



pedagogical faultlines

International Workshop on Alternatives in Education

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International Workshop on Alternatives in Education
September 21 & 22, 2007, Amsterdam

Location: Pakhuis de Zwijger

Workshop organised by Waag Society (Amsterdam), Sarai (Delhi) and the Institute of Network Cultures (Amsterdam).



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<http://www.waag.org/faultlines>

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(Dutch and English version available)

The programme

Friday 21 September 2007

9:30 – 10:00 Doors Open, Coffee/Tea

10:00 – 10:30 Opening Remarks

Frank Kresin, Waag Society (NL)

Geert Lovink, Institute of Network Cultures (NL)

10:30-13:00 Lectures

Non-Aligned Learning

Florian Schneider, Kein.org (Germany)

What is usually described as crisis in education relates to the privatization and partly dissolution of the institutional matrix in the modern educational system? Today, learning is becoming a private affair and the primary goal of self-education is to perform a permanent availability of the self in real-time rather than just showing discipline in a system of spatial control. This process challenges traditional views of radical, emancipatory pedagogy in both, institutional and non-institutional contexts. What was formerly known as progressive may all the sudden turn out as repressive or the other way around. But the necessary revaluation of pedagogical concepts also opens up potentials for new forms of collaborations between non-aligned initiatives in education, no matter whether they work inside or outside of institutions.

Paulo Freire meets Tactical Media

Felipe Fonseca and Thiago Novaes, MetaReciclagem (Brazil)

In the last few years, Brazil has - sometimes accidentally - provided the conditions for a great deal of in-depth ongoing research both in social as well as in technical and methodological aspects of the deployment of wide-reaching projects and actions regarding the access to media production, free knowledge and social technologies.

Inspired among other ideas by international tactical media experiences, and based on a great deal of interaction between the civil society, different governmental instances and a group of very active autonomous networks, an innovative approach to media education has been collectively built. A thoughtful response not only to Brazilian questions but global ones, this open and replicable methodology follows a Brazilian tradition of fearlessly mixing different cultural influences, as did the tropicalia and the antropophagy movements in the last century. This critical approach puts together the ideas of Paulo Freire, the hacker movement, free software, DIY, free radio, open licensing, tactical media, cultural production and good old Brazilian party and celebration.

We intend to explore the possibilities of interactivity amongst people as a new way to produce knowledge and culture, which is sustainable with the use of free and open source software. New intellectual property licenses are also very important to make the production accessible to remix, giving back to the authors the right to publish and share immaterial and material productions as common goods. Recycling is another key concept that allows people, as an educational process, to develop the intuition and the consciousness about the end of the frontiers between art and technology, increasing the existence of the technical objects full of indetermination and more evolutive because it is open to new human cultural inputs. To present this concepts we'll screen two short videos connecting our social and art practice with the thinking of Gilbert Simondon, a french philosopher.

Friday 21 September

The Blackmail of Lack
Prabhat Kumar Jha, Ankur (India).

Schools have developed a framework of curriculum over time that does away with the problem of location. You could be in any neighbourhood, from any background and you will be reading the same material. At one level you can argue this is a must for an egalitarian education but at another level we can say this privileges certain forms of reading and learning. More so in highly uneven social distribution of entitlements, this can lead to an education of deep dis-enchantment. Here I would argue that a substantial part of the resource for any pedagogical initiative needs to address how materials are produced, who produces it and how it is mobilized in the pedagogical context. For a pedagogical context to enact a thinking- and learning process, which is able to engage with "the blackmail of lack" one needs to creatively generate new sources and modalities of knowledge. This is however a very different proposition from the two track education policy being instituted by the government, in which the poor are going to be forever condemned to an inferior quality of education in the name of providing education to all.

13:00-14:00 **Lunch**

14:00-15:00 **Break-Out Sessions**

Room A: The Long Tail in Education
Hans Pronk en Michael van Wetering, Kennisnet (NL)

Changes in environments: education in world 2.0, the Long Tail in education

- Each student will have his/her personal curriculum, enabled by tools in Education 2.0
- Current organization of education based on Pareto's principle, the new tools enable the Long Tail approach with low search and distribution cost. The cost of another unique, personal curriculum is almost equal to the cost of a Pareto based average curriculum.

Truth is negotiable

- Both professionals and prosumers alike can/will produce all types of content,
- Not all materials have enough quality but producing content is a learning experience in itself.
- The projects in the KN-SURFnet program have given insights in how to organize this processes in an educational setting
- Producers have access to professional equipment at very low cost, anyone with talent can reach a large audience
- New tools make huge amounts of data, or maybe even information, available at very low costs
- New tools offer ways to communicate about these vast amounts of material
- Students must learn to cope with these large amounts of sometimes contradictory information and find the 'truth' in that.
- Consumers have access to high quality search functionality and are not limited by high distribution cost when acquiring materials

Room B: Counter-Mapping Creative Industries in Beijing
Ned Rossiter, OrgNets (GB)

From May-July this year the OrgNets (organized networks) platform engaged a counter-mapping project of the creative industries in Beijing. Bringing academics together with urban research organizations, artists, curators, media producers and policy-makers, the project adopted the model of a mobile research laboratory as a framework for collaborative research on the creative industries in Beijing.

The following key vectors of research served as organizing principles:

- Migrant networks and service labour
- Network ecologies of creative waste
- Informational geographies vs. creative clusters
- Centrality of real-estate speculation for creative economies
- Import cultures & export innovations in architecture and urban design
- Artist villages and market engineering

This presentation will address the limits of cross-cultural and trans-geographic collaboration, the problematic of translation, and questions of network governance. Examining the logic of the prototype, the presentation argues that a 'catalogue of failure' serves as a generative device for the OrgNets platform as it seeks to extend its activities to connect autonomous teaching and research in Asia with parallel developments in Europe.

15:15-16:15

Room C: New technologies on the Internet for self-organising systems in e-learning Sugata Mitra, Hole in the Wall (India)

Learning systems that use the Internet are evolving rapidly. Distance educators continue to view E-learning as predominantly consisting of websites where students have access to materials and some, limited, interaction with mediators. The popularity and effectiveness of such methods continue to be debated. In the meanwhile, collaborative and interactive technologies have evolved on the Internet in various forms. Informal and unorganized groups of learners are using such technology for entertainment and, increasingly, learning.

In this paper, we discuss the nature and future of the key collaborative technologies on the Internet. Experiments with real-time, almost free, audio-visual interaction and learning management systems on the Internet are described. The author discusses his experience with the use of such technology for remote classroom instructional sessions and its effects on learners.

The paper concludes with suggestions on how distance educators can integrate the use of such technology in the design of online courses.

Do it yourself media education in India Jerneja Rebernak (NL)

Changes in learning practices through the use of old and new technology in unusual spaces in India becomes a greater source of understanding and dealing with cultures that preserve creativity, autonomy and activity in contrast with the business model of media production. Do it yourself media education proves that technological processes in India have grown apart from the general notion of technologically driven education paradigm. Popular modes of knowledge transmission, such as the case studies of grassroots activities of World comics India, the history of the women's movement seen through posters and the case of the Tibetan community, giving access to new media have given shape to media ecologies and alternative media education processes. Simultaneously they have developed ways for social and cultural communication. I will use each case study as a practice, illustrating possibilities for grassroots media methods, which use technology in a completely different manner from the general approach of the standard ICT for development in education.

Break-Out Sessions

Room A: Laghu Riyaaz (Minor Practices) Shveta Sarda, Cybermohalla (India)

In Delhi, a group of young researcher-practitioners has emerged in working-class and quasi-legal settlements, under the rubric of the Cybermohalla (a collaboration of Sarai-CSDS/www.sarai.net and Ankur: Society for Alternatives in Education, Delhi). Over the last 6 years Cybermohalla Labs have developed and elaborated a host of practices that animate the labs. These are named "laghu riyaaz" (minor practices). They are part of an ongoing experimentation - with learning, experimenting, researching, understanding and ways of being in a locality - that generates contexts of interactions and modes of gathering. I will be sharing notes from internal discussions about the minor practices.

A booklet outlining the practices and notes from the labs on practices will be presented. The presenter would want the participants in the session to suggest various ways of further elaborating these practices

Room B: Lifelong Competence Development Henk Sligte and Judith Schoonenboom, Tencompetence (NL)

In this session we will present and discuss our pedagogical models for lifelong competence development, which we have developed within the TENCompetence project (www.tencompetence.org). First, we will present the basic concepts of lifelong competence development in a concept map. After that we will discuss how, using what pedagogical - or better: organisational - models, lifelong competence development can be supported. Finally, in an attempt to 'teach what we preach' we will involve the participants in a reflection game, in which they reflect on what they have learned.

Saturday 22 September

16:30

Closing Lecture

Experiments in Legal Education

Lawrence Liang, Alternative Law Forum (India)

This session will be about experiments within the field of legal education, which the ALF (Alternative Law Forum) has been involved in, both within the university and outside that tries to push the boundaries between the practical/practical divide. Given the turn in the legal profession towards a non-engagement with issues of social inequity and conflict, what are the ways in which we think of a pedagogical framework that allows for 'undisciplined' engagements with issues of law, legality and power.

17:30

End

Saturday 22 September 2007

10:30 – 13:00 Lectures

Fill, Share, Preach, Teach, the Emergent World of Hindi Internet

Ravikant Sharma, Sarai (India)

It has become almost a truism to say that the Internet in general and open spaces such as wikis, blogs and discussion lists have produced other ways of knowing, parallel to old ways of producing, classifying, preserving and distributing knowledge. But are these claims universally tenable? How significant is the issue of lag when we see various public domains as having been linguistically constituted? Is it possible to see the lag itself as an opportunity to redefine the public domain, beyond the nationalist and post-colonial parameters? To the extent that there is a split between the two, how do the residents of old 'real' public spheres confront those in the new 'virtual' public domain? How, if at all, are the so-called ethics of the internet translated in new linguistic domains? Are we seeing a furious transformation not just in the way people make opinions but also what they make? My paper will try and address these questions by drawing upon the recent resurgence of content in Hindi Wikipedia and Hindi Blogsphere.

CommonCitizen Radio

José Balbino, Descentro (Brazil)

Descentro's experience with interactive live art spaces intends to bring common citizens to artistic practice, and reveal common objects as brilliant art as well. In this way the open source instruments of media production are tools we use to show a creative way to express what of local culture each one carries within. The Workshop CommonCitizen Radio Station – web radio station playing free audio content produced with free and open source software - mixes Brazilian mainstream popular music with popular speeches. The radio program is a participative process during which present people interview each other; build a musical instrument with the free and open source software pure data and watch small videos showing Brazilian experiences with extra institutional pedagogy in technology, art and popular culture projects.

Room C: Bringing statistics to life through an interactive world map

Frank van Cappelle, IIEP/ Unesco (NL)

Statistics often confuse and bore people rather than educate them. Hans Rosling has recently proved that this need not be the case - the video of his presentation of the Gapminder software that brings statistics to life has been seen by half a million people around the world since last year. This workshop will introduce a similar interactive tool inspired by Gapminder, which aims to make statistics more interesting, accessible and educational through a graphical interface centered around an interactive world map. A topic for discussion is how graphical user interfaces can make statistics and information in general, more interesting, accessible, and educational.

Provisional Pedagogy, Provisional Practice Rupali Gupte, Collective Research Initiatives Trust (India)

The discipline of architecture is increasingly moving towards specialization and empiricism and an overt need to order space. The discipline and practice remains patron-dependent, in service of those who can shell out the monies to control space. Architectural pedagogy in such a situation splits at the fault line between those who build for the market and those who don't. Theoretical enquiry here takes a back seat and is considered irrelevant.

At both CRIT (Collective Research Initiatives Trust) and KRVIA (Kamla Raheja Vidyanidhi Institute for Architecture and Environmental Studies) we have engaged in projects that resist/tweak/play out the market in ways different from the routine. Here multiple ways of ordering, reorganizing space are looked at. Moreover, engagement with the city and its multiple actors/user groups forms an important part of the investigations.

I shall take some time to speak about some of the initiatives. To name a few here: CRIT, NEGOTIATORY HOUSING PRACTICES.

This will outline CRIT's architectural practices in the field of housing that tweak the market to design housing for those outside the receiving end of the new economic boom.

Location Based Playful Learning Henk van Zeijts, Waag Society (NL)

Digital games seem to be excellent tools for facilitating and supporting situated learning. This unbinding of knowledge from a specific context fosters its transfer to new problems and new domains. Additionally, children's attitude towards computer games is the very attitude we would like all our learners to have. Therefore, it makes sense to try to merge the content of learning and the motivation of games. Frequency 1550 is a mobile city game in which pupils playfully acquire historical knowledge about the medieval city of Amsterdam. Results of the evaluation of two pilots in 2005 and 2007 will be discussed. The preliminary results show highly motivated pupils playing, learning and working on the subject of medieval Amsterdam. A newly designed online environment for learning by making mobile games will also be presented.

13:00-14:00 **Lunch**

14:00-15:00 **Break-Out Sessions**

Room A: Open knowledge and education at the new level of web paradigm Danica Radovanovic (Serbia)

As www, and now web 2.0 is growing by the second, gives new possibilities of pedagogical forms, and the main following outcomes: resources, implementation, usage, practice. We will re-evaluate and examine new forms of social - theoretical and practical knowledge in academia and science: from implementation of web roots practice, listservs, eBoards, eZines (alternative art and education forms –then), the usage of eResources in academia, education profession to the wider audience: using larger online open archives, Consortias, digital libraries, repositories, to online social networking applications, science and education blogs.

The scopes are two paradigms: human factor and digital media educational tools (human-computer interaction and its social impacts) that we use in education systems and professional practice. For the first one are indicated open source educational software, applications and tools for giving information and knowledge. We will also give a short notice on the interest and the usage of the aimed groups of those possibilities (at classes, lectures). For the second, in professional practice we will see how those social knowledge tools have impact on larger science community groups (science, educational institutes and institutions) as well as the outcome-feedback. Also, there will be given attention of e-tension between technical and the social practice due to many reasons given in previous research. As indicated in outlines, these tensions play themselves differently in various institutional geographies - the author took empirical research on three geographic points: USA, Europe (UK and Netherlands) and Serbia.

The point will be given on interaction in open knowledge and education, and the issues that are following up. There will be given the notice to the audience of the recent exemplar of implementation of social, interactive knowledge into professional practice and educational system - the concept of web of science which founder is the father of World Wide Web Tim Berners- Lee.

Room B: Sustainable Answers through Experiential Learning Emer Beamer, Butterfly Works (NL)

Butterfly Works is a foundation and do-tank, working to develop sustainable answers to social problems around the world. We partner with ngos, public and private parties, educational institutions and individual creators.

Butterfly Experiential Learning designs processes wherein young people, through self-expression, group work and case studies explore skills for quality living. Facilitated by people and media. Topics of orientation are sexual health (Nigeria), alternatives to violence (South Africa) and children's rights (India); in a broad but local context.

I will give an Introduction of Learning about Living from Nigeria Extract of video on testing and content development workshop, South Africa. Followed by an interactive session where participants experience a typical session on alternatives to violence.

Room C: Multiple Islam, Multiple Identities: a chain diary Evelyn Raat, Imagine IC (NL)

The aim of the project is to integrate a multicultural social debate within Islamic youth groups and the issues that affect them in society. To communicate by using video and internet technologies, made as letterforms of communications in a creative environment. The participants are instructed to think in a more conceptual way for their video making.

The phenomenon of the chain diary is to use a whole history, told by different participants, who create and interact with each other. Giving the web page enough resources and content open to any new participant from the Netherlands or elsewhere.

15:15-16:15

Break-Out Sessions

Room A: Bank of Common Knowledge Olivier Schulbaum, Platoniq (Spain)

The Bank of Common Knowledge (BCK) is a pilot experience dedicated to the research of social mechanisms for the collective production of contents, mutual education, and citizen participation. It is a kind of laboratory platform where we explore new ways of enhancing the distribution channels for practical and informal knowledge, as well as how to share it.

BCK is organized as an open source model of knowledge transfer, a laboratory for inventing and trying out new forms of production, education, organization and distribution, involving new roles for producers and receivers, experts and amateurs, teachers and students.

Room B: Informal learning and the digital divide Jan Lepeltak, The Amsterdam Computer Clubhouse (NL)

The Amsterdam computer clubhouses are part of international network for clubhouses. In more than hundred clubhouses all over the world young people from the age of 10 to 18 years and from underserved communities develop ideas and use multimedia and IT to realize them.

In the year 2000 the first clubhouse in Amsterdam Slotervaart was started. A few hundred youngsters from different ethnic backgrounds became part of the clubhouse community and visited the clubhouse after there school hours. The clubhouse approach focuses on what kids want and what they can. It's not curriculum driven on the contrary the key words are: creativity and development of your own products (raps, animation, websites, video etc.).

In this presentation the experiences of the last six years will be discussed.

Personalized online community learning for school dropouts
Marja Verstelle, UrWay (NL)

UrWay.nl is not a school, but its goal is to re-engage school dropouts into learning again - without compulsory curriculum, without compulsory tests. The personal interests of the participant are the starting point for learning. Participants have a personal coach with whom they work via email, during one year on average. The coach's works with the participant on an individual learning plan and guides them in building a portfolio, and with that, in preparing themselves for the next step in life. Besides receiving one on one coaching, the participants join an online community where they connect and work together with subject-experts and with each other, on their favourite subjects, from home, in their own pace. Participants may have very different backgrounds, which makes them reluctant to learning and to return to school (e.g. social fears, a long history of bullying, teen moms). They did not fit into the school system; the school system did not fit them. They do come from the same age group (15-18) and we aim at a gender balance.

Room C: Digital Me, Digital We
Wim Veen, TU Delft (NL)

Millions of individuals present themselves in profiling sites such as Facebook, MySpace and Hyves. They create virtual identities and share their experiences, views and other private stuff easily. Their virtual lives are considered to be another window in their lives or even better an extension of self. Their virtual lives are not different from their physical existence; it's just another part. The values and norms that come with these extensions of self seem to be radically different from former generations. The net generation is a connected generation, 24/7, and is prepared to share. It is also willing to care about those with whom they communicate intensively online. According to Pika Himanen, their work ethic is focused on passion and freedom, and creativity is the most important thing in their lives. Asking young employees what keep them working in an organization, they massively answer: "It is challenge". If there is no challenge in their work, they quit. And they trust in themselves for finding another challenge at another organization. They think flat, without hierarchy, and organizations where hierarchy is in place, generations clash. However, for knowledge intensive industries and service oriented businesses creativity and innovation are crucial goals for a sustainable business development. Knowledge sharing, knowledge co-creation are key concepts for future learning infrastructures of organizations. How can education prepare the new generations of entrepreneurial employees for the knowledge intensive industries and how can industries turn themselves into learning organizations? Hmm, let's see if we can share some creative ideas about this challenge!

16:30

Closing Remarks and Open Debate

Additive or Alternative
Awadhendra Sharan, Sarai (India)

Multiple sites of engagements with pedagogy organise themselves through different motivations. The most obvious, and powerful, of these is the democratic impulse that seeks to bring in different social groups from varied spatial locations into the formal and informal domains of pedagogy.

This is evident in the many pedagogical practices organised by the state and non-state actors across the world. In the case of new media education, most recently, we see the overwhelming importance of the question of access, of pedagogical efforts being evaluated by the numbers of persons, of different social backgrounds, to which new media tools are provided. In this presentation I seek to pose the question of 'voice' that may help us reflect on the nature of this number game and the focus on tools in different cultural settings.

17:30

End

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