Visual in an MLA Paper (Orlov)

Fig. 1. This "Dilbert" comic strip suggests that personal Internet usage is widespread in the workplace (Adams 106).

hand, the same technology offers constant temptations to avoid work. As a 2005 study by Salary.com and America Online indicates, the Internet ranked as the top choice among employees for ways of wasting time on the job; it beat talking with co-workers—the second most popular method—by a margin of nearly two to one (Frauenheim). Chris Gonsalves, an editor for eWeek.com, argues that the technology has changed the terms between employers and employees: “While bosses can easily detect and interrupt water-cooler chatter,” he writes, “the employee who is shopping at Lands’ End or IMing with fellow fantasy baseball managers may actually appear to be working.” The gap between behaviors that are observable to managers and the employee’s actual activities when sitting behind a computer has created additional motivations for employers to invest in surveillance programs. “Dilbert,” a popular cartoon that spoofs office culture, aptly captures how rampant recreational Internet use has become in the workplace (see fig. 1).

But monitoring online activities can have the unintended effect of making employees resentful. As many workers would