CS 4803 Social Computing: Social System Design II

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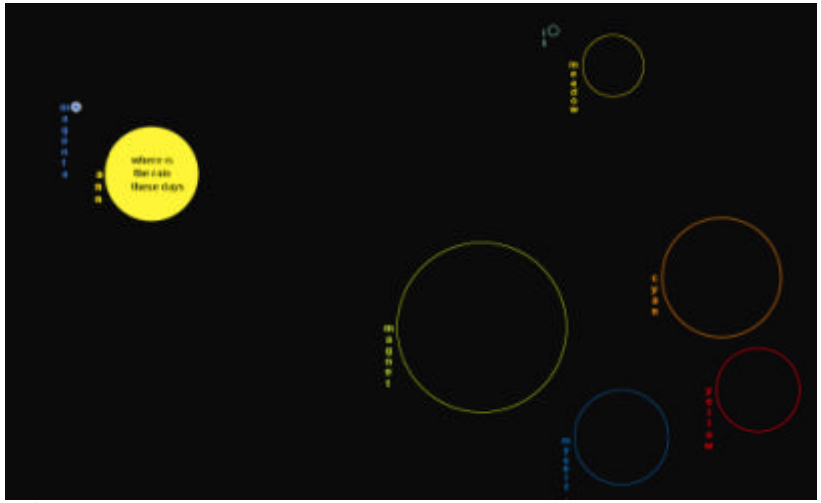
Week 5 | September 16, 2014

“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?



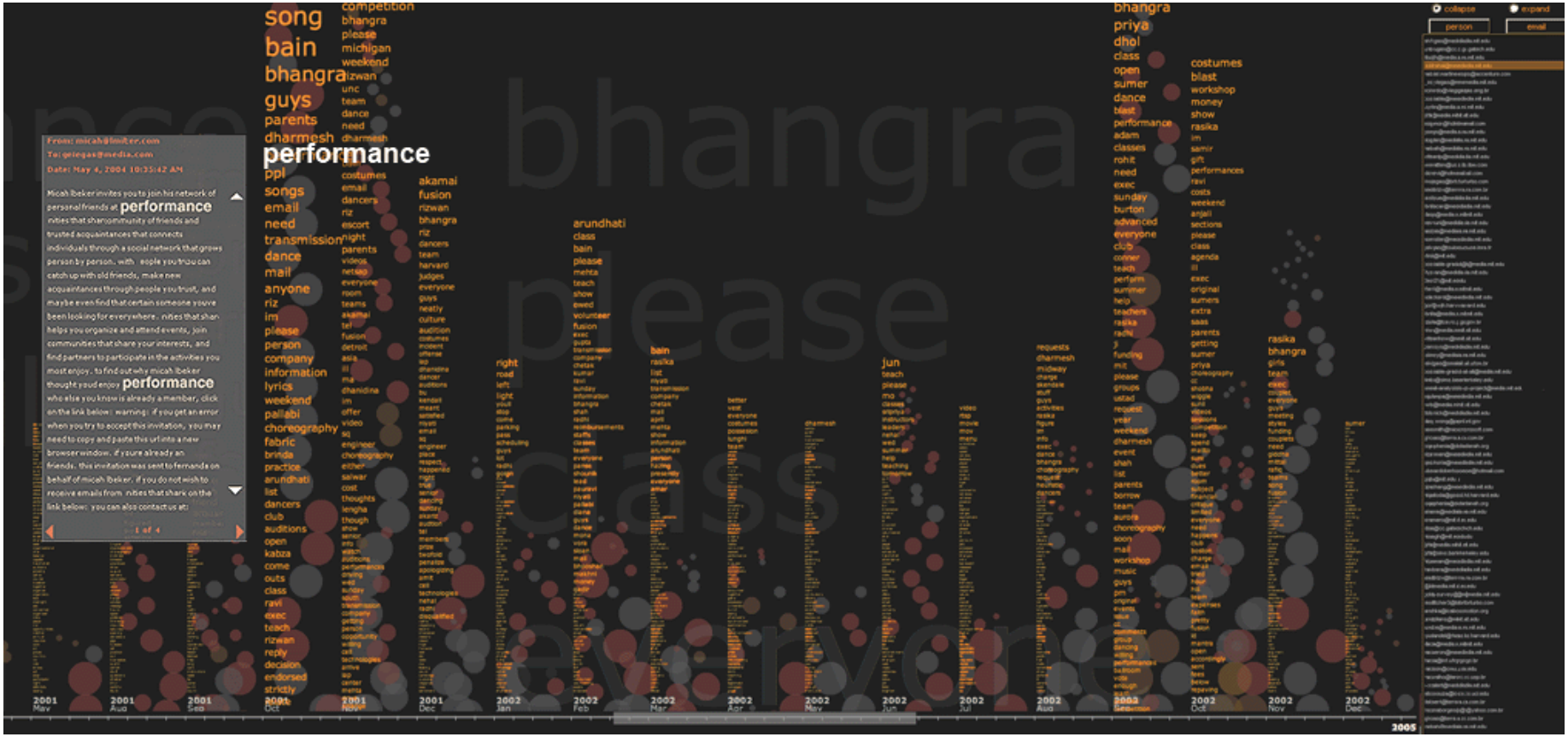

fernanda - Chat Circles
mike
fernanda
hyun
Dana
Matt
hey
there
chat
history
help


mary - Chat Circles 2
chat
history

“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?



- Yearly words—faint, gray words in the background—and monthly words—yellow words in the foreground
- Temporal rhythms are important, hence Themail has two ways of displaying content over time: the expanded view and the collapsed view.

Your reflections…

In what ways are visualizations of conversations important for social media sites?

Situate how these visualizations of social interactions fit with the social translucence theory

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?