

eChicago 2009

Kate Williams, editor

Proceedings of the third eChicago symposium
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eChicago 2009

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Introduction—Kate Williams with Chris Hagar

This volume is the third proceedings of our series of eChicago symposia. The focus has always been to gather all voices to describe, analyze and advocate how Chicago can complete its transformation from an industrial city to an information city. In the third symposium we had 35 speakers and chairs in eight sessions, 187 people in attendance and more participating online.

The basic field of study that makes eChicago possible is community informatics. Now, it is of course true that all computing is social. And computers and the internet are tools for social networks of all kinds. But community informatics focuses primarily on the local, historical communities in which we live. Those of us studying and teaching about this phenomenon see our work as foundational. This is because the library and every other institution, including the family itself, depends on the integrity of the local community. In fact, crises and disasters, which are a research focus for one of your eChicago co-chairs, prove this once and for all.

The program and the proceedings here presents three elementary components of eChicago: the objective, the subjective, and what makes those both matter, human agency. Objective, we hear from Matt Zook: He shows us our basic geographic landscape, and the new tools that enable us to add a dimension or two onto that landscape. Since we move through space, we need to know how it's different now. Subjective, we hear from Steve Jones: What are the stories we tell? What is our consciousness about the transformation we see and are a part of? The example of immigration, which is going on at the same time as digitization, helps us understand this subjective process. But then, the third element: human agency. Nothing matters without

Kate Williams (PhD, University of Michigan School of Information) is an assistant professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign Graduate School of Library and Information Science. She began community technology work in 1993 at the Chicago Area Project teaching women to use an Apple 2e, helped organize the Job?Tech conferences at UIC, MIT, and UCLA, and has taught at Devry University in Chicago, University of Toledo, Dominican, and UIUC. A case study of a community technology center in Toledo was the start of her research in community informatics. She founded the eChicago symposium in 2007 and leads the IMLS-funded eChicago study of IT use in Chicago's ethnic communities. Her work uses social capital and social network theory to measure and model the sustainability of IT use in local communities. (katewill@illinois.edu)

Chris Hagar is an Assistant Professor at the Graduate School of Library & Information Science, Dominican University in River Forest where she teaches classes in community informatics, crisis informatics, and research methods. She holds a PhD in Library & Information Science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Chris has also taught at the School of Library & Information Science, San Jose State University, the University of Northumbria, UK, and the International Centre for Information Management Services & Systems, University of Nicholas Copernicus in Torun, Poland. Chris's research explores how communities manage, organize and disseminate information in crisis and emergency situations.

Prior to taking up her position at Dominican University, Chris was Director of Library Development for INASP, an international non-governmental organization where she managed a UNESCO information literacy project in the South Caucasus and facilitated a library and information science curriculum review project at the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and the University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh. Chris has also worked in the USA and UK as an academic librarian. She has been a consultant with the British Council and the UK Department for International Development. (chagar@dom.edu)

this. So we hear from Carolyn Anthony. She tells how people working in communities, who happen to be librarians, investigated what was going on and invented what to do about it. In her story, what began as a response to urban social movements, became action to solve community problems, and contributed through the decades to richer communities by creative use of the new dimensions that technology affords. Her account is an example for all of us working in communities. Especially today, we may only have basic resources to draw on, but we also have our own imaginations and the ability to take action. In the pages of this volume you find lots of human agency.

Chris Hagar co-chaired eChicago 2009, and as the on-site chair she covered more tasks than we can see from afar. Here are her comments introducing eChicago to itself when the event opened Thursday evening:

So welcome to the third annual eChicago Symposium, sponsored by the Graduate Schools of Library and Information Science at Dominican and at the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign, and for the first time, the Skokie Public Library. We've got another record number of attendees at this year's symposium. Over the course of the next two days we've got an exciting program lined up, and we've got a diverse range of attendees.

We've got a diverse range of attendees. We've got people from the Chicago Public Library, Skokie Public Library, the City of Chicago, Emporia State University, University of Michigan, ABC Channel 7 News, Information Diggers, the Benton Foundation, the Jane Addams Resource Corporation, the Art Institute of Chicago, One Economy, Sunshine Gospel Ministries, the Ukrainian National Museum, the Greater Auburn Gresham Community Development Corporation, the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs, and the list goes on. For a further list of the attendees, take a look at the list of participants. I'd also like to say hello to everyone who's watching on the web. We've got live webcasting, thanks to Andrew Pinçon from the Digital Workforce Education Society. We've also got podcasting in this corner—thank you to Alexis for organizing that. We've got people watching this apparently all over the world. We had people from Cuba logging in at about 3:00 this afternoon. There are a number of people whom I'd like to thank, including Dean Susan Roman at Dominican for her support, and also the GSLIS office staff. They've helped enormously in the preparation of this event. I'd particularly like to thank Sharon Parker, Lenora Berendt, and Mara Ziegler.

eChicago is a work in progress, both as a discourse and as a phenomenon out there in the wide world. How is Chicago becoming, or going to become, a city where everyone can and does use computers and the internet to their satisfaction and for the betterment of this city?

To answer this, it's very important that we gather knowledge from three different realms: policy, practice, and research. We are not at a point in this where we can stay within the boundaries of any one of these, although if we did perhaps each of us might be more comfortable. It's important that we work and talk across boundaries. And we're very much at a moment of needing discourse and not dogma. We don't have the answers yet to be able to instruct people exactly what to do here. This is new territory. And this is part of

the challenge of community informatics that other conferences, the iSchools meetings and CIRN in Prato, Italy, experience as well.

So as eChicago is very much an emergent phenomenon, some of us are using it and implementing it, and some of us are even designing it. And some of those people are here, and some of them are not, but we need to be thinking about how more people can get involved in implementing it and how more people can get involved in designing it, right? There's a downloader-uploader difference here going on with eChicago to be overcome. We can be proud of the democratic nature of our series of eChicago gatherings: many voices heard from, all sizes of organizations, all sorts of neighborhoods. Library schools believe in this.

Finally: we're doing this in a unique context which is very contradictory. On the one hand we're involved in a painful contraction, with less money, fewer jobs, less of a lot of things. On the other hand, there is a burst of money coming around the broadband aspect of the stimulus bill. We can compare the U.S. Department of Commerce Technology Opportunities Program, which is some data that we're looking at now, to the money that's going for broadband. That spending was one quarter of a billion spent over 11 years. The broadband money—which has just now started to flow—will be \$7.2 billion spent over two years, that's 150 times the flow. It's the difference between a drip and a fire hose. And out here, we're trying to figure out how to be a part of that money that's coming, how to get it from Washington and how to apply it here. Washington is going through the other side of this puzzle, how to give it out in a very short amount of time. So they're looking for shovel-ready, for plug-in-ready projects, and so part of our discussion from here forward is how does Chicago take part in that burst?

Symposium program

eChicago 2009

Cybernavigating our Cultures

6:30-8:30 pm on Thursday, April 2 and 8:30 am-5.00 pm on Friday, April 3

Dominican University
7900 West Division Street
River Forest, Illinois 60305
<http://www.echicago.illinois.edu>

The Third Annual eChicago gathering is a practice/policy/research symposium sponsored by the two library and information science schools in the state of Illinois. Co-chairs are Chris Hagar, Dominican University and Kate Williams, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and the Skokie Public Library. The symposium is hosted with funding from both schools, and parallels a research project of the same name funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Every year at Chicago, practitioners, policymakers and researchers exchange ideas and find better ways to work together. This year we will be asking the questions:

- How are Chicago's neighborhoods bridging the digital divide?
- How are Chicago's ethnic communities represented in cyberspace?
- What is a strategic plan for cyberdemocracy in Chicago? In the US? In the world?

Also this year, we convene with the backdrop of a new presidential administration that is rooted in Illinois, with a new technology platform. And we are living in a more troubled economy, which puts the use of digital resources in an even brighter spotlight as a tool for democratic inclusion. This is expressed in notably higher use of library facilities across Chicagoland. This is also clearly acknowledged in Congress's stimulus bill, as it allocates more than \$7 billion to broadband internet deployment, public computing, and innovative uses of technology in local communities. Our program highlights the steps Chicago has already taken in this direction, and what might be next steps.

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Thursday April 2, 6:30-8:30 pm in Springer Suite

Chair: **Chris Hagar**, Dominican University

Welcome: **Donna M. Carroll**, President, Dominican University and **John Unsworth**, Professor and Dean, Graduate School of Library & Information Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Speaker: **Matthew Zook**, Associate Professor, Department of Geography, University of Kentucky
“*Digiplace and Cyberscapes: Rethinking the Digital Divide in Urban America*”

Q and A

Buffet dinner

Also available this evening: Hands-on GIS Demonstration with **Charles Linville**, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign Graduate School of Library and Information Science

Friday, April 3, 8.30-5.00

8:30-9:00 Coffee and registration at back of Springer Suite

Available during registration and breaks: Hands-on GIS Demonstration with **Charles Linville** and **Abdul Dakkak**, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign Graduate School of Library and Information Science

9:00-10:15 Plenary in Springer Suite

Chair: **Kate Williams**, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Welcome: **Cheryl Johnson-Odim**, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dominican University, and **Susan Roman**, Professor and Dean, Graduate School of Library & Information Science, Dominican University

Speaker: **Steve Jones**, Associate Dean and Professor, University of Illinois at Chicago
“*Via Chicago: Ethnic Media, New Media and the Experience of Migration and Mobility*”

10:15-10:35 Break

Available during break: Hands-on GIS Demonstration

10:35-11.50 Morning breakout sessions

(In Crown 320) *Sustaining the cyberlife of Chicago’s ethnic communities*

Chair: **Abdul Alkalimat**, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign Department of African American Studies and Graduate School of Library and Information Science

Héctor R. Hernández, Rudy Lozano Branch, Chicago Public Library

Sarah Cottonaro, Alsip-Merrionette Park Public Library District, “*The Pui Tak Center: A case study in Chicago’s Chinatown*”

Hui Yan, Peking University Department of Information Management and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Graduate School of Library and Information Science

Aiko Takazawa, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Graduate School of Library and Information Science

Brooke Bahnsen, Fremont Public Library

Melissa Martinez [invited]

(In Springer Suite) *The CyberNavigators of Chicago Public Library*

Chair: Roberto Pang, CyberNavigator Program Director, Chicago Public Library

Juan Pablo Avalos, Lozano Public Library

Alicia Henry, West Englewood Public Library

Sophia Hou, Chinatown Public Library

Anita Mechler, Humboldt Park Public Library

Debbie Hayes, Woodson Public Library

11:50-12:50 Lunch in the Social Hall or Cybercafé, on your own

Available during lunch: Hands-on GIS Demonstration

12:50- 2.05 Plenary in Springer Suite

Chair: Chris Hagar, Dominican University

Speaker: Carolyn A. Anthony, Director of Skokie Public Library

“Building Community: Bit by Byte”

2:10-3:25 Afternoon breakout sessions

(In Springer Suite) *The City of Chicago's three Digital Excellence Demonstration Communities*

Chair: Jan Rodgers, Graduate School of Social Work, Dominican University

Licia Knight, One Economy, and **Ron Bolton**, Lawndale Christian Development Corporation

Andy Pinçon, Digital Workforce Education Society at West Side Technical Institute, and **Jaime Guzman**, Digital Workforce Education Society

Ernest Sanders, Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation; **Norma Sanders**, Edge Technological Resources, Inc.; **Donna S. Stites**, Greater Southwest Development Corporation; and **Rev. Rodney Walker**, Teamwork Englewood

Jon Gant, respondent, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Graduate School of Library and Information Science

(In Crown 320) *Academic and activist perspectives on community informatics*

Chair: **Kate Marek**, Graduate School of Library & Information Science,
Dominican University
Safiya Umoja Noble, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Graduate School
of Library and Information Science
Nate Grant, Chicago State University
Vincent McCaskill, Sunshine Gospel Ministries
Willie Cade, PC Rebuilders & Recyclers, Home of the Computers for Schools
Program

3.25-3:45 Break

Available during break: Hands-on GIS Demonstration

3:45-4:45 (In Springer Suite) *eChicago: Can we sketch a plan for cyberdemocracy in Chicagoland?*

Chair: **Abdul Alkalimat**, University of Illinois Graduate School of Library and
Information Science and Department of African American Studies
Kate Williams, University of Illinois Graduate School of Library and Information
Science
Charles Benton, Benton Foundation
Matt Guilford, Department of Innovation and Technology, City of Chicago
Ryan Croke, Governor's Office, State of Illinois
Zorica Nedović-Budić, University of Illinois Department of Urban Planning

4:45-5:00 Wine and book launch in Springer Suite

Each eChicago symposium becomes a published book. Pick up your copy of eChicago 2008 (complimentary to last year's speakers) and celebrate both 2008 and 2009's events.

Photo gallery—Robert A. Sengstacke



Robert A Sengstacke ("Bobby") is a native son of Chicago, grandson of Robert Abbott, founder of the *Chicago Defender*. Bobby emerged in the 1960's as a founding member of Black Arts Movement in Chicago and has since become one of the leading photographers of his generation. His images take us into both an extremely personal experience of the conference and, as a collage, into the discourse dynamics as well.





What is Community Informatics?

- Digital Divide
- Social Stratification
- Convergence
- Free Culture & Indigenous Knowledge
- Political Economy
- Participatory Democracy & the Public Good





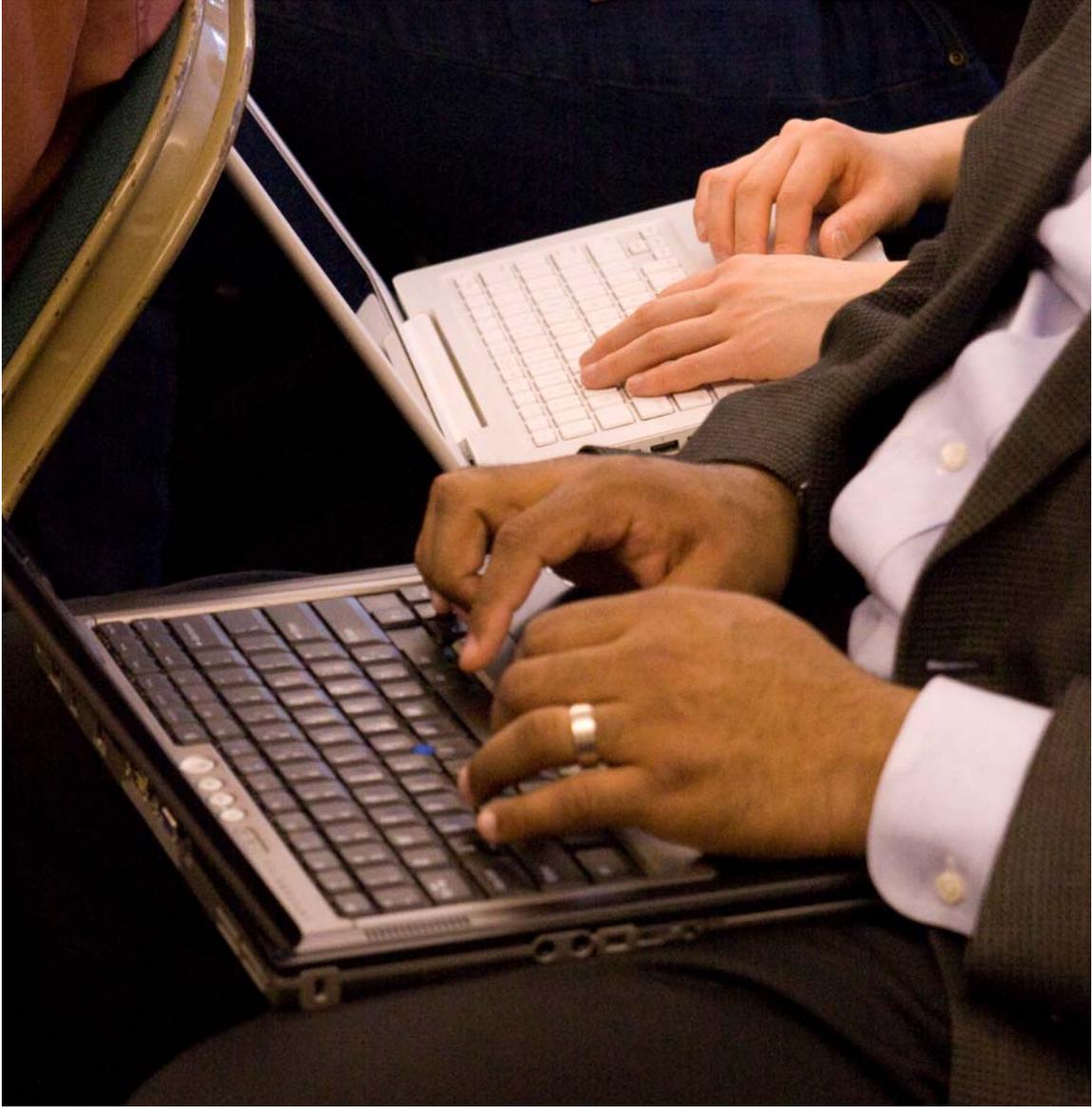


Main Points

- How did I collect URLs and use the web/bibliographies?*
- How can global/Chicago/research communities use them?*
- How would we make them sustainable? Who should manage resources?*







President's welcome—Donna Carroll

My name is Donna Carroll, and I am the President of Dominican University. I have been the president here for fifteen years. It is a delight to welcome you to Cybernavigating Our Cultures, and also to Dominican University. I always like to open this event because it gives me the opportunity to frame a conversation that I think connects with Dominican University on a number of levels. Obviously, we are delighted to have so many new colleagues on campus. And this conference seems to encourage a cutting edge and multi-textured conversation among colleagues, which is what the academy should be inviting. Your meeting gives us an opportunity to showcase our Graduate School of Library and Information Science, which is our oldest, largest and most far-reaching program, so that too delights me. But most of all, the conference topic resonates with our mission as a university. What I mean is that your areas of study reflect our commitment to social justice, and by its very nature, the need for community development, which is an important initiative at Dominican. This is an enormously interdisciplinary gathering, which again resonates with how we at Dominican look at education and what we hope to achieve with all of our degree-granting programs. And it bridges theory and practice in a very positive, innovative, and engaging way.

Donna M. Carroll is the president of Dominican University, a comprehensive Catholic university of 3500 students located ten miles west of Chicago. As the first lay (external) president of Dominican, appointed in 1994, Dr. Carroll has experienced firsthand the challenges and satisfactions of transforming an institution, and she is actively engaged in issues of strategic planning and fund development. She is currently a trustee of Fordham University and serves on the board of the Council of Independent Colleges. In addition, she is a director of Rush Oak Park Hospital and Oak Park Development Corporation and has recently been appointed to the School Board of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

Dr. Carroll brings substantial management and organizational development experience to her role as president. It was during Dr. Carroll's tenure as president that Rosary College changed its name to Dominican University. Enrollment has doubled since 1994 and the operating budget has tripled. During the 2007-08 academic year total donations to the University exceeded 12 million dollars. In the context of a well-orchestrated strategic plan, Dominican University has purchased a second campus, introduced multiple new academic programs, completed \$75 million in capital improvements and strengthened the University's position internationally. The University just completed a \$50+ million capital campaign.

President Carroll came to Dominican University from New York City where she served as Secretary of the University at Fordham University. Prior to her position at Fordham, Dr. Carroll was the Senior Vice President, Dean of the College and Dean of Students at Mount Vernon College in Washington, D.C. In addition to the above board affiliations, she has served on other national, corporate and statewide boards including, Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, TCF Bank, University of Scranton, Catholic Theological Union, and the Cook County Commission on Women. Dr. Carroll was Chair of the Federation of Independent Illinois Colleges and Universities from 2004 to 2006.

Donna Carroll received her BA in English from Wellesley College and master and doctoral degrees in higher education administration and counseling from the University of Cincinnati. She is a graduate of the Harvard Institute for Educational Management, Leadership Washington, the Snowmass Institute and the Oxford Roundtable. President Carroll has been named one of the 100 Women Who Make a Difference by Today's Chicago Woman, and was listed as one of the top ten women in education by the Chicago Sun Times. She received the 1998 Woman with Vision Award from the Illinois Women's Bar Association, the 2004 CEO Leadership Award from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education and the 2007 Athena Award. She is a frequent keynote speaker and workshop facilitator.

Dr. Carroll is a member of The Chicago Network and the Economic Club of Chicago. She resides in Oak Park, Illinois. (dompres@dom.edu)

Dominican University benefits from the tension of opposites, and I see that quality in your meeting agenda too. Dominican is a small institution but we have a complex structure, and complex aspirations. We are a suburban campus that is collegiate gothic and very attractive in its look, but we serve an urban and very diverse student body. We are regional, but our mission from the very beginning has had a strong international flavor. So I think this institution and your conversation fit together very nicely.

And the final reason I like to welcome you all is to acknowledge faculty leadership. With all the planning that Kate and Chris have done for this event, I am absolutely confident that you are going to have a thoughtful and intriguing two days of conversation, and as a larger community we will benefit from your conclusions. So I welcome you. I encourage you to enjoy the campus, and I wish you a fruitful meeting.

Dean's welcome—John Unsworth

I'll be brief, since I'm the last person between you and the person you actually want to hear from. But I did want to add my welcome. I'm John Unsworth, the Dean of the Graduate School of Library and information Science at the University of Illinois, Urbana–Champaign—I have learned to say that in one breath. This is the third—am I correct?—of the eChicago Symposiums. It's clearly a hot topic, and a well-attended event, which I'm very pleased to see. In our school this fits in with the universe of community informatics activities that are going on, a large and important part of what we do there. And I think it bridges that theory and practice divide. I won't be able to remember the following quotation exactly off the top of my head, but here goes: “In theory, there is no difference between theory and practice, but in practice, there is.” Bringing practice back into the realm of examination is important. That's one of the things that I think happens here. It's also very important, for us in Urbana–Champaign, to have a presence and be engaged in Chicago. I'm very pleased with this event on that score.

I also want to say I'm pleased that this is one of a couple of important things that we do in collaboration with Dominican. Another is the LIS Access Midwest Program, a regional effort to recruit underrepresented students into LIS programs at various Midwestern schools. Dominican will be hosting the workshop for that activity this summer. I'd like to see more of those collaborations, as I think they strengthen us both. And I'm very glad that this one has recurred, and it looks like you have a topic which is not going away. Between the second and the third iteration of this event, something has changed in the world. I'm now more optimistic that we can make a difference concerning

John Unsworth is Dean of the Graduate School of Library and Information Science (GSLIS) at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, with appointments as Professor in GSLIS, in the department of English, and on the Library faculty. During the previous ten years, from 1993-2003, he served as the first Director of the Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities, and a faculty member in the English Department, at the University of Virginia. For his work at IATH, he received the 2005 Richard W. Lyman Award from the National Humanities Center. He chaired the national commission that produced *Our Cultural Commonwealth*, the 2006 report on Cyberinfrastructure for Humanities and Social Science, on behalf of the American Council of Learned Societies, and he has supervised research projects across the disciplines in the humanities. He has also published widely on the topic of electronic scholarship, as well as co-directing one of nine national partnerships in the Library of Congress's National Digital Information Infrastructure Preservation Program, and securing grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Science Foundation, the Getty Grant Program, IBM, Sun, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and others. His first faculty appointment was in English, at North Carolina State University, from 1989 to 1993. He attended Princeton University and Amherst College as an undergraduate, graduating from Amherst in 1981. He received a Master's degree in English from Boston University in 1982 and a Ph.D. in English from the University of Virginia in 1988. In 1990, at NCSU, he co-founded the first peer-reviewed electronic journal in the humanities, *Postmodern Culture* (now published by Johns Hopkins University Press, as part of Project Muse). He also organized, incorporated, and chaired the Text Encoding Initiative Consortium, co-chaired the Modern Language Association's Committee on Scholarly Editions, and served as President of the Association for Computers and the Humanities and later as chair of the steering committee for the Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations, as well as serving on many other editorial and advisory boards. He was born in 1958, in Northampton, Massachusetts; in 1978, he married Margaret English, with whom he has three children: Bill, Thomas, and Eleanor. Further information is at: <http://www3.isrl.uiuc.edu/~unsworth/>. (unsworth@illinois.edu)

some of the issues that you're addressing, specifically the dispersion of broadband to underserved communities, and the use of internet technology to produce more transparency in government, to produce more accountability. These are things toward which we seem to be moving, and I think that the topic of the first presentation in this program is an excellent topic, and one that I look forward to hearing about. I wish you an excellent symposium, and I'll be listening in on the web.

Digiplace and cyberscapes: Rethinking the digital divide in urban America—Matthew A. Zook

Thanks both to Chris and Kate for inviting me here. I'm quite happy to be here and very honored to be asked to participate in this event. And thanks to all for coming, as well. And I do promise that I'll explain what I mean by the ideas “cyberspace” and “digiplace,” so the first step in this talk is to go through this.

To give you a brief idea of where I'm planning on going today, I'm going to chart this evolution as I see it, from the concept of cyberspace to cyberscape to digiplace, and then really get into the meat of the presentation, which is primarily looking at the mapping of cyberscapes. I will be looking at global patterns of dispersion, and talking a little bit about how this affects our thinking about digital divides—and I do want to say, in the plural, digital divides, rather than digital divide. Then I will look at a couple case studies, specifically the effects of Hurricane Katrina and New Orleans and the use of cyberscapes in the aftermath. I will take a little look at some metropolitan cyberscapes before coming back and focusing on Chicago. Luckily, I had enough lead time for this talk to take a little specific look at Chicago, which hopefully will be interesting for you all, before coming to my set of conclusions, questions, and then a final coda at the end.

So what I'm thinking about in terms of this evolution, or change from concepts of cyberspace to cyberscape, is bound up with how information technology, specifically internet, has evolved over time. In the 1980s, pre-World Wide Web, it was a text-based media. In the 1990s, with the release of the HTML protocols, the World Wide Web came into being. With the first internet browsers, we start seeing graphics and text together. And we can sort of conflate, for the moment, the idea of audio and video. It was text and graphics coming together in the 1990s. In the 2000s, or around 2000, we started getting some really interesting stuff tied to mobility, less so in the U.S., more so in other countries, particularly Japan and Finland. Not only do you have text and graphics, but people were starting to really access this kind of information on the go through cellular devices and things like that.

More recently, you probably have heard of the turn to the catch-all term Web 2.0, things like Wikis, social networking sites, and blogs. A whole lot of stuff gets crammed into this little tiny concept of Web 2.0. The important thing for my talk here is this idea that we're getting to the point where users, people online, ourselves, we're not just

Matthew A. Zook is an associate professor in the Geography department at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, KY. His interest centers on the impact of technology and innovation on human geography. He has an extensive record of articles in peer-reviewed academic journals such as the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *Journal of Economic Geography*, *GeoForum*, *Environment and Planning A*, *Journal of Transportation Geography* and *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*. His first book *The Geography of the Internet Industry: Venture Capital, Dot-coms and Local Knowledge* was published by Blackwell in 2005 as part of its Information Age Series, M. Castells (Series Editor). He is also the Primary Investigator for a NSF Project entitled "Connecting Cyberspace to Place: Understanding the Evolution of Transactions and Value Chains in Electronic Commerce". He obtained a B.A. from Earlham College, a M.R.P. in City and Regional Planning from Cornell University and a Ph.D. in City and Regional Planning from University of California, Berkeley. His blog www.floatingsheep.org is dedicated to mapping and analyzing user generated cyberscapes and digiplaces. (zook@uky.edu)

consuming content off the internet. We're starting to take more and more of an active role in constructing content. People are coming together to create Wiki pages, people are producing blogs. We debate the extent to which the blog about someone's cat is useful information. It is content, though. We're moving more towards this. And Web 2.0 is a bit of a catch-all, but that's sort of the idea that I see in this evolution.

The most recent thing I'm going to be talking about is that we have started adding location, or spatial information, to some of this information. And I picked 2005 because that's when Google took Keyhole, the previous company, rebranded it, and released Google Earth. It's when Google Maps, originally called Google Local, first started coming out. MapQuest and other sorts of online mapping programs were around beforehand, but this marks, in my mind, the beginning of what often is called the GeoWeb. It comes under different names. Sometimes people call it Neo Geography, or volunteer geographic information, other sort of things, all of which get at this combination of text, graphics, mobility, web 2.0, and location, and you really get this idea of users starting to create and share spatial annotations. And spatial annotations is a fancy way of saying placemarks. Essentially, people are being able to put a pin in a map, or a pin on the world, and say, "This is my house," or "This is a good restaurant," or "I don't like this place," or express whatever they want to express. There are lots of variations, especially given the internet, all kinds of variations on that.

This is what I see as creating what I'm referring to as a cyberscape or cyberscapes. I'm defining cyberscape as essentially an online dimension, a sort of digital online layer of the socially constructed human landscape. It's this hybrid space that blurs the lines between a material place, such as this room, Chicago, depends on which scale you're looking at, and the digital representation of that particular place. It's not necessarily supplanting what's come before. It's just an additional layer of information to which more people are able to contribute and which more people are able to access. It's a really interesting conceptual change in terms of how we think about and represent places. What is particularly relevant is this idea, again, of user-generated annotated space. I go back to this idea of Web 2.0. When you do a regular Google search, you're essentially mapping the Yellow Pages. It's very useful. You can find out where the closest pizza restaurant is, shoe store, what have you, but it's not fundamentally all that different. What's really interesting is that now people are able to annotate as well, alongside these directories and business listings. And since there are no rules on the internet, there's a lot of interesting stuff that people can annotate. You can annotate smells and you can annotate feelings, in addition to, "Hey, this is my house," which a lot of it is.

So here is the best way I can think of to help you see this idea. I'm a geographer. We like maps, we like visualizations. So I came up with this sort of simple visualization, a snapshot of a human landscape. We have people, we have busy streets, we have signs, we have businesses. This is the human landscape that we interact with every day as we move through urban spaces. What I'm calling this human cyberscape simply adds this extra layer of information over the existing human landscape. It doesn't supplant it, doesn't make it no longer important, doesn't mean that McDonald's Golden Arches are no longer relevant for how we see the city, but there's new information out here. If you are familiar with Google Maps icons, the red ones are the Yellow Pages listings and the blue ones are the user-generated listings. And this is an example of a human cyberscape.



Figure 1. Cyberscape Visualization.

Now, people have accused me in the past of being too Google focused, because a lot of the stuff I look at are Google Maps and Google's indexes and stuff like that. Part of it is just that it's a big phenomenon. A lot of people are using it; it makes sense to study it. I just want to emphasize this idea of a cyberscape. There can be many different forms of it. One example is a map someone did of Twitter reports, or tweets, on snowstorms in the UK of January 2009. You all remember in the news, the snow came in and basically killed the UK for a couple of days because they had no snow removal equipment. I know this is a bizarre idea for people from Chicago—at the same time you can see that this is the sort of information people are putting out there. You can map this, you can spatialize it, and you can give this temporal edge to it, too. This is also similar to this idea of a cyberscape that develops. It doesn't necessarily have to be Google placemarks, but for most of the presentation, that's specifically what I'm going to be focused on because it's a really good and useful example.

This brings me up to the next term in the title, digiplace. This is the one I shifted back, because I'm not going to be spending as much time talking about digiplace. But digiplace is this other aspect of how we interact with digital information. It's essentially this ordering of cyberscapes. You have all this data, that one image, all these different place marks. How do you find out which one is relevant to you? What's relevant to your search?

And there's this whole issue of how ranking takes place based on your search query. There's a lot of interesting literature on how Google page rank itself works. The most important thing is that Google looks at how other web pages link to your webpage. It's sort of a voting, peer-review process. Web pages that have a lot of incoming links are ranked more highly—there's a very complicated process to it. What's really interesting, in

terms of thinking about this spatially, is that you start getting this blending of physical distance and visibility or importance in cyberspace. I'm sure you've all probably had this experience where you do a search in Google maps for, you know, a pizza restaurant, a shoe store, or what have you, and the first thing that comes back is not the closest one. Google has this complicated algorithm by which it weighs different things, and sometimes it'll rank something higher that is farther away because according to its software algorithm, it's more visible. It's more important. And this brings up some really important questions, because suddenly it's not just physical distance. It's this measure of physical distance combined with cyberspace visibility. And it's a black box. It's one of Google's crown jewels. There's a whole industry called Search Engine Optimization, which is all focused on making you ranked higher. And obviously, Google is not interested in being optimized. They want to try to give back what they consider to be real results, but there's this game going on.

To return to cyberscape and daily life, I see digiplace entering when we get the ubiquitous iPhone. I don't know how many people had these before, or have these right now, but I went to an academic conference last week, and I actually saw people with iPhones. So I realized they've hit mass consumption levels. When academics start doing something it means it's almost passé. With the iPhone, you have this locating function represented by the blue circle on the screen. Essentially, this is where you are, and then you can do a search, where's the drycleaner, where's whatever, and you have this result coming back that's combining this sort of blended hybrid physical distance and importance in cyberspace. And this really captures the essence of digiplace. I've written about this a lot in some articles. I'm not going to be talking a whole lot about this tonight, I'm going to be focusing more on some cyberscapes, but I just want to keep this idea in the back of our mind of how the cyberscapes become visible. There is a filter going on. It can be a really useful filter— Lord knows, I like Google search results. It gives me useful stuff, but that doesn't mean that it's not a filter.

And just for an example, in digiplace, I've been looking at this for a while, and you'll all get to know Lexington, Kentucky a little better. I've been running searches for pizza. That's sort of the quintessential Google Maps example. When we first did this back in August 2005, I should note for the historians it was Google Local, it was not actually called Google Maps. This is one of the earlier incarnations. And the first three results are local pizza places, right next to the University of Kentucky campus, that were very popular with students and faculty and so forth. And so we looked at it like: “Ah. That's a really interesting result.” We got back an interesting representation of pizza.

Now, we did that same search about a year later, and suddenly, two of them dropped out and were replaced by essentially Pizza Hut. Now, I don't want to cast Google as sort of an evil corporate leviathan that was driving local pizza places out of business. There are legitimate reasons why, given the algorithm, why Pizza Hut might be ranked higher. Pizza Hut has a large web presence, and there are a lot of links going into it. A small different change in the tweaking of the algorithm could produce this kind of result, and then we see in March 2009 that Pizza Hut's gone, the local places are gone, we got two other local places, and then Little Caesars comes up. And this is really what I just want to sort of emphasize about digiplace. It's dynamic, it's constantly changing, and it's tied to how these ranking algorithms work. And this is- it's a very black box. You know, because, you know, if people knew how to do it, how Google was doing it, they'd start,

you know, gaming the system, and so forth. But still, it's one of these things that shape the kind of visibility that we experience online or with cyberscapes.

So I want to move to this next topic, to the main part of this idea of mapping cyberscapes. I want to go over a couple of different questions, the first of which is how user-generated cyberscapes differ between different places. How does scale matter? If we look at the global level, if we look at the micro, urban level, what difference can we see? How does topic or keyword matter? Do we see different results if we use different keywords in our searches? And to what extent do we see offline characters—or characteristics—being reflected or mirrored on this online or hybrid cyberscape? And I should clarify, that while user-generated cyberscapes can encompass many technologies my presentation is focused on user-generated placemarks indexed by Google. I'm not going to get into the method. It's not something that's readily available. We spent a fair amount of time trying to produce these kinds of maps. So I'll be showing you a series of these cyberscapes. Essentially, you just need to keep in mind that when you do a Google Maps search, I'm collecting this information right down here, that is, a number of places that come back from a research result at a certain location for a certain keyword for a certain radius. That's what I'm collecting, and that's what I'm showing tonight—I use various sets of grid coordinates.

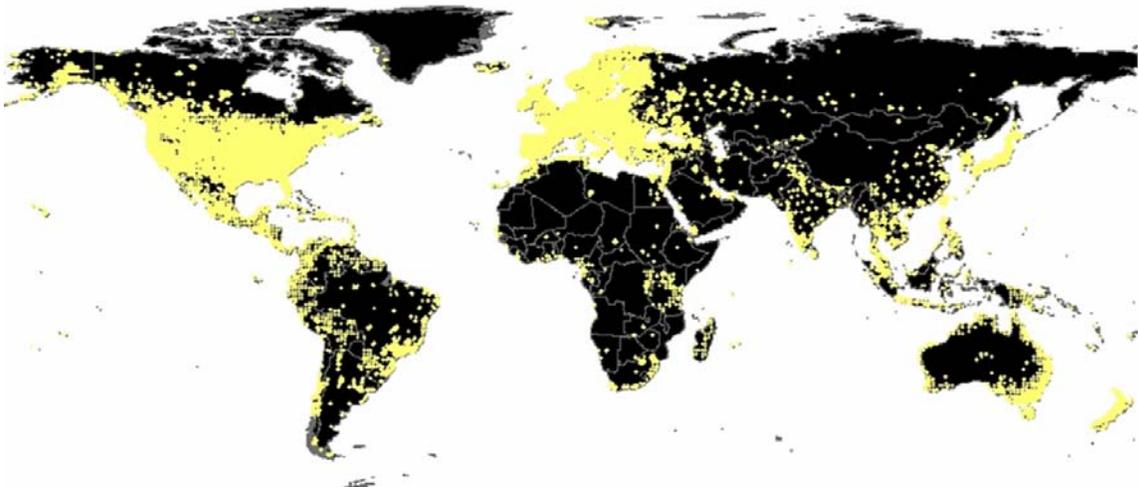


Figure 2. Distribution of Placemarks.

So here are user-generated placemarks at the global level. This is based on a global grid of about a quarter of a million points. I don't have them all up here just because it got a little messy in terms of trying to represent it. So we set an arbitrary cut-off that places with less than 100 placemarks would not show up on this map. But you see some real big concentrations: North America, particularly the U.S., Canada, Western Europe, the numbers decline as you move eastward, until you get to Japan, Australia, New Zealand, which are essentially blanketed in placemarks. In large parts of the globe, there are not very many placemarks at all, and let me just draw your attention right here to the Ganges River Valley right here. This is an incredibly densely populated part of the world. You guys know where the Himalayas are, right? It is not particularly densely

populated, but there are a lot of placemarks or a fairly high density of placemarks. We go back and forth between—this is population density, this is placemark density. And you see that the dense Ganges River Valley does not have a whole lot of placemarks. It is relatively obvious why this is so. The people who live there, the people who are concerned with that area, are not the people who are making placemarks. Likewise, the fact that there's a lot of placemarks in Nepal probably has very little to do with Nepalese internet users. It probably has a lot more to do with, again, the population that's making placemarks. These people tend to be Western, rich people going for two weeks for a trek in Nepal. I'm just pointing these out as examples. You can see some other sort of differences between placemark density and population density. Obviously, Australia and New Zealand are vastly overrepresented in terms of placemarks. Again, there are certain types of places, certain types of populations that are more likely to engage in this placemarking process than other places. Certain places are simply not being part of this mapping. And if we drop it down to a different regional level, we can see an obvious difference between South Korea and North Korea. South Korea has a fairly strong online community and has a lot of placemark activity, while North Korea is essentially blank. My favorite statistic is that the Tokyo Yokohama metro area has three times more placemarks than the entire continent of Africa. For those of you used to looking at global internet usage statistics, this is not particularly surprising. This mirrors a lot of other things in terms of users, internet connectivity, and so forth. So a really uneven cyberscape develops when we take a look at this.

Moving to a fun comparison, we can do interesting keyword searches. We can do searches for placemarks with the word “Jesus” and “Allah.” Originally, the slide was Jesus Versus Allah, but I decided that was probably not the best way to phrase it. Anyway, you can see that some real interesting patterns came out, basically what you would expect. In Western Europe, there's a whole lot more Jesus than Allah. The blue represents when there's more Jesus placemarks—or more Jesus references in placemarks than Allah. The size gives an idea of the magnitude. As you move towards the South and the East, you see a lot more references to Allah. Jesus is very popular in Rome, in Jerusalem, and so forth. At the same time, you have some very intriguing little sort of cuts within the larger trend. This is actually a little path through Belgium, Bruges, and into Brussels, that comes out. So you start seeing some of these offline characteristics being reflected in cyberscape, or being mirrored and reflected in cyberscape, not perfectly, but enough to be really intriguing.

Another example is the bible belt of cyberscape. This is a representation in which the larger the dot, the more highly specialized a place is in placemarks that have the word “church” relative to the total number of placemarks. So this concentration right here—these are places that have more church placemarks, or placemarks with the word “church,” than they have any other kind of placemarks. And so you can start seeing this sort of reflection of what are people interested in. How are certain places being represented in these constructions of cyberscapes?

All right. Let me talk a little bit about the idea of digital divides and cyberscapes. I do want to put forth this idea of digital divides, because it's my argument that rather than there being one divide that we have to get over or a community has to get over, there's this whole continuing series of divides that come up again and again. It's not just

about access; it's about how we actually end up using a particular technology. And just to quote from Manuel Castells, from his book *Internet Galaxy*: “The fundamental digital

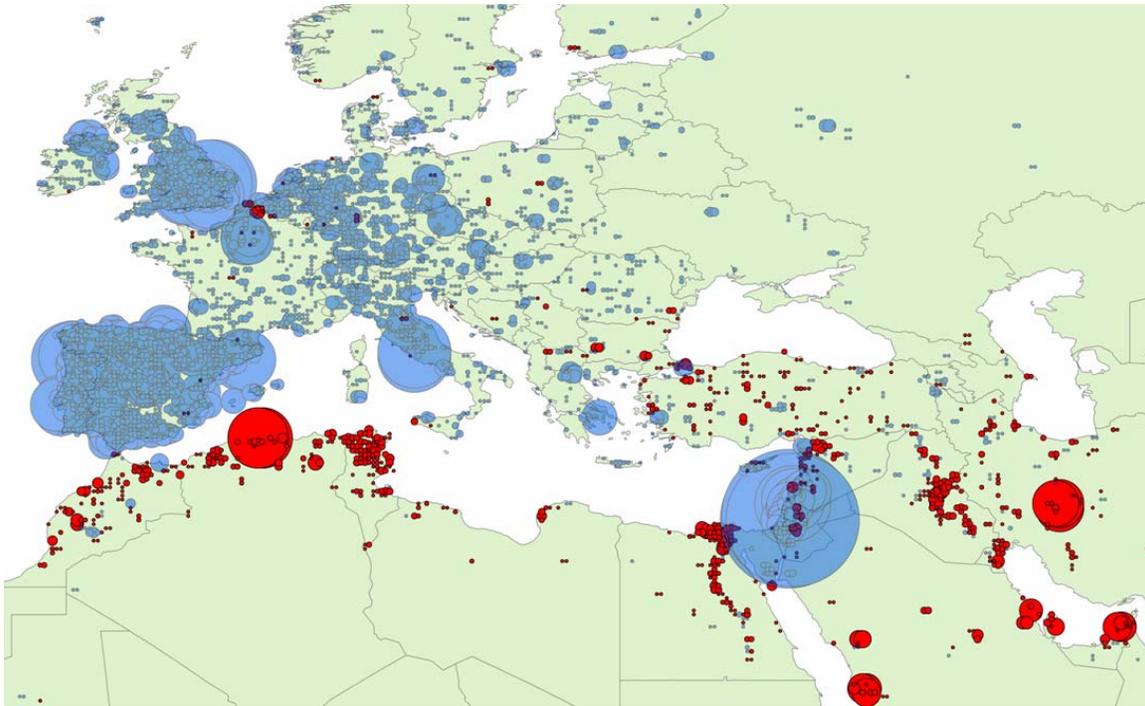


Figure 3. Jesus and Allah.

divide is not measured by the number of connections to the internet, but the consequences of both the connection and the lack of the connection. It's not just a technology, it's a technological tool, an organizational form that distributes information or information power, knowledge generation, and networking capacity and all rounds of activities.” And this is really, in my mind, the key idea. It's not simply about access. I mean, you can't have it without access, but moving beyond the simple access question is really key in thinking about the digital divide. And beyond that, it's not a simple one-time event. In fact, others have made the critique, and I agree that this whole sort of metaphor of divide is somewhat problematic because you have a divide, you bridge the divide, you get to the other side, and the problem is solved. It's much more problematic because we have a constantly moving technology— one example is the GeoWeb. The GeoWeb didn't really exist four, five years ago, in the same way it exists now. It's a new technology, it's a new way of representing places, a new way of people using cyberspace and tying it to place. And we need to sort of think about how we keep going to the next divide or whatever other metaphor we might use. In short, I'm arguing against the divide as the proper metaphor.

I'm going to borrow from Jeremy Crampton here in proposing that rather than having a digital divide, we should make it a digital lag. The idea is that it's not a one-time divide we have to get across, but that there are successive rounds of inequality, like waves on the beach. One comes in, we figure that one out, and the next one's already

coming in. There is not a simple one-time solution for any one divide. There's a series of divides that need to be continually engaged with.

So my argument, in terms of the digital lag, or divide if you will, is that given the GeoWeb, there's this fundamental question of our ability to participate in and control the technologies to define our everyday lives and spaces. The GeoWeb, the cyberscapes around us, are increasingly present, we're increasingly going to be interacting with it. Who gets to interact with it? Who participates in its creation? What is being mapped? Where is it being mapped? Whose point of view is being mapped? I think that's one of the key questions coming up with regard to cyberscape.

So with this sort of question in mind, I want to move to a specific case study I've been working on, which has involved looking at Hurricane Katrina, race, and cyberscape. And this is a picture of Victor Harris. He's the chief of the Spirit of Fi Yi Yi Mardi Gras Indian tribe. And he gave a performance at the first Mardi Gras post Hurricane Katrina. It was March, April, 2006. And he sang this song: "Calling all the people, come back home, New Orleans is where you belong, come back to New Orleans. Come back home." He sang this song on the porch of the Backstreet Cultural Museum in the neighborhood of Tremé in New Orleans. And it was a mixed crowd of people who had come back to New Orleans, people both costumed and plain clothes, and he issued this challenge. What's really interesting, what started me thinking about this research project and looking specifically at this, is that in addition to him singing this, and in addition to it being broadcast by a local low-wattage radio station, it was also being broadcast across the internet. And then suddenly there was this really interesting set of questions relating to and this interesting juxtaposition of the real materiality of Victor Harris's performance, his call for people to come back home, and this cyber broadcast. There are all kinds of questions: Who was listening? Or who knew it was possible to listen? Who had access to be able to listen to this? And because of this, I started thinking with a co-author of mine at Kentucky about how Google or the cyberscape played out in the context of Hurricane Katrina and New Orleans.

And in many ways the whole Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans event was the first field test of Google Earth, Google Maps. They hadn't been out there very long—there was actually a fairly small user base that was very devoted, very enthusiastic about it—and as Katrina came into the Gulf coastline, there were all kinds of activities. People would grab satellite photos and do an overlay in the U.S., just to be able to enjoy and play with the technology. Once the hurricane made landfall, once the levees broke, there was a whole other set of problems. A lot of people were displaced, there was a lot of confusion at this time. There were a lot of basic questions. Where are the waterlines? What is flooded? What parts of the city are damaged? And you started seeing the user base doing something like this, grabbing a photo from a new source, and then locating it within Google Earth so people could have some sort of sense of where the water lines were, where the wind damage was. In some ways it was the Google Earth community's finest hour: they came together, they were passing out a lot of information, and were able to provide a very important service to a lot of people.

One of the really interesting applications that came out of this was a website called Scipinious.com. Are people ever familiar with this website? It came out almost immediately after Katrina hit New Orleans. It was not a Google product—a couple of software engineers put it together. They did use the Google Maps API, which is this

programming interface, to make this service, and essentially what they allowed people to do was to put pins in the map and say: “I’ve been here. There’s three feet of water here.” Or: “I’ve been here. Wind damage, but everything’s dry.” Or: “I’ve talked to so-and-so who lives here, and they’re okay.” So it was a really important means by which people could exchange information about very specific places. You could go in and locate it exactly on the spot you were commenting on. It was a tremendous service, and it got a lot of press at the time. I think something like a few thousand placemarks ended up being put in and being distributed by people.

Now, that said, when we first looked at the map of these pins, we made a visual comparison to race within New Orleans. These are census tracts, and in this particular representation, tracts with a higher percentage of African Americans show up on the map as darker. And you can see certain places that became particularly famous in the Katrina context. The lower Ninth Ward had very few of these reported placemarks, which helped to generate our research question. Essentially, we ran a statistical analysis that confirms this visual impression. Neighborhoods with high percentages of African Americans were significantly less likely to have informational comments about them posted on the Katrina Information Map website. It’s not that people couldn’t do it or that there were issues of access. But also there was this whole issue of who knew at that particular time that this was a resource that could be useful. Again, it was a particular set of populations who were doing this. In the statistical analysis, we controlled for the normal things, income, age, and so forth, the things that you would sort of expect. And the percentage of African Americans still emerges as significant and important in the models.

Moving forward in time but remaining in New Orleans, we have mapped the cyberscape of the city based on a grid where the points are about 100 meters apart. It is a very fine-grained look at a particular place in cyberscape. This is a general cyberscape of New Orleans—it’s not trying to target a specific keyword. And you see that in the lower Ninth Ward there are placemarks, it’s not unrepresented, but the placemarks are certainly not as concentrated as in the French Quarter, the famous Mardi Gras tourist destination, or as in the business center. This is something we’ve seen again and again in different metropolitan areas. It tends to be the tourist areas and the business centers where you see a large concentration of cyberscapes when you look at a general level. When you start doing individual keyword searches, it comes out fairly different. So I’m going to run through a couple of examples for New Orleans.

I’ll start with “Mardi Gras.” You know, New Orleans is synonymous with Mardi Gras. We tried some other words, such as “parade,” and came up with very similar results. But if we take a closer look, we again see this real concentration of placemarks dealing with Mardi Gras down by the French Quarter. It’s a tourist place. It’s what people think of when they come to Mardi Gras. What most people don’t know, —and actually, I didn’t know until I started this research—is that there is this whole other local Mardi Gras going on as well. You start seeing clusters of parade sites and other things in neighborhoods that are not the tourist part of town. Right here across the Mississippi River, is a warehouse museum where a lot of the Mardi Gras floats are stored during the year. So we start seeing some differences in terms of the cyberscape, when we look at specifically the keyword “Mardi Gras.”

“Murder”—there are a lot of murders in New Orleans. A search of “murder” generates some very interesting patterns when you start looking at the cyberscape. I’m

going to blow it up again. You see a much more dispersed pattern. There are lots of little clusters scattered throughout the neighborhoods, consisting of reports of: “A murder took place here,” “So-and-so was murdered here,” and so forth. You also have these large

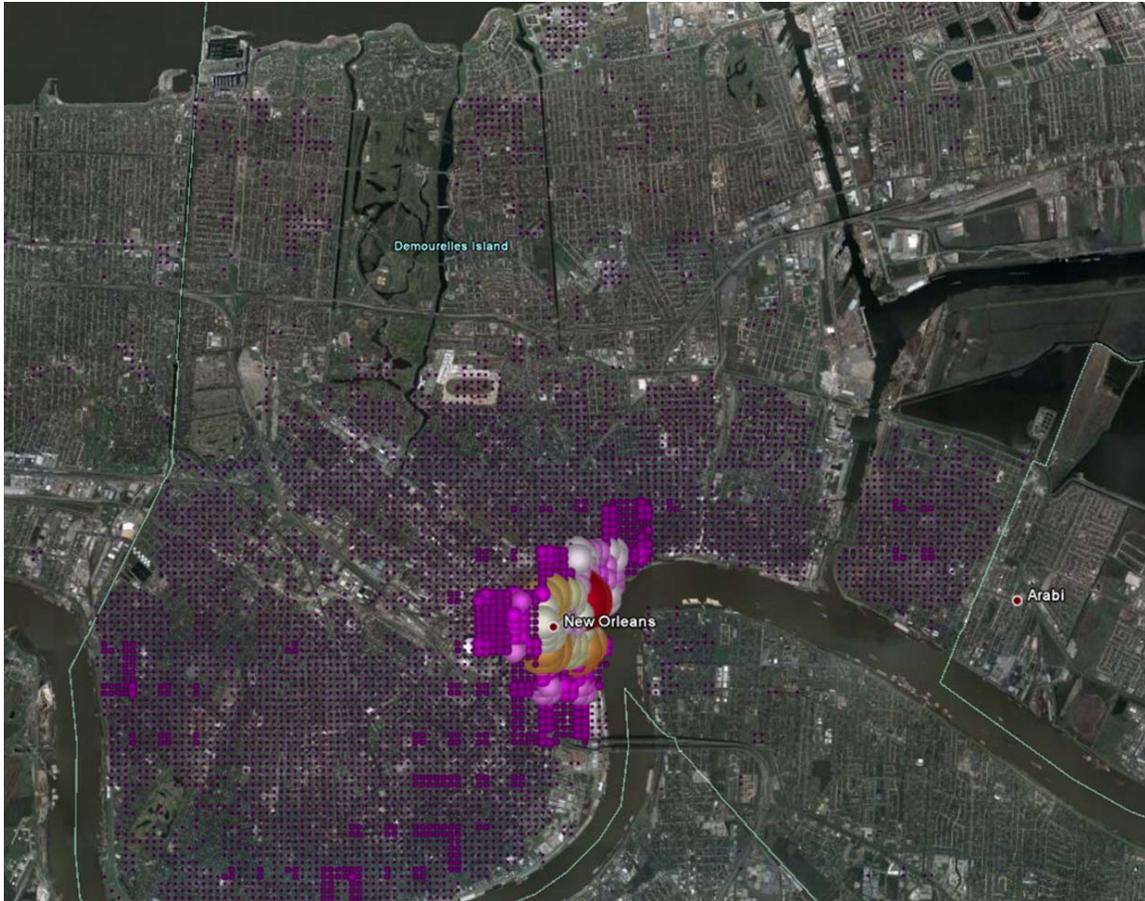


Figure 4. Cyberscape of New Orleans.

concentrations associated with the government infrastructure for dealing with murders, jails, courthouses, and so forth, which pop up here. And you notice that the French Quarter dramatically moves out of this cyberscape. Different sets of keywords get different results.

The result that I find most striking, though, is what you get when you do a search on the term “Katrina.” You get similar things if you do a search on “hurricane” or “Hurricane Katrina” and so forth, but let me blow this up again. The lower Ninth Ward is over here. It is virtually unrepresented in the general cyberscape of New Orleans, but it really looms large when you look at the specific case of Hurricane Katrina. Approximately, this is where the levee broke, which flooded the lower Ninth Ward, and there is a scattering of placemarks throughout this whole area as well. There are a lot of placemarks around the Superdome, the refuge of last resort for a lot of displaced people who were unable to leave the city. We all know sort of the stories of the Superdome.

There is other scattering around, but you see a very different representation of this particular place based on using keywords such as “Katrina.”

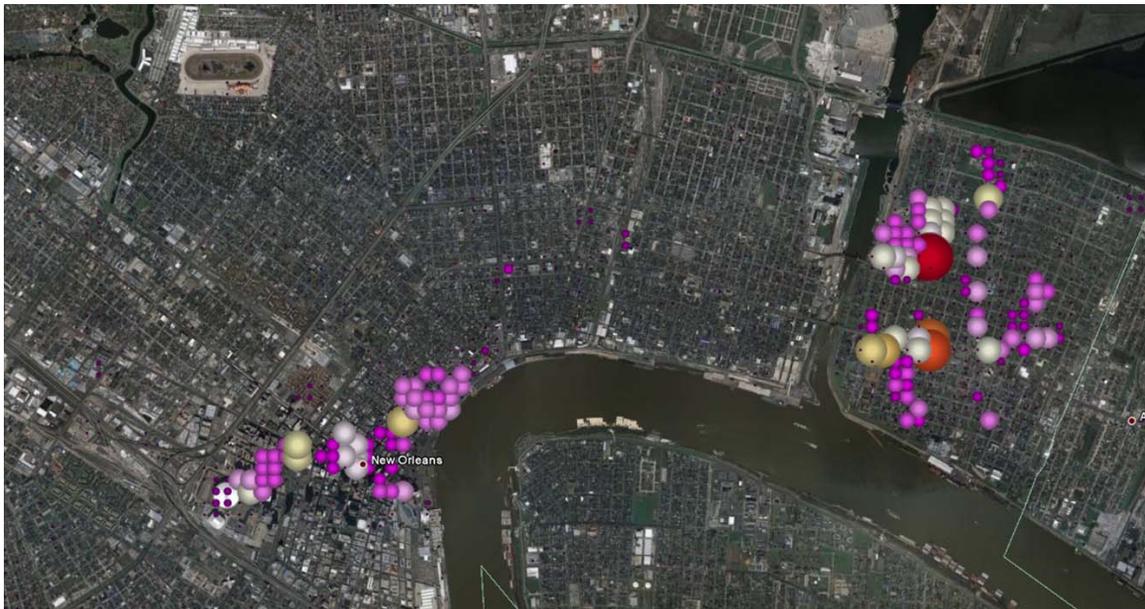


Figure 5. Cyberscape for the term Katrina in New Orleans.

All right. Let me just take a brief tour around the world, just to give you samples of other cities. We'll come back to Chicago, don't worry. I know there's a little New York–Chicago thing that's been going on for a long time, but here is just a quick example. Again, you see this real concentration in the heavy business, tourist places within a particular place. Manhattan has a much higher concentration of placemarks than the surrounding boroughs. Again, we saw that in New Orleans. This is the general cyberscape. I'm not doing any specific keywords for this. London—you have the same thing, a very strong concentration in the center of London, the city of London, where the museums and a lot of the business and government infrastructure is as well. One of the problems with a lot of data sources is that you tend to be constrained by historically defined boundaries, such as counties, states, or countries. With this particular technique we're able to take a look pretty much anywhere we want to. And so we ranged widely. Here is Buenos Aires—there's a similar pattern. You might notice, though, over here, this is the legend over here, the numbers have gotten a lot smaller. If we go back to London, we had about ten thousand being the largest one in London, but in Buenos Aires it drops down to about 600. You still have a similar clustering activity, but there's a lot fewer placemarks going on in this particular location.

Let's zoom over to Lagos, Nigeria, where there is not a whole lot of clustering, not a whole lot of placemarks. The numbers drop quite dramatically as well. But it's not necessarily the developed versus the developing world. We go to Mumbai, India, and India, and while in the whole Ganges River Valley there weren't many placemarks, we actually have a fairly decent number of placemarks within Mumbai. And again, there is this clustering around particular locations. Unfortunately, I'm not all that familiar with

Mumbai, and my grant to travel there to examine this didn't come through, so I can't really interpret this as well as I can some of the other clusterings. But you get the idea. We see this repeatedly, this pattern of clustering at the micro level within different types of urban areas.

So let's move on to the main event, the cyberscape of Chicago. I believe we are right about here, and when I did this I defined coordinates to do this process. However, I just missed this area, and I had to do it over again so we could see how the cyberscape of this particular location came through.

We see a similar pattern within Chicago, a concentration in the business areas. I'm going to come back to some of the specifics within Chicago. I suspect some of you who

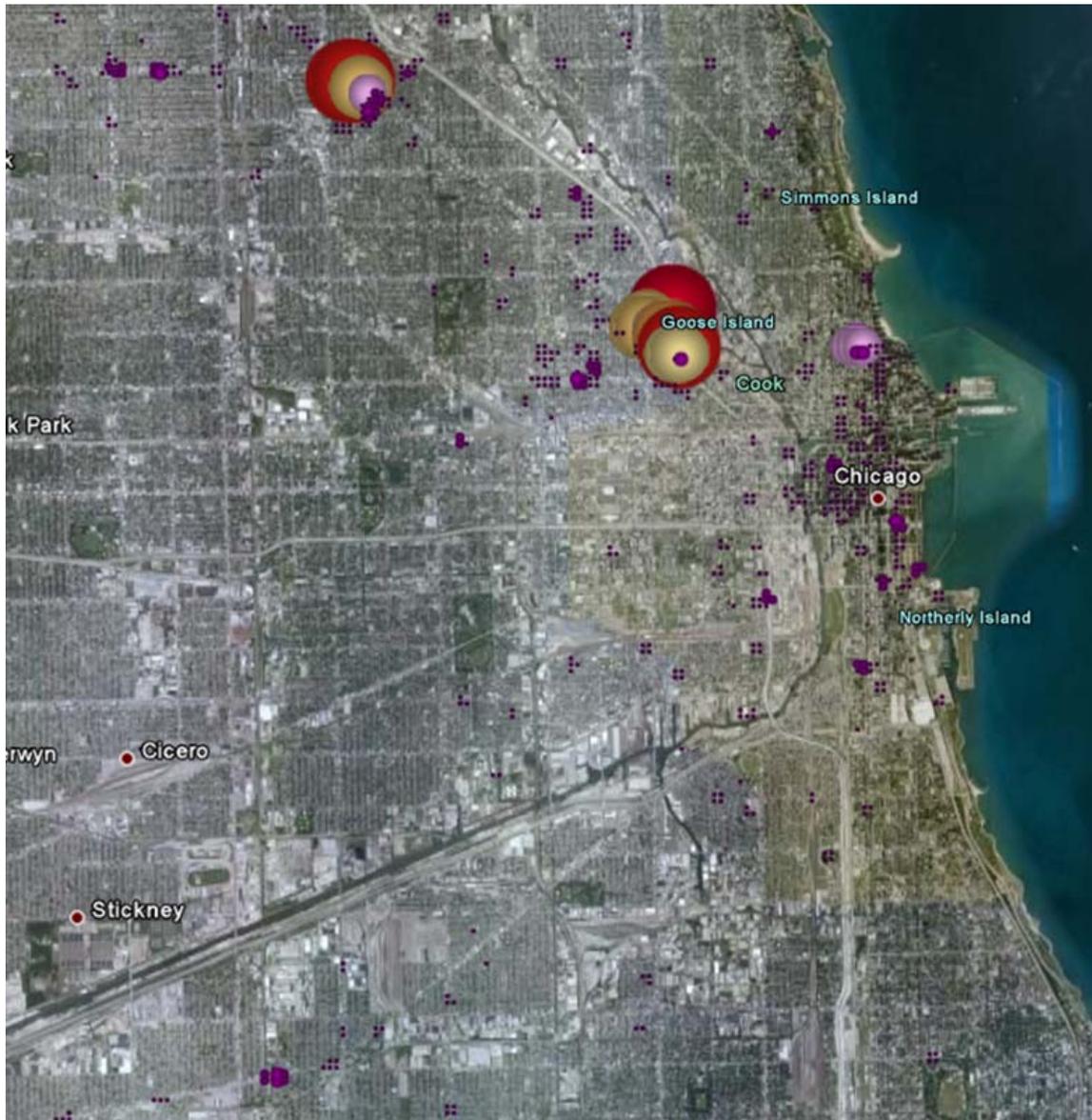


Figure 6. Cyberscape for the term Polish in Chicago.

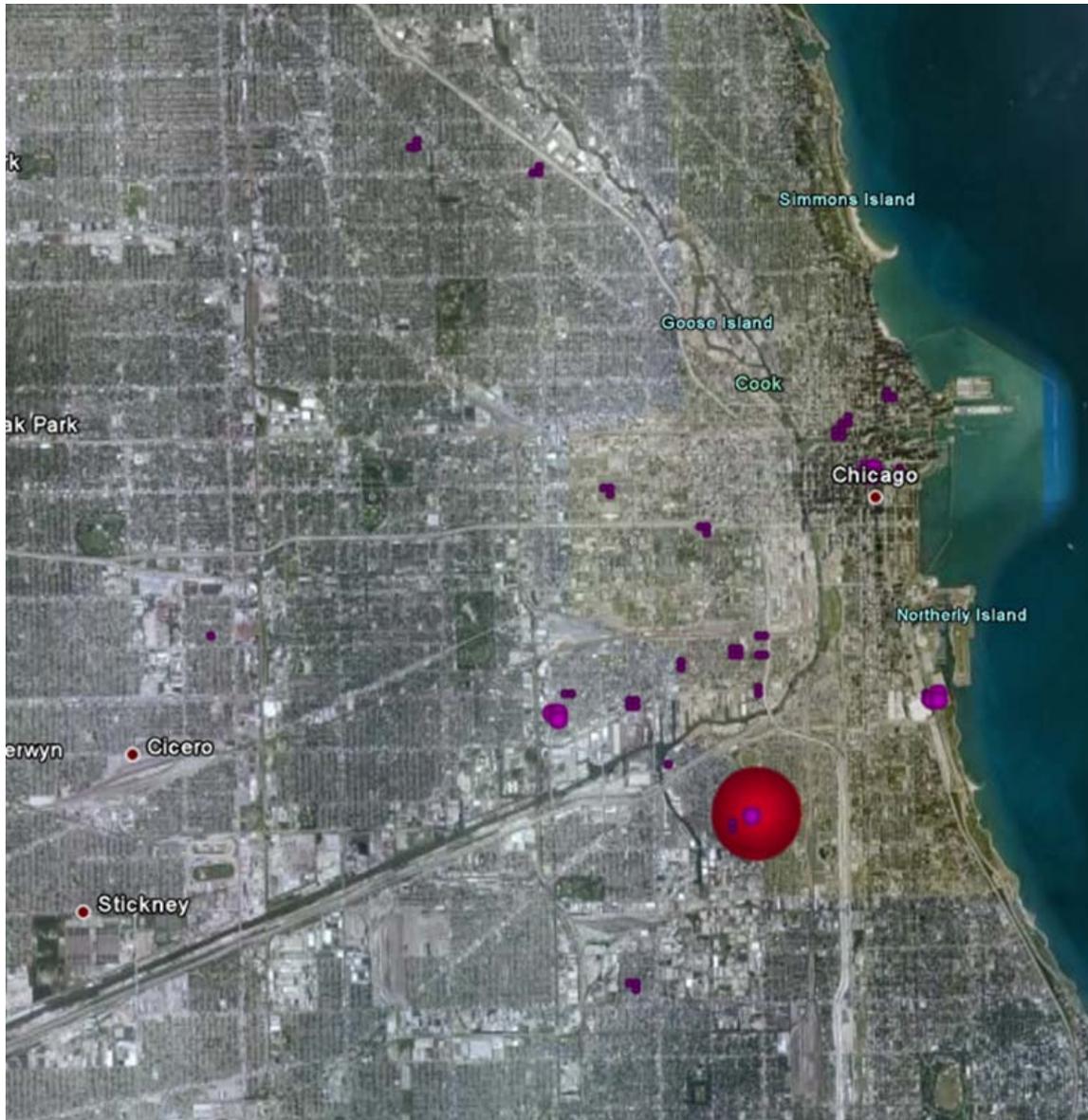


Figure 7. Cyberscape for the term Lithuanian in Chicago.

are fairly familiar with the neighborhoods in Chicago can see some patterns already popping out of here. I had to go to the census to just look at concentrations of income and race to take a look at this because I'm not all that familiar with Chicago.

But before we get into that, let's think of the cultural representations of Chicago. What's synonymous with Chicago? Well, obviously the Cubs, a franchise that's been around a long time. There's quite obviously this big concentration right around Wrigley Field. Likewise with the Bears—I was a little upset when I first saw this because there was also a concentration of “Bears” placemarks around Wrigley Field. Luckily, I was able to talk to someone from Chicago. My informant told me the Bears used to play at Wrigley Field. So we can see this element of historical overlay going on here. And it would be probably possible to work through some of that stuff. Meat packing—I was

interested in what we might see with this. Not the greatest results—the numbers are not very high. Only one or two references to meat-packing come up. I want to put this out that this way of exploring these cyberscapes does have some problems. I'm not even sure how well this might map to historic or current meat-packing activities.

I know some people here are very interested in ethnic neighborhoods and ethnic connections to the internet, so based on my informant's information, I did a couple of searches of specific ethnicities. And so this is the representation of “Polish” in Chicago's cyberscape. And I have been told, though again I'm not quite sure, that this is consistent with the distribution of Polish and Lithuanian neighborhoods. From my point of view it was quite interesting to see very different neighborhoods showing up from these kinds of search results based on the cyberscapes. And then finally, there is “fun.” I was curious what might come out, and the thing that really struck me when I did this is that it's similar to the map of the general view of the cyberscape of Chicago. It made me start to think that clearly, there are other places in Chicago where one can have fun, but this is how fun is being represented in the Chicago cyberscape. What does that mean? What might be driving some of this cyberscape? Will some of the same issues we saw within the use of the Scipinious.com website in New Orleans post Katrina show up in Chicago as well? And forgive me, because I didn't have time to do a better job than this visual comparison, but this is census block groups based on income. Higher incomes have darker colors, lower incomes have lighter colors. I'm sure this comes as no surprise to any of you, but the North Side, the wealthier parts of Chicago, have a lot more placemarks than the poorest parts of Chicago. Likewise, looking at race—the darker areas represent places that have census block groups with a high percentage of African Americans. Again, you see this difference between where the placemarks are and where certain populations are, and where certain income groups are as well. I am putting this out to suggest that there is a new digital divide, or rather, that there exists a digital lag that is coming out in the creation of these cyberscapes.

I think I'm at the end of my time, but let me just go over some conclusions, some questions, and then a coda. Rather than being divorced from the materiality, cyberscapes really represent the intertwining of the online and the offline. We see very uneven and lumpy cyberscapes. We see the mirroring of these offline divisions that can separate people and places reflected in the cyberscapes that are being used and being created. Likewise, this idea of a digital divide, or what I would actually prefer, a digital lag, really remains a relevant concern, albeit an evolving concern. What is lagging, how does it lag? It's no longer about getting dial-up connectivity or people using emails. There's this whole set of new activities that people are engaging in, and new lags are being created.

And this really gets to the main point, in my mind—who is really participating in the creation of cyberscape? I have offered some suggestions based on what I've been able to find. I haven't really gone out and interviewed people actively engaged in this or not actively engaged in that. I really think that would be an important next step. We really need to get into these questions. What gets mapped? Does crime get mapped? Do certain activities get mapped? Whose viewpoint is being represented? Is it someone from the outside? Is it rich Western backpackers trekking to Nepal representing Nepal's cyberscape? How is the Nepalese's view of themselves being represented in cyberscape? How are these cyberscapes made visible? This gets back to this whole idea of digiplace and the sorting and ranking algorithms that search engines use. How will this affect how

we move through and see and use places? I have made this argument that it does have this effect. It has this layering. We're still at the beginning of people using and interacting with this. So a key question is how will invisibility or irrelevance in the virtual realm affect people in the physical world? Is it simply disconnected? Is there a connection between how visible, how important you are, in the online world? How does that affect the combination with the online world? How does it affect the creation of these cyberscapes?

Finally, just a coda, I want to go back to Victor Harris. The same song that he gave, the first Mardi Gras post Katrina, that's how it ended. "Shame on our representative. Shame on our officials. Shame on all of them. They say they only want good people back. All people are good people. Listen to the drums, listen to the drums. I'm not afraid." And I come back to this at the end because I think the research for New Orleans and the more recent research really capture this idea that all people are good people. And all people deserve to have a voice in the cyberscapes that are being created around them despite all the challenges with the digital lags that they face. So I'll leave that as the coda to this talk. Before I give up the platform, I want to thank my co-authors on this work, Dr. Mark Graham in the Department of Geography at Trinity College, Dublin, and Dr. Michael Crutcher, who's at the University of Kentucky with me. Thanks.

Questions and answers

I'm John Berry. I teach here at Dominican, and Matt, I'd like to ask you if you've tried to map this stuff to literacy rates either in the U.S. or globally.

At the global level I think it'd be difficult to do because I'm not quite sure how good the data is in terms of literacy, and what scale it is. Usually the way I've seen it, it's at a country level, which is a pretty high level in terms of the stuff I'm doing. The one thing I am planning on doing in the coming months is taking a closer look at some of these factors, at least at the national level in the U.S.—I don't know if there are literacy levels, per se, in the U.S. I want to continue with the type of research that we did in New Orleans, but at the national level, to see if we could tease out a more definitive study looking at the effects of income, education, race, and some of these other factors. I think illiteracy would be an interesting one, but I just don't know if there's a good source for that information at the U.S. level. I think you're right, that it is certainly a factor that maps onto that, but whether or not it gets overwhelmed by the issues of income and so forth, I think we'd have to see.

Hi, I'm Nicole from the Chicago Public Library. On your list of bullet points showing the development of the internet starting with the 1980s and then ending with the GeoWeb now, what's next? How can we anticipate that lag and prevent it? And maybe we can make it not as bad of a lag.

The question is, given the history of the internet that I sketched out, going from text to text and graphics and so forth, up to the GeoWeb, what would happen next? Or what is next on the horizon, and how might people think about how to anticipate the next

lag? The quick answer is that if I knew, I probably shouldn't tell you. The quicker answer is, I actually don't know. I mean, there's lots of interesting things out there. It's hard for me to get the past the location, GeoWeb thing, because that's my professional bias, and I think we're only just starting to get at some of that stuff. Some of you might have seen this product—Google Latitude? Are you familiar with this? It's like social networking, it's sort of Facebook with spatial location. Not only can you use Facebook with your friends, but you can know where your friends are and meet up with them. I'll put it this way—I don't do Facebook. Doing Facebook with spatial location is an even farther step for me. Applications like that are what I would expect to see. And there have been some examples of people trying to do that. Because in some ways, it'd be really useful if you know where other people are or where your social network is. I mean, it can be really scary at one level, too, but at another level, it could be really useful. Where are your kids? Where's your spouse? You want to meet up with your friends? That could be a really useful application. So yes, I don't think I have any good answer besides, yes, I will continue to focus on this deployment of location. Yes?

I am Abdul Alkalimat, the University of Illinois. In your measurement of the placemarks, can you differentiate who created the placemarks? The people in the place or the people from some other place?

This is a fundamental problem, as we cannot get information. Or, due to the way we're approaching it, we do not have information on who's creating these placemarks. That's a methodological issue, but it's a key question—are these being created by people nearby? But then there's a whole question of what is nearby? Is it a mile away? Is it ten miles away? Is that local? What's local? There is a sliding scale. But that's a really interesting question. Are these things being done by locals, or is it by people from the outside representing? People come back from a vacation and put up their photos. The truth is, there are no rules—anyone can post anything on any particular place. We would expect people to be posting about places they have some sort of connection to. Either they live there or they've been there. You certainly don't need that, but you would expect that to be more of the case. But at this time, unless you're Google, I really don't think you're going to have any good answer to that.

I'm Bill Graham, Chicago State University. Piggybacking on that, I was thinking: most of the things you were talking about this evening were correlating a priori literacy versus placemarks. Is there a body of study on a tridimensional histogram of location, placemark type, or subject or keyword—like tagging, maybe, and time? I was thinking of that when you were mentioning the Westerners in Nepal were probably the people. I wondered how you got at that.

The question is, essentially, can we add a time to the question? Maybe I'll build upon this—might these placemark densities change over time? And in so doing, might that reflect that it's more coming from people locally rather than people globally—or people from outside? That's how I'll run with it. I mean, it's a good question. Quite honestly, I just started this project this past summer, looking at this particular placemark. And one of the things I'm doing is I'm running the same search. But I'll have to wait until

June to get a year lag on this. I do think it is something that would be important to look at. At this point I don't think, with the approach I have, I'll be able to say: "We're shifting from Westerners doing these placemarks to Nepalese doing that. I can imagine I might be able to get at that, but I haven't really worked out that.

I'm curious if you can situate your kind of study in your field, your discipline, where it's going. In cognitive geography, historically, concerning issues of cultural diffusion, communications create different kinds of identities other than neighbor or adjacency. Do you see your kind of research going towards some kinds of generalization and changing how these kinds of communications affect identity, and behavior? In other words, okay, you've done the study. I find it interesting. But I don't know how to relate what you're doing to the field very much, and if you're the only one that sees the mapping and placemarking, and no one else sees it, there's a nagging question of: so what?

Yes, it's a good question. Right before I came here, I got an email from someone who was sending me a working paper making this argument that we really need to move past this idea of the neighborhood, this fascination with the neighborhood, and move into the fact that more and more social networks and communities are virtually based. I'm not opposed to that idea, and I think we can move towards that direction. And I guess the bigger question is how, cognitively, do these concentrations and placemarks influence other people's decision to do placemarks? Is it along those lines?

You know, I don't even know that people doing placemarks are aware of other placemarks. They don't see patterns the way you try to study them.

Yes, I know, people don't. I don't have a good answer to that because I'm not looking at that specific issue. There is an idea that increasingly location is becoming an important part of the information people have, and maybe in the future people will have more access and better information about where other placemarks are. You can get some sense of where placemarks are. You can do a search, and you get a sense: are there a lot of placemarks on this particular topic? That could even encourage someone to put a placemark, if there's nothing about whatever topic they want to do. So I think the effect is there, but I don't think it is as strong as it might be coming in the future.

Hui Yan, with two questions for you. One, to what degree do you think mapping can contribute to bridging the digital divide, and if so, how do you measure that contribution?

The measurement—I'm not going to have a good answer. I do think mapping, any sort of mapping exercise or visualization exercise, is a way of exploring the world, a way of better understanding it. I have this data, it's all in a nice database—I don't really see anything without using statistical methods. But by mapping it, mapping whatever phenomena you're interested in exploring better, be it poverty or online access or even use within the cyberscape, I think it's the start of understanding what's going on, which is the start of any good research question. But measuring the effects? I'm going to dodge that one.

What is the density across the globe for LinkedIn, and can it be mapped in cyberspace construction?

I imagine it would be tied to business activity, business people, where they're located. Not having actually looked at it a whole lot, I would suspect it would have a similar pattern of being concentrated in places of business, being tied to wealth, and so forth, but I don't have a specific answer beyond that speculation.

Provost's welcome—Cheryl Johnson-Odim

It is my role this morning to give you the official institutional welcome, but embedded in that official welcome are my own thoughts on your undertaking. This, as Kate said, is the third eChicago Symposium, and Dominican has been very pleased to host all three of them. There is great synergy between the mission of Dominican and the mission of the eChicago initiative. The mission of Dominican exhorts us to participate in the creation of a more just and humane world, and I think that some of the issues eChicago is addressing, especially those of access, democracy and equity, resonate with Dominican's mission.

It is also not surprising to me that the eChicago initiative began among librarians, because I am aware of the tremendous changes, even just in my lifetime, in library science as a discipline and in the roles of libraries in society. Libraries have become, particularly in an information-ordered society, incredibly powerful and critically important places. And librarians have become the custodians of great treasure...*information*.

We all know that in many ways, information is power, and therefore access to information really is empowerment. Your project, eChicago, discusses communities and their access to information in a society in which access to information is power. It is not just a question of access to information, which is very important, but also about the ability to generate information. Studying the distribution of computers, training in information technology, internet access and the like, across communities, allows one to map the distribution of power in a society.

The last thing that I want to share with you is a personal story. Several years ago there were elections in the West African country of Ghana, I was furiously emailing with friends in Accra, which is the capital. And later at some point, one of my friends emailed back to me, and she said: "It's amazing that I can be more in touch with you about these elections in Ghana than I can be with my friends in Kumasi who are a hundred miles up the road." Kumasi did not have the kind of internet access available in Accra, it is a poorer and more rural community in Ghana. So here we were, she and I, emailing across thousands of miles of the Atlantic Ocean-- furiously, easily, communicating-- and there were many people in Kumasi, a hundred miles from her, with whom she could not communicate as easily.

Cheryl Johnson-Odim is Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs at Dominican University. Previously she was Professor of History and Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Columbia College and prior to that was Chairperson of the History Department and Professor of History at Loyola University Chicago. She has also taught at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Johnson-Odim has a doctorate in history from Northwestern University and was a Fulbright Fellow in Nigeria. She is a past member on the Boards of Directors of the American Council of Learned Societies and the African Studies Association and a recent Vice Chairperson of the Illinois Humanities Council. She has served on the Advisory Board of the Center for Women's and Gender Studies at Rutgers University and was a founding Editorial Board member of the *Journal of Women's History*. She is a recent past chair of the Joan Kelly Prize Committee of the American Historical Association. She is currently a member of the Board of Visitors' of Northwestern University. Johnson-Odim is a founding member of the Vivian G. Harsh Society of the Carter G. Woodson Library, among other community activities, and is the author of numerous scholarly publications. (cjohnson-odim@dom.edu)

So this is an incredibly important initiative that you are undertaking and have been undertaking for several years. I am talking not only about the gathering and use of information, but about the access to information and the power that it implies. So I commend you for your efforts. I hope that your deliberations go well today, and I thank you for continuing to involve Dominican in the effort. Thank you.

Dean's welcome—Susan Roman

Good morning. I am Susan Roman, the Dean of the Graduate School here at Dominican University, and I should have gone before Cheryl because I have right in my hand the mission. I think this truly is a symposium that really fills the mission of Dominican, and as Cheryl said, it's a wonderful pleasure for us to be hosting it. So just so you know, our mission is to pursue truth, to give compassionate service, and to help participate in creating a more just and humane world.

Anyway, I do want to say thank you, and I just want to tell a little story too. Just a few short years ago when I was a brand new dean, and Kate Williams was on our faculty, she came to me and said: "You know, Susan, this is really an important area that we should be studying. Do you think we have enough money just to invite four or five people in?" And I looked at Kate and I said: "Kate. Nothing good ever comes of thinking small. We have to think big." And so Kate began to work really very hard on getting our first eChicago together, so thank you, Kate. And then Kate left us to go downstate to do other wonderful things, and how lucky were we to get Chris Hagar, who not only was a worthy successor, and not only has her area of community informatics, but also, crisis informatics. I was thinking, when Professor Zook talked last night, about what we might be doing in the world and thinking about how we did with Katrina and what happened with the mad cow disease in the UK, how important it really is that we recognize the role of libraries during the time of crises. Charlie Benton and I were at that very first meeting, the first eChicago, and we sat at the end of our panel, and we began to see our friends, especially from Skokie Public Library—Carolyn's not here, but Fran is here— say that this really is an important role, and how do we get the information? How do we close that, at that time, the digital divide? And so we also want to thank Skokie Public Library because they are sponsoring the conference along with UIUC and Dominican.

I do want to thank, really, Chris and Kate again. This takes a lot of effort behind the scenes, and I see a good panel from the other disciplines. I see Adrian, and I know Jan's here from social work, and I know there are other professors from UIUC who are here. I love the fact that it is interdisciplinary. It's growing and it's really exciting. I'm

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Ms. Roman is a member of the national advisory committees for the International Children's Digital Library, First Book, Public Television's Ready to Learn, Reading is Fundamental, and for PBS's children's television series "Reading Rainbow." She has led delegations of children's literature specialists to Russia, Eastern Europe, Brazil, Cuba, Australia, India and China. Having raised millions of dollars in both private and federal funds for library programs and initiatives, Susan Roman also is an author and frequent speaker on issues related to fundraising, graduate library and information science education, public libraries, management, family literacy, and children's services. (sroman@dom.edu)

really looking forward to today and before the end of the day I want to thank our own faculty—Kate's here, I see, Gertrude's here—the people who are participating on the adjunct faculty, John Unsworth, and all of our students. This is what makes the difference. Your experience and your expertise are so important to us as we continue to pursue this topic, and I know it's just going to grow and grow and grow. So thank you very much, all of you who are participants. Thank you for coming. I know you're going to have a good day, and I'm looking forward to everything, myself. So thanks again. Have a good day.

Via Chicago: Ethnic media, new media and the experience of migration and mobility—Steve Jones

It's a pleasure to be here for a variety of reasons, and I'll get to some of those shortly. This is going to be interesting. I have two microphones, I have a voice recorder, we're webstreaming, there's this computer, there's another computer there. I don't think I've ever been quite this digital in my life.

Let me start with a little bit of background first. Kate mentioned that it's going to be the 10th anniversary conference of the Association of Internet Researchers. It's been 15 years since I really started putting together the *Cybersociety* book, which came out in 1995. And I was thinking about this last night because it kicks off, actually, with a lyric, and those of you who've tried to publish things with song lyrics in them—and this could take me off on a tangent about intellectual property—you know how difficult that can be, right? But to my great surprise, actually, the publisher rolled over on this one, I think because in other parts of the book I'd actually used lyrics to songs to which I owned the copyright. I think they assumed somehow that I owned the copyright to this, which of course was absurd. The lyric is actually from a song by a now long-defunct band called 10,000 Maniacs. And the lyric went like this. It was to a song called “Gold Rush Brides.”

Steve Jones is UIC Distinguished Professor, Professor of Communication, Research Associate in the Electronic Visualization Laboratory, Adjunct Professor of Electronic Media in the School of Art & Design at the University of Illinois – Chicago, and Adjunct Research Professor in the Institute of Communications Research at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He holds the Ph.D. in Communication from the Institute of Communications Research, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (1987), M.S. in Journalism from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (1984) and a B.S. in Biology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (1984). He served as Head of the Department of Communication at the University of Illinois – Chicago from 1997 to 2003, and as Head of the Faculty of Communication at the University of Tulsa from 1992 to 1997.

Jones is author and editor of numerous books, including *Society Online*, *CyberSociety*, *Virtual Culture*, *Doing Internet Research*, *CyberSociety 2.0*, *The Encyclopedia of New Media*, *Rock Formation: Technology, Music and Mass Communication* (all published by Sage), *The Internet for Educators and Homeschoolers* (ETC Publications), *Pop Music & the Press* (Temple University Press) and *Afterlife as Afterimage: Understanding Posthumous Fame* (Peter Lang Publishing). He has published numerous articles in scholarly journals including ones in *IEEE Computer Graphics and Applications*, *Cultural Studies*, *Journal of Virtual Environments*, *Works and Days*, *Iowa Journal of Communication*, *Stanford Humanities Review*, *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, *The Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* and *American Journalism*. His research interests include the social history of communication technology, virtual environments and virtual reality, popular music studies, internet studies, and media history.

Jones was the founder and first President of the Association of Internet Researchers and serves as Senior Research Fellow at the Pew Internet & American Life Project. He has made numerous presentations to scholarly and business groups about the Internet and social change and about the Internet's social and commercial uses. He is co-editor of *New Media & Society*, an international journal of research on new media, technology, and culture and edits *Digital Formations*, a series of books on digital media, the Internet and communication (Peter Lang Publishing). His research has been funded by the National Science Foundation and the Tides Foundation. In addition to numerous honors and awards, the National Communication Association (the largest scholarly organization in the field of communication) and the Carl Couch Center for Social and Internet Research created the annual Steve Jones Internet Research Lecture at the National Communication Association convention in recognition of his contributions to the study of communication and technology. (sjones@uic.edu)

Follow the typical signs, the hand painted lines,
down prairie roads past the long church spire,
past the talking wire from where to who knows.

And that line was important to me about the talking wire because I had, at that point, done a fair bit of reading about the stringing of telephone wire in rural parts of the U.S., which is an absolutely fascinating story. It could be the topic of a whole other talk. But the song itself was actually focused on homesteading in the U.S. On the homestead wives. And the end of it—I guess this is to give us a sense of what homesteading may have been like. The end of that song has the following passage:

In letters mailed back home,
her eastern sisters, they would moan as they would read
accounts of madness, childbirth, loneliness, and grief.

My parents were immigrants. Despite the fact that they changed their name to Jones, they were, in fact, immigrants. And it made me wonder, how did they keep in touch? How did they keep in touch with friends and family at home? How did they learn about the local ethnic community that they joined here in Chicago when they arrived? It was primarily letters that they used. Phone calls were incredibly rare and incredibly expensive. They were usually used to communicate about birth, about death, or other sorts of grand events in life, and then they were incredibly short, of incredibly poor quality—audio quality, anyway—and they had to be made considerably in advance. In other words, you would call the operator, and sometime later the phone in your house would ring, and that would be your call. An operator would make the connection for you. It was not nearly as easy as it is now to make a phone call to just about anywhere. Long-distance calling even in the U.S. was somewhat uncommon. Much of what they did in terms of keeping up with news was to go to the library and simply get the copies of foreign newspapers that would typically take about one to two weeks to arrive via mail, on average, sometimes longer, sometimes shorter.

Then when I was working toward my Ph.D., I ran across a wonderful book called *The Uses of Literacy* by a fellow named Richard Hoggart. It's a key text in British cultural studies, and it really paved the way for much subsequent work, and was extraordinarily influential on people like Raymond Williams and Stuart Hall. Hoggart has a passage in that book where he writes about reading rooms in branch libraries in the UK, and I'll read just a little bit of that. Quoting Hoggart:

The strength of sense of home and neighborhood may be seen in those old men who filled the reading rooms of the branch public libraries. They were often the solitaires, men whose families have grown up and left them, whose wives have died or are bedridden, and who are no longer at work. Many come daily to the reading room where it is warm [and there are] seats. The reading rooms themselves have a syringed and workhouse air. The newspapers stretch bleakly around the walls. Heavily clamped, and with the sporting pages pasted over, so as to carefully discourage punters. The magazines lie on dark oak desks across

which green-shaded lamps throw so narrow a beam, but the whole of the room, above elbow height, is in permanent shadow by the late afternoon. The shadow helps to soften the insinuations of the many notices. Heavy, black on white, all prohibitive and most imperative, which alternate with the newspapers on the walls. In one reading room, I know, there are eight different junctions varying in length from “silence” in letters nine inches high and four inches across, to “No person is allowed to bring reading matter into this room for perusal, but readers must confine themselves to the publications herein displayed.” After awhile, the atmosphere is so depressing that you begin to think that “no audible conversations allowed” is an instance of warm-heartedness in the midst of officialdom. A sensible allowance for the fact that so many of the regulars talk to themselves.

Part of the reason that had such resonance for me when I read it was that one of the first stories I remember hearing about the Skokie Public Library was about its longtime head librarian, Mary Radmacher, who preceded Carolyn Anthony, removing the sign that said “silence” in the library and getting a phone line for the library.

Now, I actually hail from a long line of librarians, the most recent one of which is my mother, who earned her Master’s in Library Science here—before it was Dominican, but here, nevertheless. I actually told her I was speaking at Dominican, and it didn’t register. “Where would that be?” She spent, I believe, 26 years at the Skokie Public Library. I spent about four or five years there working in various capacities from page—I don’t know if that designation still exists at the library or not—up to, I think I was given some very ceremonial title of Underassistant Librarian or something like that. And much of what I observed during my years there, both as a patron, albeit with some backstage access, and as an employee, in some ways resonated with the kinds of things that Hoggart was saying. The Skokie Public Library was absolutely extraordinary, and I’m sure it still is, in terms of the sheer scope and variety of its patrons and the sheer scope and variety of its collection of newspapers and other resources that would serve a very, very varied ethnic community.

Now, one of the things that I do wonder about is—and this serves as a foundation for the remainder of what I have to say—in what ways has the ability to access information from almost anywhere, and to be in touch with almost anyone anywhere at any given moment, altered the experiences of both immigration, of being in a new place, and assimilation, of learning about that place. If you think about what it means now, to be an immigrant, strictly in terms of information, of learning the ropes, of learning the lay of the land, and having less contact with friends and family, we’ve just, in the past 20 years, seen enormous change. Some of this is due to the internet, but some of this is not. Some of this is due to mobile telephony, to cheap long distance. And some of it is, in fact, due to transportation, not necessarily of people, but of goods, because it’s possible to relatively inexpensively overnight things almost anywhere in the world.

Now, part of the reason that’s been important for me is that one of the key thinkers for me, and one of my mentors, a fellow by the name of James Carey, made what I think is a crucial distinction about communication. Essentially we’ve divided it into two components, communication as transportation and communication as ritual. Communication as transportation is the easiest one of those two to really grasp, right? It’s the moving of messages, and it’s the classic model on which communication has been

built: sender, message, receiver. We move messages from one place to another, and we evaluate the quality of that communication by whether or not the message has stayed intact and been understood when it's arrived.

But for Carey, the notion of communication as ritual is much more resonant and much more meaningful because communication as ritual involves the ways we use communication to share a common culture, common understandings, common knowledge. From that standpoint, the library plays an absolutely key role, particularly my parents' generation, for immigrants and ethnic communities. It's served in many ways as a touchstone to home. The mail had some of the same resonance for them too, via the postal service. And in some ways both of those institutions helped to combat a kind of loneliness that is part and parcel, I think, of the experience of moving a long distance away to a culture that is completely new.

Now, the other way in which that term is particularly important, in terms of the kind of research that I'm going to propose towards the end this conversation, is that it is difficult to jump into the middle of conversations that are ritual based because you don't know the lay of the land, you don't know the keywords, you don't know the symbols that are involved. It is literally not knowing the language, not strictly in terms of getting by, of figuring out, you know, where do I get a driver's license or where do I get a job, but also in terms of those things that everyone around here knows. Like where the cheap groceries are, or where you can get the newspaper, or where you get inexpensive clothes, or how you can save on your heating bills. The kind of things about which people generally don't have conversations with strangers or people they just met.

Now, let me take you through a little bit of background on internet research. In most ways internet research itself started out very strongly from a kind of transportation model. Most of the funded research in its earliest days, and here I'm talking the early 70s into the 80s, was based in organizations and an understanding of how knowledge moved around in various corporate or other sorts of institutional settings. There were quite a few studies of email, of sort of the equivalent of instant messaging at the time. I was incredibly fortunate to be an undergraduate at UIUC and using the PLATO system—some of you may remember that. The goal of it, really, was to try to understand how people could efficiently move or send messages back and forth between one another.

What we started to realize into the 80s and later is that there are a lot of factors beyond the technology that have consequences for how that technology is used and how it makes sense in people's lives. What we're still only, I think, in the very early stages of doing, is trying to understand some things about how different cultural attitudes toward technology and toward its use have consequences for the deployment of it in meaningful ways. Kate had mentioned stimulus money that's going towards broadband. Some of this debate took place when the E-Rate was first mooted.

I've been very fortunate to work with Lee Rainie on the genesis of the Pew Internet and American Life Project ten years ago. It's ongoing, it's now become part of the Pew Research Center, and it's essentially dedicated to going out in the field every day, typically using random digital dialing phone surveys, classic kinds of social scientific research methods, and trying to find out who's online, what they're doing online, and talk to them a little bit about it.

Some of the things that are particularly striking about our data from then until now are the changes in use. Here are some of the raw numbers here in terms of internet

use: if you go back to our first aggregation of data in the middle of 2000, we had 47 percent of adults in the U.S. using the internet, and we're now up to 74 percent. And we're creeping toward the same penetration rate that we have for the telephone and television. Without getting terribly morbid, I hope, at this point, really what's driving the increase in use is time. Young people are internet users. The people least likely to be using the internet are senior citizens. All right, so you can do the calculation here and figure out why those numbers are changing. We, as of about four or so years ago, for all intents and purposes have hit the slowly upward creeping slope on the diffusion curve. There has not been much in the way of driving people to use the internet in the last four to five years as there was when we first started doing these surveys for the project in the year 2000. It's somewhat of a shame that we didn't start the project sooner so we could have seen the really rapid rise and seen among which populations that occurred, but so be it.

And you can see some of the other data here—I'm not going to belabor them, if only for lack of time- but you can see where we've made some progress and where we've not made progress to a great extent in other cases. The divides that we've been talking about for the last fifteen years or longer are still there: typically, race, ethnicity, age, gender, income—all of this still shows, but there are disparities. I don't think we need a survey to tell us that, but at least we have a survey to back up what our gut feeling is. Of these, really, income is the one that has remained the most constant—in other words, the most difficult to get a handle on and in some way fix. We've seen some enormous increases in some of these other categories. We've seen some really enormous increases in adoption. But when it comes to income, things have really, really stayed pretty much steady state.

What we haven't talked about very much is a kind of a geographic divide. There's been occasional discussion of it in relation to broadband particularly, but pretty clearly, there are some significant differences between urban, suburban, and rural internet use and computer use, right? So these figures show us what computer use was like between 2000 and 2008. The disparities still exist. There's been an interesting sort of change here though, because urban and suburban computer use has flip-flopped. Given the margin of error here, though, maybe not all that much—maybe they're neck and neck. But nevertheless it's still a significant thing to see.

In metropolitan Chicago, we have some interesting effects here, too. Seventy-one percent of those in an urban area in metro Chicago are using the internet. Seventy-one percent. But in the rural areas of metropolitan Chicago, it's only about half of the population. And there's almost no doubt that's to do with access, plain and simple. It's probably not even due to income. It's probably due to access. We haven't asked the income question in a targeted or a direct way, but that's our guess. It again mirrors what we saw in 2000, but if you look at the 2008 figures, the disparity's actually growing. It looks worse in 2008. In Cook County we're somewhat better than the national average, and in terms of internet use, we've surpassed the national average, right?—if you look all across Cook County. If you look at metro Chicago broken out by the four counties, you see some interesting disparities here, too. In Lake County they're going gangbusters in terms of computer use, right? Cook County is lagging. So this further reinforces some of our notions about what's going on, geographically speaking. There are similar statistics for internet use in regard to Cook County lagging somewhat compared to the other three counties. And in this case, it is lagging considerably. If you look at 2008 in that middle

column, if you look at these numbers, that's really a pretty remarkable difference between Cook and the other three counties.

What we don't have with any of our data is a way to do a very fine-grained analysis. We really don't know very much about individual neighborhoods or ethnic groups when we ask the standard demographic questions about race. We don't ask about ethnicity. We don't ask about whether or not somebody's an immigrant. We don't ask about how long they've been in the U.S. There's a lot that we don't ask, and part of the reason for that is because we ask a lot of questions. To keep people on the telephone for a very long time, when you're doing survey research, is tricky to say the least. We've been actually very fortunate, and I think it's in no small measure due to the fact that we're representing the Pew Charitable Trusts and not some marketing company or what have you.

But we're still struggling with this. In some ways the real value of what we do at the Pew Internet project is not any individual phone call. It's the fact that we've been doing it now for 9, you know, almost 10 years. And we've been asking a core set of questions, the same, for that period of time. So the comparative data that we have over time is probably the single most valuable asset that we have. I'll have a URL for the project to give you, and I do this in almost every single talk that I give, I encourage people to just go to the site and look at the reports. We make our data freely available, so if you feel comfortable with Excel or SPSS, go download our data and play around with it, because we now have more data than we can actually use. There's not enough time. We have people in an office in D.C. who are mainly tasked with keeping new projects going. We don't really have the time to do stuff with that older data. And there's an enormous data set that's just waiting there to be mined. And people are mining it, but we could probably throw thousands of people at it and find out all sorts of interesting things in so doing.

So why do we need that fine-grained analysis? Well, one reason is that ethnic communities are the ones that I think are using new media in particularly interesting and meaningful ways. And so what I have is a series of quotes from research in the last ten or so years that, so far as I've been able to tell, nobody's taken up as a challenge. Here's a response to a question about whether or not attachment to an ethnic community is a good or a bad thing. Isn't it interesting that our metaphors about immigration are all focused around foods? You know, melting pots, and salad bowls. Is it better to have an attachment to an ethnic community or is it better to assimilate, or is it more a hybrid than a binary that's at stake?

Along these lines, Viswanath and Arora (2000) wrote,

for the ethnic audience in particular, as a result of [new] communication technologies, geographical and temporal barriers indeed may become less important among different groups [that] information from and about distance areas. Will that, however, mean that other barriers such as social class, ideology and power cease to matter? Does the content and focus of the information available in cyberspace differ from traditional media?

Another way to put it is that we don't really have research that shows the degree to which immigrant groups and ethnic communities have used media before the internet. I

don't mean to impugn the Chicago Public Library on this at all, but I've had discussions with them that have simply not been that fruitful about trying to get at some data about things like newspaper use in various branch libraries where particular ethnic communities are situated. I simply don't have the data at this point. It doesn't seem to be forthcoming. I think it's an important question—so far as I'm aware, this is a somewhat zero-sum game, right? You can only pay attention to so much information, simply given how much time there is in a day. To what information in particular are recent immigrants giving time? To what are they paying attention?

Ananda Mitra has done some interesting theorizing on the topic, and argued that,

At the end of the 20th century we were witnessing a communication revolution facilitating the movement of people and information across great distances, thus producing a set of unique possibilities, conditions and tensions in the history of civilization. (2005)

In the same article, he

considers the consequences of this tension of immigrants, who often set up dissonance for themselves by disrupting their sense of space, and then attempt to resolve the tensions by mobilizing the digital realm of the internet.

One of the most interesting things that I've witnessed at UIC, for instance—my good friend and colleague at Northwestern, Eszter Hargittai has some terrific research on this, is that our students at UIC will, as often as not, when they sit down in a cafeteria or other public space where there's Wi-Fi, open up the computer, fire up the browser, and the homepage to which that browser goes is their newspaper from home. From Singapore, from China, from India, from you name it. In some cases there are interesting gender divides here because very often the male students will have sports pages, and it's either cricket or soccer.

This is an incredibly simple observation. And I've had students in research courses do this as a way to learn a little bit about simply doing observations. It was pretty clear that for students at UIC there's a very strong connection to an element of home in a way that would have been impossible for them to have before the advent of this technology. We have no idea what the consequences of this are. We don't know what this means. And I don't mean simply in a very kind of black-and-white good or bad way—is it a good or a bad thing? We simply don't understand where this type of information activity fits in the lives of these students. How is this meaningful? Why do they do this? Is it a way to stay in contact with home? Is it a way to stay in contact with some element of the culture that continues to be important to them?

Closer to home in a sense, Mehra and Papajohn (2003) wrote,

Communities of [Diaspora's] ethnic minority groups of migrant origins residing and acting in host countries but taking strong sentimental and material links with their countries of origin are using the internet in significant ways to establish their dual identities via networking across home and host countries.

I'm going to take a swipe at sociology incredibly unfairly, in which I have very little training apart from some graduate-level courses. We still, I think, operate under the notion that people have individual identities, particularly when it comes to ethnicity. Now, they may be, you know, hyphenated identities, but that doesn't mean that they're dual. That's still understood as one identity, like African American. You see this even in the ways that we take census data and you can't check off two boxes. You can't be Hispanic and Asian. You can be one of those. And if they give you, you know, Hispanic-Asian, well, that's one, right? You still don't get both.

So, you know, this notion of dual or more identities is incredibly important, I think, for understanding how these technologies are deployed and made meaningful in the lives of members of ethnic communities, and particularly those who are recent immigrants. And not just immigrants to the U.S. I'm picking on the U.S. because being in Chicago, this is an incredibly fertile area to study this. But I suspect, simply from my travels, that this type of thing occurs all over the world, particularly in urban settings, and particularly in ones that have a great deal of mobility, you know, thanks to air travel, rail travel, the transportation hubs around the world.

So let me close with a few words about where I think we're going to go with this, for better or worse, as a project of study. Where I'm beginning is trying to get a handle on old media. You know, this probably says something about my age and the kind of culture in which I grew up in, but I want to know some things about ethnic newspapers, radio, and television in Chicago. The Chicago History Museum has 245 ethnic newspapers in its index, and that's just astounding. That's amazing. And I'm sure they're missing a bunch. That's an absolutely huge number. We have very little research about who these papers represent, both geographically speaking, what are the geographic areas they cover, but also in terms of their readership. And then because of language issues, we know precious little about their content. So one of the things to do is to try to marshal a group of people to take a look at those kinds of issues and to try to make some sense out of how these ethnic newspapers survived—how they formed, where they were, what they covered, what their circulation was, and very basic information like that. We need to look at radio programs and TV shows too. Some of those persist to this day, and one of the most wonderful things to me is to simply set the radio on the car to scan on the AM dial and listen to the different languages that are available on radio here locally. And then I think we need to look at new media, but—I stressed this before, this is not an internet-only phenomenon—I think we really need to look at the consequences of mobile phones and cheap long distance if we're going to make sense of the kind of things that are going on here.



This image is taken from a New Zealand website that was promoting positive attitudes toward immigrants, trying to kind of combat some of the backlash against immigration. I was particularly struck by what these characters who are all representing immigrants are doing. You have one fellow in front of a computer and another with headphones on. I can't tell what the headphones are connected to. There's no wire—it's wireless headphones, I suppose. It could be somebody else at a mixing board, somebody singing, somebody looking at a dress for fashion design. It's not clear to me what the person in the bottom right is doing, but it would appear that the person to whom they're speaking—I could be wrong, this could be a turban or it could be some other sort of headgear, but it looks like they have a bandage. So I have no idea what's going on here, but that's part of the reason I wanted to show it.

So this for New Zealanders was meant to convey a notion of “immigrant.” Now, when I saw this—it's probably been a couple of years—I was immediately reminded of comments that Jim Carey made in the late 1990s, when he was thinking about recent phenomena in globalization. He was talking about the notion that almost all parts of the world are accessible to us, virtually, immediately and in our own homes. And as somebody who was particularly a student of journalism, Jim was very keen on trying to figure out where journalism was heading. And what he, I think, realized at that time, was that even though newspapers are bringing us all sorts of news about the world, what was becoming strange to us, and what was not being covered, was our own neighborhood. Next door.

And in fact, the people next door may be to us a lot stranger than the people who we read about in a place like Accra about which we see reporting. Another way to put that is that the connections that we suddenly have around the world in a lot of ways seem stronger than the connections that we have to people next door in our own neighborhood

or in our condo or apartment building. There are some powerful forces at work here. And so I don't mean to imply that it's simply something about the internet or mobile technologies that has consequences for how members of ethnic groups or recent immigrants relate to a place to which they've moved, or a place in which they live. I think this has consequences for us all. The ways that we understand where we are and our identity and our place within this world are as greatly affected as the sense of identity for those who have just moved to the U.S. or to Chicago. But it doesn't seem so much like it to us because we've not been uprooted. We're here. We've been here. We've been here for a long time, potentially. So we don't notice it as much as somebody who's just recently arrived and is struck by the newness of it all. If there's one thing we can do with it, it is to at least try to look at the kind of information behavior in which we engage through new eyes and see how that has consequences for the ways that we see one another. And not just the world around us, but the very people next door.

Thanks for your attention. I'd love to take questions, hear comments, feedback, suggestions, and so on, since we're particularly in the early stages of getting this project going.

Questions and answers

How do you deal with the skepticism about the criteria that you're examining as things like ethnicity?

I think the way that you deal with it is to keep hammering on the facts on the ground. And you try to do the best possible job you can of collecting empirical data. We are incredibly fortunate not only to have funding from the Pew Charitable Trusts, but to be located in Washington, D.C. and to be routinely asked to meet with policy makers and on occasion to testify before Congress. I don't think this is a kind of skepticism that you overcome with a single argument. I think it's the kind of skepticism that you overcome—I don't mean to use a violent metaphor here—by literally hitting people over the head until they get it. This is probably better for the sociologists or possibly psychologists to speak to, but it is an incredibly difficult point to get across to people who, for whatever reason, don't get it. And I have no magic formula by which to get them to understand other than to keep saying to them over the years: “Look. Here's what's happening. Here's how we know. This is rigorous research, and you have to understand this.” And you have to keep coming back to them over and over again and saying it. We spend a lot of time doing that.

Steve, do you think other countries that are further along get it?

I was speaking about this with colleagues in Scandinavian countries where, particularly when it comes to mobile telephony but also broadband, are ahead of, in the aggregate, where the U.S. is, and who also have a somewhat fraught history of bringing in guest workers from other countries. There's an interesting difference because from the get-go, those countries are much less varied than the U.S. So to be Eastern European, to immigrate to Stockholm is an enormously different experience than to immigrate to

Chicago, not just for national reasons, but because the variety of ethnicities and cultures represented here is already so much broader.

So we've been discussing how we can try to even some of the differences. Well, we can do something sort of comparative. We haven't really come up with a very good way to do that. I'd like to be able to impose upon colleagues in South Korea, as well, who experience some of this diaspora, particularly related to labor. We'll see if that happens, but I think the experience here is different than it is in most, if not all other places. Yes, sir?

My name is Charles Benton. Many years ago I was on a tour of branch libraries in Chicago, and I remember vividly going to the branch library in Chinatown and there were lots of people, lots of Chinese immigrants reading Chinese newspapers. It was their only link to the old country and to the language that they knew, and in many cases they did not know English. You mentioned the dimension of language and the importance of language and the relationship between the other languages and English. And is this part of your study? I'd love to have your comments on that.

It probably will be part of it because I think it's inevitable, because it involves additional learning and types of literacies. It's not a dimension that we're looking at initially because part of what we're struggling with is working through the libraries for access. In some cases we're greeted somewhat warmly, and in other cases we're not. When we've done some of the studies on campus looking at college students, it's been interesting to see the degree to which languages other than English are the languages of first choice in conversation among students, particularly when they're seated around the computer and may be playing a computer game or reading news information or what have you. It has to be part of it.

It would be interesting to know of the 249 newspapers you talked about, how many are foreign language newspapers. The overwhelming majority will be in foreign languages.

You can tell simply by looking at their names. They may be using that as a kind of symbolic title in a way, but I suspect that 95 plus percent of the newspapers are in foreign languages. It's interesting that you mention this issue—I want to keep making the point here that this isn't only about ethnicity and immigration. I have a tiny little cottage up in Wisconsin in a tiny little town that, believe it or not, now has a Starbucks, but prior to having that Starbucks, you could not get a *Chicago Tribune*, a *New York Times*. So now that there's Starbucks, suddenly there's a *New York Times*. There's an intertwining here of transportation, of commerce, and again, there is this notion of ritual and culture. Coffee shops have for so long played a key role in bringing people together and bringing information and news. That, in some odd way, continues to be the case. It's perhaps a somewhat more crass and commercialistic version than we might like to be nostalgic about in terms of the history of cafe culture, but it's still somewhat the case. And the library in this small town did get the paper. The few times I'd been there, the papers are hanging on the racks.

When you're doing your research about immigration in the past with newspapers, television, and radio shows versus today with new immigrants and the internet, have you looked at reasons why they immigrated? And those reasons may have to do with why they're looking at these papers, such as the religious persecution in the late 1800s, early 1900s, and specifically in Skokie, the people who came because of religious persecution.

No, because we haven't done the research. We will, absolutely—that's going to be a big part of the content analysis of the newspapers. I think, being incredibly optimistic, that we can get sufficient circulation data to be able to locate readership.

I come from Triton College. I don't have a question; I just wanted to illustrate the fascinating topic that you have been talking about today with my own personal kind of example or story, and stuff. I came to the United States in 1988 and have been here until now. For a long time I was living in a distant community where me and my daughter were the only Yugoslavs living throughout the 80s, and our only contact with our home back home was mail. At that point, a phone minute was about eighty cents, a dollar, a dollar and twenty cents, and that was just way out of our range. So letters, maybe 12 letters a year or so, one way. And at that time, while I was doing research on cultural identity and its establishment, or how it gets created in postcolonial societies in Eastern Europe and Africa, for my dissertation, my own personal identity was disintegrating because in the 90s there was the war, and basically the country disappeared from the face of the earth, and I was a Yugoslav. There were times when there was no communication—my own sense was, actually, I was the American. My only identity was I'm an American here and married to so-and-so, and that was it, because I really didn't know for many years what was going on over there and where I belong and who am I. And that went on for a long time. The internet started coming to me in the late 90s until NATO started bombing Serbia. In one of the heaviest bombed areas was my hometown. Actually, that was the place that was being bombed. That was the time that I knew about the internet, and I was using it a little bit, but then that event, ten years ago today—March 24th is when it started—got me to be really heavily involved with the internet. I was 24/7 on the internet and discovered communities of people, my own people from my hometowns. And we were very often watching the planes—or monitoring the planes from the communities near the Italian bases, and the planes were taking off going to Slovenia, Croatia, and nobody knew exactly where the planes were, and when they were going to drop the bombs and who or where they hit. And I would call my friends, and they were telling me: “Wow,” they said, “I'm finding out from you, you know, that our town was hit, and I live two miles from it.” And stuff like that.

So that was my first encounter, and as I said, we never had any contact with Yugoslavs or Serbians where we lived, and our first contact was through the internet. Since then, I have drifted away from literature and moved onto the computers and the internet and to me, that has been really, really fascinating. My own identity has been changing dramatically since 2000. To be closer to the Yugoslav and Serbian communities I eventually moved to Chicago where there's about half a million of these people, and our stores, etc., etc.—what you were talking about really resonates quite well with me, and I have a feeling with a lot of other people here. So thank you.

Thank you. Thanks for sharing that story.

I'm Dan Bassill at the Tutor/Mentor Connection. And you said something about this attachment to ethnic communities: we don't know if it's a good or bad thing yet. I've been seeing some articles about social capital, about bonding and bridging and building some understanding there. I didn't really hear you use those terms in what you were talking about, but have you been looking at that type of information in terms of trying to create understanding of what's happening?

I've looked at notions of social capital, community, and social networking, but I've actually somewhat deliberately steered clear of that in relation to this project. I'm sure it will come in at the end. I think it's in some sense inevitable. I don't, at this point, want to engage questions of social capital online in relation to this because I really want to focus more on family and family connections and connections to friends rather than other types of connections. I think that's where the strongest ties are going to be, and that's where the most lasting points of contact are going to be, using whatever media are available. I think the issues of social capital are going to arise within the context of the ethnic community and that's going to take, I think, an incredible amount of teasing out on the ground to understand, because I don't think that's going to be visible, the new media, in ways that it's visible for nonimmigrants. In other words, I don't think we're going to see recent immigrants employing the kinds of tools that have been used so far to build social capital, like name-your-favorite Web 2.0 type of technology. I think those are going to be less meaningful locally and more meaningful on a larger global scale.

I'm no expert in social capital, which is why I've been building a library of articles and research about this. Initially in my looking at it I was thinking of it for the positive aspects of the expanded network that people have, but now I'm looking at what some researchers write about as the potentially negative social capital. In other words, the thicker your community is, the stronger your network is, the less likely you would reach out or be influenced or perhaps use the new learning opportunity. And so as we're talking about things like this, reading some of the literature that's being developed in that field might help in building some understanding of what the internet or computers are doing with this.

Here's one of the things that we don't know. There's a key issue of trust for a recent immigrant, and that has an enormous impact on how one interprets and works with an understanding of social capital. So, you know, I would theorize at this point that there's going to be a link, a sort of correlation, between time in the U.S. and the progression through technologies for the purpose of building social capital and using it. It's purely theorizing at this point because we haven't done this, but within some period of time—a year's a convenient span—in the first year, my sense is that technologies are going to play less of a role in terms of the local community, and face-to-face contact will play a greater role. And then we'll progress through. One of the difficult things in figuring out the issues is that we need to get a handle not only on technologies here, but prior technologies too, and whether or not online social capital built up through technologies

prior to immigration continues in that fashion and still is meaningful or not after the point of moving. I think that's going to be a really interesting thing to see.

Hi, Dianna Wiggins, YMCA. I have a question. As I sit on the train and watch more people reading newspapers on Kindles, and I hear about traditional formats of newspapers throwing in the towel, I'm wondering how we address the access issues. You know, even a Kindle is \$350. So what are we going to do about access issues in the future and the digital divide related to these sources only being available electronically?

I take the Metra every day and I've yet to see anyone using a Kindle. But they use iPhones and you name it, all sorts of other stuff. I don't have an answer. I think it'll probably be a good ten years before we've kind of shaken out journalism here as we know it and figured out what the next iteration of it will be. And I don't have a crystal ball. I've worked as a journalist, and one of my degrees is in journalism, and I love getting the paper, but I also think newspapers today pretty much suck. So I'm pretty clearly conflicted on it.

Here's a thing for me: in a lot of cases we're seeing that recent immigrants are already bringing news habits that involve technology with them, so that we in some sense may have missed the boat in looking for recent immigrants who would look for the newspaper in print form. In terms of access, I think the interesting thing is going to be to see how decisions are made. I mean, if you're a recent immigrant and you're trying to get a handle on, you know, gaining a foothold in a new place, in Chicago, and having to make some incredibly difficult budgeting decisions, where is your information budget going to fit among the other things that you really have to pay for? And then we've been hit, obviously, with the current economic situation. Our data have yet to show that people are ceasing to use information services, that they're no longer paying for broadband or that they are paying less—that they are choosing to try to save money on it. So that's going to have to be factored in as well. I don't know that we're going to see decisions about what sort of format—well, I think it's going to be difficult to get people to tell us why they made decisions about which format to get news in, because, like I said, we may have missed that point at which those decisions were made. And I think the answers we might get are going to be like: “Oh, I don't know. That was so long ago.” Or: “I don't know—I didn't really think about it.” Or simply, “It was more convenient,” and I don't think the answers may be as deliberate as they would have been if we would have been at the crux of that moment.

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Sustaining the cyberlife of Chicago's ethnic communities

Abdul Alkalimat

We have the pleasure of having a discussion on sustaining the cyber life of Chicago's ethnic communities. Now, just as a few comments of background, clearly, one of the key aspects of the history of Chicago has to do with various immigrant groups coming into the city, occupying neighborhoods. It's a city of neighborhoods, and it's a city of a giant sort of melting pot, and this is the past, and we're seeing now, in this sort of postindustrial moment, the crisis in Chicago is the crisis of many cities. In other words, what after the industrial might, what after the jobs that represented the magnet that brought people to this city? The stockyards, the steel mills, the manufacturing plants, whether it was refrigerators or candy and chewing gum—we know Chicago is a city that made stuff.

Now Chicago, as many cities, is trying to search for a new identity. Of course, we know that a lot of that has to do with playing games and having fun—the Olympics. But we also know that there's a downside to that, because every city where the Olympics has gone, the Olympics then leaves. And we're still having neighborhoods in search of social life that is meaningful, and often, these giant structures that are built for the bread-and-circus activity of this particular generation leave us in even a deeper crisis.

So we are talking now about the relationship between the actual life in our communities and neighborhoods on the one hand and our cyber life, our digital life. Because one of the interesting things about the difference between the actual and the digital is that in the digital, for the first time, really, there is a potential for the self-determination of neighborhoods and the self-determination of all kinds of communities, especially the diasporic ethnic communities. In other words, we all know that the freedom of the press had something to do with who owned the press, but today with digital tools there is a sense in which we can all own the press.

Abdul Alkalimat (Gerald McWorter) was born in Chicago's Cook County Hospital and first lived in the Cabrini projects. He was educated at Edward Jenner Elementary School, Marshall High School, the University of Illinois at Navy Pier, Roosevelt University, and the University of Chicago (PhD). He has worked as chairman of the Chicago Friends of SNCC (Students Non-violent Coordinating Committee), founder and chair of OBAC (Organization of Black American Culture), and founder of Timbuktoo Bookstore. He is the editor of several websites—Malcolm X: A Research Site, Cyberchurch, and eBlack Studies. He authored the Ford Foundation report on Information Technology and Black Studies (2006) and is recognized in Barber's *Black Digital Elite*. He edits the largest listserv in Black Studies, H-AFRO-AM. Currently he is Professor of Library and Information Science and African American Studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign. His latest book is "The African American Experience in Cyberspace: A Resource Guide to the Best Websites on Black Culture and History" (2003). (mcworter@illinois.edu)

And so what we're now talking about is how our ethnic communities and neighborhoods are being represented or representing themselves in cyberspace, and what is the implication not only for their identity and well-being, but the nature of the city itself? And so that's really what the conversation is today.

And we have two groups of people on this panel. The first group that will be reporting is a group of graduate students from the University of Illinois, who are working in what we call the Community Informatics lab at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, GSLIS. This lab is attempting to begin an initial stage of gathering the information, that is both in print and is digital, about virtually every ethnic community in Chicago, and we're trying to map that. So we have maps and we have bibliographies and what we're calling webliographies, that is to say, a gathering of URL's to guide people to this digital representation that we're talking about.

At the same time, the second part of the panel will be people who are reporting either on their research or their actual experience in the neighborhoods. And so we want to have a dialog about this generation of digital identity and the actual work on the ground to begin to see how, from the bottom up—not from the corporate, not from the government, not from the military, but from civil society, from us—how we can begin to see the emergence of an information city from the bottom up.

By the way, my name is Abdul Alkalimat, and I'm on the faculty at the University of Illinois. In light of the time, I'm going to limit everybody to 5 to 10 minutes so we can have some discussion. So first I'm going to ask Brooke Bahnsen to come up. She is a Master's student with a degree—not a student seeking the degree, but has a degree—who is working as a librarian in the Fremont Public Library, and she was the GIS mapmaker in the CI Lab. We miss her very much, and I'd like her to come and just talk for a minute about the mapmaking project process.

Brooke Bahnsen

I'll just talk about some of the things we did in the CI lab and use Chicago Mexicano as an example. So basically, our goal was to define different communities in Chicago by ethnicity, and we used the U.S. census data from 2000 in different measures. One of the measures was foreign-born, which is how a person answers if they're born outside of the U.S., and there was a list of countries, so in this case a person would say he or she was born in Mexico. We produced over 600 maps, so whatever the census had available, we took those different countries and made maps out of that using GIS.

Brooke Bahnsen is a youth librarian at Fremont Public Library in Mundelein, Illinois. In 2008 she earned her MS in Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana with research assistantships in the Geology Library and the Community Informatics Lab. She received her undergraduate degree in Geography and Spanish from the University of Arizona, Tucson, and a master's degree in Education also from the University of Arizona. She taught Spanish to grades 1 through 8, studied in Guadalajara, Mexico, and continues her love of studying Spanish by traveling often to Mexico.

Ms. Bahnsen published a map of Illinois land cover while working for the Illinois Natural History Survey in Champaign and several *CI Lab Notes* at the University of Illinois relating to eChicago. Her interest in library science is broad, including community informatics, GIS (Geographic Information Systems), and Youth Services. (BrookeBahnsen@gmail.com)

Another measure of mapping was self-identity as Mexican. This was a difficult question on the census because they divided it into different “races.” So you can answer anything that you identify yourself as, and Mexican happened to be one of those measures. The third measure to define ethnicity is language spoken at home. So if a person happened to speak a language other than English most of the time on the census, they would answer Spanish or French or German, anything else.

So we outlined the city of Chicago, which are the blue maps up here, in the 77 community areas. So you can do further research if you need to look at what neighborhood a person happens to be living in. You can see that South Lawndale and the Lower West Side is highly Mexican in all three measures: born in Mexico, self-identifying as Mexican, and Spanish speaking, also on the North Side. Then we took the counties surrounding Chicago, all the way out to Indiana and Wisconsin and produced those same maps. Our goal is to continue to map cyberspace, so we're in the process of geocoding URL's, which we have.

We produced a series of *Lab Notes* that looked at, for example, Chicago and Mexican—or Mexico—on the internet in different categories, and we're in the process of mapping those URL locations to the city of Chicago to see if there's any correlation between where people who identify as Mexican are living and where these websites are mapped to.

Aiko Takazawa

We have been looking at community technology projects in Japan. The initial stage for us in our thinking about what is community informatics in Japan was actually a movie called *Train Man*. *Train Man* is about a guy who meets a girl in the train, but he doesn't know what to do to help her and to have more communication with her, so he goes to the online community to seek advice about what to do next.

So that movie shows us that people use public computing sites such as internet cafes, which are totally different from what we know about in the U.S., and also, people use cell phone devices to post a comment on a public space online and exchange information or ideas and just leave comments without identifying themselves. And so we had this idea that there must be community informatics elements in Japan, but we didn't know what they might be, so we reviewed some scholarly work on social networking sites like Friendster or Facebook, the Japanese version of it. But for us, those are

Aiko Takazawa is a doctoral student at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at UIUC and a research assistant for Community Informatics Lab led by Dr. Kate Williams. Her research focuses on uses of ICTs in local communities, particularly for recovering from crisis and disasters. Her personal experience involved in community disaster response as a volunteer in the 1995 Kobe earthquake in Japan drives her research to this direction. The overlays of her research interests are values in sustainability of community and culture and respect for human rights. She earned her Master's degree at the School of Information, University of Michigan. During the master's program, she worked few community informatics projects including Technology Opportunities Project Archives, Senegalese Association of Michigan information and communication studies, and the outcome based evaluation for Washtenaw County Library for the Blind and Physically Impaired. (aikot@illinois.edu)

What is Community Informatics in Japan?

日本における“Community Informatics”とは何か？



匿名オタク恋物語

とりのあす何を話したか聞察にま...
漏れのCPUが火を吐くまで真剣に

447 名前:731こと電車男 投稿日:04/0
>>433
おれにももらったカップのお礼って...
それって大丈夫ですか？
マシレスでお願いします

450 名前:Mr.名無しさん 投稿日:04/03/17 22:35
>>447
いやいいんだって
変じゃないぞー！

451 名前:Mr.名無しさん 投稿日:04/03/17 22:35
カップのお礼に食事に誘え
カップのお礼に食事に誘え
カップのお礼に食事に誘え

電車男
電車男は誰なのか

Train Man suggests that community informatics is strong in Japan. What can we learn?

The Community Informatics Lab is working across physical distance but within Japanese culture and language to test our definition of community informatics as local, historical community uses of information technology. Informed by Shoji (2007) and Toyama (2007), we searched the web for community informatics in Japan, selected 12 cases of local communities using information technology that featured content-rich websites, and analyzed these cases against two intersecting conceptual frameworks from community informatics work in the UK and US.

The 12 Japanese community informatics projects reflect collaborations that shift over time and allow for a productive combination of top-down and bottom-up mobilization. Differences in these projects' geographic reach suggest differences between US and Japanese perceptions of community.

Citations

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Coding of 12 cases

Descriptive and analytical categories draw from Community Technology on Earth project (Ritzo & Williams 2008), public computing sites (Williams & Alkalimat 2004), and a recent definition of community informatics (Williams & Durrance, 2009).

1. Typology of Community Informatics

1. Actual	: Public computing sites (i.e. Internet café)
2. Virtual	: Online community and resources such as community networks
3. Combination of A & V	: Places having both Actual and Virtual
4. Organic	: Projects borne out of community efforts not particularly concerned with technology but which now involve information technology or computers

2. Metadata for each project

Areas	Description of Areas
Name & Location	Name of project and location of the host institution
Purposes	Goals and objectives for the project
Origines	Chronology of the project
Social Forces	Background information of and related social issues to the project
ICT Use	Information and communication technology they refer in use
Website	Description of website information of the project
Host Institutions	Description of host institutions: Civic, Profit, and Government sectors

3. Classification for technology used in projects

Codes	Description
Websites	Information about activities, contact, links, the like
e-Commerce	Acquiring products is available via technologies used on the website
Online registration	Automatic response from the host institution for further instruction
BBS	Bulletin board system opened for public to exchange information
Emails	Correspondence available via emails
Computers on site	IT mentions about onsite computing sites available
Databases	Access available to their databases
Blogs	Blogs open for public to communicate personally to individual staffs in the host institution and/or project members
Brochures/PDF	PDF files are available

5 Key Findings

1. We find **collaborations** across government, commercial, education, and non-profit sectors
2. Community informatics is applied for **community & network building** across generation, gender, distance – even the entire country
3. Community Informatics **revitalizes the regions outside Tokyo -地方-** in education, culture, and economy
4. **None of 12 cases are solely actual CI (public computing)** as of today, though several began as actual
5. Only 2 cases were organic, grown out of non-technology issues; **10 began life as technology focused projects**

12 community/technology projects: Actual, Virtual, Combined, and Organic

Description	Initial stage	Present stage
1 e-learning and regular schooling programs for local community members who are both interested in learning and teaching, for all of Japan.	V	C
2 Online cataloging and archives (database) for 1995 Kobe earthquake, for public to share the memorial collection both online and at the local university library, located in the central west of Japan.	A	C
3 Online brochure and information about their annual booklets of victims of 1995 Kobe earthquake, for all of Japan.	O	C
4 Online brochure and daily communication tools by the school websites and personal blog spaces provided by the staff of the school including the principal, for not only the school related but also the local communities located in a rural mountainous region.	O	C
5 Online information sharing and exchange space for local merchandiser/shop owners located in Tokyo with people who is interested in the community, primarily for residents, workers, and visitors of the community.	A	V
6 e-learning and regular schooling programs for local community members, for a rural mountainous and coastal region of Japan.	A	C
7 Emergency childcare services for local community members, for those who have work obligation but need immediate help for sick children.	C	C
8 Social networking service sites for local community members, provided by the city, for a central city of rural mountainous region in southern Japan.	V	V
9 e-Learning and regular schooling programs for local community members, for a rural mountainous region.	A	C
10 Interactive online space for information about job provided by well-known individuals and general publics, for youth in all regions of Japan.	V	V
11 Online information gateway for all NGO and NPO, for all regions of Japan.	V	V
12 Social networking service sites for local community members, provided by the local broadcasting company, for all the residents and people affiliated with the area located in Southern Japan.	V	V



Kate Williams and Aiko Takazawa
Community Informatics Lab
GSLIS Research Showcase, April 6, 2009



commercial products, so we wanted to identify the bottom-up phenomena in Japan. From there, we turned to the SNS site, which is actually a social network site developed by a city information officer. So we started with that project.

And these are 12 examples that we identified that meet our criteria for being a Community Informatics project: a project must be serving a community, the local community, and using technology for the community's own purposes. We came up with four different CI types. One is actual—that means the project uses actual space for computing with people. And the second one is virtual—the CI people only use virtual space to do something, such as to disseminate some information for the community members. And the third is a combination of both, and the fourth is the organic type. The organic type is a type that's more representative of how the project emerged. Organic means the project was started not to use technology, but rather to serve community members; eventually they adopted technological tools to serve the needs of the community.

This is a list of the 12 examples, in chronological order. This one we found had been started in 1995—by the government. But it was a collaboration of community organization municipal officers and community members. So that becomes a model for community organizations in the adoption of technology for their own purposes; the most recent examples use only a virtual space like social network services or a community information network site such as the NorthStarNet system in the Chicago area.

And interestingly, we found that not many libraries figured in these examples. So there must be some different notion of the role of public library, even though the projects were for public purposes. We also learned that the sense of the community in Japan is just different from what we think about community. We have to go farther on with that, but our conclusion is that the central government or the federal government takes the leadership and initiatives. In other words, community informatics in Japan is more likely a part of national agenda, led by the central government. So that notion of space, geographic space, the sense of distance, and the sense of community are very much influential towards community informatization in Japan. So those were our initial findings. Thank you for listening.

Hui Yan

Good morning, guys. It is my pleasure to share with you my experiences and my ideas on eChicago. I have been here since last September, when I came here as a visiting student, and I have enjoyed my time and the research, the lab, and have been associated with a project called eChicago. What I did in the project was collect the related URL's,

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related website, related web pages, about Chinese Chicago and organize that information into a webliography. This is what I am going to talk about with you today.

First of all, I would like to share with you how I collected the URL's and put together the webliography and bibliographies. Second, I will address the question of how global Chicago research communities can use these webliography and bibliographies. Finally, I will discuss how we can make them sustainable? Who should manage these resources?

This is the webliography and bibliography we did in the beginning of this February. This is the cover page, and to collect the URL's, you know, it's very important to have a very good understanding of the internet, have understanding of websites, especially the gateways. You have to know where to get the information quickly and accurately.

So with Kate Williams as our advisor, we collected information about Chinese Chicago. First of all, we did a Google search, using keywords such as "Chinese Chicago" or "political," "history," and so on, that correspond to our categories. But during the process of collecting URL's, it is hard to decide which URL and which website should be collected, should be included in our webliography. So we have some guidelines. For example, first of all, URL's and websites should be about Chinese Chicago. It's not for Chinese Chicago. It's about, for example, it's about the history of Chinese Chicago, and it's about the political organization of Chinese Chicago. So to do this is hard for me, you know? I spent several weeks learning the difference between "about" and "for." You know, it's different. And the second thing for me is to make sure the time spent on each category of the Chinese Chicago URL collections is equal, so that each category's collection is equivalent in terms of depth. That's how I approached this analysis.

So as a first question, what purposes do the webliography and bibliography serve for me? Compiling a webliography is good practice for finding online information in a relatively scientific way. In addition, it's also a cultural recognition process both for the Chinese in Chicago and for our visiting students. It's very valuable to gain understanding of the Chinese community in Chicago and Americans as well from the webliography and bibliography. For research purposes, it helped me with my comprehension of English, and it introduced me to community informatics and its research culture as well as providing me with a first-hand understanding of the empirical research. Those are some of the reasons this webliography and bibliography have been useful to me.

The second question is: how can global Chicago research communities use them? For those of you either with the Chicago Public Library or other organizations, I would like to focus on the research communities and Chicago. For those of you involved in research, this is perhaps a brand-new perspective, looking at the communities in terms of daily life. In local communities, for example, the Chinese community in Chicago, what kinds of things are represented on the web? This represents their discourse on the web, on the internet. The second way this webliography and bibliography can be useful is that they are significant research resources that can lead to a better understanding of communities in Chicago. By looking at our bibliography and our webliography you will learn where you can find information about our local communities, right?

The third useful aspect is that the webliography and bibliography represent an evaluation of the academic attention paid to minor communities. What does this mean? What we included in the bibliographies are the research documents and other documents

about the local communities. You can have a quick look in the bibliography and find out what researchers have focused on in the past. It helps you figure out what research you can do in the local communities.

All this has to do with research. What about the communities in Chicago? I want to make three more points. First of all, the webliography and bibliography form an online gateway and guide for information sources on ethnic groups. If you live in the Chinese Chicago community or Chinatown here, you can figure out from our bibliography what aspects of your daily life are presented on the web, on the internet. And the second, more important point is more of a reflection on the fields and communities that have little or no presence on the internet, and on the issues these communities should be more concerned with.

The third point is that the webliography and bibliography together are one way for community members to find out what scholars are talking about and are focusing on with regard to community problems. Another point may be that it's a policy issue or it's a practice or hands-on issue for all of us. My idea is very simple. What about the future of this bibliography and webliography and other sources related to local communities? I think the public library should take on the responsibility of collecting more information about local communities here in Chicago. My design is maybe too elaborate, so the public library could train special librarians in Netscape Navigator or draw on employees from resources management department or related departments. Then you could distribute the information for this bibliography to the local communities.

The most important point in my argument is that the organization who best understands the local community is the public library, especially the community library. So we should foster more collaboration between communities and public libraries and our research groups. So that's all I have today. Thanks.

Melissa Martinez

Hi, I'm from the University of Illinois, and I'm here to talk about the archival project that I've been working on since October 2008 with the Puerto Rican Cultural Center. It's a collaborative project between University of Illinois Chicago and Urbana-Champaign campuses, and the center. And what we're doing is taking materials that the cultural center has produced and generated over the years, gathering them up and digitizing them in a collection that will be accessible through the University of Illinois at Chicago's special collections department online. So it'll be an online exhibit.

Melissa Martinez is a first year graduate student in the LEEP program at the Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, concentrating in community informatics and special collections. She graduated from Indiana University Fort Wayne in 2008 with a BA in History and a minor in Political Science. This past spring, Melissa started two graduate research assistantships: one with the IMLS youth community informatics project at Chicago's Puerto Rican Cultural Center and the second with the IMLS community informatics corps grant, assisting with the organization of the Community as Intellectual Space Symposium for Paseo Boricua in June 2009. She has been working on the archival project that is underway between the University of Illinois at Chicago, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and the Puerto Rican Cultural Center since October 2008. (martin93@illinois.edu)

This project has several goals. One is to preserve the information that's coming out of the cultural center about its services, its community—but also to broaden the community which the center is able to reach. And I'm very excited because as of last week our first portion is now accessible online, so you can go to the University of Illinois at Chicago, go to special collections, and you can see our project. And I'm also very excited because we recently were able to get a partial run of the newspaper that is produced by the community. So we're scanning that, and that'll be accessible online to expand the range and community with which the Puerto Rican Cultural Center is able to engage. So that's my real-life experience that I wanted to talk to you guys about.

Sarah Cottonaro

Thank you. I'm a graduate student here at Dominican University in the Library and Information Science Program, and I actually did this research on the Pui Tak Center in Chicago's Chinatown for Dr. Chris Hagar's LIS 758 Community Informatics course. What I wanted to do was look at how ethnic communities interact with community informatics and CI technology in general, how it's used to strengthen the community within itself and how the community interacts with outside communities.

The Pui Tak Center is located on the corner of 22nd and Wentworth in Chicago's Chinatown, and there is a video on the web that I wanted to look at briefly. It's a nice introduction to the center.

Video narrator: Each year, 1,000 new immigrants arrive in Chicago's Chinatown from China.

Participant: When I first got to Chicago, I didn't even know how to take the bus. When I went shopping, I was confused, not knowing what I had in my hand or how to use it or looking for a job, I couldn't find one. There were many areas of life where I just didn't know what to do.

Narrator: Each year, nearly 1,000 new immigrants arrive in Chicago's Chinatown from China. Their lives are difficult. They are poor. They don't speak English, and their job skills are limited. While they are hopeful about their new life, they face many fears and uncertainties. Seeing this need, the Chinese Christian Union Church started the Pui Tak Center after purchasing an historic building in Chinatown. The church had a vision at heart for new immigrants. Since these immigrants would never come into the church on their own, the church wanted to reach out and serve them through the Pui Tak Center.

Sarah Cottonaro was born and raised in Chicago. She graduated from DePaul University, where she was an Honors Program student, in 2006 with a B.A. in English Literature. During her time there she also worked as a tutor in the Writing Resource Center and as a mentor to undergraduate Honors students. She graduated from Dominican University's Graduate School of Library and Information Science in 2009 and is a member of Beta Phi Mu. She is currently the Library Director at Stickney-Forest View Public Library District in Stickney, IL. (sarahcottonaro@gmail.com)

Church member: When we first started in 1994, we had different visions about what we hoped to become. Mr. Yee, our founding president, envisioned us as a gas station where immigrants can come and get anything they needed on their adjustment to life in the United States. I thought we were like a lighthouse giving hope to immigrants who felt lost on their journey.

Narrator: Today, the Pui Tak Center serves nearly 3,000 people each year through its programs.

Okay. So you get a sense from the beginning just how many people this center serves, and if you were unable to hear David Mu, the director, he likes to view it as the way the church can serve the community because so many members of the community are not necessarily Christian and won't go to the church for help. It was formed to reach out into the community and to go and kind of grab users and people who needed it.

It does occupy an historic building in Chinatown, and they're actually doing some renovations on it right now. And when I spoke with him, he was really adamant that all the money that they're using to restore the building is not going to detract from their usual services. They're doing a lot of grant writing right now, and a lot of outreach to private funding for ways to work on the building without taking away from the outreach, which is the primary purpose of the center.

And this idea of building social capital echoes Robert Putnam's: "Just as a screwdriver or a college education can increase productivity, so too can social contacts affect the productivity of individuals and groups." So the Pui Tak Center is working to build these contacts so these individuals who are going to the center can develop their own voices within the community and thereby have a voice outside of the community as well.

Some of the services that the center offers are the ESL classes and tutoring. That's a primary draw for the Pui Tak Center. I was able to go and observe both, and they have two shifts to appeal to both stay-at-home mothers and restaurant workers and factory workers, which are the primary demographic of those who attend the classes. The average age is around 40, 45. As their children already are speaking English, learning English in schools, this is a way for them to communicate with their children, with their children's teachers, so that they can again, like I said, have a voice and develop these social contacts.

There's also a computer lab, and they are able to work on computer skills. There are basic computing classes for word processing that you would need for a job as well as for accessing the internet, and there is some open lab time. The Chinatown branch of the Chicago Public Library is a block and a half down the street, so they're able to take the skills that they learned in the Pui Tak center and then go down the street to the public library and access the public-access computer terminals there.

There are also citizenship courses and youth advocacy that are going into the community. As part of the youth advocacy, children from the community actually come and help with the citizenship classes, with the tutoring, and with the computer skills training. There is also a Christian school for grades K through six. You don't need to be Christian to attend. There is an element of that to the lesson, but there are no requirements in terms of religious affiliation and entry into the school.

And they also do some general neighborhood outreach. During the recent 2008 election, they registered 1200 people to vote in the election, and gave them any kind of assistance they would need for, you know, finding materials on the candidates.

In community building, the services that they give to the community members give the community members a voice so that they're able to speak out within their families and then within the neighborhood community, within the Chinese and Chinese American community in the area, and then also in a larger, global setting. So they're able to communicate with people in the Chicagoland area in general and then outside. And that's it. And I think we're going to have questions later, so thank you.

Héctor R. Hernández

Thank you. Good morning. This may be the amateur portion of your conference, here. I'm not an academician. I'm not a researcher. I have been at the Rudy Lozano branch of the Chicago Public Library since it opened. The library opened on September 7th, 1989. I arrived there on May 1st, 1989, four months prior to the branch library opening, to help get it ready.

So when we started out, our community was at least 90 percent Hispanic, meaning Mexican. There was a Puerto Rican family or two in the area. Now we're seeing some Argentinean families as a result of—well, UIC graduate students. We are less than a mile south from UIC. So my comments here will be about the Chicago Public Library and its communities, or the Lozano branch, because pretty much what our branch does is what the Chicago Public Library does.

So what is Chicago doing to bridge the digital divide in these communities? Well, one thing that it's doing is offering the technology, the hardware, the software, computers, internet access, Wi-Fi, CyberNavigators, and along with the main library and two regional libraries, all branches have computers. Patrons are allowed two hours or two appointments per day, and later we can get more into detail on that.

At the Rudy Lozano Branch Library, we have 20 computers for adults, 2 of which are Find It computers. A Find It computer is our electronic catalog and databases. And we have eight computers for children including one Find It computer, plus five laptops for use by adults when all our adult computers are being used. And in the mornings when the children are in school, adults are allowed to use children's computers. So we're looking at 28 computers at least available for adults in the mornings. Things get hectic after kids come out of school. Students aged 13 and older are required to use the adult computers. Of course, we use common sense, and sometimes we're lenient and make exceptions if they're warranted.

The Chicago Public Library also has in place a wonderful CyberNavigator program. I'm sure many of you have heard. There's a concurrent session right now on CyberNavigators. Our CyberNavigator is one of the speakers there, as well. Forty-two out of 78 branches have a CyberNavigator, who is a young expert on computers and

Héctor R. Hernández, a University of Illinois GSLIS graduate, is a former Hispanic Services Coordinator for the Chicago Public Library. He is currently Branch Manager of CPL's Rudy Lozano Branch. (hernande@chipublib.org)

computer technology. They work 20 hours per week, and they provide one-on-one assistance to library patrons. Some things they might do are helping someone to open an email account, or helping someone to fill out an online job application. We have what in the old days used to be the unemployment office, half a block down the street, now it is known as IDES, Illinois Department of Employment Security, and they have a computer lab which is probably small, so they frequently refer people to us. “Just go to a library and they'll do it for you.” It's like, we can do anything for patrons or everything, and we know everything, as well.

CyberNavigators also teach classes, computer classes, like basic internet skills. The curriculum covers the basics, such as how to use a keyboard and a mouse and opening email accounts. Computer classes are done in foreign languages in communities where that's needed such as in Chinatown, classes in Chinese are given, and at Lozano, classes in Spanish are given. We offer classes on Saturdays too, one in English, one in Spanish. Now we're doing Thursday classes as well because the demand was so heavy. And if we don't have a CyberNavigator, then staff members are expected to do these basic internet classes. Wi-Fi, or wireless access, is also available at every location.

Many of the older patrons require more assistance. The younger set, elementary or high school students, they're pretty much on their own. They don't need you. They could probably teach you a thing or two about computers. I know they could teach me a few things. But it's the middle-aged people, or perhaps the level of literacy, computer literacy or even literacy in general—these are people who require more time and attention. Someone might come in with a post-it note that has somebody's email in Seattle, and this person may never even have sat at a computer, so, “Oh, my friend told me to write him in Seattle.” You know, “Here's his email address.” Or other people think they can go in and punch in their email address—let's say a friend helped them open an email account, but they forgot how to access it. They want to go and punch in their email address in the location bar, the address bar. So there's a lot of work to be done in that area.

Oh, and by the way, the CyberNavigator program is funded by the Chicago Public Library Foundation. It is not a regular budget project, but there is strong commitment from Commissioner Mary Dempsey and the administrative staff, and of course, the Foundation itself. The goal is to, at some point in the near future, have the CyberNavigator program in all 78 branches.

And I was saying, we oftentimes feel overwhelmed by the demand—it will be good to have more technology centers, community technology centers in our neighborhoods. There are some cybercafes within walking distance of the library, but we need actually more of a commitment perhaps from elected officials or perhaps—they were mentioning grants, grant money that may be coming down the pipeline? So I'm sure there will be some folks in the community applying for these funds.

Some local community organizations do offer classes, like there's an elementary school that for years and years has had a connection with the Tecnológico de Monterrey, or Monterrey Tech, in Mexico. But that is a very well-kept secret. I went to give a talk to a group of parents at a local school, and there were presenters there from another school, and that's how I heard about it. I thought that they were trying to limit it to parents of their students only, but on occasion I will refer people to Manuel Perez School, which is two blocks away from us. And then patrons would come back and say: “Hey, I got in the class. They did take me.”

So how are Chicago's ethnic communities represented in cyberspace, and who's creating content? Well, the webliographies from the University of Illinois were mentioned. There are some organizations—the Puerto Rican Cultural Center was mentioned. We also have the National Museum of Mexican Art, which up until recently used to be the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum. There's Pros Arts Studio, which is a community organization that's been in operation since 1978. And they link community artists with residents. They do a variety of programs for children and young adults. They used to have a video documentary process with video workshops. At our library they have art classes for teens. They also have something they call *Ideas en Arcilla*, it's like clay or pottery making, and then they have fundraisers, at which they sell those items made by children and instructors to raise funds for the organization.

Across the street from us, there is Radio Arte, WRTE, a small radio station which is part of the National Museum of Mexican Art. This is a Youth Outreach component of the Museum. I won't go into much detail here; but, there are other organizations like Latinos Progresando, which serves immigrants through highest-quality, low-cost legal immigration services, community education engagement, and advocacy in organizing around issues that affect immigrants. And there's also the Chicago Latino Network, which caters more to professionals. There's another one called HACIA Works, which is the Hispanic American Construction Industry Association.

So there's a lot of stuff. There's a lot of information that is being generated. Some have events, job opportunities, social events. Some of these operations are not as successful. A couple years ago there was the Pilsen-Little Village Information Center, which was somehow tied into a summer program with a cultural tour bus which ran from the Museum Campus to Chinatown to the National Museum of Mexican Art to the South Loop. They used to put out an electronic newsletter every two weeks with lots of useful information about education opportunities, job opportunities, and other community events, but that sort of fell by the wayside.

Now, what can you say about the cyberdemocracy plan for the U.S. and the world? Well, maybe follow the plan of the Chicago Public Library because through its network of library branches, they pretty much reach, I won't say everyone, but a large number of the population. The way the branch system is laid out, no one citizen of Chicago, no resident of Chicago, should have to walk or travel more than one mile to get to their local library. Lots of computers and instruction are needed to move towards that goal of cyberdemocracy. Thank you very much.

Questions and answers

Abdul Alkalimat: One of the interesting things about this notion of democracy is that people have focused on access, which often leads to downloading information from the web as the critical factor. And what we'd like to suggest is that perhaps even more critical is uploading information. And this relates to the earlier point I made about this being a moment of self-determination. That is, communities are now empowered to appropriate the technology and use this technology in their own interest. So last night when Professor Zook made his presentation on placemarks that we can find in Google maps and so on, it still remains a question as to whether or not the community itself is uploading information to represent itself versus others representing the community. Now,

they're both important, but what we're interested in is to what extent is an ethnic community in Chicago being reported about or self-reporting information? And to follow this over time, because this will tell us a great deal about what the social and cultural experience is and how that's reflected in consciousness and how that's then reflected in digital representation. So, questions. Let's have some interaction.

I keep being struck in all of these discussions by the fact that these kinds of data are server-based data. You keep wanting to get at the kind of data that would come from the browser: where is this person in this neighborhood? Those data are available in the nested routers of the internet service providers. Of course, they're guarded because of obvious security concerns—but they're there. So those data, if they could be made available to these kinds of studies, would provide the user side. Not just the URL they're going to, but where they're coming from. It seems like to me that when you combine that with something like the precinct-wide data that's available for political voting, for years and years, at the University of Michigan CPR, you've got a kind of a map of power and politics, and is anybody doing anything on that?

Abdul Alkalimat: So the question you're raising is: how do you have democracy in a privatized world?

Yeah, exactly.

Abdul Alkalimat: So for example, right now—

The industries are winning.

Abdul Alkalimat: One of the things about the stimulus bill is that there is an attempt to map where the pipes are. Not only the pipes that are being used, but what's called dark fiber, that is to say, pipes that have been put in the ground that aren't being used yet. Now I'm in rural Pike County, Illinois, talking to a pig farmer. We're talking about broadband to the rural community, and this guy says: "Oh, yeah. Right up that road, right there. They dug that and laid that pipe a couple of years ago." Who would have known? In rural Pike County there's a pipe. Now, the problem that government has is that these are privately owned, and many of these private concerns do not want to reveal where the pipes are because that's their market position. They don't want the competitors to know. That may serve their interest, but the collective interest of the United States in trying to figure out how to deliver broadband to everybody is compromised under the conditions where you can't get the information as to where the stuff is. Now, chalk that up to Google. You know, Google is like heaven. It's like God is observing all of us. But we can't observe their data because that's proprietary. So we've got an interesting conflict here over the public good and the private proprietary interest. This may be the question of the 21st century—just think about that—just figure out how you're going to deal with that.

I'm sure Mr. Benton will have something to say about that later on today, but my question is: for your lab, and for the work you did on who controls cyber representation,

how come you decided to start with Google instead of with either snowball sampling or going directly into the neighborhoods with surveys or interviews?

Abdul Alkalimat: Well, I can just say that what we tried to do is to use the maximum sort of web searching that we could from a distance. That's step one. Step two is partnering with Hector and others in the community, because we know that we're touching the top of the iceberg, here. And just like Hector said he discovered within the community there was a dynamic that was tied back to Mexico, we're going to discover levels and layers of web activity and email activity, and ultimately we want measures of diasporic connection. So it's just a beginning of this process. But you're absolutely right that it is the people inside the communities who are going to have the most intimate knowledge of what's going on, and it's there that we have to turn for that knowledge about their activity. Only a certain amount of it can be observed from a distance.

I'm doing some work in this area that we can think about. To think of the information, to think about it geographically, where on the map it is, and the information about it, we can also think about it like a blueprint. What is the type of information we would like to learn, and can we help organize the sequencing of that information on like a blueprint, so that when somebody comes in to add some knowledge to the library, they're prompted to put it in this section versus that section? So if you were going to www.tutorconnection.org, you would see that there's an interactive library of information related to what we know about what we can be doing to help kids and support volunteers who are helping kids go into careers someday. And we could use concept maps to visualize the organization of the information so that if you were looking for information related to elementary school kids who get homework help, it would prompt you to go to a section of the interactive library with information related to homework help for elementary school kids. The library's interactive, so all that I have collected is there—anyone else who goes there can look at it and say: "I think it's good," "I think it's bad," or "I think I know something else, and I'll add that information to the link," so that the system can enable its users to add information into certain sections. And if you geocode that, you can begin to link the information to different geographic areas. I don't know if anyone else is doing things like that, but I think it's useful to be able to think of those tools. It might be valuable.

Has anybody looked at Facebook in terms of how communities—especially maybe the digital natives amongst these immigrant communities—are taking control of building their own structures, their own community-based organizations? I don't know if anybody's doing any of that, but Facebook naturally sets itself up to allow grouping, to allow community formation—you can network yourself when you first join, and so I wonder if there's Chinese American 20-somethings out there who are already sort of doing this thing, but we maybe can't see it because it's on Facebook.

I can answer that a little bit. My name is Paolo Gujilde, I am one of the lab folks from U of I. What you're asking about Facebook—when I was doing searches as part of my work with the Filipino American community in Chicago, I did find at least one that's being used by 20-something people of Filipino descent, working on community health

and looking at trying to get people to volunteer and work in community health. The reason for this is to have some exposure out there about how they have been looking at their health issues and health-related topics that are relevant to the Filipino community in Chicago

Abdul Alkalimat: See, one of the interesting points about that is, what is the relationship between a particular age cohort experiencing this social networking versus the historical, organic content of the community of origin? Be it the country of origin or the traditional community of the immigrants in Chicago--we're naming part of this session "sustaining": is that sustaining? Now, that's going to be a very interesting question, and therefore the digital representation of the cultural heritage and memory of the community is an important aspect that I'm not sure that Facebook is going to capture, and so we've got to look at it in a much broader sense of the survival of that community's experience.

I wanted to return to the note that you entered the presentation on—because I think it brings up a very important paradox in terms of providing internet access and these kinds of services—where you talked about the importance of multiple directions of this flow of participation, and the importance of the people being able to bring content to the internet instead of just accessing it. I'm a CyberNavigator, I'm one of the CyberNavigators with the Chicago Public Library, so I know it's an issue for us. I'm curious to know if it's an issue with some of the other organizations that presented here today. There is a conflict of interest. On one hand, in order to make these computers publicly accessible, they need to have certain tweaks made to them. So for instance, at the public library, all we have is internet. We don't have programs for word processing or photos. You cannot plug in a drive and upload or see the materials you would like to upload. And we do this to keep the network safe, etc., but there is a very real problem attached to that. So for instance, when a person comes into the library and would like to set up a Facebook account, there is no way for me to help this person upload their profile picture. As we know from social networking, this is the most basic and important step. And so I'm very interested in hearing people's comments or exploring a different line of thinking concerning this idea of how we relate to the internet being directly related to how we interact with the actual physical computer environment. When you go to one of these centers, that is not your computer. You know, you can't save personal information in the same way that people at home can with their own computers. So I just wanted to put that out there and see if anyone had similar experiences or solutions or ideas.

I just wanted to address the concern with the libraries. I know community technology centers do allow the use of USB drives, but when it comes to uploading a picture, that in the broad sense of things just requires a webcam or regular computer. The second thing that you mentioned about working on computers and being able to personalize in terms of sharing documents, that's the beauty of the internet. When you use Google Documents you can create a document, upload it, save it, leave, go somewhere else and come back to it and finish it and get your resume sent off for your job interview, that's the beauty of having the use of the internet being available at the library. I don't

see it as a conflict of interest, I see it as a convenience for the person that does not have a computer yet.

Abdul Alkalimat: I just want to say to that that a fundamental paradigm shift is when the library becomes a site of information production and not a site of information consumption. So while you're right, that the internet provides certain things, in terms of the general conception of what a library is in the United States, that's a paradigm shift we haven't really made yet.

This way of recording a community's history, it's very fragile. And I'm struck as well that I've not heard any voice from the field of archives and documentation and stabilization. Is there anything going on in ethnic communities other than just survival? I mean, is there socialization that helps build more than a temporary community—a sense of cultural documentation and place and time that is more lasting and more stable? I'm just struck by how fragile, how unsustainable, how fleeting and almost faddish the things being discussed are, and even the projects from the student research in community informatics, how it's tracked only in terms of now. I very much like the idea, for example, that you have communities in diaspora. You're reaching back to make comparisons, and it would be very interesting, speaking as a comparative cultural historian, how dislocation actually changes the community and how further dislocation in the community affects things. A community sticks together for survival, but sooner or later it is integrated and the community starts to lose its sense of itself. There are broader social processes here that play a role, and I think you alluded to it when you were talking about powerful forces that were having an influence, which is why you can't get totally caught up purely in small incremental change.

Abdul Alkalimat: No, I think you're absolutely right, but there is this side of it that we haven't brought up, perhaps, but there are dangers. For example, recently in the Chinese community of Chicago the Chinese-American Museum of Chicago, which hadn't been in existence for a long period of time, had a fire, and so here was the crisis. People had brought their family objects—clothing and other objects of historical significance—to the museum, and they were building it out of these personal collections. They hadn't yet got to the stage of digitizing the collection, which has all kinds of issues. In other words, how do you digitize clothes and so on and so forth, but the point is that there was a fire. And they were able to save a lot of the stuff. Anyway, now there's a plan for a very aggressive digitization program. And we're at that moment—that's the Katrina moment. You know, in other words, how much of our global cultural DNA is being lost precisely at the time when we can have cyber resurrection and they're going to have, you know, holograms of whatever it is we've preserved, and there's going to be a new world out there that we will be missing if we don't preserve what we have that documents our historical experience. You're right on point.

Well, addressing the archival concerns focusing on private studies and also bringing up a technologist, there was a recent article in the New York Times by David Pogue, a technologist, basically saying the only thing you can count on to actually survive is the paper. That you need to migrate your data. Taking something in digital form is great, in my opinion, for sharing, but the real thing, there's nothing you could

replace it with. And sometimes for research purposes, and the fragility of the artifact, it's best to use that digital representation, but that digital representation needs to be backed up, re-backed up, backed up, and backed up again and then re-backed up. And there's still no guarantee that it'll last. The only thing, as you said, that takes away the real thing is some type of disaster, and personally, I have backups and as for the archive that I work in, I will print out the information also because we're almost at our 90th anniversary, and we have stuff from the early 1920s.

Abdul Alkalimat: See, I think that's the institutional response, and that is the responsible institutional response. I have a completely different response, and that response is this: a scanner will cost you less than \$100. Every organization close to the ground is not worried about the kind of preservation that the pyramids represented or that the ruling classes of the world have always used to preserve what they wanted to preserve. Right now we've got a crisis of next week, does anybody have the minutes of the meeting? Next week, do all your family members have a picture of the new baby?

We're talking about something much closer to the ground and something much more related to the real lives of the people in the bottom half of the income spectrum. In other words, what we need is a cultural revolution that involves mass participation in digitizing the things that people really want to save and share so that we can have an information society created where the rulers are not the only ones that dominate the digital.

Now, there's a fundamental question here because the corporations are digital. The government is digital. The military is digital. It's the neighborhoods that are not digital. It's the community organizations that are not digital. It's many of our churches in which we have the knowledge of these ethnicities and these neighborhoods, etc. that are not digital. So the question is—and this is a fundamental thing about this country—when they roll out broadband everywhere, our thinking is going to be incremental, meaning you remember when computers were regarded as smart typewriters, and everybody just thought it was really nice to have a really intelligent typewriter. And then people discovered, no, they're computers, and we can do other things with them.

That's what's going to happen with broadband. But we are not thinking out of the box. We're still thinking about entrepreneurs delivering downloadable services to us. That's the model that's coming out of Washington. That's the model of all the private service providers that are going to get tons of money to link up the country. The question is: when will we begin to think about unleashing the energy and the creativity of the people to create a noncorporatized cyberspace? A noncorporatized or government-run digital environment for us to be invited in—meaning gated communities that we're invited into. I mean, I'm in first life. A lot of people go into Second Life, if you get my drift, here. It's the first life that we're talking about in here, and the digital representation of first life, not what kind of clever avatars we can create. So this is a moment.

Now, the question for Chicago is this: can we imagine a time in the past that gives us a glimpse of what the future might be in terms of mobilizing communities to create some way to preserve their memory? I was a graduate student at the University of Chicago. I would pick the phone up and call the Polish Museum. They'd say: "English, 4:00. English, 4:00." This is a community that built a museum to preserve its identity. Now, then those people have migrated out to the communities and so on, and the Polish

people are saying, “What is our identity? Do our kids speak Polish?” Every ethnic community does that. We're looking for a moment in this 21st century and digital environment that will help us understand how our communities are going to appropriate this technology and do something with it.

One last point: they talked about the African American community as being on the other side of the digital divide. That was just assumed. But guess what? The first digital culture, global digital culture, came out of that community, but it was underneath the radar of the researchers because it was called hip hop. Everybody in the world knows it, but that did not have to do with computer education as a bridge to getting a job. It had something to do with appropriating that technology and using it in order to create and recreate social and cultural life in that community. That was under the radar. You don't find that discussion in the digital divide literature, and yet that was leading the way.

So we're at a moment where we have to figure out how to think outside the box. When broadband hits this country in a big way, that is going to be a revolutionary moment of possibility. Even in our library and information school education, we have difficulty figuring out what that future is going to be, in order to unleash the students who can become the foot soldiers of this revolution. And that, it seems to me, is a very exciting thing. So right in the middle of this economic crisis everybody's going through, a seed has been planted to grow the future. And that's who we are. We are the soldiers of the future, and it's in that sense that the people of the country, in part, can be served by our imagination. And that's really the key to this whole eChicago. eChicago doesn't exist—it is in the stage of becoming, and we can help determine what it becomes. That's why we have the public library. That's why we have Sunshine Gospel Ministry. That's why the YMCA is here. Because it cannot be left to the chamber of commerce, to the city council—it has to be done by all of us.

The CyberNavigators of Chicago Public Library

Roberto Pang

My name is Roberto Pang, and I am the CyberNavigator program manager. Now, what I'm going to do this morning is give a very short introduction to the Chicago Public Library, their resources, and also their CyberNavigator program. The CyberNavigators are the highlight of the program. They are the fun part. But before that I have to put everything in context. Also, at the end of the session, we will open it up for your discussion. Hopefully, as I'm asking questions and debating some ideas, hopefully we can get some small argument going on and see where that takes us.

Now, who are we? What do we do? Well, the CyberNavigator program is a program that has been part of CPL for the last five years. However, we have had this program running in its current form since 2008. We started in April of last year, and we started with 37 branches. Now this year we have CyberNavigators in 42 branches. How many branches do we have in CPL? Does anybody know?

Workshop participant: 79.

Holy smokes. Do you work for CPL? Okay, no wonder. Okay, so we do have 79 branches across Chicago. What is the breakdown? How many CyberNavigators for each district? Now, in Chicago we have three districts. We've got North, Central, and South. North, it's everything that's north of North Avenue, conveniently, and in the North district we have 12 CyberNavigators. In the Central district, we have 17. The Central district is the area between North Avenue and 59th street. And lastly, in the South district, everything south of 59th street, we have 13.

Now you know how many CyberNavigators we have. And you're wondering: "Come on, Pang. You make us come here all this morning and you're not telling us

Roberto Pang graduated from The Ohio State University with a BS in Mechanical Engineering in 1997. He started his professional career with a Chicago nonprofit, Midtown Educational Foundation, as their Technology Director. At Midtown he oversaw the integration of computers and technology into their afterschool programs for Chicago's inner city kids. He also oversaw the adaptation and deployment of IT into the administrative operations. In 2001 Roberto cofounded an IT consulting and database development company. Roberto's role was on sales and project management, determining clients' requirements for databases. Clients included UIC College of Medicine, University of California San Diego School of Medicine, and the University of Minnesota Duluth School of Medicine. In 2006 Roberto joined another Chicago nonprofit, Casa Central, as their Community Technology Center Instructor where he had the chance to provide computer training to adults as well as Casa Central's own staff. Roberto joined the staff of the Chicago Public Library in early 2008 as the CyberNavigator Program Manager. He manages and oversees the daily operations of this City-wide program. Roberto remains in constant communication with CyberNavigators and branch managers to assure the smooth running of the program and a high level of service to Library patrons.

Roberto is originally from Honduras. He grew up in Honduras speaking Chinese Cantonese at home and Spanish and English at school. (rpang@chipublib.org)

what—you have not hit the thing yet. What is it? What is the CyberNavigator program?” Well, the CyberNavigator program is the position in each branch that basically helps patrons use the technology in the branch. These are the young men and women who are helping the patrons access the internet, navigate the internet, find information, and also, if time allows, helping them out with their general technology problems.

What offerings, what technology offerings, does CPL have? Well, if you are a patron of the library, if you have a library card in good standing, then you are allowed to go to any of these 79 branches and use a computer for two one-hour sessions of internet a day. Okay, so that's pretty cool. That's free internet. You don't have to buy coffee, you don't have to do anything. Just two one-hour sessions. Printing is available, but that's like fifteen cents a page.

Now, who are they? How do we hire them? Well, first of all, some of them are librarians, and some of them are library students, but not necessarily. We are just very lucky that some of them are librarians. The idea was that when we first started interviewing, people expected that we were going to be interviewing engineers or mathematicians or computer scientists, but I assure you, that was not the end product of it. I studied mechanical engineering, actually. I'm not a librarian. So there are some things about engineers and stuff that I guess I'm allowed to say because I'm part of the group.

So here's the deal. What talents, what characteristics, were we looking for, for CyberNavigators? First of all, they had to be smart, flat out. You have to know how to use the computer. But they did not need to be computer programmers. Very often in the resumes you would see people who were top-notch programmers. These were top gunners in technology, they could talk about networking and whatnot. Well, that was all good and fine, but that was not what we were looking for. What we were looking for were people who were very approachable, people who were friendly. Because believe it or not—and this just came to me as I was thinking about them—the position of CyberNavigator is easily, 95 percent of the time as they are in the branch working, working with patrons. There's really no time for them to go in the back room and do archiving. There's really no time for them to do paperwork or housekeeping. They're really in the trenches, dealing with people, dealing with every kind of people. So it is quite challenging in that sense. So we hire them for their personality. You have to have personality, you have to attract people. Make it possible that when you walk around, people will not be intimidated, and ask you questions. That was the type of people we were looking for.

It is also very interesting—where do they live? Who are they? Well, in a city like Chicago, so big, there are so many different neighborhoods. It is very diverse. And so just by chance—a little bit by chance, a little bit by planning—we were able to get a very diverse population that reflects the population of Chicago.

And so, for example, there are some language needs in particular branches. So obviously, the one that comes to my mind would be Chinatown. If you're going to be working at Chinatown, it would be helpful to know Chinese, I would say, considering that most of the people will speak Chinese. But by the same token, though, there are a couple of branches that need Spanish, and so I think last count was out of the 42 CyberNavigators, we probably have 9 who speak Spanish as a first language. And we got about three who speak Chinese as a first language. So in the branches of Chinatown, Daley, and Canaryville, we have CyberNavigators who can speak Chinese—Cantonese

and Mandarin—and in branches like, say Lozano, West Belmont, Marshall Square, Logan Square, there are CyberNavigators who can speak Spanish as a first language. So that's that, my friends. These are who they are. Every CyberNavigator probably is part of the community. They can actually walk to their branch. Do you walk to your branches? Everybody. Well, yeah. So see, so we were very lucky in that sense, that everybody—that the CyberNavigator was really a representation of the local community.

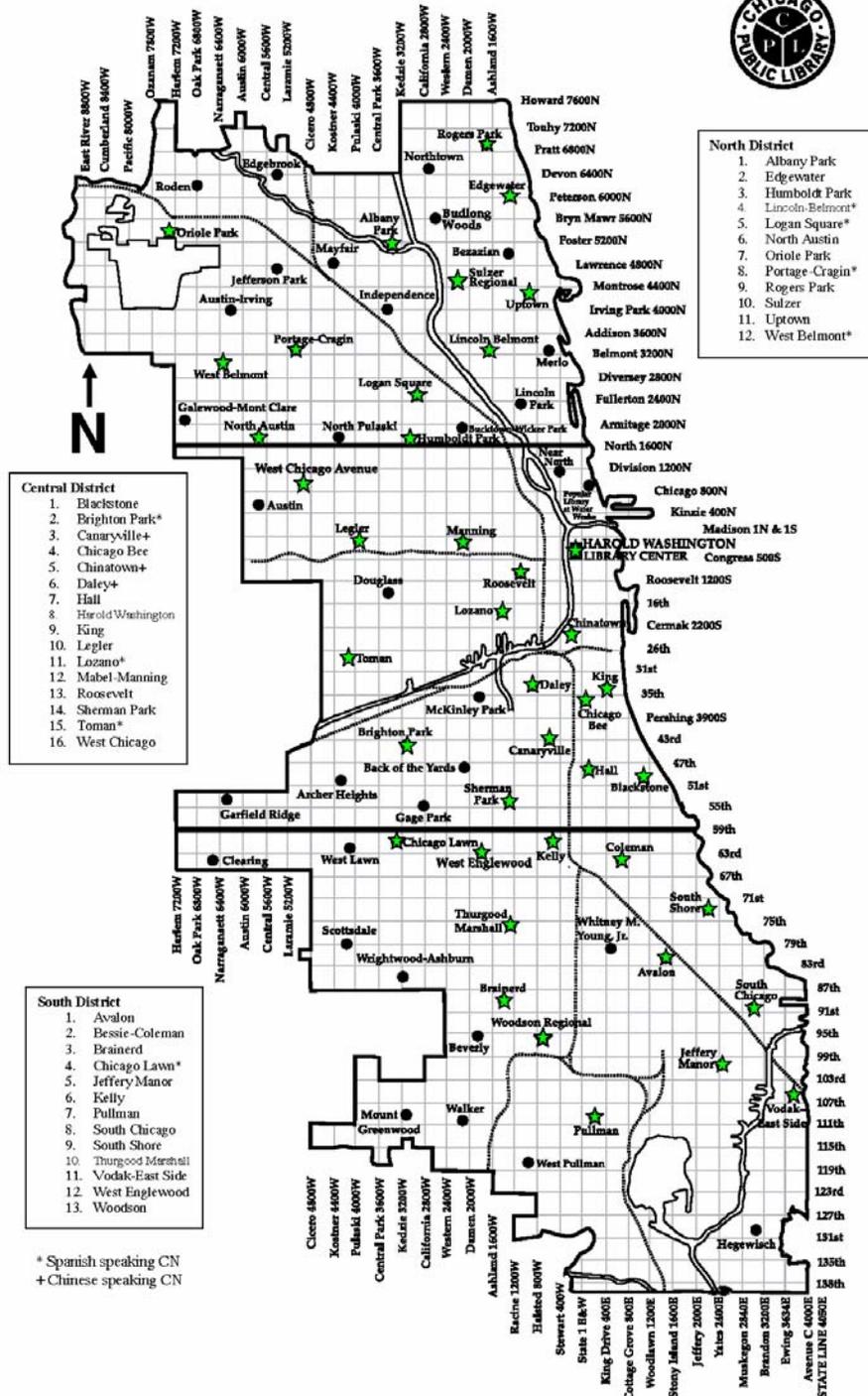
Now, what are the functions, then? Finally, we get to the good part. What are they doing? There are three things in general that they do. They do a lot of stuff, but mostly they can be separated in three sections. The first section is what I call the quickie session. In this, whenever they help, they will help the patrons with very short answers, very casual questions: “Can you help me make a reservation? How do I get this information? How can I make a computer reservation?” Or “How do I get my library card in order to make the reservation?” So those are the quickie ones.

Now, believe it or not, before we had CyberNavigators in those 42 branches, it was the branch manager, or another librarian, who was basically the default person to help out with things about technology. And we have to help the patrons, you have to do as much as you can, but there were some issues. Whenever a patron would come to you, and they would tell you: “I need a resume. How do I make a resume?” Wow. I can show you the books, but what else do you want me to do? So at the end you would see the branch manager, another librarian or staff member, spend easily 30 minutes with a patron, doing nothing but working on a resume or setting up a Yahoo email account or Google email account. And so that's why, in the branches that have CyberNavigators, they are so much appreciated. Because suddenly, just by having them in the branch, librarians are able to do what librarians are supposed to do. They don't have to spend one hour teaching people how to dig up information. Digging up information, yes, that's their job. But working on a resume, okay? They don't have to spend half an hour teaching a student, a patron how to set up an email account. So those things, they can do. In a more technical level, whenever a computer clunks out, whenever there's some problem with a computer, you don't need them to have the staff member or the branch manager doing that. Again, if they are in the branch, they would be the default people to do it.

Having said that, the second section is the one-on-one sessions. And the one-on-one sessions are sessions that, if time allows, if the schedule is free, patrons can come and sign up with the CyberNavigator to have a one-on-one session. At the beginning we thought that the one-on-one session was going to be a one-hour session exclusively for the patron, but in practical matters, the one-on-one session ended up being really a 30-minute session, maybe even a 20-minute session. And it's not because they're lazy, okay? That's not the deal. The thing is that when you are dealing with patrons, you have to feel what the vibe is. Some patrons come all excited and they say: “Oh, yeah. I'm ready to learn, man. Just show me.” And then you figure out that after 30 minutes they're losing interest. And so they have to gauge that, also. They have to be able to know what the level of interest is. And so very often we decided that we could easily do 30 minutes or 20 minutes, simply because the patron could not do more. In certain situations the patrons can handle even more. Even more than an hour if we wanted to. But very often, 20 minutes, 30 minutes is most like the sweet spot in there.

The third section, the third function of the CyberNavigators, is the group instruction, and that is something very exciting. Group instruction, making the library,

Branches with CyberNavigator as of April 2010



making each branch of CPL a center of learning is one of the goals for 2010 for CPL. And so that's very exciting, and we started that thing back in November of 2008. So

slowly but surely, we have been giving weekly classes that offer an introduction to computers—"How can I use a mouse? How do you type?" These are very rudimentary, very basic classes. And the lessons that we have now cover an introduction to computers, an introduction to the internet, and at last, how to do searches on the internet.

Also, I have to mention that since March 2008, CPL does have a brand new website, a very user-friendly website, where patrons at home or at the branch can renew books, do searches, use the database and all of those beautiful things. In addition, throughout all the branches, all 42 of them, it is not unusual to see the CyberNavigator teaching the patrons how to use it. And it's very rewarding for me to see how patrons open their eyes and suddenly appreciate that the way they can renew a book is basically they can stay at home and do it. You see? They don't have to make the trip here anymore.

And so that's very powerful. That's very powerful stuff.

So there you have it, my friends. Those are the three main functions of the CyberNavigators. That was a very broad, very general view of the CyberNavigator program, and now I present to you the CyberNavigators. Let me introduce Sophia Hou. She's the CyberNavigator for Chinatown. Juan Avalos is the CyberNavigator for Lozano. One of our CyberNavigators, Debbie Hayes, she's part of the Army Reserves, and so they have kidnapped her and haven't given her back to me yet, so I don't know where Debbie is. And we have Omar Ramirez, and Omar is the CyberNavigator for West Belmont. We've got Alicia, and Alicia is the CyberNavigator for West Englewood, and finally, we have Anita, and Anita is just here from Humboldt Park. And so, let's start with this. First of all, tell these good people about your branch. What, for example, what is the makeup of the neighborhood? Is it a mixed neighborhood? Is it mainly Hispanic or mixed? How many computers do you have, and what are the services? Things like that. What do they need to know about Chinatown?

Sophia Hou

I was from the Chinatown branch, and in this branch, usually there were mainly Chinese and Chinese-speaking people, but there were also a lot of tourists. Also, the people that came in were mostly economically—usually—disadvantaged. Yes. There were a great number of students and elderly people most of the time who came in, and the most common question was just the basics: How do you use a keyboard? What are the names? What are the functions? Recently there have been a lot of resume questions—when I started in April 2008, there were a few patrons, but as the months went on, there were more and more patrons—every month I saw more people come in. And so we had to find websites for them to make resumes more easily so that when they came in it would go a lot faster. Yeah, so that was my first branch.

Sophia Hou was born in China but moved to Chicago two weeks before her first birthday. She grew up in the Chinatown area. Sophia enjoys sharing knowledge by volunteering for ESL classes and homework help tutoring with high school students. She is attending UIC, majoring in Psychology. Sophia is fluent in Chinese—Mandarin and Cantonese. She was a CyberNavigator at the Chinatown branch, but has now transferred to the Mabel Manning branch of the Chicago Public Library. She learns that there are different needs at each branch and adjusting to the pace of that branch is the key to teaching patrons (shou@chipublib.org).

Juan Pablo Avalos

Hello. My name is Juan, as Roberto just said. I work at the Lozano branch. Primarily right there, the community is mostly Hispanic. I get a couple of African Americans, also Caucasians, but it's mostly Hispanics and most of them are Spanish speakers as I just said. What I've noticed as of late is because of all the unemployment and stuff, people, I guess, just take the time, since they're not really doing anything right now, they go to my branch and basically they just go in there and take some computer classes: how to use the computer, typing, keyboarding. A lot of people have been coming in for resumes as of late, which pretty much connects both trying to learn the computer and looking for a job. In my community there are a lot of people who are, as she said, economically disadvantaged. Some of them do not have homes or anything, so especially throughout the winter, they go in, they have nowhere to go. One of the things that they do, being there—all they ask is: “Oh, how do I play music on the internet?” Or: “How do I watch videos on the internet?” They just want to be there and pretty much for time to go by. So basically, that is my branch.

Omar Ramirez

Hello, my name is Omar. Like my fellow associates have said, the community of my branch is primarily Hispanic, and most of them don't know how to use the computer. So we're trying to come up with a class for Spanish speakers, but other than that, the other group that I keep encountering is people who need help with resumes, who want to look for jobs, and they want to know what the easiest website is out there for them to access. Some people are using Craigslist, and they don't know the different things that go on in Craigslist, how some advertisements or ads are fraudulent, so in our curriculum that we have there are helpful hints of things to watch out for. So we give this information to the patrons, and they're like: “Wow, I didn't even know, you know, you had to be careful. I thought if it's out there, it's probably just safe.” So there are a lot of people who are not informed, and it's our job to inform them. Another thing that's surprising in my branch is that we have a lot of students in the afternoon, grammar school students, who really don't know how to use the computer either. This is surprising because in this day and age, you would think they're being taught this at school, and they don't know how to get on the internet, they don't know where to go. The only thing they know right now—I don't know how it is at the other branches—but there's a thing called Kid's College, and it's a specific

Juan Pablo Avalos is a native of Chicago and has lived in the Pilsen neighborhood all his life. He is very familiar with the community and with the patrons of the library. Juan used to visit the Lozano branch as a kid; he participated in the chess club and other activities in the branch. He is a student of Business Administration at Northwestern Business School. He is fluent in Spanish. He is a cybernavigator at the Lozano branch of the Chicago Public Library. (javalos@chipublib.org)

Omar Ramirez has been a Cybernavigator for a year and a half and also holds a position at the Northlake Public Library as a Youth Services Assistant. He plans on obtaining his masters in library science as a result of the Cybernavigator position as well as the reference position. He enjoys working with all the patrons and teaching them new things and seeing their faces when they finally understand what they are taught. (omramire@chipublib.org)

website for schools, and that's the only thing they know how to get on. Other than that, they don't know about search engines, they don't know about email. I had a high school student a couple of months ago who didn't have an email, which totally blew my mind. I'm like: "Wow." So we're there, and we're helpful for the neighborhoods.

Alicia Henry

My name is Alicia Henry, and the West Englewood is a fairly new branch—we will celebrate our five-year anniversary in August. I've been there for five years, and I've lived in the community, so I know most of the patrons who come in. The area is economically disadvantaged. I have come across a lot of people, if they do have computers, they don't really know how to use their computers. They bought computers, and they don't even really know how to utilize the computers. Our branch actually has six adult computers with a time-limit of an hour, one express computer that allows only fifteen minutes per session, and one Find It with is CPL's cataloguing computer for the adult section. The adult section is fairly small just because of the area and amount of people who demand usage. We have so many patrons who come in wanting to use the computers so sometimes we're booked before midday for the whole day, therefore they people have to make a future reservation for the next day if it's available. In the juvenile section we only have four one-hour computers, one express and one Find It computer, which is a fairly small amount of computers to use for such a large demand of usage with so many people wanting to come in to use those computers. I've been there since the beginning, before they expanded the CyberNavigator program, and it has changed over the years drastically, and I can say that we have really, really made some progress, especially in the communities. I've seen and helped a lot of patrons who went from being homeless to—one patron; he's actually studying to be a Sheriff right now. So we have made some positive impacts on the community. There are people who want to learn how to use the internet, and our service is very, very helpful. So we're just trying to close that digital division gap, just by being able to educate our own communities and our own people, by being able to help them learn so that they can take technology to the next level.

Alicia Henry is a native of Chicago and has lived in the West Englewood all her life. Alicia also works as a library page at the West Englewood branch. Alicia enjoys reaching out to the community and during early summer days helps out countless numbers of young patrons by working on their resumes and cover letters. Alicia is a student of Psychology at Chicago State University. She is a cybernavigator at the West Englewood branch of the Chicago Public Library. (ahenry@chipublib.org)

Anita Mechler

My name is Anita, and I'm at the Humboldt Park branch. And many of you from Chicago probably know the Humboldt Park neighborhood is mostly a Puerto Rican neighborhood. We also have a pretty fair population of African Americans and a few Caucasians who have moved into the neighborhood recently. It's also economically disadvantaged. A lot of the people who go to the branch there, there's a lot of people who are not employed right now, and a lot of people work in the industrial manufacturing workforce, which is getting smaller and smaller every year. So we have about 25 computers total. We, like all the other branches, open up at nine. We have a line every single day waiting to get into the branch, for almost all of our computers except for the kids' side. All of the adult computers go immediately at 9:00. 9:01, they're all taken up.

And our branch is a little bit unique—I'm not sure about the rest of you guys, but we have laptops also available that you can check out at the branch. Those are our overflow computers. Those get used a lot as well. So we have four laptops as well as our desktop computers, and, you know, the Find It computers and the express computers. And that is interesting because I have to oversee that part: making sure that people have the right ID, and that that they're in good standing with the library—they're pretty strict about handing out the laptops. And right now they're just falling apart—I mean, we have keys literally coming off of the laptops because they're used so much. I have to make stickers for the keyboards because the letters are rubbed off on our keyboards on our computers. That's how much people use them.

And most of the people tend to be older adults, people who are usually 45 and up, and especially people who are in their 70s. I love them when they come in because they're just so excited to learn. And usually I cap my sessions at five with one person, so I actually will see one person five times and have an hour-long session with them, you know, once a week. And I've just started having my classes, and those are going pretty well. Most people are doing the same thing that Juan was talking about. They have a lot of time on their hands, so they just want to learn. A lot of them have bought laptops they don't know how to use. They ask their grandchildren and their children, who get impatient with them, and they're: "Oh, you're so patient and you're so young." You know? It's like, "Well, I was impatient with my parents too. But I'm patient with you." So that's definitely an anxiety that people come in with when they come into the branch. They're really scared. They're scared they're going to break it. Obviously, they get used a lot, so they do break down, but I say: "You're not going to give it a virus. You're not going to break it."

So part of it is a little bit psychological as well, giving people the confidence to do things with the computer, and I think the best part of our jobs is really seeing the wheels turning in people's heads. In my community, there are also a lot of nonprofit organizations in the area, Casa Central, Association House, and Casa De Providencia, and

Anita Mechler was born and raised in San Antonio, Texas, where both sides of her parents are from. Anita is a founding member and participant of Windy City Rollers, a roller-derby league. She also volunteered in several roles with Amnesty International. Anita has a BA in Sociology and Women's Studies and she just recently completed her MLIS from Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She is a cybernavigator at the Humboldt branch of the Chicago Public Library. (amechler@chipublic.org)

some other organizations that help people with computers as well. And we have resume building and that kind of thing, so sometimes when they graduate from me, I send them off to the classes there, and they offer them a certification program so they can say: “I’ve learned basic Word or basic Excel,” which is something that we don’t get to provide as much at CPL—except for the regional branches. And that’s definitely a growing interest—for my one-on-ones I’m booked every day teaching people, and there are some days I don’t sit down. So it’s very needed and very appreciated.

Questions and answers

How many total computers do you have in the facility?

Anita Mechler: I wrote it down, and then I forgot it. I believe it’s 25—we have 4 laptops, we have 10 adult regular one hour-long session computers, we have 1 adult express, 2 adult Find It. Okay, someone do the math for me, because I’m not really good at math. Sorry. Then we have seven regular kids’ computers, one kids’ express, and one kids’ Find It computer. And the Find It, that’s like our lingo—it’s just connected to the library’s website. It’s just a catalog of books and—well, not just. It’s an awesome website. If you haven’t gone on it, it’s awesome. And the databases—so the other side is helping kids with their homework they have: “I need to know which president Abraham Lincoln was, and when he was born,” and all that kind of stuff. This is teaching the databases to kids, because they go to Google, you know? And that’s fine, but it’s right there, the CPL website, and this is stuff that your teachers are not going to mind, and it’s approved by people.

My name is Mike, and I’m with Digital Workforce, and I wanted to know who works on the computers for the CyberNavigators?

Anita Mechler: In what ways?

Roberto Pang: You mean the technical side of it? CPL does have its own crew—very professional, very top-notch. Just imagine, we have 79 branches, and every branch easily has a minimum of 12 computers for the public and a maximum probably over 100 at each of the regional libraries. So multiply 12 by 79 plus 300 from the regional branches—it’s like this many computers. A lot.

My name is Don Samuelson and I live in Lake County. I’ve largely been educated in libraries. I’m a big believer in guided self-training. It seems to me that the major problem with taking advantage of the internet and computers is the inability of the average person to understand the practical benefits, which you are dealing with all the time. Informing and educating the marketplace as to the benefits of the internet and broadband is really spectacular. It seems to me that you are providing a missing link in this process with the CyberNavigator program. And it would seem to me that it would be useful for you to think about some resources that you might draw on—I’m saying that there probably need to be 79 libraries with about five CyberNavigators in each library,

along with 100 computers, and anybody who goes from a training program has the ability to take a computer with them.

Well, how do you do that? Well, one thing you have is access to a vastly expanding AmeriCorps program, so that if you were to put together an application concerning CyberNavigators in your request for AmeriCorps support for your libraries that could be useful. Also, the NTIA stimulus program provides grants to assist in public technology initiatives in libraries. As for the potential for assisting the at-risk population, it seems to me that you are right in the middle of that sweet spot. Practically, with Mary Dempsey being a close associate of the mayor, and the mayor wanting to suggest to the world that we are an international city that gets it, it seems to me that this would be an awfully important part of his strategy for convincing the world that Chicago is a international connected city with all of its neighborhoods and diverse populations. So I would encourage you to step back, have a little bit of a retreat, and think significantly larger than you may be at the moment based on budgetary concerns and start looking for funding outside the conventional funding because you are doing something that deserves a great deal of support.

My name is Maria Mavis. I'm here at my second semester at Dominican in the media specialist program. I had two questions. The first one was: how do you guys keep up with your own training to keep up with the technology? And the second question was: do you work with, like you said, organizations in the community? Do you work closely with them? Collaborate with them? For your programs?

Alicia Henry: Well, in my community, I do, me and one of the librarians, we have been doing some outreach programs. We go out to the community and find other resources that are actually for the next level or overflow, I would say, just because I'm limited as to my availability. I get so many requests and I'm overbooked every day. I barely can take a day off just because I have so many people that I know need my services, and I'm the only person in the branch who's going to take the time and do my job, so I've found a program called Knock At Midnight. They also have a career center at the Salvation Army. The one thing about my community, though, we do have services that will start up, but then they don't really last, and that's a lack of quantity. So if we can get the resources and be able to keep them in the area, I think it'd be a great, great service to the community. And also, there are some other resources that help them with other things besides computers, such as career services like the Goodwill Human Services Career Center. They also do job finding and help them people with resumes. So we are outreaching. We also have the pamphlets—we network with the organizations and make a partnership with them, so if they want to send patrons to us for services, they can also reach out to us also. So we have their pamphlets. We have a job and resume center just for that, and also resource materials and pamphlets that we offer the patrons.

Anita Mechler: Well, for training, we actually do have classes through CPL. Before we launched our classes, we learned how to teach. That involved instruction in learning styles and, and we also did a speaking thing where they videotaped us and we had to uncomfortably watch ourselves present things and all the mistakes that we make and the ums and the hands and that sort of thing. So we do get training through CPL, and

we are involved in their all-staff institute day, and we do take classes through that, and they try to tailor some stuff specifically to us. And then we do it on our own. We also have a social networking site called Ning. We have a CyberNavigators site just for us, so we post stuff on forums there. You can upload files, so: “Hey, I made this great brochure about how to set up an email account,” and you share it with everybody, or you can ask questions. Somebody asked me about eBooks online through—they wanted to know, can you actually read a whole book on the CPL website? Well, there's some that you actually can—I didn't know that and it's really just by patrons coming in. If you start noticing, hey, this person asked me a question I don't know the answer to, I can try to find out. And I know personally, and I'm sure you guys do this too, if somebody is going to make a one-on-one appointment with me, I do a reference interview. I ask them, “What do you know, and what would you like to learn?” and then I do some background research if I need to. I have this binder that's coming apart with brochures and all this information about computers and also about communities in the area. My branch manager is awesome. I love her. And any time someone asks a question more than once, she makes some kind of informational thing for it. So we have a sheet that we actually hand to people because we don't have Word and Excel in our branch. We have found some ways around that: Zoho Writer, Google Docs, that kind of thing. Google Docs is pretty complicated for a beginner to use, but we try to find those resources and help people with their resumes and that kind of thing.

And if it seems like we just have to send them somewhere, I do feel good sending them to Association House or Casa Central. I don't work closely with them, but we know of each other. I refer people to there, they refer people to here, so we refer mostly—I've never physically met anybody from those organizations, which I definitely feel is a link missing for me. I've tried calling them, and they're really busy. So we've had no verbal communication, but we just kind of know of each other.

Roberto Pang: Maria did have a very interesting question about the training that we receive, the training of the CyberNavigators. And a few months ago, there was an idea, or a question about: “What's so special about your CyberNavigators? What is it that they could do that you could not do with a volunteer? You get a smart college student who knows the computers and who's friendly—what's keeping them from volunteering and basically keeping these guys obsolete?” Well, it doesn't work that way, really. The main thing that separates the CyberNavigators from, say, volunteers, is basically training. It's a lot of training, and interestingly enough, although the name sounds so technical, “Oh, wow. The CyberNavigator,” the training that we give these guys is all about customer service. It's all about dealing with patrons—what do you do when the patron is unreasonable? Some patrons come to you and they demand: “I want help now, now, now.” What are you going to do? How are you going to act? So it does take a lot of training to wise up. It does take a lot of training to know how to deal with people who are very demanding or who are flat-out rude to you. Okay?

So that was one thing. The other thing is that as a manager, most of my jobs have been in nonprofit. I have never worked as an engineer, curiously enough. But working with volunteers, working in the nonprofit world—volunteers are good people, they're very devoted, and they deserve a lot of credit. But when the time comes and there is an urgent need, when the time comes for something that's indispensable, I cannot go to a

volunteer and yell at them: “What are you going to?” I don't pay them. They tell me to get lost. So there is a limitation with volunteers. Volunteers are very good, they can do a lot of stuff, but when you need things that are very important, when you need somebody to step up to bat, you need to pay people. When money changes hands, there is an obligation. They have to show up. And so many times, it's very easy for me to say: “Show up Friday for eChicago.” And here they are. It would be very easy for them to say: “You know what, Pang? I got class. I got Biology class. I'm out, man.” What am I going to do? With volunteers, you cannot demand. But with staff—I'm a good guy, I don't yell at them—but with staff, you can ask things nicely and put in that perspective, that as fulfilling as it is, as beautiful as you might feel when you help patrons and whatnot, it is a job. You have an obligation to show up. You cannot just call the patrons and tell them: “You know what? It's raining. I'm not going to show up. Let's leave it for Friday.” It does not fly, okay? And for that, I would get yelled at, okay?

I'm Charles Benton with the Benton Foundation. This truly is an inspiring panel, it really is. These guys are on the front line, focusing on bridging the digital divide, and helping with expanding computer literacy. It's fabulous. I want to follow up Don Samuelson's suggestion about the future budget and focus on the current budget, because this is very important for us to understand if we're to help you expand this obviously much-needed and outstanding program. You have 79 branches. How many workers do you have? What kind of support do you have in the central administration within CPL? Who do you report to in the structure? And how does that work? What is your own vision of building on best practices and building the service here in competition with other services that the public library provides? Because there are always other things to do with the money. So if you could give us your own sense of the structure and the future potentials, the priorities, that would be great.

Roberto Pang: The CyberNavigator program, in its current form, is funded totally and entirely by foundation money. There is a parallel organization to CPL, which is the Chicago Public Library Foundation. And it is from them that we get the money to pay us, okay? Something that we made very clear through the interview, through each and every one of them, was that this was not a city position. This is a contracting position, and it is a 1099 type of gig. We are not part of the staff of, say, the foundation or CPL. It is totally financed by outside money, by private money.

Now, the ultimate goal indeed would be, for me and for my boss, to have at least one CyberNavigator in each and every one of these 79 branches. And it does make sense, in the sense that you go to a library, and you see how critical it is to have at least some rudimentary computer skills. Juan was telling me here how he was helping some patrons to go to the website—to the McDonald's website—and fill in the job application. So, wow, even for McDonald's you cannot talk to the manager in person and apply. You have to go to the library and fill out the form there. So there are some critical things that people need to know in order to really survive and forge ahead in today's society now. So indeed, the goal would be to have one CyberNavigator in each branch.

And how many do you have now?

Roberto Pang: Forty-two. Last year we had 37, this year we added 5 more, and hopefully, as long as money comes in—so tell your friends about us, okay? Tell your friends about us and give money to the foundation. We would have more CyberNavigators in each branch. And in the bigger picture of it, you tell me. You're the librarians here. I would think it would make sense that in a library, where you try to make it a place of learning, a place of discovery and reading, you cannot just have computers in the room and internet and tell people, “Oh. There they are—use them,” and really not help them out, because not everybody knows the computer. It would be the equivalent of me saying—this just shows you my lack of knowledge about libraries—I cannot just buy a bunch of books and put them in a room and say: “Oh, yeah. That's the library. Use it.” There is a level, an element of education that is needed— at CPL, at least— to help people. It's not about learning computers. It's not about: “Oh, wow. I can send emails.” If we have a website where you can renew books and find information and use the database, and that is exclusive to CPL, it does make sense to have that element of training. So in one sense we can argue: “Yes. They learned the computer, they have access to internet, but the benefit of that is they use our resources more effectively.” So if, without instruction, the patron would use the computer for two hours, but maybe with instruction, maybe after some classes and some sessions, they would be able to do the same thing in 45 minutes and open up that slot for more people to come. So getting into an efficiency point also is one of the goals.

Hi. I work at the Harold Washington Library downtown. And we love you, first of all. I hope you know that. We think you're just the best. And I have two questions for you. One is: what kinds of things would you hope that librarians or staff at reference points— clerks or anybody—what would you hope that we are telling patrons about you? When we are your marketing campaign or the information point, so that they'll know about CyberNavigators, what should we be telling them? And then separately, how, if at all, does pornography at the libraries affect your jobs? I'm very curious about that.

Omar Ramirez: Marketing-wise, I think I speak for all of us when I say we work pretty well with our reference staff. Most of the time you do have to do the interview process when you get training. You have to ask them: “Okay. What is your need?” And then they tell you. And then we go as far as we can, so when they start saying: “I need a book about this, and I need a book about that,” and blah, blah, blah, well, that's when we pass them off to our reference staff. And it's vice versa—reference staff would be like: “Okay, here's your book. Oh, you want a website or you want to figure out how to get to that website? Here's our CyberNavigator.” So the most we can ask from our reference staff is: talk us up when you're speaking to your patrons, just as much as we talk the reference staff up to our patrons. I'm passing on the pornography one because I don't get that at my branch. The patrons respect it, the way that the computers are set up, adults go to one side, and children go to another side. And for the most part at my branch, it's respected—I've been there since January, we haven't had a problem with it.

Alicia Henry: Well, at my branch we have had some adults that do view the pornography websites. And we do have the privacy screens on the computers, only on the adult side. The children are monitored a little bit better. If we do see children—they may

sneak onto the website—we do suggest that, “Maybe you've gone to the wrong website. Let's help you get back onto the right website.” You know, we make suggestions, let them know that we are aware of what they may be viewing, and that it is inappropriate, and let's help you find the proper website to go to.

As far as marketing goes, we have had our profiles in the newspaper. They were on commercials on television. We also have word of mouth. So you have one patron? Trust me, if you do a good job, they're going to tell someone else. And then as far as my staff per se goes, they have 1,001 flyers, and I have little receipts. They want business cards: if I'm not there, they will give them my business card, and they will tell them: “You can call her between these hours. She'll be here today at 4:00 or something like that.” So they are really good at knowing what you're good at and what you're capable of doing and when to refer patrons to your service.

Anita Mechler: We have security screens, which means that they go over the front of the screen, and only if you're really looking directly in front of it can you see the picture more clearly. And we have the same setup, I think it's probably across all the branches, the adults have the security screen, and the kids' side doesn't. And the kids' side for our branch is near the children's librarian's desk. So they can just turn around and see what they're looking at. And we were trained pretty heavily when we went into our orientation on child pornography and sort of the procedures around that. We had intense workshops on it and the right things to do and all that kind of stuff—CPL is very, very strict about no child pornography and the things that you should do, the procedure for handling that issue. We all know it very clearly. But we don't have filters on the computers, so people can go there. My general rule is, as long as there aren't any other kids around, and if it's not child pornography, that's what they use their computer time for. And I'm very lucky that I haven't had anyone ask me, “What's the best site for blah, blah, blah,” or whatever. That's not really a question you're going to get asked by people. They're going to go do it on their own. They know where they're going to go. And I've definitely seen it, and it's just: “Okay. Moving on.”

Concerning the marketing: Alicia, I think, said that pretty well. Just helping people is your best marketing, because if I'm walking around the branch—some days it's a little crazy because I have to be like: “Okay. Calm down. Take a breath. I'm going to get to you, just give me a second.” Because if I'm helping one person, it's like: “Excuse me! Excuse me! Excuse me!” I mean, people see you helping somebody, and they want to grab you for you to help them. And they'll all get the help, and I'll get to you. That's the best marketing, I think, is if they see you being friendly and helping people and I love my reference librarians, so we trade off on all sorts of things. Especially at my branch, with the laptops, I have to have a good relationship with the clerks up at the front because I don't have access to the same systems that they do. I don't have circulation access or what the librarians have. I have to say: “Hey, can you make sure this person's in good standing and their address matches?” and all that. So I do have to ask and interrupt them and say: “Sorry.” I have to be in a good relationship with them, because I depend on them for that part of my job.

I'm a graduate student at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. And first of all, I wanted to ask each of you, how long have you been working in this position, and

second of all, if working there has changed your way of viewing an information society, and has made you consider changing, or, I don't know, orienting your education toward earning an LIS degree, maybe?

Sophia Hou: Well, I've worked at the library for a year and three days, because I remember I started on March 31st. And it does maybe kind of gear me towards wanting to work at the library as some sort of librarian or just something related to it in that field. But at the same time, I wanted to become a social worker, because helping out people is just—when you see their hunger for knowledge and then you watch the community grow, you just really want to change yourself to that field. So that's really my take on it.

Juan Avalos: Well, as she just said, I've been working there for a year and a couple of days. I would say it's changed my way of seeing some websites—before, I would search for anything under Google, Wikipedia, and Yahoo. After I got the training for the databases, I mostly started gearing people, especially the kids, towards those websites. I actually have a degree in business administration. I was more geared towards business, but as I've been working there it's sort of geared me more into customer service. I don't know if that leads into a library degree, but more into working with people, more than anything.

Omar Ramirez: I've been working as a CyberNavigator since January, but I've been in the library system for about two years, now. I came from a retail background and then met my wife, and she's a librarian, and she's like: "You should work at a library. I think you'd be good at it." And I've gone from being a person who puts the books on the shelf to CyberNavigator, and my other job is assistant reference person at a library for children. So definitely, libraries are where I want to be.

In regards to how we view our knowledge of it, since being a CyberNavigator I've noticed that I took for granted the knowledge that I have, and now I realize that there's other people out there who don't have this knowledge, and I want to find the best way for those who are just beginning to be introduced to the internet and all the computer stuff, find the easiest way to tone it down for them so that they can get it. So that they can be at my position where they're like: "Wow, I didn't know this was out there, and I'm fortunate to have this knowledge."

Alicia Henry: I've been at my branch for five years, and I'm actually the vet of the whole 42. So I've seen the change, like it's changed dramatically, and I kind of feel the same way Sophia feel, like I changed my major in school just because of this position, so now I'm like a psychology major, I want to go into social services, just so that I can help people. It does give you that impact, because you have something that you know that you can give to someone else and they can benefit from it. But I did go to a Reaching For It conference for the Library Association, and I was introduced to how can you utilize technology skills into a librarian position.

It was an interesting thought. So if there's something that I can pursue later on, I may.

Anita Mechler: I've been at my branch for about a year and three days, and I came to it from the other way. I went to Loyola and studied sociology and originally wanted to be a social worker, but decided I wanted more sleep than that, and worked in the library, on a fluke, sort of, as my work study job when I was a student, and loved it. Loved all the people, loved the environment, loved being around books. It just smells awesome and, you know, I just loved it.

And I graduated, and then at first I didn't know what I wanted to do. Just living in the city, you know, working temp jobs mostly, administrative assistant, all that kind of thing. So I'd deal with all sorts of people and especially technology and all that kind of stuff, and finally three years later realized I needed to become a librarian. So I just graduated in December. I'm looking for a full-time job, if anyone wants to hire me.

So I have my MS and MLIS. I did the LEEP program at University of Illinois, I did it online, and I just casually asked one of my professors. I did a community informatics class—they have some classes in Chicago with the Puerto Rican Cultural Center, and we are sort of their information professionals that do whatever they want us to do, essentially. So they had a library there—it was essentially a collection of books—and they wanted us to help them catalog and do all that kind of stuff, and I just casually asked my professor: “Hey, I really hate my job in an office, and do you know anybody that's hiring?” And she said: “Yeah. Humboldt Park down the street's hiring.”

So I met Andrea, my branch manager, and got hired and went through school during it, and she went through the same program as I did—it was great. And it's really changed my perspective on public libraries. I did the academic library side and really thought: “Oh, I really want to go into an academic library,” when I started school. Working at the Humboldt Park branch, I really got to see the need for special libraries, public libraries. So I get to do a little bit of extra reference stuff while I'm working there, so I get to do just a little bit more than maybe the average CyberNavigator, mainly because my branch manager encourages me to get the practice, but I love it, and I really love the people and the system and the librarians. So I'd like to get my foot in the door, if I can.

Roberto Pang: Let me point out that we do have a former CyberNavigator here, Maggie Taylor, and she did drink the Kool-Aid, so she is now a librarian. Anything you want to add?

Yeah. Actually, you guys are doing a great job, and I would say that you guys are much more articulate, and understanding about the impact of what your position is while you're in it. When I was a CyberNavigator, I don't know that I realized the impact that I was having on the community that I worked in. I was in the Canaryville branch—go figure, they put a redhead in the Irish neighborhood—and I left in August. I was hired at the same time as most of these guys but left in August to get my MLIS at UIUC. But I was noticing that we didn't mention that the position is only 20 hours a week, and that's capped, so you're part time, and all of those 20 hours, you're spending with patrons. And so in an ideal world, with additional funding and supporters, maybe you would have time to—I would like to open that up to you guys and ask you: if you had additional resources, if you had an actual computer that was your own and you were able to facilitate

programs, what could you do with that extra time and with those extra resources? And how can you deal with the resources that you have to do more?

Alicia Henry: That is definitely a big issue, just because we don't have that place of our own because we're not CPL staff. Well, I am—I do two positions, but, you know, as being just a CyberNavigator, you don't have those resources to get into some of the systems that you may need to get into to help the patrons, and then if they have questions about reservations, about printing, you can't add money onto the printing. You can help them use a printer, but you have to wait until they go up to the circulation desk, ask someone to add the money.

So you have to be a multitasker and really know how to work around the resources that you do have available, just to be able to maximize your potential and be able to get the job done. It would be definitely a plus to have your own computer, just because if someone asks you about a reservation, there are two clerks at the circulation desk. The master program is only at certain computers. So how can I get into the system and answer this patron's question if I have two clerks at the circulation desk assisting patrons and then the reference—at the reference computers it's an adult reference or children's librarian there helping patrons? So I have to actually wait so that I can get in, steal a quick minute and—you definitely have to have that relationship with the staff. So I have to reach over, saying: “Oh, let me see real quick for this patron.” With library card numbers, when people come into the branch, they don't have their card, but they have the actual ID, they can look up the library card number. You have to have a library card number in order to utilize our computer services.

So it's definitely a challenge. Every day is a challenge, to be able to work around the resources that we do have available and the lack of resources. Like, how she has the pilot program with the laptops? That would be a plus in my branch because we only have a small amount of computers. It would make my job a little bit easier to expand on my classes. Opposed to having 5, maybe I could have 10 patrons at one time. So it would definitely help us utilize our time with the 20 hours maximum. They're going to keep it at 20 hours. Then, let's maximize the resources so that we can help more patrons. Or if not, expand the hours.

Omar Ramirez: In addition to what she said, one of the things that would benefit if we had more resources in regards to laptops. If we do classes—I know at Humboldt Park they have their computers in a room. I don't have that at my branch. It's just out in the open. So if I block those out for a teaching session, then those computers are out for other patrons. So if we had laptops at our branch, we could use the laptops and sit them in our conference room and do our class there and still have the other computers available for people. So that would be something we would look forward to.

I'm Charlie Linville, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. It dawned on me that much of the early discussion was about people and place. And I think people are very interested in people, place, and community. I wonder about the extent to which you get requests for help with things like Google Maps, Yahoo Maps, Google Earth, and if there are opportunities to sort of fulfill this hunger for knowledge that you mentioned about the communities themselves and use those kinds of technologies or even richer

geographic information systems as a way to, indeed, fulfill an additional hunger for knowledge about the community.

Sophia Hou: Well, the resources. Well, we start out with the Chicago Public Library website, but usually, for my community, it's mostly Chinese. Therefore, I have to teach them other websites, for example, Babel Fish, or some sort of translating website, for them to understand or use the other websites. This takes a longer process, but usually, that's one of the things. And also, I work with the eTeacher in the library that we have, and he always helps me translate or refer some students or people over. But in terms of hunger for knowledge, usually translating is the major issue. And also, for the handouts that we have, they used to be in English only, but now we have some that have been translated into Chinese, which is extremely helpful. But since people always want to learn more than just the basics after they pass that stage, I've been developing my own sort of programs or instruction sheets. They're on various topics that are not completely related to the Chicago Public Library website, but it's still internet based, in which they can still use the resources or the computers at the library to either search for things and also just find jobs. So that's how I've been working with it.

Omar Ramirez: Another thing is, we know what branch has what collection, so if someone comes to me, I know the limits of my branch. Let's say they want to know about Puerto Rican History. I know that Humboldt Park has a whole Puerto Rican history section. Edgebrook has a good Chicago History section. So whenever we fall short, we always know what other branch we can send them to so they can get supplementary stuff that we couldn't get them. Or we can have it delivered to our branch.

I guess my question was more about mapping in particular and the power of maps to reveal things to people in the community about their own community. Is that something that is currently happening, and if not, is it something that seems like it might have some promise?

Anita Mechler: In terms of mapping, there's actually the Sanborn Fire Insurance Illinois Maps on the CPL website. It's a database that you can access, and we were trained on that during our orientation. It gives you the ability to look at different buildings in Illinois at different time periods and, you know, what was there. I haven't really had people ask me that, however. I have had to print off maps, because people have MapQuest. So they'll say: "Hey, can you MapQuest something for me?" You know, usually a direction to a job, for example, or, you know, they want to go to an auto part store or something nearby. And we can print that out for them, and I usually, you know, will do that, and the librarians will do that as well.

Something like Google Earth, because it's something you have to download onto your computer, we can't download them onto the patron computers. They're just internet. So we have no other programs running on those aside from that. And I think something like Google Earth would, to be honest—and I don't mean this in a negative way—but it would blow their minds. It's very far from an everyday need for them. It's really everyday need stuff that they're asking us for, and it tends to be for those of us who are much more Web 2.0 people. It's very, very, very basic stuff. But this stuff is monumental to them.

My name is John Berry. Actually, the first time I saw my house here in Lake Forest on Google Earth, it blew my mind too. That's why my question is: you have a large group of folks coming in who have a hunger for knowledge, but their English language skills may not be the best. So how do you handle low-literacy, low-literate English speakers when you're dealing with technology? Do you refer them on? Do you work with them as best you can? Or how does that work?

Roberto Pang: Well, I think that's one of the main reasons why, when we were recruiting people from Chinatown, Daley, Canaryville, Lozano, we were trying to pair that to the population. We needed somebody who could speak native Chinese at Chinatown, otherwise it would hinder things very much. And places like Lozano definitely do need a native Spanish speaker. And so I guess, in general sense, we do try to have the CyberNavigator represent the community, the people living there.

Kate Marek with the Graduate Library school here at Dominican. My question: several of the CyberNavigators mentioned the fact that young people are coming to you with no computer skill, elementary school kids, junior high school kids and some high school kids, as well. Of course, that's devastating. We're not surprised to hear that, but it's devastating to think about that in terms of their future. My question for you is: do you get a sense that those young people understand how limiting the lack of those skills is for their future? So in other words, do they get it when you talk about day-to-day needs and so forth and how are those more pressing for these young people than really understanding some of the limitations in terms of information-seeking skills, being so totally tied to computer literacy issues?

Anita Mechler: To be perfectly honest with you, the kids play games on the computers. And they usually come in the day before their homework's due and they want you to do it for them. So that's the challenge, because they'll use Google. "Well, I looked it up on Google, and I didn't find anything on..." whatever they're looking for. So they don't really have a sense of it, I don't think. It's just fun. You know, I come after school, wait for my parents to pick me up, I play a game or do my homework, and that's it. They want something quick. They want something now. And I think it's an instant gratification issue. They're not realizing it, probably, until they're about 50. And they come to me and say: "Hey, you know what? I need to learn some job skills." And, I mean, it'll probably be a little bit different because of the way technology has gone, but most people aren't realizing it until they're much, much older, and it's affected their lives.

Building community: Bit by byte—Carolyn Anthony

Librarians thirty years ago could not have imagined the state of community information in libraries today. Borrowing from the lingo of the feminist era, I can assure you that “We’ve come a long way, Baby!” That is not to say that development has been steady and linear or that every step was progress.

When I started work as a reference librarian at the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore in 1973, I discovered an unusual reference resource behind the desk. A file of 5”x8” cards in an agate box contained information about social service agencies and governmental units in the city. It looked like a wonderful resource, but it had not been updated for a couple years and one had to wonder whether the people listed were still at those agencies and whether the fee for a monthly bus pass might not have increased in the interim. When John Burgan, then Head of the Central Library, asked me one day how it was going, I commented about the card file and how it looked like a great idea, but was of limited use because it was outdated. “How would you like to write a grant proposal for funds to update it?” he asked. I was tempted to look behind me. Surely he couldn’t mean to suggest that this junior member of the professional staff would conduct such an undertaking? “I’ll help you,” he offered. And so began my adventure with Information & Referral Service.

Mary Landry Eidelman from the Maryland State Division of Library Development and Services that administered the LSCA money was very helpful in coaching me as I began work on the project. She suggested that I get in touch with the Health and Welfare Council of Central Maryland, a United Way funded organization that did a lot of I&R in the area at that time. After a phone call to make contact, I put on my coat and walked a few blocks over to the Health and Welfare Council to meet with Rosemary Chappelle.

Why am I giving you such detail about this experience from 1974? Because in just a few sentences, I can tell you what it is important for you to know about why this fledgling I&R experience was successful. People in senior positions supported and mentored the project. It was launched with personal contacts and began when I left the library building. I did not have to consult any directories or contact lists to retrieve the

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Currently, she is an active member of the Urban Libraries Council and a member of the PLA Leadership Task Force and the PLA Budget and Finance Committee. She also serves on the Advisory Board for the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at Dominican University.
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names of these people 35 years later. Collaboration with these folks left a lasting impression on me.

Rosemary and I became friendly. She was probably thirty years senior to me and well connected in the Black community which comprised a growing majority in the city. I was not from the area, so had a lot to learn. She acknowledged that staff at the Health & Welfare Council had a hard time keeping up with information. They had a variety of printed directories, rolodexes and posted lists on bulletin boards which served as resources. I offered to provide them a copy of the updated card file I was creating if she would help me with staff training. And thus a productive partnership was begun. That dormant card file I found at Pratt was left from the Neighborhood Information Center Project, launched with federal funds in five cities in 1969. Several large cities had experienced race riots and destruction in the late 60s. White flight to the suburbs was in progress. Communication systems were broken and services were both fragmented and challenged by local distress. The project had failed at the Pratt Library, not for lack of need, but because it had been created by outside persons from the University of Maryland and was never fully integrated into service at the Library.

We had to train a lot of staff to understand the purpose behind the I&R project and how they could use it. With thirty branches around the City, branch staff could contribute to data gathering by supplying information about agencies and clubs in their neighborhoods. A key element in discovering this information was getting those staff out into the local community. This was harder than it might sound, not only because staff was busy with current work as is always the case, but because there was pervasive fear and a profound lack of trust as a legacy of the riots. I remember in particular one library branch that had a roll of barbed wire on the portico and graffiti-etched, translucent lexan in place of windows. Librarians dreaded an assignment to that branch. Staff would get in their cars and leave as quickly as possible when they got off work. We started going out in pairs to walk in the community, gathering information when we could about agencies, but also just seeing what was going on. In one neighborhood, we'd find that most of the shopkeepers lived nearby while in another neighborhood, they all came in from elsewhere. Sometimes we would discover an information need the Library could fill and other times someone would offer a service like when the friendly manager at the pet shop offered to bring a bunny and a parakeet to a children's program.

Such small-scale local people-to-people connections played a role in restoring a sense of community and trust in neighborhoods. Not all staff welcomed the opportunity to engage in community walks or to gather information. Books needed to be purchased and bibliographies prepared. There was a sense of urgency to the work as circulation was lagging. And staff had to prepare posters and flyers for library programs. Gradually, some staff discovered that distributing the flyers on a community walk got more people to come to a program than putting the flyers out at the circulation desk.

But some staff questioned why gathering information in the community was part of their job. "We connect people with information that is already published. We're not the researchers and data gatherers," they protested. Training likened the I&R transaction to the reference interview process to help librarians recognize that they had the skills for I&R work. Still, some librarians objected to learning more about the context for a question, feeling that we never asked why someone needed information requested at the reference desk. Parallels needed to be made. Just as you need to know if someone has the

literacy or language skills to use a reference resource you might give them, you need to know if they have transportation or child care to be able to visit the health clinic. Some staff balked at following up an I&R referral although they would routinely stop by a reading table to check whether a patron had all the information they needed after making a reference inquiry.

A big problem was that the card file of information was difficult to produce and to replicate for the branches. We encouraged branches to keep their own file of neighborhood information according to templates that were established. We devised systems for photocopying the card along with a half page letter that asked service providers to review and update the information about their organization. While this process was less time consuming than phoning, and allowed the provider to see all the information on their agency and correct it as needed, file maintenance still required a lot of staff time. Staff needed to type up new cards with the corrected information and copy the corrected cards to send to the Health & Welfare Council and to larger branches for their satellite files. Some service providers failed to return their letter with corrections so a follow up phone call was needed.

Standalone personal computers, and CD-ROMs facilitated information retrieval by staff, but I am sure that you can begin to appreciate the advantages of networked digitized community information. Digital listings facilitate collaborative information collection and maintenance. Information providers have the opportunity to tell their own story. Information in digital files should be more current as IP's can post a change in hours or personnel as soon as it occurs instead of waiting for the annual review of information sent out by the library. The information is easier and more convenient for people to use since digital files are available 24/7 and can be accessed from the home or workplace. The digital files are more visible and attractive, providing direct access to the information seeker. Card files were hidden behind the desk and could only be accessed by a librarian. Digital community sites frequently incorporate digitized local collections such as historical photos, genealogical information or locally indexed newspapers. Digital community information is available to people outside the locality. SkokieNet staff have heard from people in other states who have used SkokieNet to access local information on behalf of an elderly parent or in anticipation of a trip to this area. Information in digitized format provides integrated functionality to the user. For example, a person might identify local employers and proceed to fill out an online job application. Or the user can connect directly to the agency's site to obtain needed information as in the case of a request for information about a permit or license. The user may even proceed to paying via I-Pay or PayPal and receiving the permit—all within a short session at the computer. And digital information sites are frequently scalable so that a user can decide the scope of the community. This was a particular strength of the NorthStarNet system when that was in place as a person could fairly easily enlarge the scope of that search to the north suburbs when looking at public transportation systems while limiting the search to Skokie when looking for childcare. Some digital community files have a Geographical Information System (GIS) overlay that enables scaling down to a particular zip code or neighborhood in a metropolitan area. This is an example of using digital resources to link systems. It is also possible to incorporate a mapping function, for example, so that a person can easily locate an agency on a map and obtain driving directions as part of their search process.

We couldn't have dreamed of such functionality back in the 70s.

A development in addition to community information is the community network which was introduced as the Internet began to be used by public libraries and increasingly by the general public in the mid 1990s. The Three Rivers Freenet in Pittsburgh was one of the first community networks. An early community network in Illinois was the Heartland Freenet out of the Alliance Library System. These community networks link local residents, enabling conversation and dialog for purposes such as identifying and solving local problems. On SkokieTalk, a community network run by the Skokie Public Library, Frances Roehm put out a question being considered by Village government officials regarding what kinds of businesses should be sought for development in downtown Skokie. SkokieTalk has expanded to include other contributions from Skokie residents such as writing and short videos about local activities and events. Links from SkokieTalk take visitors to Twitter, Facebook and YouTube for further sharing. Twitter postings are brief news items about people and events in Skokie.

Craigslist began as such a local community information network for the posting of items for sale or services needed in the San Francisco area. It has caught on and spread nationally although the scope is still local for easy nearby delivery. One of our librarians wrenched her back in the middle of a move out of her apartment. She put out a call for paid help on Craig's list (no charge) and had two assistants within an hour. It's no wonder that classified ads have all but disappeared from local newspapers. The egalitarian nature of Internet exchanges seems to make them nearly as acceptable sources of information to people as personal contacts according to Rosalie Day who manages a statewide community information service for the South Australian community. Research has confirmed that people have a preference for informal, personalized connections in obtaining information.

Let me share with you a bit about the development of SkokieNet as a profile of one community information service and its evolution. SkokieNet was born as a part of NorthStarNet in 1995. Skokie Public Library was one of four public libraries involved in founding NorthStarNet within the North Suburban Library System in order to meet a need for coordinated access to free information about communities in the region. It was recognized that, within the suburbs, people might live in one suburb, work in another and visit doctors or shop in still others. Therefore people might want information about services in any of the suburbs they frequented and could do so more easily within a coordinated system. Participating libraries agreed to use the same subject headings and similar formats for organizing information about providers. A calendar was also part of the initial offering. The North Suburban Library System hosted the data, trained information providers and had staff dedicated to assisting libraries in getting their community information service mobilized. Initially, options for accessing the network were by dial-up via modem or telnet to the NSLS address through an Internet account. Libraries and some other public sites had kiosk terminals available for people who did not otherwise have access.

Let me tell you something about the demographics in Skokie. Skokie is an inner-ring suburb, just north of Chicago, with a population of about 68,000. According to the American Community Survey, 42% of the population is foreign born and a majority of people speak a language other than English at home. There is no primary second culture,

but rather a pluralistic mix, with about 25% Asian, and numbers of others from the former Soviet Union, the Middle East and various Spanish-speaking countries.

Skokie Public Library targeted agencies such as the Village, Park District, elementary schools, major social service providers and arts organizations for inclusion on the digital site. Niles Township High School District 219 was the only local organization other than the Skokie Public Library which had a website in 1995. The Library held meetings and mobilized other agencies, providing an initial web presence for them. It took a lot of work to format material with html coding and get it posted. After a time, most of the governmental units and larger entities were contracting for their own website to which SkokieNet could link, but there was still a steady flow of organizations, clubs and businesses that wanted the visibility of an Internet presence. In 1999, Skokie installed NorthStarNet kiosks at Village Hall, the Park District, Westfield Old Orchard Shopping Center and the North Shore Center for the Performing Arts. The Mission Statement of NorthStarNet was

- maintains a useful and authoritative online community information resource managed by local libraries
- encourages the development of strong relationships between Illinois libraries and their communities social, economic, educational, cultural, and civic organizations; and
- supports the communication and cooperation among members of the NorthStarNet community.

In the latter 90s, NorthStarNet felt threatened by the introduction of two community information initiatives at the national level. AOL launched Digital Cities which had a regional partner in the *Chicago Tribune* while Microsoft started Sidewalk in major cities. *Chicago Tribune* boasted that, “Our experience as a news organization is an advantage. We have experience in selecting items that people want and need to know about.” Within two years, Digital Cities abandoned its effort, finding that the identification and collection of local information was too staff intensive and not a revenue generator. In 1999, Microsoft sold Sidewalk to Ticketmaster which continued to provide guides and ticketing to the MSN network.

By 2005, after a decade of operation, NorthStarNet was serving 120 communities in the north, northwest and western suburbs of Chicago. Perhaps it had grown too large and unwieldy for in 2006 NorthStarNet announced that it could no longer support the member libraries and would phase out operation by mid-2007.

SkokieNet survived the transition to stand alone status, securing space on a server and taking care of contributing information providers. Under Frances Roehm’s guidance, SkokieNet continues to flourish and grow. Statistics for the month of January this year showed nearly 32,000 page views on SkokieNet and over 43,000 page views on ChicagoJobs, another community site operated by the Library. SkokieNet members and other users regularly add items to the calendar, post stories and photos. We continue to sign up new Information Providers.

Volunteers have assisted with adding content to SkokieNet. A group of active teens has worked on establishing portals for several of the ethnic groups in Skokie, including Russian, Chinese, Indian, Filipino and Korean. Spanish is also in the works.

We have also asked some local ethnic groups to link from their page to SkokieNet's ethnic content. Teen volunteers also helped the Gandhi Memorial Trust organization add photos to their web page, helped a senior program his cell phone and also generate content for TeenTalk. The teens have had a great time shooting video at community events such as the annual Festival of Cultures and the 4th of July parade.

A new, improved ChicagoJobTalk (ChicagoJobs.org) went live in October, 2007. Interactivity has been the big development on the latest versions of the community sites. ChicagoJobTalk offers RSS feeds and the ability for users to comment on any postings as well as a JobTalk Forum for visitors to interact with each other. One feature is the popular Ask an Expert Career Coaching Q&A where answers to queries posted by job seekers are provided by professional career counselors such as Maxine Topper of the Jewish Vocational Service. Since its debut, Maxine has responded to a steady flow of questions. These questions and answers are published so that all may benefit, eliminating any personal or identifying information to protect the privacy of individuals.

Expanded services and the move from NorthStarNet to independent status have required additional staff time. One of our librarians did all the work to convert the database to the Drupal format for flexibility in content management. This was a big project, completed last spring. The system worked well until we were attacked by a hacker in January. The intruder inserted a virus which compromised the site and could have infected visitors. We had to take the site down and have been working with some professional programmers to re-establish the site in a new and improved, more secure Drupal format.

So, why persist with SkokieNet at such cost of staff time and purchased assistance? Clearly, we truly believe that benefits accrue to the community and the Library from SkokieNet. There are quantitative measures each month of the number of page views (generally 25,000-30,000 each for SkokieNet and ChicagoJobs), the number of additions to the calendar, stories and comments from users. There is also a qualitative assessment which is hard to value. You may recall the story of George Bailey in the holiday film "It's A Wonderful Life." When he is in despair, an angel shows him what Bedford Falls would be like if he had not been born. Similarly, we read the postings from a person who found a hypnotherapy service on SkokieNet that helped him stop smoking, patrons sharing comments about what to look for in a tutor or a note from a longtime section 8 landlord encouraging people to comment and conclude that Skokie would experience a loss were SkokieNet to cease operation.

Research by Joan Durrance, Karen Pettigrew and others has shown that, when there is a good Community Information system in place:

- People make better use of local agencies for individual success.
- There is more civic engagement.
- There is more effective service delivery.
- There are more linkages among community agencies.

I can attest to the value of increased linkages among community agencies. When personnel from different agencies are aware of each other's services and have an established level of trust, opportunities for collaboration and partnerships abound. The Skokie Library just had a well-attended teen job fair, sponsored jointly by the Library and

the Skokie Park District, with participation by a number of area agencies and businesses. Because of the Library's work with the Festival of Cultures, we have established ties with people and groups from most of the ethnic groups in Skokie. The Gandhi Memorial Trust group brought Gandhi's grandson Rajmohan Gandhi to the Library to speak as well as other programs and exhibits. A woman from the Chinese community assisted staff in collections who were dealing with issues related to transliteration, simplified Chinese and traditional Chinese. When Metropolitan Family Services applied for a major grant to work with immigrant families with young children in Skokie, they sought the Library as a partner, stating that use of the Library is critical to immigrants' acculturation. Metropolitan Family Services has held a series of programs for immigrant parents at the Library, while Library staff have arranged simultaneous programming for the children. The Village approached the Library about submitting a grant application to the International City/County Managers Association. One of the elementary school districts inquired whether we would work with them on an Even Start, preschool literacy proposal.

These are just some recent examples, but it really has amazed me how quickly and easily we can assemble partners for a project. In the case of The Even Start grant, for example, I advised that they should include Oakton Community College and supplied two contact names of persons responsible for adult literacy and English language learning. This was not from a directory, but from personal contacts as I have served on the Advisory Board for the Adult Education program at the community college.

When I heard that Niles Township schools had jointly established a Parent English Language Learner Center, I called the new Director and invited her to the Library to meet some of our staff whom she would want to know and work with. She's been on the job less than a year, but regularly sends the Library information about programs they are offering and has invited staff to present information about Library services at some programs.

Such exchanges and cooperation clearly result in better programs for the public. I firmly believe in being involved on advisory committees and community projects, even when the specific value to the Library may not be immediately clear. What are some of the benefits to the Library of such involvement?

- An external focus gets one beyond an institution-centered view and out of a passive role.
- Linkages with other community agencies enable identification of problems and a coordinated approach to addressing them.
- Community involvement provides opportunities for intelligence gathering about resources, services and opportunities. Recently, for example, I learned that one of Skokie's school districts own its own buses (rather than leasing) and would be willing to schedule them for some weekend family visits to the Library.
- Interactions with individuals provide market information about residents of the community and their concerns.
- Work on joint projects in the community gives visibility to the Library as a leader and enables staff to speak about Library programs and services within a context in which people are most receptive to hearing the information.

I see more opportunities for public libraries in the community information area. Because data gathering has been facilitated by technology and have enlisted the assistance of community members in supplying and updating the information, we can focus more on access to information and how it is used. In the early 1990s MARC standards for Community Information File records were developed. While standards are always helpful, we have learned that people don't necessarily relate to the formal and hierarchical structures that librarians use to organize information. Just as we appreciate the value of next generation catalogs and tag clouds for bibliographic information, why not for community information also? There is a potential for tagging and the use of metadata in expanding access to community information.

Besides "ease of use," "convenience" is a primary predictor of user behavior. We have watched most video rental shops disappear as users have turned to Netflix, a service that mails DVDs to the home. CD sales have dropped in favor of the convenience of downloading, even when a fee is involved. There is untapped potential in the use of social networking tools to drive information to the user and connect with people where they are. Triggers such as drop-down information menus could be useful in community information. We could do better at anticipating user needs in the way that Amazon does. Take any target group such as kids headed off to college, baby boomers about to retire, recently laid off workers and think—what are their needs that could be addressed through community information? Through library services? Can we encourage them to self-identify via selection of RSS Feeds or to volunteer their email addresses to the Library for receipt of certain types of information? Two or our librarians set up a second Library Facebook page, devoted to highlighting employment resources. One of the staff reported that, "Based on a number of conversations (via email, phone and Twitter) I have had recently with unemployed patrons, being on the Web is a major activity... (We) started this employment page as a means of taking advantage of Facebook's popularity to highlight important library services." Facebook ads have also been used successfully in recruiting attendees for Library programs. About seven different blogs are operation, with various levels of participation. We also encourage patrons to give us their email addresses when they register (or re-register) for a card, with the ability to choose from 25 or more types of information to be received ranging from movies, concerts/or family events to presentation or workshop topics such as careers/personal finance, new technologies or health and medical. The Library has hundreds of people registered to receive brief notices which are mailed electronically to about 6,000 addresses each month.

Granted, public libraries, like all institutions at the present time, have to watch their spending carefully if not cut back on services. So how to take on new initiatives? One possibility is to use e-commerce to collect fines and self check-out where possible, automating routine functions in order to free staff time for interacting with the public in meaningful ways and getting out into the community. A shortage of funds is a reminder that the Library can't do it all and can't do it alone. Financial cutbacks may provide the opportunity to enter into partnerships and the stimulus to collaboration.

Johnson County Library Director Mona Carmack saw the "CI system as unlocking the huge amount of information packed away in county-sponsored pamphlets, booklets, web pages and staff cubicles." Library staff "dedicated (themselves) to developing content and to partnering with local agencies and organizations to leverage

their content. Our goal is to create topic-specific sites that are searchable through a single interface (or portal).”

Some excellent examples of how nonprofits use technology and new social media can be found through NetSquared [<http://www.netsquared.org>], a project of Tech Soup. An article in 2008 highlighted entries in the third annual Mashup Challenge. One project was “Open Green Map, which merges social networking technology with GoogleMaps to create an interactive tool that enables users to share local resources to promote environmental living. Links to resources such as recycling centers, farmers markets, etc. appear on the map. Users can write commentary and rate resources, using local knowledge to help build community, support local economics, and promote sustainable living.”

Researchers have discovered a lot about the way people seek and use information. Brenda Dervin emphasizes a user-centered approach. “Her work has shown that a range of factors in any given situation can affect the ability of an individual to recognize the need for information, to seek it, to obtain it and to incorporate it into their frame of reference.” She calls her theory of information behavior “sense making” and describes elements of the “situation” consisting of history, past and present horizons; “gaps” which are questions or confusion; “bridge” which are ideas, attitudes, feelings and memories and “outcomes” – the helps, hindrances and consequences. This is valuable information because it reinforces the understanding that information-seeking is individual and personal. Joan Durrance cites Ann Bishop and others in “Their recommendations for how libraries might provide more effective networked information services are aimed at complementing citizens’ lifestyles, constraints, and information seeking patterns.” The Library is not going to change these patterns; we must adapt to them.

It should come as no surprise that people look to trusted sources and prefer those that are more informal and personal. Don’t you find for yourself that you are more likely to make a referral when you know a person at an agency, when you can give a name and feel confident that the person will be helped?

Developments in technology and user interface design have furthered unmediated information access, but we rely on it at our peril. John Seely Brown and Paul Duguid in *The Social Life of Information* note that “For all information’s independence and extent, it is people, in their communities, organizations and institutions, who ultimately decide what it all means and why it matters.” (p.18)

Joan Durrance has pointed out the limitations of formal Community Information including lack of awareness, out of date information, broken links, too much information and poor interface design, among others. We can, and should, make use of newer technology to improve information systems. Nevertheless, the information systems are the tools and fundamentally, it is all about people. If we keep that in mind, the potential is huge. I quote Joan Durrance again in saying, “Community networks can help revitalize communities and in the process help reinvent the institutions that serve them.”

The City of Chicago's three Digital Excellence Demonstration Communities

Ernest "Ernie" Sanders

Well, good afternoon, everyone. My name is Ernie Sanders. I work for the Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation. We're located on the Southwest side of Chicago, west on 79th street.

I'm going to tell you a little bit about our presentation today. Our presentation is a little bit unique in that we have three communities that are participating in this digital excellence project that's sponsored by the City of Chicago. Each of our communities, Auburn-Gresham, Chicago Lawn, and Englewood, geographical boundaries touch each other. It made sense to us to leverage best practices and resources and really operate as one community. And so our agency, the Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation, is the lead agency of the three, just for clarification. So since we have three neighborhoods combined, we said we got to call ourselves something. So we came up with this great acronym, SDPD. Just what you needed, another acronym, right? So we call ourselves the Southwest Digital Planning District, and ultimately, our goal is to digitally and socially link our communities- a spin on the DSL.

Our project steering committee consists of several folks. It includes my executive director, Carlos Nelson and myself. Then there is our sister agency, the Greater Southwestern Development Corporation—Donna Stites is the chief operating officer and Piotr Korzynski, is a fellow with the University of Chicago working for Greater Southwest. Our Southwest organizing project is an extension of the Greater Southwest Development Corporation, and a gentleman by the name of David McDowell is working with us as well. Teamwork Englewood, we have two partners there: Rodney Walker, who's the executive director. Johnny Muhammad is also a team member here as well. And then under this initiative with the city, we received some funding to hire folks to help us along with this project, and so our three agencies went through our interviewing process, and we hired a technical resource company called Edge Technological Resources, and Norma Sanders works for this organization as our project manager. We

Ernest "Ernie" Sanders functions as the New Communities Program Manager and Director of Communications for the Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation (GADC). Ernie is a business professional of 25 years and has worked on a national cause to reduce Recidivism and promote Re-entry for ex-offenders. He is a community activist and a candidate for a Masters Degree in the areas of Workplace & Traffic Safety. Ernie recently attended Harvard University's Divinity School and earned a certification in Faith Based Community and Economic Development.

Ernie has authored two Christian self-help books and has extensive knowledge in capacity building, strategic planning, leadership and team development, property management and communications. Ernie functions as inner-office technical advisor, and coordinates and directs the communications effort for the organization. His strengths are mostly demonstrated through interpersonal and project management skills. (esanders@gagdc.org)

hired another gentleman too who's a consultant to assist us with all of the heavy lifting, if you will, between the three communities. His name is Marvin Parks.

So a little bit about this initiative from the larger picture, okay? The Digital Excellence Demonstration Communities is a pilot program that is part of the city of Chicago's Digital Excellence Initiative, and is being administered by LISC/Chicago in its New Communities Program. LISC/Chicago is an intermediary agency that receives funding from the MacArthur Foundation to help revitalize 16 neighborhoods in the city of Chicago. So the city of Chicago put out an RFP and partnered with LISC/Chicago and their New Communities Program to work on this digital excellence project.

So, what is our Southwest Digital Planning District vision? Well, we envision using technology to connect these three neighborhoods and reduce the physical and psychological barriers that have hampered their cooperation and slowed their collective progress. We also envision using technology to address the coming challenges across the Southwest Digital Planning District, stimulating economic development and continuing to revitalize our neighborhoods.

Our target audiences: we said between our three communities, we really have to zero in on who we want to talk to, who we want to be part of this initiative, who we really want to benefit from this. In our community, there's a lot of vacant land and at the same time, there's some dense areas. So we said: who can we target? Who will this make best sense for? Small businesses, youth and seniors, ex-offenders, workforce development, undocumented immigrants—we really want to go after developing work strategies to have folks employed in our area. Now, in the presentation here, these all appear to be audiences, but when we really started doing work, we wanted to make these issue-driven topics, to help us digitally and socially link everyone.

Our goals: We have several goals, and we've taken the opportunity just to list a few for you, the ones that we believe are most crucial at this point.

Mindset: we want to work to expand the community's mindset around technology through training and increased access. We want to educate government and private entities on how our communities are already using technology. We want to work together with partners to provide feasible, realistic technology solutions that meet our community's needs. I want to make clear our special emphasis, here, is that we want to educate government and private partners on how our communities are already using technology. Often these initiatives come from the top down and they say: "This is how you're going to do it." Okay? But we felt it was as important to tell them, "This is how we're already doing it," so that there will be some leveraging between both the funders, and all of the partners involved. Typically, in our neighborhoods, a grassroots approach is mostly effective when communicating, organizing, and leading our residents and efforts.

Education and training: we want to educate our neighbors about existing hardware and software in intergenerational and age-appropriate ways. We want to grow our community technology centers from being primary access points into the best in-class training sites, including items that may be out of reach from most or our households. In all three of our communities, we have grandparents who are raising grandkids, and so this intergenerational and age-appropriate issue is just such a huge dynamic for us that we really hope to be successful in.

Technical support: we want to find ways that support affordable, locally based technology support providers. We want to partner and develop strategies to make sure our community can sustain this use of technology.

Access: we will create opportunities for our residents to readily access the internet through community technology centers, local business and internet cafes, and ultimately, their homes. We figure, if we could have organized block clubs, talking to each other digitally, or through some form of a PC then we've had a small success.

Hardware: we'll be providing affordable and appropriate hardware starting in the community technology centers and moving into businesses, schools, churches, and ultimately households. Technology changes rapidly, and we are committed to investigating using the latest hand-held devices as well as computers to access technologies. Everyone has a cell phone. A cell phone is just not a phone anymore, it's really a computer. So for us, that's a leveraging opportunity to reach out to all our constituents.

Software: we'll provide affordable, appropriate software that meets the needs of individual family businesses and communities, including a common community website. Between our three neighborhoods, we want to build a web portal, to which all our constituents can go and find out what's going on in each of the three communities.

Here's some proposed projects that we have: expand our Center for Working Families centers; develop a youth training center for adults and seniors; expand youth-run computer refurbishment centers; support a digital arts youth initiative; and train small businesses in electronic bookkeeping and inventory management.

What's really next for us? Well, you know, this is very new for us, and to be quite honest, without our residents being involved, we don't have the answers. Again, often, things are given from the top down, and the way our communities work we want them to rise upward. And so we're having community planning sessions at Perspectives Charter School on April 16th from 6 to 8 p.m., and also April 18th, 10 to 12 a.m. The reason for the two different sessions is we recognize that our business owners may not be able to attend a morning session, and our seniors, may not be able to attend an evening session. So we want to offer both sessions so that we can have as much input as possible on our project, here. And I believe that's all I have for you today. Thank you very much.

Elvia Rodriguez Ochoa

My name is Elvia Rodriguez. I am Director for Community Programs for Pros Arts Studio. And we are one of the partner organizations for the Digital Excellence Demonstration Community program within Pilsen. We are a 30-year-old arts

Elvia Rodriguez Ochoa is a multi-disciplinary artist, educator and administrator, active for the past twenty years. Completed a B.A. in Fine Art from Trinity Christian College in 1992 and earned an M.A in Inter Disciplinary Arts at Columbia College (2005). As an administrator and an artist, she has collaborated in the creation and maintenance of many non profit organizations in Pilsen. Among them are Taller Mestizarte (Mixed Art Workshop) where she served as President in 1998 organizer for La Voz de Los de Abajo, and a board member for Calles y Suenos. Elvia has also contributed to other existing organizations such as the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum, Fiesta del Sol/ Pilsen Neighbors Community Council, and Gallery 37 as an educator and an artist. Elvia is the Director of Community Programs at Pros Arts Studio. (rodriguez@prosarts.org)

organization that provides programming in a wide variety of arts, from the traditional drawing and painting all the way into digital media, which includes web making, websites, teaching students how to use Photoshop, and anything else that our artists or our students can come up with. We're based at Dvorak Park as an Arts Partner in Residency, and we also have programs running at Casa Aztlan and at the Rudy Lozano Library Branch.

So our part in this is we're really pushing the creative arts within this whole digital excellence. For us, the use of the arts within digital programs is not just about learning the programs, but it's also about the variety of skill sets that children and youth learn while they are creating their projects: basic computer literacy, how to turn on and off the computer, how to use the keyboard, all that stuff, which goes back to the point that somebody else made, do the youth know that they need these skills in the future? They may not know, but we, as the adults, we know that we need the skills, so it's important for us to embed some of this learning within stuff that they find fun like games, creating websites and their MySpace pages and whatever else interest them. Because that's where the learning is heading towards in the future, where the youth themselves are going to pick and choose to become experts in different areas.

Our lead agency is The Resurrection Project. They're doing an amazing job of getting as many people together to talk about this program. That can get pretty tricky in a lot of our communities because we're so into doing the work that we're doing, a lot of the times we find it hard to take a few minutes—this kind of work takes hours, and is really some intense work. We should really be open and honest with each other because a lot of us within the nonprofit field, we're taught to look at the others in the community as competitors for funding, and really, this kind of project helps us break that down and say: "No. We're all in this together, we're all trying to do this to bring something better to our community that really does come from the community and is not coming at us from downtown." So the Resurrection Project is one of the partners.

Arturo Velazquez (Westside Technical) Institute is also one of the partners which is where Andy is housed, through Digibridge, and I know he's going to talk some more about his specific project when he comes up. We have people like Instituto de Progreso Latino, Eighteenth Street Development Corporation, Gads Hill Center, and the Lozano library branch. We're trying to pull as many people in, including groups like Yollocalli, which is the youth initiative of the Mexican Fine Arts Center. So we're coming together and all talking about what digital excellence would mean in our community.

And similar to what was just spoken about, what would it mean to have a portal? But not just any old portal. What if this portal, since our community is so into the arts and so into its identity as a community, what if the youth in our community are the ones creating the content for this portal? Let's give them the opportunity to create things that go out there and represent the community. Similar to a lot of other communities, we're fighting all these negative stereotypes about what our community is about and what's the best way to combat that. Let's have our youth be the ones out there saying: "This is what we can do," and not just what's in the content, but the fact that they, themselves, are the ones creating these sites, creating these videos, creating all this documentation. It gives them the power to say: "Hey. I'm responsible for what goes on in my community. I'm the one that's putting this out there so I can make things different and I can make things change." Which, again, is building the next layer of leadership. You know, I don't know

about anyone else, but as my mom used to say: “Yo no soy eterna.” I'm not going to be here forever. So it's really vital that we're building up the next level of leadership within what we do.

Pilsen has such a huge reputation of being an arts community, and we really want to push that, we really want to promote that. We want to bring in the local businesses along 18th street as well, because this benefits them. We are bringing in people to come in and check out our murals that we've got in the community—you know, cataloging them, having them online, being able to raise funds that way, to restore these murals and commission new ones. We want to talk about maintaining our vitality as a community, and for us, this Digital Excellence Program has been such a great way for us to sit down and really, genuinely dialog with other partners in the community and go forward with this and say: “What is it that we really want?” And having looked at what was just presented by the Skokie Public Library, that's the kind of thing that we're pushing towards, I think. To have that kind of integration, to have that kind of reaching out amongst each other where we are sharing these resources and really, I'd like to turn it over to Andy because Andy is a very important key in this. At Pros Arts we teach digital literacy through the arts, and that gives our youth a certain level of training. Instituto de Progreso Latino has an alternative school, and has programs for adults that teach a different level of digital literacy. We have Westside Tech, which is a community college, but how are we making these bridges happen between all of these community organizations where a child who starts out in my program, can end up at IPL and then end up at West Side Tech, working with Andy eventually becoming the person creating the next level of entrepreneurship, where they set up their own business to keep digital excellence going in our community? So I'll hand it over to Andy from here, and I thank you.

Andrew Pinçon

I'm going to go very briefly because we obviously weren't prepared for what happened, so bear with me. I'm basically in charge of infrastructure. I'm an engineer, I've been working in digital inclusion, digital literacy, for probably 15 years, particularly in Pilsen. So over the years we've done a lot, but right now I just want to show you where we are objectively. I want to give you some specifics. We handed this out at our last session (see pages following remarks for slides/handout-ed.) that we had with LISC on March 3rd. We all had workshops at West Side Technical Institute. Can everybody see this? So these are our partners that are in yellow on Google Maps. That blue happens to be what's called AT&T high-speed broadband boxes—that basically means that what we have in Pilsen is what you see here. We basically have, in addition to community partners that Elvia described, we also have high speed to the home through the home through AT&T [that] provides 18 megabytes to 30 megabytes, and typically, you're talking about \$15 a month as the cost to the home owner. So we have 23 installations in Pilsen, all the infrastructures are in place, and there's a reason why, I think, as an engineer who's taught engineering courses, that they have done this. They put this investment in, and it's simple: because of the Olympics. And if you go down Cermak from Western, you hit not only Pilsen, but you also hit Chinatown, and once you hit Chinatown, you hit the McCormick Center, and the infrastructure has been laid down throughout Pilsen. So we're really

fortunate that we have all of this basic infrastructure already there, ready to be deployed in Pilsen's digital excellence plan.

The other thing about it is that we're planning to extend beyond the Pilsen boundary into the education centers that are there with the University of Illinois at Chicago and the Alivio Medical Center, so over the next three years we'll be expanding

Andrew Pinçon, P.E., has 30 years experience in international engineering, technology and business management experience, and is the Executive Director of Digital Workforce Education Society (DWES), an Illinois non-profit 501-c-3 based out of City Colleges of Chicago's West Side Technical Institute. DWES maintains offices and training facilities at two City Colleges of Chicago campuses, West Side Technical Institute and Wright Humboldt Park Vocational Education Center; manages a computer and electronic recycling facility at the Cook County Sheriff Boot Camp Prison in Chicago; and computer recycling facilities with Marquette University at the Milwaukee Area Technical College and in West Bend, Wisconsin. DWES manages the electronic and Computer Recycling and Refurbishing programs for City Colleges of Chicago's eight two-year community colleges and 10 vocational education and satellite campuses in Illinois and all of Marquette University's electronic and computer recycling and Refurbishing Programs.

Andrew was the only environmental engineer on Mayor Richard Daley's Council of Technology Advisors Digital Divide Sub-Committee from 1998 through 2002, which helped fashion the computer Recycling Program and led to the formation of DWES to serve City Colleges of Chicago's computer recycling and training program. Over the past 10 years as Executive Director of DWES he has integrated and institutionalized the recycling of electronic and computer equipment into a job creation and entry level job training program, which he now oversees at two City Colleges of Chicago campuses, West Side Technical Institute, and Wright College Humboldt Park Vocational Education Center. These entry level technology programs train cohorts of 20 students at each campus in computer recycling, refurbishing and reuse and provide A+ Certification to graduates of these programs. He and his colleagues at DWES also created the entry level technology training program for the Cook County Sheriff Boot Camp Prison which is adjacent to West Side Technical Institute. This job training program was awarded the US Department of Labor Employment Training Administrations Award in 2008.

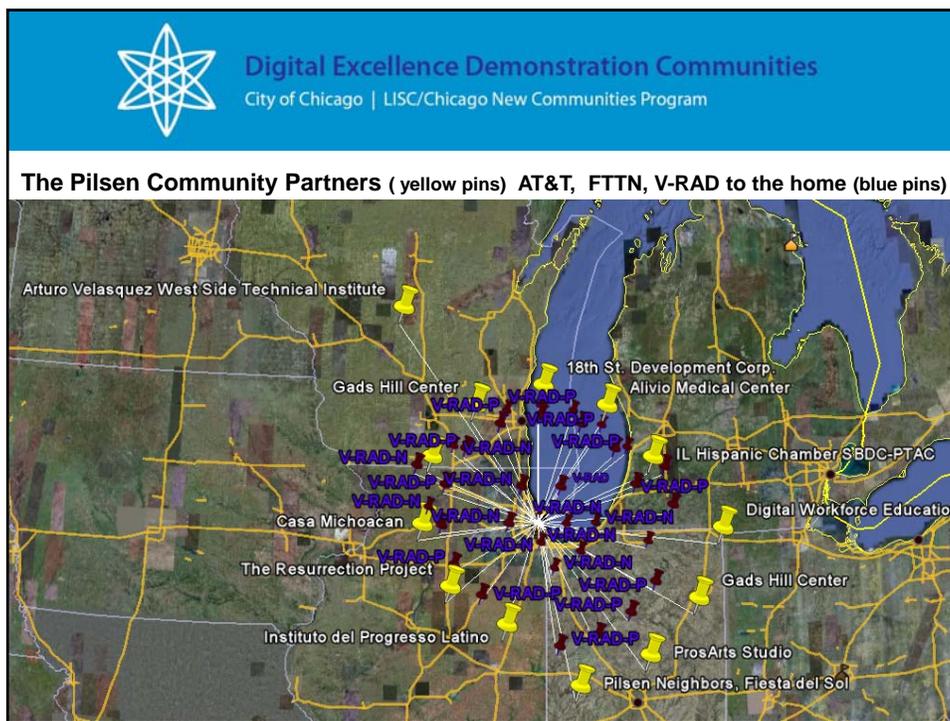
Andrew served as the US Small Business Administration's Illinois District Technology Advisor from 1997 through 2002 and as Technology Advisor for the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA) and Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) since 1998. He has been responsible for a number of technology initiatives and training programs used by DCCA and DCEO over the past 10 years. He developed, installed and currently maintains the DCEO Small Business Development Center's (SBDC) videoconferencing network which links over 20 DCEO Small Business Consulting Offices and the DCEO Webcast and Online Collaboration Portal used throughout Illinois by the SBDC Network. DWES is a DCEO Illinois Entrepreneurship Network Affiliate.

Over the past 10 years, DWES has developed online distance education technology which is used on the refurbished computers and by other Illinois, national and international education institutions, K-12 schools and education professionals. These online distance education technologies deliver a variety of training programs to the desktop furthering the goal of DWES to facilitate lifelong learning to urban, suburban and rural populations. Andrew and his colleagues in DWES are recognized internationally for their work in Distance Education. In 2003, DWES was a Delegate Agency for the United Nation's First World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Geneva, Switzerland and conducted live video streaming and live webcasts from the WSIS Summit to a global Audience unable to attend the Summit in Geneva.

Prior to DWES, Andrew was the President of Alado Development, Ltd., an Illinois technology consulting firm providing telecommunications training and consulting to Lucent Technology, Qwest Telecommunications and Compaq Computer Corp for eight years throughout the Midwest. In 1974 he built an International Environmental Engineering company based on his environmental patented technology, Ionization Internationale, Ltd., in Chicago with wholly owned subsidiaries in Norway, Holland, Singapore, Chicago and Denver. As President, he was responsible for an international staff of 364 engineers, technicians and managers. In 1992 he sold his company to his partners. Andrew holds a B.Sc. from Duke University and a M.Sc. from Louisiana State University in Environmental Engineering.
(pincon@digibridge.org)

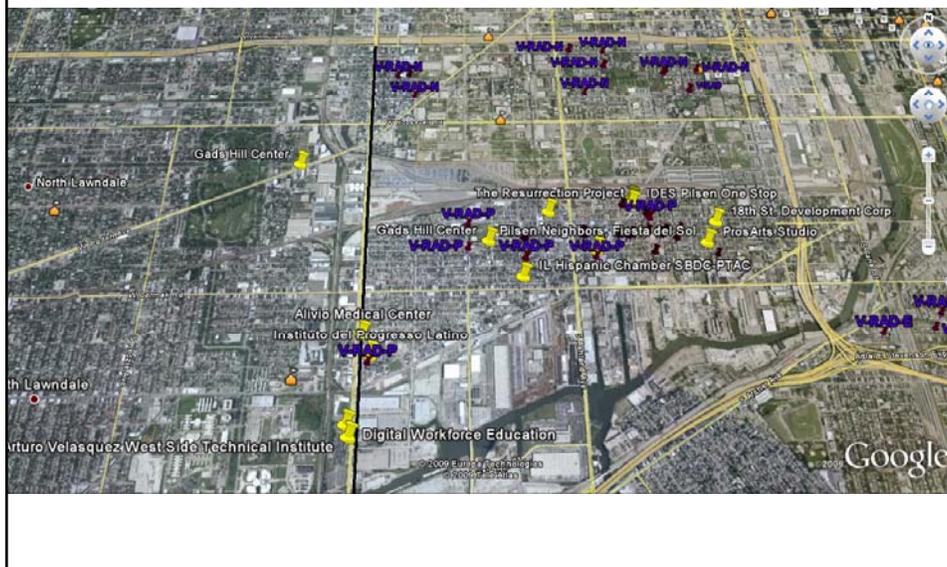
in that direction and into Chinatown because we have the infrastructure to support training. In fact, Alivio Medical Center right now has two Mandarin-speaking help assistants who are working there and one who speaks Vietnamese, so we're looking at the whole healthcare role in Pilsen as to how we provide these services to a broader population and we're using Pilsen as a kind of epicenter to put this out.

This is what the equipment looks like that is on our streets, already installed. So this is the Vrad box that provides up to 30 megabytes to the home. And these are what the routers look like in the home. So it provides what AT&T calls U-verse. The U-verse broadband is already being deployed in Lake County. You heard earlier today in one of the presentations that Lake County is already pretty far along in terms of internet deployment. Well, that's because of the income there. In fact, the people have computers in their homes. I'm in charge of all of city colleges of Chicago's 18 different campuses—that's 8 two-year institutions and 10 vocational ed schools. One of our programs is to really flood the area with our refurbished City Colleges of Chicago computers that are our A Plus training programs that are going on. So those computers will go out and will be connected very quickly. We're already delivering computers every week in Pilsen. So that's about all I have. I think I'll pass it on to Licia.

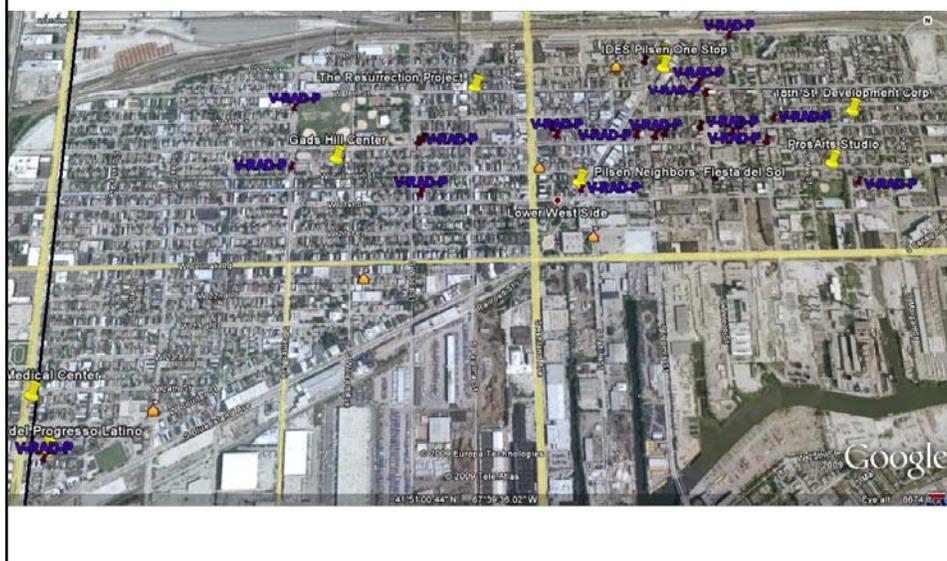


AT & T V-RAD street level installations

23 installed in Pilsen,
10 installed north of Pilsen and Roosevelt Road
3 installed east of Pilsen toward Chinatown,



Map of Pilsen Community Partners (yellow) and AT & T V-RAD to the home/business installations (blue)



AT & T Video Ready Access Device – V-RAD



Pad mounted V-RAD



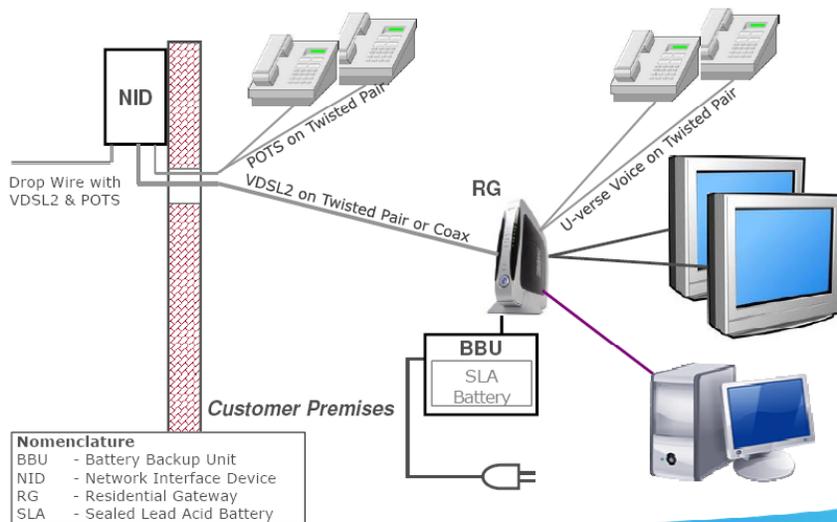
Pole mounted V-RAD

How it works

The system runs over your phone lines. Basically you get a big Internet connection (*about 30 megs*) which is controlled by AT&T and everything streams through that connection. The installer can use your existing phone and/or coax TV cabling to run the system in the house. This system is based upon a fiber optic connection from the core AT&T site to a local Vrad device in your neighborhood. There needs to be an AT&T Vrad close by your house to get the service though.

AT & T Video Ready Access Device – V-RAD

FTTN Home Network



Residential Gateway (RG) 2Wire 3800HGV



Technical Specifications

Broadband Interfaces

- VDSL2 for FTTN (RJ-11 or coax)
- Broadband Ethernet for FTTP (RJ-45)

LAN Interface(s):

- 4 Ethernet ports (RJ-45)
- Wireless 802.11g or HyperG access point
- USB 1.1 slave (PC/MAC connectivity)
- USB 2.0 host

VoIP

- 2 derived voice lines (RJ-11)

Power

- External 12Vdc power supply

Licia Knight

Hello, I'm Licia Knight, and I am the Chicago area director for One Economy, and I'm representing Lawndale today—The Lawndale Christian Development Corporation actually had an opening for their Martin Luther King district today.

So I am glad to be here, and I'm going to keep my talk very simple. We had a little jump start, working in the community network for our programs, and I want to share how we are integrating our efforts into one project. We asked one question in North Lawndale, and that was: how can we create a vibrant community network that is affordable, accessible, and useful for Lawndale residents? And so we decided that we were going to create a vibrant and ubiquitous community network that every citizen has access to and becomes producers and wiser consumers of online content.

With that said, we realized that we had some challenges as well as an opportunity to reflect on what we have done in the last few years. In North Lawndale, we've been working on a wireless network for about two years. And we have brought many people to the table. One major critical activity is to create a collaborative of viable homeowners, apartment dwellers, schools, and businesses and public libraries to take ownership of the community network. So that means that's all residents, businesses, schools, etc will become part of a cohesive planning team to meet the communities overarching goals. To that end, we formed what's called the Lawndale Wireless Community Network Collaborative, which is actively participating in the Digital Excellence Demonstration Communities project that you've heard my colleagues speak of today. This integration has helped us to sustain resources in the community, working for the community, and that's the Lawndale way. We are integrating existing projects within the community and finding funding resources for target audiences such as youth programs for our resource centers, our CTC's, social services agencies, local businesses, and of course, our

Licia Knight manages One Economy's Chicago area programs, which includes the growth and development of on-the-ground digital inclusion programs and the public purpose media properties of One Economy. She has 10 years experience working in underserved neighborhoods and nonprofit organizations in the areas of strategic planning, community development, and community informatics. Licia has over 20 years of experience in information technology consulting and training and applies this management experience in transforming communities with vital, mission-driven organizations throughout Chicago. One of Licia's major initiatives is the Lawndale Wireless Community Network Collaborative project. The multi-year project is designed to create a 21st century digital ecosystem that leverages the power of technology to create economic, educational and career opportunities for the North Lawndale residents. Prior to joining One Economy, Licia was the Director of Community Centers of Excellence at Lumity. Her role included managing Community Technology Center partners, and providing oversight to digital literacy training, workforce development and youth services within technology centers, and digital inclusion services. Licia spearheaded the 2010 Digital Literacy Collaboration Project, a multi-year project designed to create a collaboration between Lumity, local Community Technology Centers, and the Chicago Public Library to bring internet based learning and services to thousands of underserved people in Chicago. Ms. Knight has also managed community technology centers and worked in corporate technology consulting prior to moving into the nonprofit sector.

Licia has served on several school boards and community councils in the Chicago area and southern suburbs. She holds a B. S. degree in Business Administration and Information Science. (lknight@one-economy.com)

residents. We've also established internal and external factors that have helped sustain and build community networks. We have over 20 community residents and partners that are now at the table, and they are participating in this collaborative.

Also at the table are some very exciting external partners. One major partner is Professor Jon Gant from U of I. —Jon Gant is working with us on our project which includes the GIS mapping. We have also brought in UIC as part of our civic engagement, and we have our social service agencies that are all participating at the table. We have revised our vision, and it now reads: “The vision of the Lawndale Wireless Community Network is to create a 21st-century digital ecosystem that leverages the power of technology to create economic, educational, and career opportunities for residents. The mission of Lawndale Wireless Community Network is that every resident within the Lawndale community will have access to free and affordable high-speed internet, dependable hardware, creative training, and robust public-purpose media; to insure they are optimally engaged in the new digital economy and have the resources needed to become self-sufficient.

So what's next for this particular community? We are convening our Lawndale Wireless Community Collaborative on a monthly basis. Our next meeting will be held on April 15th at 11:00 to 12:30 at the Lawndale Christian Development Corporation. We will meet to discuss our proposed early action projects with the collaborative, and we're going to revisit our project list and set some priorities. We have about 25 projects. All of them are not funded, so we realize that we need to prioritize those. Thank you.

Jon Gant

Thanks. I just have a few minutes just to make a brief response to the presentations about the digital excellence communities here in Chicago. I think certainly that the initiative is very remarkable in how the city is working with LISC in really targeting these three particular areas, and there are probably three key things I see that are very vitally important and that we can learn from these examples.

It's very clear, also, that these are projects that are in the early stages. We're seeing a lot of evolution in particular around building the capabilities to target all the necessary resources to build and strengthen the digital infrastructure that exists in those communities. What I find very important is that when we think about this, we should remember it's more than just simply the technology. We are saying, you know, “Let's just plug everybody in.” I really appreciate Steve Jones' talk earlier today because he really talked about a lot of key statistics from the Pew studies about internet usage and so forth, but so much about using computers is more than just having the computer. And then here, the challenge is that you were talking about having disparate stakeholders all working together to reach a common goal. And the cat that we're herding here is not only just the

Jon Gant (Ph.D. Carnegie Mellon) holds an appointment as an associate professor in the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign Graduate School of Library and Information Science. His research interests include electronic government, information technology and organization design; social networks, knowledge management, and information technology; strategic management of information systems; and geospatial technologies. Recent publications include *Digital Government and Geographic Information Systems* (2004). (jongant@illinois.edu)

use of the technology, but also the organizing of the rest of the organizations that are there—the libraries, the schools, the nonprofits, the private sector, the city and government organizations, which are all working together to build the right type of social architecture to support the use of the technology that's there. So it's important to have the technology infrastructure to support the community, but it's also about how we go about creating this social architecture.

So from my viewpoint, in working a little bit more closely with North Lawndale and also within the other two locations, is that I see two things happening at once. We are building this architecture, but then also there is a lot of work to getting all of the organizations to work in concert with each other. And we know that's very difficult because as one of the earlier speakers said, normally, the organizations are competing over resources, right? But here, we're saying: "Wait a second. We have to throw that model out." Because in order for us to move forward—for everybody to move forward—we need a good foundation that everybody can play with.

Now, last week I was at a conference in Washington, D.C. on social media and government, and one of the big things now is using Web 2.0, Twitter, and Facebook and all the social networking, mashing-up, and all this sort of stuff. And it's crazy what's going on, you know, the things that you can do, and I think it's very exciting. I appreciate hearing earlier about the CyberNavigators working at the library and helping all kinds of people learn how to do this type of thing. One of the things that just strikes me is that whenever you have a common platform in terms of defining your data or the technology architecture, then you've got basically a fertile field in which you can do all kinds of wonderful things. And the goal is to build that architecture so that everybody can plug into it. It's much like setting standards for lights and electricity. We can also do the same thing, not only with getting on the internet, but the more critical things of being able to share important bits of data—or important bits of information that are needed to really help bring jobs to the community, to improve businesses, to deal with environmental issues, to deal with social issues and things like that. Then we have the ability to really harness the power of all the organizations and people who are trying to deal with these problems so they can focus on them instead of saying: "Okay. What format was that file you gave me in?" And: "Where was it from last week?" And that sort of thing. The other thing is the matter of how we can build the knowledge, share knowledge within these communities. So what I've been seeing in all three examples is the growth and improvement of practices to share knowledge so that organizations can work together much more effectively.

The second very important thing, though, is that our understanding of what this means for the individual person has gotten so much more complex because there're so many different factors that really influence whether or not a person's going to use a lot of these technologies. This comes from my research and stuff: we think the opposite. If it works well, people will use it. But the thing that really makes a big difference is this factor right here: the social influence, the social influence. Is there a way that we can really harness the networks of relationships that we have interpersonally with our friends, with people we know from school or church or from work, to help us move along and use technology to do things that we want to do? So how can we use technology in a way to really help facilitate that? So it's more than just to say: "Hey, I'm online." But how can I get that real sort of tacit knowledge that you need? That you get from friends. You know:

“Hey, organization X does these things, and this is how it works on paper, but this is how it really works. You need to go talk to Mrs. Smith who's there on Fridays, you know, make her a little pie, and she'll really hook you up.” You got to be able to do that, and then the question is: how can all of our tools help us to reduce the time and effort to get that bit of information? Right now, if we call on a landline phone I got to chase people around, but if I can sit here and Twitter you while I'm sitting here in this thing, I'm getting that information instantly. Or if there's an easy way to capture, like, in blogs and Wikis and things like that, and I can share it with people, then we're really making it easy for people to take advantage of these technologies.

So I think these are the two big issues that I know that all communities are addressing, and need to continue to address: how do we build sort of the social infrastructure to make organization work well together, and then how do we also make it very easy for people to use this technology? We need to spend the time and resources to truly understand that. And the goal isn't to get on the computer. I mean, that's fine, but the goal is: how can we do it to really improve our lives? To get the information we need for jobs, or to start businesses, or to go to school, deal with health issues, and things like that. So I see that what's very nice and very interesting and that many of us in the room are following and trying to understand from the examples, is how is all this coming together, because we know it's very, very difficult. Chicago's a great place to study that because it has this history of a lot of competition over resources and a lot of challenges of working together. The viewpoint here is really trying to understand how that works and how that can be a good lesson for other parts of the country and other parts of the world as well, too. So thanks.

Questions and answers

I noticed that all of you are involved in community organizations, and two things that I usually associate with community organizations are power and action, and I was wondering if you can speak to how these are applicable in this technology infrastructure.

Ernie Sanders: Define for me “power.”

Well, in my experience community organizations often try to work with local powers to give individuals the ability to make change in areas that matter to them and this is traditionally done through social action, small and large, and power-building activities. So I was wondering if this framework is still a part of the way you're using technology.

Elvia Rodriguez: To jump on that definition, what I got about power was: power is organized people and organized money. And I really, really am into that definition because that's part of what we're doing here. We're organizing people to make a social change. It's no longer optional to know about the digital world. It's no longer optional to know about technologies. It's come down to the very basics, like life skills, to be able to navigate the cyber world, so it is about equality on that level.

Licia Knight. I would agree. I'll just add, most of the terms used—grassroots efforts. That's what we're doing. We're starting from the bottom with our community planning sessions that are upcoming in April, and it's all about listening to the community and letting them organize what they need.

Don Samuelson here. It seems to me that one of the things that could be done in all of your groups is to illustrate practical advantages that have been generated by people who have adopted technology, the internet, and broadband to make practical differences in their lives and to publicize that. I don't think you need to go through necessarily all of these interaction activities. They are interesting to describe the phenomenon, but I think the more practical matter is going to be individuals understanding that there is a practical benefit greater than the cost and effort to achieve it in very practical ways. By accessing DSL inexpensively. Accessing jobs. Getting part-time work. Having healthcare. All of the functions that are available from the internet need to be brought into the practical living experiences of people in places like 6425 South Lowe in Englewood. Once they know, we will have a large appreciation of why this is really practical, as well as the danger of not doing it because people in the rest of the world who are going to be competing for jobs are doing it.

Licia Knight: Don, it's interesting that you asked that question. Adoption is actually one of the drivers from the Pew internet research, and it is also one of the goals that have been added to what we are doing within the various communities. Of course, adoption, as we well know, means how do you get people within your community to use not only the computers, but architecture, and organize themselves to become good consumers of technology? So we are doing that, and I think that it's great that we were able, early on in our planning, to recognize that we need to have some true drivers that are forcing us to look at how we will insure that we are being well-aware, good consumers and providing that for the community.

Ernie Sanders: I agree with Licia. Your comments are right on, particularly with not just using this as another digital tool, but really leveraging those opportunities that exist for education, healthcare, and workforce development. Those are very common issues in our community, and you're absolutely right. Our greatest effort is to change the mindset of our constituents, and we are just using this project of digital excellence to do that. We really want to bring everyone together for a common good to increase their quality of life, and not necessarily to have another widget, if you will, on your desk. And let me also say that this whole mindset change is something that doesn't happen overnight. You know, this project is finite, but we believe planning is going to be continuous. Planning doesn't stop when the clock says to stop— planning is continuous. It's continuous, and we just certainly hope that we can affect one person within our neighborhoods to ultimately change the mindsets of folks in the world.

Could any of you describe briefly how local chambers of commerce or small business development centers are starting to work on those strategies? Thank you.

Andy Pinçon: I think because I'm part of the Small Business Network for DCEO, I need to answer that. I don't know if anyone else is. But you know, we have a video-conferencing network that is, with our 64 small business centers, run by the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and I am in charge of that network out of West Side Tech. We've had meetings this week in Springfield with director Ridley of DCEO, and we are looking at connecting a variety of services to this group to the extent that they want to plug in, certainly in Pilsen and at our West Side Tech facility. We've already brought into Pilsen our small business development center there on Cermak, which is the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. It is a small business center providing free entrepreneurial services to the Pilsen area, the Little Village community. It is also a technical assistance center, which provides contracting—federal contracting assistance. All of this is free. The network throughout the state serves 38,000 small businesses a year, is responsible for over half a billion dollars in contracting that is done through these services, and all of these services are free. I've been part of the network for ten years, so it's natural that it becomes institutionalized in the Pilsen plan.

I'll tell you a little bit about the Southwest Digital Planning District. We have three communities that, for the first time, even though they've touched each other since Chicago existed, have decided from a business-model perspective that what we call quarters of businesses are going to come together in our first planning session and tell us exactly what they need. From a business technology standpoint, we don't even know, and some of them have done so, and some of them are very resistant to even put technology in their stores today. So you really, really would be surprised about how many small businesses we have, and we have a model that we're going to reach out to each neighborhood and bring them to the table right with us. The Southwest Development Corporation is one. Ernie's actually at the Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation, which is also a development corporation. So one of the biggest goals is to put new businesses along, you know, the area from 63rd, all the way to 79th. I think the strategy's going to work

Licia Knight: It's great to see that all the communities are engaged in this. In North Lawndale, the Lawndale Business and Local Development Corporation, which serves as our department of commerce for the community, has been at the table with the Department of Commerce for years, and so this has been great for us to really be part of a collaborative that is working on behalf of the community. Additionally, just recently several of the larger businesses came to the table to make a decision on what they would like to see at one of the quarters at North Lawndale, and that's going to be part of one of our projects.

Ernie Sanders: Let me just conclude by saying our communities have what's called an SSA—a Special Service Area—and that's a city of Chicago-sponsored program, and SSA's are basically businesses in a business corridor, and we plan to leverage all of the businesses in the SSA to really just bring them to the table about this initiative.

Yes, I wonder if you all can give a rough inventory of the public computing sites in your communities. You won't be able to count them exactly, but part of getting started

on a project like this is having an inventory and knowing where you're starting from. I'm interested to know if it's the same across the panel or different, and how.

Elvia Rodriguez: All right, I'll start because I did keep the websites up here. So I can talk about some of the things that we have. Pros Arts Studio has a mini lab. Instituto de Progreso Latino has actually two types of labs. Gads Hill. The Lozano library branch, of course, they're a hot spot. Yolocalli Youth Museum actually has a radio station—they broadcast from the middle of the neighborhood. And Pros Art Studio, as well, serves as a mini hub within the Park District. We're in a Park District building, and so we have our network set up in the Park District so that other people can come in and use it as well. And we're in the process of finding out about more places. We have several cafes in the neighborhood that offer Wi-Fi. West Side Tech is fully a Wi-Fi hot spot. The entire campus, even up to their parking lot, I was amazed to find out, is a Wi-Fi hot spot, so you don't even have to go into the building. Wow, that's a good signal. And those are the main ones that I know about that are public access points, and we're actually pushing to see if we cannot just do like that mushroom effect where there's a couple of hot spots here and a couple of hot spots there, and we want to expand it to the point where these mushrooms, these umbrellas, are touching, or if we can deploy one that covers the entire area. That would be a huge thing, but we're still working out the details to see which of the two we go forward with.

Over the past four weeks I actually have been working on an inventory across Southwest Englewood as well as Auburn-Gresham, and so far I've reached out to 150 public institutions. We have total 493 computers that are publicly accessed, with social programs, after-school programs, art programs, health programs, so not just the huge public technical centers—although that is one of my goals, to build one on the South Side. It's a lot of computers, and I'm halfway there.

Licia Knight: And lastly, in North Lawndale, again, we have been doing our inventory as well. As part of another major project, we are going wireless in North Lawndale in the next few months, and we have about nine public spaces. We are also looking to add additional spaces and have at least 12 hot spots, and many of those will be in the resource centers and computer technology centers that have been engaged in doing this work for a long period of time.

Hi, I'm Charles Benton of the Benton Foundation, and I'm so excited about this panel because to think that the City that Networks report that recommended three digital excellence centers was published in 2007, and we're finally here at the table reporting on progress. It's interesting that the title of the slide right behind you is: "Overcome barriers." I was thinking, yes, you've overcome a lot of barriers to get where you are.

Now, there are obviously a lot of challenges ahead. As I think was stated at the beginning, this is a demonstration project, or I should say, it's a pilot project. As a pilot project, hopefully if you're really successful in using this technology in innovative ways to meet fundamental needs in your communities, then there'll be a really powerful argument for taking what you're doing to scale and applying what you're doing in other parts of Chicago, let alone elsewhere around the country. So the mechanism that will measure

your progress is research. We're at a research conference. No one's talked about research at all, and I'm just wondering where we stand on research, the research plans. To document what you do and to lay a base as to where you are now and the further barriers you're going to overcome and how you will make progress in the next two or three years with the funding that you now have, let alone the potential funding from the broadband stimulus package and other places, I mean, this really is exciting. There is a framework. The leaders are in place. Ernie, I didn't know until this afternoon that you're sort of the supercoordinator, and I know you are very humble in your coordinating role, because that's one of your great strengths, among other things. So it's fabulous to see all of you up there and to share in your excitement about where you are, but there's a lot of work to be doing, and I'm just wondering: where are we on research?

Matt Guilford: It's always fun to be put on the spot. Hopefully I have another 20 minutes. You know, research is obviously a key component of what we're looking at. They are demonstration communities, and as you said, Charles, we want the great work that's being done here to be shared with the rest of the city. That's something we're looking at, we're still in the process of developing that. One thing that I'll discuss, in probably about half an hour at this point, is our work city-wide on analyzing the digital divide and where that stands, and maybe talk about how that ties into this.

Academic and activist perspectives on community informatics

Safiya Noble

I want to introduce this talk by putting “student” in parentheses, because I have a lot of gray hair. You really can't see it because I just dyed it a couple days ago, but I already had a career in advertising and marketing for about 15 years and then married a lovely man and moved to Champaign Urbana and decided to go back to grad school. That's what you go when you move to Champaign Urbana. So I'm going to be speaking a little bit with both of those hats on [as a student, and as a professional] -- having worked in multicultural consumer markets, African American and Latino, specifically. A lot of that colors my world, so I hope you'll forgive me if I inadvertently once in a while say “consumer.” I don't mean it, I mean “people,” but unfortunately, you get this really maladjusted training in marketing.

So I want to talk a little bit from a personal perspective and about why I went into community informatics at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois, particularly with this background in sociology and multicultural interest. And I'm also thinking about this with an activist hat on. When I worked in marketing, I was really focused on social entrepreneurship. What does it take to actually infuse a little bit of capital into communities and then see businesses and nonprofits start to thrive? So I bring that kind of orientation into library school and information school, and as I think about community informatics, really, I wanted to call out some key areas that I think all of us, whether we're students or professionals, should be thinking about with our activist hats on. When I think of an activist, it's really a person who's about creating social or political change, and I really think everybody at this conference is here because we are those kinds of people, even though for some reason they've made the A-word a bad word. It's not really one of my favorite bad words. It's like a good word, so I'm going to encourage us to re-embrace our activist, our inner activist.

Safiya Umoja Noble is currently in the University of Illinois Graduate School of Library and Information Science MS program and entering the Ph.D. program Fall 2009. She is focusing her work in GSLIS on Community Informatics to better leverage technology as a tool for working in under-served communities. She is especially interested in how popular culture serves as an important information source in communities, and examining technology use and innovation from the perspective of the marginalized. She is most interested in critical information studies and its implications in the emerging knowledge economy. Safiya spent her professional career in multicultural marketing and community engagement and has worked close to 20 years on public-private partnerships between grassroots organizations, universities, companies, and African-American and Latino communities. She plans to refine her research skills in Human Computer Interaction and Community Informatics in an effort to understand the implications of race, class and gender on technology innovation. She holds a B.A. from California State University, Fresno in Sociology with a minor in Ethnic Studies and did two years of graduate work at San Jose State University in Sociology with an emphasis on Critical Race Theory and Gender Studies. (snoble@illinois.edu)

So in community informatics, I hear a lot of different things about “what is community informatics,” and what are we focused on. Some people talk in terms of digital divide. When I think about digital divide and the way that we’re doing it down in Champaign Urbana, a lot of the programs that are coming out of the community informatics initiative, they’re really about hardware in schools, hardware in communities and nonprofits. It’s really about software training, it’s about skills preparation. It’s also about digital participation and being involved in the new emerging knowledge economy that’s increasingly digitized. So digital divide is a phrase that’s important in community informatics.

We also talk about social stratification. You know... will people who are the most in need get computers and get Internet access? Will people at the top use their technology in civic-minded and appropriate ways? But the social stratification orientation doesn’t necessarily call into question that we do live in a stratified society. It’s really more about looking at technology’s diffusion up and down the social strata at every level.

There’s also a lot of talk about convergence, convergence in terms of new media: the pipe—you know, the pipe into the home delivering everything. It’s not just about TV over there, radio over here, the Internet over there, but it’s: how are all these things starting to come together to reframe our world and the way that we’re interacting with information? So convergence is really important when we talk about informatics and the community, particularly because people and our knowledge are also converging... or not. That’s an important part of community informatics. We’re looking at the “or not” and making sure that people actually have a voice and are participating in that process.

I have a personal amount of passion, a high degree of passion, for free culture and indigenous knowledge as a thing that we should care about when we talk about community informatics. You know, in many ways I feel like going back to grad school and studying community informatics is atoning for my sins in marketing, and I really do believe that, because in many ways, the privatization of information and culture, the ownership issues of culture, who owns culture is important. Who gets to participate with culture? You know, if I wanted to do a presentation and put a clip from *Good Times* in here, you know, I’d have to spend \$10,000 to clear the rights to do that. Does *Good Times* belong to all of us? I mean, it belongs to my childhood. To me. It belongs to me. But it really doesn’t in the new conversations that are going on in our country and in this world. So I think these ideas about privatized knowledge, who owns knowledge, our access and our ability to have the rights to information and to popular culture, are really important, and I really encourage you to start looking into this movement.

Indigenous knowledge is also important in the community informatics movement from my perspective. When you want to sell a Hummer, for example, to African Americans, and I have done that in my past, you actually go into the neighborhoods, and you find out: what do people want to drive? Why do they want to drive that? What’s important about the lifestyle that people are living? What does it mean? What do all these different things mean? And then you develop products that are really based on what people’s needs are. When we incorporate the indigenous knowledge versus deciding: “We know those people. We know what they want. We’re going to give them what they want.” Rather than going to the source, we fall into some traps. I think what community informatics, for me, is about is really privileging the knowledge from the grassroots, privileging the knowledge and the voices of the people who are voiceless. It is about

making sure that there is as much credibility and legitimacy to those voices as the voices that come over Fox news. Did I say that those were credible? I didn't mean that (smiles).

So the other thing is political economy. You know, when we talk about how money moves through our society, the information society and the information economy is one of the fastest growing economies in the world. Well, economy is fundamentally about money. Money flowing. Where is the money flowing? Who's actually having checks written to them? Who's actually providing services? Where's the consolidation of money and resource? Because usually what typically follows with that is a consolidation of power. So looking at the political economy of information and community is really important. Most of us have the experience of working in nonprofits or in public service organizations where we know the nasty side of political economy, which is “no money”, and not a lot of power and resources, and having to amass that power and resources in other ways, through activism, through volunteers, through a base of people. But looking at how the money flows in community informatics is super important.

Ultimately, I feel like all of these things, in some ways, add up to laying a foundation for participatory democracy and preserving the public good. In many ways, when we think about what's happening with the information age, a lot of us—Professor Alkalimat called attention to this, if you were fortunately enough to be in the session earlier in this room—talked about what it means to ensure that people are actually having ownership and participating in society. That it's not just about consumption, but it's also about production. And it's also not just about production from wage labor. But it's also about actually having a civic voice and being able to amass those voices to have ownership in our society. These are important concepts. Sometimes when I really listen to the news, I think that democracy is about Halliburton getting a contract in Iraq. I mean, it's like, what? Is that democracy? I don't understand. These confusions about the free market and democracy, this collapsing of the “free market” ideas and “democracy” I assert we need to un-collapse those two conversations. We need to actually reframe our idea of participating in democracy and making sure that these issues of privatized knowledge and privatized information are really under examination so that information lives for the public good.

So the things that I'm inquiring into in terms of community informatics, and the questions that I really want to raise—and I'm going to raise a series of questions, because that's what grad students do. But I don't really have to have the answers, and that's actually the best part about being a student. I actually know the answers are here in this room, and I'm looking forward to your feedback.

For me, what I'm working on right now, is not just community broadband, but really trying to expand that conversation to community-*owned* broadband. Obviously, all of us are probably in a flurry around the Stimulus bill and the resources that are going to be available for us. Many of us probably in this room are working in some form or fashion on that. So looking at ownership in this dialog: will municipalities own? Will a community trust step forward and own? Will AT&T come in and run service? These are important issues that we need to look at. Independent media and free culture: really, I spoke to that already, but I think our ability to have a voice and articulate perspectives from the grassroots is very important. Then there is mobile learning: I don't know a 12 year old who doesn't have a cell phone, and learning is happening all around us. It's becoming ubiquitous through mobile technology. I think this is a really exciting area of

community informatics to look at. If you don't have Internet access at your house, your kid probably has a cell phone, and most of the kids I've ever worked with did. And then there is this whole idea of social entrepreneurship, which I think is really underneath community informatics. I'm an entrepreneur, I've been an entrepreneur, I've owned a company. I loved being an entrepreneur. I still "think" in these terms because I actually like being able to have control over my life. A lot of people who know me know I'm not a morning person, so putting me in this afternoon was excellent, and it goes with the whole idea of being able to "own" your own work from beginning to end. This is very important, and it's a concept that I think is important as we talk about community informatics. It's really not just about training people for a job to go lay cable for Comcast. It could also be other things, and there could also be other models.

And I ask the question: how soon will the digital divide close? Some people assert that the digital divide is going to close, and this is one of the questions that I want to raise in this panel today. Mattel's new You Create Music is going to be forty bucks. It's got loops, you know, you can create your own beats with this, this is an exciting toy for kids, right? So when you think about what kids are doing already with technology, one could assert that we are moving closer and closer to technology and equipment being resolved on some levels. But what are we going to do after that? What will we do? What will we do, what will we create? You know, the university of Hip-Hop culture is now in session. Hip-Hop's first broadband network has been released. People are doing things, and I put these things up [referring to slides] because I'm not sure—sometimes I think people forget. They think: "Oh, you know, people, they just need to get resumes, and they'll be all right." But then, we've got our first broadband network! So I'm trying to expose you to lots of other ways of thinking about what communities are doing, and because I'm African American, you know, I'm privileging my culture and my community's experience, but there are some exciting things happening in a lot of places.

Are we tracking free culture and commercial culture at the same time? I talked about this when I talked earlier about free culture: Rhyme Library, they're providing QR codes where you can go and take a picture with your cell phone, and then it automatically will send a message to iTunes and download it right to your cell phone. There's awesome stuff that's already happening that I think we need to be aware of. But what is it supporting? Is it selling songs for iTunes? Maybe. Consumerism and tech culture converging, you know? Here we have a picture of a customized PC, you see that you can get it with the wood grain; it's all blinged out. And here we have your gold-plated PSP. I put these things out there because I just want you to be aware of something else besides what you might think of as African Americans' relationship to the digital divide or to technology. In the world of the people that I used to work with when I was in marketing, these are the people that I was talking to, the people who might have these kinds of things. And so we're up on it. When I was in high school, the only people who had beepers—because that was when we had beepers—were surgeons and doctors in our town and the drug dealers. So I'm totally familiar with the whole idea of technology being right there around me, or on the corner. In fact, African Americans are early adopters of technology, and many people don't realize that. These are important things to remember as we're talking.

And I've made the point about media and content converging. BET was bought by Viacom. That was a big deal a few years ago. Our urban radio networks are being

subsumed by big media. These are important things when we talk about content. This is the full picture of community informatics, from my point of view.

I love being an entry-level scholar because, you know, my advisor's in the room, and he might tell me, something like, "You're totally off. You don't know what you're talking about." And then it's great because maybe don't know what I'm talking about...because really, I'm just getting started. I thank you very much for indulging me.

Nate B. Grant

Thank you. Nate has a very big ego. Thank you. There are two areas that I have asked to cover. One is my work at Chicago State University—it's good to see some of my colleagues here—and my work before, during, and after Chicago State University.

At Chicago State, I head the Media Services department at Chicago State University. My department is responsible for providing and supporting faculty with mediated services like smart classrooms, digital tapes, videotapes—anything that supports their lectures that they're not familiar with or don't have access to, my department supports that. In addition, we give technical advice. For example, several departments want to purchase equipment for their own needs. We can tell them the types of equipment to purchase. As a matter of fact, we even encourage them to purchase equipment and let that equipment be housed in our area so we can maintain it at the same time. In addition, we do commercials, we do documentaries, and we support our annual gala with multimedia presentations and the like.

Back to our objective, here, to talk about community informatics—I'm using community in quotes because the community that I'm speaking with is broad. For example, I've produced and directed projects in 38 countries. The good news about digital media in general, television and motion picture productions in particular, is access. Today, one can write, create, produce, edit, and distribute broadband signals instantly with considerable ease.

³⁰ **Nate B. Grant** is currently Associate Professor, Chicago State University and Head of Media Services. In addition, President of Lake Shore Film & Television Productions, (<http://lakeshorefilm.com>), a media production company based in Olympia Fields, Illinois that was established in 1984. Nate has many years of experience, directing and producing film and television projects in more than thirty countries, and over thirty US cities. He has produced and directed a two-channel, two-way, interactive satellite program from North Africa that was downlinked live, to the USA and 40 countries. For Sears, Roebuck & Company and United Airlines, he directed television commercials. Nate also produced and directed a series of training videos for Luster Products, designed for the professional stylist. He produced and directed, *Secrets of the Caribbean*, a short film featuring Philip Michael Thomas for the tourism industry shot on location in St Kitts, West Indies. Nate directed the feature film, *Butterscotch & Chocolate*. In addition, he produced and directed *Cotton Club Revue* (ABC Television) and *Black's in Advertising* (ABC Television). He directed a television pilot featuring Bernie Mac on locations in Chicago. Nate wrote, produced and directed the documentary, *What Shall I Tell My Children Who Are Black*, the legacy of Dr. Margaret Burroughs, founder of the DuSable Museum and the South Side Community Center. (Winner, "Best of Show" at the Black Berlin Film Festival.) Nate's education includes studying painting & sculpture in Paris, Columbia College and School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Nate has a BA in Fine Arts, Southern Illinois University, MA in Communication, Governors State University and PhD (candidate) Purdue University. (ngrant@csu.edu)

Several years ago I was in a rainforest in the country of St. Kitts. It was hot, the camera lenses were foggy. The weather was humid. But this was not unusual in the rainforest in the Caribbean islands. Television star Philip Michael Thomas was sweating as I directed him in a video shoot near a waterfall. I was setting up for another shoot as my mixed crew of American and Caribbean technicians made a clearing in the thick vegetation. The government of St. Kitts hired my company to feature high-profile television stars in a tourism video. I say that because the thing that was not on the table when I was discussing it with my client was what kind of equipment I'm going to use, what kind of cameras I'm going to use. At that time it was analog. What type of analog signals were you going to use? They were interested in the story. So most of my background and work with others has been with developing and producing the story. We're letting the story take the lead, versus the technology taking the lead.

After this scene, we were traveling in the city and to other locations, and the locals—in other words, local Caribbean people—quickly spotted Philip Michael and caused traffic jams. Here again, the community saw, not all the cameras and all this stuff. They just saw this star and what we were trying to accomplish and the government was trying to accomplish, to put St. Kitts on the map—I don't know. H

I've worked professionally throughout the Caribbean, producing and directing programs for a variety of clientele. Equipment was never the issue. The story, the message, the mission was the driving force. Intended outcomes, then, often are tempered with precarious circumstances where quick thinking as well as good ambassadorship is critical. For example, I was in Nigeria on a production, traveling with 18 cases of production equipment I owned. After clearing customs, I hired a local truck and driver to transport us to the hotel. A mile outside the hotel, our truck and taxi were stopped by the police. It seemed that local authorities suspected that I brought this equipment into the country to sell. They approached me with their loaded machine guns—and that's not in quotes, that's fact. Loaded machine guns drawn as if to violently resolve the issue on the spot. However, after several minutes of discussion, showing papers from the United States Customs Office in Chicago, and after great hesitation, I was released. Always looking—as Bill Cosby always said, I was cool. While it is true that Nigerians and African Americans have a connection-, I assure you, at that point the connection was set aside or secondary as we had to resolve this issue about equipment.

Cable television came to Chicago through an amazing ordinance to provide opportunities to create a wide variety of programs from a variety of sources. The cable companies set aside several channels where citizens would create and broadcast their programs on cable-accessed channels. Broadcast standards were not applied, experience was not an issue. Citizens could now be on television. Cable companies pledged to provide equipment, training, and a studio production apparatus to any citizen as an incentive for wiring thousands of homes. What cable access did not provide was the training, the need, the understanding of the media. Equipment and access was not enough. Digital technology changes every eighteen months. It's the story. It's the story, not technology that fuels the program. So, whereas I am not saying that technology is not important, I'm saying that technology is secondary to the intended purpose.

Another example: some time ago I was hired by a civic organization to produce an international program. I was often hired by foreign countries because, as I mentioned before, I had my own equipment, and though I could not get insurance on foreign

countries, I was still available. I was sitting one day in a very hot warehouse and processing equipment—amplifiers, audio boards—waiting for a live signal that I had previously arranged with engineers after traveling to Europe, North Africa and the eastern United States. The two-channel, two-way interactive satellite signal was to have a footprint in forty countries.

The back story: the client had requested quad. Now, quad is a phenomenon—most of you folks in here weren't even born when it was alive. Quad, which is two in video tape, was the industry standard for many years. The client asked me to put this program together and use quad. No big deal. I took the job, again, with the equipment that the client asked for. Shortly after I accepted the job, I found that the quads, the three quads that I needed—by the way, three quads would take up this entire space up here. It's that big—that wasn't available, so I had to switch to one inch. One inch, you can put three one-inch tapes on this desk. One inch was the latest technology—the client didn't understand that—so I decided to go ahead, put all this stuff together, and all the buttons and whistles and the monitors are going. The client came in and he looked at all of the monitors and said: “Excellent job.” I was sweating crazy because I'm thinking, he's going to look at these one-inch machines and say: “Where are my quads?” I asked him later on: “What about the quads?” He said: “Quads? I don't know from [dip.]” I should say something else. “I don't know from anything. Someone told me that that was good.” So he translated that, what someone told him, to the production, whereas the equipment that I use was actually better. So again, there is that asterisk about equipment.

My experiences with digital technology and cyberspace: the lines are very transparent between sending messages, sending and receiving programs. Technology is far ahead of the practitioners. Motion pictures—I'll talk just a second about it. Motion pictures, whether factual or narrative transmits special messages and cinematic experiences to the viewer, and as Lewis Jacobs says in his book, *The Movies as Medium*, quote: “involve ... a confluence of census, visual, kinetic, spatial, temporal, that is different from any other medium.” End quote. The combination of shooting and assembling the story with actors and the complex configuration and organization of equipment, lighting, sound, and the frame width of any of the seven departments of motion picture and video productions presents then a matrix that suggests rewarding outcomes. I'm saying film stands by itself, as with theater, as with books and so forth. Messages can be transmitted today faster and more efficient than ever. Video images can be transmitted via You Tube, Facebook, MySpace, and many of the other social networks with considerable ease, reaching thousands of viewers. Although there is considerable transparency, issues of navigating cyberspace are important. The issues of developing messages for a particular audience are another. In my passion, the story and the research that goes into the production is the story. Let the equipment, or the form, follow the function or the message. Thank you.

Vincent McCaskill

I want to thank Abdul Alkalimat for inviting me. He called me up and it felt like he was chastising me and made me feel like I had to be here. He told me it was a good thing to come to, and “I want to see you down here, and let me know.” You know, so I appreciate it. I came last year, and I really enjoyed it, and I'm just thankful, you know, for Sunshine, that I've been invited this year just to share a little bit about what we do.

Sunshine as a ministry has been around since 1905 in various forms. If you remember the rock n' roll McDonald's downtown, that used to be Skid Row in Chicago, and that's where Sunshine pretty much started, as a ministry for Moody Bible Church. Over the years, we've existed in various forms. We were in the Cabrini Green area for 30 years, and then as that area began to gentrify, we had to move. So we found our home in Woodlawn, 500 East 61st Street, 61st and Eberhart, which is right behind Washington Park.

So Sunshine is privileged to be in such a historic community, and we're just one of many organizations in Woodlawn that are dedicated to seeing that the residents in the community continue to thrive, and actually, to be renewed. So our motto is: “Seeking the renewal of the city.” It comes from a bible reference Micah 6:8. So basically, our mission is to seek renewal of the city through ministries of mercy, discipleship, and justice. So how does that play out in everyday life? It means that we have bible studies, we have tutoring, we have one-on-one discipleship and mentoring, and we also provide life skills in the form of our technology center.

So for me, the hugest part of those three is the justice piece, and so for me, in coming into the role of Sunshine, learning about digital divide, learning about digital inclusion, learning about haves and have-nots and all those different kinds of things, it interests me. Before I came to Sunshine I was a network engineer. I worked for various different companies designing networks, doing all kinds of techy stuff. So that, while in of itself I do like that, the core root of what I like to do, which was a perfect fit for Sunshine, was to see the light come on with people learning things. So I had to learn about community technology centers, I didn't know anything about them three years ago. Nothing. And I had the privilege of going to Boston for a conference held by TechMission. And they, at the time, were providing services and resources for CTC's to get started, and I learned a lot of good information. This conference helped to begin to understand what the community needs were.

So when we started at Sunshine three years ago with this part of what we do, one of the things we need to find out is, what is it people need to know? What's missing? So we conducted a series of surveys, I went and visited community technology centers, just talked to different people, and we were able to actually open up our doors and for the community center in April of 2006.

Vincent McCaskill is Community Technology Center Director for Sunshine Gospel Ministries, a position he has held for four years. Vincent also teaches various technology classes and entrepreneurship at Sunshine Gospel Ministries. He is also a technology consultant that specializes in network infrastructure design and implementation. He is a Microsoft Certified Trainer (MCT), System Administrator (MCSA) and Technology Specialist (MCTS). (vincent@sunshinegospel.org)

So what we provide is access, training, and entrepreneurialism. We provide access in the way that most community technology centers provide it, which is through an internet cafe. You can come in and use the internet five days a week to do all kinds of different things that you want to do. We have printing and faxing services, and we do have people there to assist you when you need help with things. That's a vital resource because in Woodlawn, there are a few other technology centers that are on the outer parts of Woodlawn, so we're, I think, a little bit more centrally located, and we're also close to the library, the Bessie Coleman library branch. We get lots of referrals from the Bessie Coleman branch for people that want to do those simple things such as creating a resume, or something as ambitious as going online to find a business plan template to become an entrepreneur because they have an idea that's burning in them. So we exist for them to be able to come in and do those kinds of things and to be able to help them as best we can, and that's the internet cafe.

The other things that we provide are training and digital literacy, training in word processing, spreadsheets, all those different things. And we started off doing Microsoft Word, doing the Microsoft house thing, and I quickly learned about Open Office, I quickly learned about Google Documents and all those different things, so we just scrapped Word, PowerPoint, and all that stuff. While we still have it, we teach it from the perspective of being able to use it anywhere, and that, to me, is exciting, being able to use it anywhere. So with Google Docs, I can create whatever I need to create, save it, it's in the cloud, and then I go back and I pick it up at another cloud, and I have it, and it's there, and if I don't want to bring my computer, I don't have to. If I don't have a computer, I'm not hard pressed to have one. It's good to have your own, don't get me wrong, but those kinds of conveniences, where you're dealing with communities where the technology is not available personally, you have to rely on the cloud. It's a funny thing to work with, but I like the way it works, at least for now. So those are the things that we teach.

And we have teen programs, as well. We partner with After School Matters, the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship, NFTE, and we offer apprenticeships. Initially, we offered technology apprenticeships, so we taught computer networking and web design, and then when we partnered with NFTE, we said: "Well, let the teens create their own business, and we'll teach them how to do everything: income statements, break-even analysis, opportunity costs, all those different things. And so we'll use the technology as a supplement." So what do you need if you're going to start your own business? Are you going to need to set up a small office? That's where the networking comes in. How much does that save you? Call Geek Squad and find out. Three hundred-fifty dollars or more. What if you want to start a website or create a website? What are the costs for that? So we built those skills into the program so that when the teens are finished, not only do they have the skills to know how to start a business—and some of them have started businesses—they also know how to set up a home network? Who do I call to get my internet service? How do I get all that stuff set up? And how do I create a presence for myself on the internet? So they're actively involved in the creation of content. We created a small social network with them on NING. I know some of you have heard of NING before. NING.com. So we created a portal for them there where, at the end of every class, they blog for about fifteen minutes to talk about their experience, and I emphasize to them that it's not just here you can do that. And they add to it even after they leave the program. So those are some of the things that we're doing.

And we have the internet class for the adults along with the other classes that we teach, and that class is one of the ones I really enjoy because we get to go all over the world. When you teach the internet, there are lots of different things that you can do. When you have senior citizens or people who aren't really familiar with it and they begin creating content—before they sign up for the class, you know, they don't really know much about computers—that's exciting. So that's the internet class.

So the rewarding part is when we do this every day. You know, we hear stories. We get stories. I get emails from people who have found jobs, who have started their own business, or they just went to the store and bought a computer. That may sound like simple stuff, but when a senior citizen calls you and tells you that because he or she took a class, he or she knew how to go and figure out how to buy a computer, and it didn't feel like he or she was buying too much or buying too little and got it for a good price, you know that you were able to pass on something positive to them. Those are just some of the rewarding things.

And the training also provides them with the ability to contribute content. We're talking a lot about that at eChicago, the ability to upload(contribute), as opposed to download(consume), and I'm confident that the residents that we're communicating with are able to do quite a few of those things. So that's a summary of what we do.

The challenges are that we need people. We need people to come in and do something like the Cyber Navigators with some of the people who come into our cafe. We serve about 800 residents per year in the internet cafe, and with our classes, maybe 200, 300, and so we need people to come in, with the skills already, who are willing to help. We need people to come in and teach financial literacy. We need people to come in and do a resume workshop on Saturday. We need people to come in and talk about some of the creative and innovative ways technology can be used to build our residents up, because the area that we live in, gentrification is coming, and we need to learn innovative ways to become better entrepreneurs and become more innovative, in how we do, what we do. My passion and Sunshine's passion is just to see all these different things passed on so that people can become better at this technology thing, at this social thing, so that they're not left behind. Many people do not realize that African-Americans have been early adopters and innovators of technology. Sunshine had the privilege of Bruce Montgomery, founder of Technology Access Television (TATV), speak at one of our community networking meetings about African American history in technology. He told us that Network Solutions was founded by an Emmitt J McHenry, an African-American. Network Solutions was the one of the first companies to be awarded a contract for Domain Name registration. That was news to me, and so those are the kind of things that are encouraging that I share with my teens.

So that is who Sunshine is, that is what we do, and we need help, so if any of you are near Woodlawn or are willing to do any of those things, we would love to have you help and partner with us. We also partner with other organizations in the community. The CARA Program is part of the University of Chicago. They provide job placement, and so before people are placed in jobs, they refer them to us, and we do the technology training, and then we send them back, and they're able to go through their program. We're looking to partner, and we've partnered with quite a few organizations in the community. And so it's a privilege to be there, it's a privilege to serve, and so we're just looking forward to

continuing to share what we have and then learn from the residents that we're with.
Thank you.

Willie Cade

So what I want to talk about is hardware fundamentals. While lots of you guys work on stuff after you get hardware, I want to talk about getting the hardware, because that's where I live. Going forward. First thing I want to talk about is why Linux doesn't work. Last year I came to this conference all proud and brought a box that was Linux-based and had a great, pretty image on it, and all of that, and guess what? It doesn't work. And a lot of people go: "What? It's a great operating system, especially when you get it in the room with geeks." On that, we'll have a huge argument on that particular issue, but I will say, within this particular space, Linux doesn't work for the following reasons. It's a good operating system, it looks good, the price is right, and it's free. Okay, that's nice. And by the way, we spent hundreds of hours, and I know my compatriots in cities throughout the U.S. have also done that. And we've sold a few hundred, but it doesn't work.

The reason that it doesn't work is that it doesn't have drivers. Now, I was trying to explain to my wife who, you know, has been living with me for 31 years, what a driver is. Now, to me a driver is like, okay, it's a driver, right? No. She didn't get it. I'm going to try this example out of what a driver is in the software world and see if it works with you guys, okay? So imagine you have a car, and someone gives you a car, but they forget to give you the engine, okay? That's tantamount to what happens today when people give you their old computers because they've erased the operating system, right? Okay, good. So wait, oh, great. Let's get the operating system, we'll get it—Microsoft now has this thing called Microsoft Authorizer Refurbisher. You can get it and put it in. But it still won't work because you need these pesky little things called drivers, software that connects the hardware to the operating system. So back to the car analogy—it's like putting the engine into the car, but forgetting to connect it to the driveshaft, okay? Does that make sense to everybody? So you now all know what drivers are about, and that's all that drivers do. It's a little piece of software that connects the hardware and the operating system together. That's all there is to it. But Linux doesn't have them.

And one of the things we've done recently is we've cataloged about 7,500 pieces of electronic equipment that we've collected from individuals' homes. By the way, how many people have a PC in their home that they're not using that is in either a closet or the basement? Thank you very much. Anyone not raising their hand is lying. Am I right? Thank you, thank you. So we have 7,500 of these pieces of equipment that have come in, we've had over 3,000 different models. So we're basically getting two of each, and that's it. That's the difficult with reusing hardware. Also, too, by the way, on average, it's about

Willie Cade started working on the issue of bridging the Digital Divide back in 1996. The hobby became a fulltime occupation in 2000. Today his company PC Rebuilders & Recyclers (PCRR) is one of the premier refurbishers in the United States. They are so confident in their refurbished product that they offer a 3 year warranty on the hardware. International aid organizations seek out their equipment for their relief efforts. Over the years he has taught introductory and intermediate computer application classes and even today he spends a few days a month staffing his companies 800 support line. (williecade@gmail.com)

11.3 years old, which in the technology world is about as old as I am. So what we need to have to make that work are drivers. Linux doesn't have it, Microsoft does. Sometimes they're a little bit hard to find and a little bit hard to install, but that's kind of the art and the magic of refurbishment. Okay?

But I think the more important reason why Windows works is because the number of people in our society who know about Windows. Now, I'm going to ask a question, and since you guys lied last time, I want to the truth this time, okay? And the truth means, if it's true, you've got to raise your hand. Because it'll be very instructive to everybody in the room, I believe, if we do this experiment right. How many people in this room, irrespective of the level of expertise that you have with running a computer, have a go-to person that you call when you've got troubles? And that friend of yours is Windows-based, except for the geek in the back room.

Workshop participant: *You put Windows XP on an eleven-and-a-half-year-old machine?*

We put Windows X on every machine that we get. By the way, I have purposely couched this in this way, in order to talk about this in a controversial way—by the way, this is the first time I've ever run this experiment. But what this experiment shows you is the incredible utility that there is in having your community member, someone you know and trust, whether they're a twelve year old or whatever, whom you call for help and support.

By the way, I'm really fond of looking at how people use their computers, because I will go over and watch and I'll go: "Hmm. I never knew you could do that." By the way, how many people ever knew that if you have a domain name, like mine is PCR, if you type in PCR on the URL line and hold down shift and control, enter, it'll put in the www.http and it'll do "dot com" at the end, so you don't have to do the whole thing. The way I learned that was watching somebody do it, okay? That's how we're learning about this today.

Now, classes are great to get started on, but what we really need, in my mind, are on-demand answers. And so what are the things that we do? Let me just see what else we have on here. So everybody has friends, beginners or not. And by the way, one of the things that we're starting to do now, since we man an 800 number, we're actually starting to do Google searches on people's problems, and we're finding it's remarkably good with a decently trained individual or knowledgeable individual, in order to staff an 800 phone line.

So our refurbished systems, we are what's known as a Microsoft-authorized refurbisher or MAR. It took us seven years to make that agreement with Microsoft. By the way, never try to negotiate with Microsoft. It is work. So we started, and back in 2000, they officially said: "Yes, it's okay. We'll give you the licenses. We'll charge you, but you can reinstall the operating system onto a piece of hardware that's already bought a license." That's how good Microsoft is, by the way. Okay? And our systems include Microsoft Windows XP professional, Simple Restore, which is a proprietary piece of software so that when you get infected with that worm that came out on Wednesday, you can hit one button and reset the factory settings. Microsoft Office, except we can't give that to schools. Google Desktop, Adobe Reader, etc., etc. We have a three-year hardware

warranty on our system. By the way, you don't even get that with new systems, do you? Very rare. The reason we think we can get that? We just consider our equipment that's been turned in to us as well tested.

By the way, there are now corporations, by accident of the economy, are starting to discover that their three-year refresh cycle is hooey. There's one large well-known organization here in Chicago that hasn't had a hardware refresh in over eight years. And you fly on their airplanes. And they're fine. They're starting to really go: "Wow."

And by the way, we're only really now starting to get what I call my reluctant repeat customers. Those are people who are coming back to me and saying, "I bought it"—literally, on Monday this week, and woman came in at 5:15 and said: "I bought my first system from you four years ago. [And] now time to come back." Now remember, that was a refurbished computer from four years ago. That computer's eight or nine or ten years old, and it's been serving her well. So that's just some of the things that we're should think about.

So we have a three-year hardware warranty, we have a U.S.-based, 800 number support, so you can call us and ask us questions. We say it's a hardware line, but we're invariably answering all kinds of software questions, etc. And it costs less than One Laptop Per Child. The whole thing that we do is less than that. Everybody know One Laptop Per Child? It used to be known as the \$100 laptop that went down to \$200 that went up to \$400.

So about the projects we're working on: the state of Illinois has passed legislation called SB 2313. It's an eWaste law. It makes producers of this equipment responsible for the take back of it. It goes into effect January 1, 2010. My estimates are that the OEM's will spend about \$11 million on recovering that equipment. I teach down at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, on Thursday nights, a sustainable eWaste class, and we are going to be starting a research center in Champaign on the issue of eWaste. I don't call it really eWaste. It's eScrap or eOpportunity. It's good stuff. But the culmination of this semester's work is a contest where there are 21 student-led teams, approximately 4, 5 students per team, who are taking this stuff that we collected in February from the indigenous population of Champaign, and they now are making new things with it. So they're making it up.

By the way, there are more University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign graduates working at Microsoft than from any other university in the world. That was a stunning statistic to me. That's a quote from Bill Gates, so I'm taking it as true. So the contest—one of the interesting things that students are making is they're taking the magnets out of hard drives. By the way, hard drives need magnets in order to work, very high-quality magnets. Didn't know that? If you take one apart, it's really kind of cool. That's the geek in me. They're going to take and put it on the spoke of a bicycle. They're going to put a coil for those magnets to go through so that when you ride to class, you plug in your laptop battery and you're charging it up. Now, that's a cool use of the technology for one reason. You're destroying the data, right? Take the hard drive apart and you're destroying the data, which is what everybody wants when they get rid of their computer. You're reusing an incredibly valuable resource in the magnets. Most people now just take them and throw them and grind them up and melt it, you know. Oh, my god. No. Let's not do that. The third thing that really excited me about this? What about if you're off the grid? What about if you're off the grid in Africa? You've got a way, now, to generate the

electricity to run this stuff. You don't need to be on the grid. By the way, they think, with this magnet and this system, that they can generate 120 volts of electricity. That's frigging impressive, by the way. I don't know about you, but I'm very impressed.

Back in February, February 11th, I testified before the House Committee on Science and Technology in Washington on HR 1580. Everybody's up in the air. How many people, by the way, saw that or heard about that *60 Minutes* episode they did on eWaste in Guangdong Province in China? And how awful and bad it was and all that kind of stuff? Well, even Congress is starting to realize that we need to understand and figure out what the problem is with this stuff. So it's a bill to create academic research centers in major universities to study the issue of eWaste. We want to be there first, and we want to be the biggest, and we want to be the best, down in Champaign.

Smart Grid. By the way, I think that Smart Grid is going to be the Holy Grail for information and access to technology in the homes. Somebody's got to say: "Why?"

Workshop participants: *Why?*

Thank you. One of the things that we're starting to discover is that if you give people a device in their homes that shows them how to manage and conserve their energy, they will save approximately 30 percent of that energy. If you have an average electrical bill of \$100 a month, that's \$30 a month. If you take half of that and apply it towards that device that teaches you how to save energy, you've got about 180 bucks a year. Anybody remember the price of my refurbished computer up there? It's 165 bucks. You could actually finance, through electrical savings, bridging the digital divide. In my experience as I've been working on this, the Holy Grail of the digital divide is how do we get the computers in the home economically? By the way, Commonwealth Edison may very well be willing to lease that equipment to you so that you save the energy and will, in essence, give people this technology. For me, that's exciting. And we're going to questions now, right? All right. Thank you.

Questions and answers

Can people—is this only for schools, or is this for individuals? Who can get these?

Willie Cade: As long as I'm working with a community-based organization, anybody who needs service can get it. I am absolutely committed to everybody having their own, okay? No, we need people like Nate so that we can get the basics covered, but everybody has to get their own. By the way, have you guys heard about Malcolm Gladwell's new book, *Outliers*? It's a wonderful book, and in it, one of his theses is, in order for you to become proficient in something, you need about 10,000 hours of practice. And I mean proficient in it, okay? And the only way I can perceive that people will become proficient in technology—and by the way, I'm now 53, and I got a minor in computer science when I was back in college—I only now have the sense or feeling that I'm becoming proficient. In other words, I only really now am getting to the 10,000-hour level. I would highly recommend the book, by the way.

Kate Marek: Another thing Gladwell says in his book is that it's not just about being smart. It's about the opportunities that life presents, and so in the information profession, we have the opportunity to help create those opportunities for success in others, and that's one of the things that's really exciting about Gladwell's work.

I was wondering, why does a small computer firm make it, and why do some not? Why do some guys and gals manage to get into successful operations, and others don't?

Willie Cade: For all the reasons that people fail and succeed in life and all the ventures that they try, I'm sure. You know, Hyde Park Computer had a great run when it had its run. Every once in a while, circumstances overcome, you know, and so before Microsoft and DOS, there was another operating system. It was called CPM, and it didn't make it.

It'd probably run on some of your computers.

Willie Cade: Yes, there you go. So, I mean, I don't know the answer to that. I do know that, you know, part of the *Outliers* book is, it just takes a whole lot of work. One of the things that I've been personally fortunate with is, you know, I have a pretty big mouth, and people like to listen, you know? I'm able to sit with congressmen and talk the talk and walk the walk. When the FCC chairman came to town, he loved our work. You know, so people find ways to be supportive.

I'd like to ask a question about broadband and the use of broadband in the community. In rolling out the broadband, from an activist's point of view, how can this be maximized by our neighborhood communities? Anyone can chime in with ideas about what we might consider.

Nate Grant: As I said earlier, there are really two issues: equipment, and what are you going to do with it. An awful lot of energy is spent with equipment, understanding it, learning it, using it, utilizing it.

Then after that, then you want to now decide what to do with it. I think I would kind of say, first, what do you want to do? In other words, let's say the community wants to tell stories about the justice system, or they want to tell stories about what have you. The story should drive the car, in my judgment. The equipment, by the time you've spent all the energy in one, you have gotten to that 10,000 hours, it's going to change. Broadband is here—I go back to cable television. The question was asked when cable came to Chicago. And the companies said: “Okay. We're going to put equipment in all the areas surrounding Chicago. And by the way, communities will be wired all over America with the same premise. If you let us wire the communities, well, we can download programs, and now there's convergence, and you can do various things with cable. We will teach the community how to access it and utilize it.” Well, because technologies, in my judgment, change so fast, people got caught up in the technology versus what do you want to do with it. I would ask the question: what do you want to do? And broadband is just a matter of distributing stuff. You've still got to create. You still

got to have something in your mind like a mission. You still got to have an intended purpose.

I take all that, but right now, there's \$7 billion on the table. And all of the for-profit companies, from AT&T and Viacom and all the rest of it, all the way down to small service providers, are at the table. I think our poor communities need answers to that second set of questions you were asking, and so it's for examples of answers to those second set of questions that I'm asking. Because I could say, for example, from the African American community, we want to be free. Or I could say, in Chicago, instead of all the ethnic groups warring with each other, you know, over long histories of bloodletting, we want to unite. In other words, some kind of goal that's beyond the entrepreneurial exchange that can go on. Not: "I have videos; I want to sell them," but how do we achieve this social justice goal that would make life worth living in Chicago? That's what I'm talking about.

My thinking as to both of your questions is, if you looked at a map of Chicago and looked at the demographics for what poverty is and then asked in terms of a distribution center, what are the places where users could access the equipment and access the knowledge that everyone's talking about building on the internet? If you map where all the faith-based groups are in the poorer neighborhoods of Chicago, there's an awful lot of buildings where people gather for one purpose. They could be gathering for another purpose. Say there's 1,000 places. If a computer technology center takes three people to operate it and manage it, facilitate it, and it takes five computers, do the math. A thousand places, three people, five work stations, internet access, what's the cost? If you can put that together and get a plan through the stimulus package, you could be getting that money into neighborhoods through lots of different places staffed by people, supported by technology, and with a purpose that those places would help people access the knowledge that's available to them already.

Willie Cade: Let me just speak up. Actually, we've done the numbers, and they don't work. That's the bottom line—they don't work. And what we did do was also the map. I worked with the city of Chicago, and we did a block-by-block map on internet accessibility, both through AT&T and through Comcast—which, by the way, neither one of them wanted to share with us. We got it, and in the stimulus package there is \$350 million to create that map for the whole country. So that map is going to be available soon. The theory behind the map is transparency of the map. I think it'll be a useful tool, but I still think that the economies and some of the physicalness of the problems are very real.

I'm asking a key question, which is not how the corporate sector is going to use this. How are we going use this independent of the commercial exchange? How is the community going to use broadband? If we can't tell Congress that, if we can't tell Obama that, what's the point?

I'm saying once they lay the pipe, and broadband is available, what should we imagine is a community use of it, given the fact that culture, like language itself, is free? If you had to pay for it, we wouldn't have language. We share language freely. So I'm

saying, if you lay the pipe and it's there, the American people have now the same speed that they have in Tokyo, where you can download a feature-length film in one second, I'm saying, if that is a new world we're living in, describe the world.

Nate Grant: A brief answer is: the model was cable television. The same question was asked: if we provide all of this equipment to the community and train them how to use it, how can they access it? And the issue was availability or access versus need. In other words, if you take the same question, what we want to do is to create a continuing series of programs to inform our people, so forth and so on, using the technology versus accessing the technology, because what happened before is, after the technology was accessed, nothing happened. So you have to reverse it. You got to put that mission in front of it.

Safiya Noble: I think that a core value, at least in the African American community, is still education. Learning. I think that the highest value all of us have is to be free. I think it really is. And I think that it's incumbent upon all of us as educators to foster better education and learning. I actually think the reason why people love the internet is because they actually get to go find stuff out that they want to know about. Friends, people, experience, knowledge. And I think that we should be knowledge organizers, so that just the BS isn't organized and delivered, but the good stuff, too. And I think that we actually have a tremendous amount of people who both are capable of delivering on that and organizing that, and think that everybody wants that. We all want that. And I think it speaks to our highest human good and our highest human potential, our real, spiritual desire to be free to have control over our lives. And I think that's the thing that's really exciting to organize around, versus just consuming I Love New York for the rest of my life. Do you know what I mean?

eChicago: Can we sketch a plan for cyberdemocracy in Chicagoland?

Abdul Alkalimat

I'd like to welcome everyone to this final panel. First of all, let me say my name is Abdul Alkalimat from GSLIS and the Department of African American studies at the University of Illinois. And it is a real pleasure to participate in this final panel. eChicago is a conference that has attempted, boldly, to pick up the thread of Chicago as a sort of paradigmatic city, not only in this country, but the world. Particularly in the industrial stage of development, and not only at the level of objectively what happened, but at the level of academic study, urban sociology emerges at the University of Chicago using the city as a laboratory. And when Burgess and Park set up their first seminar, they met for two or three weeks, establishing a conceptual framework, and then sent the students out and said: "Okay, everybody. Find a block and learn that block," which, in sociological terms, would be from intersection to intersection on both sides of the street. So one block. And on that basis, they began to gather information and synthesize that information and eventually, you get the various theoretical models that came out, the spatial ecological zones of the city, and so forth. This because almost a universal paradigm, to analyze cities.

Today we're in this transition from the industrial city to the informational city. And in this way, Austin, Seattle, Blacksburg, Virginia—a number of places have emerged as sort of best practices, so to speak, as far as what's happening in the city. We've also had a lot of false starts. I mean, there was a lot of press about wireless in Philadelphia, and so forth. So we know that any technological innovation is going to have a hiccup or two. But the fact of the matter is that automobiles continue. And therefore, we know that this technology is not going away. And so we are going to continue to reflect on Chicago as an important aspect of not only where we live, but where we can gain a lot of knowledge that we'll apply in many other places.

Okay, this is the big picture panel. We've talked about a lot of things. And now we're going to talk about cyberdemocracy in Chicago. Now, this has two aspects of it. The cyber that we're talking about has to do with the hardware and the software and then the digital content that's uploaded into that environment, which can then be distributed globally. That's the digital side of things. Then there's the democratic side of things, which has to do with people. It has to do with knowledge, it has to do with consciousness or that ideological "ought," as opposed to simply the perceptual "is," and then it has to do with agency. What do people do about it? You know, how do people construct tomorrow? And that, after all, is the dialectic between digital and democracy.

Now, broadband will take the cyber to the modern limit. This is a technological revolution. This panel is about the democracy part. How do we prevent a lag between the hardware and software, on the one hand, and the wetware, on the other hand? That's us.

Abdul Alkalimat's bio appears on page 61.

In other words, we need to talk about a social revolution that advances our interests in the context of the technological revolution. We're talking here about fundamental, systemic paradigmatic change, and that is, after all, the focus of this panel. The big picture.

And having said all that, I'm going to introduce the panelists who will speak in this order. Matt Guilford from the Department of Innovation and Technology, the city of Chicago, will start off. Then we'll have Zorica Nedović-Budić. And then we're going to have Charles Benton, who is a seer, a prophet of this age, to be followed only by the engineer, the scientist on the ground measuring things, and who is also the spirit power of this conference, Kate Williams. And they'll speak in that order.

Matthew Guilford

Thank you, Abdul, for the introduction. It's kind of intimidating to be talking about the big picture and be the one who's starting. First of all, thanks to Kate for the invitation to speak here, and also, for putting together this event. It's really a testament to the strength of the digital inclusion community within Chicago that this has been happening for three years, now. I only have about ten minutes, so I want to cover three main topics. The first is discussing a change in the way the city has approached technology access that we've seen in the past three years. The second is to share and update you on some programs that support this change. And then the third is to talk about how this change impacts cyberdemocracy.

So it was very fitting that Abdul referenced citywide Wi-Fi because that was really where we were just three short years ago. And when you look at the focus of cities in terms of providing technology, there's obviously incredible work that's being done by libraries. Laura Zupko from CPL is here, and I just want to recognize her as a partner who had actually been doing this work before we even thought about citywide Wi-Fi. But I do want to talk about what I see as a pretty fundamental change in terms of the way that cities are approaching technology access, and that's a shift from, say, a citywide Wi-Fi project to a digital excellence agenda that's much, much broader. I'm going to share a bit about how that happened in Chicago and why I think it's important for other cities.

One thing that was really unique about Chicago's position in terms of how we approached Wi-Fi—and many other cities were looking at doing the same thing—is that under Mayor Daley's leadership and with the support of folks like Julia Stasch from the MacArthur Foundation, Chicago saw this idea of a citywide Wi-Fi project as something that could actually be catalytic for something bigger—that we shouldn't just be looking at broadband and Wi-Fi, but at digital excellence, or digital inclusion as a whole. And ultimately, this report that Charles had referenced in the last panel that came out in 2007

Matthew Guilford, Program Manager of Digital Excellence and Innovation at the City of Chicago. He coordinates efforts across 40 government departments to bridge the digital divide and increase the technological competitiveness of America's third largest city. In collaboration with the Mayor's Office, his team leads public / private partnerships and policy-making in areas such as broadband deployment, digital literacy and technology workforce development. Prior to joining the City in 2007, Guilford developed strategies for technology-based economic growth at the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation. He holds a degree in history and in biological basis of behavior (behavioral neuroscience) from the University of Pennsylvania. (matthew.guilford@cityofchicago.org)

really positioned Chicago to be a leader in terms of looking at digital excellence more broadly when Wi-Fi became less of a realistic option.

So what are the elements of a digital excellence agenda, and how is this different from the way that we approached this before? Well obviously, broadband access is still critical, right? That's fundamental in terms of everything that we do. But this advisory committee also identified four other drivers: hardware, software, awareness, and training and education. And the awareness piece was something that really came up in the last panel—how do you actually get people to value the importance of technology in their lives? The demonstration communities, which I'll talk about a little bit later on, are doing great work in driving this awareness.

The other shift that we see is a real difference in terms of who's at the table in terms of digital excellence, who are we working with. Government, as was the case in Wi-Fi, is still a key driver and a convener, but we've come to realize that it's critical to have grassroots organizations, like all the folks who are working through this, and also, the private sector has a really important role to play in resolving these challenges. And the third group that's critical – and why we're here today-- is the role of major institutions like hospitals, universities, nonprofit foundations.

Another thing to mention in terms of how we approach this, is the third major change. This is really, I think, the role of a city and its partners in addressing the digital divide. So before, if you look on the bottom, we have infrastructure. That was what citywide Wi-Fi was, and infrastructure will continue to be important in terms of bridging this gap. But cities are being called on to play other roles, as well, that I think is actually much healthier. One is delivering programming to bridge this gap. Another area is formulating policy, and this means formulating policy both at its city level, but also advocating at a state and national level for policies that are inclusive of cities' needs. And the third is really demonstrating leadership. Using the convening power that our elected officials like Mayor Daley have to actually get all these partners working together to achieve digital excellence.

I'm just going to talk about a few examples in terms of how those four areas are translating into the work that we're doing. The first one that I'll mention is our technology use and access study. And this is the one we began in 2008. The goal here was really to understand where, exactly, there are gaps in terms of technology use. And even more than plotting out where technology access exists, which has happened in a lot of cities, we wanted to get behind what the drivers are for why people are or aren't using technology. Because we think that just the presence of a DSL hub in a neighborhood, or even access to cable modem service, isn't enough in terms of actually bridging that divide. So we commissioned telephone survey that was conducted last summer. We're still in the analysis phase, but was supported by the MacArthur Foundation, with the State of Illinois and was conducted by the University of Illinois at Chicago and the University of Iowa Survey Lab.

And the focus of this was, as I said, to look at not only just access to broadband, but also technology skills, activities, use of technology at libraries, and barriers and roadblocks to use. And although this is in a very pre-release phase, and we're hoping to really release this in the next few weeks, I'll share with you a few of the details. We know now that about 69 percent of Chicago residents have internet at home, and about 61 percent of them have broadband. One of the things that really came out of the

study that was critical, and speaks to the importance of library science in this debate, is that about a third of Chicago residents use the internet at the library. And those third that are using the internet aren't only the ones who use the library because they have no other option. They're the ones that have internet at home but actually need help in terms of those other, softer skills in getting online and getting value out of it. Thirty-five percent use Wi-Fi in public places, which I speaks to the work that nonprofit organizations, the private sector, have done in term of Wi-Fi access points. And about 16 percent use community technology centers. And our understanding of that is that's actually a relatively high number in terms of Chicago compared to other cities. Seventy-seven percent have computers at home. And in terms of skills, about 70 percent know how to use a search engine, but only about 20 percent know how to create a website. So we've got some gaps to bridge in the skills piece as well.

And one other piece that we asked about, that we thought was really important, was to understand the degree to which this is an issue that people care about. So we asked folks: should the city have a broadband policy, and should the city be actually executing projects to address that? And the response was overwhelming: 89 percent of residents felt that we should have a broadband policy. Most of them felt that that projects should ideally be citywide, and if not citywide, serve neighborhoods that are the least connected first. And that was really powerful to us. We also asked them whether they would support a small tax increase in terms of funding that, which I know is a little bit tough to swallow. This was also last year before the recession hit. But a large majority of them also felt that they would support investing in these programs, which is key.

I mentioned that we're interested in policy, not only at the city level, but we also realized that to some extent—and Charles has worked with the federal government on this for many years, so he can speak to this as well as anybody else—that cities' hands are largely tied in terms of telecom policy. Many decisions are made by the FCC and the Department of Commerce in Washington, D.C. And we had felt for several years, especially under the previous administration, that cities' voices weren't always being heard in terms of the way these policies were being made. So Chicago and San Francisco and Boston cosponsored a resolution with the U.S. Conference of Mayors, which is the main advocacy body for large cities in the U.S., to create a national broadband strategy. And we're really excited that the stimulus calls on the federal government to develop a broadband strategy. We feel that's critical in terms of cities to be able to do the work that we need to.

The one other thing that I would add on collaborations with other cities is a piece about infrastructure. We know that Wi-Fi faced challenges, but we felt after that, that our policy goals were still the same, and they were the same goal that I think many of us have in this room. So we joined together with several other major cities to look at what some new approaches were in terms of the ways that big cities can help to bridge the digital divide and ensure universal broadband access. We commissioned a Municipal Broadband Market Assessment which is available on our website, which I'll leave you with—and there are three main conclusions that I think are really relevant. One is that Wi-Fi, in general, will continue to face pricing pressures, that citywide Wi-Fi faces real challenges.

The second is the push for “big broadband.” And by big broadband, we really mean fiber. It's clear that when you look at the numbers, and many of you have seen this, at how America competes with other industrialized nations. The fact that the average

connection speed in Japan and Korea is something like 60 or 80 megabits per second, and the average in Illinois is 3, means that we really need to be looking at how are we competing on this global stage, and how can that fuel some of these other efforts? And then the third, which is again a testament to the broader focus on digital excellence and not just broadband, was the need to address the demand side. Even if that access is there, how do we convince people to use it? And then the last point that I'll make has to do with the demonstration communities. I realize that I forgot to acknowledge Danielle DuMerer, who is the project manager overseeing our demonstration communities and almost all these other projects and is really carrying a lot in terms of all of this, and making it a reality.

How many of you were at the panel right before this and heard from the folks up front? Great. So you know that the demonstration communities are really a huge focus in terms of our efforts. The idea here is to say, if we had every institution in the community moving on all cylinders in terms of bridging the digital divide, what would that look like? And then how can we start to take those stories and move them to other parts of the city and scale them up? We've received funding from the MacArthur Foundation in terms of providing salaries for project managers, and there's also a small catalytic grant program that the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity is funding. And yes, many, many partners, about a dozen technology companies are also contributing in-kind support to this program. In terms of where we are with the process, we started planning back in January, and we're hoping to have some plans complete hopefully by the summer.

Hopefully that gives you a sampling of how the City of Chicago's addressing increasing technology access and how we think that shift has taken place. How does this tie to cyberdemocracy? We think that digital excellence is really fundamental in terms of being able to enable cyberdemocracy. Cyberdemocracy can't be real and can't be legitimate unless everybody has access to it in the community. On top of that, we see that there's definitely a role for government and others in building online and digital tools for cyberdemocracy and allowing those interactions to take place. And then, this piece that I think was touched on in all of the demonstration community projects was creating a culture of use around technology. We think that even if everybody has technology, even if we've got the greatest and latest applications, that we need to create a culture of participation that really uses those tools.

Lastly, I wanted to discuss three other trends that we see happening in terms of how municipal governments are approaching cyberdemocracy. One is obviously the explosive potential of social media. It seems like every day we read about new public figures using Twitter. Mayor Daley released a You Tube page a couple weeks ago that we're really excited about. And I just read that even the British Queen Elizabeth has it, so we're getting there. Mobility and location are becoming things that are really, really important. We think that's key in terms of enabling cyberdemocracy—getting devices like these in the hands of folks, and leveraging mobile tools in terms of facilitating interaction with government can be really powerful. And also, the location piece of letting people know what's going on in their neighborhood. What are the decisions being made that are impacting people next door to them? And then the last piece is really something that we're working on aggressively: the idea of data sharing, of putting

information out there, interfaces out there, and then allowing people to leverage those for new applications.

Hopefully I didn't go too fast and you've got an overview of how the City is approaching these issues, and I look forward to questions. Thank you.

Zorica Nedovic-Budic

My name is Zorica Nedović-Budić, and I'm a faculty member at the University of Illinois, Department of Urban and Regional Planning. It is a real pleasure to be here and actually meet the library and information science community. In this final session of the meeting, Cybernavigating Our Cultures, I would like to stress the word "culture". My session is called Looking Around. I would like to look at the perception about the status of ICT in the U.S. and what is actually going on here. I will discuss the basic framework that I use when I study information and communication technologies and the urban environment, give a few examples, and conclude by assessing how far we are in reaching our goals and what are the implications. Then I will open up our discussion with questions and issues that we can think about together.

I will start with South Korea. They have an idea and a project to develop a ubiquitous city network. The network involves over ten cities that are supported by the government not only conceptually also in terms of funding. Korean telecom is also involved as a sponsor. The goal is to develop cities that would have a variety of content, provide through a so called 'ubiquitous' environment allowing people to do anything, anytime, and anywhere. So that is the idea. They are in the process of developing some of the sites. , it is conceptualized and progress is being made. The project is not complete, but you can get a sense of where they are heading. The project is nationwide and with it the Koreans want to put their cities on the international / global map. At the same time they want to provide access to ICT to their own citizens and creating contemporary environments that are up-to-date technologically.

The slide here shows the projects. (Slides follow Zorica's remarks-ed.) One project is on the periphery of Seoul is the Seoul Digital Media City. It was conceptualized in the 1990s; its development started in 2000. It is a public-private partnership project, which is based on the principles of digital media. The implementation of that project involves a whole city with various components enhancing its digital environment in

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addition to wireless signals and high capacity broadband, e.g., street lighting sensors, digital store fronts.

Without going into details of these projects, I just want to mention, we need, over time, some assessment. Somebody else in the earlier session called for research to see what these kinds of projects provide to the local residents, if they improve their quality of life, how much they contribute to democracy, and whether they are actually cyberdemocracies. I don't have that assessment; I just wanted to show you the direction in which the places are going.

Last October I was invited to Korea to share some of the experiences with ICT going on in the U.S. My task was to describe the direction and the trends in the U.S. Given that U.S. is seen and was, for a long time, the leader in Internet technology and in various other aspects of communication technologies, it was difficult for me to express (as well as for the audience to comprehend) that 25 percent of Chicago households have no Internet access, and that 50 percent of low-income households have no access. That is contrary to what to general expectations. The perception of the U.S. is that in Chicago or other major cities there is full access, and that the “ubiquity” is achieved in the U.S., meaning that all activities are supported by ICT, which is not the case. The U.S. and Chicago are in the process of trying to reach that goal, which is not that easy. Even just couple of years back, which is a long time ago in terms of technological development, the U.S. was already behind a number of countries in terms of Internet penetration rates, and in what is called the digital access index. So in some ways the U.S. is still highly ranked, but other countries that are competing to get ahead, not necessarily of the U.S., but to develop their broadband capacity and provide ICT-based services for their societies (e.g., E-government, E-commerce, E-democracy, E-health, etc.).

The way that I look at this phenomenon when I study it is through the various aspects of cyberdevelopment. One is the actual access in the private realm, which is the individual realm. The other is the governance, or the public realm. I believe these two are the most relevant when we talk about cyberdemocracy. The third one is related to the economy or what I call the productive realm, which includes industries, businesses, services -- everything that is contributing to the economic development of the country at various scales: a place, a neighborhood, a city, or a region. The fourth one is the spatial realm, which our colleague Dr. Zook from University of Kentucky talked about yesterday. This is where many of the activities – private, public and productive are projected and manifested in terms of form and function.

Private and public realms are the ones I believe we need to focus on when we talk about democracy. I will mention two projects outside the U.S. that provide examples of how cyberdemocracy is framed and achieved with ICT. One is illustrating the national level provision; the other describes local developments, but also well supported through national policies. . The first example is Japan. The technological developments went along there as in other countries, but with a more focused attention on ICT provision. They started in 2000 with their basic IT strategy and law at the national level. Between 2001 and 2003 they had a strategy that was called eJapan, which was trying to increase the capacity of and access to technology. Then beginning in 2006, they started to move into projects that are more content and user- oriented. So once they have the basic infrastructure and access, and they have achieved sufficient penetration of technology and accessibility, the next step, is to provide content that is relevant to the communities. I

think that is a theme that has come through this conference as well. In Japan they realized that achieving access to technology and capacity is fundamental, but does not fulfill the other societal goals – in terms of education, health, and environment. Japan decided to work on providing services that are based on the demand from the users, from the population, from the community. So that's what they're moving towards at this point of time. They are talking about a ubiquitous society that is focused on user services.

As a point of comparison—and again, there might be slightly different data from different sources—in terms of the cost of provision, the U.S. capacity is about three or almost four times more expensive per megabyte of data than Japan's. And in terms of the combined speed and provision of data, it is about seven times more expensive per megabytes per second. So there is plenty of development ahead for the US to catch up with.

Finland is another example. And this is at the local level—the city of Tampere decided, in early 2000, to start a major five-year eTampere initiative. That initiative was in sync with a national strategy for the development of an information society for the country of Finland, and it was also synchronized with the eEurope initiative. There are all these levels in play that need to be considered and harmonized – one of the issues I will stress in my conclusions. Connecting back to the city of Chicago, I think it is worth mentioning that it needs to coordinate with the state and national levels, as the key actors in the enabling process for technology.

In the city of Tampere, Finland, key issues were the eInclusion and eGovernance. They recognized that education and literacy—the themes that have been mentioned a couple of times today—are important elements and that is where they put some of their effort. The goal is to enhance the potential participation in the democratic processes from their population. Some of the projects were clearly just government services, while others were focused on participation in the processes that are related to community development and community building.

The funding for eTampere was substantial. The population of the city is about 200,000 people, and the metro area is about half a million. They had seed funding just for that city, of 17 million Euro, and they generated an additional 100 plus million Euro from various public institutions. It is a huge investment that reminds us that it is very difficult for things to happen on only a volunteering (unfunded) basis. Although U.S. and Chicago have great volunteers and great efforts go into supporting various programs and local actions, the financial backing and a true intention are necessary. This was just a brief introduction into Finland's city of Tampere initiative, which is something that you can find more about.

Going back to the U.S., Chicago is one of the major cities that is perceived from around the world as one of the global leaders in many areas, including technology. And it is one of the leaders. However, it is developing very differently from how other cities and some of the countries go about their promotion and provision of ICT access. The approach here is a little bit more fragmented. This related to the nature of the framework for provision of communication technology in general. It is led by private-industry that is possibly slower and more selective, driven by demand and profit. The development and access to technology seem to be more expensive. There is no question that in general a major progress is made. There are policies at the national and state levels that guide the direction and scope of ICT developments in the US. But the local and national and state

policies are not well coordinated, which will need to happen more forcefully for more intensive development and more extensive provision across the urban and rural US.

With respect to the content provided with ICT and to the actual value to the local population, the final level that is relevant is the connection to the local processes, to community economic development, education, health and social services, culture and recreation, and so on. The user demand is the point of reference. We have plenty of goals to pursue, and my conclusion is that there is really no shortage of great ideas. One such example is the set of goals put forth by Illinois Internet Public Trust. There is an agenda that is providing the vision and the direction. I think we're going in that direction maybe in a little bit more fragmented, but also in a very determined, way.

Compared to some of the examples demonstrated by other places, maybe there is no big plan (despite Burnham's 'make no small plans' warning) or overall forceful national backing for the development of ubiquitous Chicago and cities around the U.S. There may not be a designed and delivered product, but at same time, we are going in the direction of building CyberChicago or CyberSeattle, and other local digital places. I'll stop here, and we can talk about many issues that I mentioned, which are education, motivation for development, at which level and how we can synchronize various levels of policy, and focus on content. We can learn from others, but also learn from ourselves as we go through this process.



eChicago – Cybernavigating our Cultures
Can we sketch a plan for cyberdemocracy in Chicagoland?

Looking around....

Zorica Nedović-Budić, PhD, Professor
Department of Urban & Regional Planning
University of Illinois @ Urbana-Champaign

Themes



- **Perception vs reality**
- **Framework / definition**
- **Approach / examples**
- **Reaching the goals**
- **Questions / issues**

South Korea

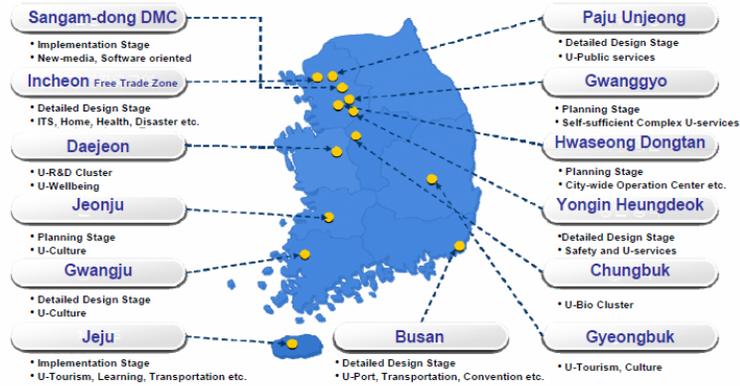
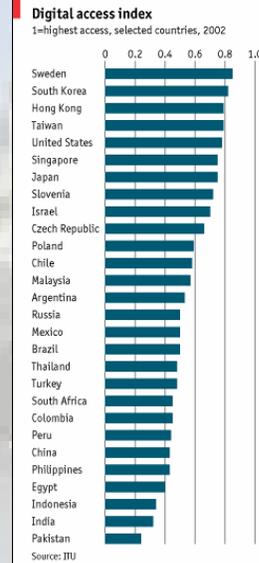
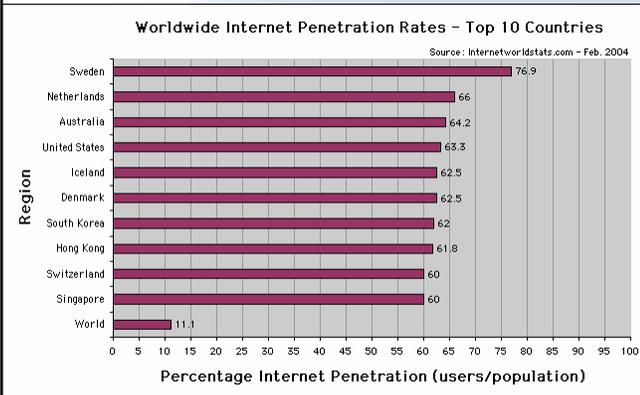


Figure 1: Planned Ubiquitous City Projects in Korea

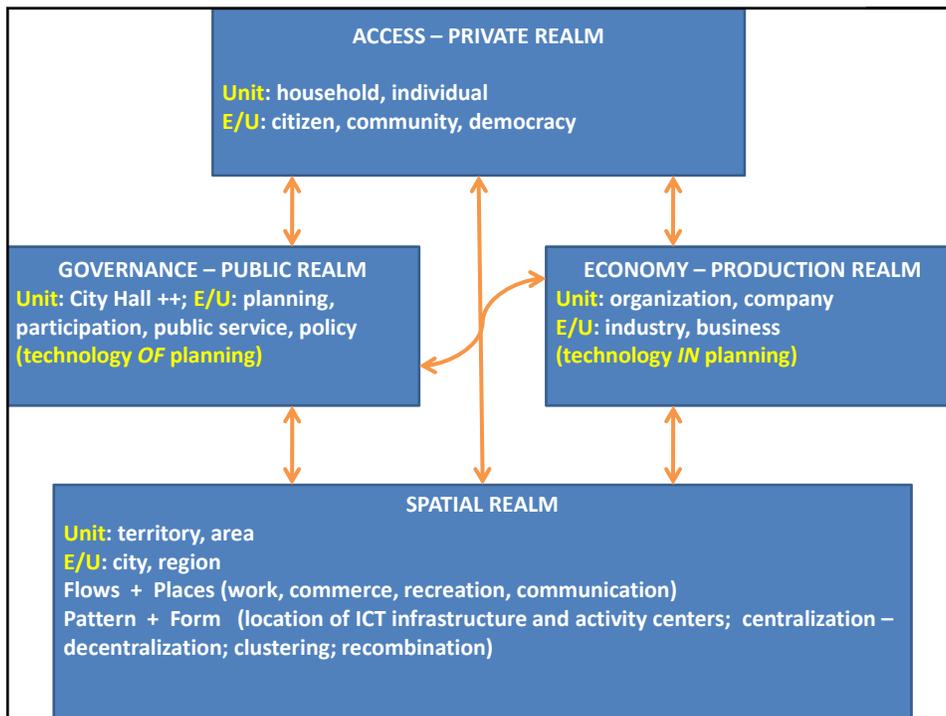


25% of Chicago households have no Internet access
 50% of low income have no access (Reedy 2008)
<http://telephonyonline.com/home/news/chicago-broadband-push-0930/>



Worldwide Internet Penetration Rates - Top Ten Countries
 Source: Internetworldstats.com

Digital access index
 Source: <http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/dai/index.html>



Japan (Arima 2008)



2000: Basic IT Strategy / Law

2001/2003: e-Japan Strategy

(Headquarters for the Promotion of an Advanced Information and Telecommunications Network Society)

2006: u-Japan Policy (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications)

Ubiquitous: universal, user-oriented (u-Services), unique

Cost: \$3.69 per mb / \$0.07 per 100 kbps (\$12.6/\$0.49 US)

Speed: 63.6 mbps / 4.9 mbps in the U.S.

Finland (Inkinen, 2008)



City of Tampere

Idea: citizen-centered knowledge society & urban digital governance

2001-2005 eTampere initiative, implementation of the national information society strategy & e-Europe initiative

Issues: e-inclusion, welfare, education / literacy, general development, access / affordability (5%) / partnerships

Funding: seed 17 + generated 113 mill Euro



Source: Kim & Jang (2008)

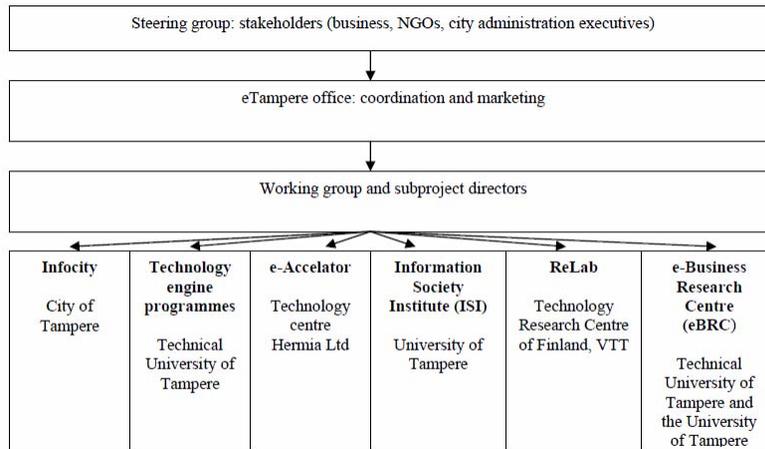


Figure 1. The information society project "eTampere" as an organisational chart.



US/Chicagoland

Major cities / Chicago still placed high in terms of ICT

Expanding coverage by broadband and wireless services; somewhat uneven, slow, and expensive

Regulatory, competition-based environment; therefore, somewhat fragmented and uncoordinated

Some policies and initiatives at federal and state levels

Activities in enabling governance and community development; but not many to support overall societal / economic progress and competition

No integration with other aspects of economic, community and infrastructural development

Illinois Internet Public Trust (2008) goals submitted in 2006 to City of Chicago Community Wireless Program:



1. Digital access and tools for all;
2. Public-private computer support and telecom service centers everywhere;
3. Computer lab access for all;
4. Community forums for telecommunication service quality improvement;
5. Local digital media and news centers;
6. Public information for consumer choice and better decisions by all; and
7. Digital literacy matters.

The question is: If these goals were all fulfilled, would Chicago be an U-city? It is hard to say. But, in a fragmented but forceful and determined way, the real cyber city is emerging. Unlike some other cities, this one is probably not going to be designed and delivered. What we need to learn in the meantime is to recognize it when it is here.

Questions / Issues



Need / motivation

Approach / levels

People – centered

Content – focused

Education

Charles Benton

We've had a wonderful citywide perspective from Matt, and also a great international perspective, which is terrific, and I thought that it would be useful if I gave you some comments from today's proceeding. As we're thinking about the theme of this session, can we sketch a plan for cyberdemocracy in Chicagoland? This is the theme of the session here. And I will try to give some quick reactions to today's multiple sessions, at least those that I've attended, and then at the end, some brief comments about Washington and the stimulus package in particular, and philanthropy. I'll try to do it within ten minutes, maybe it'll be fifteen, so with your patience, we'll roll forward.

First, the role of research: this conference is all about research, and I have raised, throughout the meeting on more than one occasion, the importance of research, which I really believe in—the gathering of data, the measuring of what works, the identifying of best practices, and the making of recommendations on occasion to policy makers on how to take successful projects to scale. I think the power of research for social change and improvement is really fabulous, and you're all in that business. Insofar as you're just researching to get points and do papers for their own sake, don't do that. Do research that's going to make a difference. That is the kind of research that I believe that Kate, quintessentially, is doing, and many others in this room as well, but I certainly can point to Kate on this one.

Steve Jones this morning—I really enjoyed his presentation. I thought his ethnic media-new media experience of migrating and mobility was wonderful—Steve, are you still here by any chance? No. He has left. Anyway, the Benton Foundation's involved in a very interesting project called New Routes for Community Health. We've got about \$4 million from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and they don't know how to give away a \$50,000 grant. I mean, it's too big for that. So, they need intermediaries, and we're an intermediary. We had 120 submissions, and out of this, picked 8 projects with the idea of combining immigrant communities, media production partners, and community managers, in teams that are building models from which, hopefully, future actions can be taken. And Steve was interested in research on this, so we're going to be in touch with him about the research, which is a fabulous connection.

Charles Benton has served since 1981 as Chairman of the Benton Foundation. He now also serves as Chief Executive Officer. He has led the Foundation through its evolution from a grantmaking to an operating foundation devoted generally to the field of communications. Charles has also had a long career in the media education and entertainment businesses, including Public Media Inc. In 1978, President Carter appointed Charles as chairman of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science and as chairman of the first White House Conference on Library and Information Services, held in November 1979. In 1980, he was re-appointed for an additional 5-year-term, during which time he was elected chairman emeritus by unanimous vote of NCLIS commissioners.

From the fall of 1997 to December of 1998, Charles was a member of the Presidential Advisory Committee on Public Interest Obligations of Digital Television Broadcasters, also referred to as the "Gore Commission", whose final report was submitted to the President on December 18, 1998. The Benton Foundation was designated by the co-chairs to serve as a home of the Advisory Committee legacy, acting as an institutional memory and tracking the debate on and progress of the Advisory Committee's report and recommendations. (cbenton@benton.org)

The CyberNavigators... CPL... Roberto Pang, are you still here? There he is, back there. Roberto and his panel—for those of you who missed it, this was an inspiring panel. These young people here, who are spending half their time, 20 hours a week, being CyberNavigators in public libraries, in 42 of the 79 public libraries, and the work that they are doing in serving their constituents, with funding from the Chicago Public Library Foundation and others; it really is inspiring. Here again, researching what you are doing, Roberto, I think is critical, and it was interesting. And Don Samuelson—where's Don? There you are—was raising the point about involving the Vista workers to help. That's free help. It's not really free, but free for the project. And then the notion of some broadband stimulus funding for this, too. Don, I do hope you follow up...and Roberto, what he said to you about the harder you work on the proposal, the more you are motivated to follow up is absolutely true. So do it.

Okay. I thought that Carolyn Anthony's presentation, from the Skokie Public Library—Carolyn, are you still here? There you go. Boy, you are an inspiration, too. The demographics of your community, 68,000 people in Skokie, 28,000 not born in this country, speaking 90 languages, wow. I admire your being sensitive to this demographic and using the new media to serve their needs, and then mobilizing, Frances Roehm. Frances is right here. What a partnership. It's one plus one equals five. It's my favorite math, really. Anyway, you guys are on a roll, and you are really a model of public library digital leadership in serving community needs—if they could all pay attention to you, you're way ahead of the curve. And you need publicity for your model that highlights the benefits of what you are doing. Obviously there's a lot more to be done here.

By the way, Robert Croneberger, whom you mentioned, when I was chairman of the National Commission of Libraries and Information Science in the Carter administration, we had a task force on Community Information and Referral Services that he chaired. So the guy that was your model was someone I knew. Is he still living, by the way, or not? No, he has passed away. Great guy.

Okay. Turning to the city of Chicago, with its Digital Excellence Demonstration Communities, I've already said my piece on this. I think in addition to research, the other big challenge, that's before all of us here, is how to coordinate between the community and institutional forces serving it. The digital excellence demonstration centers, the Chicago Public Library, the community technology centers, let alone schools and hospitals, community health centers, are all “anchor institutions” serving community needs and hopefully gathering data in the spirit of the Obama administration, which is focused on facts, data, and the application of science to governing—imagine that! There's a role for science in government. Now there's a brand-new idea. Whoa. So isn't it wonderful that in this era, we are getting back to fact-based, data-based decision making? And in technology, I'm seeing Washington—and this is really a good transition to my Washington spiel here, quickly—I'm seeing that the silos are coming down and the government is, across the board, thinking about technology use, which is very exciting. So that instead of some agencies doing a great job because their leaders believe in it, and other ones doing nothing, and then all the stuff in between, they're hiring a chief technology officer that will report directly to the president and, you know, they're getting serious about the systematic use of these tools in the building and betterment of our society's position in the world. Frankly, it's very exciting. That's my take on Washington today.

The Benton Foundation's mission: we're really into two things: policy and practice. The foundation's general goal is "communications in the public interest." This was a legacy of the Encyclopedia Britannica, which was formerly owned by our family. And so in 1981, after my father died, EB put in \$8 million as our endowment, and I had four words from his will: "Good works in communications" as my guide. Four words. We built the foundation on the basis of that not inconsiderable, but in the large scheme of things, relatively small endowment and those four words. And in our focusing on the policy, the thing we're really concentrating on now is universal broadband. We focused on universal service and put out a publication in late 2007, "Universal Affordable Broadband for All Americans," written by Jim Kohlenberger, who is a Benton fellow and now is the chief of staff for John Holdren, who is head of the Office of Science and Technology Policy in the White House. So Jim's landed in a very good spot. And he was the lead advisor on this report, which came out in December of last year, is titled "An Action Plan for America: Using Technology and Innovation to Address Our Nation's Critical Challenges." There it is.

Why is this relevant to today's meeting? The other part of our mission—the practice part, is our commitment to public service and community media, and obviously a lot of what's going on in Chicago fits in the broad sense with community media. So, the economic stimulus package, The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, in general, is \$887 billion for doing lots of stuff, and is without precedent in American history. As a small part of that, about \$7.2 billion, which is a little less than 1 percent, is set aside specifically for broadband in service to unserved, underserved, and rural populations, but also for institutional support as well, to help bridge the digital divide and all the things we've been talking about today.

As a part of this process, as I think most of you know, first you get a bill out of Congress. And then, once the bill is done, it falls to the various cabinet officers and agencies to figure out the implementation. How do we spend the money? What are the criteria? How do we get accountability on all this?

So that's the phase we're in right now, and the last day of comment on this is April 13th. Benton put in filings on both the goals and the criteria. How to push on the implementation of the goals as intended by the administration and by Congress, and then the grant's criteria, so that they favor new, innovative, non-incumbent forces to spend this money, this \$7.2 billion, which has got to be spent, all of it, by September 30th, 2010. It'll be in three disbursements, after we have the guidelines. The final guidelines will be out, ballpark, around the first of June, and then there'll be probably a June, July quickie period for submissions, then there'll be a fall period for submissions, and there'll be a submission next spring. So there'll be three shots at this money.

So that's the general picture. Now, Wednesday afternoon in Washington I had a fifty-minute meeting, with Jonathan Adelstein, who was one of the FCC commissioners, and has just been appointed head of the Rural Utilities Service of the Department of Agriculture. He is a wonderful man, by the way, one of Senator Daschle's protégées, and that's how he got in the FCC. He's a really first-rate leader, and he'll be a great leader at the Rural Utility Service. They have \$2.5 billion and the National Telecommunication Information Administration of the Department of Commerce as \$4.7 billion.

Okay, I'm almost finished. So, I also had an hour and a half with Michael Copps, who is the acting chairman of the FCC. We talked about the research because the

government has got to be accountable for the money it's giving out, and the grantees, in turn, have got to make quarterly reports to Congress. And there's got to be the gathering of data for accountability and transparency. The government can't do this alone. They need help. Well, Kate's got a great research proposal, so I took Kate's proposal, handed it both to both Copps and Adelstein. They will read it. Hopefully we'll get some positive feedback. We've got to worry about the funding. It's a big challenge. I had dinner with Kohlenberger the night before. He actually wrote a section in the National Science Foundation goals for research on the stimulus bill, and he said: "My section there was for science, but adding technology is no big deal, so we ought to be able to do that."

So I think the funding for this—you know, a couple of million dollars—is not a big deal in the large scheme of things. Not nothing, but not a big deal; and this research is absolutely fundamental. We have to have it as a country, and Kate is the perfect leader to do this because of her work on—no, you really are, Kate—because of her leadership role with TOP research. Because BTOP, the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program, is supposed to be built on top of TOP, the Technology Opportunities Program, which was from 1994 to 2006. So she's been doing this retrospective research on the databases, with TOP for some time. I should say that I got on to Kate first from Don. I just want to acknowledge that. You were responsible for my first awareness of Kate, Don.

So anyway. Copps and Adelstein got this report, and the exciting thing to me about the research—because I'm not a researcher, I'm not an academic—I'm not sure why I'm here, actually.

But the exciting thing to me — I'm not bad with big ideas, and that's what Kate's work embraces—the exciting thing about this is that the research is structured to feed data back to the projects while the projects are still working so the data and information can help improve the projects. It doesn't just judge the projects; it's to improve them. What a radical idea for academic research!

Now, I've got one last point, and I'm going to stop, because I promised to bring you a report from Washington. I was called, about two months ago, by the President of the Council on Foundations, which is our trade group in Washington for philanthropy. They were putting together a task force on Information and Communications Technology in Philanthropy—got to take a deep breath before all that comes out. So we had our first meeting at the MacArthur Foundation last Friday, a week ago today. Sharon Burns is the chief technology officer at MacArthur. She's got a staff of ten people. She used to be working for the city of Chicago. She's fabulous. So she and I volunteered to co-chair a policy subcommittee, because the council is not really into policy much. But this is an area that needs attention—technology's everybody's second priority, you know? Everybody realizes you got to have it, but it's everyone's second priority after their work in health and education and all these basic issues. So we decided, instead of talking about policy in broad and general terms, that we would ask how we get philanthropy involved in the stimulus package. Because the stimulus package law requires a twenty percent match. So, where's the money going to come from? Well, isn't that what foundations are for, in part? So there's going to be a town hall meeting at the Council on Foundations' annual meeting on Tuesday the fourth of May, and the theme of that whole meeting is Philanthropy in the Age of Economic Crisis. So this is a big opportunity.

So the dream here is, Kate's going to be making these reports—I mean, we'll knock on wood, here—that we can organize geographically, that we can send out through

the council of the 60,000 foundations in the country and see if we can make some connections between philanthropy and the decisions that are made by the NTIA and RUS about the grants on the stimulus funding. So anyway, these are some thoughts from Washington, some thoughts about philanthropy, some thoughts about the conference.

Kate Williams

The thing about speaking last is everybody steals your thunder. I was going to draw a tic tac toe, I was going to fill up all nine cells with nine ideas! But I'm just going to talk about two: innovation and sustained discussion. What we've had so much of here, and also in eChicago 2008 and 2007, is innovation at all levels. This third meeting is so far the most broadly representative: the city and the biggest library system in the area, the grassroots and the geeks and the community organizations. Together we represent a tremendous amount of innovation.

Now, sustained discussion. Every partnership that is working at these questions is engaged in extended discussion, and it can be very contentious and challenging, when they aren't people you usually talk to, and you don't feel comfortable with them yet, but that's why you're in these discussions. There is that sort of meeting where you find out about getting a grant, when you're feeling really uncomfortable, looking at who's next to you, and wondering if you're going to get it or if they are. And then there are the opportunities for extremely democratic discussions, which is how we design eChicago, and it's been successful in being democratic every year, where everyone can come and say what they think. And feel quite free to do that. So thank you to everyone for allowing this to happen.

Now we have to go our separate ways and then come back in 2010. The particular opportunity we have is this, from the top and from the bottom. From the bottom, you each have a yellow sheet in your folder where you need to start writing down who you think ought to present at eChicago 2010. That can include yourself, so please nominate yourself and pass these in on the way out.

And from the top. We are in the state of Illinois. We are in the city of Chicago. Where is our new president from? Chicago, Illinois. So this is a moment for us to make big headlines with what this city is doing, so that this city can emphatically and clearly join the ranks of these other cities that are already known internationally for their eInnovation. For example, eTampere. I heard that word from Finland for the first time today. And we now know about eKorea, at the top of all these rankings. South Korea, come from nowhere. Time for eChicago! Let's have some wine, check out our eChicago 2007 and 2008 volumes here, and see you in 2010.

About the Dominican University Graduate School of Library and Information Science

As the only American Library Association-accredited institution in northern Illinois, Dominican University Graduate School of Library and Information Science educates leaders in the library and information science professions who make a positive difference in their communities. This service-oriented education takes place within the larger context of the university's commitment to values-centered student development and is guided by relevant professional standards and core competencies. The school provides students with an excellent graduate education leading to a meaningful work life. Celebrating its 80th year of Dominican University's commitment to education in this field, the school currently enrolls over 500 students at three Chicagoland locations and is one of the largest LIS programs in the nation.

Our Mission

As a Sinsinawa Dominican-sponsored institution, Dominican University prepares students to pursue truth, to give compassionate service and to participate in the creation of a more just and humane world.



About the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Graduate School of Library and Information Science

Consistently named the top library and information science program in the nation, the University of Illinois Graduate School of Library and Information Science, founded in 1893 at the Armour Institute in Chicago, maintains a reputation of excellence and innovation. The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign was founded in 1867, and is regularly cited among leading universities in the United States.

Our Mission

People use information for analysis, inquiry, collaboration, and play—and in so doing, change the world. The Graduate School of Library and Information Science is dedicated to shaping the future of information through research, education, and engagement, both public and professional. Our mission is to lead a revolution in the understanding and use of information in science, culture, society, commerce, and the diverse activities of our daily lives.

