CCGL9008: Cyber Societies –

Understanding Technology as Global Change

LEC 1
Introduction



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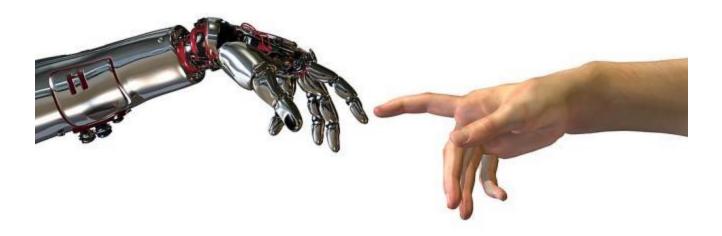


Role of technology in contemporary life

MATRIX

- Contemporary culture is characterized by an unprecedented level of technological use and integration
- Contemporary culture is a technoculture, a culture saturated by and fundamentally invested in technologies
- Many of our most basic ideological beliefs
 about (i) who we are and (ii) how we relate
 to the world and each other are framed by
 technologies

Has the internet revolutionised our life/ society/ the world as the digital optimists foresaw?





Technological determinism vs social/economic determinism

Williams, Raymond Williams (1975),

Television: Technology and Cultural Forms

Proponents vs opponents of digital optimism? What do they say?

(Creeber & Martin 2008: 5-7;

Hesmondhalgh 2013: 313-323)

Why studying this course?

- Provide a balanced and critical account of the economic, social, political and cultural dynamics of technological developments
- Situate these developments within wider sociological debates around globalization, individualisation and consumerism
- Contextualize the increasing importance of mobile and converged media technologies and forms in everyday life activities
- Train us to become active and critical internet/ICT users

The network society

What Happens in an Internet Minute?

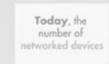
"Manuel Castells in his information age trilogy (Castells, 1996/2000, 1997)...[has] a hugely ambitious body of work...to link discussions of economy, society, politics and globalisation within a meta-narrative of social change in the information age."

And Future Growth is Staggering



2+ million Search queries

(Miller 2011: 57-58)





By 2015, the number of networked devices

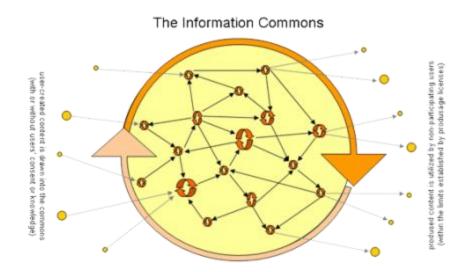


to view all video crossing IP networks each second

Convergence culture and the new media experience



Producers, Consumers and 'Produsage/Produser'



"...such distinctions between producers and end users of **content** have become increasingly insignificant"

(Bruns, 2008: 2)

What is digital inequality?
What social/political/economic factors complicate the ideas of local & global digital divides?



"ICTS have become of increasing economic and social importance to the vast majority of use in advanced economies, and to many in developing economies as well...[in] a capitalist society...rightly or wrongly, creates economic and social inequalities...not different from industrial society...continuity of inequality and marginalization between them both."

(Miller 2011: 94-95)

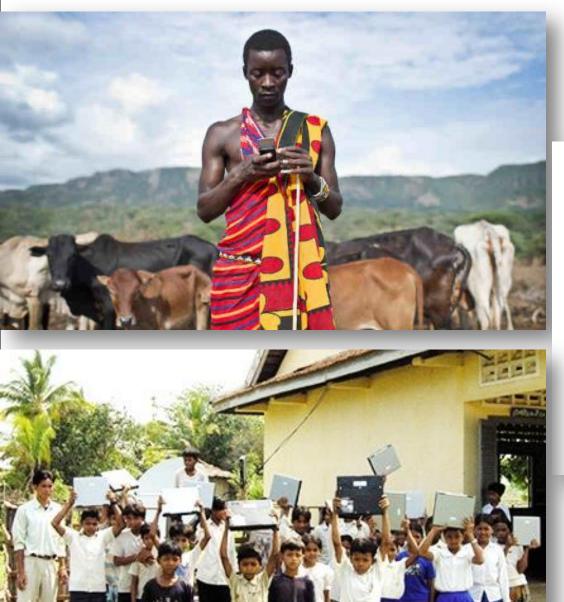


What is "digital divide"?

Popularized in academic, policy and media discourses since in mid-1990s, "digital divide" refers to "the gap between those who do and those who do not have access to computers and the internet." (Van Dijk, 2005: 1)



Bridging the global "digital divides"?





Does identity ("who I am") originate internally or externally? How are identities discursively constructed in and through digital communities?



A stable, centred self-identity no longer exists?

"Gergen (1996) went further to suggest that the profusion of technologies such as the internet have an impact on how selves are constructed and maintained. Technologies expose us to more people, more cultures and increasingly varied understandings of the world...offers us...anonymity, freedom of self expression, the ability to lead parallel lives...creates conditions that are increasingly untenable for the notion of a stable, centred self."

(Miller 2011: 163)



'Liberation from meat'!

- Cyberspace frees us from the typical bodily/
 discursive markers of gender, race, disability &
 class that tends to mark out 'others' in society
- "Gender is performative." (Butler 1990, 1993)
- Techno/cyber-feminism:
 - Use of the internet & ICTs to deconstruct the notion of "natural" or "authentic" (gender) identities based in the body
 - Decentered, fragmented identities as a liberation from a body-based subjugation of women, as well as ethnic and racial groups



Love and sex in cyberspace

- The Internet has a profound impact on the construction of romantic relationships and sexuality
 - Sexual liberation and exploration
 - Prevalence of online sexual activity
 - e.g. the viewing of sexually explicit material, sexual partner seeking, cybersex, and flirting
 - Expansion of the commercial sex market:
 - ✓ eg. compensated dating
 - "Problematic" behaviors
 - ✓ eg. Cybersex addiction, Internet predators
 - > Affect **offline** romantic and sexual relationships



Emergence of "new politics"/"new social movements"?

- The Internet helped the Zapatista uprisings in Mexico, the necessity of remote Twitter users to organize medical supplies during Arab Spring, the refusal to use bullhorns in the Occupy Movement that started in New York, and the empowering effect of tear gas in Istanbul's Gezi Park.
- In Hong Kong, Occupy Central gained momentum with on-site organisation with the help of social media

Life inside social movements require an investigation of **authority**, **technology**, and **culture**

How is digital activism changing society?

"[T]he hegemonic barrier of access to mass media [has vanished]... digital networking technologies allow the hegemony of mass media organizations to be challenged, providing publicity for countless events, incidents and stories from multiple perspectives, which might not normally be available to the general public."

(Miller 2011: 138)

How "smart" are you?





Are you ready for the "posthuman" future?

Meet Sophia: The first robot declared a citizen by Saudi Arabia

YouTube - 3,114,000+ views - 10/30/2017 - HD - by The Jakarta Post

sophia the robot Sophia has AI (Artificial Intelligence), visual data processing, and facial recognition

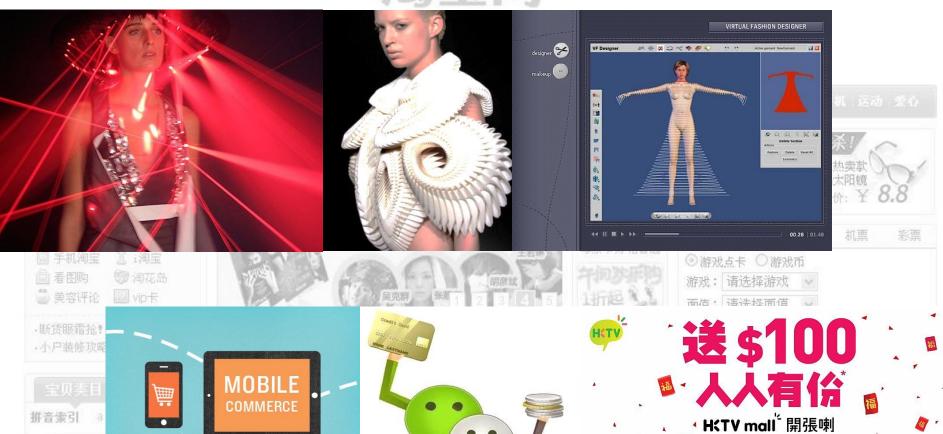
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移动/围

笔记本/ThinkPad/DELL

电脑硬件/LCD/台式整机/网络 SONY 苹果 联想 华硕 惠普 二手 主板 内存 硬盘 CPU 显卡 二手

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How has our right to privacy / control personal information been undermined in a "digitized surveillance society"?

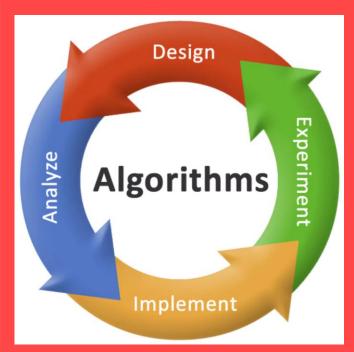


Key tools of digital surveillance?

The digital age has provided 1) states, 2) organizations and 3) individuals with a number of new opportunities for the surveillance of populations:

- ✓ Biometrics
- ✓ RFID (Radio-frequency identification)
- ✓ CCTV (Closed-circuit television)
- ✓ Credit card transaction data
- ✓ Public record keeping and registers
- ✓ Loyalty shopping card schemes
- ✓ Public transportation travel cards
- ✓ Number plate recognition systems











Meanwhile,
community started to
break down in the
face of the
individual...



"Life will be happier for the on-line individual because the people with whom one interacts most strongly will be selected more by commonality of interests and goals rather than by accidents of proximity."

(Licklider et al., 1968 cited in Rheingold, 2000: 9)

The notion of "my community"/the "me me me" generation

- Rather than talking about "the community", now we witness an ego-centric network of relationships centred around oneself and one's interests (as visually articulated in a social networking profile)
- From "little boxes" to glocalisation, to networked individualism



Do you think "shared economy" can build a brighter future for everyone? Why?

COLLABORATIVE ECONOMY

An economy built on distributed networks of connected individuals and communities as opposed to centralized institutions, transforming how we can produce, consume, finance and learn.



PRODUCTION

Design, production and distribution of goods through collaborative networks.









CONSUMPTION

Maximum utilization of assets through efficient models of redistribution and shared access.



aldab





FINANCE

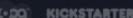
Person-to-person banking and crowd-driven investment models that decentralize finance.



EDUCATION

Open education and person-to-person learning models that democratize education.







coursera SKILLSHARE





Which SDG(s) sound most important and relevant to you? Why?









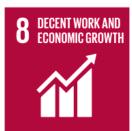
































- Course objectives
- Key and further readings
- Teaching mode
- Tutorial schedule
- Assessment criteria
- Group YouTube projects: examples
 - How far is 4cm?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ugogKrxQQR8

Unmask

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEvIhWYnPlg&feature=youtu.be