

## **The Cyberpeople Jack Implant: A Study of Remediation, Ethics, and Technology**

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Internet users are expected to make meaning from a myriad of communication modes (e.g., audio, image, and text). Bolter and Grusin (1999) explain that the concept of "remediation," a "complex kind of borrowing in which one medium is itself incorporated or represented in another medium," can facilitate such meaning-making. An example of remediation is the taking of a digital photograph of a painting for display on the Internet. As a new medium, the photograph of the painting becomes digitally portable, accessible to anyone on the Internet. But, at the same time, the photograph loses the textures created by the artist's paint strokes. With the increasing digitization of analog communications, I argue that we must understand the effects, both positive and negative, that occur through the process of remediation. Consequently, in this project, which explores a hypothetical patent for what I have termed the "Cyberpeople Jack Implant," I offer a model for such critical reflection and construct an ethical argument about the "remediation" of science via digital technology.

### **Food For Thought**

When machines meet and exceed human capacity for thought and declare themselves to "conscious entities." will we believe them?

As humans add cyber-enhancements in order to maintain a competitive edge in an age of "information overload" what will be the dividing line between man and machine?

Humans will eventually covet Artificial Intelligents ability to process more information more quickly and Artificial Intelligents will covet Humans possession of a soul and the ability to die. Both will see advantages to the other's state of being, hence both will assume that a merger of man with machine is not only logical, but also a natural step in technological evolution. On the other hand, Postman warns us that with every new technology there are gains and losses. Do we have the ability to determine what these gains and losses will be?

If the entire consciousness of a human being can be downloaded into a computer, updated in one-minute intervals, and numerous copies made for security through redundancy, how can we distinguish between the original and the copy?

New technologies replace old technologies. Who will be responsible for upgrading the copies of the human consciousness as software and hardware improves?

If mankind's technological evolution does succeed in shedding its mortal coil (the need for a human body) and attains immortality through technology, what if one decides that immortality is not as attractive or as desirable as one thought and decides that she/he wants to die, who will decide an individual has the right to die? With there being so many copies of a person, how can one be assured that all the copies have been destroyed?

**Note:** According to the guidelines of the original assignment, the only research I was allowed to perform in creating "this" project was researching the U.S. Patent Office Database. The purpose of this constraint was to see what I made of the information within the database without external influence. The readings and web sites I have suggested all came long after this project was submitted February 24, 2006. As I continued to discuss these ideas with others, more and more people began to make incremental suggestions as to where to seek new information in the area of interfacing the human brain with machines. Hence, I am grateful for contributions made by Dr. Jody Shipka, Dr. Jennifer Maher, Dr. Gail Orgelfinger, Daniel Reiner, and Jonathan Deane in reverse and forward engineering "this" multi-modal communication. The exhaustive list of contributors to "this" project may be found under the heading "Acknowledgements" within "Goals and Choices" of "this" project.

### **Suggested Readings**

*The Singularity is Near* by Ray Kurzweil (2005).

The main difference between this book and his earlier writing, *The Age of Spiritual Machines*, other than 250 additional pages in the new book, is that Kurzweil cites hundreds of scientists and their research all working on incremental breakthrough's in various disciplines that when combined will lead to a marriage of man with machine.

*The Age of Spiritual Machines* by Ray Kurzweil (1999).

Kurzweil is a futurist and an entrepreneur in the field of artificial intelligence. Based on previous information and trends, Kurzweil creates a "roadmap" and discusses the breakthroughs that will be necessary for a marriage of man and machine. In essence, Kurzweil is an advocate for short-circuiting the slow process of biological human evolution and accelerating the process through the use of technology. Kurzweil illustrates the future of computing and the natural stages of progressions that will be made in forecasts of ten and twenty year periods at a time.

*Robo Sapiens: The Secret (R)evolution* (2006).

This is a video documentary worth looking at the subject of current research being performed by scientists who are seeking to interface the human brain directly with machines.

*Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology* by Neil Postman (1993).

Postman does devote a chapter in his book to computing technology, but mainly argues more from a point of "remediation." Technology remediates itself, and when it does, there are always gains and loses switching from an old technology to a new technology. If nothing else, Postman warns us to beware of those who uphold technology as faith.

*Remediation: Understanding New Media* by Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin (1999).

This is an excellent source to begin an exploration of "remediation" and new media communication theories.

## Suggested Readings (cont'd)

*At Play in the Fields of Writing: A Serio-Ludic Rhetoric* by Albert Rouzie (2005). Rouzie argues that since the 18th century a split occurred between seriousness and play and one could not flip back and forth between the two. This split continued until the Internet became accessible to the general public through the use of a Graphical User Interface (GUI) browser, such as *Mosaic 2.0* (1993). As more users began to come online, more and more people began to experiment with their newfound freedom of being anonymous on the Internet. Users would enter bulletin boards and chat rooms with fictitious names in order to remain anonymous. Being a virtual person within a virtual community provides users with the ability to say things one normally would not say in face-to-face contact. Users would flip back and forth between serious writing and having fun with their freedom to the point of being ludicrous.

Rouzie calls "this" style of writing *serio-ludic* shortening the word "serious" and "ludicrous" (play) and combines them to form the adjective-adjective compound modifier *serio-ludic*. Rouzie argues that the division between work and play is an old Victorian socio-cultural hold-over in the English language and the Internet has begun a major healing between the long standing division of work and play in rhetoric.

I argue that the language of science is not only difficult to understand by other than the trained scientist, but also remains inaccessible to the general public. Why not explain the language of patents by using a genre that *edutains* (educates and entertains) its intended audience. By applying good techniques of technical writing, combining *narrative* with *sketch* and using techniques of Rouzie's *serio-ludic* rhetoric, I have created a hybrid genre that makes patents more accessible to the general public. I call this new genre a *serio-ludic* narrative-sketch, that when combined, not only educates, but also entertains the reader, hence *edutainment*. This is the specific genre the "Re-patent" has been written in.

*The Ambiguity of Play* by Brian Sutton-Smith (1997).

This is an excellent source for an introduction to Adult Play Theory, an area highly under-researched by academia. When one performs a search on the topic, most literature has been written analyzing child play, but not adult play, for it is assumed that adults do not play.

## Suggested Web Sites

*Roboethics.org* <http://www.roboethics.org>

This is a good place to start to learn about ethics applied to Robotics, guiding the design, construction and use of the Robots and Artificial Intelligents.

*The Three Laws of Robotics* [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laws\\_of\\_robotics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laws_of_robotics)

This passage in the Wikipedia acts as a good starting point for the three fundamental laws that will need to be built into Artificial Intelligents for protecting human beings. These laws were created in 1942 by Isaac Asimov, the writer of countless books in science fiction. This is only one suggested site as there are many others discussing the three laws of robotics.

## **Suggested Web Sites (cont'd)**

*ICRA '07: 2007 IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation 10-14 April 2007, Roma, Italy* <http://www.robotics.org/icra07/index.php>

One of the agendas of this workshop was to work on the details of ethical considerations for Artificial Intelligents. In other words, discussions concerning protecting Artificial Intelligents from Human abuse, i.e., a Artificial Intelligents Bill of Rights. Scientists are already considering the rights of Artificial Intelligents before these entities are animate or conscious.

A web site version of this presentation may be found at

<http://www.theintegralworm.com/toct01.html>

This site illustrates by applying "remediation," there are always gains and loses moving from one mode of communication (analog sketches, 3-D objects, sound files, written text, etc.) to another mode of communication (digital web page, digitizing analog documents, digital drawing, hyperlinks, mp3 files, etc.)

I can be reached at [p\\_christopher\\_paul@yahoo.com](mailto:p_christopher_paul@yahoo.com) if there is anything you would like to discuss in reference to this presentation or any other areas. My current interests are artificial intelligence, neuroscience, mathematics; particularly Chaos Theory and Markov Chains, statistics, philosophy. ethics, play theory, writing process theory, boundary crossing theory, theories of composition within a socio/cultural settings, and theories in new media composition.