

easily than the anonymous flame on the blog. On the Web we all become small-town vicious lou in the big city.

Even these reactions aren't completely new, though. City dwellers never entirely succeeded in turning Manhattan into Pexxa, and they didn't really want to. The contradictory emotions Turtle describes are the characteristic urban emotions—excitement, novelty, and possibly balanced against loneliness, distraction, and alienation, and they seem to have arisen almost as soon as cities

themselves. We were alone together in ancient Rome and 11th-century Kyoto. Long before on the printed book, Horace and Lady Murasaki acted to the life of their physical cities by reaching for simplicity, mindfulness, and meaning. Turtle's children also seem to yearn for a digital version of the classical pastoral retreat, or the Buddhist monastery. Maybe that would do us all some good. But the villa and the monastery would be much less appealing if we didn't have the big city and the Web of the wide world to return to.

Social Networking. Then and Now

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