

Critical Internet Culture

A two weeks course

VCA, Centre for Ideas, July 29-August 9 2002

Weekdays from 4-6 PM

Guest lecturer: Geert Lovink (geert@xs4all.nl)

Program:

1. Monday July 29

Course Intro plus Short History of the Internet

Topics: short history of the computer, cybernetics and the cold war, NASA and the birth of the Internet, development of applications such as email, telnet, gopher, irc and www.

Links: www.computerhistory.org, <http://www.isoc.org/internet/history/>,
<http://www.forthnet.gr/forthnet/isoc/short.history.of.internet> (Bruce Sterling),
<http://www.pbs.org/internet/timeline/>.

2. Tuesday July 30

Free Software and Open Source

Topics: short history of free software ideas, open source as metaphor, migration into other contexts, from scientific publishing to the human genome project, astronomic data to copyleft of art works.

Links: www.gnu.org, www.mozilla.org, www.linux.org, www.oekonux.org,
www.debian.org, www.slashdot.org, <http://mikro.org/Events/OS/wos2/index-e.html>,
www.lindows.org, www.openoffice.org.

3. Wednesday July 31

Web Interfaces and the Space Metaphor

Topics: ping and traceroute commands, visualization of the Internet, interface design, network architectures, browser design, demo design and the ideology of usability.

Literature: Martin Dodge & Rob Kitchen, Mapping Cyberspace, London: Routledge, 2001. Links: <http://www.cybergeography.org/atlas/routes.html>, www.browserday.com,

4. Thursday August 1

The Rise and Fall of Dotcommania

History of techno-libertarianism, Wired and the so-called Californian ideology, rise of the dotcoms in 1998/99, business plans, venture capital and IPOs, from crash in April 2000 to the ENRON and WorldCom schandals in 2002.

Links: www.fuckedcompany.org, www.cyberselfish.com, www.thebaffler.com, <http://hotwired.lycos.com/special/ene/>, www.wired.com, www.kk.org.

5. Friday August 2

Lists, Weblogs, Message Boards

Overview of the dialogue and discussion/exchange tools on the Net, from email, electronic mailinglists and newsgroups, MOOs to open publishing weblogs such as indymedia and slashdot.

Links: www.nettime.org, www.blogger.com, www.hobbohotel.com.

6. Monday August 5

Streaming Media, Net Radio, Peer-to-peer Networks

Multi-media content online: difference between old media broadcasting and decentralized models for netcasting, online creative collaboration and file exchange. Overview of non-profit net radios. Political economy of bandwidth and lo-tech strategies.

Links: www.xchange.re-lab.net, www.b92.net, www.kazaa.com.

7. Tuesday August 6

Net.art Strategies

Difference between concepts of virtual museum, online galleries (art on the net) and self-referential net.art that questions standards and modes of communication.

Links: www.rhizome.org, www.verybusy.org, <http://www.calarts.edu/~line/history.html>.

8. Wednesday August 7

Mapping Australian New Media and Internet Cultures

Overview of new media arts organizations, their models and goals (and how to participate).

Links: www.fibreulture.org, www.anat.org.au, www.acmi.net.au, www.experimenta.org, <http://www.realttimearts.net/>, <http://www.dlux.org.au/>, <http://www.octapod.org.au/electrofringe/>.

9. Thursday August 8

Net activism, Hacktivism and Indymedia

Different models of net activism, from counter information, network building for activists to the offensive strategies of hacktivism.

Literature: Graham Meikle, Future Active, Sydney: Pluto Press Australia, 2002. Links: www.indymedia.org, www.noborder.org, www.woomera2002.com, www.n5m.org, www.mclibel.org.

10. Friday August 9
Designing the Digital Commons

Issues: intellectual property right regimes vs. free software and peer-to-peer networks, public domain within cyberspace. Plus summary and evaluation of the course.

Literature: Lawrence Lessig, The Future of Ideas: The Fate of the Commons in a Connected World, New York: Random House, 2001. Links: www.creativecommons.org, www.opuscommons.net,