

TECH1002-1 Social Media Innovation

Lecture Twenty: Network Culture – Online Dating & Participation

Cub Sport – Paradise

https://youtu.be/Mxlvae3l_mQ

Mercury Rev – Snowflake in a Hot World

<https://youtu.be/HY3TRCozh8>

1 Social Change

“While social change was always multidimensional, we are faced with ever increasing complexities, irregularities, and unpredictable flows. This means that when we try to understand social change we can never explain it in general and all-encompassing ways” (Lindgren, 2017, p. 290).

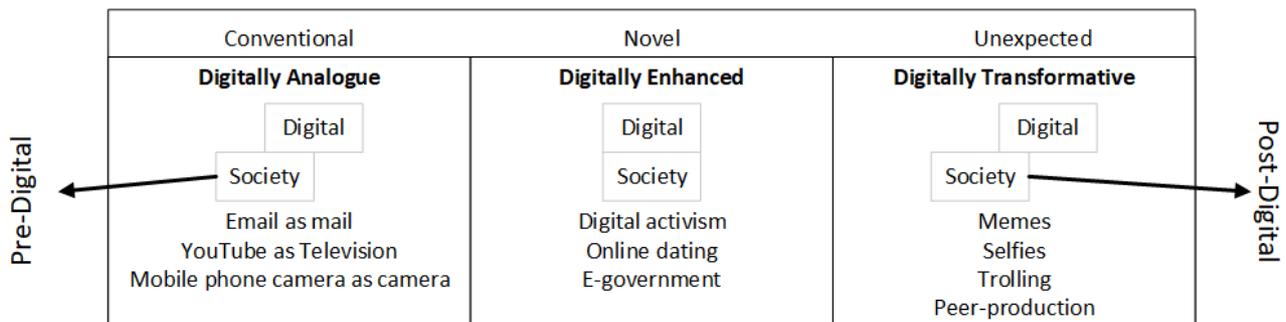
“Anthropologist Arjun Appadurai (1996: 33) has argued that there are five disjunctive cultural flows that must be taken into account:

- *Ethnoscapes*: flows of people.
- *Mediascapes*: flows of media.
- *Technoscapes*: flows of technology.
- *Financescapes*: flows of capital.
- *Ideoscapes*: flows of ideologies. (Lindgren, 2017, p. 290).

“The media that we use will affect what we see, how we speak, and what we do. Therefore, it is impossible to talk about social and cultural change without taking into account the roles of the ecologies in which people and media are embedded” (Lindgren, 2017, p. 290).

“Generally speaking, digital media can transform social behaviours and relationships completely, but they may also change them just a bit, and sometimes nearly not at all. Contextual factors are what decide which one of these scenarios – or what combination of them – end up becoming realised” (Lindgren, 2017, p. 290).

Contextualised Outcomes of Digital Media Use



(Lindgren, 2017, p. 291).

2 Attention Economy

From attention-seeking celebrities to digital oversharing and the boom in cosmetic surgery, narcissistic behaviour is all around us. How worried should we be about our growing self-obsession?

http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2016/mar/02/narcissism-epidemic-self-obsession-attention-seeking-oversharing?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

Sites and networks like Facebook and Instagram can be said to facilitate the “constant maintenance and reinvention of the self” in a way that “encourages the performative aspect of identity,” and in which “our own lives and the lives of others become like dramas that are played out before different audiences in our social networks” (Jones & Hafner, 2012, p. 152).

Anxiety is a way of life for Gen Y. In an insecure world, is it any surprise? Simon Copland

As we face what has become an epidemic of anxiety disorders, we must confront the social conditions behind it
<https://www.theguardian.com/society/commentisfree/2017/feb/25/anxiety-is-a-way-of-life-for-gen-y-in-an-insecure-world-is-it-any-surprise>

2.1 What role do selfies play in on-line dating?

“Selfie obsessed: Why DO teenagers take so many pictures of themselves? One mum says she's baffled by daughter's addiction to sharing absolutely everything (and here's just one day in her life)”

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-2957800/Selfie-obsessed-teens-pictures-baffled-mum-defiant-daughter-head-head.html>

2.2 Forget the hangover, under-25s turn to mindful drinking

Non-alcoholic drinks are taking off in pubs and bars as a new fashion for abstinence takes over among young people

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/feb/26/under-25s-turn-to-mindful-drinking>

3 Identity Performance

Jones & Hafner describe how the idea of social identity as a “kind of performance” was developed by the sociologist Erving Goffman in his book from 1959 *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life*. In this book Goffman argued that when we are in public we cooperate with one another in “performing various roles.” (Jones & Hafner, 2012).

3.1 Selfies

“LIKE Kim Kardashian, do you enjoy taking shots of your behind in the mirror? Maybe you're more like Helen Flanagan, making the most of your ample assets at every chance? Or could you be Rosie Huntington-Whiteley, posing with your favourite green smoothie?” <http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/fabulous/5597801/The-selfie-tribes.html>

3.2 Self-Presentation

This means that we pay attention as individuals who participate in social situations in order to manage our “information preserves.” This is a process of deciding what information about ourselves that we want to present to other people or to hide from them.

“To celebrated the 6th birthday of gay lifestyle app Grindr, PinkNews brings you the six most read Grindr stories from the past six months. According to the app, since “2009, Grindr has experienced explosive growth and today has a huge global reach with guys logging into Grindr in 192 countries around the world. “Grindr now has more than 1.6 million active daily users exchanging 70+ million chat messages and 5+ million pictures. Mexico and Brazil recently broke into the top five top countries for Grindr use, highlighting impressive growth in the Latin American market.” Happy Birthday Grindr! <http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2015/03/25/six-of-the-most-read-pinknews-stories-about-grindr/>
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3.3 Social Roles

As we have many different sides to our personalities we also play different roles in different circumstances. At home we may play the role of son, daughter, brother, sister; at work we may play the role of employee, colleague; at college we may play the role of student, learner, teacher, co-learner, and so on.

According to Goffman, we accomplish these roles through acts of performance and by making use of the equipment that we have to hand to help us present these identities to different people.

“The fascinating thing about selfies, now a culture-engulfing phenomenon, is how unintentional they were. The technology business (as opposed to the wilder internet) has only done this a few times; the only other example that comes easily to mind is the text message, aka SMS, which began as a means for control of mobile networks, then morphed into a messaging system for anyone. That was intentional, though, whereas the front-facing camera, the Sony Ericsson Z1010 in 2003, seems to have been one of those features that uncovered a consumer desire pretty much by accident.” <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2015/oct/12/selfies-front-facing-cameras-the-next-big-thing>

3.4 Social Props

Like actors on a stage we use props, costumes and make-up to mediate our sense of identity to ourselves, to our peers and to the world.

“Selfie sticks are the worst, there's no denying it. I was so close to having a selfie stick-free weekend wandering around London aimlessly. But I made the mistake of walking across Westminster Bridge and saw plenty in action. And who can blame Londoners and tourists wanting to frame themselves right next to views of parliament or the London Eye on the opposite side? I'm a sucker for excellent views, like anybody else.”

<http://www.newstatesman.com/science-tech/internet/2015/12/selfie-sticks-mask-bigger-problem-we-have-each-other-interaction>

4 Social Media Affordances

So just as we do this in our lived worlds, we also do this in our online worlds by using the affordances that are offered by social media sites to adapt and present a version of ourselves to the on line communities that we are part of.

“Can't find The One on regular matchmaking sites? Meet the couples with a shared passion for beards, Star Trek, hiking and more” <http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2016/feb/13/bristlr-to-trekdating-found-love-niche-dating-site>

Furthermore, and as Jones & Hafner note, on Facebook, for example, our sense of identity is validated by our friends in the forms of likes and shares of the posts that we make. It is easily possible to fake an identity online, but constructing the shares and the validations that give an online identity a sense of authenticity is much more difficult.

Tinder is killing romance, says BBC historian Lucy Worsley: Love is being replaced by 'bored singletons looking for one-night stands' <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3261233/Dating-app-Tinder-killing-romance-says-BBC-historian.html>

5 Social Dating

Dating sites and dating apps have become increasingly popular as they have been integrated with smartphones that are GPRS enabled. They allow users to locate other users who are nearby and to chat with these users, share images, rate users or exchange location information.

How to get the most out of online dating. Want to find love, or at least meet new people? Our dating expert gives some pointers to using internet dating sites. <http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2014/nov/13/how-get-most-online-dating>

5.1 Social Practices

The popularity of sites like Tinder and Grindr reflect differences in expectations about social interaction between people who identify as heterosexual and people who identify as homosexual, though it is unclear as to what extent these boundaries are fixed online as more people are freed from social conventions and expectations and are more willing to explore communities of users on the basis of interest and need rather than fixed social roles.

“Dating apps 'to blame for rise in STIs and potential new HIV explosion' expert warns. Dr Peter Greenhouse says dating apps should 'invest more time in pushing a safe sex message'.”

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/health/11969699/Dating-apps-to-blame-for-rise-in-STIs-and-potential-new-HIV-explosion-expert-warns.html>

6 Network Potential

According to Jennifer Jacobs Henderson, the “potential of participatory cultures – spaces where thoughtful, engaged world citizens tackle complex problems, build creative networks, and contribute to political decision-making – is seemingly limitless” (Henderson, 2013, p. 272).

6.1 Ethical Concerns

There are five areas of ethical concern that Henderson identifies as fundamental to participatory cultures if they are to flourish?

Henderson identifies five areas of ethical concern in the development of a participatory culture. As Henderson explains, “for participatory cultures to flourish, online and off, we must address five fundamental areas of ethical concern: access, rule-making, connectedness, contribution, and freedom.”

“How ‘Netflix and chill’ became code for casual sex. Originally, the phrase was innuendo-free, but then it became a euphemism. Now the streaming service is getting in on the joke itself.

<http://www.theguardian.com/media/shortcuts/2015/sep/29/how-netflix-and-chill-became-code-for-casual-sex>

6.2 Extended Access

In the past, according to Henderson, participatory culture was restricted by the proximity of people to the resources that were needed, either geographically, politically or economically. However, with the rise of the internet and mobile telecommunications, it has been possible to extend access to information and communication systems, and to potentially involve many more people as active participants in social and civic life.

6.3 Support Structures

Henderson describes that internet “access is increasingly available in spaces such as public libraries, but some younger people don’t have consistent access to the new media or to support structures that guide their use or participation.”

Swipe right for puppy pictures: Tinder teams up with Instagram to allow users to show off their photos on their profile
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-3040649/Swipe-right-puppy-pictures-Tinder-teams-Instagram-allows-users-photos.html>

6.4 Universal Infrastructure

According to Henderson, for a “participatory culture to be equal, fair and productive, it must allow meaningful access to all.” This involves providing a universal infrastructure that all can use to connect, and providing education to everyone who “may have the production skills and creative knowledge needed for vibrant participation.”

6.5 Rules of Discussion

Henderson goes on to explain that “participatory cultures are bounded by the rules of the culture – including who has the power to set the topics of discussion and organise the contributions – and the technology itself.” Henderson believes that clearly articulated rules are an essential consideration of any ethical online participatory culture, because these rules help to govern interaction and give structure to the form of participatory culture that emerges.

“Bare-chested Tom Daley showers in coffee and crushes lemons with his biceps in bizarre healthy eating videos (but viewers are more interested in his torso)” <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/video/femail/video-1251030/Tom-Daley-poses-shirtless-food-cheeky-YouTube-videos.html>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/tvtomdaley>

6.6 Participatory Rules

These rule, Henderson suggests, should be taught by the more experienced participants who explain these rules to newer contributors, thus encouraging interaction at different levels of “competency, expertise, and completion.” Therefore to ensure that these rule meet ethical standard they should “be developed by members, enforced equally, and taught consistently to new members,” as they are passed on to each new generation of users.

SUED BECAUSE OF MY BOOK??? | Tyler Oakley

<https://youtu.be/HY09Pf2BvX8>

Often people feel excluded from a participatory community because they do not feel connected to the other users of the community. Henderson cites Henry Jenkins in suggesting that this sense of exclusion can often be based on a lack of perceived expertise, knowledge or language skills.

Tyler Oakley

<https://www.youtube.com/user/tyleroakley>

7 Positive Contributions

However, there are some participatory cultures that are happy to include non-specialist users because they are seeking a ‘happy average’ that engages a wide range of people who then might make positive contributions without holding specific skills or expertise in technical or detailed matters. As Henderson states, in some creative communities, expertise can be either a welcoming hand or a slamming door.” The answer, according to Henderson is to maintain a

sense of ‘hospitality,’ and to reflect the benefits of inclusive approaches that seek different viewpoints and unheard voices.”

WEIRD FAN MAIL | Tyler Oakley

<https://youtu.be/Q9oxZXftF9c>

Not all contributions to participatory communities are equal, and people make a contribution in different ways. The important thing that Henderson notes, is that respect the contributions of different participants by presuming that every participant has a claim for “full recognition as a person,” and that they are of the same moral worth as others in the community.

The GAYEST Video EVER (ft. Joey & Ingrid) | Tyler Oakley

<https://youtu.be/5DgcMO8ZmvA>

7.1 Hospitality

Henderson states that “respect in participatory cultures is often attained through recognition by others. When a participant – whether recognised by username, avatar, or ‘real’ name – constructively contributes to a participatory culture, then he or she gains respect. The more regular and helpful those contributions, the more well respected he or she becomes.”

Tyler Oakley's Slumber Party Intro - Glasgow 17/05/15

<https://youtu.be/fOcPslfma88>

Finally, Henderson affirms that a sense of freedom has to pervade a participatory culture in the form of a robust and open debate between the participants. Henderson makes reference to John Stuart Mill’s concept of the ‘marketplace of ideas,’ where the “best ideas rise to the fore through free and open debate.”

The Newlyfriend Game (ft. AmazingPhil) | Tyler Oakley

<https://youtu.be/Azy1ruTB-xo>

7.2 Contribution

As Henderson states, the “ability to speak freely is fundamental to the human condition.” However, if we accept that people have this freedom, then they have the right to dissent. As Henderson states, “dissent for the sake of dissent is often rejected by other members, and dissent perceived as violating the cultural norms such as flaming, [are] rejected even more roundly.” What Henderson suggests that we look for when we are accommodating these forms of dissent is the ‘sincerity’ with which it is expressed within the bounds of the ‘hospitality’ that was suggested earlier.

The more important truth that arises from this sorry, one-sided spat and gushing, gleeful Twitter fallout is that a positive LGBT message has been obscured by a rush to judge a 23-year-old bloke who stepped onto a stage in front of millions and spoke about his sexuality. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/men/thinking-man/the-petty-and-egotistic-reaction-to-sam-smiths-oscars-error-is-a/>

Sam Smith quits Twitter after his acceptance speech at the Oscars sparked outrage

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3473445/Sam-Smith-quits-Twitter-acceptance-speech-Oscars-sparked-outrage.html>

Can we shift from an Identity Economy to a Contribution Economy?

Orange Juice - Rip it Up

<https://youtu.be/ESy-Z8vqMrE>

References

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