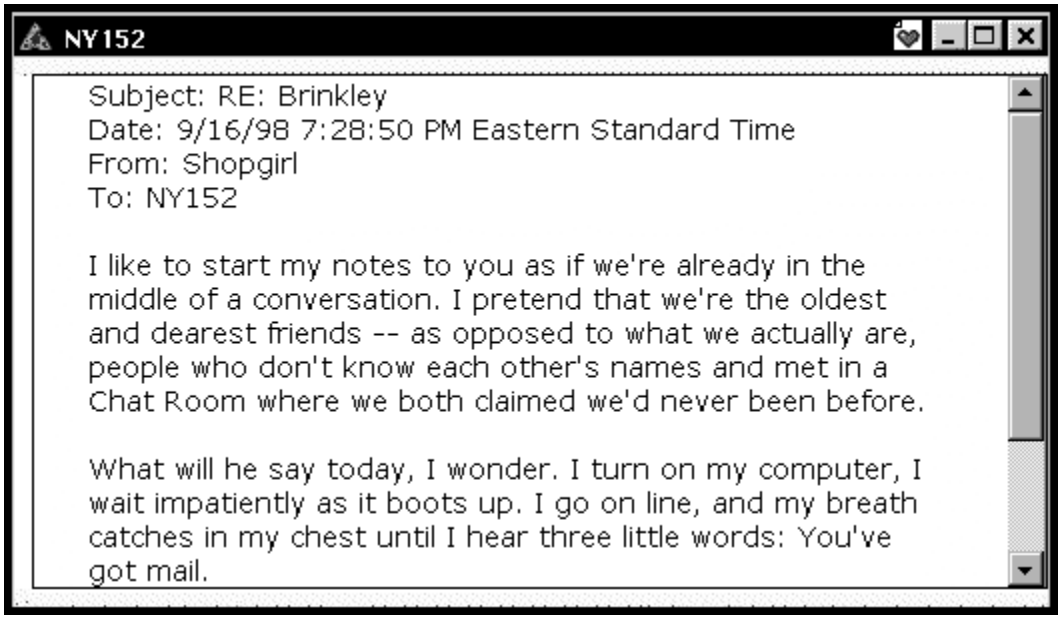
Figure 1. The paradoxical nature of digital communication.

	"speech"	"writing"
Attenuated	absence of non-verbal cues	loss of text as object
Enhanced	ability to re-examine utterance	restoration of presence of interlocutor

FIGURE 2. MESSAGE FROM "SHOPGIRL" TO "NY152" IN "YOU'VE GOT MAIL."*



*Source: URL http://www.youvegotmail.com/.

FIGURE 3. COMMON FEATURES OF DIGITAL WRITING.

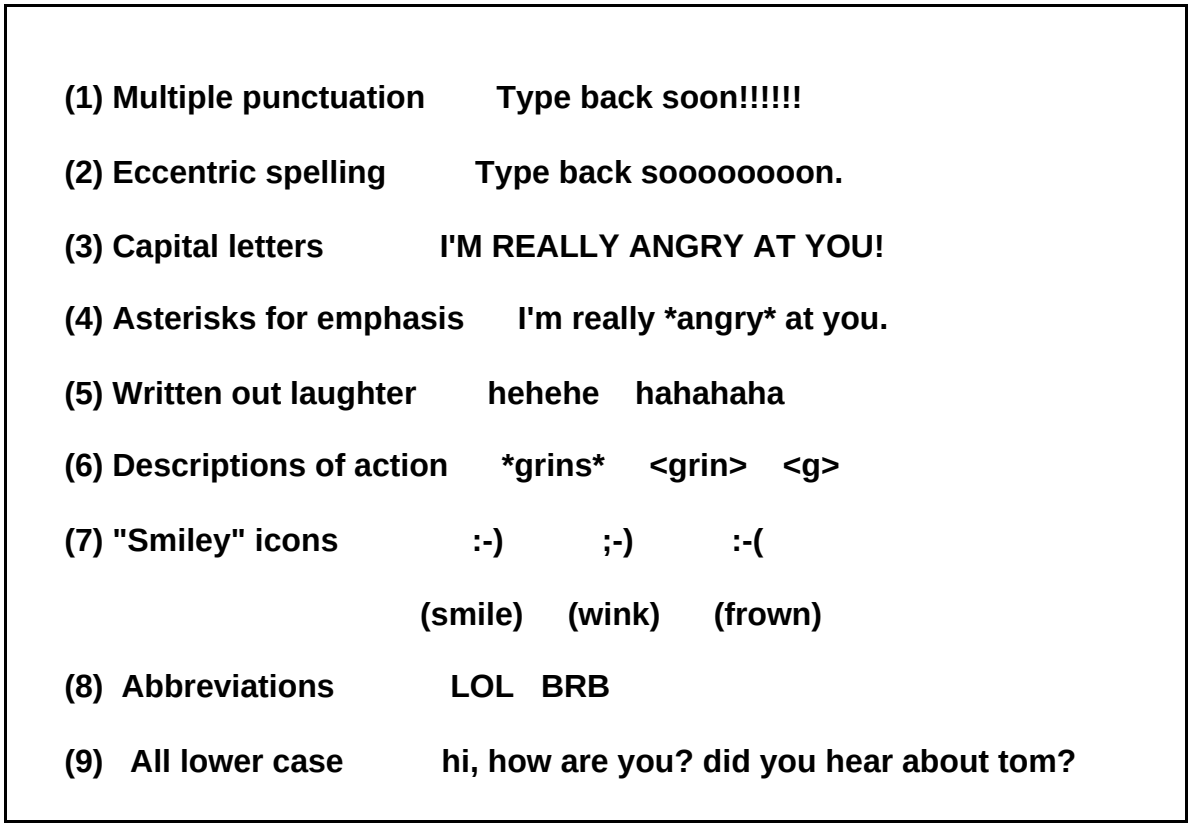


Figure 4. Key elements of the business letter template.

Feature	Example
(1) Opening: salutation + formal address, TLN	"Dear Dr. Jones"
(2) Closing:	
optional pre-closing	"Thank you for your consideration of this matter."
complimentary close	"Yours truly,"
signature FN+LN	"John Doe"
(3) Standard syntax	
(4) Formal vocabulary	
(5) No abbreviations	
(6) Standard spelling, typography	
(7) Standard punctuation	
(8) Layout: white space between opening and body of letter, between body of letter and closing; between paragraphs	

FIGURE 5. LETTER FROM A STUDENT NICKNAMED “TECHNOSMURF.”

Date: Sat, 23 Apr 1994 19:27:04 -0400 (EDT)
From: TECHNOSMURF@xxxxxx.com
Subject: Help: need some articles for research paper
To: msdanet@pluto.mscc.huji.ac.il

Hello, Ms. Danet!

How are ya doin' today? I feel quite spiffy, too!

My name is T. L., and I'm doing a research paper on the social implications of e-mail.

Jacques Leslie ...referred me to you in acquiring your not-quite-published-yet article.... It would help me very much
[and thoroughly suprise the socks off of my English II teacher] if I could get a copy of this article....

I greatly appreciate your help in this matter. Also, I'll be sure to completely document my sources.

Thanks a bunch! [... of grapes!] (:

T. L. <TECHNOSMURF@xxxxxx.COM>

TABLE 1. CONFORMITY WITH THE BUSINESS LETTER TEMPLATE IN 20 RESPONSES TO A CALL FOR PAPERS.

Feature

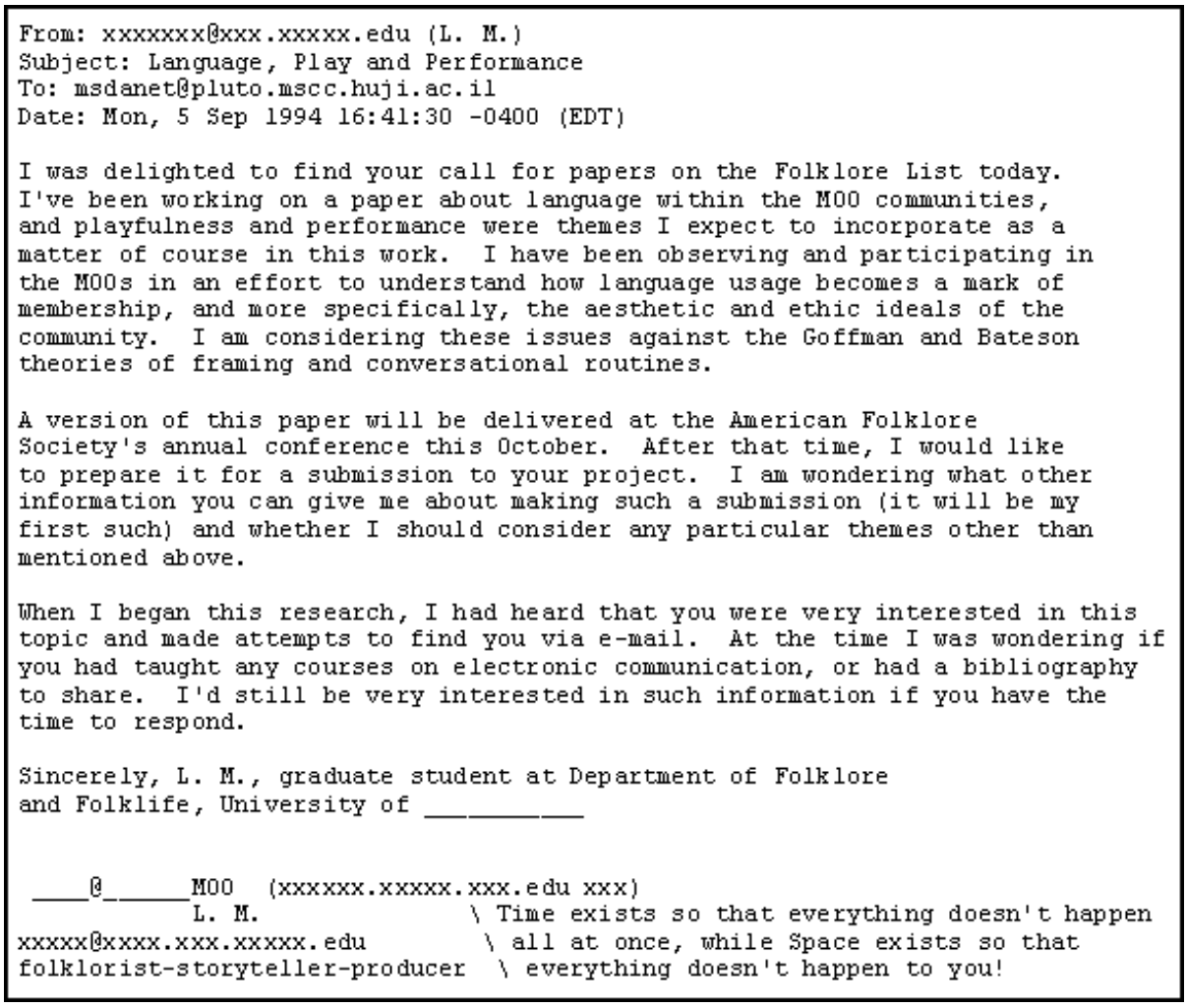
Letter no.	Op../Clos.	Syntax	Vocab.	Abbrevs.	Sp./Typog.	Punct.	Layout	Total "yes"
1	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	4
2	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	4
3	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	3
4	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	1
5	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	1
6	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	5
7	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	4
8	no	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	4
9	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	0
10	no	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	2
11	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	2
12	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	4
13	no	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	4
14	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	4
15	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	4
16	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	4
17	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
18	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	6
19	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	4
20	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	5
Total "yes"	2	13	13	10	13	5	14	

FIGURE 6. LETTER DEVIATING MOST SHARPLY FROM THE BUSINESS LETTER TEMPLATE.

From: S. C. <xxxxxxxx@xxxxxx.xxxxxx.com>
Subject: info on pares,etc(papers that is)
To: msdanet@pluto.mscc.huji.ac.il
Date: Mon, 5 Sep 94 12:37:18 EDT

iHi,
just got the email message from the IJVR (?) sorry, only subscribed recently, and may have inverted letters) re: the special edition, and the call for papers ...
am quite curious, and could greatly/would greatly appreciate if you could forward further info....also, anything on some research in the area--I am working on a new college course with a colleague, on virtula reality, cyberspace, the virtual world, and we are looking for data, evcerywhere. She did a paper last year on the nuances and politicis and culture of email....its going into a cs journal, shortly; perhaps it may be modifiable and adaptable to your issue?
Also-I noticed from your letter Prof. Rafaeli's connectionnwith bus. admin-I also treach management, and have been looking for some extra info to help put together a course proposal forusing internet to do business research....any suggestions? Ive found a few syllabi online that are slightly in that area, but not totally...
looking forward to hearing from you,
and best wishes in the new year to all...
S. C.
xxxxxxxx@xxxxxx.xxxxxx.com

FIGURE 7. A LETTER SCORING FOUR POINTS.

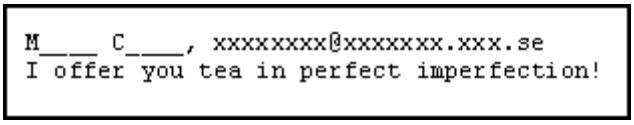


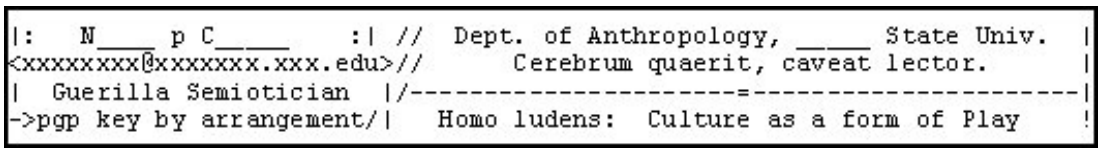
```
From: xxxxxxx@xxx.xxxxx.edu (L. M.)
Subject: Language, Play and Performance
To: msdanet@pluto.mscc.huji.ac.il
Date: Mon, 5 Sep 1994 16:41:30 -0400 (EDT)

I was delighted to find your call for papers on the Folklore List today.
I've been working on a paper about language within the MOO communities,
and playfulness and performance were themes I expect to incorporate as a
matter of course in this work.  I have been observing and participating in
the MOOs in an effort to understand how language usage becomes a mark of
membership, and more specifically, the aesthetic and ethic ideals of the
community.  I am considering these issues against the Goffman and Bateson
theories of framing and conversational routines.

A version of this paper will be delivered at the American Folklore
Society's annual conference this October.  After that time, I would like
to prepare it for a submission to your project.  I am wondering what other
information you can give me about making such a submission (it will be my
first such) and whether I should consider any particular themes other than
mentioned above.

When I began this research, I had heard that you were very interested in this
topic and made attempts to find you via e-mail.  At the time I was wondering if
you had taught any courses on electronic communication, or had a bibliography
to share.  I'd still be very interested in such information if you have the
time to respond.

Sincerely, L. M., graduate student at Department of Folklore
and Folklife, University of _____


 ____@_____MOO  (xxxxxx.xxxxx.xxx.edu xxx)
            L. M.               \ Time exists so that everything doesn't happen
xxxxx@xxxx.xxx.xxxxx.edu         \ all at once, while Space exists so that
folklorist-storyteller-producer  \ everything doesn't happen to you!
```

FIGURE 8. OPENINGS AND CLOSINGS IN 20 LETTERS.

	Opening	Pre-Closing/Closing
(1)	Dear Professor Danet,	I hope to hear from you soon. Sincerely,
(2)	Dear Ms. Danet,……..	Thank you very much
(3)	Ms. Danet -- …….	I look forward to your reply
(4)	Ms. Danet, …….	Thanks!
(5)	Dear Brenda Danet,…	Regards,
(6)	Greetings;……..	Thank you,
(7)	Brenda Danet--…….	_____
(8)	_____……	Please write to me at your earliest convenience.
(9)	_____…….	Thank you for your work in this area.
(10)	_____……..	Sincerely,
(11)	_____ ……	_____
(12)	iHi,……	looking forward to hearing from you, and best wishes in the new year to all…
(13)	Dear Brenda……..	Greetings
(14)	Hi,……..	Thanks!
(15)	_____ …	_____
(16)	Hi Brenda,	Thanks,
(17)	_____……..	Thanks,
(18)	_____……..	_____
(19)	Hello, ……..	_____
(20)	Brenda:…….	Thanks.

Figure 9. Playful signature files in responses to an online Call for Papers.





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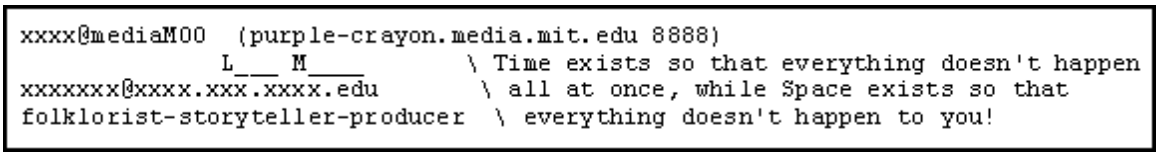


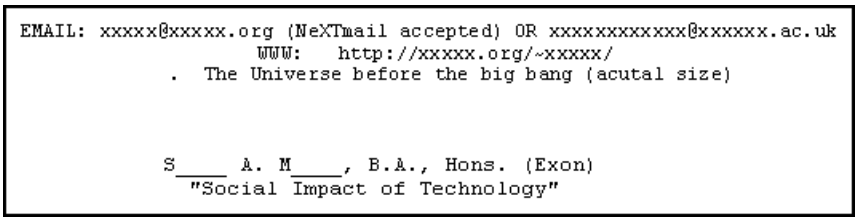
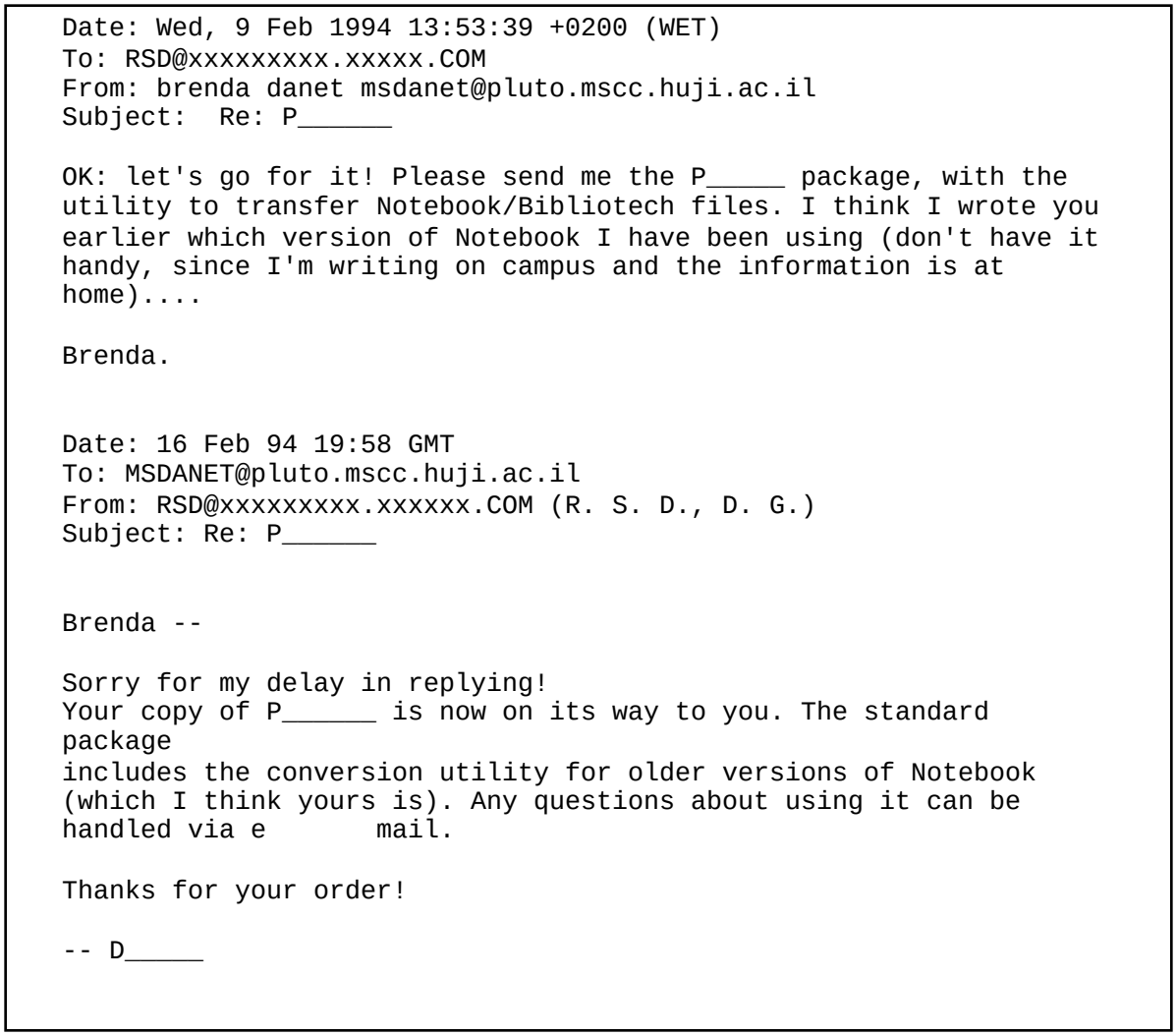


FIGURE 10. THE DECISION TO ORDER THE SOFTWARE.



Date: Wed, 9 Feb 1994 13:53:39 +0200 (WET)
To: RSD@xxxxxxxxx.xxxxx.COM
From: brenda danet msdanet@pluto.mscc.huji.ac.il
Subject: Re: P_____

OK: let's go for it! Please send me the P_____ package, with the utility to transfer Notebook/Bibliotech files. I think I wrote you earlier which version of Notebook I have been using (don't have it handy, since I'm writing on campus and the information is at home)....

Brenda.

Date: 16 Feb 94 19:58 GMT
To: MSDANET@pluto.mscc.huji.ac.il
From: RSD@xxxxxxxxx.xxxxxx.COM (R. S. D., D. G.)
Subject: Re: P_____

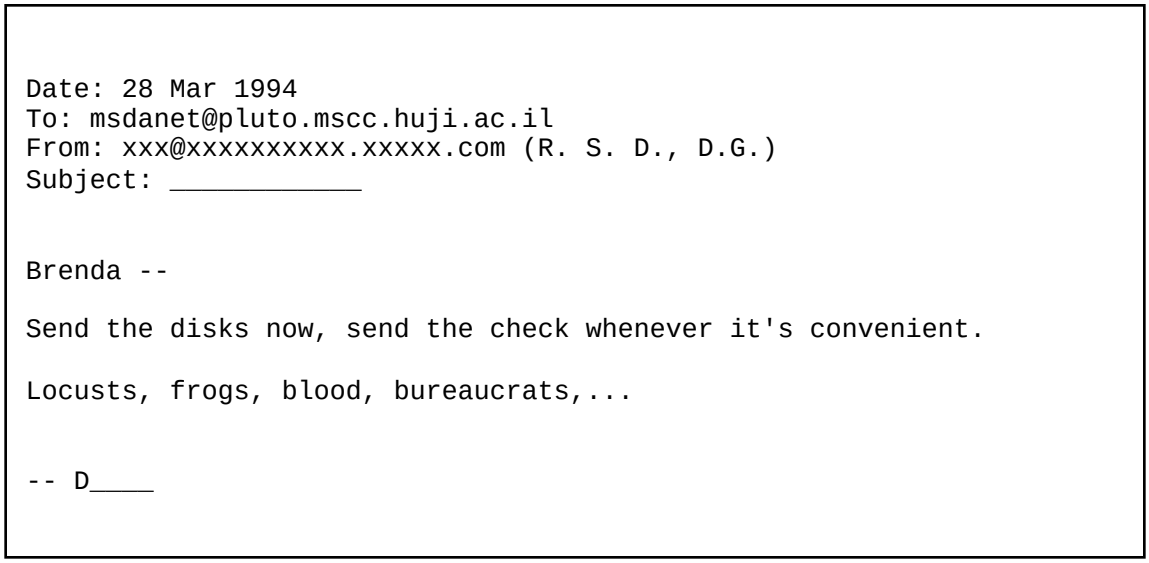
Brenda --

Sorry for my delay in replying!
Your copy of P_____ is now on its way to you. The standard package
includes the conversion utility for older versions of Notebook (which I think yours is). Any questions about using it can be handled via e mail.

Thanks for your order!

-- D_____

FIGURE 11. LOCUSTS, FROGS, BLOOD, BUREAUCRATS.



Date: 28 Mar 1994
To: msdanet@pluto.mscc.huji.ac.il
From: xxx@xxxxxxxxxx.xxxxx.com (R. S. D., D.G.)
Subject: _____

Brenda --

Send the disks now, send the check whenever it's convenient.

Locusts, frogs, blood, bureaucrats,...

-- D____