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Performing Cyborg Identities
The Co-ontology of Personal Identities and Mobile Phones
among Teenagers in Santiago, Chile

In accordance with numerous accounts Chile has one of the highest rates of penetration of mobile technologies in Latin America. Mobile phones, MP3 players, digital cameras and other mobile technologies have become a quotidian part of the everyday lives of an important group of the country's population, especially in urban areas. In this context this paper, based on an ongoing ethnographic research project carried out in the city of Santiago, will concentrate in one particular group of the population: teens between 15 and 16 years old. The general aim of the paper is to explore the connections between practices related to the constitution of personal identity by members of this group and different practices of use and appropriation of mobile phones. In order to do this the paper will, first, briefly summarize the connections between identity theory and technology using loosely an Actor-Network Theory approach. Secondly the paper will present three cases studies of teenage boys and girls involved in practices of mobile technology use, analyzing them in connection with processes of identity construction. Finally the paper will conclude hypothesizing that in contemporary Santiago, teenage identities and mobile phones are not only intimately related but they are co-ontological; they are "enacted into being" in the same performances producing what we call cyborg identities.

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