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# Cyberculture(?)



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# Themes & Topics…

Should we still talk about this?

Is it something different anymore, or is it part of “everyday life”?

Is “cyberculture” now a meaningless term, now that everything “interpenetrates”?

New forms of sociability

A replacement of the “one to many” content model by a “many to many”?

A new “cyborg body”?



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# Interpenetration

Technical side

OS & TCP/IP interoperability: almost done, thanks to XML and widely-adopted proprietary standards

Cross-system more difficult

PCs, cell phones, PDAs, cameras, watches, embedded systems?



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# Cross-System Issues

Far different genealogies and business models

Windows, Mac, and Linux were hard enough…

Cell phones on an "old," lock-in subscription model—"pay to get to another system"

Example: phone photos to a PC?

Bluetooth?—please!



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# Elusive "Convergence"

The fictions of "plug-and-play"

Some are OK: USB2, PCI, ATA, etc., thanks to standards committees

DRM protections prevent movement of content and time/space shifting

Overreaching: how many people want X10 to control their shower from their PC?



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# "Ubiquity"? So What?

Defined (in theory): everything interconnects, everywhere, wirelessly

How? WiFi… Bluetooth… GSM… G3… Java… AJAX… [perl… python…]

How to get integration across TCP/IP, POTS, and mobiles—SIP isn't enough

WiFi, voice-over-IP (VoIP) and the promise of disintermediating all conversation?



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# Disintermediation… Ever?!

Cell phones without towers or providers:
"meshing" [a cousin to "mashing"?]

Municipal WiFi and the politics of connectivity

Lock-ins prevent freedom and flexibility

political lock-ins

content lock-ins: recording contracts, etc.…

device lock-ins: SIM cards, DRM, etc.…



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# So… Cyberculture?

The technology is still in the "kludge" stage, as we've seen

But we work with what we have to enhance sociability

Pre-built infrastructures: GSM/G3, social networking sites, PVRs, embedded devices, quasi-legal file sharing/reading

"Guerilla" adaptations and work-arounds: p2p, thumb drives, hacks



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# A New Phase of the Web?

Phase 1: making the virtual

MUDs, IRC, email, listservs

Phase 2: moving the real into the virtual

IM, Java, ERP/CRM, email as a norm

Phase 3: integrating the virtual and the real

SMS (text-messaging), locational tech, ubiquity [and the danger of outlaws]



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# Games?

[caveat thin expertise here on bob frost's part]

The "game experience" as an example of interpenetration of the virtual and the real

oldest: Space Invaders (stand-alone), MUDS (networked)

new: massively networked games in parallel, yet connected worlds Everquest, WoW)

newest: networked sex/adult gaming

Relevant signs: exchange rates & outsourcing



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# Transforming Sociability

Extending the notion of "small things loosely connected" (from Granovetter, 1983: "The Strength of Weak Ties"—social capital)

"Proximate sociability"

[see Mimi Ito…]

Presence awareness: not "here" but aware and connected

SMS, Skype, IM, Crackberry…

New dynamics of attention, "placeness," caring & connecting



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# The Barriers…

The usual digital-divide parameters

cost, accessibility

knowledge capital and extant social & knowledge networks

Cognitive

mode- and context-switching

attention-slicing: “If your job is to never think one thought for more than 59 seconds, then yes, the blackberry is a productivity blessing.”—Wellington Grey, Slashdot, 2006-04-08


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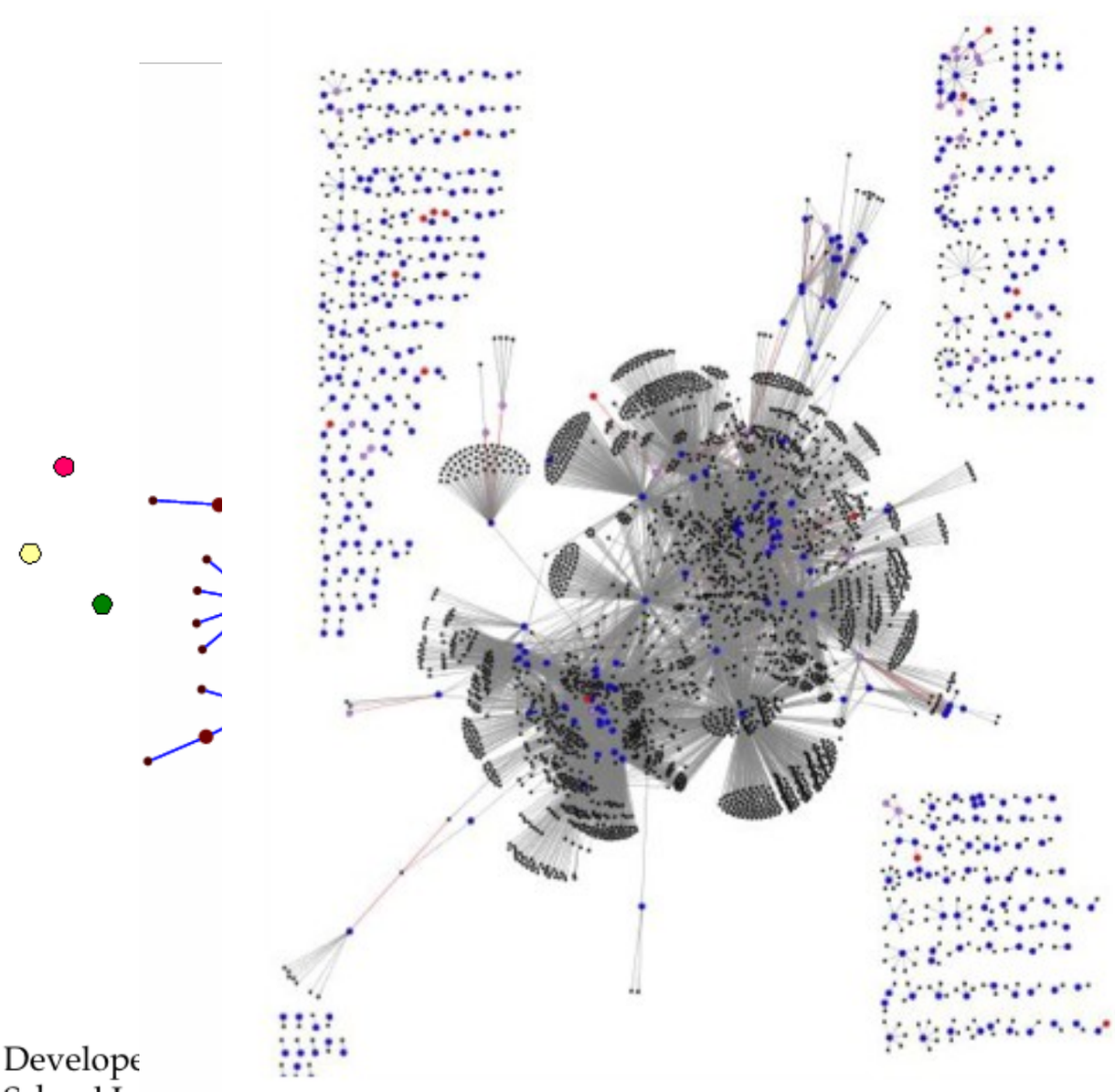
# Networks, Mapped…



Develope
School In
in America," *AJS* **107**, 679-716 (2001).

**Product recommendation network**

- Purchase after a recommendation
- Customer product recommendation
- Customer not buying a recommended product

**S. Election:**

Source: www.cc.gatech.edu/classes/AY2009/cs7270_spring/7270-wk13-market.ppt

Thanks to Lada Adamic…



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# Exploiting Networks…

Viral marketing: leveraging social networks to sell stuff

Solves the inefficiency / cost-ineffectiveness of "blast 'em"

Incentives to recommend [SunRocket]

Should we mix business and pleasure?

Do (and should) incentive models explain everything? 6° of sales?



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# BEYOND BUSINE$$

- Simple social networks: MySpace, facebook, and Friendster (is there "niching" here?)
- Networks of interest and action
- "Yellow Arrow" networks of found places
- Bottom-up mashups and politics†; alternatives views of culture
- Share vibrations (how legal is this?)
- Personal erotica (from ifilm)


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# …and ourselves

Do we exist simultaneously and seamlessly in the real and virtual worlds?

Cognitively, perhaps… but then, do we assume the "mind-body" fracture?

avatars and doppelgängers; alone & lonely at the screen

Is "seeing" the same as "doing"?; virtual sex—what about fidelity?

Information is active: go beyond notion of "filtering" (passive) to the notion of constructing information.

Information doesn't happen, it is made, and it makes meanings

Handling information can be empowering!



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Work

Play

Learn

Transform the World!



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