

Open

daughter anecdote – wants to open everything.

O.E. open "not closed down, raised up" (of doors, gates, etc.), also "uncovered, bare; plain, evident," from P.Gmc. *upana "up from under, over" (cf. L. sub, Gk. hypo). The source of words for "open" in many I.E. languages seems to be an opposite of the word for "closed, shut" (e.g. Goth. uslukan). Of shops, etc., "available for business," it dates from 1824. Sense of "candid" is attested from 1513. The verb was O.E. openian, but etymology suggests the adj. was older. Open up "cease to be secretive" is from 1921. The noun meaning "public knowledge" (esp. in out in the open) is attested from 1942; the sense of "an open competition" is from 1926, originally in a golf context. Open-handed "liberal, generous" is from 1601. Open door in ref. to international trading policies is attested from 1856. Open season is first recorded 1896, of game; and figuratively 1914 of persons. Open book in the fig. sense of "person easy to understand" is from 1853. Open house "hospitality for all visitors" is first recorded 1824. Open-and-shut "simple, straightforward" first recorded 1841 in New Orleans. Open marriage, one in which the partners sleep with whomever they please, is from 1972. Open-minded (1828) is first recorded in Carlyle. Open road (1817, Amer.Eng.) originally meant a public one; romanticized sense of "traveling as an expression of personal freedom" first recorded 1856, in Whitman.

A photograph of a rectangular sign with a metallic border. The sign has the words "ON AIR" in large, bold, black, sans-serif capital letters. A vertical crack runs through the center of the sign, passing through the letter 'O' in "ON" and the letter 'A' in "AIR". The sign is mounted on a light-colored wall. There are some reflections and a small blue mark on the sign's surface.

ON
AIR

Media history. New media introduce new opportunities for social interaction
family life in front of TV instead of public life in Cinema
low power radio facilitates indie music scenes, dialogues of resistance
but these opportunities are marked by the political economic climate in which they originate
television grew out of post-war wealth and expansion of leisure time
mobiles come at a time of increased inequality, hyperindividuation, specialization, and forced nomadism
in Vancouver:
housing costs soar
poverty broadens and deepens
work flexibilizes

a time of divestment in public media - CTR, whose cracked on air sign is depicted here - now has to fundraise. CFRO is constantly under the gun from the CRTC



North america is insane

we use mobiles while driving, but also watch television, and play video games while driving
for the wealthy media are accessible in every nook of their lifeworld

for the poor media opportunities are shrinking away into corners, public telephones, public internet drying up



Internet - platform expands number of participants and depth to which they can reshape the media around them

the dream of the internet - to better distribute access to knowledge - has had limited reach

but it has had some

Wireless - in canada: we're late as compared to the ROTW world (anecdote)

surprisingly, and despite individuation implied in a western paradigm, mobiles have proven to close the digital divide better than the internet in the 3rd world

3G

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the late Raymond Williams: mobile privatisation, the atomisation of our social life, the conversion via media of public activities to domestic sphere [(1977) Resources of Hope: culture, Democracy, socialism]

current scholars such as Michael Bull (2004) bemoan the ipod's potential to lock us into individual bubbles, extending Williams' analysis to a more literal form of "mobile privatisation": utopian, private encapsulations/managements of experience in public spaces ... (2004, "Sound connections: an aural epistemology of proximity and distance in urban culture")

but these cats are only seeing a narrow selection of use patterns of media, neglecting unanticipated use of communication technologies:

hyper individuation is actually in REVERSE in the uptake of mobile media elsewhere:

examples of unanticipated uses:

- Grameenphone
- shared handsets in south Asia
- mobile hacker communities
- our very own Fearless City

technology is socially constructed in and by the networks in which they operate

cultural and economic variation produce surprising but predictable variance - community handsets, for example

Walkman

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Wireless - for us wealthy North Americans,

mobile media has potential to help lure us out of our homes and cars and bring us into direct interaction in public space -or at least facilitate our activities once we're there - forced by environmental concerns or even just by the price of gas

our trend toward a carless society is growing

mobiles are unsuited to cars anyway

mobiles are highly suited to public transit, cycling, walking

TCP/IP

a different trajectory:

Legacy of the Internet - open networks, built on a large number of small service providers - didn't start out as a commercialized communications platform

Anecdote: my first internet service was provided in 1998 by a small shop in Burnaby that only accepted personal cheques, month by month, no commitment, 56kbps. you had to walk in in person to set up an account

if you had a phone line, and could connect a machine to it, you were in the game. carriers couldn't restrict your access.

internet has since consolidated, but inherits the legacy of Open culture in its DNA (**TCP/IP**, Linux as dominant server platform, wikis, social media)

and you can still connect whatever equipment you like to it.

Apache

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Wiki

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even though we have problems and threats like consolidation and net neutrality, there is still a culture of openness

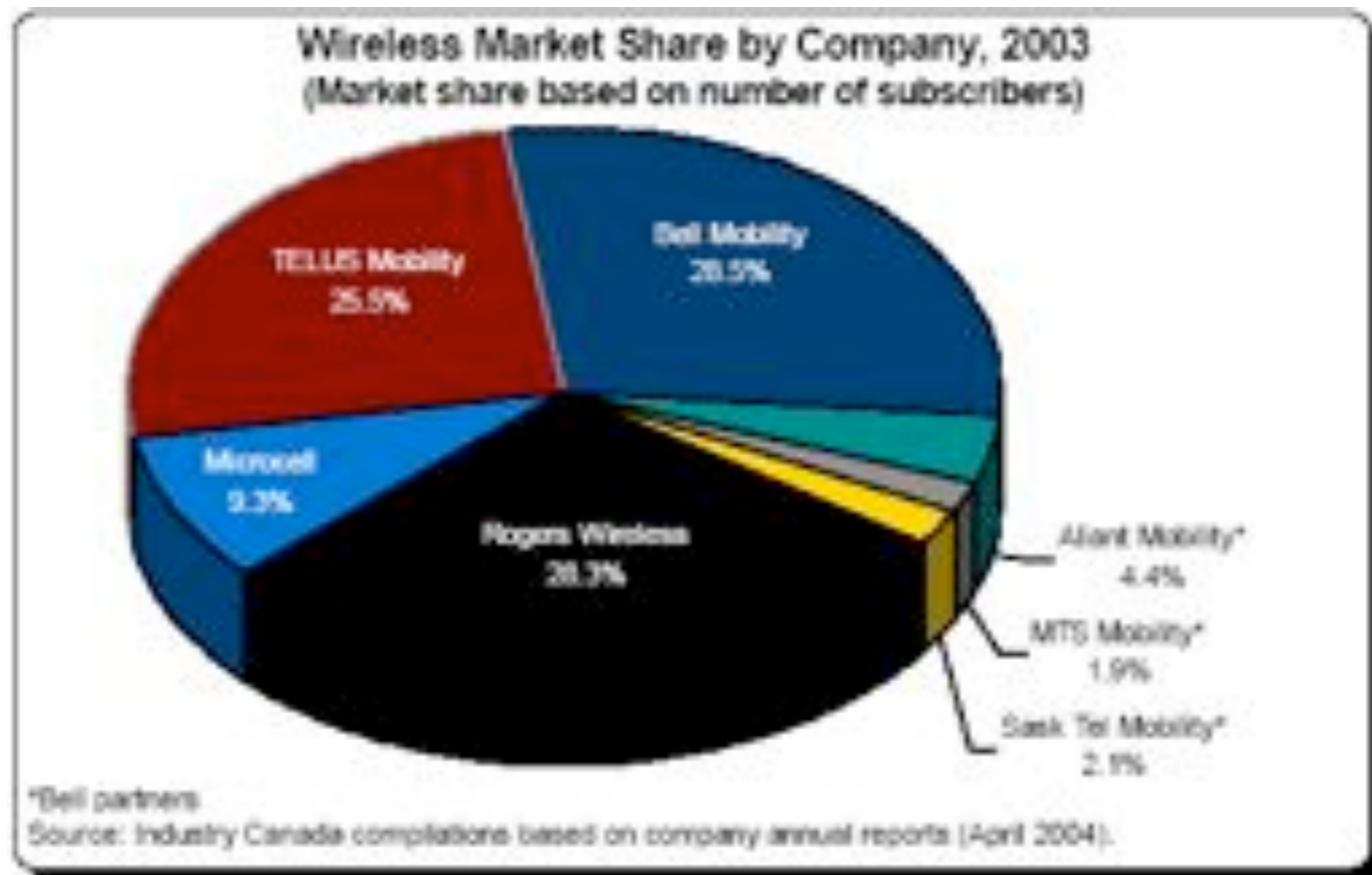
but there is also a problem of anonymity (flaming, hatred, etc., which thrive online)

Hz

Wireless - while the Internet is limited only by the number of servers and connections that can be built, wireless is limited by scarcity of spectrum (diagram, review of spectrum auction)

<http://www.cbc.ca/money/story/2007/11/28/auction.html>

spectrum auction this summer - 4 major new companies, but all must lease tower space from existing entrenched wireless providers. plus most of them (e.g. Shaw, Videotron) are massive media holding companies to begin with



Wireless - commercialized from the get-go, consolidated from the get-go (pie chart)

esp in Canada - a recent Merrill Lynch report revealed that Canada's wireless sector has a combined profit margin of a whopping 45.9% - well over the global average of 33.1%

over 95% of the wireless market is owned by Rogers, Bell, and Telus

<http://www.cbc.ca/technology/story/2008/09/04/tech-profit.html>

the new players, coming in as a result of the spectrum auction this summer, will only own about a 25% market share by 2015, according to Convergence Consulting Group

<http://edmontonsun.com/Business/News/2008/09/18/6800626-sun.html>

Telecommunications

legacy of the Telecommunications Act put restrictions on carriers providing landlines. service was legislated to be affordable and accessible

Equipment

AT&T, 1968, restricted what customers could use to connect to their network.

early MTS systems required calls to be mediated by an operator

Carter, a Texas oil merchant, wanted to enable his field workers to communicate directly – the Carterphone simply had a cradles to place the phone in – no need for an operator anymore

Carterphone decision – ATT challenged this – FCC decided against AT&T – it had to permit third party gear to connect

Later decisions in the US paved the way for computers to use tel networks, too



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but carriers still restrict what equipment we can use to connect to their networks.

- locked Telus and Bell phones - no SIM cards, even
- scarcity of wi-fi handsets
- locked up bluetooth stacks
- crap software (Windows, Palm, and the former Symbian) that dictates use patterns

is openness of the mobile internet going to happen or is it going to be closed? this is an ideological battle between capacity providers and the culture of openness which is just leaking onto the mobile now, with its increasing use as a device to access IP networks.

Open Moko - one of the possible avenues for an open mobile platform

802.11

802.11 - one answer is community bandwidth, with open wifi mesh (or at least the only answer that's obviously in front us) - wifi is unlicensed, as is some **WIMAX**

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FCC

policy decisions, govt by govt, will affect how much new spectrum is allocated to the public. the purveyors of open culture need to be actively involved in the process of spectrum management - in the US with the **FCC**, in Canada with the **CRTC**.

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wifi devices (**iphone**, **N95**) offer a partial solution, and perhaps show the way ahead whatever the policy outcomes are

B2C

open and slick and locked down (wireless carriers) versus ghettoized peer to peer meshes using open platforms

P2P

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GOOG

the other elephant in the room is development platforms - open handset alliance (goog) versus Nokia's symbian (41% handset market share), vs. Apple (single digit market share) vs. Microsoft (single digit market share)

S60

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Polis

what are the implications for public space? public space becomes a new site for this struggle (e.g. fearless city 5 seconds on city screens, e.g. olympic, lots of empty seats, athletes couldn't blog during olympics, dmca takedowns of videos e.g. husain bolt)

LBS

mobile media are all about context awareness, locative media - things find you through search instead of you finding things through search

Twit

what are the implications for art? art generates itself in the murmuring to the hives - it opens itself in public space - a Heideggerian Opening?

is Twitter really trivial, or is something else going on?

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Open Art

The work "holds open the Open of the world"[44ff]

“The world strives to surmount the earth. This is the nature of world as self-opening”

to Heidegger, it's an unconcealing, a revealing. (earth conceals, world reveals)

according to this phenomenology, art makes the world open. to do less is to not make art.

the sacrifice? authorship. it recedes into public generated art (already evidenced with youtube, mashups, etc)

Open Praxis

world is full of producers not consumers

Anon

“the telephone caller loses touch with a geographic location and a social function. he becomes truly discarnate and, in that psychic sense, uncontrollable - a phone poltergeist, as it were, who occasionally produces the obscene phone call.” (McLuhan GV 124)

are we still phantoms stalking each other?



is anonymity something that has unforeseen social benefit?

This is an Anonymous protest of the church of Scientology. they've also hacked Sarah Palin's email. they may or may not be the same people. their opponents also mirror their actions (CoS attacking the Epilepsy Foundation forum)

is this socially beneficial? is it potentially destructive? it's both!

Open ID

locative media, and the fixedness of mobile phone numbers return us to real places as, hopefully, real people, using passwords,

what Baudrillard clung to in 2000 (Passwords) is that words are passers of meaning, they metamorphose them and open us up to new universes.

Download

e.g., in field tests 3G services are seen to prioritize downloads over uploads (in speed of service, just like broadband providers) since the "we are meant to consume not produce" as viewed by ISPs.



broadband and **3G** services (e.g. Bell's **EV-DO**) will never serve public access because of the strict commercial paradigm that dominates the way those businesses operate

we download, not upload.

passwords here lead us to read our online bill; they don't enable us to bypass these processes and inhabit new social potentialities

IMBY

in the end wireless providers may not be able to answer our call for Open Mobiles, and we may need to look to grassroots initiatives in building community infrastructure - using the unlicensed spectrum that we have, while at the same time remembering that 802.11 might not be always free (e.g. **VONIC**) and keeping up the fight on the policy front to maintain and increase our channels that we use to connect to each other - in immediate, locative spaces, and over long distances.

Going Out to Be Alone

McLuhan argues in *The Global Village* that electronic society will obsolete individual identity, because the computer and high speed electronic network, linked together, extend human consciousness into the network. An individual's consciousness is accessible everywhere simultaneously, just part of the network. Just as the nail gun obsolesces the hammer which obsolesced the human hand, the computerized video network will obsolete the microphone which obsolesced the human voice.

McLuhan goes on to say "The North American goes to the movies or the theater to be alone with his date, whereas Europeans go to enjoy the audience. The North American excludes advertisements from his cinema and theater, while Europeans find no violation of their privacy from ads in places of public entertainment. Europeans, on the other hand, exclude ads from radio and television in their homes; but since there is little or no privacy in the North American home, ads are tolerated, if only because we go elsewhere for privacy." (GV [1989]: 157)

these two quotes are perhaps the most poignant insights we have for prophesying the character of North American adoption of the mobile: we will struggle with our ghostliness, our anonymity, and we will struggle with our need for privacy, especially the kind of privacy we've come to take for granted in public.

while the political economy of wireless and mobile sectors will no doubt facilitate these sorts of behaviours, with our actions, as ever is the case in media history, we must transcend the expected use implied by marketing campaigns designed to superficialize and depoliticize our interactions. at the heart of this is open mobiles, but also open people, and open spaces.