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Recent scientific advances have raised the possibility that Ramsey and patients like him will be able to communicate. That is, we might be able to "read" their thoughts. Communication of this kind is one of the goals of researchers who, in 2004, planted electrodes in the

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FIGURE 4.1 Conscious but Locked In

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FIGURE 4.1 Conscious but Locked In
Erik Ramsey (right, with his father, Eddie) suffers from locked-in syndrome.

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FIGURE 1.1 Digital Interaction
People stay wired to their digital media, even in social situations.

Around the world, billions of people now spend much of their time interacting through digital media (FIGURE 1.1). In fact, many people, especially young people, feel panicky to be away from their 24/7 connection to the electronic universe. When was the last time you willingly went a week without your phone or computer? A day? Some of you probably cannot last more than a few hours, or you become anxious when your instructor insists that cell phones be turned off in the classroom.

You might think, therefore, that our more frequent communications with others would bring many benefits to our social lives. Early proponents of social media, such as the creators of Facebook, envisioned a flatter world—that is, a world with fewer obstacles between people. In their view, technology would make us more connected and give us stronger social ties. We would stay in touch with old friends while easily making new ones. Our new friends would be people who shared our interests, whether they lived on the next street

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Predicting the future is a tough business.

CHAPTER 1 The Five Foundations of Economics

Economics is the dismal science.

MIS CONCEPTION Perhaps you have heard of the "dismal science"? This derogatory term was first used by historian and essayist Thomas Carlyle in the nineteenth century. He called economics the dismal science after he read a prediction from economist Thomas Malthus stating that because our planet had limited resources, continued population growth would ultimately lead to widespread starvation. Malthus was a respected thinker, but he was unduly pessimistic. The world population was one billion in 1800. and it is seven billion today. One of the things that

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IMAGINE WAKING UP IN THE HOSPITAL and the only thing you can move is your eyelids. You cannot talk or indicate that you are in pain. Finally, someone notices that you can voluntarily blink, and together you work out a system of communication. In 2000, when he was 16 years old, this situation happened to Erik Ramsey after his brain stem was damaged in a car accident. Since then, Ramsey has suffered from locked-in syndrome. In this rare condition, all or nearly all of a person's voluntary muscles are paralyzed. Even when Ramsey is awake and alert, he cannot communicate with those around him except by moving his eyes up and down (FIGURE 4.1).

As a psychological state, locked-in syndrome has been compared to being buried alive. Imagine that you see all the sights around you and hear every noise, but you cannot respond physically to these sights and noises. Imagine that you can feel every itch, but you cannot scratch yourself or move to gain relief. Hard as it is to imagine, Erik was lucky in that he was able to blink. Other such patients have no voluntary muscle movement. They have often been mistakenly thought to be in a coma for years, receiving no pain medication or socially appropriate communication. Recent scientific advances have raised the possibility that Ramsey and patients like him will be able to communicate. That is, we might be able to "read" their thoughts by imaging brain activity in real time. Communication of this kind is the goal of researchers who, in 2004, planted electrodes in the

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FIGURE 4.1 Conscious but Locked-In

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FIGURE 1.1 Digital Interaction
People stay wired to their digital media, even in social situations.

the creators of Facebook, envisioned a flatter world—that is, a world with fewer obstacles between people. In their view, technology would make us more connected and give us stronger social ties. We would stay in touch with old friends while easily making new ones. Our new friends would be people who shared our interests, whether they lived on the next street or on some tiny island thousands of miles away.

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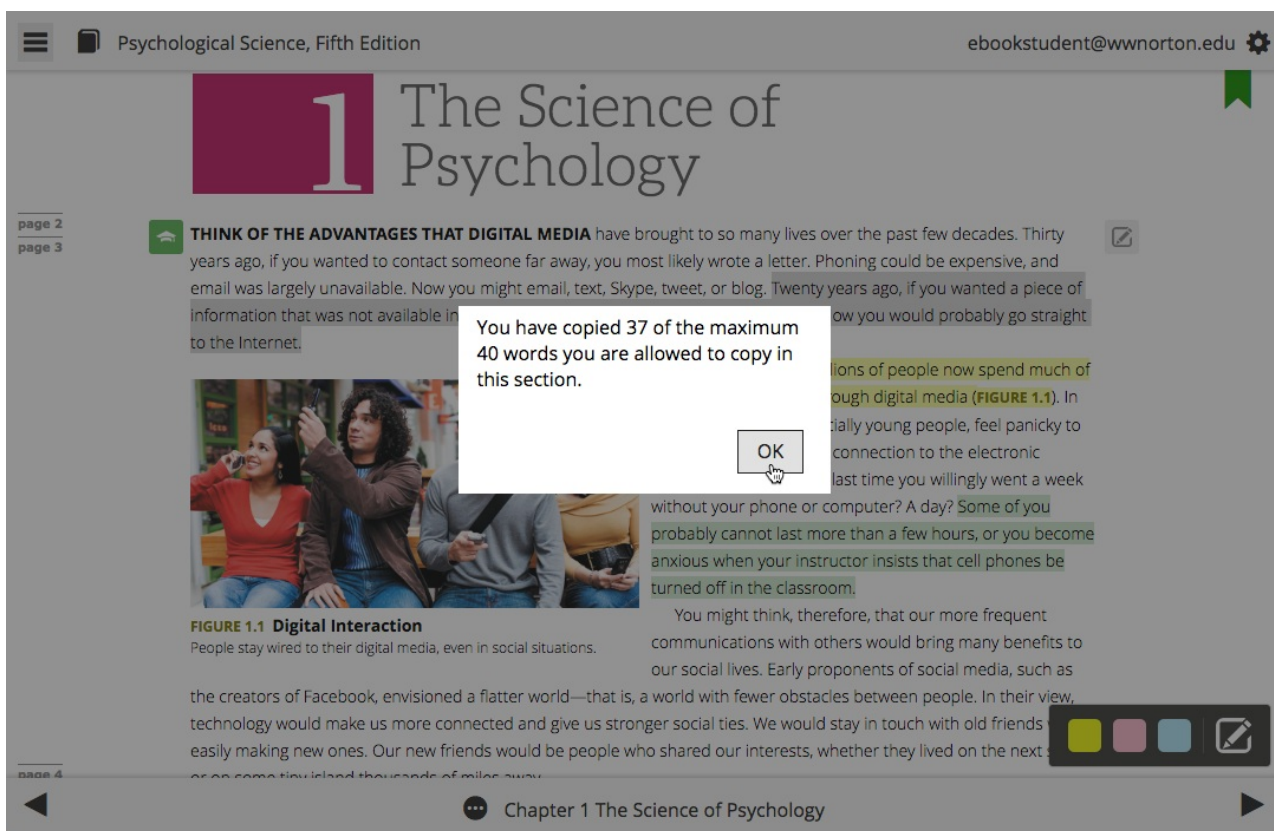
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FIGURE 1.1 Digital Interaction
People stay wired to their digital media, even in social situations.

tions of people now spend much of their time on digital media (FIGURE 1.1). Initially young people, feel panicky to be disconnected from the electronic world. Last time you willingly went a week without your phone or computer? A day? Some of you probably cannot last more than a few hours, or you become anxious when your instructor insists that cell phones be turned off in the classroom.

You might think, therefore, that our more frequent communications with others would bring many benefits to our social lives. Early proponents of social media, such as the creators of Facebook, envisioned a flatter world—that is, a world with fewer obstacles between people. In their view, technology would make us more connected and give us stronger social ties. We would stay in touch with old friends and easily making new ones. Our new friends would be people who shared our interests, whether they lived on the next street or the other side of the world.

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Around the world, billions of people now spend their time interacting through digital media (FIGURE 1.1). In fact, many people, especially young people, feel panicky to be away from their 24/7 connection to the electronic universe. When was the last time you willingly went a week without your phone or computer? A day? Some of you probably cannot last more than a few hours, or you become anxious when your instructor insists that cell phones be turned off in the classroom.

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Facebook now has over a billion users. Many Facebook users visit the site several times a day. None of these people are sad and lonely, right? All of them have become happier through social media?

On the contrary, there is evidence that the more people use Facebook, the less happy they are in their daily lives. In 2013, at the University of Michigan, the psychologist Ethan Kross and his colleagues performed a study concerning Facebook use. The researchers texted the study participants five times a day for two weeks. In those texts, they asked the

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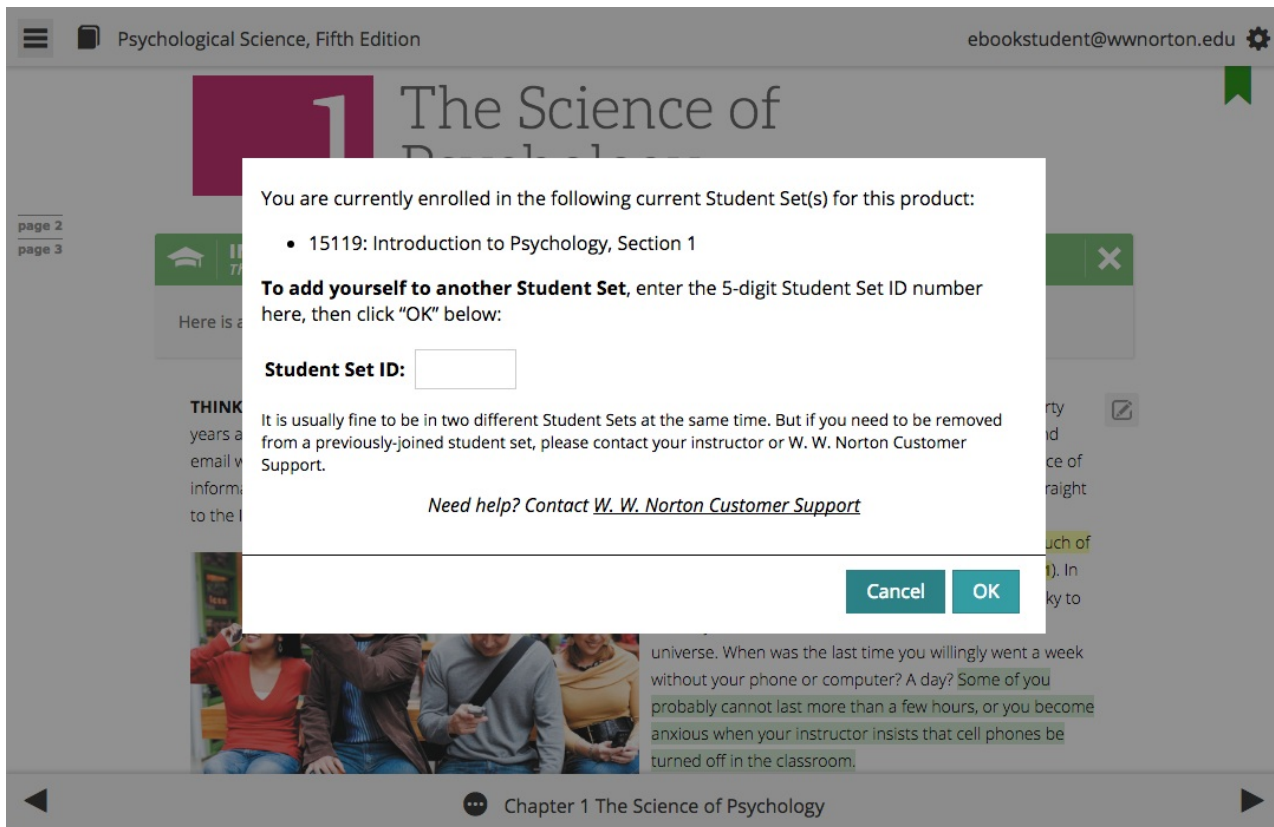
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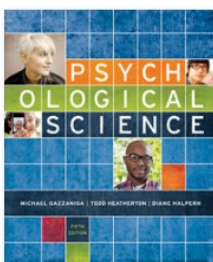
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project that self out into the world for approval. So we must always keep up appearances. And it's this part—about having to manipulate how we look to others, about seeking and getting followers, likes, and comments—that has some Instagram users thinking twice.

While many are still content with the platform as is, a growing number of young people are setting up secondary accounts on Instagram that upend the normal rules. Contrary to "rinsta" (or real Instagram), these "finstagram"