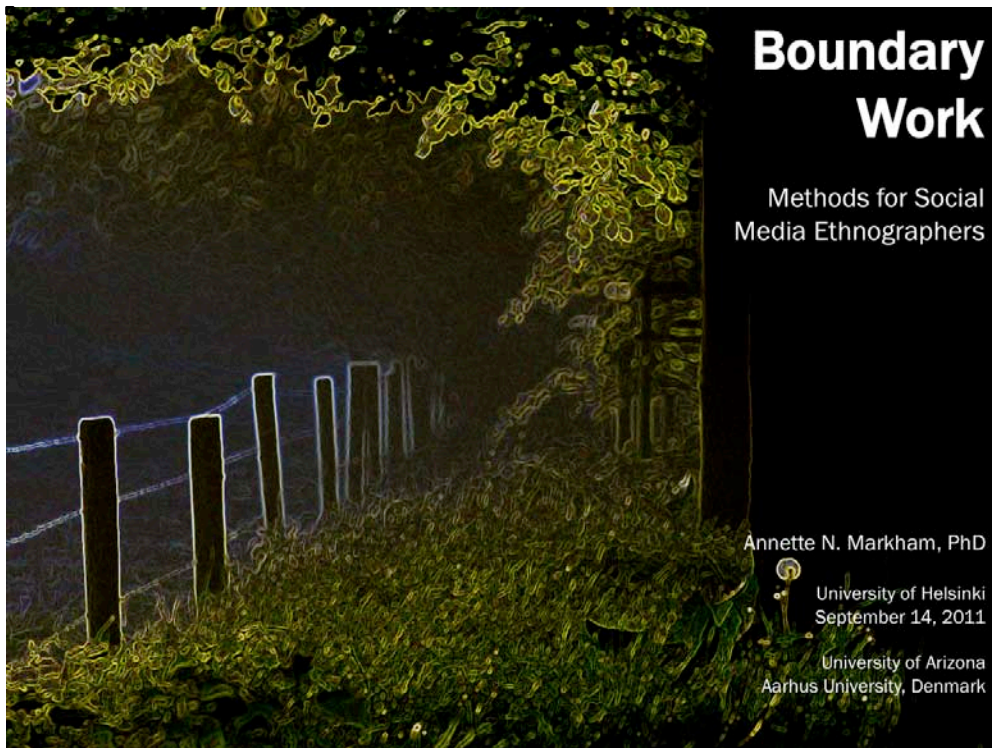




→ **Note to readers:**

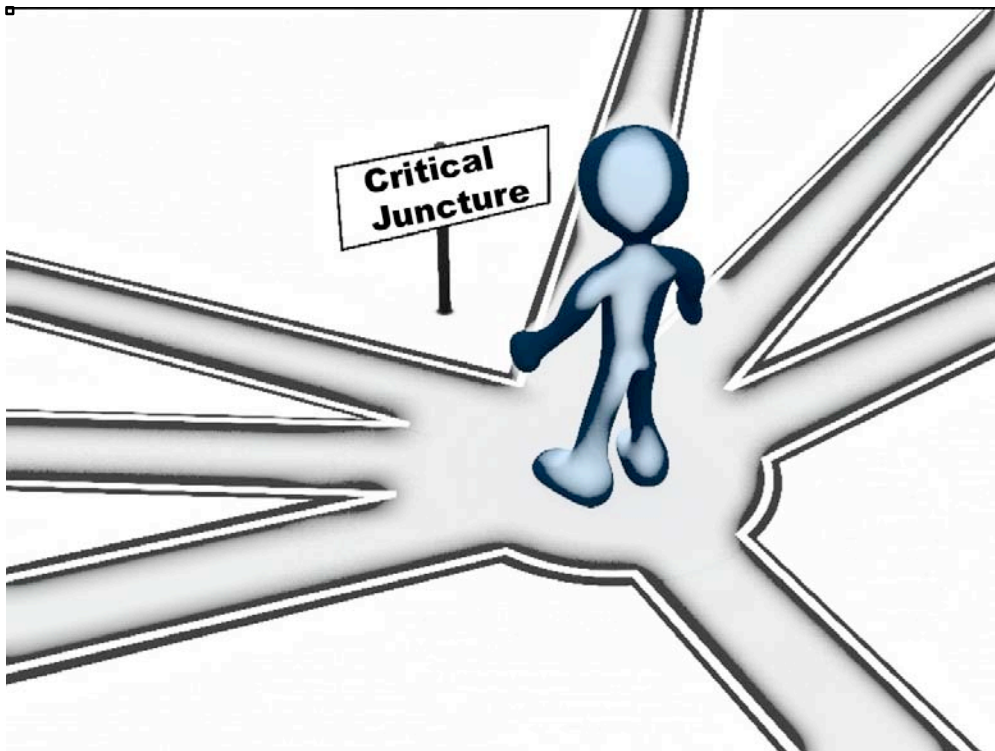
These are brief notes to accompany images for the presentation. They should be viewed as personal speaker outline rather than a complete or thorough argument.

Likewise, images are not cited fully. I can provide resources on request. But again, these are images used for educational purposes only, for the context of this particular event.

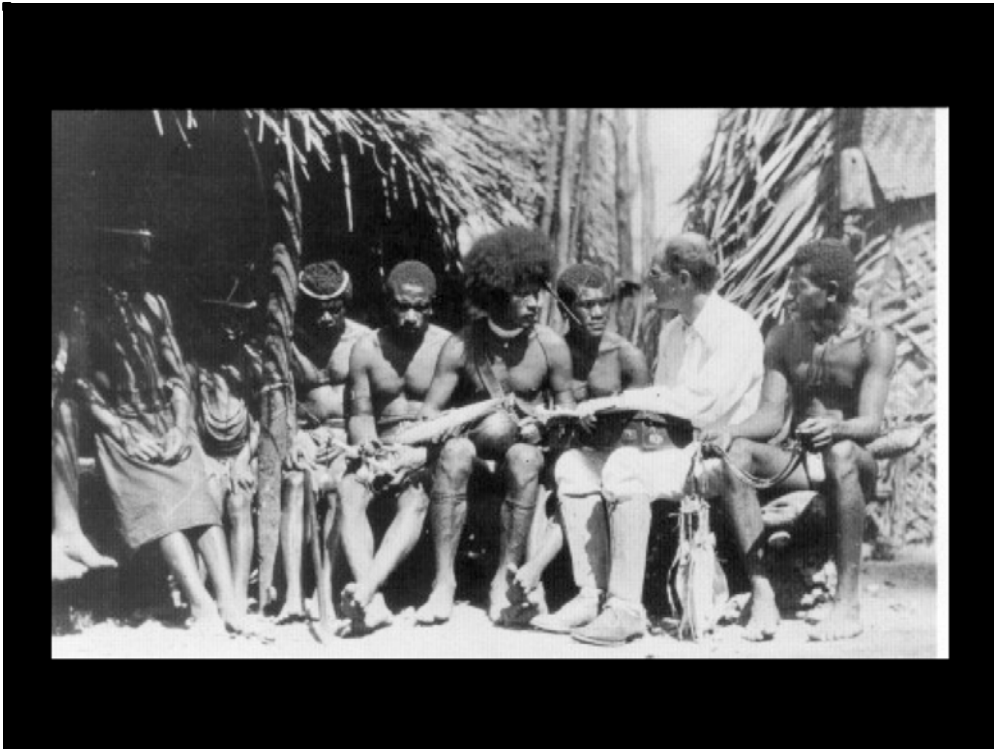
Please contact the author with questions or comments: amarkham@gmail.com

Been working on a book about applying the lens of remix culture to qualitative methods in internet studies.

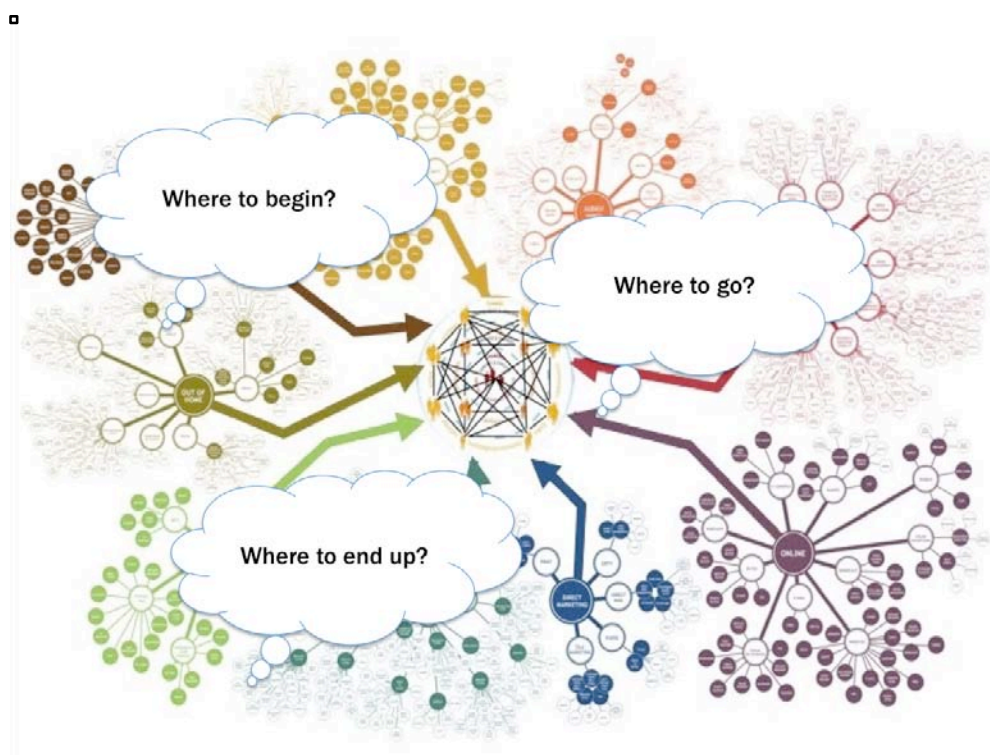
1. I want to talk about what some of the boundaries imposed on us by traditions of method. Like what is supposed to be ethnography, or what counts as research.
2. And some of the boundaries we need to negotiate when we're trying to conduct research in this era.
3. And how we might think about "the field" or the object, when both these are constantly moving and shifting under us.



When I think about doing research, and how I've done it, I get this image in my mind. We do a lot of this in ethnography. Stand at critical junctures, deciding where to go next.

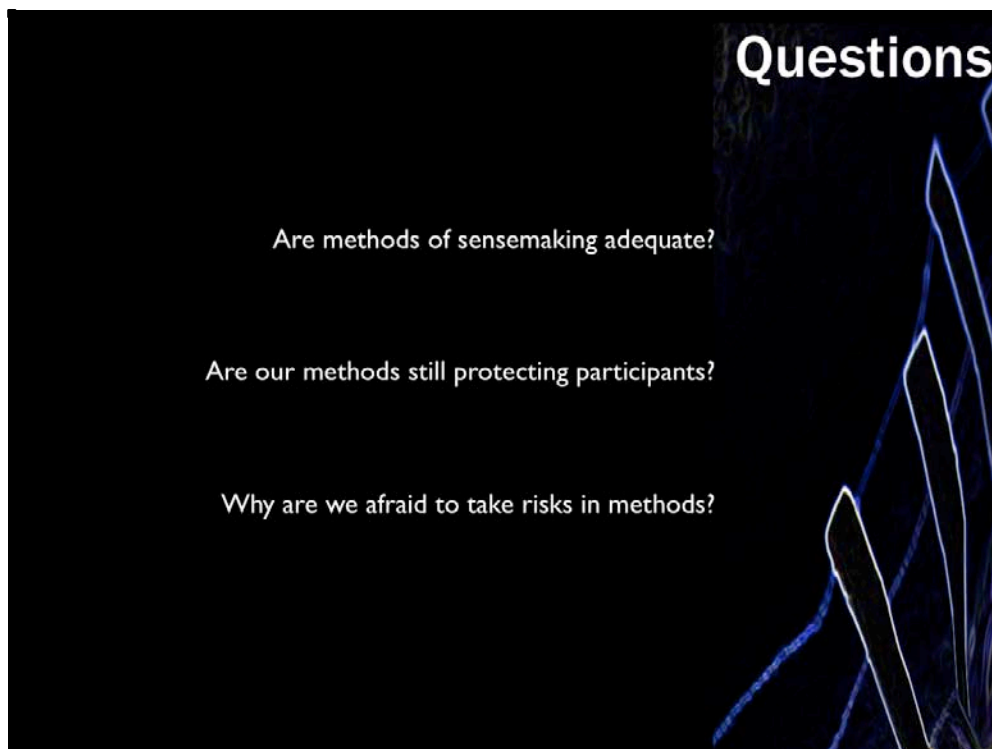


In a fairly homogeneous, simple environment, this was challenging enough. .(malinowsky)



But in the past few years, our contexts for research have begun to look a lot more like this. (animation.on.slide)

It's difficult to know where to begin, much less where to go. And where you'll end up? That's perhaps the most important question, because it marks a shift from thinking about the project as something stable to thinking about it as an argument you make. In a remix culture, it doesn't matter if you explain the whole or capture the 'truth' of a situation. That's impossible. What matters is: are we asking relevant questions? Are we doing thoughtful and rigorous research? And are we making good arguments, situated in specifics of the contexts? Are we helping? Contributing?



It might help you understand where I'm coming from as a scholar and speaker if I mention that in the larger project (remix and fabrication), I'm asking these sorts of questions:

When we look at culture today, Are our methods of sensemaking and representation adequate? And by this I mean more specifically:

- 1) Do our models for ethnography work when the field is constructed much more by interaction than geography?
- 2) Do our methods for looking at interaction adequately reflect the MODES of interaction possible?
- 3) Do our thought processes as researchers fit well with norms for data collection, analysis, and reporting when our own experiences of the research are situated in our own multiphrenic experience of the world?

2) Do our methods still protect participants?

simple answer is no. Longer answer is one that I write about elsewhere.

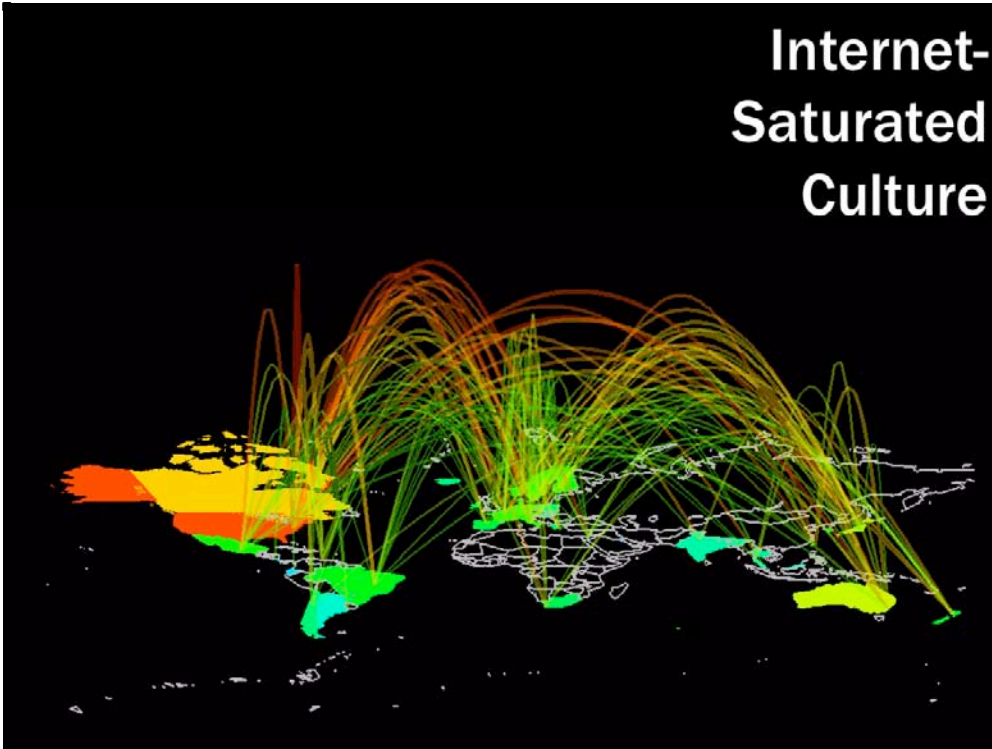
3) why, within cultural epoch of collaborative, open source, reputation based forms of knowledge production, do we see a strong persistence of traditional procedures and norms for 'what counts' as appropriate for qualitative research?

4) And related, are we afraid to take risks? Here I didn't know whether to invoke the phrase "methodological hypochondria" or "empirical imperialism." they both apply as reasons we don't feel comfortable working outside the already-established parameters for qualitative research.

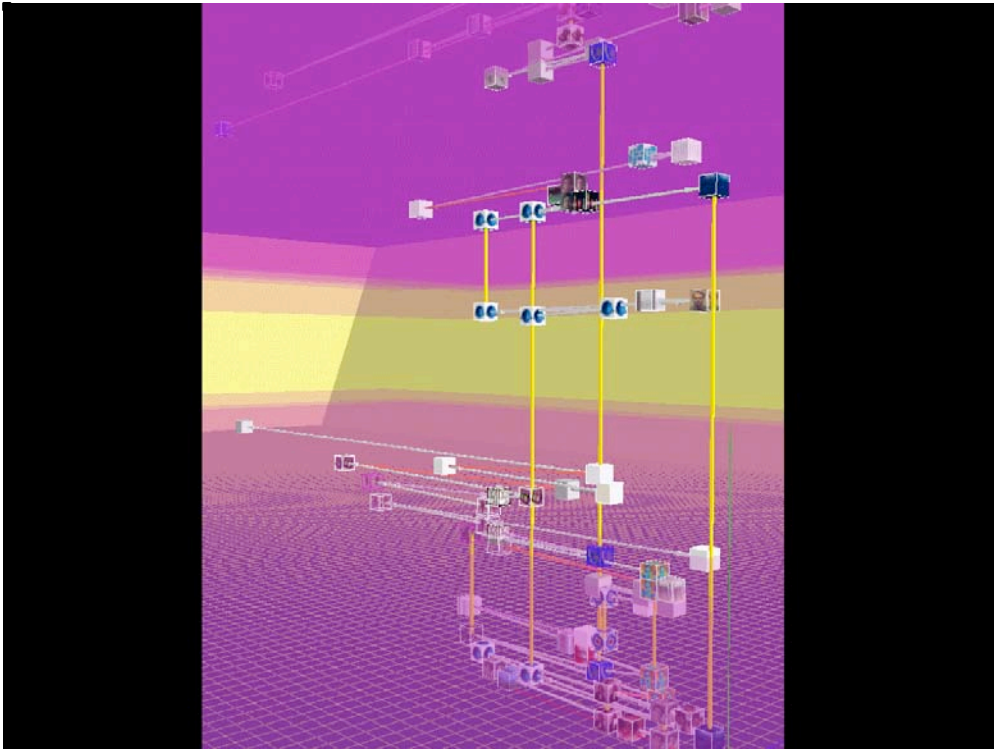
SO GENERALLY, I'm asking:

- a) What kind of research environment do we find ourselves in, in the 21st century western academic institutions? What led to what I see as an increasing conservatism in qualitative research?
- b) how can we fight against it and
- c) what would a rigorous and ethically situated practice of remix look like?

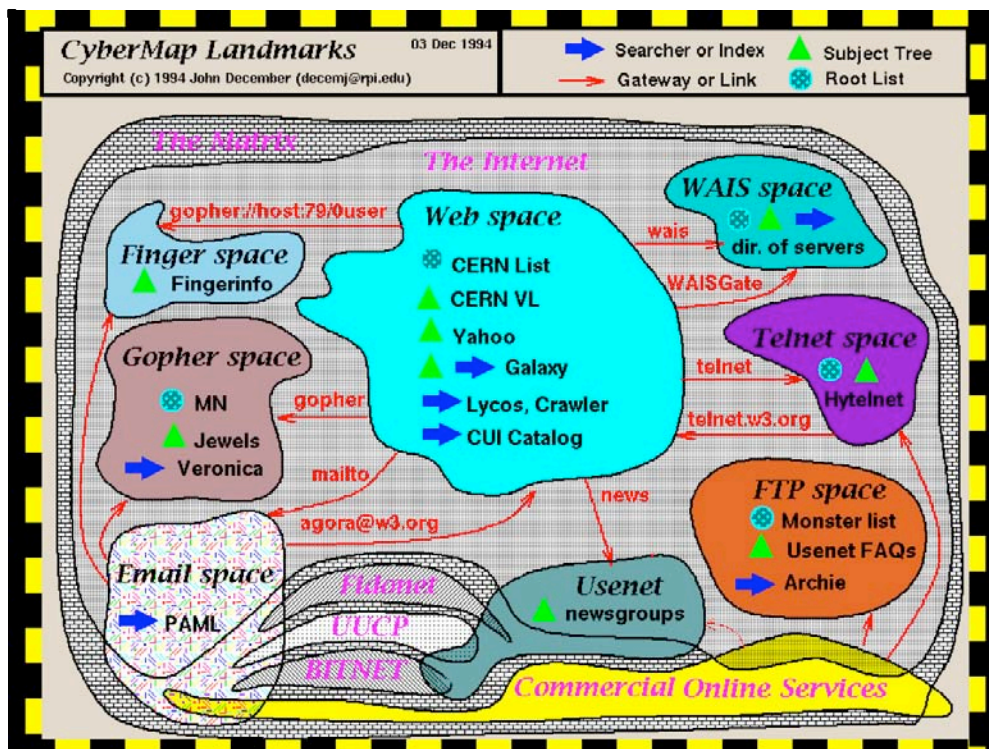
Internet- Saturated Culture



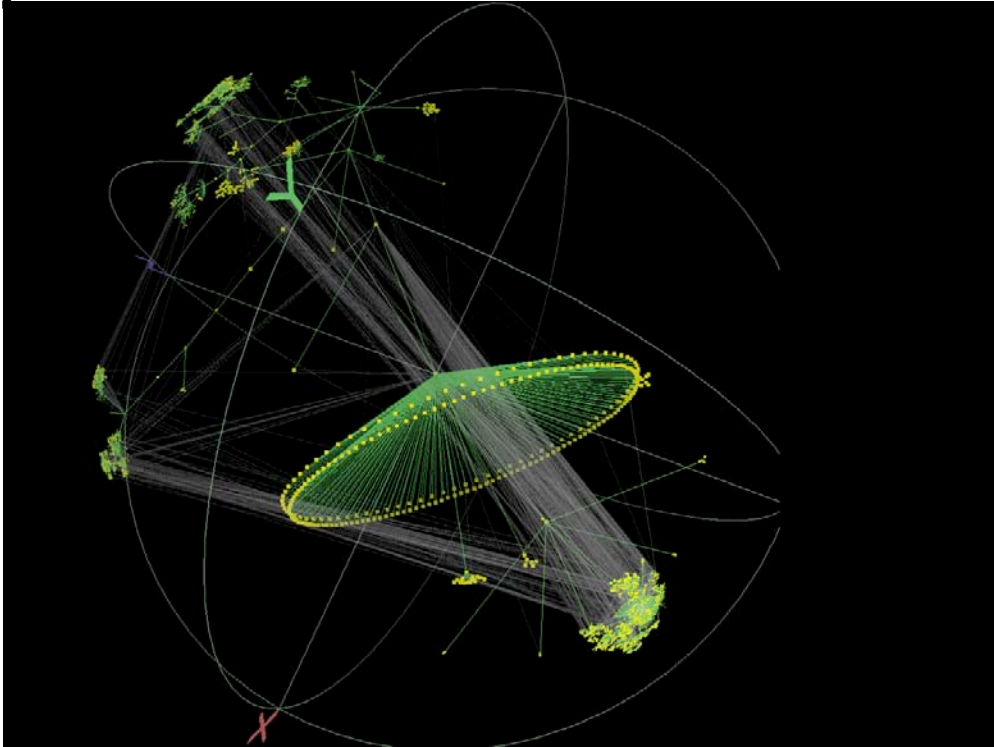
Since the commercialization of the internet in the mid 1990s, our notion about information flow, personal boundaries, and cultural formation have been shifting. Conceptualizations like these help me make sense of it. (cyberspace.Atlas)



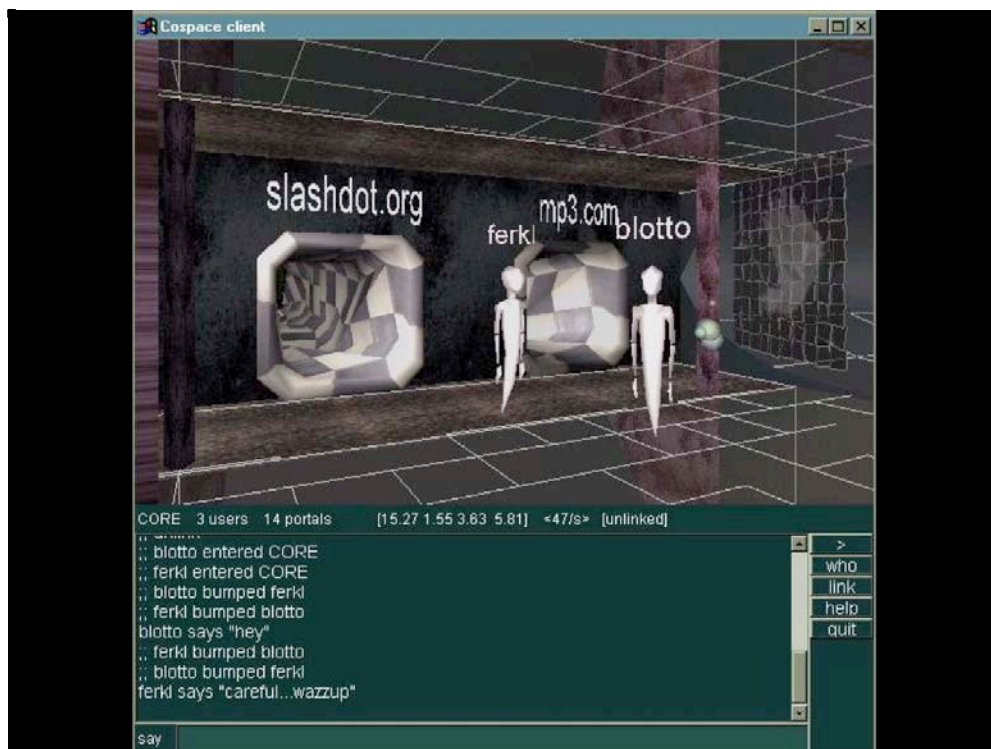
(from the Atlas of Cyberspace)



(from the Atlas of Cyberspace). From John December



(from the Atlas of Cyberspace.
Walrus)

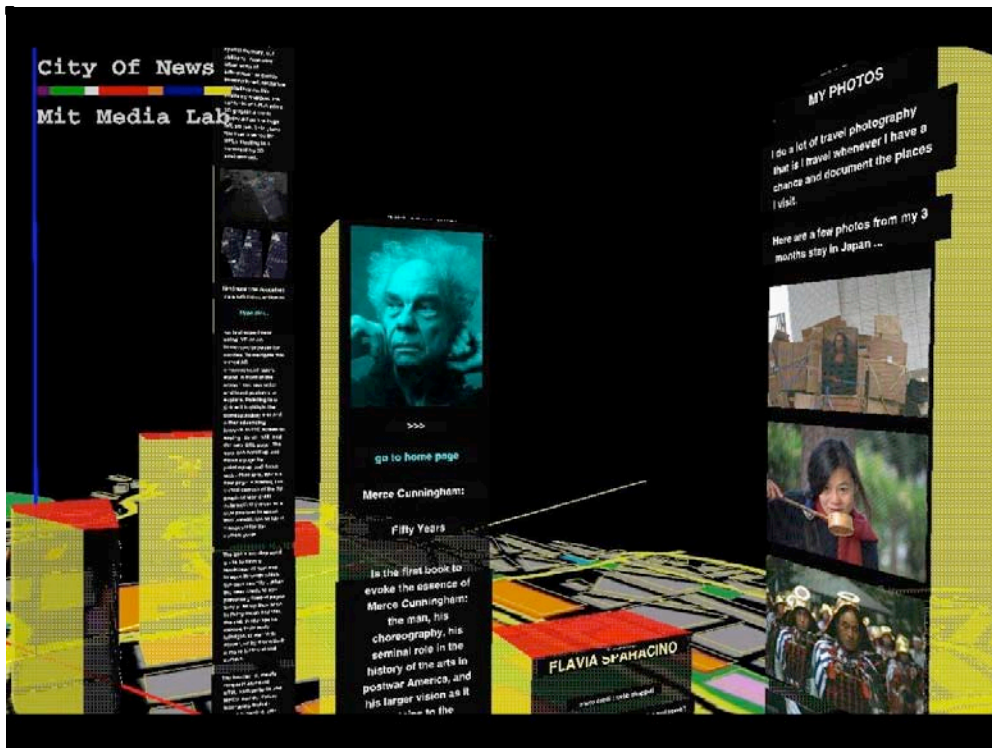


Models grew from simple networked maps to three dimensioned spaces for information exploration, including visualizations of ourselves as avatars moving through websites, software for bookmarking websites that geolocated each bookmark and identified it by type, and three dimensioned 'scapes' wherein we would exist, informationally.

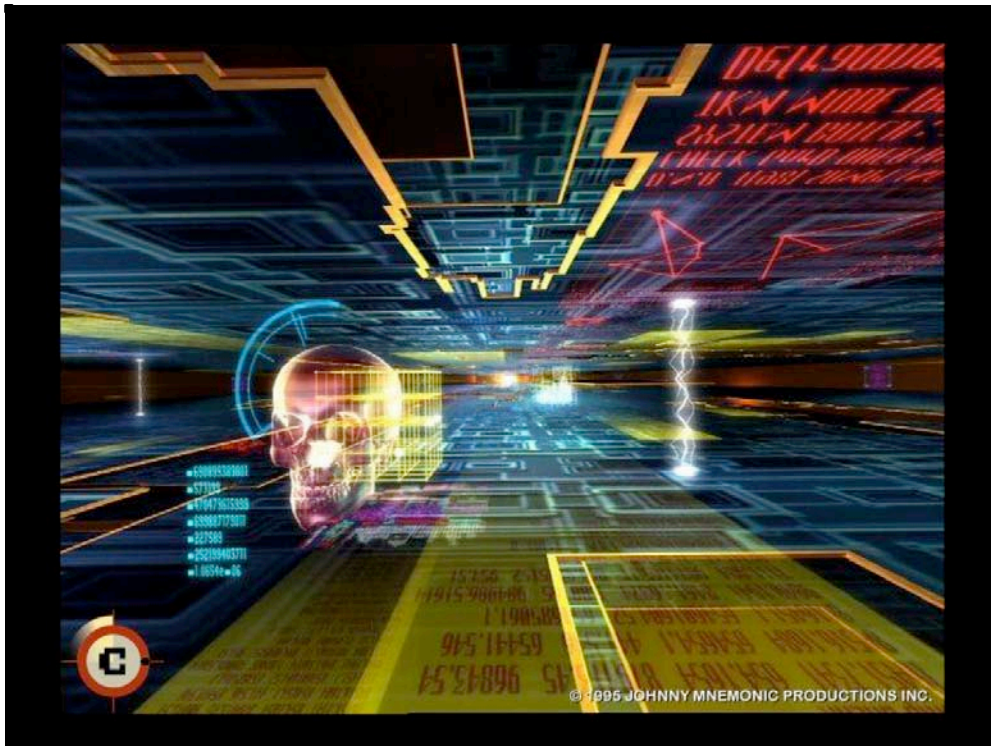




(from the Atlas of Cyberspace)



(from the Atlas of Cyberspace)



The creation of the platforms happened in parallel with films of the decade that envisioned a merging of human and machine, the creation of unique lifeworlds for our avatar selves. Here's an image of Johnny Mnemonic and following, the Matrix.

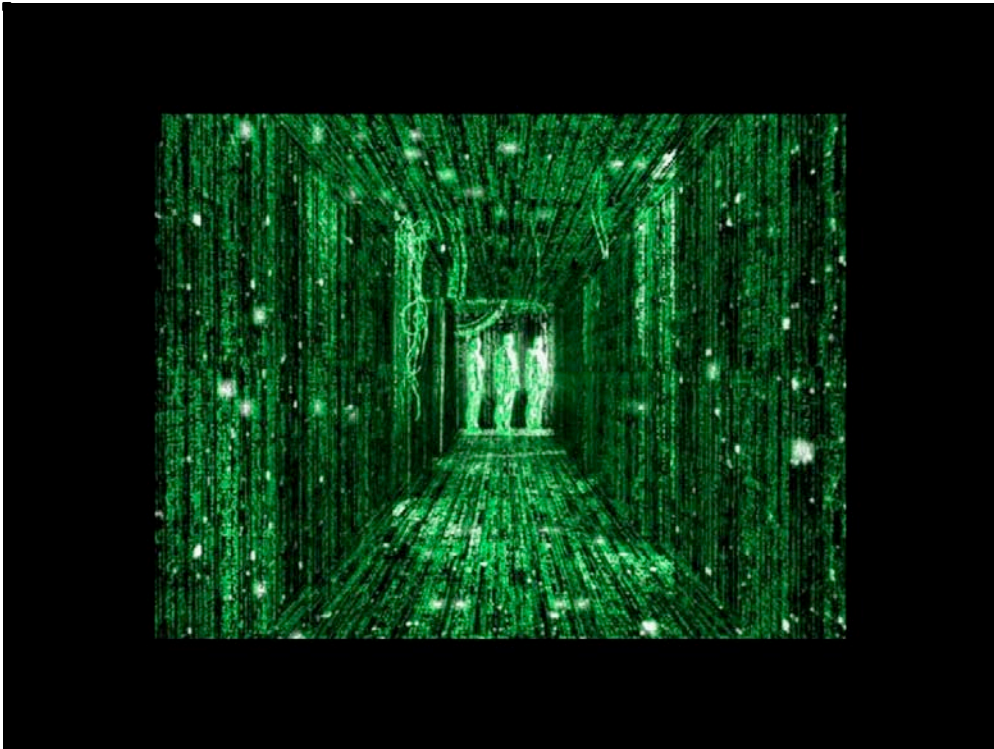
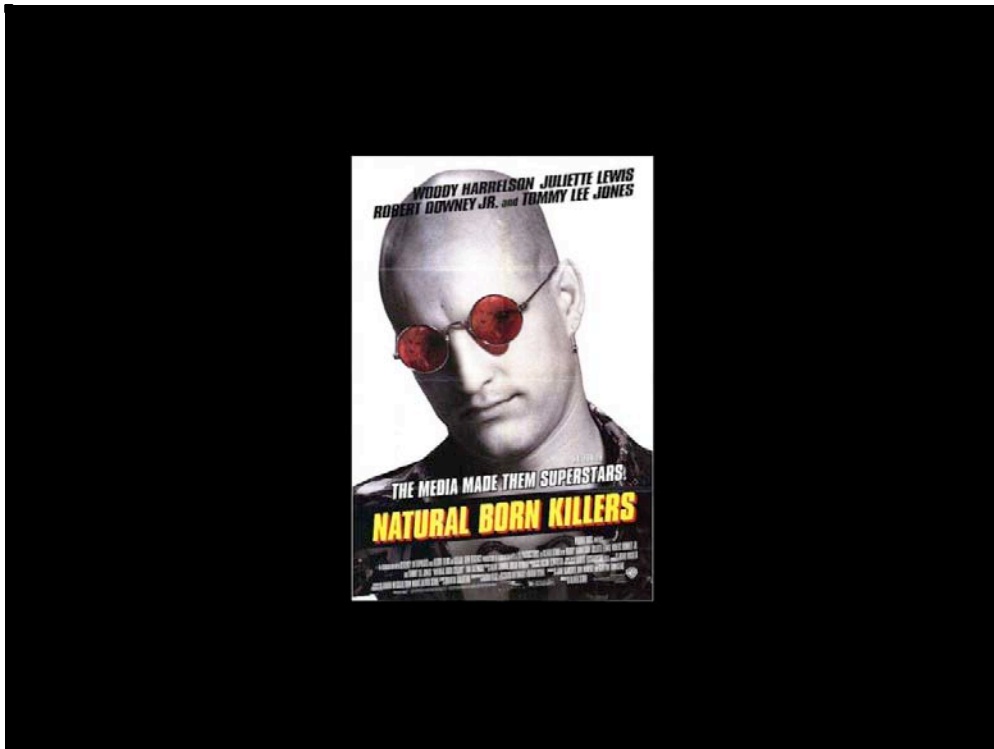
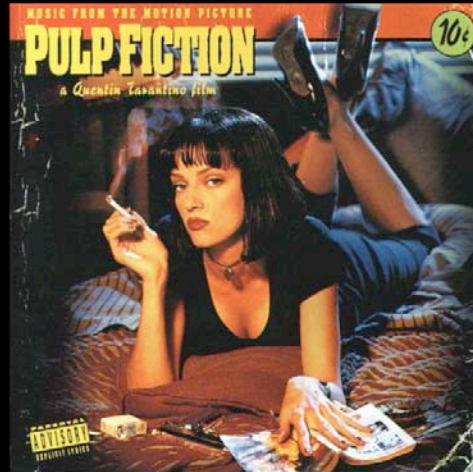


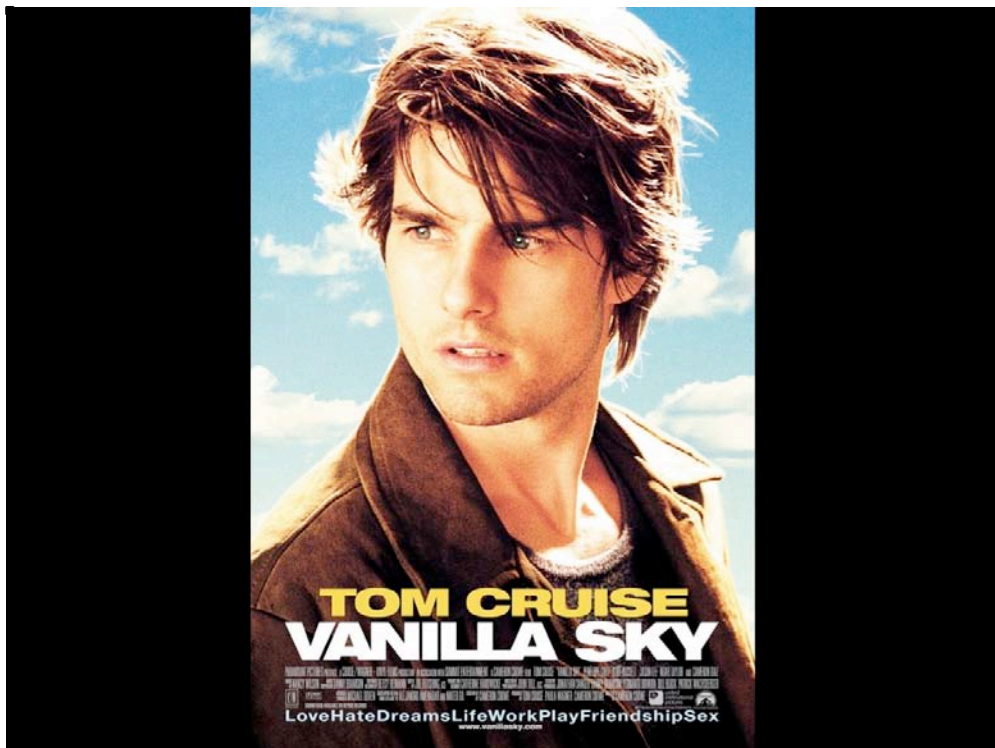
Image from The Matrix



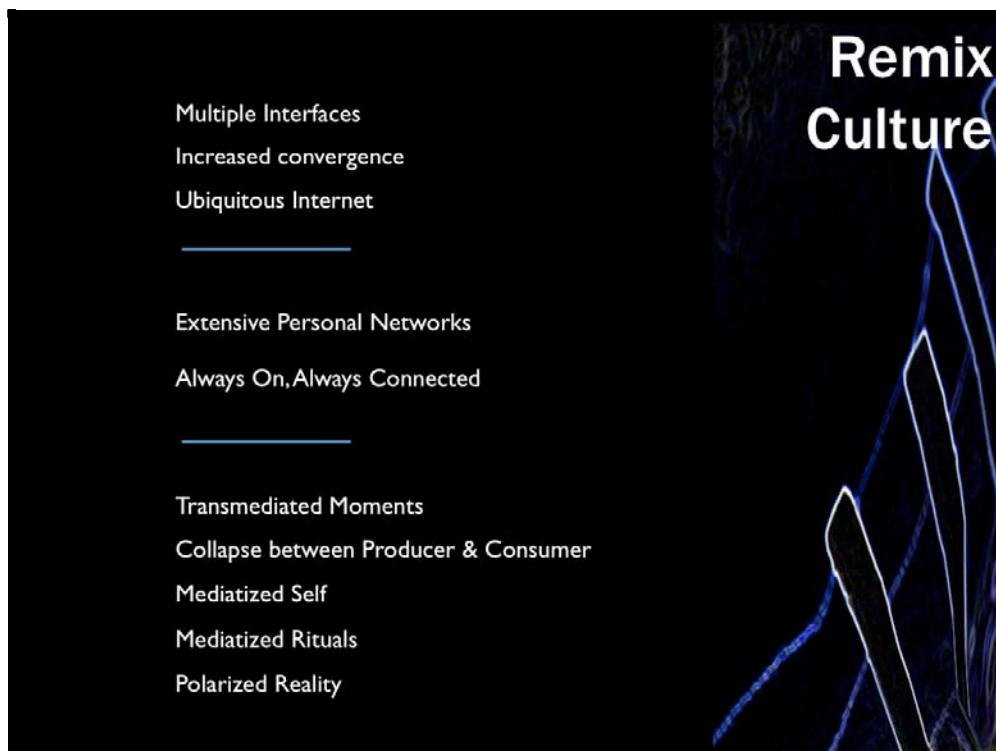
The narratives we see about life reflect some of this uncertainty about boundaries.

The early to mid 1990s also marks a time period when postmodern thinking hits the streets in more popular, user friendly form. Films like Pulp Fiction and Natural Born killers, dismantled the barrier between audience and film, self and action of the film. Later, Run Lola Run does another twist on this.









MEANWHILE, the world keeps getting more complex, in terms of our understanding of what is the self, what is culture, and what is real.

In countries with high internet, computer, and smart phone penetration, life in the 21st Century is marked by ...

Let me show some snapshots of what this looks like to me, in my recent experience. These are not uncommon points--Each of us would show a different remix of this, but I want to show you some of the things that complicate the research project

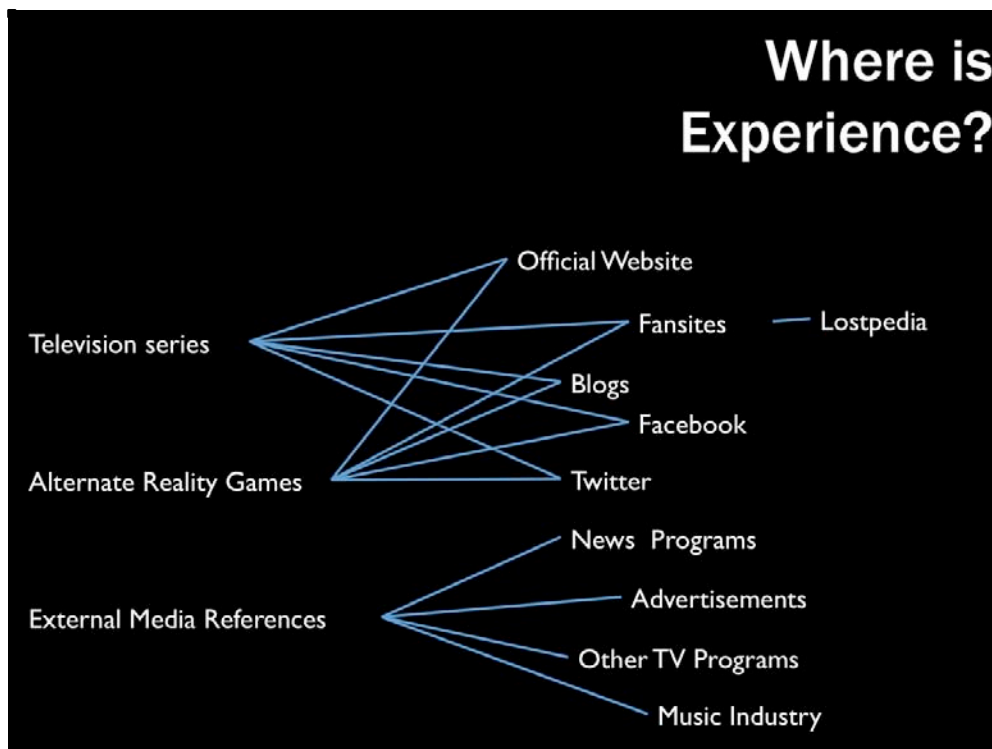
Transmedia Moments



Lost represents the chaos of transmedia, or as the US based scholar Elizabeth Bird terms it: “mediated moments” . We’re moving much beyond the idea of the audience responses such as watching and talking. The transmedia characteristics of Lost demonstrate the collapse between production and consumption.

Let’s look at some of this:

(mediated moments is a term offered by Elizabeth Bird in a talk she gave in Barcelona.)



What is Lost?

In this truncated effort to map Lost, I asked: Where is Lost? Is it the broadcasted show? Well, there's all the ancillary stuff that goes on simultaneously, where I can experience Lost. Then there are the between season AR games. These get referenced in the show, involve face to face meetups, online gaming, chatrooms, and of course the normal blogging, tweeting, and wall posting. Then there are ways you experience lost without ever watching it. When it's referenced in other media, like The Simpsons, America's Got Talent, news programs, billboard advertisements.

All of these are venues for the experience, only one of which involves sitting in front of a television set. All of these vary in levels of directness with 'viewing.' and it's not really close to adequate to call these "venues" or locales.

Where's the Object?

Transmedia Storytelling

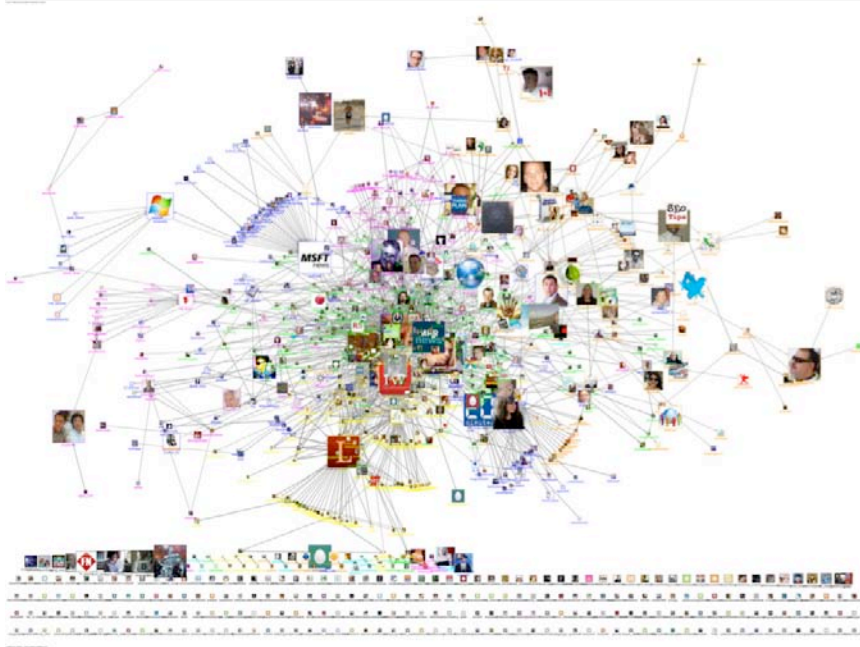


Garish visual, but nicely done depiction of the complexity of the transmedia process.

When is Lost?

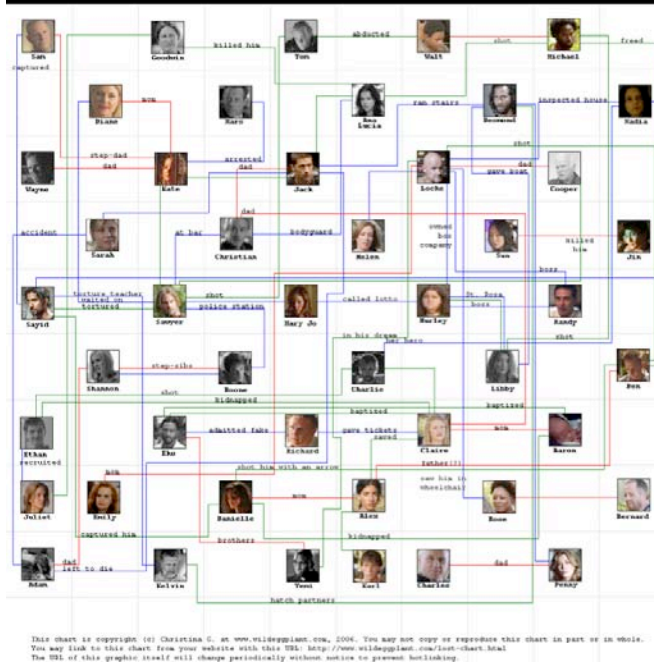
2006, Dan Hill City of Sound.
Good article: [http://
www.cityofsound.com/
blog/2006/03/
why_lost_is_gen.html](http://www.cityofsound.com/blog/2006/03/why_lost_is_gen.html)

Who?



Twitter map, but not actually depicting the series Lost. 457 tweets during final episode, compared to 17K (next highest number, for Glee)

Again, Who?

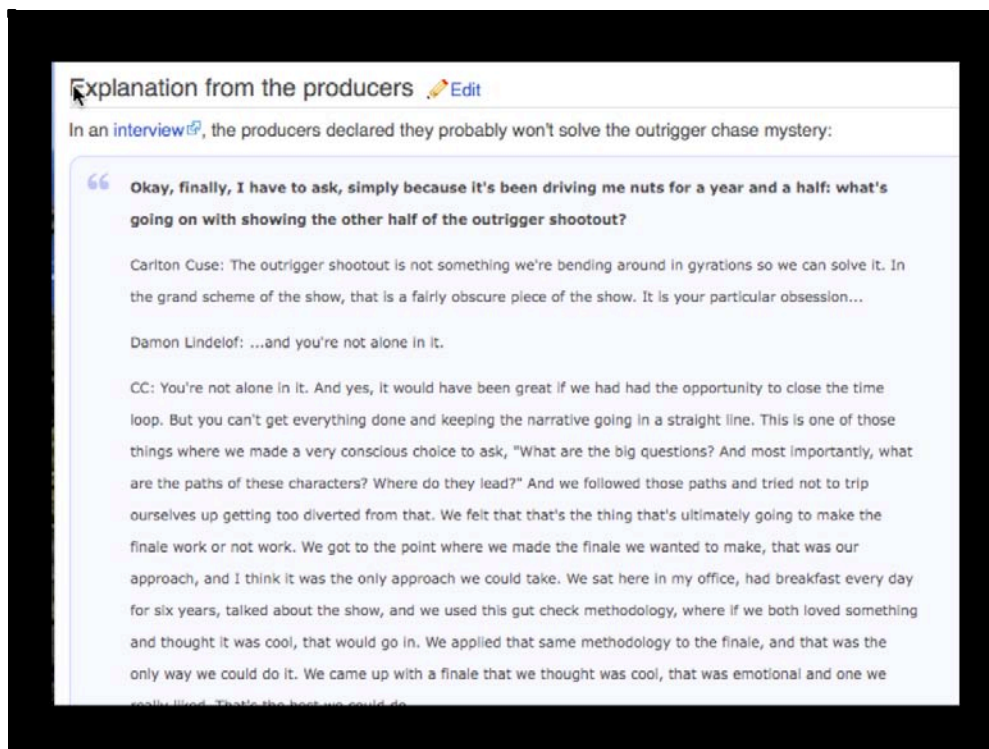


The countdown timer hits zero [Edit](#)

Note: Each section is on either the Left, Right or Center audio track. The tracks are played simultaneously.

“ You tell him what to do” “Is he crawling?” “Why don’t you tell him who you are?” “Thought I could get you to them?” “It’s not over” “Who called the doctor?” (Same time, sped up) “I don’t think he’ll be	“ Let go of Henry” “Can we (just) abort?” “I warned him not to do it” “Can’t do it from the shelter (south)” “Can’t move him(?)” “Hello” “Apparently they have done this before” “Time to get another”	“ You tell him what to do” “Is he crawling?” “Why don’t you tell him who you are?” “Thought I could get you to them?” “It’s not over” “Who called the doctor?” (Same time, sped up) “I don’t think he’ll be
---	--	---

Still where is Lost? How about these transcripts that fans produce of barely comprehensible whispering that happens in the background during the show?



How about these online forums, where people ask questions and the show producers talk to them, answer questions that are confusing them about the structure of the plot, the characters, or the overall goal for the series?



Or webmaps like these to show various things. In this case, characters from the show.

Producer? Consumer?

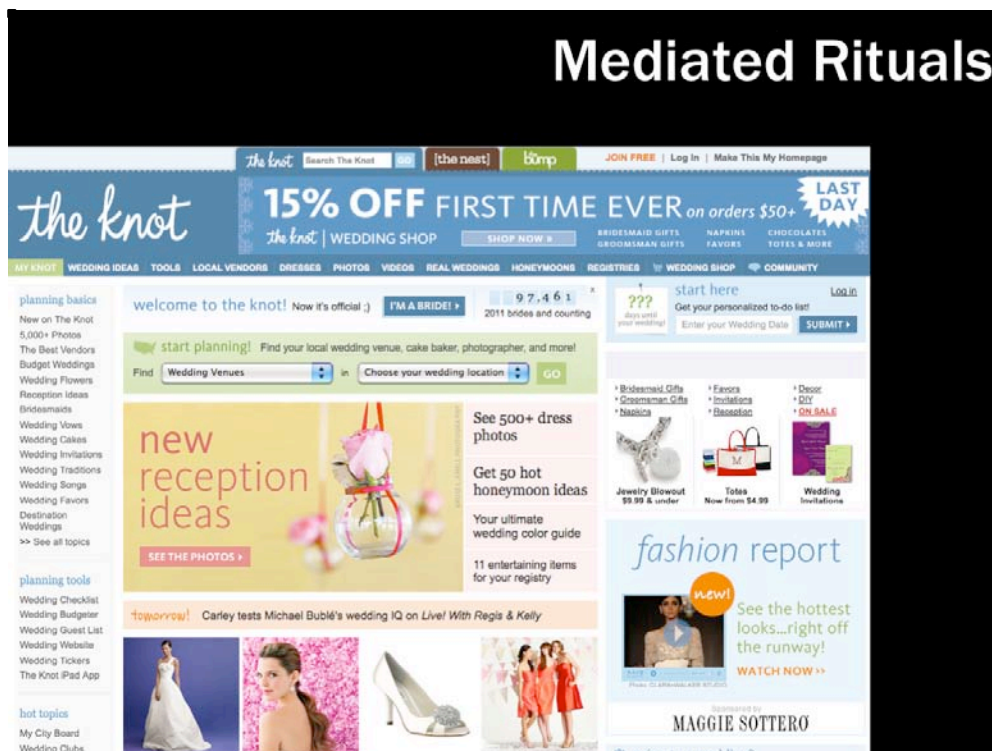


Mediatized Self



Book covers to help you brand your micro-celebrity self
(term attributed to Theresa Senft)

Mediated Rituals

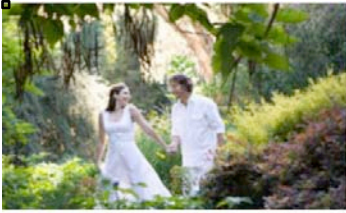


Elizabeth Bird uses this concept to talk about how social life is refracted through media lens. The daily routine of reading paper or Michael Jackson's funeral = examples of this in an obvious way. But when media is not present, symbolic behavior is still played out in such a way that invokes media.

You can see this well if look at common rituals, like camping, road trips, weddings, or response to tragedy, that doesn't commonly invoke media. But invoke media scripts. Bird tells us that there develops a "cultural imperative that requires a choreographed performance". And the performance is really based on mediated understandings and media industry productions. What's the right way to protest these days? What soundtrack is essential for the perfect Americana Road Trip?

The media has a huge role in personal decision making, but few would probably want to acknowledge it.

So I want to talk about weddings. Mine because I can poke fun at it more easily than poke fun at others. Consider weddings today versus the wedding my mother had. Or the idea of a "1940s wedding." try to recreate this look, drawing on Hollywood depictions or nostalgia photographs. These are media scripts, not necessarily reality or real memory. Totally based on media, but never spoken, maybe not even present at the event.



Jupiterimages/Getty Images/Thinkstock

A secret garden theme is for the romantic bride who loves lush flowers and serene settings.



istockphoto/Thinkstock

Autumn leaves provide a beautiful backdrop for your wedding portraits.

Steve Instee Egyptia

[Butterfly Wedding Theme](#)
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[Halloween Wedding Theme](#)



Mark Wilson/Getty Images News/Getty Images

Have a band of period-accurate reenactors -- such as these flute-playing Civil War reenactors at Gettysburg, Penn. -- perform as you walk the aisle or during the reception.



ChinaFotoPress/Getty Images News/Getty Images

This groom incorporated the superhero theme with his Superman costume during his wedding in China in 2007.

It's impossible to avoid having a theme.

Mediated Rituals



So I found myself unable to escape it. And as sonia livingstone would say, everything is becoming mediatized in any culture that has even a hint of electronic communication.

Note the 1950s retro feel of this invitation.

Mediated Rituals



Note the retro feel of these photos, in Black and white, attempting to evoke 1940s post war hollywood feel, taken in what is called the boneyard, an area specifically for preserving planes, such as these old ww2 monsters.

We wanted to have a bit of nostalgia, but it swiftly became very choreographed, as demonstrated in the next slide

Mediated Rituals



Which shows only a fraction of the more than

(unavoidable) Mediated Rituals



30 pictures on our wedding day when we were supposed to portray a classic dance 'dip.'

we didn't want to do it, all of them are ridiculous, including the one where mark dropped me, and of course, my mom and dad didn't have to do this over and over and over so the photographer could be sure we had the 'perfect memory.'

You get my point, I hope. Even our most memorable moments in life are now heavily mediatized. My trip here, if I want to be the model twitter contributor, should be as scripted as possible.

Individualized News

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NYT > Home Page

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Hours after the Security Council voted to authorize military action against forces loyal to Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi and impose a no-flight zone...

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The United States is becoming an Hispanic country. And it's happening much faster than anyone expected.

Behind the scenes: How the GOP is selling its budget plan to itself

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Wash Post Politics

White House to work with both sides on gun control measure

President Obama called Sunday for greater enforcement of gun control laws and improved background checks in the wake of the January shootings in...

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U.N. Nuclear Chief: Japan "Racing Against The Clock"

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West moves towards Libya action

Western powers discuss how to enforce zone over Libya and protect civilians, backs "all necessary" means except...

Japan raises nuclear alert level

Yemen forces fire on protesters

msnbc.com: Politics

First Thoughts: Worse than they're le

It's clear that the U.S. government nc information coming out of the Japan nuclear crisis.

No move yet in Congress to curb nuc

Senate sends 3-week funding bill to I

The Ec

Japan Japan earthquake held for victims - Jap

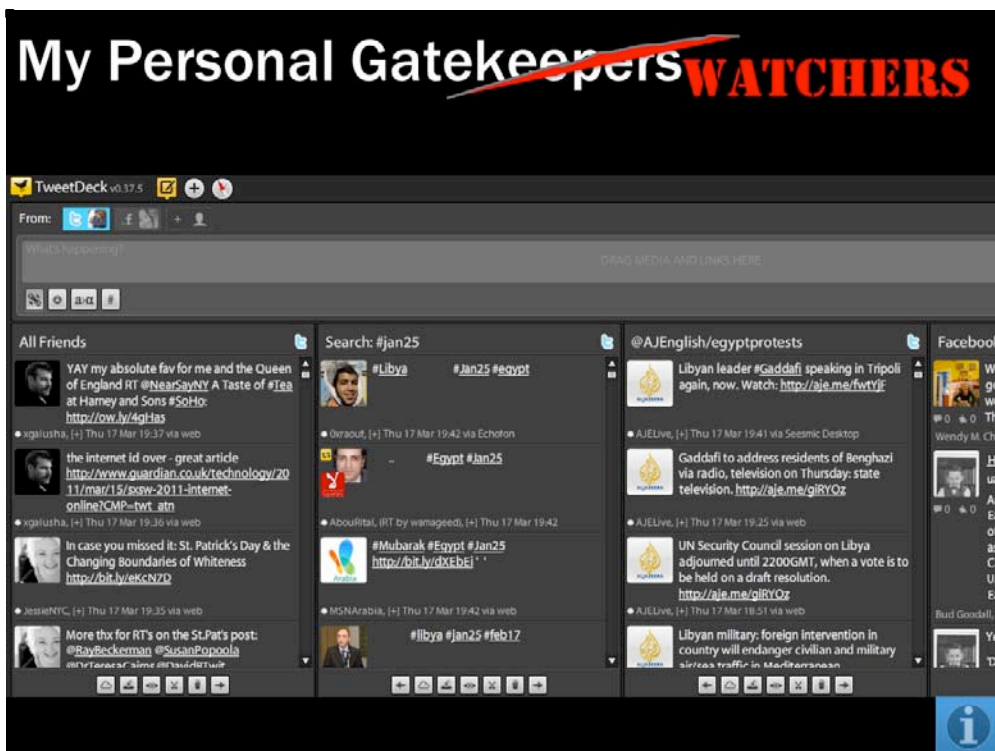
http://japan- earthquake.mygoc...

Business

The... Microsoft's HP Feb 18 Mar 13:10

Ep... to Remain Anonymous 4/2

39



Axel Bruns raises important shift to gate watchers from gatekeepers.

What my mom saw on January 27



MSNBC Nightly Newscast
January 27, 2011

What I saw on January 27

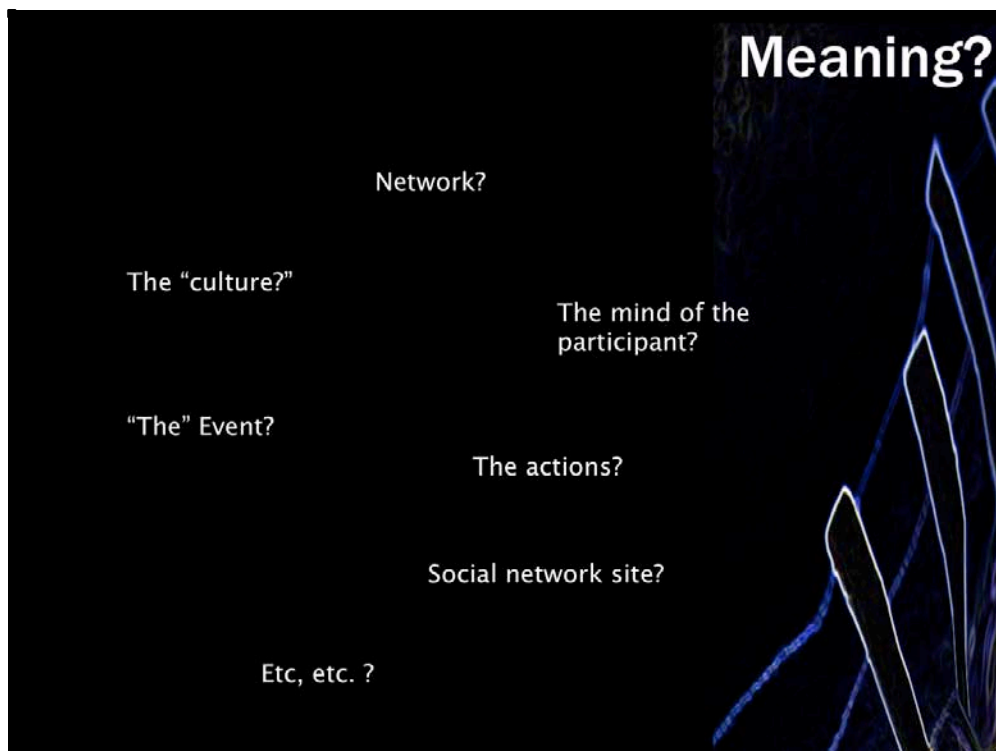
[The Most MISGIVING video on the Internet #Jan25](#)

Uploaded on Youtube January 27, 2011

Credits to Tamer Shaaban who made this video

Important message to youtube and people who flag this video :

If it gets flagged or removed , it will be uploaded 10 more times



What is the object?

Where is the stuff happening?

Where does meaning reside?

What do we DO, as researchers trying to understand this?

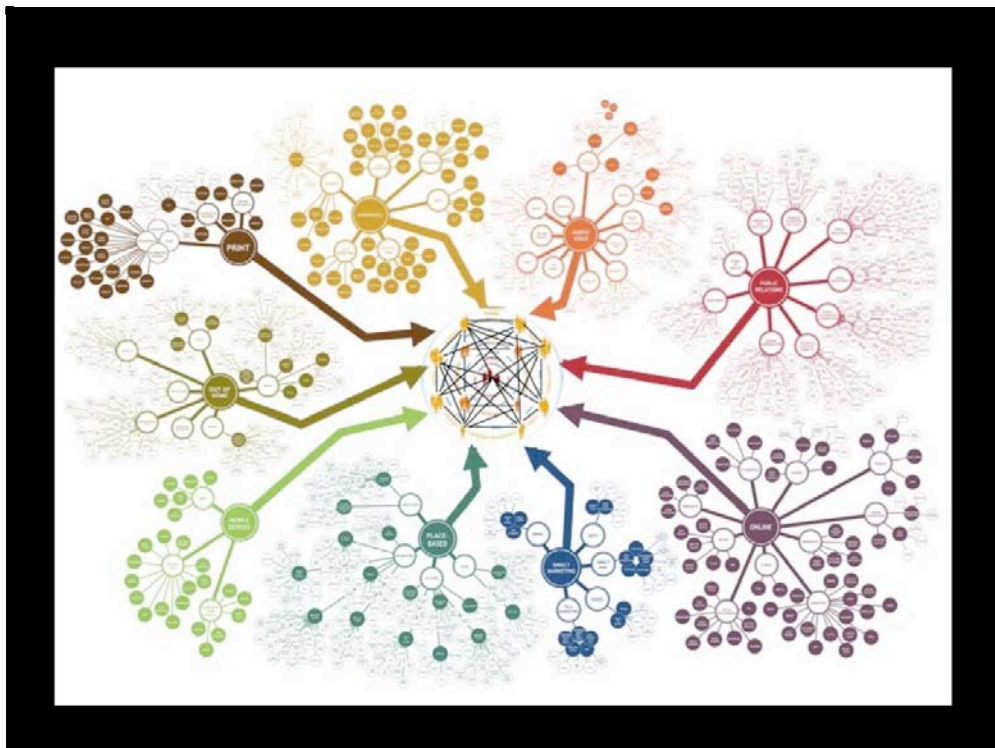
Questions

Are methods of sensemaking adequate?

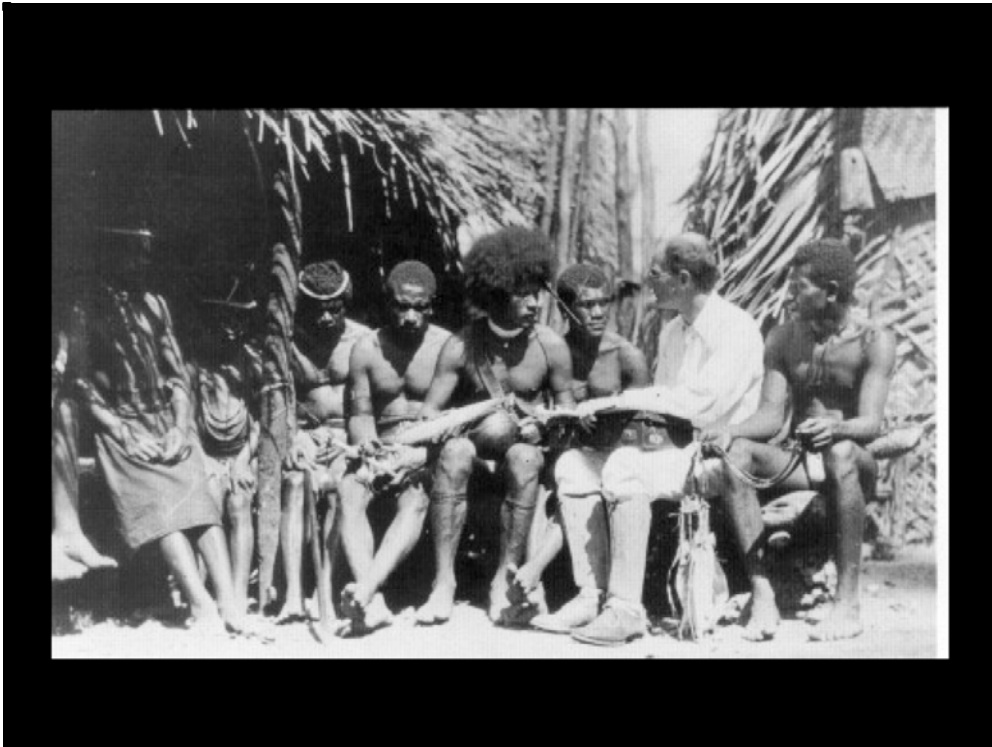
Are our methods still protecting participants?

Are we afraid to take risks in methods?

So I find these questions still very meaningful.

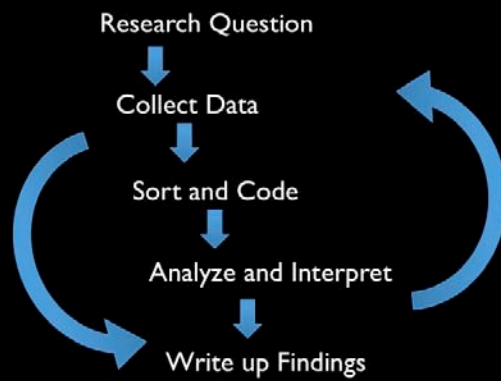


This may have always been the case, but it's certainly more visible now, and the temptation to collect and comprehend the whole is strong.

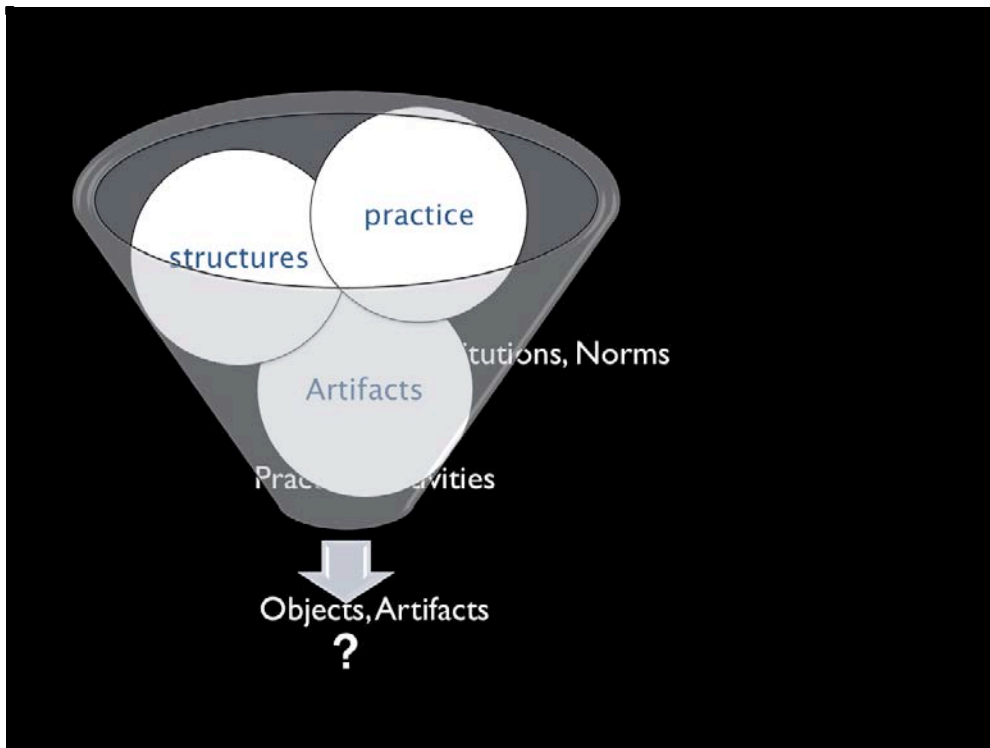


Yet our models for research are embedded in the notion of the classic ethnographer in the simply bounded field, as this picture of Malinowski in the midst of fieldwork illustrates.

Typical Method Texts



And despite alternatives given by feminist scholars, interpretive ethnographers and others, this remains the main training model for qualitative inquiry. A linear, straightforward process.



Even when we get more complicated, to think about mediatized contexts, our methods still fall short, because they continue to try to disconnect and separate what is essentially impossibly separated.

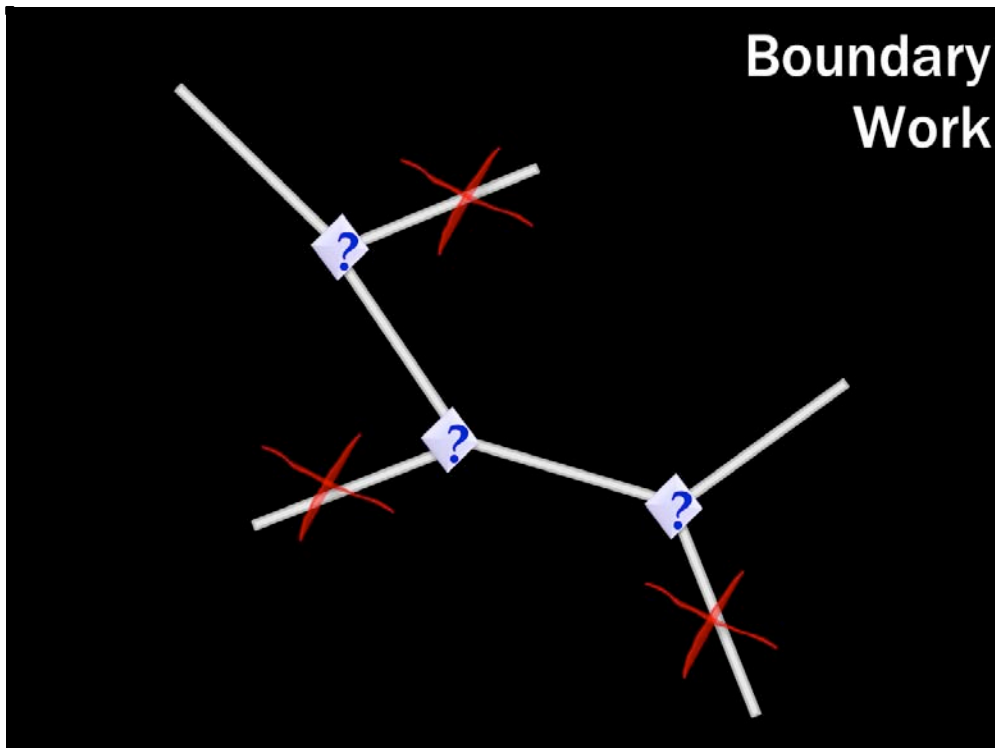
We can't help it. It's what we do. Categorize. Separate. Explain.

But as a start, we can identify this as a possible problem and try to find different ways to PICTURE what we're doing.

This list, from UK scholar Sonia Livingstone represents a fairly traditional way of thinking about how to do social research in general. At one level we can focus on devices used to communicate or convey information, which comprises questions of technology design, innovation, and development. The second level would be to focus on activities or practices in which people engage to communicate or share information; this aspect includes issues related to the social and cultural contexts of new media. The third would be the social institutions, structures, or arrangements that develop around new media devices and practices, including how technologies and practices are organized and governed.'

Another way to look at this is in a less hierarchical way or not as 'levels' because they're simultaneous, and as many argue now, impossible to separate in any neat and tidy fashion.

Animations on this slide block content if notes are printed.



animations on slide.

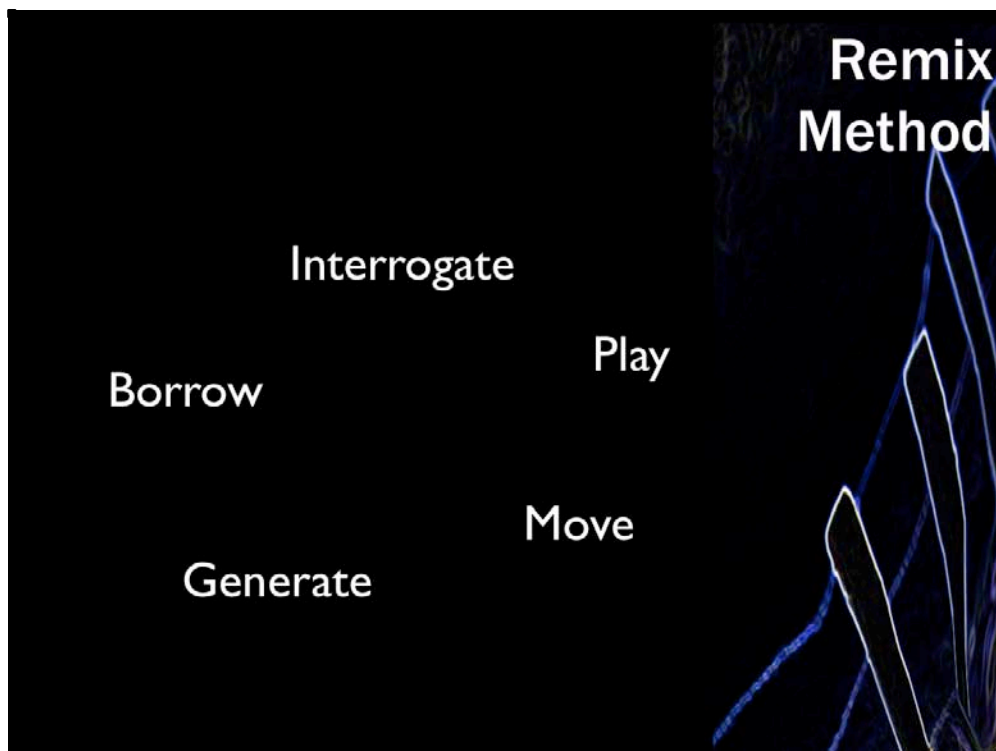
In the multi-modal production and consumption of multi media, identity, culture, and meaning are in constant motion. Always shifting terrain under the researcher's foot. Like trying to step into the same spot in the ocean twice.

In this context, I have to go back to basics:

Flexible adaptation. An attempt to find creative ways to cope with global, fragmented, multi-sited contexts and experiences.

And it's based on the notion that methods are nothing more or less than choices, made at critical junctures, with consequences for knowledge production and the communities and individuals we study.\

So for me, the issue is how remix can help me mix things up, literally, to try to create frame breaks for myself so that I can identify my frames, think differently, and engage in an ethical practice of reflexivity. It's basically an interrogative technique. Not an "anything goes" technique, but a model for opening doors, finding new frames for thinking and analyzing, using strong modes of accountability, and building on existing alternatives for remixed measures of quality.



A remix method approach is a way of embracing the idea that our individual products are similar to the entire academic enterprise. That we are contributing pieces of an ongoing conversation; that understanding takes place over time and in a collaborative, creative way. Which moves us away from the impossible goal of finding the right answer, the whole description,

how to do it well?

reflexivity
interpretive authority

But seriously, what does it involve?

Borrowing. Taking the 'best of' from a range of approaches.

Generating

Moving

Playing (practicing, testing, rehearsing)

Interrogating

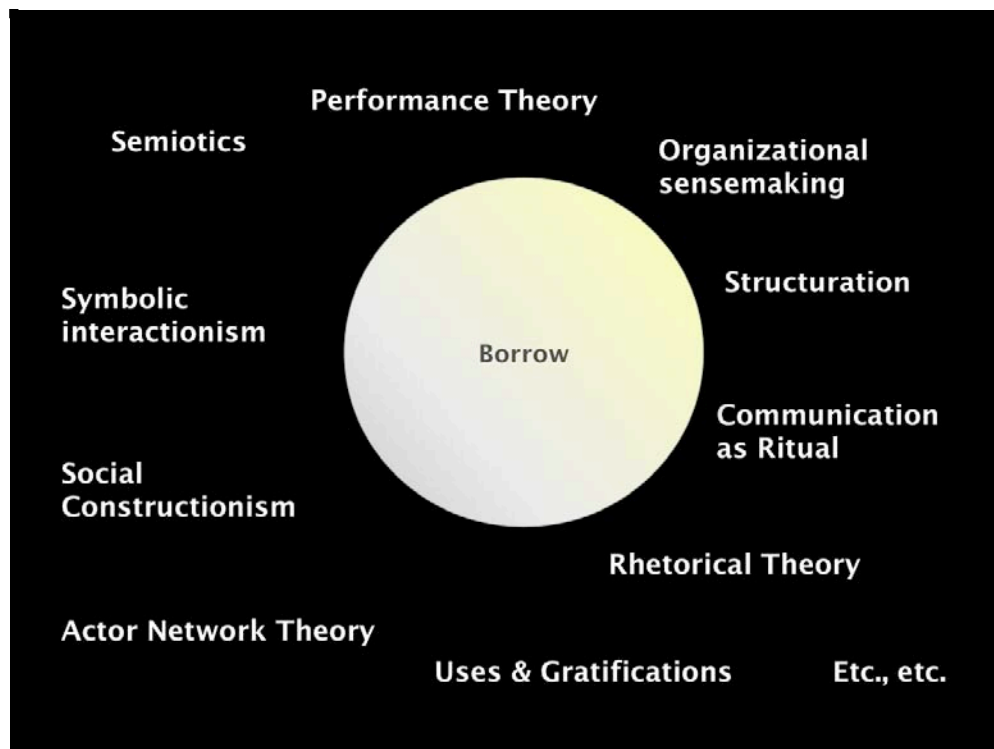
But seriously, what does it involve?

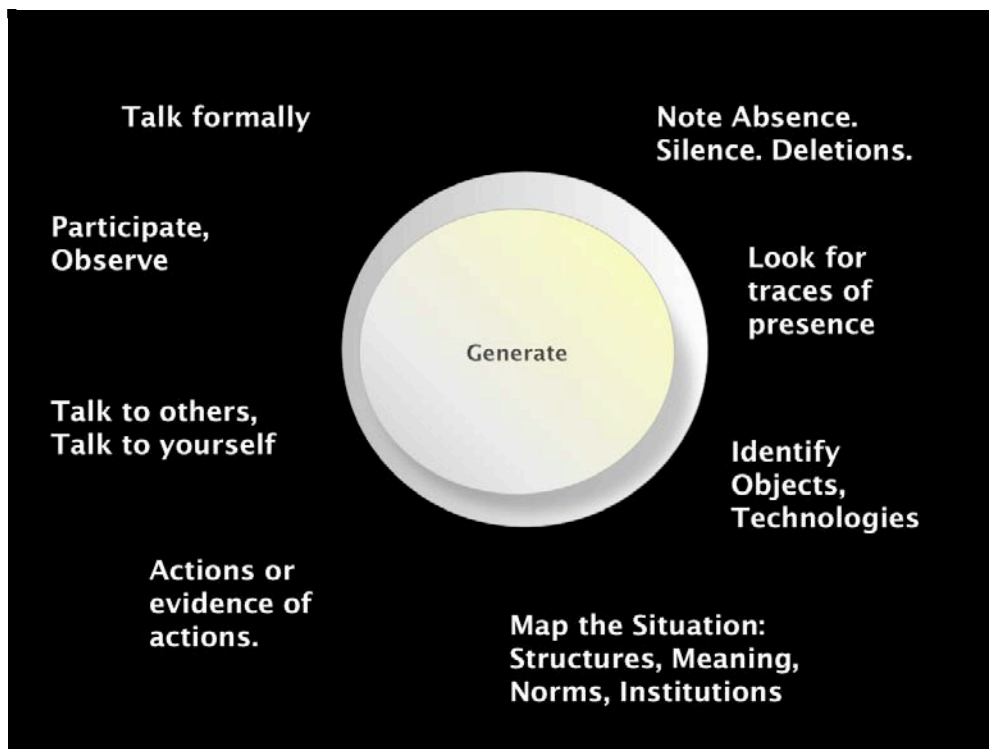
Borrow from anything. Any way of knowing. Any epistemological framework. Any philosophy.
Any art

Generate lots of data

Play with multiple methods, testing and practicing

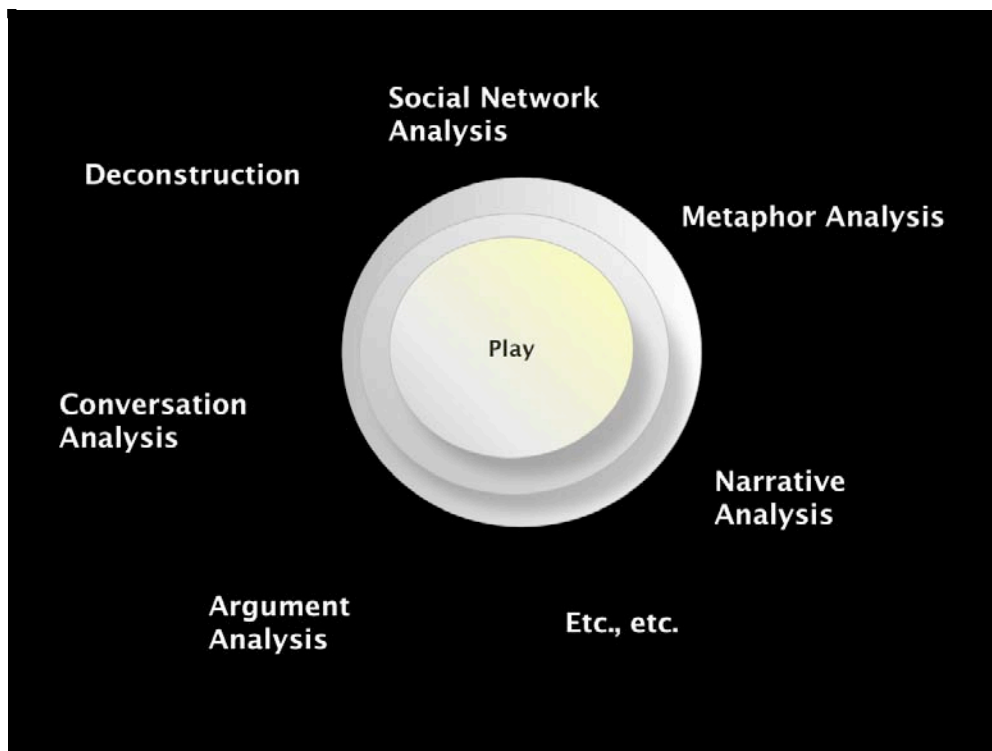
Move. As in shift your perspective, change the questions, follow the data, move in and out of the flow of information



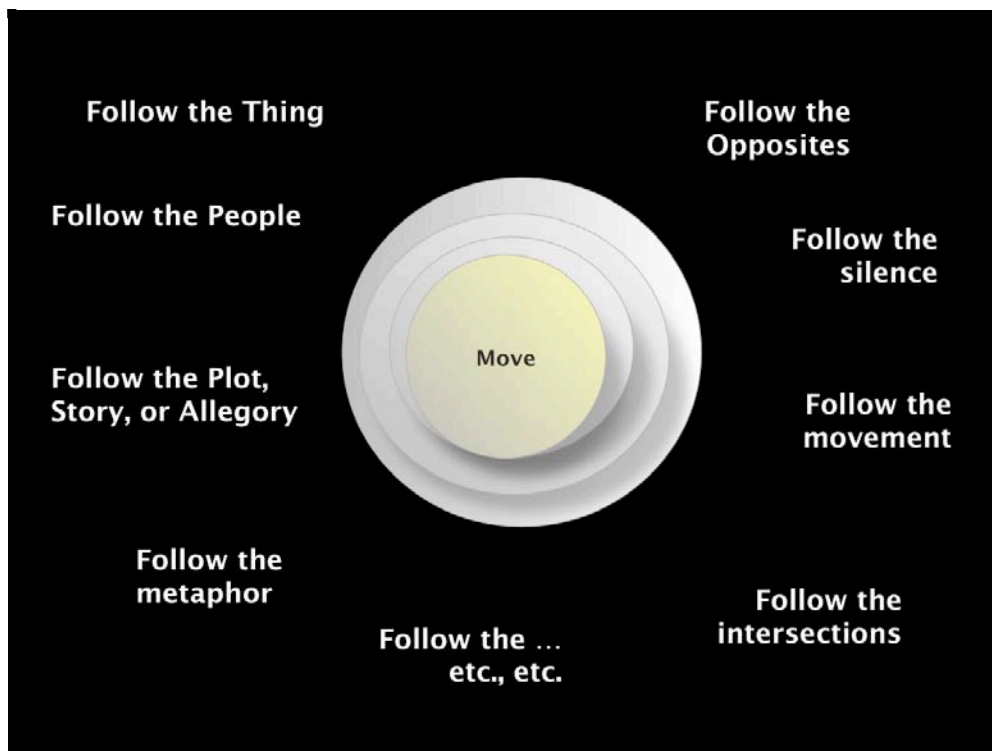


What exactly are we focusing on as 'data' which will be used to measure, assess, describe, contain, and further delimit the object of analysis? What perhaps matters as much as the answer to this question is this: What should we be generating in order to make sense of contemporary phenomena?

Generate may be a better term than collect, in that it's clear that we are not in a simple position of looking at a discrete set of possibilities and then selecting some stuff out of a pile to call data. Rather, as we move and shift with moving and shifting phenomena, "stuff" is generated (or could be) that we then later label 'data' suitable for analysis.



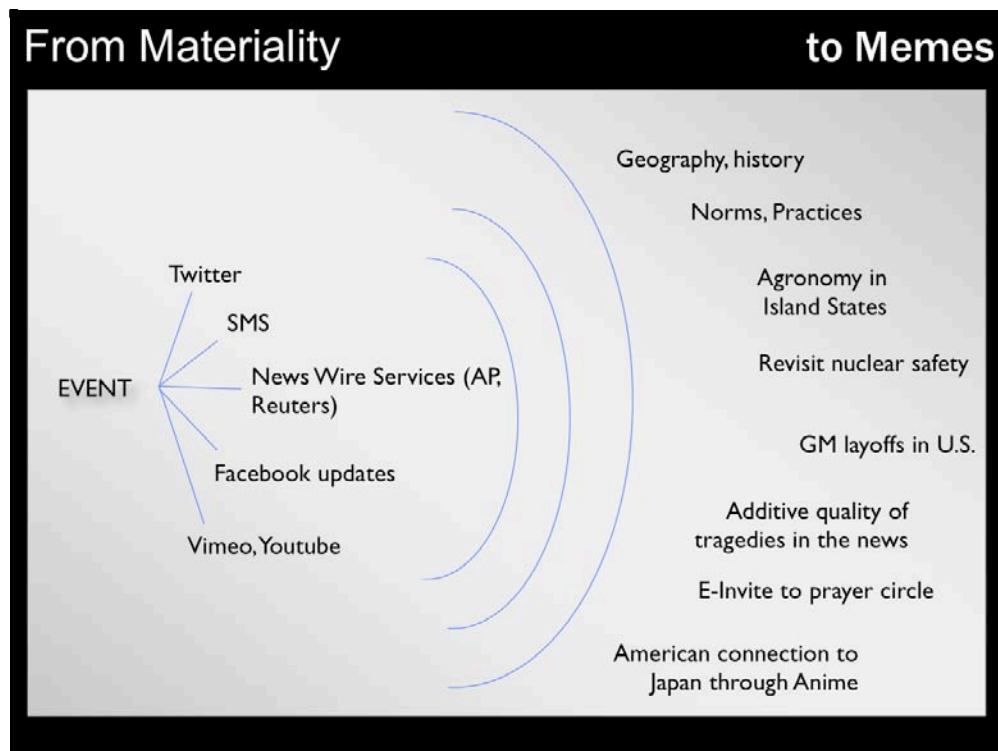
Play is not about creating a final product. It's about practice and experimentation. Notably, this may not be stuff that ends up in a form for an audience, like a performance at a jazz club. It may be just practicing one's scales at home.



Move is a way of thinking about loosening up, motion, jarring, shifting perspective, etc.

Also moving where the wind blows you ...or where the data takes you.

....or moving through the first “question door” into the others, changing questions...



A way to think about movement is to consider how an event or situation plays out via social media. Although it begins with materiality, it swiftly shifts to cultural units of information more identifiable as memes.

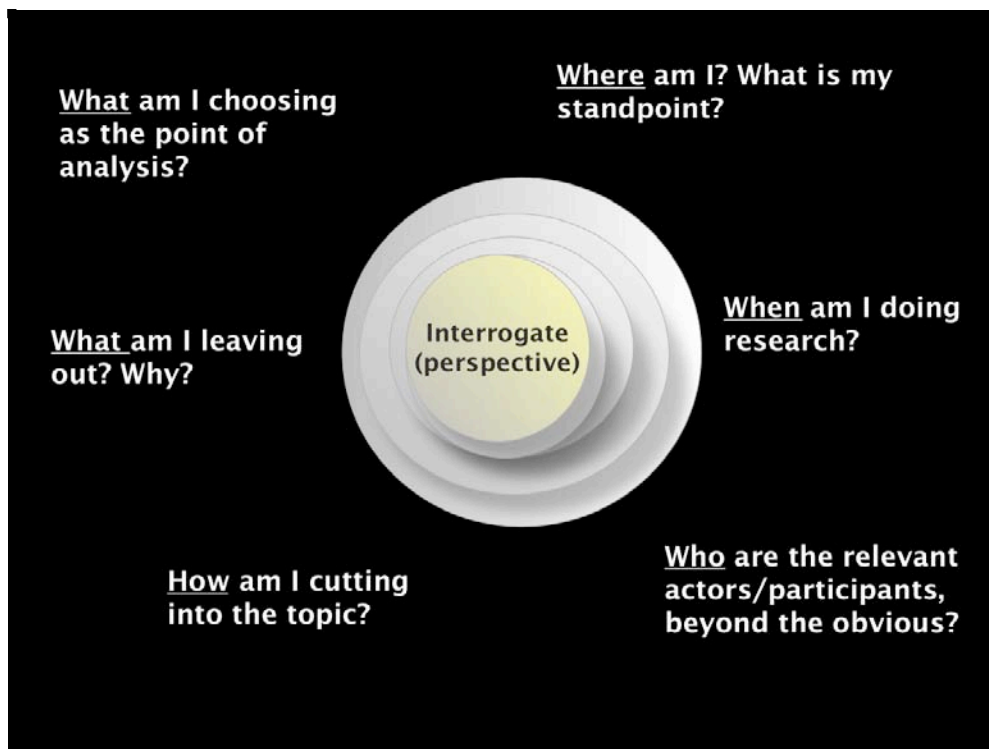
These are some impressions I have of Japan within a couple of weeks of the event.

we're learning a lot about Japan.
 it's geography, it as an island state (large, powerful), old culture, closed for so long,
 we see it in photo, before and after (pictures overlaid)
 the iconic images of Japan in anime, science fiction, technology, world war II,
 mixing with the shifting physical images of catastrophe that is not across the country but all encompassing. played open.
 everyone has something to say, everyone praying,
 the last time it was that open was Hiroshima, and in a completely different, one way, broadcast media
 private closed society, on display for the world
 everyone has a view, an opinion

how we transmit info and the national way it's distributed or framed, per country
 personal stories and personal networks of information transmission (phone, blog, twitter, fb)
 so many different levels, but channeled depending on what your 'go to' access is for information.
 Yet even within (as well as across) it's layered. and each layer has such complexity.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ROalknlk9LA>

history of nuclear accidents and how you deal with emergencies from the 1950s, being invoked by people watching the news
 living on islands, the discussion of water, flooding, agronomy, water and radiation, milk and radiation.
 impact on the auto industry. GM announced closing a plant because they can't get parts from Japan. the 'fallout' in very specific
 industries around the world, in technology parts.
 anime and the relationship of particular people
 this is not even talking about the impact on people there, people directly related to the event
 and so one's information flow certainly impacts how we frame and experience not only the catastrophe there but social and
 political life in one's own country.
 negative response about the speed (lack of) of the company that runs the nuclear plant.
 man on the street interviews
 video clips from tsunami
 everything is different in an island state.

These impressions help me identify how rapidly or radically ideas can shift among or across cultural groupings, in very short
 periods of time. It's about shifting opinion, of course, and this occurs all the time. But focusing on it helps me problematize the
 obdurate qualities of those things we call the objects of our analysis.



Interrogation is a reflexive self questioning. A way of assessing one's own actions, all the time, iteratively constantly (think of how a musician hears his or her own performances, or athletes scrutinize their own game play)

This slide illustrates some questions that might get asked from the inside out. From the RESEARCHER'S perspective. This is a process of reflexivity From the researcher to the object (whereas the next slide is the complexity of the transmedia object)

You can't ask what is the object without asking these other questions, which really help you realize, reflexively, what you're up to.

Methods I use to reflexively interrogate my own stance involve a lot of visuals, these days:



creative destabilization of the linear or sensible mode of qualitative inquiry, to help generate creativity but also identify the habitual ways of seeing. To try to get unstuck from only one world view (as these maps remind me)

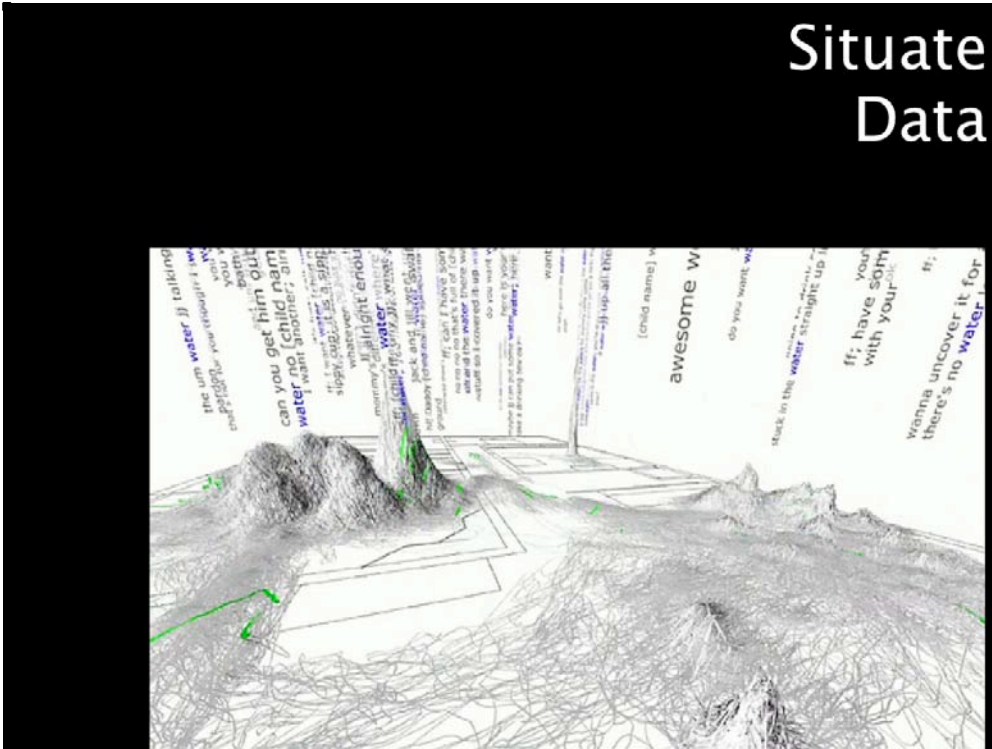
It's basically an interrogative technique.

Actually, Playing with visuals can help reveal ways of seeing otherwise. At the level of interpretation, when we're drawing conclusions about what we've analyzed, we're generally answering the "So What?" question. During this stage, we'll draw a particular path, eliminating other options.

Using visual means may give insights otherwise not identifiable. Different portions of the brain are activated when the tool switches from typing on a keyboard to writing with the hand. Likewise, when we see visual images. We are drawn to network maps, not just because they're pretty.

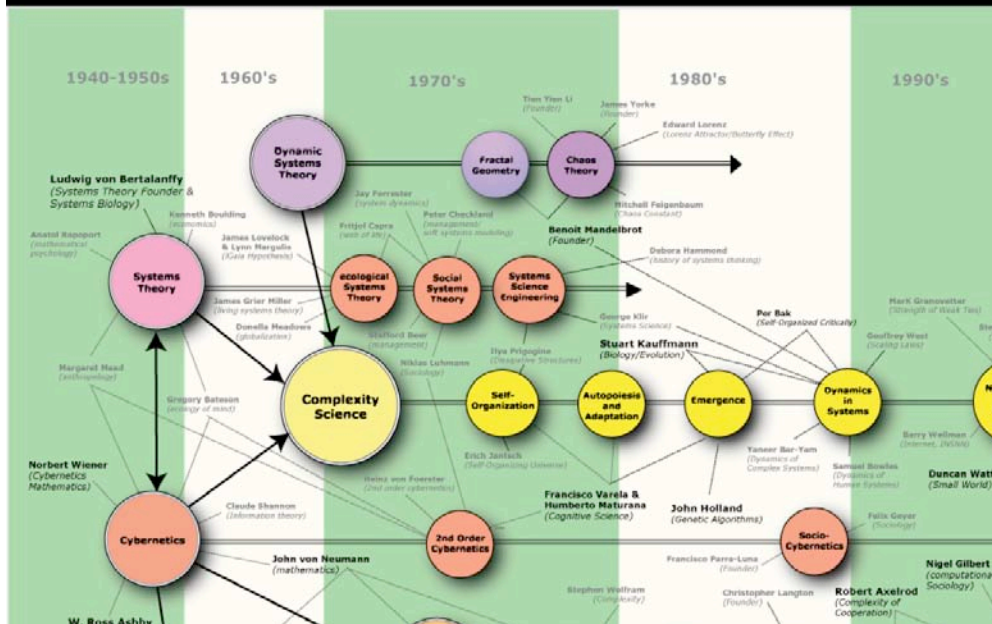
An ethical sensibility
It pushes reflexivity.

Situate Data



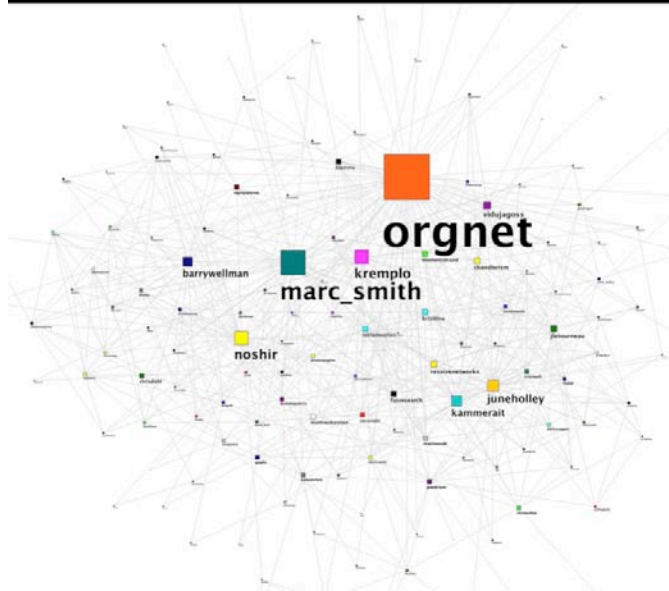
Here, a map of the data we're creating can help reveal the areas of emphasis, how we are positioning our study, our self as scholar in relation to other areas. This is from Deb Roy's data set, presented in a TED talk about his son's language development. Here, the data being visualized is the word "water" as it's used around the house.

Situate Science



This is not a map of my own intellectual history, but a nice illustration of how this can be done. It's useful to situate oneself in the larger intellectual culture. To see both similarities and distinctions. But to also know where one is coming from.

Situate the Self



Or one can situate oneself within the culture one is studying. This is a network map of the social network of network analysts. In this case, the network of those who are involved in orgnet mailing list. This was offered by Barry Wellman.

Reflexivity



It doesn't have to be too complicated,

[illegible]

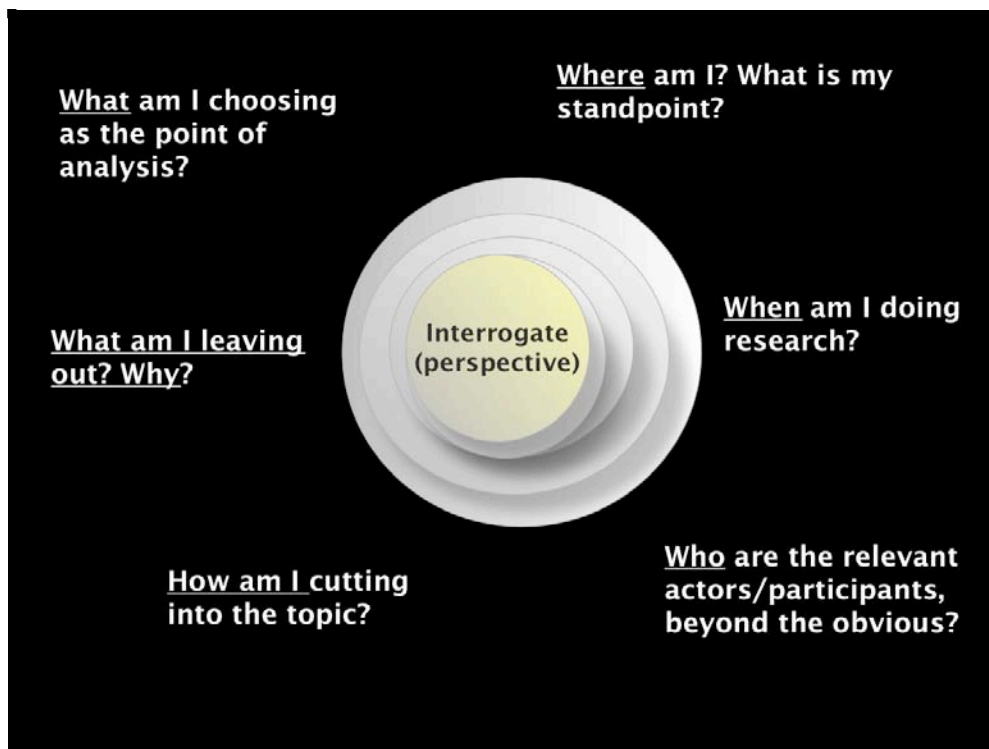
It could just be some scribbles.

[illegible]

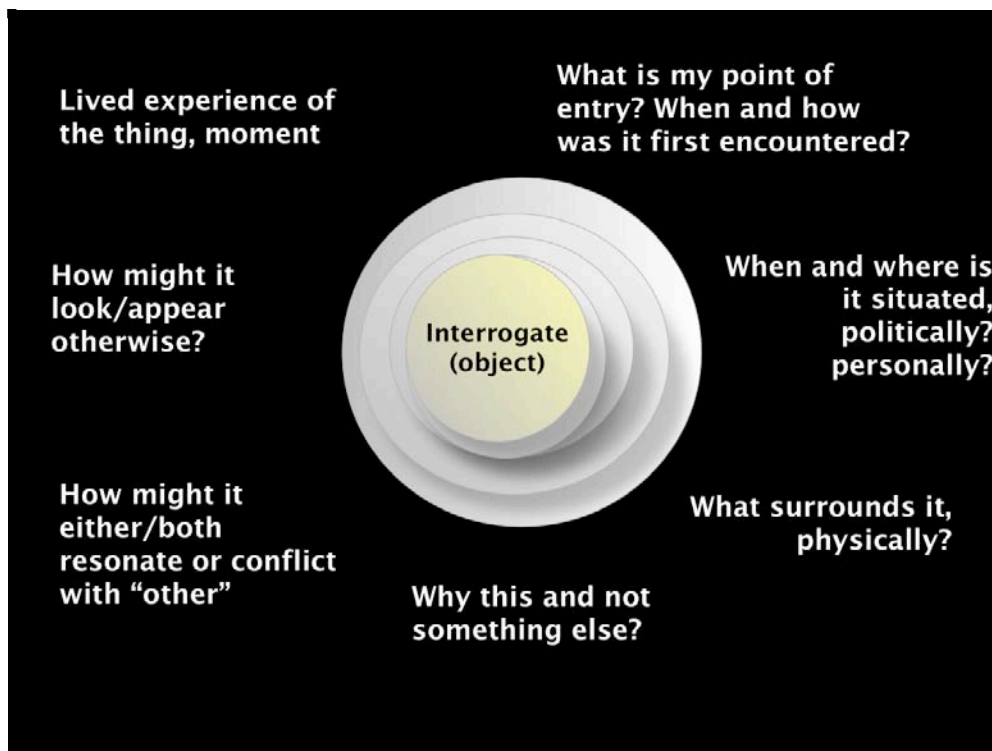
There are varying degrees of relevance to this sort of visualizing. In some work, it might not be that important. In other contexts, it could be quite relevant, as this NEXT image shows.



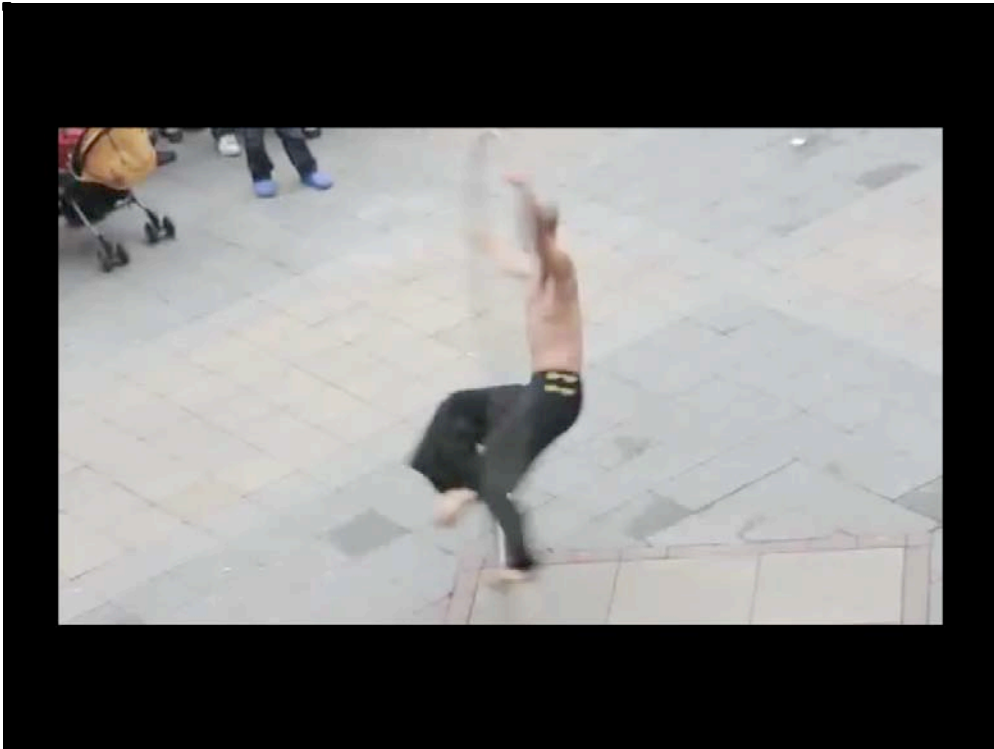
A word map of advertisements for boys' toys



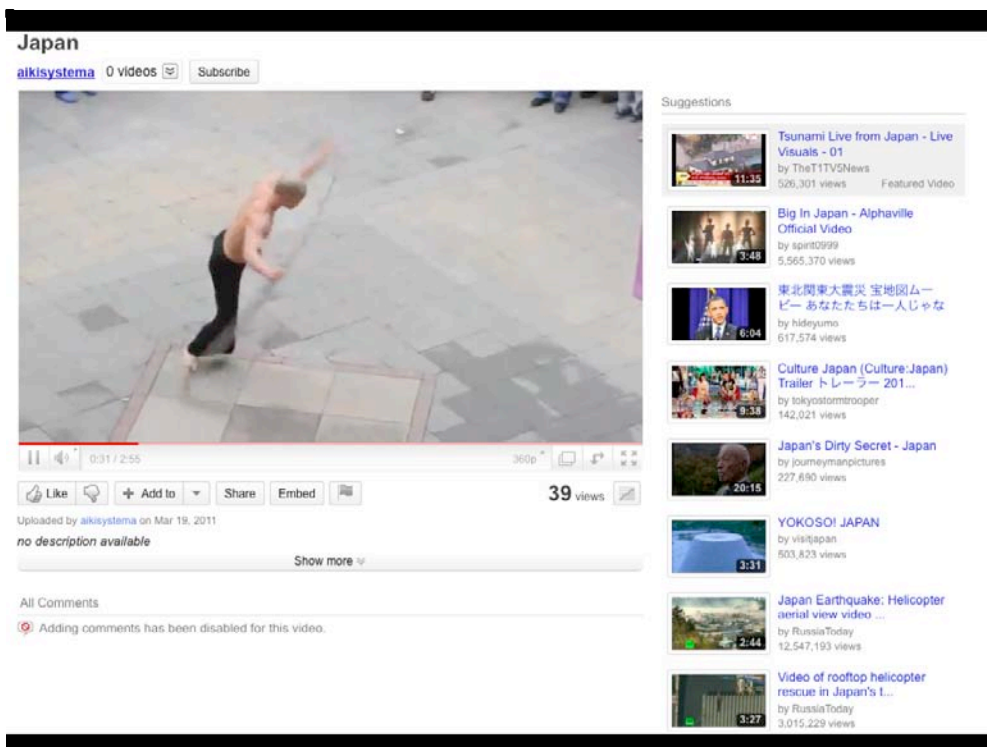
Repeat slide here. Again, this is one way that I engage in a rigorous analysis of my own practices.



Likewise, one can apply some reflexive interrogation to the study of the object with fruitful results



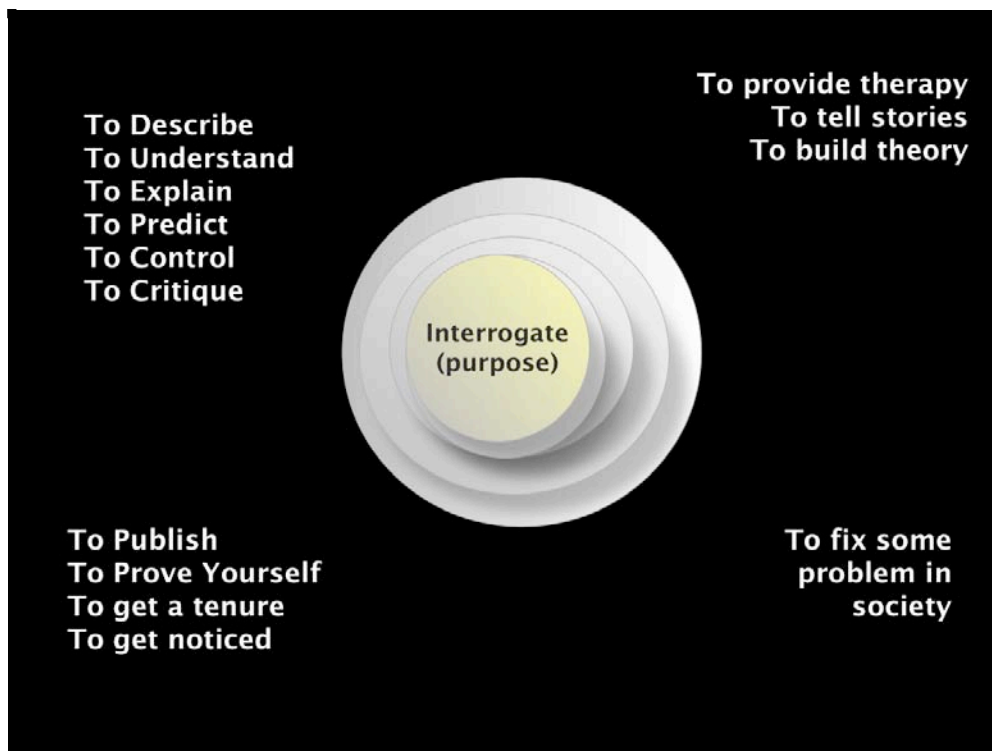
Seen alone, this video is certainly interesting



But it swiftly becomes more layered when we see what surrounds it physically.

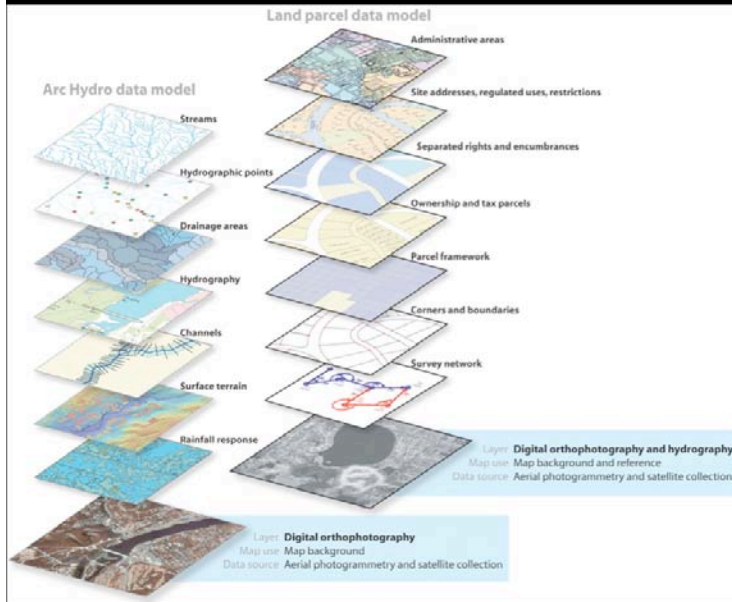
Then, if we add more context, to say that it was posted on facebook by a 13 year old boy and forwarded to me by his mother, then we see how it lives in more context.

Then, it gets even more complex when we realize (if we realize) that the language being spoken is Mandarin, which means the label "Japan" is wrong.



And finally, why are we doing research in general? All of these are viable. All of these influence to a large degree the way a study is conducted.

Layered Accounts



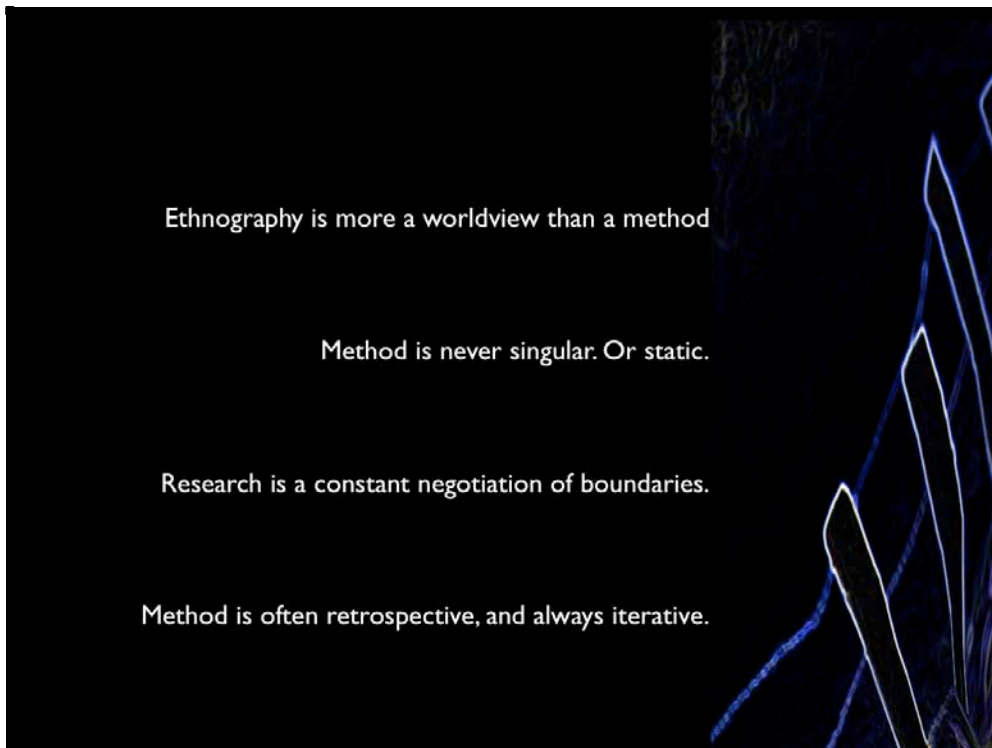
This is a good model for showing how different perspectives can yield different maps of the same space. Layered like this, they offer a more complex image.

The weakness is that it's presumed that these together comprise the whole. Or that there is a whole, which is questionable in interpretive research perspectives. So the next image is also one worth considering.

Layered Accounts



This shows layering without an implied whole. More meaningful and salient to this account is the juxtaposition evident in the phenomenon, highlighted by the perspective.



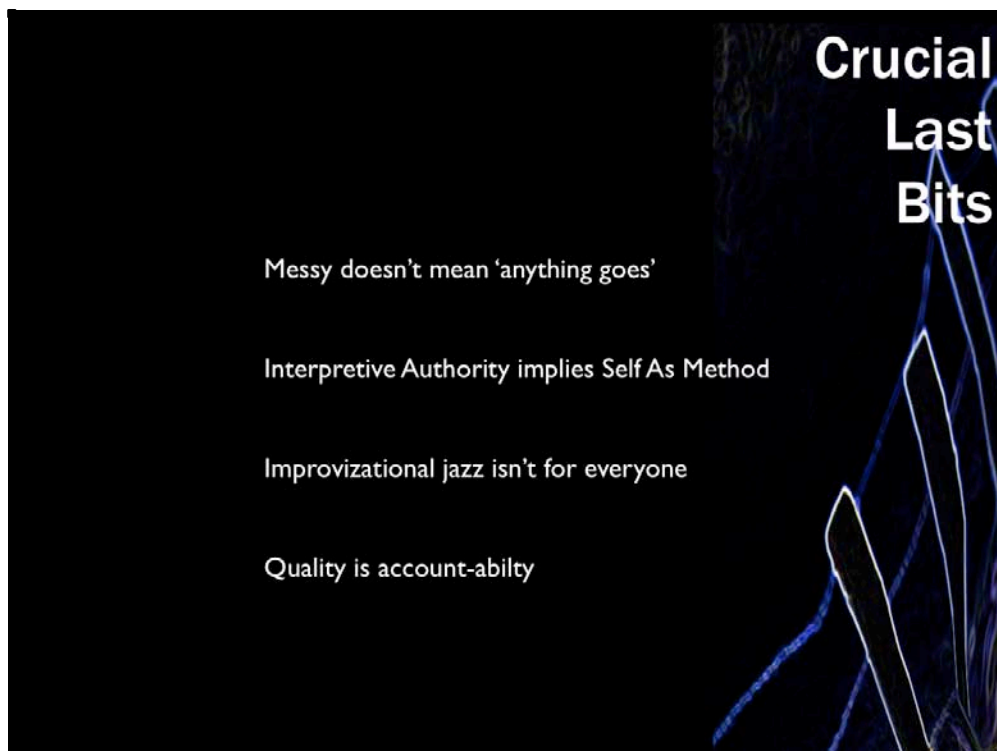
Some final thoughts about ethnography:

“Multi sited” is just one form of resistance against traditional ethnographic premises and conventions that just don’t work so well anymore, if they ever did. The rise of interpretive ethnography, netnography, technography, and multi-sited ethnography comes along with the realization that when applied to more than descriptive case studies of discrete tribal cultures, ethnography becomes more of a worldview than a method.

Second, there’s never only one method involved in the course of a study. We know this fact, but it’s worth repeating: Method is not monolithic. It’s also not static. Ethnography, multi-sited or not, might be a starting point, but it swiftly morphs into multiple methods of collecting, sorting, analyzing, and writing.

Third, good method is always about good questions.
Both asking and
answering questions is about negotiating boundaries.

Finally, it’s worth mentioning that when we’re really good at what we’re doing, we



To go along with that thought, here are some crucial last thoughts before I end:

Note to readers:

These are brief notes to accompany images for the presentation. They should be viewed as personal speaker outline rather than a complete or thorough argument.

Likewise, images and noted scholars are not cited fully. I can provide resources on request. But again, these are images used for educational purposes only, for the context of this particular event.

Please contact the author with questions or comments:
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