

Intruduction to Electronic Participatory Culture

Two Roles, One Actor

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Karlsruhe, 8-9 April 2015

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Prosumer and prosumption

Trichotomy

producer \rightarrow distributor \rightarrow consumer

Three Waves

1. Agricultural Revolution — every produces for its own needs
2. Industrial Revolution (mass production, mass distribution, mass consumption, mass education, mass media, mass recreation, mass entertainment, weapons of mass destruction)
3. Information Age — prosumer and prosumption¹

¹Alvin Toffler, *The Third Wave*, 1980.

Produser and produsage

Examples: Wikipedia, open source software, ccMixter, Slashdot, Indymedia, Clickworkers, the Sims, the blogosphere

1. Open participation and communal evaluation
2. Fluid heterarchy through ad hoc meritocracies
3. Palimpsestic unfinished artifacts in a continuing process
4. Common property and individual rewards²

²Axel Bruns, Blogs, Wikipedia, Second Life and Beyond: From Production to Prodsusage, 2007.

Open participation and communal evaluation

- Commons-based peer production (Yochai Benkler, *The Wealth of Networks*, 2006)
- Wikipedia Talk page

Fluid heterarchy through ad hoc meritocracies

- meritocracies (GNOME, Apache, Mozilla, LibreOffice)
- hierarchy → heterarchy (Warren McCulloch, 1945)
- 'benevolent dictator' (Linus Torvalds, Jimbo Wales)
- panopticism → holoptism

Palimpsestic unfinished artifacts in a continuing process

- stigmergic collaboration (stigma "mark, sign" – ergon "work, action"; Pierre-Paul Grass on termites, 1959)
- swarm intelligence (Gerardo Beni, Jing Wang, 1989)
- Wikipedia as a palimpsest
- granularity

Common property and individual rewards

- problem of intellectual property rights
- individual merit system (a sense of seniority)

Wreader

- writer + reader
- hypertext
 - The Garden of Forking Paths (Jorge Luis Borges, 1941)
 - Memex (Vannevar Bush, "As We May Think", 1945)
 - Hypertext, hypermedia — Project Xanadu (Ted Nelson 1963)
 - Critical theory of hypertext³

³George P. Landow, Hypertext 3.0 critical theory and new media in an era of globalization, 2006

The Cult of an Amateur

The Cult of an Amateur

- Web 2.0 = new marxism
*"Every free listing on Craigslist means one less paid listing in a local newspaper. Every visit to Wikipedia's free information hive means one less customer for a professionally researched and edited encyclopedia such as Britannica."*⁴
- crowd is not always wise, it supports "slavery, infanticide, George W. Bush's war in Iraq, Britney Spears"

⁴Andrew Keen, *The Cult of the Amateur: How Today's Internet Is Killing Our Culture* 2007.