Doctoral Symposium: Participants and Overview

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The WikiSym 2011 Doctoral Symposium was held as a pre-conference event on October 2nd, 2011 on the campus of Stanford University. Accepted PhD students were invited to present their dissertation work and participate in discussions and feedback sessions with three faculty mentors:

- Loren Terveen, University of Minnesota
- Coye Cheshire, University of California at Berkeley
- Robert Biuk-Aghai, University of Macau

Students also presented their work as a poster during the conference, to encourage more feedback and discussions with the WikiSym research community.

Doctoral students studying any aspect of open collaboration were invited to apply for a position in the symposium. Applications were reviewed by the panel of faculty mentors and accepted students received travel support and conference registration, courtesy of the National Science Foundation.

Eight students were accepted to participate:

Daniel Araya, The University of Illinois

Learning and Education in an Age of Collective Intelligence

In my research work, I examine public policy issues surrounding cyberinfrastructure and "cyberlearning". Like the physical infrastructure supporting an industrial economy (power grids, telephone lines, water systems, etc.), cyberinfrastructure (CI) refers to the cognitive resources (information technology, computing systems, information networks, digital sensors, and people) that support a knowledge economy. In the domain of education, CI overlaps supercomputing, data visualization, peer-to-peer learning ecologies, open educational resources (OER), and multiuser gaming environments. My focus on CI is largely based on an underlying interest in the social dimensions of learning and the potential of technology to enhance learning environments.

Adam Fish, UCLA

Liberalism & Neoliberalism in Internet & Television Convergence

Current is a global television news network that since 2005 has attempted to bring together the best practice of the two-way internet with the best practices of the one-way television in a process of democratizing media and empower viewers to become producers. This process however was fraught with difficulties. As Current discovered, the internet and television, as historically and culturally distinct systems, do not easily converge. This article presents the efforts to converge the internet and television while contextualizing the responses Current employees have towards the internet, television, and their convergence as moral-technical imaginaires, that is, cultural and discursive responses to technological affordances. Three forms of liberalism constitute my conclusion: social liberalism, economic liberalism, and neoliberialism. I contextualize the moral-technical imaginaires regarding the use of technologies to facilitate civil society as manifestations of social and economic liberalism. Lastly, Current's failure at internet-supported media democratization reveals a historical trend away from the romantic ideals of technoprogressivism and towards neoliberal practices of professionalism and consolidation.

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Helge Hemmer, The University of Wuppertal

Bridging the Gap between Research Lab, Student Experiments and Business Reality

While research results are published in primary literature (e.g. conference proceedings or articles), education mostly works with secondary literature (e.g. text books), that by their nature lack of up-to-date information on research results. People working in an industrial enterprise mostly don't have much time to keep themselves informed about latest developments from primary literature either. They get their information often from professional journals only giving non in-depth overviews or by consultants. The concept and implementation presented here is targeted to bridge this information gap for the field of production planning methods, offering a simulation enhanced knowledge management system.

Mohammad Hossein Jarrahi, Syracuse University

Social Networking Technologies and Information Knowledge Sharing in Organizations

This research is focused to both understanding and theorizing how and to what extent social networking technologies (SNTs) facilitate informal knowledge sharing among organizational members. By SNTs I mean systems that provide a viable platform upon which social interactions among individuals can build. Forms of SNT include (but are not limited to) weblogs, wikis, and social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. I address the above question by examining how SNTs affect the knowledge sharing practices based on informal networks within and across organizations.The primary outcome of this research will be a greater conceptualization of the role and value of SNTs for knowledge sharing in organizational contexts.

Brian Keegan, Northwestern University

Breaking News on Wikipedia: Dynamics, Structures, and Practices of High-Tempo Collaboration

The goal of my research is to evaluate how distributed virtual teams are able to use socio-technical systems like Wikipedia to self-organize and respond to complex tasks. I examine the practices Wikipedians employ to synthesize content about

breaking news events out of a noisy and complex information space. Using data from Wikipedia's revision histories as well as from other sources like IRC logs, I employ methods in content analysis, statistical network analysis, and trace ethnography to illuminate the multilevel processes which sustain these temporary collaborations as well as the dynamics of how they emerge and dissolve.

Katherine Panciera, The University of Minnesota

The When and Why of User Participation

My work investigates the user lifecycle, including viewing, registration, contribution, and motivations from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives. The work was conducted on Wikipedia and Cyclopath, a geowiki for bicyclists. By beginning to understand when in their lives users contribute content and why they are contributing, we can help build more effective systems that serve the users. In addition to looking at contributors, the work also investigates the opinions of consumers to better understand differences between consumers and contributors.

Heather Willever-Farr, Drexel University

Who Are We? Family History Peer Production on the Web

Peer production is becoming increasingly commonplace, as different interest groups, such as computer programmers, cycling enthusiasts, and genealogists build collaborative online artifacts. We know little about the burgeoning and diverse community of genealogists who are engaged in collaborative production on the web. I present an overview of my future research plans to study peer production by genealogists for genealogists.

Shun Ye, The University of Maryland

Truck, Barter, and Exchange: An Empirical Investigation of P2P Barter Markets

This study examines the antecedents and consequences of reciprocity in the emerging peer-to-peer barter markets. Direct reciprocal ties are found to be more likely formed between individuals with similar tastes. Both indirect and direct reciprocal ties of an individual influence transactions but in different ways. While an individual's indirect reciprocal ties help increase the likelihood of her obtaining a good she needs, direct reciprocal ties help increase the service quality of a transaction. Also, goods transacted with direct reciprocal partners tend to be rarer and of higher value. Practical implications on the design of P2P barter markets are discussed.

1. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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