Time

What is your entry [concept/idea/term]?

My idea for this paper is to think about time, and how we perceive time online. We all use our digital devices every day. But as we use our devices more and more, the devices get more and more intuitive and more time consuming. "*I lost track of time"* is a normal sentence you'll hear if somebody has been using their computer. So what I want to discuss in this paper is how our online presence changes our perception of "real world" time.

What problem do you want to address and why [define the problem, and list questions you will want to address when writing, why is it important]

The problem I want to address in this paper is the fact that we spend more and more time with digital devices in our everyday life. Newer research suggests that we spend more than 8 hours[1] each day on our mobiles and laptops. And while we do so we often find ourselves in a situation where we lose track of time.
We only get small and subtle information regarding the time we spend online. These are throbbers, timelines, buffer icons etc. But most of these isn't actually a sign of time, but mere information on a process is happening. The only "real world" information of time is the clock either in the top of the window (Mac users) or the right button corner (Windows). But why do we even have a clock on the computer? If you are not waiting to turn into a live cast show, then there is really no point, right? Even though we have this clock showing, we often find ourselves losing track of time.
So how does this change our perception of time?
Time is no longer a straight line. We can always go back in time, tweaking with settings and change them so they fit our present goal with the session.

Time perception

When thinking of time, it is important to know the physical laws of how to perceive and understand such a term. In our physical world, we have come to know time as being something consistent and non-changeable. But is this really true?

Once we get to understand that the constants of time we know is human made, we can really begin thinking of time as being relative. A day consists of 24 hours. And we need 365 of these days to have a year. But these measurements do only fit the orbital period of the earth. What if you took a planet like Neptune, the farthest away known planet from the Sun in the Solar System? The orbital period is 164,8 Earth years, but in reality, it is just one Neptune year. This year on Neptune contains 60.182 Earth days, which only takes 16 hours 6 minutes and 36 seconds in relativity to the measurement of time as we know. [2]

Time and speed

In reality, time is just a product of speed. Whatever we can see with our eyes is the light bouncing back to you. This seems like it is happening immediately, but in fact, this just happens because of the speed of light. So, in theory, if you could travel faster than the speed of light you would in fact travel in time. Let's say you could go 3 times the speed of light, there would be a split second, where you could see yourself before taking of. Furthermore, time is also manipulated by the gravitational pull. Let's say you had an identical twin and went on a space trip for a couple of years. When you come back your twin would quite possibly be older than yourself. This happens because of gravity. If you were near a super massive black hole however, the gravity could be strong enough that an hour to you might be years to someone on Earth. For you as the astronaut, there wouldn't be any difference in how you experience time. Time would still feel like it's passing normally for you. But it is important to note that time dilation is only relative to other frames of reference. You would be able to travel near this black hole for as long as you want without aging super-fast. But if you compared the time you've spend to the time spend on earth there would be a noticeable difference.

Physical vs. Digital world

In real life, you see time in minutes, days, years etc. But what about online? Does time even exist? Whenever you go online everything is available, there are no sites that are online up and running during the day. Some support webpages even provide 24h support. So, when do we even stumble upon this phenomenon online? The answer lies the waiting period. When the stream doesn't go as fast as you want it to do. This is when the infamous throbber comes in to the picture. This small icon is one of the only reminders, besides the clock on your computer, of time.

Other discussions:

Time is money

- Companies uses time as a way to get money. It is the internet providers who control how fast your connection with the digital world is supposed to be. And this is something they can earn a lot of money from.
    - Companies as gravitation
        - Net neutrality
        - As mentioned before with time, then it is a product of speed. The same goes for our perception of time online. We only stumble upon time when the speed is not fast enough. And this speed can be regulated by the companies who sells you your internet connection.

How you are planning to do it [what sources you are planning to use and how they might help in answering your questions]

I was planning to use the texts we have read under the term temporalities. More specific I was thinking of *David Berry, "Real-time Streams", in Berry, op. cit., pp. 142-171.*
David M Berry talk about the *streams* in which we are always in. These streams are data and everything that we do puts more data into this stream.
More specifically in relation to this paper I will use his term "*Dataspace*". Data is being stored all the time, and this gives us the ability to "reverse, record, reorder" time - everything is available. It feels like we have made us a time machine - this power can be "addictive"
One other thing the text speaks of it what D. Berry calls "*our now is getting shorter*". This metaphor is great in this paper as well since that is an outcome of software. We can no longer wait days, hours or even minutes to get some specific information. We have to get what we want at the moment we want it.

"*In the real-time stream, it is argued that the user will be constantly bombarded with data from a thousand different places, all in real-time, and that without the complementary technology to manage and comprehend the data she would drown in information overload. Importantly, the user is expected to desire the real-time stream, both to be in it, to follow it, and to participate in it, and where the user opts out, the technical devices are being developed to manage this too. Information management becomes an overriding concern in order to keep some form of relationship with the flow of data that doesn't halt the flow, but rather allows the user to step into and out of a number of different streams in an intuitive and natural way.*" – (David M. Berry (***Find reference in text***)).

Another text I will use as reference is a book written by no other than Stephen Hawking called: "*A Brief History of Time*". This text I will use to build up a great metaphor to speak of time from. This text is a great explanation of our understanding of difficult terms such as time and relativity.

References:

1.

Average daily time spent online teenage and Millennial internet users worldwide as of 2nd quarter 2017, d. (2018). Worldwide average daily time spent online 2017 | Statistic. [online] Statista. Available at:https://www.statista.com/statistics/736727/worldwide-teen-average-online-time-devices/ [Accessed 30 Apr. 2018].

2.

Cseligman.com. (2018). Rotation Period and Day Length. [online] Available at: http://cseligman.com/text/sky/rotationvsday.htm [Accessed 30 Apr. 2018].

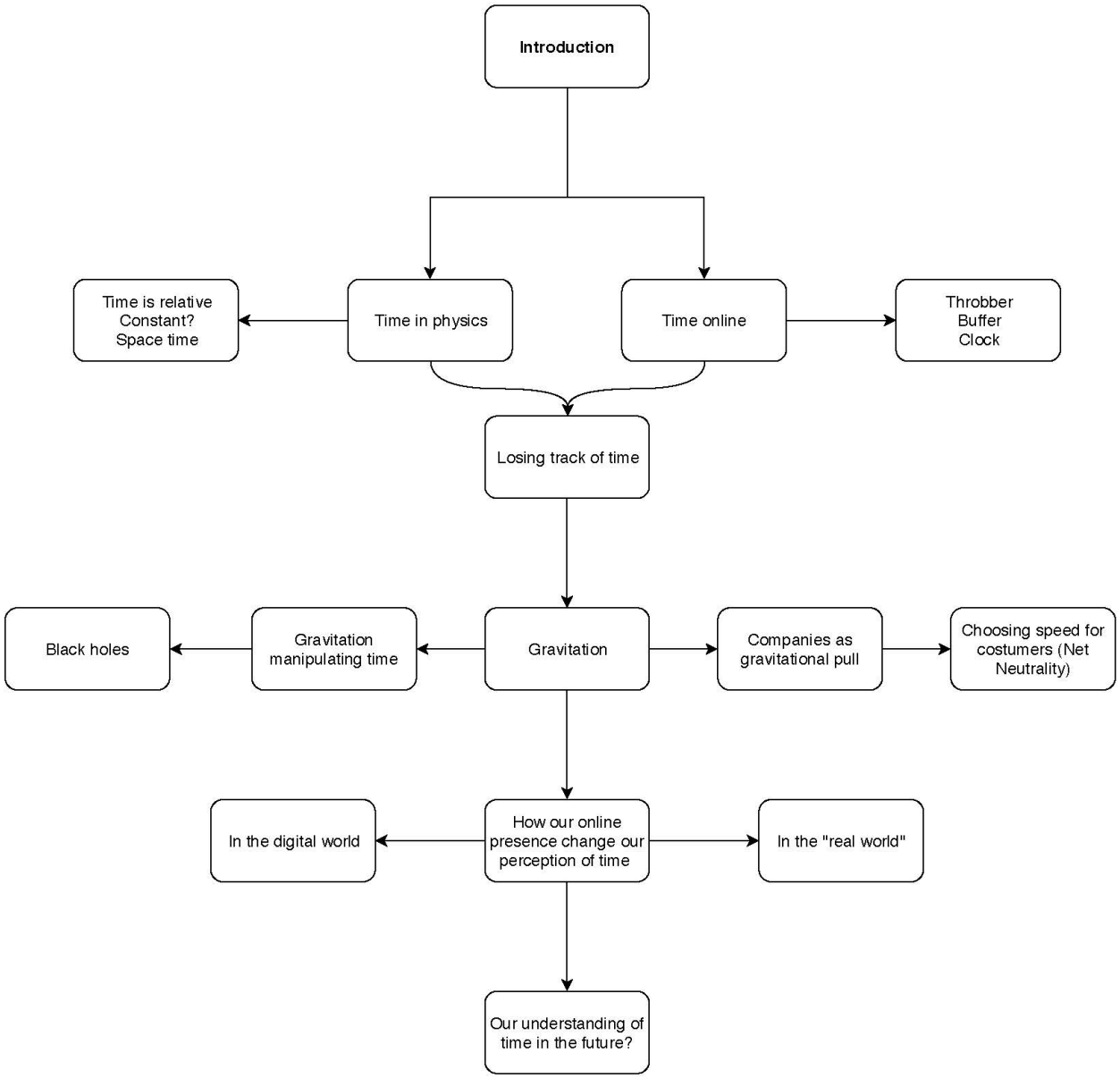
David Berry, "Real-time Streams", in Berry, op. cit., pp. 142-171.

Hawking, S. (2005). A brief history of time. New York: Bantam Books.

Chun, W. (2008). The Enduring Ephemeral, or the Future Is a Memory. Critical Inquiry, 35

On the next page, I've made a flowchart which will explain my idea of how I'm going to build up this paper.

Time


Introduction
Time is relative
Constant?
Space time
Time in physics
Time online
Throbber
Buffer
Clock
Losing track of time
Black holes
Gravitation manipulating time
Gravitation
Companies as gravitational pull
Choosing speed for costumers (Net Neutrality)
In the digital world
How our online presence change our perception of time
In the "real world"
Our understanding of time in the future?