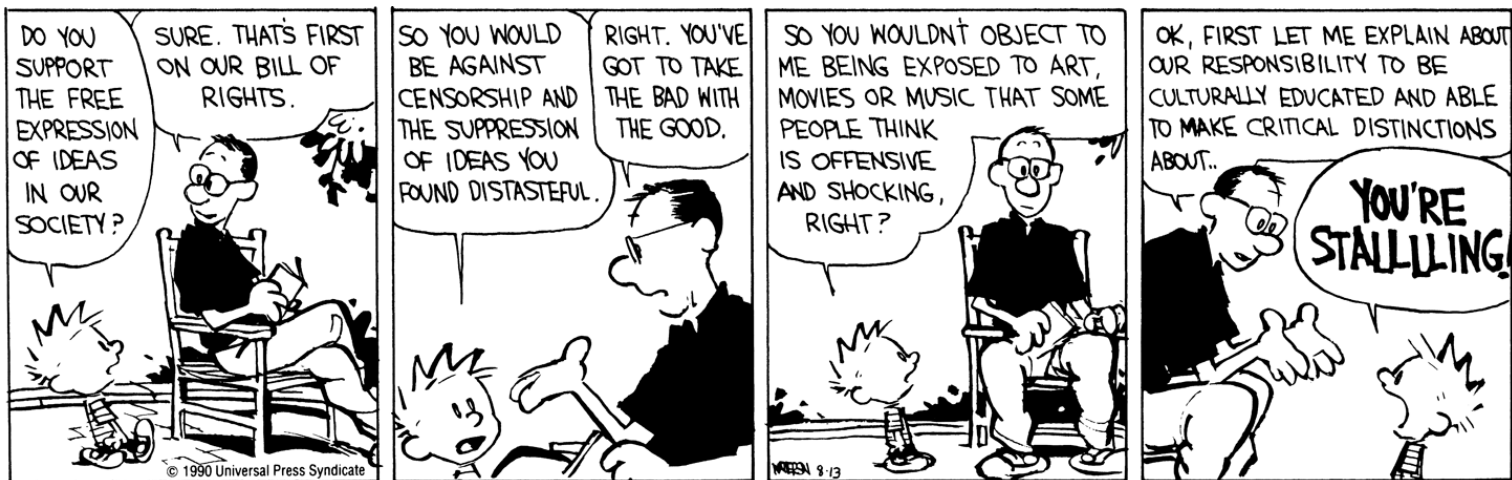# Lecture 10
# Networked Communications

# Participation Quiz

Which movie do you like best?

A. Lion King II: Simba's Pride

B. Star Trek Inception

C. Shawshank Redemption

D. Citizen Kane

E. Star Wars: in 3D

F. Lion Kin I: Simba's Downfall

# Web Filters

- Web filter: software that prevents display of certain Web pages
  - May be installed on an individual PC
  - ISP may provide service for customers
- Methodologies
  - Maintain "black list" of objectionable sites
  - Examine content for objectionable words/phrases
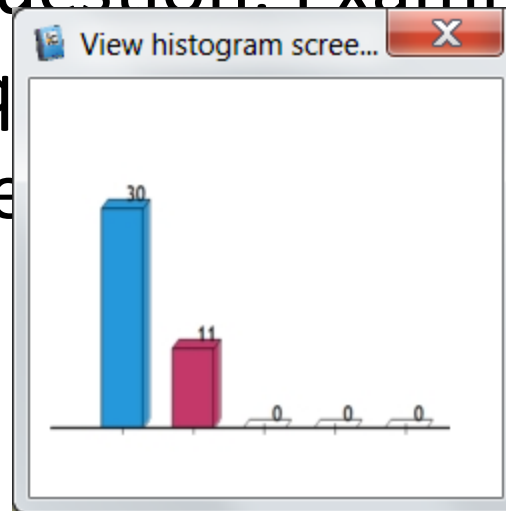
# US Child Internet Protection Act

- Libraries receiving federal networking funds must filter pages containing obscenity or child pornography

- U.S. Supreme Court ruled CIPA did not violate 1st Amendment guarantees
(6-3 decision in June 2003)

# Children in Libraries

At the beginning of the course, we asked:

"For the protection of children,
computers in libraries should be configured
to block objectionable content."

Let's revisit this question. Examine it in groups, and
then discuss the question from the perspective of
the ethical theories discussed so far.

# Sexting

- Definition: sexually suggestive text messages or emails with nude or nearly nude photographs
- In a 2009 survey, 9% of U.S. teenagers admitted to sending a sext, 17% admitted to receiving a sext
- Case of Jesse Logan
  - killed herself after ex-boyfriend shared pictures
- Case of Phillip Alpert
  - just turned 18; sent pictures of his 16 year-old girlfriend.
  - sentenced and registered as a sex offender for child pornography
- Case of Ting-Yi Oei
  - principal kept a copy of a picture as evidence
  - angry parent sued him
  - lost job over child pornography charges
- How should society respond to sexting?

# Identity Theft

- Identity theft: when a person uses another person's electronic identity

- More than 1 million Americans were victims of identity theft in 2008 due to their online activities

- Phishing: use of email to attempt to deceive people into revealing personal information

# Chat-Room Predators

- Chat room: supports real-time discussions among many people connected to network

- Instant messaging and chat rooms replacing telephone for many people

- Some pedophiles meeting children through chat rooms

- Police countering with "sting" operations

Are chatroom "stings" ethical?

# False Information

- Quality of Web-based information varies widely
- Other media also have information of varying quality
  - The New York Times v. The National Enquirer
  - 60 Minutes v. Conspiracy Theory
- Google attempts to reward quality
  - Ranking uses "voting" algorithm
  - If many links point to a page, Google search engine ranks that page higher

# Cyberbullying

- Cyberbullying: Use of the Internet or phone system to inflict psychological harm
- In a 2009 survey, 10% admitted to cyberbullying, and 19% said they had been cyberbullied
- Case of Ghyslain Raza "the Star Wars kid"
  - videotape fell into the wrong hands, shared online, went viral
  - harassed at school, eventually dropped out
- Case of Megan Meier
  - 13 yr old girl met 16 yr old boy on myspace, flirted online
  - then he broke up: "you are a bad person and everyone hates you"
  - she killed herself
  - the boyfriend didn't exist: 2 neighborhood girls and their mom
  - there was no law against what they did; no charges
- Megan Meier Cyberbullying Prevention Act
  - penalties for "communication intended to coerce, intimidate, harass, or cause substantial emotional distress to another person using electronic means to support severe, repeated, hostile behaviour"
  - What do you think of this law?

# Is Internet Addiction Real?

- Some liken compulsive computer use to pathological gambling

- Traditional definition of addiction:
  - Compulsive use of harmful substance or drug
  - Knowledge of its long-term harm

- Some people spend 40-80 hours/week on the Internet, with individual sessions lasting up to 20 hours

# Is Internet Addiction Real?

- Kimberly Young created test for Internet addiction
  - Sample question: "Have you repeatedly made unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back, or stop Internet use?"
  - Patients who answer "yes" to at least 5 of 8 questions may be addicted
- Others disagree, noting
  - Computer use is generally considered a positive activity
  - Excessive use does not lead to criminal activity
  - More accurate to call excessive use a compulsion

Discuss: do you believe that internet addiction is real?
Does society bear an ethical responsibility for it?