
Communication in Internet message boards

BEVERLY A. LEWIN and YONATAN DONNER

A quantitative analysis of usage in Computer-Mediated Conversation (CMC)

WHILE commentators as 'early' as 1984 were predicting that the "organizational, social, and personal effects of computers will be deeply felt", they could only speculate on the strength of its impact, e.g., "Computers *could* make communication easier...." (Kiesler, Siegel, & McGuire, 1984:1123–4, citing reports from the previous seven years: our emphasis). As this account was being written, at the end of 2001, the effects of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) were fast overtaking our poor ability to measure them.

There are many ways to communicate through computers: Usenet newsgroups, mailing lists, and message boards, which allow users to discuss specific topics with each other. (The term CMC allows for the possibility that some methods of communication, e.g., "chat rooms", will not meet the definition of 'mail'. However, since the most popular method of CMC is e-mail, we will use these terms interchangeably here.) For those who have internet access, CMC is often their preferred choice of indirect (i.e., non face-to-face) communication, thanks to its speed, efficiency, and flexibility. Perhaps for these reasons, e-mail has already overtaken the telephone as the primary means of business communication (Morgan, 1998).

It has been estimated that, as of January, 2000, about 827 million people were using e-mail (Li Lan, 2000), the most widely used internet application (Nua, 1998). Unfortunately for most of the world, the dominant language on the internet is English, whether for e-mail messages (Geary, 1997) or postings to Usenet newsgroups (Cumming, 1995).

Language and the internet

Like any other medium of communication, CMC has characteristic features, generated by the medium and the immediate situation, e.g., the communicators do not see or hear each other and may not even know each other. The messages contain only text, and therefore cannot convey emotions and tones. The purpose of CMC is to relay a message quickly; accuracy is secondary.

While we know much about the extent, social impact, and benefits of CMC, we know very little about the special characteristics of the English that is used on the net. In fact, Gimenez (2000) found that, as of 1997, only two of eleven well-known ELT textbooks dealt with the topic. The specialized journals have not yet caught up with the issue, so that *English Today*, with six articles dealing with CMC since

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YONATAN DONNER, born in 1981, represents the generation that has grown up with computers. He is interested in everything concerning the Internet and computer programming, as well as in linguistics, physics, philosophy, and mathematics. As a participant in numerous bulletin boards he began to observe the characteristics of English in computer-mediated communication.

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January 1995, is a relative leader in the field.

Informal observations (e.g., Maynor, 1994; Uhlirova, 1994; Li Yongyan, 2000) have ascribed distinctive features to CMC, which can be termed *variations of or deviations from* standard English, depending on one's point of view; nevertheless, these observations have been supported by very few quantitative studies (e.g., Gains 1999; Gimenez 2000; Li Lan 2000). Although the variations are undoubtedly interesting phenomena in themselves, the real question for linguists is whether these variations will ultimately transform "standard" English (Li Lan, 2000) or even "replace traditional writing as a kind of arbiter of language" (Maynor, 1994:53). On the other hand, perhaps what is developing is a new speech register (Uhlirova, 1994; Maynor, 1994) rather than a new writing register. A more immediate question for educators is whether we are looking at a lack of rules or the actual emergence of new norms, which should be part of the English syllabus.

A few possible causes have been suggested for the distinctive features of CMC language. Firstly, the writer does not spend time correcting the message (Kawasaki, 1992). Second, CMC lacks the paralinguistic cues that are present in face-to-face communication (Kiesler, Siegel, & McGuire, 1984; Reid, 1991). There is a consensus in previous literature about the "oral" nature of e-mail. The practices that the literature has noted – such as inappropriate use of lower case letters, emoticons to replace facial expressions, and pause fillers ("hmmm") – seem to try to imitate a conversational register (Uhlirova, 1994; Maynor, 1994; Cumming, 1995). Other practices such as special acronyms (e.g., *BTW* for "by the way") are clearly dictated by the desire to relay the message quickly. Omitting the subject or verb of the sentence achieves both purposes. However, some practices, for instance, colloquialisms such as *nope* and *yeah*, which involve more keystrokes than the "standard" *yes* and *no*, indicate that conversational register can pre-empt speed (Maynor, 1994).

In addition, to help situate CMC on the speech/writing continuum, certain social conventions associated with letter writing have been investigated. The results of Gains' study (1999) of salutations and closings, based on a mixed corpus of academic and business e-mail letters, greatly diverged from those of Li Lan (2000), who used a corpus of academic mail.

This again suggests that situational characteristics interact with CMC features.

Besides the lack of quantitative studies, an obstacle to generalizing about CMC language is that, in the previous studies cited, the corpora are drawn from very structured social environments (i.e., business or academic communities). In some, the environment is not specified (e.g., Li Yongyan, 2000). When considering these academic, personal, or official contexts, it is possible that the users share some demographic characteristics and occupy complementary roles, such as employer/employee, or colleagues. We chose our corpus from discourse communities (Swales, 1990) that would be expected to be extremely heterogeneous in all demographic and educational characteristics. Furthermore, members of these communities, which share only a common interest or hobby, have little likelihood of meeting one another. In fact, a large proportion of the users do not reveal their real names. With this type of corpus, we hoped to arrive at a more generalized picture of CMC. On the other hand, it also seemed likely that there would be variations in the general features in accordance with the topics and purposes of various subgroups using CMC.

The first purpose of this study is to examine the extent to which CMC, as a whole, is actually characterized by the features commonly ascribed to it. The second purpose is to test whether there are variations in usage in accordance with the purpose and content of the message. Specifically, we tried to answer the following questions:

- How frequently do the features ascribed to CMC actually appear in a large corpus of messages?
- What proportion of writers include a CMC feature?
- How frequently does each of these features appear, per number of words in the message?
- Is the topic of the message board related to the type and frequency of the characteristics that appear?
- What is the frequency of certain social conventions in CMC and is the frequency associated with the topic of the message board?

Methodology

The features were examined in a corpus of 200 messages taken from five different bulletin

boards on the internet: three Usenet newsgroups, a mailing list and a web-based Java message board.

These specific boards were chosen for two reasons. First, they contain postings from a diverse range of people with no common trait except their interest in the subject discussed in the board. That is, the messages in the board were written by people of varying educational backgrounds, age group and sex, as far as could be established. Second, not only does each of these boards deal with a different topic, but each also includes messages written for different purposes, such as requesting help, exchanging opinions, and arguing. A more thorough examination of the differences between the boards can be found in the discussion. The technical differences in the use of the boards are described in Appendix 1. Forty messages from each board were selected, by the following method:

Newsgroups and mailing list

Beginning with June 25, 1998, every fourth message was included, until 40 messages had been collected. There were two further criteria: only the first message from each writer and only messages from countries where English is the official language were included. Thus, the corpus represents 200 different writers but it is not possible to know which, if any, of the included writers are non-native speakers of English.

Message/bulletin board

Non-Anglophone countries could not be isolated because e-mail addresses of the writers are not listed. Therefore, the first 40 messages posted by

bulletin board	topics discussed
1. Newsgroup: talk.bizarre	Miscellaneous topics perceived as "bizarre"
2. Newsgroup: alt.tv.seinfeld	The TV show "Seinfeld"
3. Newsgroup: comp.os.ms-windows.win95.misc	Microsoft's operating system "Windows 95"
4. Mailing list: q2demos	Making movies using the "Quake 2" engine
5. Message board: Unreal Rants and Raves	The computer game "Unreal"

Figure 1. Bulletin boards included in the corpus and their topics

different writers, starting from August 20, 1998, were used. Figure 1 shows the names and topics of the boards in the corpus.

The following twelve features were examined in every message in the corpus.

Syntax

- 1 Inappropriate omission of subjects or verbs in sentences
- 2 Special spellings, such as "u" for "you" and "l8ter" for "later"
- 3 Special acronyms, such as AFAIK, for "as far as I know"
- 4 "Emoticons", symbols that convey emotions, such as :-) for happiness or amusement and :-(for sadness or frustration and ;-) for a wink
- 5 Emphasis by capitalization or enclosure by asterisks ("*I*")

Punctuation

- 6 Run-on sentences (lack of full stop at the end of a sentence)
- 7 Messages written entirely in lower case or entirely in upper case letters
- 8 More than one punctuation mark at the end of a sentence, such as dots, question marks or exclamation points

Characteristics of oral register

- 9 Pause fillers, such as "Hmmm", and "well"; transcribed sounds, such as "heh" to indicate laughter
- 10 Lack of intersentential connectors such as "However"

Social conventions

- 11 Greetings ("Dear X", "Hello"); sign-off by name
- 12 Use of names, i.e., for every message, it was noted whether a real name or an alias was used, either in the "From:" line or in a sign-off. Every authentic-sounding name (i.e., not an obvious nickname or alias) was assumed to be the writer's real name. There is no way to be certain whether a name used by a person is actually his or her real name.

Number	Abbreviation	Name
1	Bizarre	talk.bizarre
2	Seinfeld	alt.tv.seinfeld
3	Win95	comp.os.ms-windows.win95.misc
4	Movies	Quake2 Demos and Movies
5	Unreal	Unreal Rants and Raves

Figure 2

Results

The bulletin boards will be referred to by number and abbreviation, as shown in Figure 2.

Research question 1

How frequently do the features ascribed to CMC actually appear in a large corpus of CMC messages? First (Table 1), we discuss the frequency of messages that bear any of these features; later (Table 3), we discuss the frequency of each feature per number of words in the corpus.

Table 1 indicates whether a CMC feature was realized at least once in a message. Since each message was written by a different writer, it shows the proportion of writers who include such features. It does not show how often the

feature was realized per message. As the table illustrates, each CMC feature appeared in 17% to 46% of the messages (or, conversely, more than one-half of the messages did not display the particular feature). In the entire corpus, the most frequently realized feature was (inappropriate) punctuation (46%), followed by special CMC usages (36%). Syntax (18%) and oral register (17%) appeared half as often as special CMC usages and less than half as often as punctuation items.

If we look at frequencies according to topic, we see variations according to boards. Board 4 had the greatest number of messages containing at least one distinctive CMC feature (85%), and also had the highest frequency for each CMC feature. Board 5 had the second highest frequency of messages containing three features: special CMC usages, punctuation items, and characteristics of an oral register. Board 3 had the lowest number of messages containing any distinctive CMC features (48%). Some of the differences in frequencies among boards are significant: for (A) syntax ($p < 0.05$), for (B) special CMC usages ($p < 0.01$), and for (D) oral register ($p < 0.01$).

Table 2 specifies the frequency of each special CMC usage in each board.

In sum, no special CMC usage appeared in more than 19% of the messages. Of those that

Table 1 Number of messages in each board that realized CMC features

Feature	Board 1: Bizarre n=40	Board 2: Seinfeld n=40	Board 3: Win95 n=40	Board 4: Movies n=40	Board 5: Unreal n=40	Total n=200
A. Syntax (1)	8 (20%)	4 (10%)	4 (10%)	14 (35%)	6 (15%)	36 (18%)
B. Special CMC usages (2)	13 (33%)	13 (33%)	6 (15%)	21 (53%)	19 (48%)	72 (36%)
C. Punctuation (3)	18 (45%)	20 (50%)	14 (35%)	21 (53%)	18 (45%)	91 (46%)
D. Oral register (4)	4 (10%)	5 (13%)	2 (5%)	12 (30%)	10 (25%)	33 (17%)
At least one feature (A, B, C, or D)	28 (70%)	28 (70%)	19 (48%)	34 (85%)	30 (75%)	141 (71%)

Key to feature numbers

- (1) Lack of subjects or verbs
- (2) Spellings, acronyms, emoticons, or emphasis
- (3) Run-on sentences, messages written entirely in lower case or upper case, or two or more consecutive marks at the end of a sentence
- (4) Speech-like pause fillers, connectors or sounds

Table 2 Frequency of special CMC usages in each board

Special CMC usage	Board 1: Bizarre n=40	Board 2: Seinfeld n=40	Board 3: Win95 n=40	Board 4: Movies N=40	Board 5: Unreal n=40	Total n=200
1. Spellings	3 (8%)	7 (18%)	2 (5%)	9 (24%)	7 (18%)	28 (14%)
2. Acronyms	2 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (10%)	3 (8%)	9 (5%)
3. Emoticons	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	2 (5%)	10 (25%)	2 (5%)	16 (8%)
4. Emphasis	11 (28%)	6 (15%)	2 (5%)	6 (15%)	12 (30%)	37 (19%)

Table 3. Frequency of feature in proportion to number of words per board

Feature	Board 1: Bizarre	Board 2: Seinfeld	Board 3: Win95	Board 4: Movies	Board 5: Unreal	Total
Total number of words	2767	1399	2300	4012	2256	12734
A. Syntax (1)	13 (0.47%)	5 (0.36%)	4 (0.17%)	18 (0.45%)	9 (0.40%)	49 (0.38%)
B. Special CMC usages (2)	21 (0.76%)	15 (1.07%)	8 (0.35%)	35 (0.87%)	36 (1.60%)	115 (0.90%)
C. Punctuation (3)	21 (0.76%)	36 (2.57%)	19 (0.83%)	61 (1.52%)	54 (2.39%)	191 (1.50%)
D Oral register (4)	8 (0.29%)	5 (0.36%)	2 (0.09%)	15 (0.37%)	11 (0.49%)	41 (0.32%)
A,B,C, or D	63 (2.28%)	61 (4.36%)	33 (1.43%)	129 (3.22%)	110 (4.87%)	396 (3.11%)

Key to feature numbers

(1) Lack of subjects or verbs
(2) Spellings, acronyms, emoticons, or emphasis
(3) Run-on sentences, messages written entirely in lower case or upper case, or two or more consecutive dots or marks at the end of a sentence
(4) Speech-like pause fillers, connectors or sounds

did appear, emphasis was the most popular, followed by special spellings, emoticons, and special acronyms. In contrast, special CMC acronyms appeared in only 5% of all messages. Most common was *FAQ* (“frequently asked questions”), which accounted for half of the appearances. The other acronyms were *RTM* (“Read the manual”), *BTW* (“By the way”), *IMHO* (“In my humble opinion), and *ROFL* (“Rolling on the floor laughing”).

Similarly, special spellings occurred in only 14% of the messages, with no particular special spelling dominant.

Table 2 shows that board 4 also had the

highest number of messages containing most special CMC usages, except emphasis. Board 3 had the lowest number of messages containing each special CMC usage.

Characteristics of oral register

Pause fillers (such as “oh” and “um”) appeared in only 17% of the messages, with 15 different realizations occurring from one to seven times. In contrast, the data conformed to expectations for oral register in realizing only nine inter-sentential connectors, (such as “however”), in 200 texts.

Table 4. Social conventions of messages in each board

Feature	Board 1: Bizarre n=40	Board 2: Seinfeld n=40	Board 3: Win95 n=40	Board 4: Movies n=40	Board 5: Unreal n=40	Total n=200
Greeting only	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	3 (8%)	5 (3%)
Sign-off only	26 (65%)	13 (33%)	20 (50%)	24 (60%)	2 (5%)	85 (43%)
Both	3 (8%)	1 (3%)	8 (20%)	8 (20%)	0 (0%)	20 (10%)
Neither	11 (28%)	25 (63%)	11 (28%)	8 (20%)	35 (88%)	90 (45%)
Real name	23 (58%)	17 (43%)	34 (85%)	14 (35%)	1 (3%)	89 (45%)
Alias	15 (38%)	8 (20%)	6 (15%)	12 (30%)	39 (98%)	80 (40%)
Real name and alias *	1 (3%)	4 (10%)	0 (0%)	14 (35%)	0 (0%)	19 (10%)
Neither	1 (3%)	11 (28%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	12 (6%)

* as in John "Killer" Smith

In Table 1, we reported the proportion of messages in which a particular feature appears. Perhaps a more important question is, "How frequently does each of these distinctive features appear in proportion to the number of words in the corpus?" Table 3 shows the frequency of each feature in proportion to the total number of words in the board. In other words, all occurrences of each feature were included.

In the corpus as a whole, a distinctive CMC feature appeared every 32 words on average. Specifically, punctuation items were most frequent (one per 67 words, followed by special CMC usages (one per 110 words), syntax (one per 260 words) and characteristics of oral register (one per 311 words).

There was some variation across boards: the relative frequency of the items was lowest in board 4 (one per 31 words), and highest in board 5 (one per 21 words). The relative frequency of the syntax items in board 1 was the highest (one per 213 words). In addition, there was a difference in the average number of words per message in each board. Board 4 had the longest messages, with an average of 100 words per message. The range among all

other boards was from 35 to 69 words per message.

Our final question was: What is the frequency of certain social conventions in CMC and is the frequency associated with the topic of the message board?

The upper half of Table 4 shows that most writers included a greeting, and/or a sign-off in their messages, but 45% included neither. Whereas only 13% of the writers included a greeting, 53% included a sign-off.

The differences among the boards were significant ($p < 0.001$). In boards 1, 3 and 4, the majority of writers used only a sign-off while in boards 2 and 5, the majority of writers used neither a greeting nor a sign-off.

The bottom half of Table 4 indicates that 55% of the writers seem to identify themselves, including a real-sounding name, while 46% hide behind an obvious alias or use no name. The distribution according to board is significant ($p < 0.001$). In boards 1, 2 and 3, most people used only a real name. In board 4, an almost equal number of people used only a real name, only an alias, or both. In board 5, only one person used a real name and all the others used aliases.

Discussion

Certain linguistic features have been ascribed to CMC but have not been tested methodically in a heterogeneous corpus. We describe these features operationally as *syntax* (omission of subject or verb in a sentence), *punctuation* (inappropriate use of punctuation or of lower and upper case letters), *oral register* (pause fillers, lack of intersentential connectors) and *special CMC usages* (emoticons, acronyms, special spellings, signals for emphasis). We examined the extent to which these features actually appear in 200 messages, representing 200 writers and a variety of bulletin boards. We found that each feature did occur, but only in fewer than half of the messages. Furthermore, the features that were realized appeared in unequal numbers. In the entire corpus, the most frequently realized feature was punctuation (46%, $n = 91$), followed by special CMC usages (36%, $n = 72$). In contrast, the number of messages realizing syntax or oral register was less than 20%.

This pattern is not associated with efficiency; disregard for both conventional punctuation and conventional syntax should appear equally on that basis. If we look at the special usages that evolved with CMC (spellings, acronyms, emoticons, and emphasis, Table 2), we find that none of them was used by more than 19% ($n = 37$) of the writers. Here again, efficiency does not seem to play a part; emphasis (which requires more keystrokes) and spellings (which in all but one case reduce key strokes) were the two features that appeared most frequently in the category of 'special CMC usages'. Emoticons, one of the 'signatures' of CMC, appeared only 16 times (8%) in the corpus. These results could mean that the influence of such features on CMC is limited, but they could also mean that we are only at the beginning of a process. It would be necessary to replicate this study in future years to verify the latter interpretation.

A more striking result is that the frequency of features varied according to topic (board). Board 4 had the greatest number of messages (85%) containing at least one ascribed CMC feature and also had the highest frequency for each CMC feature. Board 5 had the second highest frequency for three features. Both these boards are subscribed to by people who are using the board to carry out another task; the communication is only secondary to that purpose. Board 4 is devoted to creating a computer

movie, while Board 5 is involved in playing the computer game "Unreal", and in both cases the task is performed by several participants. These characteristics might have some impact on the linguistic features.

As for the frequency of these features, per number of words, one ascribed CMC feature appeared per 32 words, on average, but here again, the distribution was uneven – punctuation features were most frequent and oral register was least frequent. Again, frequency varied according to the boards. Board 4 contained the *lowest* frequency of features per number of words (one feature per 31 words) while board 5 realized one feature per 21 words. The data for board 4 seem inconsistent with the fact that it also realized the greatest number of *messages* bearing a CMC feature. This is difficult to explain, unless it is related indirectly to the length of the messages. Board 4 also had the highest number of words per message (100) as against 35 for the board with the lowest number of words per message.

The social conventions associated with letter writing (openings and closings) were also examined. In our study, 87% of the messages did not contain an opening greeting while 48% did not contain a sign-off. In contrast, Gains (1999), using a corpus of academic and business e-mail letters, found that 92% did not contain an opening greeting at all, while Li Lan (2000), in a corpus of academic mail, found that 54% of messages contained no greeting. Furthermore, in Gains, the senders did not sign their names in 58% of the messages, in contrast to 67% in Li Lan's study. These findings would suggest again that it is invalid to generalize about CMC but that such conventions may depend upon pragmatic considerations, such as whether the addressee and sender belong to the same institution.

This study has shown that there are differences among the five bulletin boards in the frequency of CMC features. Three of the differences in frequencies among the boards are significant: syntax, special CMC usages, and oral register. The topics of the bulletin boards and the purpose of writing to them are obviously related, but the relationship is not clear-cut. Board 1, which is used for arguing about various bizarre topics, did not have the greatest number of deviations from standard English. However, Board 3, used mostly for getting and providing help with the Windows 95 operating system, contained the lowest number of

messages including each CMC feature. It also had the lowest frequency of occurrence of these features. Board 3 is the most practical of the boards, discussing technical problems that are very often relevant to people's jobs. Thus, writers may edit them and take care that they conform to standard English before posting. The characteristics of this 'practical' board correspond to those for business e-mail found by Gains (1999). In that study, nearly all writers conformed to 'grammatical' British English.

This study dealt with features of CMC texts only. It is not possible to know if certain features, e.g., inappropriate punctuation would also characterize conventional letters written by the same people. Secondly, we do not know if the frequency of CMC features was related to demographic differences (age and education) among the participants. Further study should involve comparing e-mail messages with messages on the same topic written on paper. Moreover, future studies should compare e-mail messages written by people of various ages and level of education.

Appendix 1: The technical aspects of the bulletin boards

There are many sites on the World Wide Web that allow the user to read newsgroups, and sometimes even post new messages. One of the most popular is DejaNews <<http://www.dejanews.com>>. It allows the user to search newsgroups using keywords, read newsgroups, reply to existing messages and post new messages. Searching and reading newsgroups can be done by everyone who uses DejaNews. However, in order to post replies or new messages, one has to subscribe first. The subscription is however free.

The *mailing list* operates through e-mail. In order to read it or participate in the discussion, one has to send a blank e-mail to a subscription e-mail address. After receiving a confirmation, the user begins receiving the messages from the mailing list, delivered to his/her e-mail address. To send a new message to the list, the user can either reply to one of the messages from the list or send a new e-mail to the list e-mail address. In both cases, everyone on the list will receive that message.

The *message board* operates through the web. No subscription is needed to read the messages on the message board, but to send messages one must subscribe to the message board. The sub-

Some samples from the corpus, unedited

Board 1: talk.bizarre

Humans suck. That's what it means. It means that someone will step on your face to get one step ahead. It means that you'll be used as a pawn in someones twisted game. It means you'll be manipulated into thinking and feeling certian things from the day you are born. It means that people will lie to you and not consider your fragile feelings. It means that in other peoples eyes, you are nothing. It means that you will never truly understand another of your speices. It means that you will eventually do the same things to others that you hated when they happened to you. It means you'll teach your kids the same things. It means that you'll die never able to say that you really understood anything in your short life. It means that you'll never know why you were even here. Humans suck.

Board 2: alt.tv.seinfeld

It's a shame that the syndicator didn't send out "The Keys" prior to showing us "The Trip" episodes. It is sort of an important part of the story leading up to Kramer's departure....

Board 3: comp.os.ms-windows.win95.misc

Hello all.

Does anyone know of a registry hack to allow the full paths to be shown in the documents section of the start menu?

Thanks.

Please reply be email too.

Board 4: Quake2 demos and movies

I do this. I'm workking on a few different highlight reels from clan CTF matches and some DM demos I've done. I'm having some problems getting the cameras to stick in the .dm2, but they look great in the KG2 camera server. Gotta RTM closer, I guesss. :) I was never really a fan of FA11 though, so I odn't know the difference. What am I missing?

Board 5: Unreal Rants and Raves

Next time, I'll wait for a demo, one with working multiplayer and good MP gameplay, instead of buying it on the first day and playing it for only 9 days.

Btw, Grand Prix Legends has working net codes out of the box and is a blast to play on the net.

scription is simple and free. Anyone can post anything to these boards. The web-based message board, however, automatically censors messages that use profanity and the operators can remove any message they choose. ■

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Institutionalizing '9/11'

The short form for 'September 11' has recently received graphic endorsement from *TIME Magazine*, in both a Special Edition (cover shown here) and a subsequent statement. Ann Morrison, the editor of *TIME Europe*, in the editorial to the issue of 8 Apr 02, notes:

'We received some nice news recently. The American Society of Magazine Editors announced that *TIME* had been nominated for five National Magazine Awards, the most ever for a news-magazine. We're up for awards in the categories of Single-Topic Issue (for our 9/11 special edition, which featured a 28-page picture portfolio and Nancy Gibbs' story about that horrific, chaotic day)...'

