Research

It is my sincere belief that the pursuit of new knowledge is one of the more noble occupations one can undertake. Humans are endowed with a natural curiosity of the world in which they live and the universe around them, their interaction with this world and humans’ interaction with each other. Research is the means we employ to systematically develop understanding of phenomena observed in the world. This natural curiosity leads humans to develop technology to help us examine and understand the world in new ways and to improve our place in the world. Technology changes the way in which we interact with the world and each other. I am particularly interested in understanding the effect technology has on the interaction between humans and its effect on social structures.

To investigate these phenomena, I have reviewed the existing body of literature related to human interaction and technology; specifically, adaptive structuration theory (AST) (De-Sanctis and Poole, 1994) which is developed from social structuration theory (Giddens, 1984). AST has provided information systems literature a workable general theory of technology appropriation in social structures that has withstood initial empirical investigation. More empirical investigation is needed as well as greater theoretical development. I wish to do both. My dissertation is a synchronic analysis of AST in which I have found support for the tenets of the theoretical perspective. I believe that AST will stand up to further empirical analysis as I endeavor to form a better understanding of the processes involved in structuration.

I also have a keen interest in researching issues in information ethics and individual’s rights to privacy. New information technologies provide means to collect and distribute data on individuals at levels previously only imagined in science fiction literature. These technologies permit firms and governmental agencies to examine masses of individual data that poses real risks to individual privacy. These technologies develop far faster than society can develop norms, let alone legislation, to control their use. Research is needed to understand the extent of the invasion of privacy that can occur and what ethical analysis information systems professionals may undertake in the absence of societal norms to guide their behavior.

I feel an obligation to engage in development of an academic mind. Ongoing research is a critical component of that development. I feel that ongoing research will help me to become a better, wiser teacher, and a more valuable academic citizen.