CART 351 RESPONSES

1) **Locative Media Revised**

Locative media is, in essence, media that draws from its location in order to make said location significant in some way. The article opens with the claim that locative media's hype has since died off rather quickly, but I've seen its revival through PokemonGO, to name a popular game type for the genre, and even through Montreal's own Cité Memoire installation, a more information-based type of media.

One of the examples mentioned in the article is Border Bumper, a phone application that uses cell tower data to read which border you are closest to and places you inside the country closest to your location, then redraws the map's border to form around you accordingly. I think this is neat, because it shows how close in proximity some people are to other countries, and now flexible borders can really be if one were to decide to shift it to include themselves. This form of locative media is less fun-based and more thought provoking: what's to say you are in France or Germany? A specific set location? Can you simply claim that, by being closer to the France border, you are technically in France? Ultimately, it's a matter of politically-defined borders, but through tower pings it can be easily shifted around.

That being said, there are many applications for locative media in computation-based art today, especially with the rise and refining of cellphone GPS technology that is increasingly accessible to the public. I think it'd be worth bringing back, both for fun and informatively, for the sole reason that more can be done with it now than when it first started circa the early 2000s.

2) **Delightful Vistas**

This text takes a look at hypertext and the different challenges and rewards it can present to its users, especially taking into account the early forms. Because of its original perceived complexity, it started out quite rigid and not particularly fun. However, as people became more familiar with it, wild variations began to appear and bringing with them the early confusion, until those, too, became familiar.

The text compares unplanned hypertext to gardens and pathways, stating that there may be interesting things within but people can be reluctant to explore it due to the difficulties navigating it, while planned hypertext is straightforward and a little bland, like streets in a city.

The section of this text that spoke to me most was the Planning Pathways discussion. The author says that, to navigate the garden, we should offer the *best* route rather than the shortest route. Instead of having a point A to point B clickthrough link, the author recommends bringing the user to a pitstop at point C that offers the viewer more, or different, options before needing to continue on to B. I do strongly agree with this, and often I feel like having the choice between a direct link and a link that may bring me somewhere that I can see other things, I would choose the link that takes me elsewhere simply by virtue of enjoying having different options to visit.

The point I got from this text is that it's important to have the wild garden, but to structure it in a way that is less unmanageable and more directed.

3) **AJAX: A New Approach to Web Applications**

The article describes AJAX, created by Adaptive Path, showing how it is relevant to early (at the time) functions in Google Maps. AJAX, as the author states, eliminates the staggered waiting between a user input and the web server output. At the time of the publishing of this article (2005) Google apparently was the only one using AJAX to it's best current potential, allowing real-time updating of it's Maps and Suggest services. AJAX isn't really it's own application, but rather a compiled language that can be used to process data within its own engine to handle user requests as they come up, taking care of matters that don't need the server on it's own.

The Q&A at the bottom goes a little more into what AJAX is and how it works, or how it's supposed to work. Adaptive Path states that it's both a technology platform and an architectural style, reassuring that XML and Javascript can both be used to access AJAX, and that it is 'not necessarily' better or easier to use than other options.

By now we know that AJAX is a strong and useful tool in web developing. I think that, while I personally struggle with AJAX and how to apply it, it is a very useful tool that (clearly) many web developers have since taken advantage of. There may be easier, more concise ways of handling user requests live, but AJAX is highly effective at what it does and I support it's ever-increasing use.

4) **The Anxieties of Big Data**

This article touches on something that almost everybody who grew up with earlier internet (earlier than today) was taught: beware of what information you put on the internet! There is the ever-present underlying fear that your data is continuously being collected and compiled into a large, terrifyingly comprehensive file about who you are as a person, and every slight misgiving about you that you may have hinted at online.

This online surveillance is a source of worry for many, of course, but there must be some way to avoid it. As with the examples given, especially in the case of violent attacks, some data must have slipped through the cracks and allowed the offenders to communicate and carry out their plans without being detected.

We know that we are being surveilled. The problem is, the surveillance isn't quite effective enough, and since it isn't, why not focus on the points that require closer inspection such as finding and apprehending potential mass-shooters, or bringing online sexual offenders to justice? If these things can pass underneath the internet's watchful eye, then why watch out at all? It seems, to me, a much better and effective use of company time to seek out those who are dangerous to society, than, for example, to monitor Jane Doe's facebook page to recommend her eerily-accurate advertisements based on her recent search history.