Cyberculture(?)
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”?
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?
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!
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?
“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?
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. . .
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 workarounds: p2p, thumb drives, hacks.
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]
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
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
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
Networks, Mapped...

Product recommendation network

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

3. Election:

Thanks to Lada Adamic...

Develop School In

Source: www.cc.gatech.edu/classes/AY2009/cs7270_spring/7270-wk13-market.ppt
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?
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)
...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!
• Do we now have the means to create alternative locations of power?
• You now have the data, the information, the knowledge—and maybe the wisdom
• Move from the virtual to the real… and make it real.

Work

Play

Learn

Transform the World!