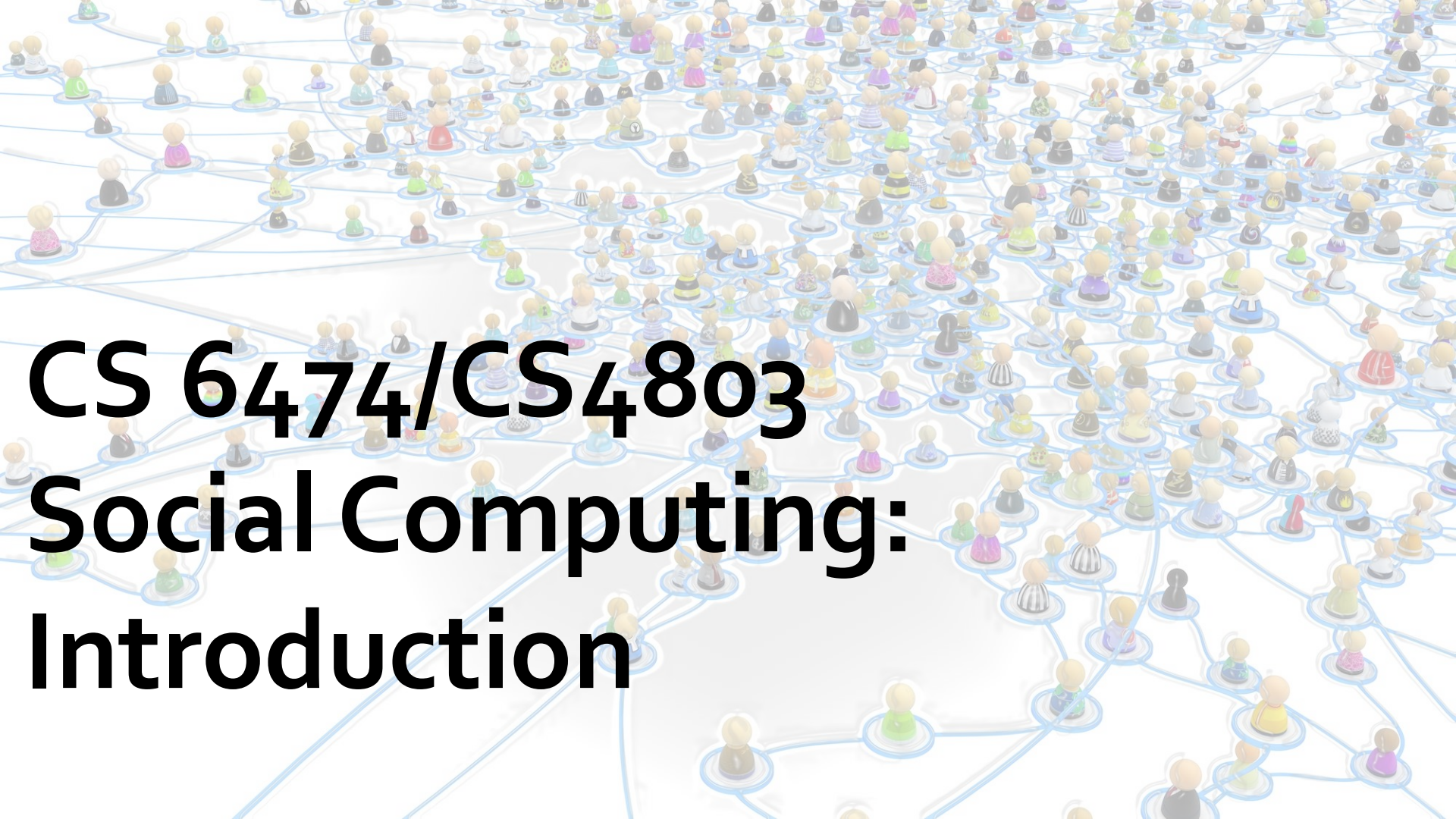




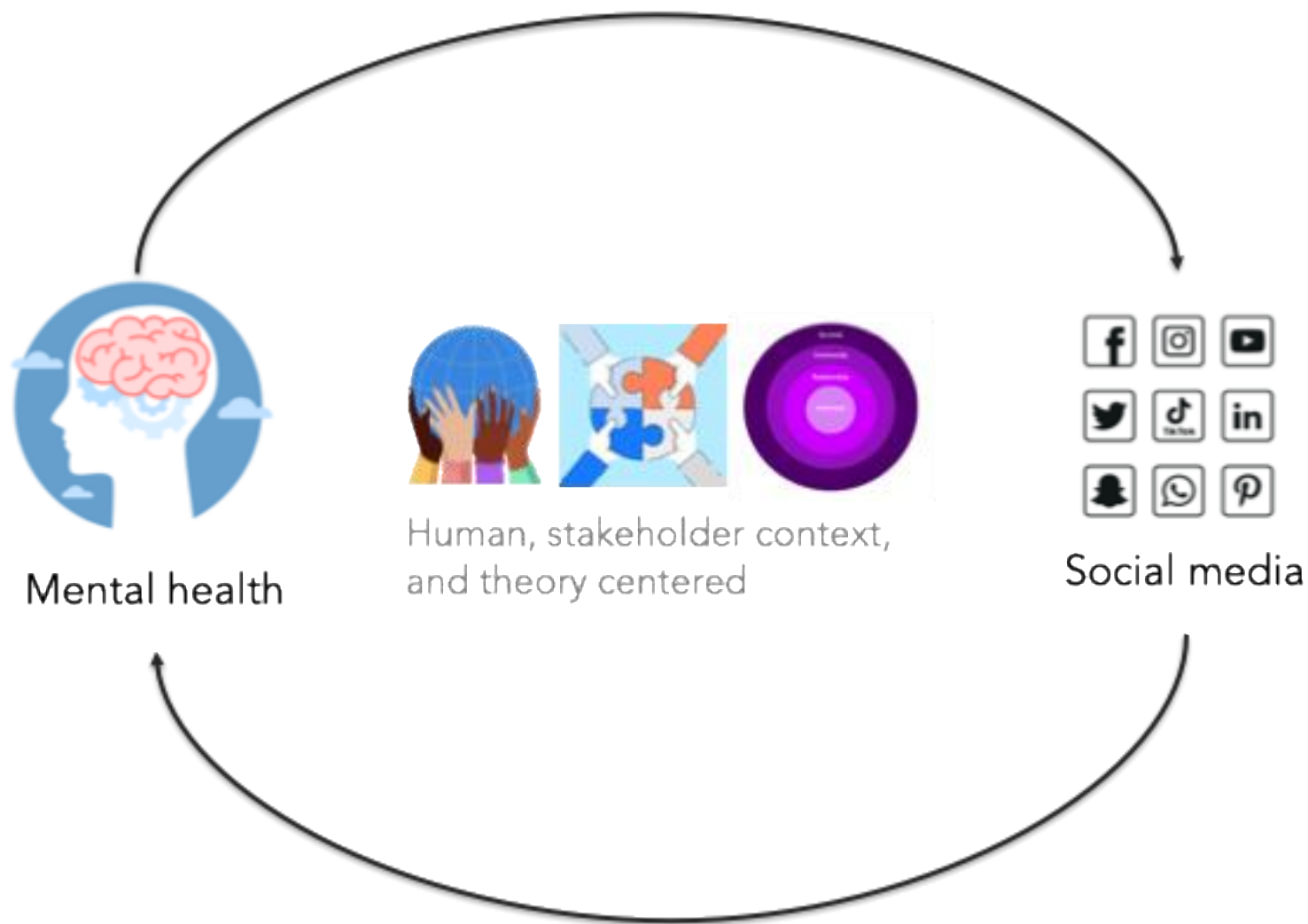
CS 6474/CS4803

Social Computing: Introduction

Munmun De Choudhury

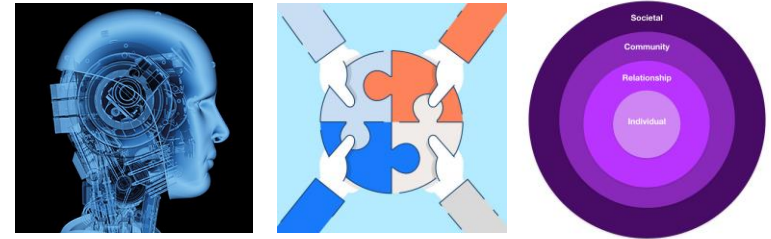
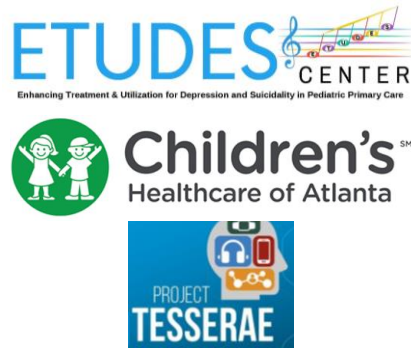
munmund@gatech.edu

Week 1 | January 6, 2025



SocWeB Laboratory

How do online technologies reflect and shape our well-being?



Human, stakeholder context, and theory centered



Interdisciplinary, collaborative approach

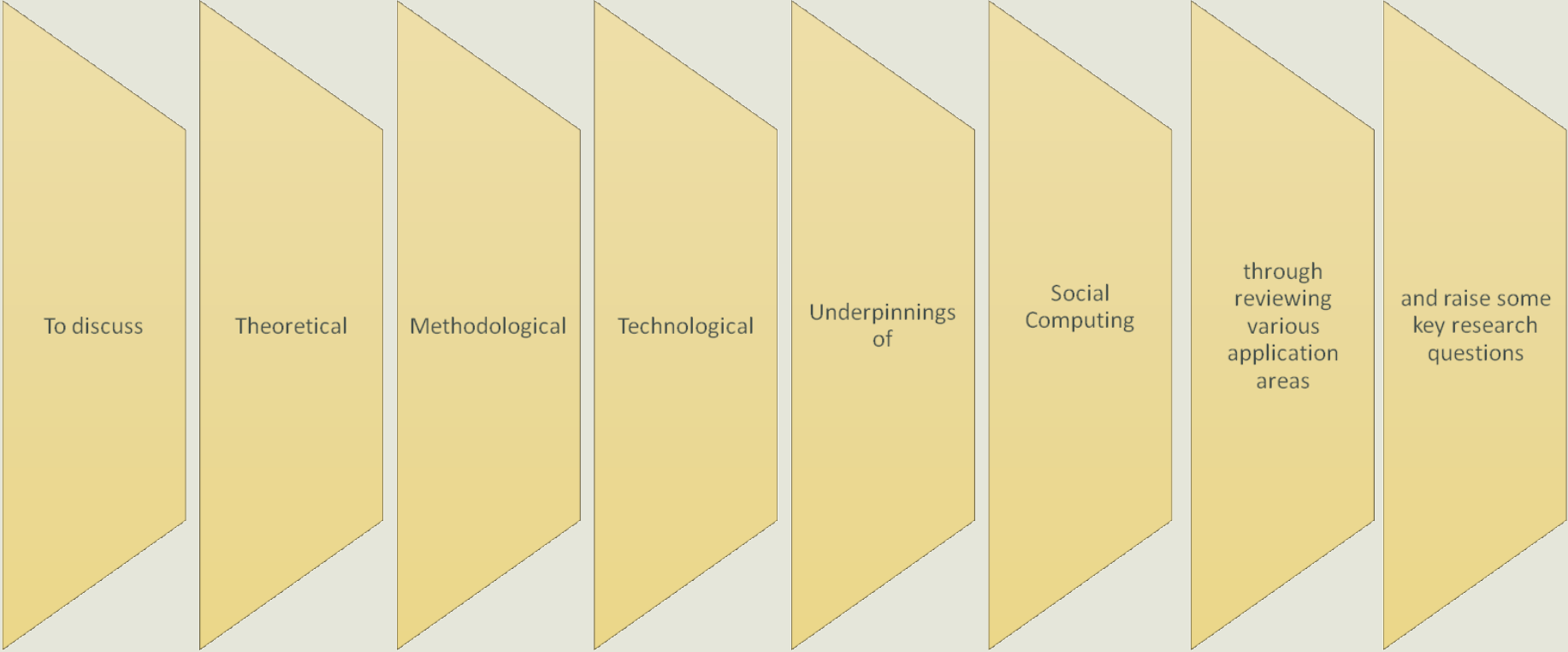
Part I: Course Structure and Information

Learning Objectives

- Course Website:
http://www.munmund.net/CS6474_Spring2025.html



- **Goal: How and why social computing works or does not work?**
- **Takeaways at the end of the course**



To discuss

Theoretical

Methodological

Technological

Underpinnings
of

Social
Computing

through
reviewing
various
application
areas

and raise some
key research
questions

Grading

- Reflection on Assigned Class Readings (any/best 10) - 25% (2.5% each)
 - : There are a total of 20 such classes with readings
 - : Piazza link for submission of reading reflections
 - : Piazza for asynchronous discussion
- Class Attendance/Participation - 10%
- Assignment I - 5%
- Assignment II - 10%
- Assignment III: 17%
- Term Project - 33%
 - : Project Proposal - 7%
 - : Project Proposal Presentations - 3%
 - : Final Project Presentation - 5%
 - : Final Report - 18%

Required Skills

- *Technical:* any object-oriented/scripting language like Python; some frontend development skills/web programming skills (e.g., javascript) if your project is about building a social tool
- *Statistics/machine learning:* preliminary knowledge of working with some data and using some analytical software (e.g., Python, R)
- *Reading/writing:* approximately two papers assigned for each class, term paper proposal and final term project report

Important notes about skills

- No programming will be taught – you are required to have fairly good working knowledge of data analytics
- Analytics review
- Some review of data analytics during the discussion of various readings, as appropriate

Course Materials/Logistics

Participation in Class Readings

- Write short blurbs on Piazza (under “reflections”) about the readings assigned for a particular class
 - Blurbs can range from 300-600 words in length
- Sample reflections available on the course website
- Any/best 10 reflections out of 20 topical classes
 - Starts from next week (Monday, Jan 13)
- **Piazza link for signup:**
<https://piazza.com/gatech/spring2025/cs6474a4803sc>



Assignment I

- Questions will focus on your experience of exploring your own social media behavior(s).
- *Insight focused questions*
- What to hand in?
 - A report
 - Submission on Canvas

Assignment II

- Questions will focus on the topics of the reading materials covered until the point the assignment is released.
- ***Design focused questions***
- What to hand in?
 - A report + screenshots of the design
 - Submission on Canvas

Assignment III

- Questions will focus on the topics of the reading materials covered until the point the assignment is released.
- ***Data analytic questions***
- What to hand in?
 - A report + code in a zipped folder/notebook
 - Submission on Canvas

Term Project

- Goals:
 - Group project: 3-4 people
 - You are free to pick your group – use Piazza to know and find like-interested classmates
 - Need to discuss your project idea with instructor/TA early on in the course, before proposals are due

Term Project

- Group effort
- Individual assessment – clearly articulate individual goals and contributions in the project proposal
 - In the final report, revisit the above list to indicate what you have done
- Peer assessment – indicate how each of your groupmate accomplished what they were supposed to do
 - Only required in the final report
 - Anonymous to teammates

Late Policy

- Reading reflections are due *at 11:59pm* on the **day before** the relevant class meeting.
- Assignments are due *at 11:59pm* on the date listed for that assignment.
- Term project report is due at 11:59pm on the date listed.
- Some work (only assignments, but not the project deliverables or reading reflections) submitted more than 15 minutes after the due time will be assessed a 25% penalty.
- Each additional 24 hours of lateness will result in an additional 25% being taken off the grade for that assignment. After 2 days, the assignment will not be accepted and a grade of 0% will be entered.

Help and Resources

- Office hours: By Appointment; Virtual/Link on Canvas
- Email: munmund@gatech.edu
- Teaching Assistants:
 - Jasmine Foriest (jay@gatech.edu)
 - Jiawei Zhou (j.zhou@gatech.edu)
- Office hours: Virtual/By appointment
- Email announcements will be made over the course page on Canvas

If you need to reach me or the TA...

- Questions should be directed via email to me or TA for fastest response
- For questions/concerns related to the assignments or project deliverables, reach us at least 2 days (48 hours) before the due date.
- Questions within 2 days (48 hours) of the due date should not be expected to be answered by the deadline.

Part II: Defining “Social Computing” / Background

Why Social Computing?

Interact

- Expressions
- Gestures
- Spoken Word
- Written Word



Sensitive to the people around

Humans are
Social

Make decisions shaped by social context

- Choosing a restaurant
- Crossing the street

Doing what others do and following what others say

Theoretical and Infrastructure Basis of Social Computing

Class Discussion

A) An example of a social computing system
(that exists online)

Why?

B) An example of a non-social computing
system (that exists online)

Why?

Social Computing Tools

BLOG

WIKI

Social Networks

RSS

Social
Bookmarking

VOIP

Others

- Internet Forums
- Multimedia Sharing
- Virtual Reality

people **creating**
(blogs, user-generated content and podcasts)



people **connecting**
(social networks and virtual worlds)



people **collaborating**
(wikis and open source)



people **reacting**
(to each other: forums, ratings and reviews)



people **organizing content**
(tags)



people **accelerating consumption**
(RSS and widgets)

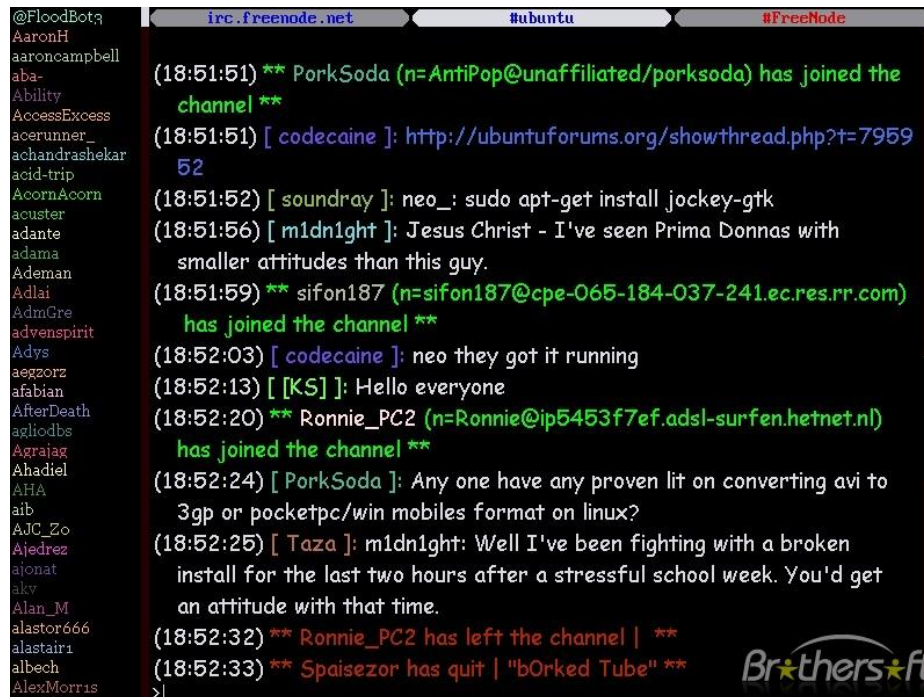


A Brief Historical Analogy

ARPANET and groupware

IRCs and forums were early “social”

- IRC – Internet Relay Chat, very early rudimentary application layer protocol that supported text based message exchange



```
@FloodBotg
AaronH
aaroncampbell
aba-
Ability
AccessExcess
acerunner_
achandrashekar
acid-trip
AcornAcorn
acuster
adante
adama
Ademan
Adlai
AdmGre
advenspirit
Adys
aegzorx
afabian
AfterDeath
agliodbs
Agrajag
Ahadiel
AHA
aib
AJC_Zo
Ajedrez
ajonat
akv
Alan_M
alastor666
alastair1
albech
AlexMorris
>

irc.freenode.net #ubuntu #FreeNode

(18:51:51) ** PorkSoda (n=AntiPop@unaffiliated/porksoda) has joined the
channel **
(18:51:51) [ codecaine ]: http://ubuntuforums.org/showthread.php?t=795952
(18:51:52) [ soundray ]: neo_: sudo apt-get install jockey-gtk
(18:51:56) [ m1dn1ght ]: Jesus Christ - I've seen Prima Donnas with
smaller attitudes than this guy.
(18:51:59) ** sifon187 (n=sifon187@cpe-065-184-037-241.ec.res.rr.com)
has joined the channel **
(18:52:03) [ codecaine ]: neo they got it running
(18:52:13) [ [KS] ]: Hello everyone
(18:52:20) ** Ronnie_PC2 (n=Ronnie@ip5453f7ef.adsl-surfer.hetnet.nl)
has joined the channel **
(18:52:24) [ PorkSoda ]: Any one have any proven lit on converting avi to
3gp or pocketpc/win mobiles format on linux?
(18:52:25) [ Taza ]: m1dn1ght: Well I've been fighting with a broken
install for the last two hours after a stressful school week. You'd get
an attitude with that time.
(18:52:32) ** Ronnie_PC2 has left the channel | **
(18:52:33) ** Spaisezor has quit | "bOrked Tube" **

Br★thers★ft
```

IRCs and forums were early “social”

- Forums – message boards or an online discussion site where people can hold conversations in the form of posted messages



The screenshot shows the CTC Forum website. The header is blue with the CTC logo and text: "CTC Forum Discussion boards hosted by CTC". There is a search bar and a "Search" button. Below the header, there is a "Board index" section with a "User Control Panel (0 new messages) • View your posts" link. A navigation bar includes links for "FAQ", "Members", and "Logout [admin]". The main content area displays a table of forum boards under the "CYCLING" category. The table has columns for "TOPICS", "POSTS", and "LAST POST".

	TOPICS	POSTS	LAST POST
Does anyone know ... ? General cycling advice (NOT technical !) Moderators: Si , Graham , Spam Busters	5879	66775	by Bruce J Q 07 Feb 2011 05:23 pm
Bikes & Bits - Technical section For discussions about bikes and equipment. Moderators: Si , Graham , CJ , Spam Busters	7361	74700	by reohn2 Q 07 Feb 2011 06:25 pm
Campaigning & Public Policy Moderators: Si , Graham , Spam Busters	1211	29005	by Regulator Q 07 Feb 2011 06:26 pm
CTC Charity Debate A place to discuss the issues relating to the proposed change in the national CTC's structure. Moderators: Si , Graham , admin , Spam Busters	76	2353	by meic Q 06 Feb 2011 12:23 pm
On the road Commuting, Day rides, Audax, Incidents, etc. Moderators: Si , Graham , Spam Busters	2691	46223	by snibgo Q 07 Feb 2011 04:50 pm
Lands End to John O'Groats Specific board for this popular undertaking. Moderators: Si , Graham , Spam Busters	955	10423	by patpalloon Q 07 Feb 2011 04:42 pm
Touring & Expedition Cycle-touring, Expeditions, Adventures, Major cycle routes NOT LeJoG (see other special board) Moderators: Si , Graham , Spam Busters	3025	27900	by snibgo Q 07 Feb 2011 06:21 pm
Mountain Biking Anything specific to off-road riding. Moderators: Si , Graham , ctc.org.uk/mtb - Ian , Spam Busters	312	2564	by Steve Kish Q 07 Feb 2011 04:44 pm
People, Events & Rides Talk about events & rides. Find companions for your ride. Moderators: Si , Graham , Spam Busters	1392	6537	by drdimi Q 07 Feb 2011 01:01 am

The advent of modern social computing came when digital systems began to process user-generated content and make use of it for their own purposes – which often involved producing new functionality and value for their users

What attracts people most, it would
appear, is other people.

— William Whyte

The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces

- Whyte led the Street Life project in the 1970s, and began investigating the various dynamics of urban spaces.
- He focused on the city, and studied New York City's parks, plazas, and various informal recreational areas like city blocks -- a total of 16 plazas, 3 small parks.
- Goal: 1) *why do some city spaces work for people while others don't*, and 2) *what the practical implications might be about living better, more joyful lives in our urban environment*.

The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces

An aerial photograph of a small urban space, likely a park or sports field, with a green field in the center, surrounded by buildings and a fence. The image is dark, with the text overlaid in white.

**THE SOCIAL
LIFE OF THE
STREET**

Part III: Introductions