Lost, found, and made
- meta-data, meta-media, and meta-communication

‘Digital data – lost, found, and made’
Seminar
Center for Communication and Computing

October 16, 2012

Klaus Bruhn Jensen
Professor
Preview

- Media of three degrees...
  - ...three-step flows of communication

- Data – lost, found, and made

- Meta-data – a special kind of found data

- Meta-media – the computer as a unique medium

- Meta-communication – humans cannot *not* communicate

- Meta-media lend new prominence to meta-communication
  - ...in practice
  - ...for interdisciplinary research
'Media’ and ‘communication’

• Media of three degrees
  • Humans as media, mass media, network media

• From ‘two-step flow’...
  • The founding of communication research across the great divide of interpersonal and mass communication (Lazarsfeld et al. (1944); Katz & Lazarsfeld (1955))

• ...to three-step flow
  • One-to-one, one-to-many, many-to-many communication (Jensen, 2009, 2010)
  • A historically contingent model (Peters, 1999)
### The big picture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communicative practices</th>
<th>Media of the first degree</th>
<th>Media of the second degree</th>
<th>Media of the third degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>One-to-one</strong></td>
<td>PROTOTYPE</td>
<td>Telegraph, telephone, fax</td>
<td>Email, text message, instant messaging, IP telephony</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Face-to-face conversation, letter</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>One-to-many</strong></td>
<td>Manuscript, theater, painting, sculpture, architecture, musical composition</td>
<td>PROTOTYPE</td>
<td>Web 1.0 / webpage, download, streaming (mass) media</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Book, newspaper, magazine, broadcasting, audio and video recording</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Many-to-many</strong></td>
<td>Cave painting, gaming, graffiti, notice board, agora, marketplace, stadium</td>
<td>Community media, public-access radio and television, telephone chat services</td>
<td>PROTOTYPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Web 2.0 / wiki, file-sharing site, online chat, massively multiplayer online gaming, social network site, blog, auction site</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Data...

• ...lost
  • ‘speaking into the air’ (Peters, 1999)

• ...found
  • Human artifacts, artworks, and documents
  • Legacy of humanities
  • ‘texts’

• ...made
  • Social practices, orientations, and interactions
  • Legacy of social sciences
  • ‘data’ from interviewing, experimenting, observing
Meta-data

• From TV meters...
  • Semi-automatic documentation of who watches what, when, for how long
  • Replaced personal diaries; telephone interviews

• ...to data mining
  • Each instance of digital communication leaves a bit trail
  • Meta-data about data – and about who did what, with which data, when, for how long, in which sequences and networks
Meta-media

• Computer as general meta-medium
  • Reproducing / remediating all previous media
  • Integrating these media, and then some
  • (Kay & Goldberg, 1977)

• Adopted ‘new’ media
  • Mass media moving online
  • E.g., newspapers, film, broadcasting

• Born ‘new’ media
  • Digital applications
  • E.g., SNS, blogs
Meta-communication

- Two aspects of meta-communication
  - Meta-linguistic: cats and/or tigers
  - Relational: who am I, who are you?
  - (Bateson, 1972)

- Humans "cannot not communicate" (Watzlawick et al., 1967)
  - Communication as a condition of any and all social life
  - Communication as a constitutive element of diverse objects of study – cognition, emotion, interaction, culture, history
Social network analysis

- Primarily quantitative methodologies (Wasserman & Faust, 1994; Monge & Contractor, 2003)
  - Networks as ‘global’ measurable structures and distributions of (meta-)data
  - ‘Everything’ is documented in and of the network
  - Big Data

- Qualitative aspects
  - Networks as ‘local’ nodes and links with contextual meanings
  - ‘Nothing’ is documented in and across contexts
  - Local contexts of action – and research
Review

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A short version

A long version

[Image of the book cover: MEDIA CONVERGENCE]

The three degrees of network, mass, and interpersonal communication

KLAUS BRUHN JENSEN
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kbj@hum.ku.dk