

CS 8803 Social Computing: Social System Design

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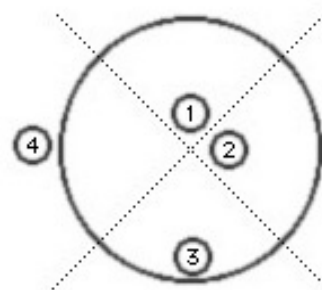
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Week 3 | September 3, 2014

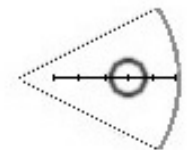
“Social Translucence: An
Approach to Designing
Systems that Support Social
Processes”

- “Socially translucent systems” – visibility, awareness, accountability
- Many analogies to physical world social encounters
- “Translucence” stands for the power of constraints
 - In face to face interactions, physical space is translucent (and not transparent) to socially salient information; it is an important resource for structuring interactions
- Concept of *knowledge community*, a place within which people would discover, use, and manipulate knowledge, and could encounter and interact with others who are doing likewise.

- Design of socially translucent systems:
 - *Making activity visible*
 - *Conversation Visualization and Restructuring*
 - *Organizational Knowledge Spaces (managing visibility and privacy)*
- Design of a system called Babble, a knowledge management system which makes social information visible, aware, and accountable
 - Social proxies
 - Group awareness



(a) proxy layout

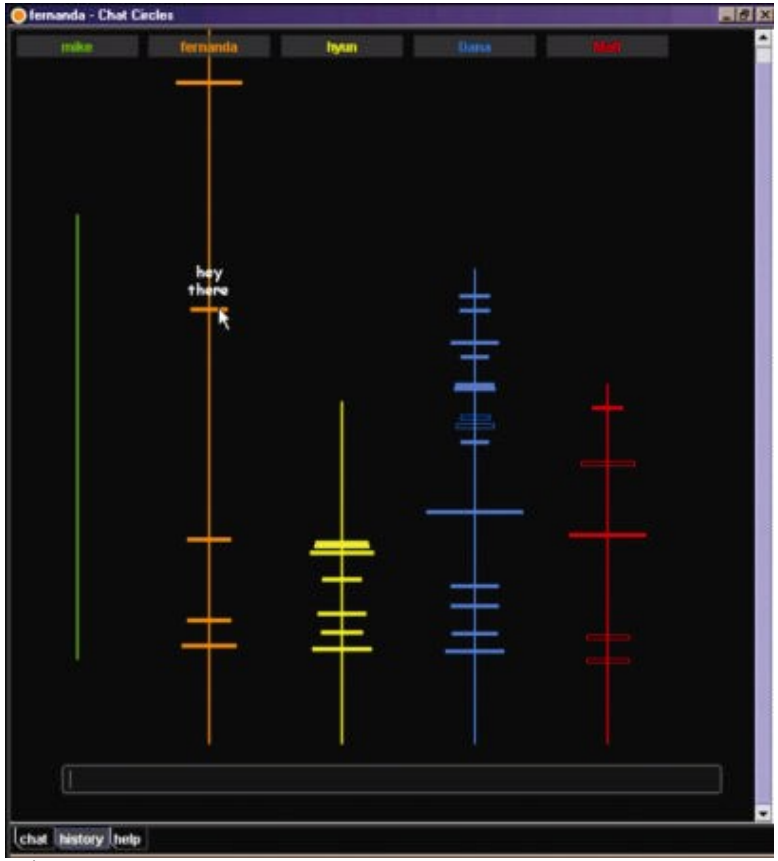
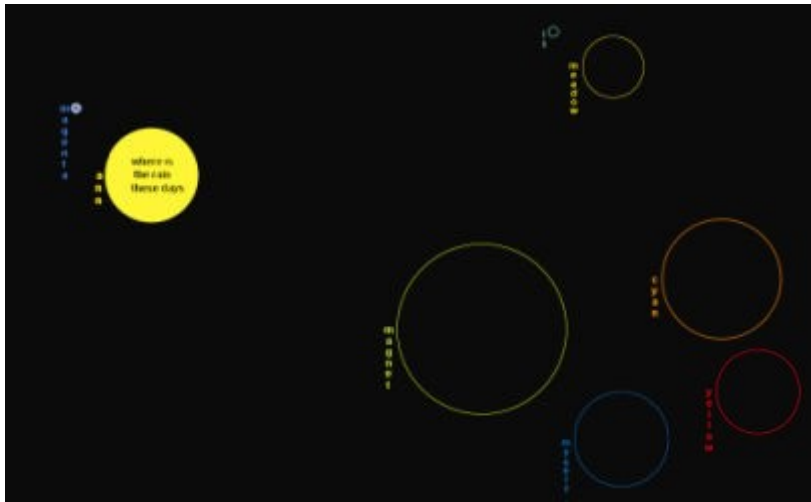


Active ...Idle

(b) animation rule

“The Chat Circles Series:
Explorations in designing
abstract graphical
communication interfaces”

- An early paper on visualizing social conversations.
- The paper shows a progression from allowing simple features to more complicated manifestations of interactions.
- Key challenge: how to balance between rudimentary text and highly graphic representations of conversations
- Chat circle series:
 - Environment: what demarcates the space? What is there to do besides chat?
 - Communication channel: how do the participants communicate with each other?
 - Individual representation: what do the participants look like? Is there a particular meaning to one's appearance?
 - History: is the conversation permanent or ephemeral? How can one see bygone interactions?
 - Movement: how do the user's move in the space?
 - Context: what is the purpose of the site?



“Visualizing Email Content:
Portraying Relationships
from Conversational
Histories”

- The paper presents “Themail”, a visualization that portrays relationships using the interaction histories preserved in email archives.
- Two main interaction modes with the visualization: exploration of “big picture” trends and themes in email (haystack mode) and more detail-oriented exploration (needle mode).
- Also presents email content parsing algorithms.
- Main idea: the patterns of communication we build up over time (on email) are significant. As email archives grow, they become valuable records of people’s relationships.
- Two questions:
 - What sorts of things do I (the owner of the archive) talk about with each of my email contacts?
 - How do my email conversations with one person differ from those with other people?

Can Twitter and Facebook be considered socially translucent systems?

Simplistic venues like IRC chats (back in the day), Google talk (today), and 4chan forums are hugely popular, though not socially translucent. Why have they worked?

Chat circles were about online chat rooms where people conversed. Do the same principles of design (environment, history, comm. channel etc.) apply to today's social media sites?

Concept of “hearing range” seems very novel. What would be equivalent of a hearing range on Twitter or Facebook?

Chatscape allowed users to describe others with their chosen set of characteristics. While it may make conversations more “contextual”, what risks does it pose if applied to today’s social computing platforms?

Can something like chat circles be easily adapted to represent today's social media conversations? If not, why? Hint: who uses chat rooms these days?!

Can a similar visualization like Themail be applied to modern social networks/media? What are the opportunities and challenges?

Many of us are lurkers on Twitter or Facebook. Would Themail still be an effective visualization for lurkers?

A key idea of Themail is the ability to smartly browse conversation histories. Is it always a good thing? Why is Snapchat so popular?

New Twitter Activity Viz

- Link:
https://ads.twitter.com/user/<your_username>/tweets
- Tell me two interesting things you learn from this?

Data hack

- Download a really small sample of tweets:

<http://www.munmund.net/courses/fall2014/notes/sampleTweets.txt>

- Open Python, in your favorite editor
- Can use nltk library: count distributions of words (unigrams), bigrams in tweets

Next class

- Monday 9/8 (topic: Term Project Discussion)
- **No assigned readings**, but you need to start forming groups and discussing ideas on your term project
- Those who have been thinking about project ideas, informally pitch them in the class on Monday

Term Project Teams

- Start discussing with your classmates about potential team formation
- **Team member information due: September 8**
 - Email me and the TA about team name and members
- **Team project proposal due: September 15**
 - Use the time until September 15 to come to me and discuss project ideas
 - I'll suggest some sample projects in the class on September 8
 - Once you are final, email me and TA and the project proposal (2-3 sentences)