Bannon: Core issues for CSCW

CSCW 2015

- This paper is possibly older than some of you!
- A lot (too much) focus on terminology?
- But back then it was about more than words… (see this post on vocabulary: https://cscwuvic2015.wordpress.com/2015/09/14/vocabulary/)

Bannon cont.…

- Bannon's notion of direct/indirect collaboration… not really captured by our 2x2 matrix, yet it is important…

- (Does he dislike the term groupware?)
- What is a group? A group implies boundaries…

Bannon: 3 views on CSCW research… a continuum

1) Groupware developers – “strict constructionists”
2) Those seeking to improve technologies for work processes – “loose constructionists”
3) Social scientists –focused on understanding how groups work and how they use technology

3 Core Issues…

- Articulating cooperative work
- Sharing an information space
- Adapting the technology to the organization and vice versa

Articulation Work

Consists of all tasks needed to coordinate a particular task, manage subtasks, recover from errors and assemble resources

Can't always predict what is needed – continually need to negotiate and renegotiate

Shouldn't "automate a fiction"

Robinson's "double level language":

Systems need to support interactions at the formal level and informal (cultural) levels

A warning…

- Articulation work is the stuff people forget take so much time
- Articulation work is the stuff people forget they need technology to support
- Articulation work is sometimes the work managers don’t appreciate

Sharing an information space

People prefer different problem solving strategies or heuristics

- Continually validating information produced by colleagues → hence a shared information space must be transparent

Decisions are based on a specific conceptual framework

- Information systems must capture the domain and mappings between different perspectives
- But organizations are not perfectly collaborative systems:
  Collaboration&Conflict Overt&Covert

Therefore we need "bounded transparency"

- Info systems need to allow users consider what is revealed, when, to whom and in which form

Discussion point: Do we always benefit from transparency?

- Bannon suggests that we should always know where the “data” comes from and the context behind it, but is that important in all collaborative processes?

Designing socio-technical systems

Changes in technology induces changes in the work organization and social structure of the labor processes

- The computer is an agent of change "par excellence"

Technology embodies – implicitly if not explicitly – assumptions on how the system will be used within the "work organization"

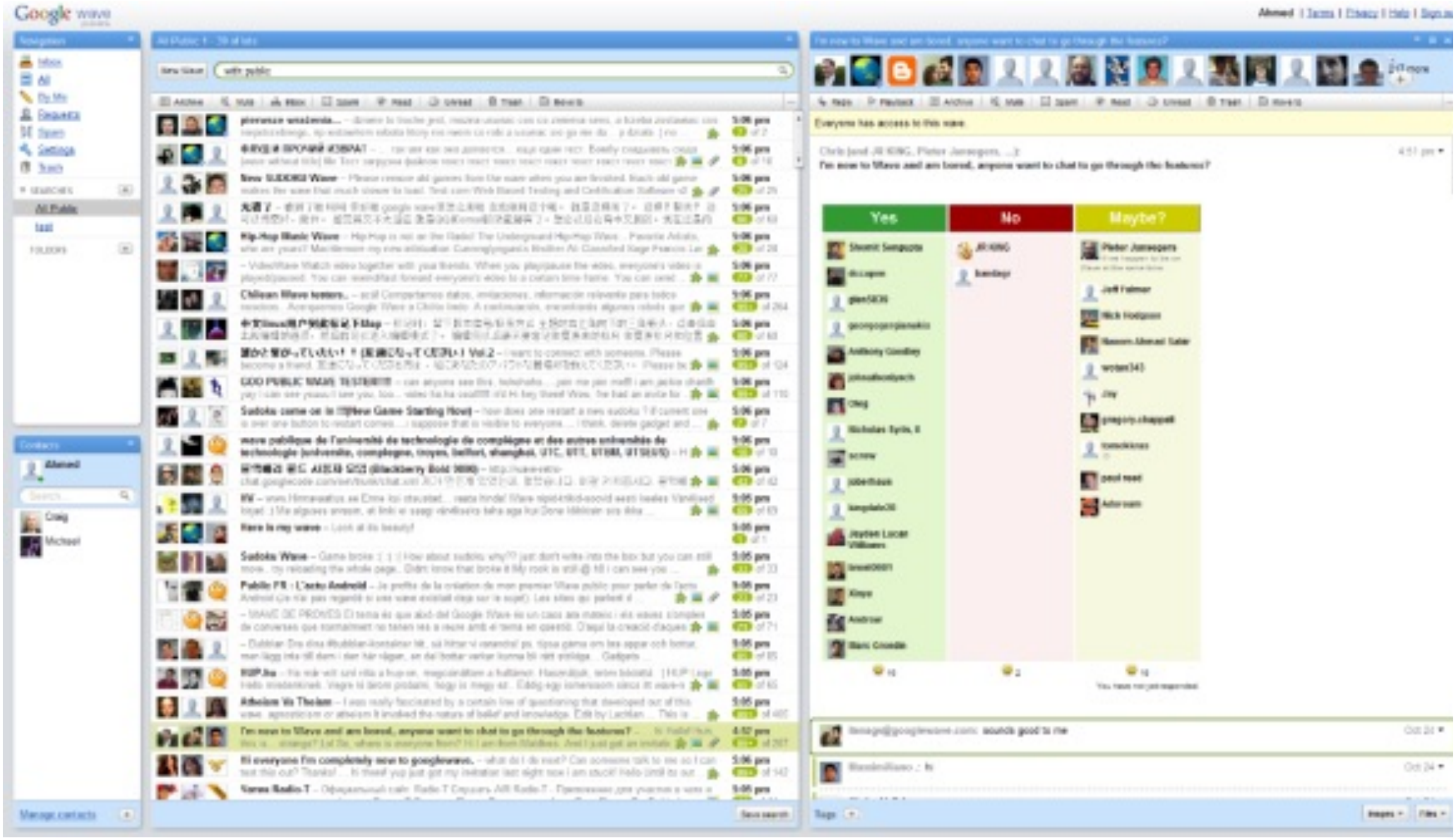
We need to develop a theoretical framework that will help us understand the complex interactions between the technical subsystem, the work organization and requirements of the task environment

- Need to perform more detailed empirical studies – design incremental modifications to existing systems and observe their effects

Blog comments…

- Paper still relevant since 1989 (older than some of you!) "It is interesting to me that, even after 26 years, many of the issues discussed still seem to be at play today."
- "Agile development portrays what Suchman says very accurately as it does not follow one specific road until completion of the task but allows you the freedom to not only take any path to completion but also allows you to change the done criteria of your task. "
- "This tool is also helpful in addressing the second problem that is; sharing an information space. Incomplete tasks and project progress can easily be monitored with the help of JIRA,as it provides a very effective way of sharing an information space that keeps all the project members on the same page."
- Side note: check out Vannevar Bush's paper from 1945!

Why Google Wave failed?



My opinion… (not right either!)

Why Windows 8 failed:

http://www.zdnet.com/article/five-reasons-why-windows-8-has-failed/

“CSCW seems like an extremely natural extension original intentions of the Internet as a whole. Which, as documented by internetsociety.org[1], the predecessor to the Internet’s (named Arpanet) goals were to connect and transmit memos from connected American universities to one another. Meaning, that baby steps of the web as we know it today could be seen as an effort to collaborate and share information.”