

## The Visual, Perception, Politics

Vjing, other visual forms of expression/content

Real-time/modulated publication/publics

Today (and weeks 9 and 10)

- \* ARTS2090 So far
- \* Visualizations and other interesting visual forms
- \* Screens and Vision
- \* VJing as real-time publishing/public (or, or, other forms of synthesis as publication)
- \* Transparency
- \* Representation/Design
- \* Visual, Body, Social Body
- \* Distribution and Aggregation and the “I”

## Visual Expression/Content

- \* we've tended to focus on the shifts with regards to words, text, print so far in the course. I hope you've learnt a lot from that .. it's one set of forms of content/expression
- \* but there are others: sounds, touch, proprioceptive expression/content (and these change over time, can be published and assemble publics and individual experience differently .. each can also combine with other forms of expression/content)

## Visual Expression/Content

- \* last week and the next few, we're looking at visual media, visual perception and the shifts in publishing/publics involved (especially visualization)
- \* a key theme will be that new media forms allow for 1. enhanced modulation of visual expression/content

itself, and 2. new engagements between this and text, sounds, proprioceptions etc

but first ... ARTS2090—  
The Story So Far

- What is publishing? What difference does it make?
- **Publishing practices** are deeply involved in the constitution of **social life**, because of the kind of **publics** they help bring into being.
- Much **individual experience** involves participation in **real social life** and **“imagined” publics—via modes of publishing.**
- We’ve looked at how different publishing technologies and practices make for different formations of publics, in history and contemporary life.  
The three aspects to any Mode of Publishing
- even though the differences between the increasingly many modes of publishing matter ...
- we can understand them via three aspects:
  - **archives**
  - **forms of expression/forms of content**
  - **eg. a sentence (expression) is made up of a font (content), a font (expression) made up of ink or pixels (content)**
  - **or grains of rock (content) make up mountains**

**(expression), while mountains (content) make up mountain ranges (expression)**

- **forms of expression/forms of content**
- **we've chosen *visualization* in this course because it's an interesting form of expression/content ...**
- **and because it's basic to culture, so when we reassemble our relationship to vision this changes culture**
  
- **distribution**
- **and**
- **aggregation (bringing together)**

Secondary Aspects to All Three of These

- they allow us to **(re)configure or reassemble** publishing, and the organization of our lives in relation to publishing
- (we can reconfigure archives, rearrange forms of expression/content, assemble new ways of distributing or assembling)
  
- much of the drive for new modes of publishing is about giving us more room to **reassemble our social engagements, engagements with the publics we imagine are out there .. via variations to modes of publishing**
  
- they allow us to **modulate** our experience **within** these assemblages, configurations or publics (slightly different .. here they allow us to change the **intensity of our experience** .... eg brighter or dimmer colours, louder or softer volume, more exciting or calmer lives ..)

## Modulation in Visualization Modulation in Visualization

- they also allow use to **transduce** different elements of publishing, along with aspects of our experience (**convert it**, eg from invisible data to a visible visualization, from visual to more embodied experience, from reading to interaction, from social to individual and back to social life)
- a game controller is an example of a transducer ... (but so is a corkscrew)  
A visualization of a COMplex TRansduction Process (Making a book)

some somewhat quirky diagrams bringing this all together

but really what's happening is something like this

### That Green Dot means

- we're in a period of immense transition ... how it will be in the future?
- well, let's think of cats as forms of content/expression ...  
Modulating Images of Cats
- from cats to Lolcatz, via cubism cats to an infinite modulation of cats ... eg scanned cats ..
- see links in Course Lecture Notes page ...

TO Some extreme examples of what is happening throughout publishing

### Visualizations and other visual publishing/assembling of publics

David Rokeby - Gathering (2004-2006)

<http://vimeo.com/8110981>

What the visual can do (that many other forms of exp/content can too)

- \* it gathers images in real-time, of a public, and then reconfigures these images of public
- \* it can not only synthesise (bring together and merge) different images
- \* it can also extract aspects of images according to filters before and during mixing images (flesh tones, other colours, etc)
- \* in short, both the image and public are broken down, fragmented and reconstituted, assembled, in real-time.
- \* According to technical operations such as filters and synthesisers

note also that

- \* in one sense, these are direct images of a real public
- \* but in another sense, even if direct, real, they are also altered and modulated (remixed) images of a real public
- \* note that here, in the form of digital code put to work, data's function is to manipulate the images ...

Cross Signal Processing

- \* when one signal is turned into another (eg when audio signal is visualized, or vice versa) this is called cross signal processing...
- \* there's more and more of it in publishing ... and you could, as per the earlier diagram, consider things very broadly as cross-signal processing across publishing (media) and publics (people, the social).

See

- \* Oscilloscope in Lecture links

## Visualizations

\* see links in Lecture Notes for Flinklabs, HIPerspace and Wired science maps ..

## Screens/Projection/Vision

are a form of publication/formation of publics ... when they are tampered with, so are publics  
now to a key issue within this

### images as signs

#### What's Unusual About Images as Signs?

- Textual signs (alphabets, *words* like “cat”) are based on arbitrary assignments of material signs to our thinking about the world / communication - paradoxically, it is because “we” assign their roles, that arbitrary signs can form codes
- These codes give the (only somewhat illusory) sense of controlling the world through signs.

#### What's Unusual About Images as Signs?

- Images, however, are different. They are what we might call “motivated” signs ( the sign is “motivated” by what it references).
- They do not stand in for reality arbitrarily.
- To some extent - they bring reality with them.
- Paradoxically, this makes them harder to fit into sign systems, to control.

for example, compare  
*the sea*

language - arbitrary sign - could just as easily be  
la mer (French)  
havet (Danish)  
VS

### To repeat

- because images are motivated signs, they are not completely coded (this is not to say they are without structure - but much of this is given to us by the referent)
- textual signs are arbitrary therefore coded (that is, we are freer to arrange them *formally the way we want*)
- images, capturing “reality” more directly are harder to do this with ...
- ***BUT ...*** manipulating images via technology (e.g. digital technology) adds something extra to this “captured reality” - allows for more of a kind of grammar ..

### In Sum

- more flexible work with images allows us to break them up, remix them in a kind of grammar—this gives us much more power in terms of using them for communication, persuasion, in fact for all kinds of things that operates within and to form publics

now to a second key issue within this

### Further Complications - Vision itself

- The science of vision tells us that our vision system (binocular, eyes in front of head - not for example like a fish - on either side) determines what we can see (we don't just see “the world” as a whole - the world is relative to our ability to see it)
- Moreover, the brain “creates” what we see from what is let in

by our vision system - very differently from other animals, and very differently to how things “really” appear ... *heavily influenced by habit and memory* (e.g. the moon on the horizon).

### Further Complications - Vision itself

- We do not see “pictures” - our visual is much more dynamic - constantly scanning, moving ...
- as if this isn't enough ...

### Even More Complications! Vision Machines

- visual / optical / image technologies complicate the situation even more....
- they change *what* we see, and *how* we see it
- they change the *arrangements within we deal with, use images ...* (think of billboards, sunglasses, webcams, the cinema as a space, IMAX, VR, etc)
- Paul Virilio writes about this (*War and Cinema, Vision Machine, The Aesthetics of Disappearance*) .. for example, ...  
<http://landsat.gsfc.nasa.gov/education/compositor/>

### Visual Media/Perception

- All these complications come together: the nature of image based signs, the peculiarities of human vision and human vision processing; the vision machines that arrange our relation to vision, and our visual and *social* environments.
- It is this combination that concerns many thinkers about visual media, from cognitive scientists and advertisers to obscure French philosophers!

### Philosophy/Sociology of the Visual

## Theories of Vision

### 0

- Theories of Vision - older and more recent, can be summed up in the title of a recent book - *Is the Visual World a Grand Illusion?* (Alva Noë, 2002 - Thorverton: Imprint)
- Visual experience is seen as *overwhelming powerful*, especially if it involves the technical, *fundamentally untrustworthy*, or *both*.
- The latter leads to ideas concerning a *totalising techno-social configuration of vision (often seen as “modern”)*, although this is also questioned.

Guy Debord - *The Society of the Spectacle*

In which we are so surrounded by images that we have no time for critical thinking, or in fact much in the way of thinking at all – particularly in the cities.

In which we are losing contact with the “real” world – which was being replaced by this mass of manufactured images (advertising for example, but not only that – television, films, images everywhere)

Crucially these are images that encourage commodification – or that are themselves commodities – that is, images that encourage us to buy things or that we buy.

in fact, this kind of “antiocularism” is pretty old

### Brief History - Plato and Images

- Just as with writing (which undermined our memory) Plato didn't trust manufactured images - these were simulacra - copies of copies (the latter referring to Plato's notion of the normal world as an imperfect “copy” of a series of ideal forms)
- It is this that has often informed mistrust of visual images

and technologies

**but some people like vision control!**

### **Renaissance Perspective**

- often identified with modern optical machines, methods, and is now “naturalised” - so common we think it’s normal
- really a combination of methods in painting developed in the Renaissance (1400s in Italy) - first by Alberti in his *De Pictura* (on painting) in 1435.

<http://www.olejarz.com/arted/perspective/intro10.html>

<http://pcssd.org/nwoodart/hall%20perspective%201.jpg>

### **Renaissance Perspective**

- as if set up for one point - one viewer, indeed one eye (initially used pin-holes)
- as if there is a vanishing point on the horizon - one vanishing point
- as if vision is arranged between these two points in a fixed structure

### **Renaissance Perspective**

- this gives us a *view - the feeling of vision encompassing the world with every object in its right place ...*
- you can use mathematics to figure it out and vision machines to help you paint according to it - thus it involves a series of technical systems that lead to modern visual media
- all this of course, has implications socially (a world which one can feel as if one sees totally, in which people and objects can be arranged in the “foreground” and “background”, as the centre or on the fringes ... etc)

**it leads to ...**

### **The Age of the World Picture**

- In fact, Heidegger says that variations on this idea, in which a combination of the sciences and technologies of measurement and media give us *the feeling that we can picture the world*, typify (everything that is wrong with) modernity.

- from visual innovations comes a whole new concept of the world, of culture ...

### **Age of the World Picture**

- He's not saying that they give us a different picture than before - but that they give us the very concept of a "world picture" that did not exist before!

- Thus for him visual media are problematic, as this "world picture" is delusory, and, worse, distracts us from the less measurable, less knowable world.

### **Heidegger's "Age of the World Picture"**

- ordering of the world through instruments and technologies which are crucial... gridding out of world, which brings 'objects' and subjects' into being in a certain relationship...objects and subjects are produced through the use of these instruments, not just found...and here 'produced' and 'production' are the key terms (or, we could say creation) and this production is never final but ongoing ...

### **Heidegger's "Age of the World Picture"**

- In short, you want a better and better picture of the world, so you increase your ability to give it technically (better microscopes, telescopes, medical imaging, home video, sound, etc)...**but** what you find are more and more differences, even new ones - we could call them hybrid....

### **Visualization/The Visual**

- Week 7 I talked about visualization

- Week 8 was a wide ranging, if fairly loose, examination of recent shifts in understanding the visual. We also began to look at some of the newer ways in which visual media are used. And how these bring together publics in different ways.

### The visual

- We considered the **nature of the image as a sign**. Images are traditionally seen as motivated signs .. that is they carry something of what they refer to with them

### The visual

- (that is, you can recognize a picture of a hat, but you might not know what “un chapeau” is). You can work with them, but they’re not completely flexible, in the way that the alphabet is.

### The visual

- That is, images as signs weren’t as manipulable as written text until recently. Now new media technologies allow us to fragment, break up and rework images, so that in effect there is a new “language” of image work available to us.

- This *liberates but also complicates* the work of images in drawing together a public

### The visual

- We skipped briefly through some other complications

- 1. We have a better understanding of how complex vision itself is (along with perception in general)—and through this understanding have been able to develop new technologies (such as 3D) but this makes for a very complex visual world

### The visual

- We skipped briefly through some other complications

- 2. We had a very quick tour of the philosophy and politics of images: especially those who thought images powerful but suspicious ... Plato (because they distracted us from the ideal world), Heidegger (because they allowed us to think [falsely] that we could create a “world picture”) and Debord (the consumerist society of the spectacle)

### **Visual Technics (Technologies + Techniques)**

- Finally we began to think about historical and contemporary work with the visual that embraces its power
- From VJing and new forms of interactive video art, back to a consideration of the technique of perspective painting and drawing developed in the Renaissance.
- This is where we'll pick up today ...

#### **Some important moments in the history of visual technics**

- there are very many of these, so what follows are just some
- you should be better able to analyse others yourself ...
- a mix of shifts to our visual perception (eg telescopes, microscopes) and new modes of presenting visual images (painting, photography etc)... (or both)

### **19th Century Technologies**

- A mix of visual technologies was seen in nineteenth century media technologies (e.g. zoetrope, stereoscope, but also of course photography and film)
- Just as importantly as giving new modes of vision, these technologies raised questions about the nature of perception

## Crary vs During

- the new devices make for “points of intersection where philosophical, scientific and aesthetic discourses overlap with mechanical techniques, institutional requirements, and socioeconomic forces”
- in other words, new vision machines are a crucial part of modernity ...
- BUT: “freedom and the human spirit” are seen as endangered by the newly machinic nature of vision (During: 282)

### some other crucial moments

- photography and computing
- realism in the novel and theatre (late c19th)
- the cinema
- modernist art
- television (Sconce - *Haunted Media*)
- satellites

**you can begin to see again why some think images were taking over - making us passive consumers of “the spectacle”**

**another example of such thinking**

### **The Cinematic Apparatus**

- One example of a recent theory that sums much of this up ... (Christian Metz and others in the 1970s).
- Passive, projector as if in the back of one’s head, a dream

state, etc ...

- again, you can see why Debord might have talked about a society of spectacle

**after the 1960s/1970s**

- in fact, the society of the spectacle's high point might have been the 1960s/1970s

- again, after this, it might have become worse (see Hal Foster *The Return of the Real*) in that increased interactivity only immerses us further into the Spectacle, etc

**after the 1960s/1970s**

- but some would argue that computing - along with increased visual literacy, had given us a more flexible, less passive relation to images

**Smaller Screens**

- The central point here concerns screens and visual media technologies, their uses and visual cultures in general

- This is that there are many views of visual technologies but perhaps two dominate (in various mixes)

**Smaller Screens**

- 1. the idea that images and visual technologies dominate us, literally, and in the social / spatial arrangements, modes of perception, and concepts of the world they imply. They dominate by separating us from our embodied experience, and giving us a distant "world view" or "world picture" OR

- 2. visual technologies are different, fragmented, often mixed. What is more, vision is embodied, and mixed in with other forms of embodied perception and action. It is in this mix that visual media - with all their complexities operate .. - *vision, and the effects of vision, are open to experiment* (thus many digital artists)

**Conclusions**

- Debord's society of spectacle has moved on.
- If we can put screens in our pocket, it may be that we can domesticate screens as much as we once thought they domesticated us.
- If we can dance to the rhythms of images as much as to the rhythms of sound, it may be that screens and humans are forming new ecologies in which visual experience is produced.

### Conclusions

- visual experience is constantly reconfigured anew at the fundamental level of the structure of experience.
- a good example could be VJing.

Vjing (and other real-time forms of publications); or, other forms of synthesis as publication

Mark Amerika and Vjing

“A VJ could be a creative writer **who manipulates matter and memory** by composing live acts of image écriture repositioning the movie loop as the primary semantic unit of energy”

Vjing and Related Examples

- Vjing is live image (and often sound) mixing
- Sometimes done by an individual
- Sometimes involves more interaction from the audience ...
- It is a kind of real-time image-mixing publishing assemblage with a very fluid approach to archives, forms of expression, distribution and reassemblage

- Also lots of reconfiguring, modulation and transduction  
Vjing etc
- it brings together movement and visual images very obviously
- it brings together different kinds of publics in relation to images  
Vjing etc
- see links in Lecture Notes  
Giselle Beiguelman
- Brazilian Artist, who among many wonderful works, uses mobile phones, mobile cameras and bluetooth to create interactive visual installations ... you use your camera to change the images as you move around
- sometimes always/sometimes never/sometimes (description)
- Tele bits2.0
- Suite for Mobile Tags  
Vjing
- **strips images elements into components, modulates them, remixes them** ... again in almost real-time, or in fact in any mix of times it wants
- constructs images, publishes them, and **constructs a (temporary) public (eg in clubs) in real-time** ...
- we can see **echoes of this throughout publishing and the construction of publics** (real-time, modulation, fragmenting and re-assembling, etc)  
Data is the key  
(as always)
- data transforms interactions .. opens up the possibilities of reassemblage, modulation, transduction ... transforms and multiplies archives, forms of expression, distribution and aggregation and all the potential interactions

between them ..

- not only between machines and code, but everything associated with them .. people, bodies, different senses, plants, movements
- visualization is just one example of conversion of data from one form into another, which then feeds back into our senses, and shifts individual experience, the social, “publics”
- this doesn't have to be electronic or digital .. the example from 1860 of a cholera outbreak ... was a transduction of data into a published visual form that then fed back into bodily and social interactions (saving lives for one thing)
- .. this is the function of all published news (in fact all forms of publication), and there's a lot in common here between visualization and general reporting .. now they are all mixed up in any case ..
- what's crucial is what is mixed up in terms of the subtle shifts of modes of embodied actions and technical transductions implied by engagements with different mixes of modes of publishing
- so for example forms of expression/content mean much more than just whether it's words on a page or an interactive computer game ... **forms of expression "grab" the body and brain differently .. organize experience, action and potential action differently, organize the social and publics differently**

Again, Data is the Key—because it opens up other aspects of media elements and processes and bodies to each other ... and to Mutual Transformation THE MORE THINGS YOU “CAN CODE”, and the more Codes can work across previously separate activities, the more mixed up things get The massively Enhanced use of Data is the Equivalent in Publishing to the INvention of writing or the Printing Press

TO MOVE ON, Another Key Issue While thinking about Visuality and  
Publics...

Transparency (Seeing Through, seeing all)  
[thanks Gillian Fuller for this section]

**OH NOES! we haz too much information!**

transparent aesthetics

transparent architecture

- ‘There is no longer any true interior or exterior, the barrier erected between us and the landscape is almost ethereal.’
- (Cited in Louise Wyman in Koolhaas et al, 2001: 240)

- Bathed in light, placed on a plinth, the commodity is ‘enthroned ...with the glitter of distractions’. (Benjamin 2004:18)

Glass

- a technology that materialises **transparency** – an aesthetic that entwines both ‘the X-ray gaze of empirical knowledge’ and spectacular possibilities of consumption.  
transparency: the window

transparency as ‘grand ideal’  
enlightenment residues

- transparency linked to ‘precision and truthfulness’

a mania for transparency

- Transparency serves both the rational and irrational – alternating between an illuminating display of the previous unseen to the dark suspicions of ‘what have you got to hide’?

simultaneous visions

- Transparency means a simultaneous perception of different spatial locations. Space not only recedes but fluctuates in a continuous activity.....
- By definition, the transparent ceases to be that which is perfectly clear and instead becomes that which is clearly ambiguous’. (Rowe & Slutsky,1963: 45)
- Transparency enables multiple planes and dimensions to visually coexist implying a ‘broader social order’ - one beyond the literal sense of transparency through which we see ‘the product’, ‘the human’, ‘the landscape’, but one which re-imagines the surface structures of spatial order, making the world cubist, remixable. (Fuller 2005 ‘windows’)

“remix + precision + ‘truthfulness’”  
Transparent Tech

- Things need to be transparent and obvious because the space one is navigating exists on a scale that is beyond big – it is informational.
- transparency is a surface for information exchange.
- Transparency makes it obvious what kind of subject one should be to navigate the space – *a predictable one*.
- When things become habitual they become transparent. But how do we appear in transparency? How are we made public?  
*OR*

how do windows see us?

- eg 1. cubist cat metaphor!  
eg2. as statistical data  
as target (precision)
- a desire for ‘total transparency’
- to touch the real, not just mediate it.
- to walk through the screen.  
leads us to ... (end week 9)

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- (that is, you can recognize a picture of a hat, but you might not know what “un chapeau” is). You can work with images, but they are (or WERE) stubbornly attached to their referents ... they’re not completely flexible, in the way that the alphabet is.

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### **Visual Technics (Technologies + Techniques)**

- Week 9, we thought briefly about (only some) crucial moments in the development of visual technologies ... photography, film, odd technologies such as the zoetrope, computing, global satellite systems (real-time images) etc

### **Visual Technics (Technologies + Techniques)**

- We considered the possibility of being overwhelmed by visual culture in something like Debord’s ‘Society of the Spectacle’
- We looked at the technologies and ideas surrounding Transparency (from windows of all kinds to heads-up display to the idea that everything we do should be able to be seen)

## Visual Technics (Technologies + Techniques)

- We considered the impact of code / data on the visual, and on visual cultures.

## Visual Technics (Technologies + Techniques)

- All this led us to consider the complexity of visual culture, here perhaps summed up from two perspectives
- the complexity of the kind of work we can do with images, pulling them apart, extracting aspects of them, remixing them, all assembling “publics” in different ways
- the complexity of the social worlds that result

### Today

- We’ll think first about a final complication within all this .. that is, the related issues of *representation* and *simulation*. (I’ll suggest that the intensity of both of these now can often lead us to lose ourselves in space, rather than “find ourselves”)

### Today

- I’ll then return to data (only partially in relation to the visual) ... this time considering the relation between data, metadata and an embodied experience of the world

### Today

- From here I’ll move to consider ubiquitous or pervasive computing, otherwise known as the “internet of things” .. this really means data everywhere ... and a very different creation of publics ...
- And this will lead us into the final section of the course, and the third aspect of publishing ... *distribution and aggregation*.

Representation/Simulation  
Char Davies

- <http://www.immersence.com/>

Radiohead

- <http://code.google.com/creative/radiohead/viewer.html>
- 'no cameras or lights were used. Just data'
- note the weird point when it morphs in terms of direction
- [thanks Xavier Fijac]

Representation

- This is how we often think of art and in fact of much in general culture.
- Here we might say we often assume that things are simply RE-presented in media, without too much change. The images, etc are roughly equal to that they represent
- Of course, there are many obvious problems here!

Representation

- One is when these images take over from "reality"
- The other is when they "represent" something that didn't exist previously

- Next week you need to be very disciplined.
- You also need to pay attention to the proceedings (you can't chat about your own work while others are presenting theirs)
- We look forward to your visualizations

### Baudrillard

- eventually these images or pictures substitute themselves for the world
- phases:
  - 1. reflection of basic reality
  - 2. masks and perverts basic reality
  - 3. masks the *absence* of a basic reality
  - 4. bears no relation to reality whatever: it is its own pure simulacrum

#### examples of pure simulation?

##### Artificial Life

Jon McCormack - <http://www.csse.monash.edu.au/~jonmc/>

##### Mariko Mori

<http://www.google.com.au/search?q=mariko+mori>

every act of identification is also a loss of identity

advertising involves a complex understanding of this (think of losing yourself in the supermarket or IKEA)

Roger Callois - losing identity through mimesis

- Callois is concerned with bugs! He notes that bugs sometimes adopt camouflage which is dangerous - he calls it excessive or luxurious. So some bugs make themselves look like the leaves

they eat - and are subsequently eaten by more of the same bugs...he does not think that mimesis is about survival...or about finding oneself. Again it is about losing yourself...to the environment. One mimics the world in order to become it, at the price of losing one's self (thus all those stories about mad actors)...

### Roger Callois

- 'Mimicry would thus be accurately defined as an incarnation fixed at its culminating point and having caught the sorcerer in own trap' (27).
- (remember our initial discussion of ritual)
- 'the end would appear to be assimilation to the surroundings'
- 'There is a real temptation by space.' (28)

### Roger Callois

- by attempting to become one's perception of space, or to create the perception of space through mimesis one pays the price of loss...but this condition is almost intrinsic to existence in the world. One is always mimicking a perception of space (Aristotle was more concerned with mimesis of characters).

### Roger Callois

- one "becomes" *with* space not *in* space...
- It's a kind of death instinct (at least a desire to lose one's identity to space) ... it may be a kind of psychosis ..

### Freud

- Puts it this way

- and this perhaps sums up some of our experience of virtual space, or even cyberspace... or even just experiencing immersion in digital, networked publishing and publics
- 'I know where I am but I do not feel that I'm at the spot where I find myself'

**The Visual and other senses, DATA, The Body, The Social Body  
(How do these affect each other?)**

Bodies, Data and Publishing

- We extract data/sensations (think of a digital image or sound file) from bodies/world/other machines/texts and the movement of bodies/world/other machines/texts
- We store it in archives (hard drives, book shelves, etc)
- We arrange it with new forms of data (metadata)
- This allows for new forms of expression/content
- And for new forms of distribution/aggregation  
but what links all these—directs their movements?

**metadata**

a terrible word

but what it means is pure informational power

Gregory Bateson

- metacommunication
- “communication about communication”
- in other words, metacommunication sets up the terms for what can happen ...
- so metadata sets up the terms, the channels, the possibilities for what can happen in terms of publishing, it's relation to publics, to experience .. (think of the TV guide, or iTunes menu)

- metadata is also more crucial the more complex the system
- “we can create "magic" at meta-levels as described by Gregory Bateson which **allows us to sometimes generate whole system change with one fell swoop**”  
<[http://www.masteringstuttering.com/Articles/Meta-States\\_Advancing\\_NLP.htm](http://www.masteringstuttering.com/Articles/Meta-States_Advancing_NLP.htm)>
- (note this is not a terribly reliable academic source)
- e.g. whole document to Italics ..
- Data and metadata allow for new systems of communication or new assemblages of communication in complex systems
- So the data that allows the invisible to become visible is metadata, or allows your body to communicate with the Wii remote, and this to the Nintendo and the TV is metadata.
- We don't just have archive fever, or even visualization fever, but data fever, metadata fever ...  
This is also what is changing modes of PUBLISHING Along with our Lives  
Let's WE can better understand the BOdy in relation to Datawork  
the BOdy in relation to (META)Datawork
- the body in a media framework is in a highly interactive situation, although this can also be subtle
- what counts from the body's side? physical positioning, structures of attention, signs (as environment gathering or transductive objects, communication via signs as a structural adjustments of bodies), drives (eg hunger, sex), emotional interests, guidance of intentions (and intention is what we direct at the world around us's possibilities, for us, at any given moment ... **it is all this that we mobilise data and metadata (media, publishing) to satisfy**  
Think of the iPad—ADrian Miles (“I thought of the novel”)

- <http://vogmae.net.au/vlog/2010/04/i-thought-of-the-novel/>
- The iPad as transforming visual publishing by making visual experience more like that of reading, just in the way we are physically positioned with an iPad.
- “the iPad brings us to **the phenomenal experience of something novel like**. If we want it to be personal we turn it towards our faces, and away from the world. It can play hi quality video that looks glorious. We can have a mix of media. So what sorts of audio visual stories will begin to appear? What is the novelesque post cinematic form for something like the iPad? Personal, private, intimate. Not social like the television or the cinema. Not cluttered and lost amongst my task bar, applications, jobs, windows, mouse, file menus and whatever else on my monitor. Yeah, I could watch films here, and probably would, but as an ersatz sort of viewing (like reading a novel on an ebook reader), but **I want the audiovisual forms that leaves the sociality of television and cinema (apart from, of course, for cinephiles who happily watch in solitude) and finds the intimacy of silent reading. What do I need to make for this? What would I watch, for this?”**

Bodies are ACTIVE/motivated—Drives

- drives, emotions and intentions, actions, etc are what data organizes for us, and what we organize data for (think here of Vjing as organizing the public and bodies in a nightclub, or of the way the visualization Gillian showed you from the 1850s re-organized people’s lives ...in other words, think of feedback loops between all these complex systems, media machines, data, bodies, social, publics .. all at once, and in transformations...” What do I need to make for this? What would I watch, for this?” [Adrian Miles])
- all coming from basic needs (eat, drink, sex, power etc) (or, eg, visualization is all about a scopic drive, a drive to see in order to command)

What is a “social body” in this context?  
How our Body Engages With Social “BOdy”

- but what is “social body”
- actually it’s **simply a collection of bodies and events of bodies** .. which is to say relays between these bodies, which is to say individual events of communication or within publishing ...
- Tarde, no abstract “social” or “social facts” .. just relays of imitative traces between monads or individual bodies etc ... and of course these are very heavily relayed by modes of publishing ..  
[<http://www.flickr.com/photos/msippey/4572325944/>]

Publics

- Publics are the **idea of a “collection” of specific acts of publishing** (everyone archiving, expressing, distributing/aggregating ...) ..
- Ideas of publics become a kind of distributed “meme” within specific acts of publishing ...
- this enables the ongoingly different assemblage of the “social body” through space and time ..

P  
ublics

- The public becomes a kind of shifting data/metadata that represents an imagined community with nevertheless real effects
- But there are a string/collection of specific (actual) social events of communications/publishing... relayed from body to body ... that underlie this construction of the public, even if this then in turn feeds back into everything as an idea/meme

Visualization

- is a particularly effective version of this ...
- imagining a collection of events (for example, climate data, recording

weather events from over time and around the globe), gathered into events of publishing (a scientific visualization, a visualization in a newspaper, etc) that then shift both the notion of a public and change the kinds of relays (of ideas, feelings, etc) that move through the social body)

### Visualization

- an aggregator of information often concerning the social body,
- making the invisible visible .. seeing “over the new horizons”
- transparency as a complex drive for control ... while risk averse, etc  
SO, E. G. CLimate Change And Visualization
- means two things
- 1. visualization in scientific research (the social body of climate scientists)
- 2. visualization in the communication of science within the "public sphere" (the more general social body ... this is very different from the first, but both come together in debates such as those about climate change)

### Climate Change

- the problem is we can't see “it”
- so visualization crucial
- and much fought over, as it will influence what the social body will become ..

### The “Hockey Stick”

- Michael Mann and the fights over hockey stick
- <http://www.skepticalscience.com/broken-hockey-stick.htm>
- <http://www.google.com.au/search?q=climate+change+visualization>
- <http://www.google.com.au/search?q=michael+mann+hockey+stick>

- and remember all this feeds back into desires, drives, individual and social bodies, other networks, politics, decisions (neuroeconomics), etc  
Some OTHER Examples
- Assemblage for Creating Thought (ACT)
- <http://brianholmes.wordpress.com/2010/04/27/systems-dynamics-lives-on/>
- [http://www.funnelinc.com/funl\\_workbook\\_detail.html](http://www.funnelinc.com/funl_workbook_detail.html)
- <http://www.funnelinc.com/index.html>
- skies (natural “body”)  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TR0DZRw9IkA&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TR0DZRw9IkA&feature=player_embedded)  
VJing, Climate Change (and other examples from the past few weeks)
- what we are trying to get to grips with in all these is data as a way of producing visualizations and therefore engaging with our (social and individual) bodies in a complex, world (in both space and time)
- all are about finding rhythms of connection etc over time, as events of publishing ripple through the social body
- And I hope you can see where we will be going when we head towards distribution and aggregation .. amidst it all .. collecting (aggregation) and redistributing all this data and metadata, these desires and drives, these individual and social bodies ...

you can see how complex our engagements with the visual forms of content/expression are and how complex and shifting are the publics that form (and unform and form again) through the visual, the other sense, and data

now, something that’s been haunting all this ... the third aspect of publics and publishing distribution and aggregation (bringing things together)

i-publishing- aggregating- navigating UBIQUITY

I'm going to begin with a big contemporary issue/example  
Ubiquitous Computing

- Ubiquity=being everywhere, perhaps all at once, omnipresent  
Ubiquitous Computing
- Ubiquitous computing (pervasive computing, ambient intelligence)= 'a post-desktop model of human-computer interaction in which information processing has been thoroughly integrated into everyday objects and activities. In the course of ordinary activities, someone "using" ubiquitous computing engages many computational devices and systems simultaneously, and may not necessarily even be aware that they are doing so. This model is usually considered an advancement from the desktop paradigm. More formally Ubiquitous computing is defined as "machines that fit the human environment instead of forcing humans to enter theirs."  
(Wikipedia)

### Ubiquitous Computing

- multi-platform, cross platform (so that newspapers now must publish across an increasing number of platforms)
- ambient intelligence ("slivers" of computing ... chips) embedded in everything (eg tires that tell the car when they're flat)
- the "internet of things"
- everything networked
- data flows everywhere
- the problem becomes navigation (before we get to privacy etc)  
when publishing meets ubiquity
- we step off the page or screen and into the network

- “public” extends even more to include non-human objects and processes
- “publics” become even more dynamic and complex when publishing steps through the screen (off the page...) and into the network
- immersive media life
- multidimensional space (many new dimensions “invade” conventional 3-d space)  
extra-dimensional media
- *Purple Rose of Cairo*  
new relations between content and experience
- new relations between screens, canvases and cities.
- between movies and games
- when everything is a surface for publishing.  
what has this to do with publishing and aggregation?
- transductions, transformation and the move to total transparency (direct interfacing)

- becoming 'one' with machines.
- let's go back a bit ..
- what is aggregation?  
what is aggregation?
- e.g. 1. feed reader i.e. Google news. RSS- syndication
- <http://news.google.com/nwshp?hl=en&tab=wn>
- about  
[http://news.google.com/intl/en\\_au/about\\_google\\_news.html](http://news.google.com/intl/en_au/about_google_news.html)  
my filter. my feed. my choice. my navigation through the mediascape.
- 'my mix' - the I in everything
- individualisation
  - of content
  - of how its consume
  - when its consumed...
- aggregation as a form of expression ( Barnett and Flores)

- filtering your own feed.
- 'niche'ing yourself.
- hypernicheing- a shared universe that paradoxically isolates into small worlds?  
remix (again)
- lolcat time of lecture
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AuXhPKnwsaM>
- aggregation + personalisation.
- - i remix I-
- aggregation is personalisation.
- content is now co-produced through aggregation.
- you mix the world- by deciding what you'll engage with.  
content is king?

- not if you can't find it.
- not if you can't play with it.
- the questions of the age.
- thorny issues of 'quality'
- standards? experts?
- Google v News Ltd.  
distribution is king?
- two different business models—controlling distribution (News Corporation, Fairfax, etc) versus enabling aggregation (Google, Apple)

Or is it *Aggregation*?

- aggregation troubles the distinction between content/meaning and expression/distribution/syntax.
- because in gathering your own material you are more able to construct meaning/experience for yourself
- it prompts questions what 'good' we might lose (and gain) from the new flexibility in distribution and aggregation.
- In the case of aggregation, the good in question is the value of journalism for democracy

i.e. huffington post

- <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/>  
e.g.. 2 mobile media  
mobile media needs a different city

- from

to ...

screen to city

- building/world as canvas/screen
- <http://mobispray.com/>  
aggregating **experience** not just content.
- publishing 'experience' as 'content'
- and we do aggregate experience ( and then archive it)
- this forms an increasing basis for publishing and publics  
life aggregating  
what effects?
- from the hyperpersonalisation that aggregation and mobilisation  
affords?
- how do we even think of what constitutes a 'measure' of media?
  - i.e. 4 YT videos + 2SMH articles + 5 library songs+ ( saving 3 to delicious), 1 picture, two sms.

-i-worlding... (ubiquity)

- the smart house ( smart architecture) is an integrated media platform.
- wireless
- personalised to your requirements
- sensing devices everywhere.
- ( foot sensors, biometric readers etc)
- e.g.. Bill Gates house  
some features of bill gates house
- <http://www.usnews.com/usnews/tech/billgate/gates.htm>  
Navigation = publication
- navigation through a mediascape that is so intense it is material.
- a mediascape that is personalised and integral to everyday experience and social relationships.
- publishing our way through a series of other publications.  
Next Week
- a detailed but clear examination of the principles/concepts of

distribution and aggregation