

## TECH1002 -17 Social Media & Technology

### Lecture Twenty-Four - Exam Revision

#### 1 Exam Structure & Format

##### Section A: Compulsory

- Network Culture
- Collaboration
- Play & Gamification
- Participation

##### Section B: Four from Eight

- Affordances & Constraints
- Spreadable Media
- Collective Intelligence
- Future Media
- Multimodality
- Media Sharing
- Music Sharing & Participation Power
- Cultural Ownership

#### 2 Reading

Delwiche, A & Henderson, J.J. (Eds.), *The Participatory Cultures Handbook*. London: Routledge.  
Jenkins, H., Ford, S., & Green, J. (2013). *Spreadable Media*. New York: New York University Press.  
Jones, R. H., & Hafner, C. A. (2012). *Understanding Digital Literacies*. London: Routledge.  
Rheingold, H. (2012). *Net Smart - How to Thrive Online*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

[Look for the [E] on the lecture notes section on the TECH1002 DMU Commons Wiki Page]

#### Past Papers:

<http://www.library.dmu.ac.uk/Resources/ExamNet/> [Search for TECH1002]

#### 3 Question Styles

- The questions ask you to 'state' or 'identify.'
- The questions relate to what is discussed or described in each of the chapter sections that are identified in the weekly reading suggestions.
- The questions do not call for you to 'speculate', 'explain' or 'discuss' the relative merits of these issues.
- The questions do not call for you to give your own personal opinion or to relate these issues to your own personal experience.

#### 4 Answer Styles

- Answers can be written as bullet-points.
- Answers should state clearly and precisely the main points or issues that are described in the suggested chapters – no more and no less.

- Answers should not be discursive, i.e. they do not have to attempt to debate the relative merits of an issue, unless this is undertaken in the chapter on which the question is based.
- Answers can provide impersonal examples that are founded in verifiable reported observation, i.e. in the mainstream media, but they should not be speculative or subjective, i.e. based on your own opinions or made-up stories.
- Answers should make an objective and specific point, and should not relate to an overtly general view or your personal experience.
- Think of your answers as if you are writing a Wikipedia entry and stick to the facts.

## **5 Section A - Compulsory**

(Answer Four question from this section)

[These topics were covered in lecture Twenty-Two]

### **5.1 Network Culture**

We live in a world, according to Howard Rheingold, that is dominated by networks.

- Think about what is different about social life in online networks?

### **5.2 Collaboration**

According to Jason Mittell “wikis have become one of the hallmarks tools of the participatory Internet.”

- Can you identify what the key attributes of participation are in wiki use?

### **5.3 Play & Gamification**

Electronic games, according to Jones and Hafner, have evolved to be rich multimedia experiences based on complex problem solving, often integrated with a narrative or with other players who can interact in real time.

- Think about what the main attributes of video games and how they are different to traditional forms of media?

### **5.4 Participation**

Jenkins, Ford & Green explain how media is being transformed both by technology and by the expectations of audiences, who now want a greater degree of “meaningful participation.”

- If media is now more about participation, what are the characteristics of social media that enhance the participatory experience?

## 6 Section B

(Answer Four question from this section)

### 6.1 Affordances & Constraints

#### **Affordances & Constrains – Jones & Hafner - Chapter One.**

Jones and Hafner identify how digital technologies have brought about “new things for us to do” with media.

- In what way do memes offer new media affordances and new media constraints?

### 6.2 Spreadable Media

#### **Spreadable Media – Jenkins – Chapter Five.**

According to Jenkins, Ford & Green, “successful creators understand the strategic and technical aspects they need to master in order to create content more likely to spread, and they think about what motivates participants to share information and to build relationships with the communities shaping its circulation” (Jenkins, Ford, & Green, 2013, p. 196).

- What are the main attributes of spreadable media?

### 6.3 Collective Intelligence

#### **Collective Intelligence – Rheingold – Chapter Four.**

The benefit of collaborative and collective action, according to Howard Rheingold, is that people are able to coordinate, share, and pay attention to their common goals.

- Can you identify what the main features of online collective intelligence are?

### 6.4 Future Media

#### **Future Media: Delwiche & Henderson – Chapter 25.**

Paul A. Taylor suggests that we should adopt a critical attitude to digital technology that questions the relationship between technical access and the quality of interactivity and participation.

- What do you think are the challenges involved with ‘clictivism’?

### 6.5 Multimodality

#### **Multimodality – Jones & Hafner Chapter Four.**

Jones and Hafner suggest that with increased multimodal media content it is necessary to think in new ways about the literacies we use to learn about digital media.

- What are the main issues that are associated with multimodality?

According to Jones and Hafner, forms of communication, such as aural discussion, involve “more than just words” (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 50). Speech also includes “elements such as your gestures, facial expressions and body language,” which all contribute to the message that is made (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 50).

Multimedia communication, according to Jones and Hafner, makes it easier for “users of digital media to combine multiple semiotic modes based on difference systems for meaning making” (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 50). This practice of combining media forms is known as “multimodality” and refers to the way that “texts are made up of a combination of modes” (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 50).

Digital technology has greatly enhanced our ability to create and share texts and media that incorporates multimodal content. According to Jones and Hafner this is “most obvious in the texts that we encounter on screens, because these digital texts can incorporate audio and video in a way that print-based texts cannot” (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 50).

Jones and Hafner suggest that as a result of this increased multimodal media content it is necessary to think in new ways about the types of “literacies” that are needed to “cope with the proliferation of images, graphics, video, animation and sound in digital texts” (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 50).

According to Jones and Hafner the new practices of media production and sharing “follow a shift in the dominant organising principle of texts from the primarily textual mode of the page to the primarily visual mode of the screen” (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 50).

This means that the literacies and skills that people focus on will move away from the simply linear and visual formatting of written texts, to the idea of ‘design’ with the use of graphics, video, audio, interactive elements, and crucially, the ability to both read and write content as part of the text.

Jones and Hafner make reference to Gunther Kress, who argues that the underlying principles of multimedia design are fundamentally different from the design thinking that is required for the printed page.

According to Kress the “technological affordances of digital media... will inevitably shape the future of writing as well. Writing will become more visual as it increasingly adopts the logic of the image that is promoted by the screen” (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 52).

According to Jones and Hafner the logic of writing that dominates the screen is still related to the way that we write for the page, this is because “writing, like speech, follows a temporal and sequential logic,” in which a “story unfolds in time,” requiring the speaker and the listener to make sense of what is being shared in a “sequence.” Writing is similarly organised as we have to work in a “fixed space (as words on a page) rather than unfolding over time,” in which readers are still, for the most part, “expected to process it in a linear and sequential way” (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 52).

Images, however, are described by Jones and Hafner as being “spatial/simultaneous,” as all of the information that is needed is presented concurrently in the same space, and which has a different and more direct effect on the viewer that often provokes an “immediate emotional reaction” (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 52).

Images, according to Jones and Hafner, “tend to be more ‘polysemous’,” and are therefore “capable of sending numerous messages at the same time,” some of which are contradictory and competing (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 52). Meanings that are offered by visual texts, according to Jones and

Hafner, are more “topological,” while text-based meanings are more “typological,” following established grammatical and descriptive routines and rules in order to ensure consistency and fluency between different texts.

According to Jones and Hafner, “as we move from the page to the screen, we are witnessing a change in the amount and quality of information that is communicated through images” (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 53). This means that there is an ongoing change in the way that we think about reading and writing, as we adopt different strategies for “negotiating the reading paths through such multimodal texts” (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 53).

## 6.6 Media Sharing

### Media Sharing – Jenkins Chapter Six.

According to Jenkins, Ford & Green, “under a broadcast paradigm, distribution is almost inseparable from promotion.” This is because “both mechanisms ensure that a commercially produced product grabs the attention of the most broadly defined audience possible” (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 230).

- In what way is the media sharing model different from the broadcast media model?

By contrast, according to Jenkins, Ford & Green, “the circulation of independent films, games, music, and comics typically demands participatory mechanisms to compensate for the lack of promotional budget” (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 230).

This means that independent media producers have to develop communication strategies that “court niche and subcultural communities” that are “imagined to have a strong affinity with the genre or message” (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 230). In a sense, and according to Jenkins, Ford and Green, this means that creators of independent media hope to promote their work with like-minded others.

The new model of sharing and participation, according to Jenkins, Ford and Green, is in contrast to the older model of media consumption, in which audiences were forced to pay for content, despite the enjoyment and pleasure that they got from it. This is a form of “coercion and extortion” that ensures that everyone pays for content regardless of what they get from its use.

In the new sharing model of media circulation audiences are encouraged to pay for what they value, which implies a high level of trust on the part of the content producers, and thereby breaking with the tradition model of media consumption. Instead media producers are able to experiment more freely with content that is free or selective.

The impact of the web has therefore resulted in a parallel system that runs alongside the mainstream marketplace approach, which, according to Jenkins, Ford & Green, hints at “new modes of production, alternative genres of content, and new relationships between producers and audiences” (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 232).

Producers who operate in this independent field of media circulation and sharing, according to Jenkins, Ford and Green, have to consider how they can get noticed, and to do this they have to listen to how their “material spreads” (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 236).

As Jenkins, Ford & Green point out, while the traditional model of media content production is “structured around major publishers, with independent and alternative publishers constructed as an alternative, things are much fuzzier online, where amateur and semi-professional artists appear

alongside those who are more commercial and professionally accomplished” (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 237).

In the mass-media model, content is often shared because it is relatively ubiquitous and widely available and is designed to support a wide range of conversations with a wide variety of people. In the niche and independent field of media production, on the other hand, media content spreads, according to Jenkins, Ford & Green, “because it helps people communicate their more particular interests and sensibilities, to distinguish themselves from most others” (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 242).

This model goes further, according to Jenkins, Ford & Green, as independent media producers embrace their audience, fan networks and followers as co-collaborators who are encouraged to get involved “at each step of the production, distribution, and promotion” (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 254).

By encouraging community forms of fundraising and co-production, media producers are increasingly able to tap into the emerging “collaborative circulation models” that offer potential supporters the opportunity to “shape the distribution and exhibition” of work that is being produced (Jenkins et al., 2013, p. 254).

## 6.7 Music Sharing & Participation Power

### Music Sharing & Participation Power – Rheingold Chapter Three.

Rheingold points out that “participatory culture is one in which a significant portion of the population, not just a small professional guild, can participate in the production of cultural materials.”

- How can the principles of participation be applied to the sharing of music?

Howard Rheingold states that “communication media can make it possible for individual behaviours to add up to collective value by making it easy or affordable for people to do things together that used to be difficult or costly” (Rheingold, 2012, p. 112).

The ability to participate in online social activity is made possible when we understand the “cultural landscape” of information and communication technology, according to Rheingold, and not just the technological practicalities of communication.

Rheingold cites how Henry Jenkins has sought to redefine the way that we think about participatory culture, and lists the principles for access and success as:

- Relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement.
- Strong support for creating and sharing creations with others.
- Some type of informal membership whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices.
- Members who believe that their contribution matters
- Members who feel some degree of social connection with one another (Rheingold, 2012, p. 113).

In order to enact and to secure value from this approach to social collaboration, Rheingold suggests that we have to think about digital participatory literacy skills, such as **persuasion**, **curation**, **discussion**, and **self-presentation** in order to engage with others in a social exchange of participation. Knowing the how and why we enact different participatory practices, according to Rheingold, is vital if we are to develop the skills to take part in online communities.

As Rheingold points out, “participatory culture is one in which a significant portion of the population, not just a small professional guild, can participate in the production of cultural materials ranging from encyclopaedia entries to videos watched by millions. And it is a culture populated by people who believe they have some degree of power” (Rheingold, 2012, p. 115).

People use digital media, according to Rheingold, to form “interest driven communities” in which they “hang out and share media online that are of mutual interest” (Rheingold, 2012, p. 118).

Media in these communities is shared with a sense of “social currency” based on the “creation, exchange, collaboration, and critique of media created by participants” (Rheingold, 2012, p. 119).

Rheingold outlines several principles of good social exchange and content curation that will enhance participation and collaboration:

- Use subject matter expertise.
- Be relevant.
- Match the trust that your collaborators put in you.

This means developing a “cycle of curation” that is able to:

- Identify a niche and focussing on a speciality to distinguish yourself.
- Select your sources carefully, identifying them properly.
- Establish a search framework to monitor the information that is being shared about your specialist subject.
- Reach out and connect with other passionate collaborators who share your passion.
- Aggregate content and filter feeds for the least useful content.
- Be selective about the stories that you share.
- Verify the information – don’t let crap through.
- Edit and summarise, with proper care to your references.
- Contextualise your information.
- Give some spin so you point to why it is relevant.
- Title it properly so it can be found.
- Credit the people who prompt or inspire you.
- Organise your content with well-chosen tags.
- Keep your content updated.
- Disclose your purpose and explain why you are passionate about a topic.
- Syndicate your content by letting people know how to share it via RSS.
- Encourage and make feedback easy.
- Monitor your content by using the data and analytic tools that are available.
- Refine and improve your content based on the shared interactions with your users.

## 6.8 Cultural Ownership

### **Cultural Ownership – Delwiche & Henderson – Chapter 10 (Owen Gallagher – The Assault on Cultural Ownership).**

According to Owen Gallagher, “cultural works or expressions are different from other types of possessions in that they exist primarily to communicate knowledge and ideas in one form or another, which is of benefit to society at large and, therefore they should be copied and distributed as widely as possible.”

- How is the convention of copyright challenged by online remix media?

According to Owen Gallagher, “cultural works or expressions are different from other types of possessions in that they exist primarily to communicate knowledge and ideas in one form or another, which is of benefit to society at large and, therefore they should be copied and distributed as widely as possible” (Gallagher, 2013, p. 86).

Gallagher argues that by “making a copy of a cultural work, the creator still has possession of the original and the work is no worse off for having been copied, nor has its value decreased” (Gallagher, 2013, p. 86). Gallagher suggest, however, that the principle of copying associated with digital access to cultural work has the ability to enhance social engagement by shifting away from the idea of “intellectual property,” which would promote an increase in the access that we have to information and cultural artefacts.

Gallagher argues that “the existing copyright system works relatively well for controlling copies of physical media, but once songs, movies and texts are digitised and made available on the internet, it is effectively impossible to regulate the spread of copies without infringing on fundamental rights to privacy and freedom of expression” (Gallagher, 2013, p. 88).

Property, according to Gallagher, is a “social convention” that identifies an agreed set of “social relations between people and objects” which is backed up and enforced by laws and legal contracts.

People who support “cultural ownership,” according to Gallagher, “claim that cultural works like songs, films and texts are a form of property that that the person who creates the work has a natural right of ownership to that work” (Gallagher, 2013, p. 88).

Usually rights are given over a cultural artefact if the production of that artefact can be viewed as the product of sustained effort, or the result of scarcity. According to Gallagher neither of these principles can be applied to cultural works (Gallagher, 2013, p. 89).

In the case of digital technology, according to Gallagher, “reproduction is no longer an appropriate way to measure infringement, as, in the digital age, copying is now central to every use of a copyrighted work” (Gallagher, 2013, p. 91).

There is a promise that we can live in an age, according to Gallagher, in which culture will be “open, free and sustainable,” though the reality is that those who have “controlled the tools of production, distribution and promotion in the past are doing everything in their power to cling to this control for the sake of their own dwindling profit margins” (Gallagher, 2013, p. 89).

According to Gallagher, media companies form a “cartel of extremely powerful companies [that] regularly exercises its ‘intellectual property’ rights, often at the detriment of wider society” (Gallagher, 2013, p. 92).

As a response to this Gallagher describes how remix culture has become an alternative form of expression of music and videos. Using sampling and remixing techniques, it has been possible for cultural producers to create something new from existing content, and thereby transform existing cultural products into new “extant material” (Gallagher, 2013, p. 93).

According to Gallagher for “much of the 20th century, audio-visual remix creativity was all but impossible for most people to produce. The equipment was simply not available or affordable to the average person. The content was not accessible. The distribution channels were reserved for those who owned the airwaves” (Gallagher, 2013, p. 93).

Today the boundaries are blurring, suggests Gallagher, as technology has transformed the formerly linear media delivery systems into a “multi-directional, accessible, participatory network available to anyone with a compute and an internet connection” (Gallagher, 2013, p. 94).

As a result, we need to “understand the distinctions between commercial competition and amateur appropriation: between creative re-purposing and piracy” (Gallagher, 2013, p. 95).

## **7 References**

- Gallagher, O. (2013). The Assault on Creative Culture – Politics of Cultural Ownership. In A. Delwiche & J. J. Henderson (Eds.), *The Participatory Cultures Handbook* (pp. 86-95). London: Routledge.
- Jenkins, H., Ford, S., & Green, J. (2013). *Spreadable Media*. New York: New York University Press.
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