Inter*faces*

54 • Spring 2003

HCI 2003
starts to materialise in Bath
due for completion in September

Words, words, everywhere, nor any stop to think

Joined-up thinking with Buckingham Shum & ClaiMaker
Cassandra laments lost lyrical love
Kilgour chews his words carefully
Croucher's CubistFrog and Laura's Linux Lingo
Cockton sounds off but McEwan heads off!

contents

View from the Chair

Drop the red pants and lose the red faces?

Will we ever drop our red UserMan overpants and don professional attire? Will we take pride in HCI methods that demonstrably deliver across product contexts? Can we drop the matching red faces when confident predictions about designs fail to materialise in use? We will not, unless we take HCI methods seriously and create better methods through research, and monitor and improve methods in practice.

Developing professionalism is a key goal for the British HCI Group, an inclusive group that seeks effective interactions between educators, researchers and practitioners. Indeed, I can think of no true profession without such a virtuous stakeholder triangle.

Without research, a profession cannot develop. Without education, it cannot endure. Without practitioners, there is simply no profession.

Practitioners are thus absolutely necessary, but they are not sufficient. Without close co-operation with educators and researchers, professions ossify and die out as trade unions of vested interests.

Today, there are only HCI specialists and no professionals. No professional body currently accredits and polices practice (just calling ourselves 'professionals' is silly). There may never be an HCI profession. Instead, existing professional bodies such as the British Computer Society, the Ergonomics Society or the British Psychological Society may agree on mutually recognised specialist accreditation.

Does it matter whether we become HCI professionals or accredited specialists? Many of us already are professional members of the BCS, ES, BPS or whatever. Do we need two professions and dual allegiances, or do we need additional specialist qualifications that provide appropriate assurances for clients, customers and (ultimately) users?

Either way, a body of knowledge has to be mastered, demonstrated, and continuously updated. Mastery of knowledge is necessary, but not sufficient. We must also demonstrate effective competencies, or knowledge remains utterly academic, in the pejorative sense. But this is not the only sense of academic.

There is the positive sense of mastering a subject and supporting inspired students in their own mastery of the subject, of extending and repairing a body of knowledge, and of applying knowledge in practice in a way that commands respect from full-time practitioners. So, once again, only an inclusive group can develop accreditation for HCI specialists.

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Editorial

The power of words is a running theme throughout this issue – though we seem to have more pictures and diagrams than ever before! Several are of Bath and its campus, which will host a great HCI2003 in September.

After too long an absence from these pages, Simon Buckingham Shum returns with details of what he's been up to. The ClaiMaker project threatens to allow us to comprehend what people mean when they write and cite. As Cassandra's spiky attack, on the unusability of some academic literature, displays, this is not a moment too soon. In what he threatens to be the last of his Veteran's Columns (cue write-in campaign) Alistair Kilgour also thinks about what some of the HCI vocabulary actually signifies, and muses on the effectiveness of words as we try to communicate across disciplines and with normal people.

Never neglectful of the acerbic capabilities of prose, bodyline bowler Gilbert Cockton lobs in a couple of short pieces in his usual irrepressible style. Hopefully these will provoke a storm of letters and emails, with which to fill the next issue.

Words are the currency of conferences, of course, and this time of year always supplies a rich collection of conference and workshop reports and previews. But these are not merely prosaic! Bryan-Kinns & Hamilton report on the madness in Aarhus – telepresent lamps, bicycle wheelies and multi-sensory seedpods are but a few of the non-text interfaces. Cairncross earns her first centrefold, previewing the forthcoming HCI Educators' in Edinburgh at the end of March. This two-day workshop is for anyone interested in the HCI capabilities of graduates. There are some excellent undergrads coming through: Tom Croucher presents a student's eye view of information architecture – a notion too often neglected and that could only help the poor benighted nomadic workers that Stavros Kammas hopes to help through his PhD. Barbara Crossouard has a detailed review of the HCT Workshop at Sussex where a number of other doctoral students presented and discussed their work. Xristine has outdone herself once more with a bumper crop of seven book reviews.

Laura Cowen increases our vocabularies with her bluffer's guide to Linux. You will shortly be name-dropping distros around your colleagues with a kernel of accuracy. I'm pleased to welcome Laura as Deputy Editor for this issue, not least because that means she'll be doing my job from the next issue. It's hard to believe that three years have passed since Janet Finlay passed the job on to me, I've had such a great time. But issues 42-54 of Interfaces would have been full of typos, poorly laid out and ill-structured had it not been for the professional skills of Fiona Dix, and they would have had no content were it not for the contributing editors, including Xristine, Alistair Kilgour, Martha Hause, Alan Dix and Alex Dixon (who edited issue 50 in my absence), and of course the dozens of individual writers. Thank you all.

So that's it for now from me in this role – I remain as BHCIG communications chair – coordinating this publication, UsabilityNews, the website, mailing lists and future channels. Thank you for reading, and Alan's given me, on page 26, the last (ahem) word!

Tom McEwan
retiring editor

RIGHT TO REPLY

Make *Interfaces* interactive! We invite you to have your say in response to issues raised in *Interfaces* or to comment on any aspect of HCI that interests you. Submissions should be short and concise (500 words or less) and, where appropriate, should clearly indicate the article being responded to. Please send all contributions to the Editor.

To receive your own copy of *Interfaces*, join the British HCI Group by filling in the form on page 27 and sending it to the address given.

NEXT ISSUE

Interfaces welcomes submissions on any HCI-related topic, including articles, opinion pieces, book reviews and conference reports. The next deadline is **15 April**, but don't wait till then – we look forward to hearing from you.

with thanks to commissioning editors:

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Deadline for issue 55 is **15 April 2003**. Deadline for issue 56 is **15 July 2003**. Electronic versions are preferred: RTF, plain text or MS Word, via electronic mail or FTP (mail fiona@hiraeth.com for FTP address) or on Mac, PC disks; but copy will be accepted on paper or fax.

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PDFs of *Interfaces* issues 35–53 can be found on the B-HCI-G web site, www.bcs-hci.org.uk/interfaces.html

ClaiMaker: A Semantic Web Tool for Modelling, Analysing and Visualizing HCI Literature

In *Interfaces* several years ago (Issue 39), I proposed the use of 'relational metadata' as a way to connect research publications to each other as a form of 'semantic citation'. Since that earlier proposal, the EPSRC (in their wisdom) funded the *Scholarly Ontologies* project [1]. In collaboration with Elsevier and the *International Journal of Human–Computer Studies*, we have been building an environment to investigate the new avenues opened up by semantic web and visualization technologies for scientific publishing and argumentation. This derives from a long history of visual hypertext argumentation tools [2] going back to the formative visions of HCI pioneers Bush and Engelbart. In this article, I'd like to bring the HCI community up to date on progress, and, for those of you excited by it, to invite your collaboration to take it forward.

Literatures as semantic networks

The key idea is that literatures are large networks of claims and counter-claims – *interpretations*. The authors and readers of documents see them as making different contributions, and as holding different relationships to other work. Arguing about the nature of these is precisely what a lot of research is about. What would it mean for publishing and learning to make these claims explicit as visualizable, analysable network structures?

ClaiMaker

ClaiMaker, *http://claimaker.open.ac.uk*, is the first technology that we have released from the project. It provides a way to associate concepts with documents, and to make connections between those concepts. A set of relations is provided derived from theoretical and pragmatic principles, reflecting the discipline-independent 'moves' that researchers make when they publish new work. For instance, contributions might be *theoretical*, *methodological*, or *empirical*, and they might be *an example of*, *a challenge to*, or *an extension of* existing concepts. Figure 1 shows how one does this through a menu-driven web interface.

As the network of (quite possibly contradictory) claims grows from contributions to the server, tools are needed to make sense of it. The underlying discourse ontology provides the backbone needed to prevent the network from becoming unintelligible spaghetti. We are adding *Discovery Services* that enable one to pose the kinds of queries to a literature that students and researchers long to ask, but which have no meaning in conventional digital libraries: *Which documents disagree with this one? What is the intellectual lineage of this idea? What papers share these theoretical foundations? Why is this paper cited?* Figures 2 and 3 show examples of the visualizations that we are experimenting with.

Overlaying ClaiMaker onto the HCI digital library?

The HCI community has some excellent, large digital libraries at its disposal, such as the HCI Bibliography project, www.hcibib.org, and the ACM Digital Library, www.acm.org/dl, plus of course all the journal, conference and institutional websites. But these are just huge
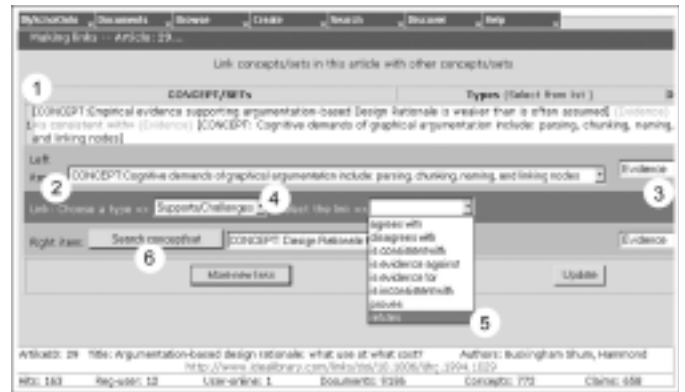

Figure 1: User interface to ClaiMaker, showing how a researcher can build a set of claims.
Key:
1 A *claim* that has already been constructed, ready to submit;
2 the *Concept* to link from, which has
3 been assigned the type *Evidence*, and
4 linked via the Relational Class *Supports/Challenges*,
5 more specifically, *refutes* (selected from the dialect-specific menu).
6 The user then searched the knowledge base for a target *Concept*, *Set* or *Claim* to which they wish to make the connection.

information oceans. There is much knowledge therein, but the only way to access it is by reading large amounts of text! ClaiMaker aims to assist with the sensemaking process that must start as you enter a new literature, or start to distill the results of a search. Conceptually, it sits as a layer 'above' any literature (online or otherwise), to enable the expression of interpretations, and counter-perspectives. The fact that there are already HCI digital libraries in existence frees you from having to enter that boring metadata, and get on with the interesting work (as a knowledge worker) of analysing and mapping the meaning of those resources.

Educational opportunities

Although we started out with professional scholarly publishing and discourse amongst academics as our focus, this work naturally opens interesting possibilities from an educational perspective, if we extend the work on concept mapping to literature mapping.
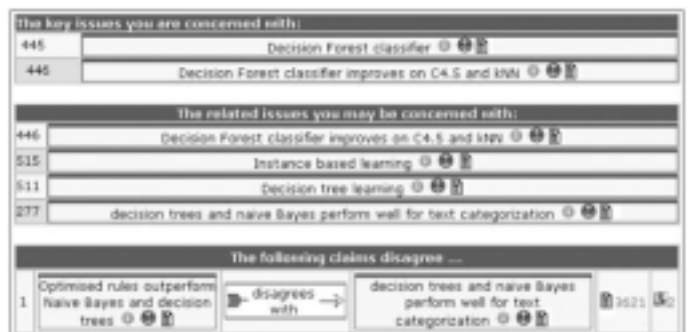

Figure 2: What papers challenge this paper?
Key:
ⓘ clicking displays concept metadata;
ⓞ sets the concept as the focal concept, to show incoming and outgoing relations;
▤ links to the document metadata/URL;
▨ links to information about the concept's creator.
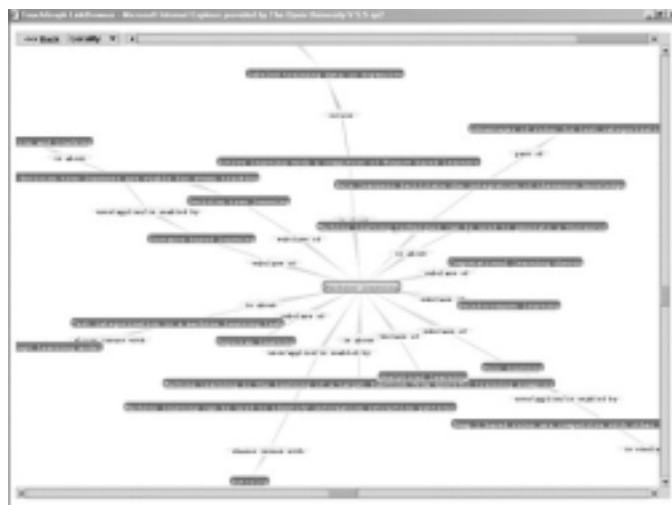
Simon Buckingham Shum

Figure 3: A map radiating from a central node of interest, showing the semantic connections (claims) between concepts that have been made.

- For those teachers who already ask their students to construct and share concept maps, ClaiMaker adds the dimension of knowledge-based services for interrogating those structures.
- Research students from undergraduate to PhD levels may find ClaiMaker an interesting medium in which to model their literature reviews for projects.
- ClaiMaker is a semantic web environment for crafting succinct maps of the key debates in a literature, as pioneered on paper by Horn [3].

The grand vision...

We hypothesise that ClaiMaker may be an early example of how scientific publishing could evolve beyond pure text as its mode of dissemination, and move towards 'native internet'

representations. If so, new practices would become standard. Your research papers would not be just static documents on a website, but would have a semantically enriched presence in a claims-network, enhancing the likelihood of your work being discovered by interested parties. Research groups would publish their work as libraries of concepts and maps that summarise their worldview, and claimed contributions, serving as resources for other groups to reuse.

An invitation to collaborate

The HCI community is a candidate 'early adopter' of a technology such as this, given its interest in novel user interfaces, digital libraries, and its literacy with the web. We invite you to have a play with ClaiMaker (there is a test 'Sandpit' database with some sample data to experiment with). Our hope is that groups in different disciplines catch the vision of a new, 'net-centric' way of publishing and analysing research claims. Having modelled part of their literature in the system, and demonstrated to their own satisfaction its potential as a way to publish and analyse the connections between ideas, this can serve as a relevant exemplar for communicating the idea to their wider community. How could the HCI community benefit from having key parts of its literature in this form? If you or your group want to participate in this project, or use ClaiMaker for your own purposes, then we'll do all we can to assist.

References

[1] Scholarly Ontologies Project: http://kmi.open.ac.uk/projects/scholonto

[2] For a comprehensive overview of this emerging field, see *Visualizing Argumentation: Software Tools for Collaborative and Educational Sense-Making*, (Eds.) Paul Kirschner, Simon Buckingham Shum, Chad Carr (in press). Springer-Verlag [www.VisualizingArgumentation.info]

[3] Robert Horn: *Mapping Great Debates*; www.stanford.edu/~rhorn/

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Deflections Product Recall

Gilbert Cockton

There has been a great January discussion on William Hudson's marvellous UCD list (ucd@lists.syntagm.co.uk, but it may be full!). Practitioners refreshingly rejected the prejudice that academics so lacked practical value that practitioners must go it alone.

Personally, this was heartening after my *interactions* Business column (*Sale Must End!* with Alan Woolrych, September + October 2002) was 'reflected' on by Harley Manning (*Reflections: Must the Sale End?*, November + December 2002). Ideally, *interactions* would have commissioned a dialogue between Harley, Alan and I to move the issues on, but the editor's email appears to be broken. I got no reply to my emails.

So, here's *Interfaces*' first *Deflections* column as an answer to the tendency, in certain parts of the HCI world, to bury debate. As a companion to my chair's column, *Deflections* will use Harley's issues to open up a discussion on accreditation of HCI specialists. Do respond!

Issue one is how well old inspection methods combine with newer contextual design. Here, an accredited specialist must know the difference between mainstream inspection methods and contextual design. Would you accredit someone who told you the latter is already part of the former?

Issue two concerns method assessment. Accreditation question: "How do you prove that a missed problem was really missed in an inspection?" Should accredited specialists understand how to validate inspection methods by reliably classifying hits, misses and false alarms?

Issue three concerns analyst competence. Harley asks: "Are analysts the solution or the problem?" Answer: accredited analysts would be the solution; the problem lies within too many unaccredited ones.

So, where do you want to go next decade? Do we take HCI method improvement seriously? Can we be treated like professionals if we prefer excuses to competences?

So, rephrasing Harvey, "Are HCI specialists the solution or the problem?" The answer is both. Accredited ones are the solution, self-proclaimed ones are the problem. We urgently need to indicate to the public who is who. The big question is, what should they know, and even more important, how must this be demonstrated in effective practice?

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CubistFrog.com: an Adventure in Information Architecture

Tom Croucher

For some time I have been becoming increasingly interested in Information Architecture. I have been considering what I, and many other people, mainly use computers for. One of my primary uses of computers and, indeed, the Internet, was finding information. My previous experience of Human Factors in Computing had not really prepared me for methods to enhance this user goal in web sites. Enter Information Architecture, a discipline that aims to organise digital information for users. IA takes from several disciplines, including more traditional disciplines such as library science, and more modern, including HCI. If you talk to many Information Architects you will find that they come from highly varied backgrounds, reflecting the variety of skills involved in the subject.

At some point I decided that providing good ways for people to get information was where I wanted to aim my efforts. This is why I started on my current project, or adventure as a friend called it, CubistFrog.com. Over the last four months I have been working towards making a web site to provide both a resource and a forum for people involved in the disciplines surrounding, and including, Information Architecture. Ironically it was this task itself that really brought home to me what Information Architecture means in a project. For the first time I had taken on a project which not only kept growing the more I worked on it, but also one in which I had to look at all the human aspects personally.

Eric Reiss' version of card sorts using post-it notes

The true value of Information Architecture becomes very apparent when you have to start classifying content for many different backgrounds of user. In traditional media, items are only classified in one place, but in the digital world they appear in multiple locations. Information Architects commonly use techniques to help solve these problems more easily. Card sorting is a method in which you write down each topic on a card and then sort them into categories, in order to quickly work out where items should be. It is particularly useful when used on sample users, to see what categories users expect items to be in. It was this, and other Information Architecture techniques, which allowed me, with the help of some friends, to work out the structure of the new site.

Information Architecture provides a way to allow radically different types of users find the information that they need with ease, critical in any modern web site. This is more than just information retrieval. Often people are unsure of what they need and it is Information Architects who have pioneered the thinking behind the ways that we browse sites such as Amazon or Yahoo!. Of course Information Architecture should go hand in hand with HCI, as Christina

Wodtke, the Information Architect at Yahoo!, told me recently:

> You use usability methods to understand the person you're designing for before you begin design, and you use them during design to see if you are coming up with good solutions and you use it toward the end of the cycle to assure that you have gotten it right… But you still have to design. IA helps there.

This emphasises one of the things I am keen to promote for CubistFrog.com, understanding between disciplines for

Human Factors on the web. There are many great e-lists for HCI and IA such as the ACM's CHI-WEB and the SIG-IA list run by ASIST. Although many subscribers are members of both lists I think that more communication and exchange of ideas from these communities can only be a good thing. In the future I hope that CubistFrog.com will encourage academics and professionals to share ideas and to interact beyond the scope of their speciality. You may be saying right now, "But I do these things anyway!". Well, Information Architecture has grown out of common sense, and puts a name to some of those things you already did and some you didn't. It is time to think not just how people interact with computers but how they interact with information and that is simply what Information Architecture is about.

Take a look at your web sites, and consider how Information Architecture could make a difference.

CubistFrog.com is due to be launched online shortly; there is a mailing list for people wanting more information about it, or those wishing to contribute. Please send an email to info@cubistfrog.com or visit *http://www.cubistfrog.com* .

Further information

Information Architecture for the World Wide Web (2nd Edition), Lou Rosenfeld and Peter Morville, O'Reilly, 2002

Information Architecture: Blueprints for the Web, Christina Wodtke, New Riders, 2002

Practical Information Architecture, Eric Reiss, Addison-Wesley, 2000

William Hudson at Syntagm keeps a comprehensive guide to e-lists at *http://www.syntagm.co.uk/design/disclists.htm*

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A Bluffer's Guide to Linux

Laura Cowen

I installed Linux on my laptop because, well, it seemed like the cool thing to do. Why is Linux cool? Because it is 'not Windows'. You see, it's not cool to like, or use, Windows. If anything is too 'Microsoft-like' in Linux, it's just not cool any more. I briefly considered getting an iMac because they're supposed to be even cooler (you can see I take my computing seriously) but I am not a Mac-fan. Mac-lovers can shout as loud as they like but you will never convince me that a Mac is a more usable alternative to Windows. And besides, I like having two mouse buttons, or even three, à la the old Acorn machines.

So, I installed Linux and I'm reasonably happy with it so far, although I've discovered some crucial rules for survival in the 'cool' Linux universe.

Getting the name right

It is vital that you pronounce the word 'Linux' correctly. The Linux kernel was created by, and named after, a young lad in Norway called Linus. Americans pronounce Linux *Lye-nux*, which makes sense as they also pronounce Linus *Lye-nus* (the '*u*' as in '*us*'), as in the Peanuts character with the blue security blanket. However, British devotees uphold the *tomaydo/tomarto* tradition and pronounce Linux with a short '*i*' sound, as in 'pernickity'. And although the Norwegian pronunciation of Linus is *Lee-nus*, using *Lee-nux* is liable to get you lynched.

Getting it free

If you listen to anyone talk about Linux for long enough, they will start talking about software being not 'free as in beer' but 'free as in birds'. At this point you should nod sagely, and not say "Mine's a pint". Beware: as Linux is really warmed over Unix (beloved of the old and the very geeky, not very usable by anyone else, and liable to rot your guts in the early morning), the phrase 'free as in Real Ale' may be more appropriate.

Linux, and much of the software available for it, is distributed 'freely'. The exact details of this 'freedom' aren't important, but it basically means that one person can do all the work, and someone else can make the profit. As such it is one of the reasons that Linux is proving so popular in business.

Well, nearly free...

Linux is free as long as you have a zippy internet connection for downloading several CD-ROM's worth of installation files. If you don't have a decent internet connection, you can still get it free … as long as you pay about £35 for the book that comes with it. Of course, buying a boxed set of CD-ROMs that comes with technical support from PC World is nowhere near awkward and obscure enough to be cool.

Choosing a distro

Linux is a kernel (the vital bit). A bundle of software that runs on a Linux kernel is called a distribution (or 'distro'). Distros can be designed for different purposes; the differences are simply what is included in the package. There are various well-known distros, such as Mandrake and SuSE, but I installed Red Hat Linux because I'd heard a lot about it.

Red Hat is the Microsoft of the Linux world. Even non-Linux users will probably have heard the words Red and Hat and Linux in the same sentence a few times. Therefore, it is not a 'cool' distro to run. Also, much effort has been put into designing an easy installation process. This makes it a seriously uncool distro. Remember, the more obscure and more awkward to use the distro, the cooler.

What's in a name?

Windows has nice program names. Notepad is a pad for notes, and Calculator does sums. If you are writing a Linux program, give it a name that will mean nothing to anyone outside your immediate family. If someone can look at the name of your program and guess what it does, then that is very uncool. Ideally, your program name should be a recursive acronym, such as Zinf, which stands for Zinf Is Not Freeamp.

Laughing at newbies who ask what a program name stands for is considered cool.

Choosing a desktop

The next step is to choose a desktop. The two most common desktops are KDE and Gnome. Never express a preference for either desktop in company unless you are sure that everyone else agrees with you as to which is better. There are people prepared to go to war to defend their GUI.

Recent versions of both GUIs have even been subjected to the same sort of user-testing as Windows XP's interface. Which, of course, makes them … uncool. A better bet is a GUI that has no visible buttons, icons, menus or taskbars. In fact, the ideal Linux GUI lacks everything that would make it useful as an interface.

Using Linux

There is no standard location for any file on Linux. That would make it way too easy to find a file when you want it. Also, to be cool, you should compile your programs from their original source code, rather than relying on a nice installer program.

And any 'real' Linux usr types incomprehensible commands in command windows to make things happen. As this is much more user-unfriendly than a point-and-click GUI, the coolest thing to do is run a GUI and then operate only from a command line window within it.

And inevitably…

With its increasing popularity, Linux itself has become too 'Microsoft-like' to be cool (see Lycoris and Lindows), and so geeks everywhere are migrating to even more obscure and awkward OSs in order to be that much cooler than the rest of the crowd. Now, where've my FreeBSD disks gone?

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Conference Report: NordiCHI 2002
Notes from a small city

The people of Copenhagen have a joke that goes along the lines of, 'Why does Denmark have Intercity trains when there is only one city?'. Of course, the response to this joke is that there is a second city, Aarhus, which is where we encountered and took part in NordiCHI 2002, the second Nordic conference on HCI.

Aarhus is a compact city with interesting indigenous architecture. We were inducted into the Danish design ethos by means of the conference reception at Aarhus Town Hall, a building typical of Danish functional design to which a town hall tower was added in the 1950s by popular demand. The resultant building is now a source of civic pride and joy. Functional design is considered in every aspect of Aarhus life, resulting in minimalist traffic lights without sunshades, given the typical weather in the northern tip of Jutland. A curious myth is that the warm and welcoming inhabitants of modern-day Aarhus are descended from the Elvin folk who inhabited the deep forests surrounding the area in the fifth century, a topic that is debated throughout the pubs and bars of Aarhus!

The plenary talk of NordiCHI 2002 was given by the inimitable Mihai Nadin, professor and head of the Computational Design programme at the University of Wuppertal. His stirring opening speech railed against the lack of conceptual distance between humans and machines in conventional HCI as he saw it. He was particularly concerned with the reprogramming or dumbing down of humans to fit in with machines' capabilities, as opposed to designing machines to help us develop, be creative, and become inspired. This was a great start to a conference in the Nordic countries where one would expect a high level of Activity Theory inspired work, considering machines as mere tools with which we change the world, from a community-centric viewpoint of course.

The main conference programme itself achieved a satisfying balance between theoretical, methodological, industrial, empirical, and tools-based papers. However, at times there seemed to be a lack of depth to some of the papers, and not enough glue between the papers, relating, for instance, theory to practice, or vice versa. One of the most promising theoretical papers involved a critique of talk-aloud techniques as within the toolbox of usability testing techniques. The presenter, Janni Nielsen, went on to discuss what kinds of problems one may encounter with such techniques, and the possibility of post-hoc interviews as a means of elucidating usability issues. However, there was a lack of glue to link these theoretical notions to practical applications. One was left thinking, "yes, but so what, we already know that there are problems with asking users to think aloud when performing tasks – that's one of the considerations to take into account when designing studies".

Similarly, Tore Urnes and his colleagues extended the ideas of participatory design (PD) by using a theatre metaphor in which usability specialists take on the role of stage Directors, users take on the role of Actors, and domain objects become Props. While this may provide conceptual anchors for users to better grasp the ideas of PD, and how they fit into it, there is little evaluation of the metaphor and its potential benefits and restrictions. Nonetheless, we await the results of their future work.

Thus while the theoretically-angled papers seemed to offer few obvious practical implications, the contrary situation was exemplified by papers that took a more empirical or tool-oriented slant. As one example, we cite an interesting paper by Konrad Tollmar and Joakim Persson, from the Interactive Institute in Stockholm. That paper described a system for supporting remote presence, allowing physically distant people (e.g. in different cities) to get cues of other people's presence in other locations.

F Hamilton and seedpod

In this case they had developed lamps, which illuminated when family members entered rooms in their own houses geographically remote from the lamp. Thus, as a daughter perhaps entered her own house in Stockholm, the lamp in her mother's house, say in Malmö, would light up, indicating the daughter's remote presence.

A study was then conducted with three families to see whether some level of intimacy was fostered between the family members. However, there was no notion of theoretical implications, nor how applicable this approach would be in situations outside the three families considered. Thus, while the conference attendees clearly warmed to the concept, from a design perspective, we were left wondering about the scope of applicability of this blue-sky research. Interestingly, though, this type of work illustrates how HCI, as a discipline, is maturing, or at least expanding in scope, to address non-work issues.

Indeed, NordiCHI was indicative of a growing trend in HCI conferences – the expansion of the field out from basic work settings into areas of fun, leisure, and play (see the growth of meetings such as Computers and Fun, work by academics such as Monk looking into fun, the fun workshops at recent CHI conferences). This is a positive move away from the desktop and into the wider realms of technology in action across strands of life. NordiCHI's nod and wink in this direction included not only full papers such as the one just discussed, but also an aesthetic artefact session, in which local interaction design students exhibited their work (curiously eclipsing the refereed poster session).

Interactive bicycle

Artefacts included such novel ideas as bicycles that sounded like horses, and giant seedpods that attempted to give the feeling of seasons through heat, light, and sound. These were not just toys or creative follies, but attempts to meet some user requirements. For instance, the seedpod / season device was not just a whimsy, but was intended to communicate the changes in our environment over time, rather than a conventional multimedia presentation on a flat screen. It was a device that appealed to, and utilised more of, our senses. Similarly, the horse-bicycle notion was not as bizarre as it seemed at first. It was designed to meet a need for children within the city to experience some form of nature within an urban environment. On a more immediate level, the sight of bearded academics trying to pull wheelies to make the bicycle neigh was really refreshing given the perpetual drizzle of October!

The wheelie-pulling academics reflected the overall spirit of the conference, which was inclusive, open, and friendly. Maybe the ghosts of Activity Theory and socialism live on in the community spirit of Nordic researchers and practitioners? Such an atmosphere made the conference constructive rather than confrontational, colourful rather than cliquey, and open rather than obtuse.

The location of some of the more prominent members of Nordic academia was a mystery that hung over the conference. Bødker was spotted, but others such as Kuutti and Engestrom were nowhere to be seen, and sorely missed.

Nevertheless, the conference reception was an extravaganza of fine food prepared by one of Denmark's top chefs, with music and entertainment – a brass band quartet that ran around the dinner tables singing 'Don't worry, be happy' – making for a highly entertaining and surreal experience.

To sum up, NordiCHI 2002 contained a balanced range of papers from theory to practice, but lacked evidence of interrelation between, or depth within, the themes.

Curiously for a Nordic conference there was a lack of socio-theoretic approaches and derivatives of Activity Theory, which, for us at least, had been one of the potential attractions of NordiCHI.

In terms of moving HCI forward, the conference itself helped to move the discipline out of the desktop into multimodal environments with its inclusion of interesting and invigorating aesthetic artefacts. Moreover, the general spirit of the conference was constructive and inclusive making it a positive experience for those who took part. We look forward to our next outing to Tampere in 2004 and encourage others here in the UK to join us.
Photos by N Bryan-Kinns

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Important Dates
April 7, 2003 Submission deadline
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www.smartgraphics.org/sg03/

BHCIG Reports
Education and Practice

The E&P Group met for its first 'official' meeting in December and agreed four priority activities for the immediate future. Each of these activities builds on previous work done within the main Exec before reorganisation. Each now has a small sub-group of the E&P group, which has particular responsibility for taking it forward. The main activities are:

1 **HCI Educators' Workshop** We want to further develop this successful event into two workshops held annually in April and as part of the September conference with continuity of theme and outcomes. The workshop needs to include practitioners to ensure relevance of HCI teaching but must also provide a forum for educators to share experience. [For information about the next workshop in April at Napier see pages 12–13.]

2 **Curriculum Development** The British HCI Group last developed an HCI curriculum in 1995, which was incorporated into the BCS examination curriculum. We suspect that this is now out of date! We will be exploring HCI curricula from foundation level through to masters and within continuing professional development as well as recommendations of teaching practice suitable to HCI.

3 **Accreditation** Although a fully fledged professional accreditation scheme may be a long way away, we need to address how HCI is represented within other professional accreditation and development schemes, and to consider ways of benchmarking HCI skills and knowledge. There is also the possibility of developing an accreditation scheme for courses based on the curriculum development activity.

4 **Marketing and awareness raising** We need to identify (with the Comms group) who it is that we are trying to reach in terms of education and practice and how we should go about it. Students range from undergraduate to PhD; practitioners from usability professionals to professionals in other disciplines. We may also wish to 'educate' the general public about HCI issues.

As well as these core ongoing activities, we are exploring a range of new projects. These include: providing annotated and reviewed HCI resources via the web site; developing a student portal with access to job opportunities and a mentoring scheme to allow shadowing of professionals at all levels; a master class programme aimed at practitioners.

So, busy times ahead… if you are interested in being involved in any of these activities, or have ideas for other things that you would like us to be doing, please contact the E&P Group Chair: Janet Finlay. You are more than welcome to join us!

Janet Finlay
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Research

Interacting with Computers 15:1 Jan 2003

Editorial: intelligence and interaction in community-based systems (part 2)
corresponding author Dr. K. Stathis
citation information Vol 15:1, pp 1–3

Agent mediated retailing in the connected local community
corresponding author Dr. M. Witkowski
citation information Vol 15:1, pp 5–32

Multi-agent systems support for community-based learning
corresponding author Dr. Y. Lee
citation information Vol 15:1, pp 33–55

Using conversational agents to support the adoption of knowledge sharing practices
corresponding author Dr. T. Nabeth first named author Dr. C. Roda
citation information Vol 15:1, pp 57–89

Adding cultural signposts in adaptive community-based virtual environments
corresponding author Dr. E.M. Raybourn
citation information Vol 15:1, pp 91–108

Designing interactive interfaces: Theoretical consideration of the complexity of standards and guidelines, and the difference between evolving and formalised systems
corresponding author Dr. I. Alm
citation information Vol 15:1, pp 109–119

The effects of movement of attractors and pictorial content of rewards on users' behaviour in virtual environments: an empirical study in the framework of perceptual opportunities
corresponding author Dr. C. Fencott
citation information Vol 15:1, pp 121–140

Dianne Murray
dianne@soi.city.ac.uk

Conference Preview
HCI 2003: Designing for Society, University of Bath, Sept 8th–12th

Tom McEwan, Publicity Chair

By the time you read this, the full papers and tutorial proposals will be in the hands of the peer reviewers, whose ratings and comments will be considered by the programme committee in late March, with the successful submissions receiving notification before CHI.

The rest of the conference organisation proceeds apace – under the stern helmsmanship of Eamonn O'Neill and his trusty treasurer Peter Wild, the committee met in Bath on a sunny day in January, toured the venues and debated over several hours the structure of the week. The deadline for all other submissions isn't until 9th May, but everything is starting to take shape. Dave Clarke and team have prepared an excellent website for which Philippe Palanque and Eric Barboni have supplied a very usable and useful online submissions process.

Catriona Campbell has put a lot of work into Industry Day (back in the traditional one-day slot but this time on a Thursday). Building on the strengths of the EUPA contribution to HCI2002, she has fashioned an attractive structure for the day. She has two outstanding keynotes awaiting

confirmation (including one from the e-Envoy's Office) and parallel tracks covering Expert Practice, Industry-based Research and Knowledge Transfer.

The Knowledge Transfer track, (a timely innovation at the national conference, given the UK government's announcement of 'third stream funding'), is designed for those from industry who are new to HCI to get a comprehensive primer. Specific invited panels include: writing a business case for usability, getting UCD into the design cycle, accessibility v usability and methods for UCD. This culminates in the conference dinner, at the stunning Roman Baths and Pump Room, leaving delegates supercharged about the society we are designing for, before a final conference day of more traditional HCI research activity.

I flew to Bristol from Edinburgh – surprisingly cheaply with BA – and made the trip to the campus by public transport in 90 minutes, and back within 45 minutes by car. Committee members who travelled from London took just over an hour by train (after two hours to get across London!), and apparently the trains run back to London into the wee sma' hoors for any day-trippers. The halls of residence looked nicer than some recent conferences, and the facilities were excellent. There's also going to be a big marquee in the grounds for the exhibition, which will give us all a chance to get a bit of fresh air and network in between sessions.

As we went to press, news came through that Hiroshi Ishii from MIT has agreed to be one of the keynotes. This is a tremendous coup for the conference, and everyone I've talked to about this today seems genuinely excited. Look out in the next issue for a review of Hiroshi's career and achievements, as well as more information on the other keynotes. Subscribe to HCI2003-News on *http://www.hci2003.org/* to be kept informed about the latest updates.

Tom McEwan
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HCI Educators' Heads North
The A B C (Appropriateness, Benefits and Costs) of D-E-F- (Distributed, Electronic and Face-to-Face) Learning in HCI

The 6th HCI Educators' Workshop will be hosted by the Napier University, Edinburgh, on Monday 31st March and Tuesday 1st April, with the support of the Learning and Teaching Support Network centre for Information and Computing Science (LTSN-ICS).

As the alphabet soup of the title implies, the HCI curriculum continues to expand, while students are presented with an increasing variety of ways to learn. Through a mixture of invited speakers, interactive sessions, and posters, including plenty of opportunity for discussion and exchange of experiences, the workshop aims to provide a highly participative forum in which to explore the widening range, multifarious contexts and innovative methods of HCI teaching and training.

The workshop will be structured around key themes. Invited speakers will lead off the discussion, and their presentations will be followed by interactive sessions. These will be in a panel format that includes three short papers, followed by open discussion. There will also be a progress report from the British HCI Group's newly formed *Education and Practice Group*.

Workshop Outcomes
By participating in the workshop, delegates will

- develop a greater awareness of key topics issues facing HCI educators and trainers;
- exchange best practice with colleagues from other institutions;
- identify new ideas to inform their own teaching practice thereby enhancing the learning of their students.

All delegates will receive a set of workshop proceedings and it is planned to disseminate outcomes in external publications.

Workshop Themes (Outline)
There will be four main sessions devoted to the following themes:

- The HCI Domain
- Accessibility
- Graphic Design and Interface Design
- Current Issues in Teaching, Learning and Training for HCI

Each session will start with presentations from invited speakers. These will then be followed by an interactive session in which three short papers will be presented, followed by questions and discussion. Workshop posters will further enhance our consideration of these themes. The short papers and poster overviews will be included in the workshop proceedings.

The HCI Domain
This session will focus on the scope and boundaries of HCI, in the context of what appears to be an ever-expanding body of relevant theory and diversity of application domains, ranging from usability engineering to interaction design, from interacting with computers to interacting through computers, and from work-based to home and leisure-based applications.

Invited speaker
Professor David Benyon, Chair HCI Research Group, Napier University

Accessibility
How can we best design applications and devices that meet the needs of all users? How can we help make our learners and trainees aware of these issues? What assistive technologies can we use to help users with special needs? How can we make our curriculum more accessible?

Invited speakers
Lorna Gibson, David Sloan, Dr Anna Dickenson and **Professor Alan Newell**, (all from Applied Computing, University of Dundee) "Including Accessibility within undergraduate computing courses"
Dr Alison Crerar, Chair, Edinburgh Branch BCS, Organiser for Scotland of IT-CAN-HELP, a network of IT professionals helping disabled people with technology

Graphic Design and Interface Design
Interface design: an engineering discipline or an art? How can graphic design influence interface design? Do learners need graphic design principles?

Invited speaker
Professor Brent MacGregor, Head, School of Visual Communication, Edinburgh School of Art

Current Issues in Teaching, Learning and Training for HCI
What should we be teaching and why? How should we be teaching it and why? What learning pedagogies are appropriate for HCI?   How can new learning technologies best be used to support our teaching and learning? What is industry looking for in our graduates? What is industry teaching our graduates?

Invited Speaker
Dr Janet Finlay, Chair Education and Practice Working Group, British HCI Group

In addition to presentations by the invited speakers we are also looking for contributions to allow us to explore and discuss these themes further. We are keen to encourage contributions from trainers and other practitioners from industry.

Key Dates and Costs
The social programme is optional and costs an additional £45
- Monday March 10th – Deadline for early bird registration (£85)
- Wednesday March 26th – Deadline for late registration (£100)

- Monday March 31st 10.30am– conference starts
- Tuesday 1st April 3.30pm – conference ends

Other Information

There will be time to relax – co-chair Alison Varey is setting up a whisky tasting on the Monday evening, followed by the workshop dinner.

Accommodation details can be provided on request.

Registration costs will cover the two days of the workshop, coffee and lunches, while the social programme will cost an additional £45. Registration is open to all those with an interest in the workshop themes and is **not** restricted to those presenting papers or posters.

Registration forms are available from the LTSN link at www.hcie2003.org.

If you have any questions then please feel free to contact me, and I hope to welcome you to Edinburgh in the spring.

The British HCI Group's Educators' workshop has run annually since 1998, attracting around 40 of the UK's top HCI lecturers and professors each year:
2002 Department of Information Systems, University of Portsmouth
http://www.tech.port.ac.uk/staffweb/rosbottj/hciWS2002/
2001 Department of Computing and Electrical Engineering Heriot-Watt University
http://www.cee.hw.ac.uk/events/HCI2001/
2000 School of Computing, South Bank University
http://www.ics.ltsn.ac.uk/events/hci2000/
1999 School of Computing, South Bank University
http://www.ulst.ac.uk/cticomp/hci99.html

Sandra Cairncross, workshop co-chair
s.cairncross@napier.ac.uk

Workshop Programme (provisional)

Monday 31st March

10:30 Registration
Coffee, Networking & View Posters

11:00 Welcome and Introduction
Dr Sandra Cairncross, workshop co-chair

The HCI Domain

11:15 **Keynote presentation: Exploring Interaction Design**
Professor David Benyon, Napier University

12:00 Interactive Session (panel presentations with discussion)

13:00 *Lunch,Networking & View Posters*

Accessibility

14:00 **Keynote presentation: Including Accessiblity Within Undergraduate Computing Courses**
Lorna Gibson, David Sloan, Dr Anna Dickenson and Professor Alan Newell, all of Applied Computing, University of Dundee

14:45 **Keynote presentation**
Dr Alison Crerar, Edinburgh Branch BCS

15:30 *Coffee, Networking & View Posters*

16:00 Interactive Session (panel presentations with discussion)

17:00 Close of day 1

Tuesday 1st April

9:00 *Coffee, Networking & View Posters*

Graphic Design and Interface Design

9:15 **Keynote presentation**
Professor Brent MacGregor, Edinburgh School of Art

10:00 Interactive Session (panel presentations with discussion)

11:00 *Coffee, Networking & View Posters*

Current Issues in Teaching, Learning and Training for HCI

11:30 **Keynote presentation:Education and Practice: bridging the divide**
Dr Janet Finlay, Chair Education and Practice Working Group, BCS-HCI Group

12:15 *Lunch,Networking & View Posters*

13:15 Interactive Session (panel presentations with discussion)

14:15 Where Next ? Discussion on the activities of the Education and Practice Group Working Group

15:00 Closing Remarks Professor Alistair Kilgour of Realaxis Consulting

15:15 Coffee and depart

The Cassandra Column

'Rage, rage against the dying of the light…'

Cassandra Hall

At a recent workshop we discussed student reading. The consensus appeared to be that students don't read much at all and some of them don't appear to have much of an ability to do so. This wasn't just a problem with computing or psychology students but arts undergraduates too. It wasn't a preserve of the New Universities either so those of us in the Old can't slap each other on the back and snigger.

Now, it's true that the price of academic books is beginning to make them look like some sort of dreadful luxury or status symbol. I'm even starting to be sympathetic with that way of assigning class by counting the books people have. Because unless you can make friends with every author that's any good, you can't afford to buy the things if you're this side of professor. And I am, and likely to stay chairless if God and my VC have anything to do with it. And I'm fed up, but notwithstanding.

It was sad, the way we all wanted our students to read. We wanted them to read academic papers to keep abreast of current developments. We wanted them to read the seminal papers of the past to see where we had come from. We wanted them to read newspapers so they'd know what was going on. We wanted them to read text books to get a wider picture. We wanted them to read novels to feed their imaginations and to develop a love of words. I wanted them to read poetry and Richard Dawkins to stop them believing in pseudo science. I was outvoted. Hardly surprising really when such a lot of HCI thrives on pseudo science and now there have been attempts at a recent HCI conference to stave up anecdote and, as if that wasn't enough, to put the boot in on grammar as well. But the students themselves share Robert Louis Stevenson's belief that: "Books are good enough in their own way, but they are a mighty bloodless substitute for life."

The big problem with asking students to read is one that I suspect isn't going to win me any friends. Let's face it, a lot of the papers and books aren't exactly a bundle of laughs. Have you noticed how many papers are ghost written by Boring and Tedious? And I feel guilty if I ask students to read stuff I keep by my bedside to send me to sleep.

Why is it that so many writers think that unless it's hard going it isn't real academic stuff at all? Richard Dawkins doesn't write like that. Neither does Steve Rose. Even Stephen Jay Gould is only slightly tedious (mostly because he never shuts up about baseball). Richard Feynman is more entertaining even than Terry Pratchett and only marginally less useful. HCI is the most interesting subject I know of outside of physics so how come we academics manage to make it so unpalatable for our students when we write? I've seen the most entertaining, erudite, witty and charming of people turn into harpy hags when they start writing. Why can't they put all the charm they project on stage into a book or paper?

And then there's the bigger problem that so much of what is written pays scant regard to what has already been written and some of it is very badly written as well. I was brought to this rather depressing belief after reading articles written by those writing for the Web and then thinking of the years of

work HCI had put into tackling the very problems they were bemoaning or, even funnier, shouting 'eureka' over because they'd just (re) discovered the solution.

Why are we continually reinventing the wheel but this time with hexagonal sides and spiky bits? They say that science advances by building on the shoulders of great scientists but the Web seems not to have recognised shoulders at all and is obsessed with bits much lower down and often used as terminology for nonsense. Is it we don't read? Or is it that the people who write don't aim it in the right direction so the people who should get the information never see it? I find myself lamenting the energy wasted on solving problems that already have solutions. But then no doubt ergonomics felt that way about early HCI. And I suppose there's always the chance they might find a better solution if they aren't saddled with our mind set.

There's a temptation always to blame this on the youth of HCI, computer science and software engineering. We act as if some time in the distant future it'll all be okay because we'll have matured and won't make these daft mistakes. But it isn't really like that.

A while back, I saw snippets of a Channel 4 programme on why buildings collapse. Being impatient with the series, which, although very good, concentrated on what people felt rather than what went wrong, I bought the book. Now, don't dismiss it as not being about HCI because here's the trick. It sort of is. It's certainly about engineering and having read it I came to the conclusion that all of the failures I witness in software engineering have parallels in civil engineering. One horrendous, depressing story followed another. I began to wonder why people could repeat mistakes. Surely, if you got it wrong and people died you'd warn others? But it wasn't that simple, and it didn't always happen. They didn't read. They didn't know where to find the information. They didn't even know the information was there.

And actually, that's what science is like too. I may have presented a cosy and idealistic picture of science, building on what has gone before, but that isn't entirely true. If it was, there wouldn't be such quarrels over who invented/discovered something or other first.

Why doesn't the Web read us? Because it doesn't know we're here – not really. Gilbert Cockton touched on this in an earlier issue. They don't read us. I know of one leading light who was invited to speak on HCI issues at a CS conference 'because CS educators aren't integrating HCI into their courses'. The conference aimed to 'pass on tips to HCI educators' at which point I have to admit to thinking: 'Hey guys and gals, we don't need tips, it's you that needs tips from us!' And all this after my dearest friend has told me quite blithely that after 7 years of it, she isn't doing CS conferences anymore because: "I've told them all there is to know about integrating HCI and now they need to get on with it." Be real darling; they haven't started to listen yet. And in fact, they didn't even know you were talking to them.

I read a lot when I was a student. Probably all the wrong things. I still do that too. The worthy book reviews in *Interfaces* always depress me because instead of reading the

latest tome I'm reading the latest Pratchett or Dawkins. But when I was a student there was less to read and fewer distractions. It was possible to order books from other libraries or to buy your own copies but mostly there was enough around to be going on with. In a field like computing, it isn't that easy. There are journals galore, magazines, books, articles on the Web, and so on. It is impossible – actually and virtually – to keep abreast of everything. Most of us have learned to skip read, skim and dip. And actually, in order to work out what to read, we check what the writer has read first. And we do that by checking citations.

I used to be amused by the way that the book reviews editor went on and on *ad nauseum* about where the citations were and whether they were readily available. I thought she needed to get a life. But I've grown up since then and I sympathise now. The first thing I do when getting a book is to read the dedication (I won't read anything dedicated to loved ones because I know the book will make me sick, all that sloppy insincere pandering ugh!) then at the preface, flick through the contents and look at the list of citations. It tells you a lot. You can guess the mind set by looking at what's referred to. You can gauge the argument and how well supported it is. I can work out how trustworthy and modest a writer is by how they use citations. And it's not just me. At HCI 2002 an academic remarked that he'd looked at how citations were used and sometimes – more often than is good for us – the citation referred to just didn't support the argument. This is scary stuff.

Citations are there to support arguments. They are there to show the process of proof. They are not there to make ourselves look learned – no amount of name dropping shows you to be well read if you don't understand the content and misuse the author. They are there too so that others can verify your argument and look at fuller sources if they wish. They are there for the reader, not to prove the intellectual prowess of the writer, nor to act as an advertisement for everything we've written so far. Academics must start taking writing seriously if they want other people to take reading seriously. Citations are not the academic equivalent of shouting 'hello mum' on TV!

Books and papers are hard work. They are hard to write and harder to read. Certainly, harder work than surfing and skimming and dipping. But they deliver so much more. We have to ensure that we use them properly, and we offer our readers the very best means we can of checking our arguments and putting us right. We can do that by using our citations wisely and honestly.

Books are our weapons against ignorance. Citations are the proof that we have indeed built our arguments on the shoulders of giants. Let's not degrade them. Terry Pratchett's *The Globe* explains how books are based on books that went before and future books are contained in present books. But he sums up the impact of books much better in an earlier novel so I shall leave the last words to him:

"The Library didn't only contain magical books, the ones which are chained to their shelves and are very dangerous. It also contained perfectly ordinary books, printed on common-place paper in mundane ink. It would be a mistake to think that they weren't also dangerous, just because reading them didn't make fireworks go off in the sky. Reading them sometimes did the more dangerous trick of making fireworks go off in the privacy of the reader's brain." From *Soul Music*.

Postscript – no, Anne Smith, charming and talented though she undoubtedly is, isn't one of my PhD students. And the Invisible University isn't anywhere near Abertay, wherever that is. It sounds too far away from motorways and dreamy spires for comfort…

Cassandra Hall
The Invisible University

Workshop Report

Barbara Crossouard

HCT – 2002
Tools for Thought: Communicating and Learning Through Digital Technology

At the end of September 2002 I attended HCT – 2002, a two-day postgraduate workshop with the title 'Tools for Thought: Communicating and Learning Through Digital Technology' organised by the School of Cognitive and Computing Sciences of the University of Sussex and sponsored by the British Human–Computer Interaction Group. Distinguished guest speakers included Miss Alice Gryce of Digital Brain, Professor Eileen Scanlon of the Open University, and Professor Andrew Monk of the University of York. The other participants were postgraduate students from around the UK and abroad, all of whom were taking the opportunity to present their ongoing DPhil studies.

I should explain my own perspective here – I was just on the point of enrolling for the first year of a DPhil as a Graduate Assistant in the Institute of Education at the University of Sussex, so I was one of the few participants not to make a presentation. I will be working on a project whose focus will be to evaluate the impact of the internet on teaching, learning and assessment, so the workshop as a whole was quite illuminating in its insights into new developments waiting in the wings of the human–computer interface.

The first comment that springs to mind relates to the diversity of the presentations – their focus was extremely broad, awakening me to many issues related to the use of computers in education. Indeed I have to say that some presentations seemed thoroughly futuristic to me. For example, I learned about the reality of using sensors to capture the learner's emotional state, so that as user frustration rises (as we know it sometimes does!) a help facility is enabled, offering timely pre-emptive advice [1]. Another project that surprised me was WISdeM [2], where learner profiles are developed allowing the presentation of material to be tailored individually to suit each learner's communication preferences and learning styles. My relationship with my computer will have to change – it is

becoming a much more complex creature than I would ever have given it credit for!

I did find it fascinating how far the characteristics of the users are being taken into account and used to personalise the human–computer interface. Two studies that come to mind here are the incorporation of individual goal orientation and motivation levels into tutoring systems using Ecolab. This is an Intelligent Tutoring System (ITS) on the topic of food chains and is aimed at children [3]. In the context of the work of Ames [4], who has identified two main groups of goal orientation in students, the existing Ecolab software is being adapted to include a goal context, which corresponds to the student's goal orientation, and then to provide feedback adapted for that orientation [5].

The second modification being studied involves the measurement of a learner's motivation (based on the three components of *effort*, *independence-control* and *confidence*) and its use to modify the presentation of activities within the Ecolab teaching program [6]. The ambition of these studies impressed me, given the task of capturing a student's motivational characteristics in the first place, let alone building in a response to lead to better learning outcomes. Again, the workshop was invaluable to me in opening my eyes to what the future could hold.

It was also striking that a considerable number of presenters sought to locate their work within a theoretical framework that embraced constructivist Vygotskian concepts of learning, in rejection of transmission or behaviour reinforcement models which were possibly associated earlier with computer-based learning. I found this focus on the part of the researchers very encouraging and, of course, it is important for the general uptake of these new ideas. Ecolab is an example of this, designed around a Vygotskian approach, and aiming to provide collaborative, adaptive scaffolding of learning for children.

Other presentations by Pat Jeffries [7] and Skip Basiel [8] focused on using internet technology (asynchronous communications and research-based VLEs respectively) to provide scaffolding of higher-order learning, and opportunities for collaborative working. The insights gained from these projects are obviously important in establishing best practice in uses of internet technology in higher education. From a personal perspective I really appreciated the opportunity the workshop gave me to share their ongoing research with them.

From a different perspective, Mary Darking's study of the response of two UK universities to the growth of on-line learning technologies was illuminating, and her findings deeply sobering [9]. Using an ethnomethodological approach, she has identified several important themes for analysis.

The first of these is the growing shift in focus, within higher education, to the integration of on-line learning with face-to-face teaching, and away from the provision of on-line distance learning, a shift partly due to the failure of this market to generate the incomes once predicted.

The second is the recurrent theme of a 'sense of inundation' emerging from her interview data, in terms of workload and in terms of the changes to teaching itself as the capacity to link to internet resources makes an impact, and finally in terms of the administrative task of integrating existing infrastructures with on-line technology.

If this were not enough, she also identified attitudes of deep unease associated with a multitude of complex issues,

for example the disquiet felt for the way on-line materials and activities seem to become fixed or frozen, and the distaste expressed for the surveillance and monitoring capabilities of on-line technologies.

Other aspects were seen more positively, however, such as increased equality in admissions and assessment. Overall, her contribution to the workshop was invaluable for its focus on the perceived effects of on-line technology on the academic workplace and for putting in the spotlight the implications of the implementation of on-line learning for the academic world and for its values. Perceptive and undoubtedly disquieting, her presentation made vivid the transforming influence of technology on our society and its institutions.

To conclude, the workshop as a whole opened my eyes to many new avenues to be explored in our interactions with computer technology and gave me the opportunity to meet with people working in similar areas to me. My thanks to COGS at the University of Sussex who organised and sponsored the workshop, to the British Human Computer–Interaction Group as co-sponsors, to the University of Sussex Institute of Education for supporting my attendance, but most of all to everyone who presented their work.

References

[1] Anne Smith, 'Towards an Interface that Effectively helps in Relieving User Frustration'

[2] W.A. Janeiro and Claude Ghoul, 'WISDeM: Communication Preference and Learning Styles in HCI'

[3] Luckin R. and du Boulay, B. (1999). 'Ecolab: The development and evaluation of a Vygotskian design framework', *International Journal of Artificial Intelligence in Education*, **10**, p198–220.

[4] Ames, C.A. (1990). 'Motivation: What teachers need to know', *Teachers College Record*, **91**:3, p 409–421.

[5] Erika Martinez, 'Helping to provide meaning to the students' learning by considering their goal orientation'

[6] Genaro Rebolledo-Méndez, 'Modelling the motivational state of the learner in a Vygotskyan inspired ITS'

[7] Pat Jeffries, 'Supporting the effective implementation of asynchronous computer conferencing in a campus-based HE environment'

[8] Anthony (Skip) Basiel, 'Meeting the needs of the on-line researcher: an investigation in virtual autonomy'

[9] Mary Darking, 'Integrating on-line learning technologies into UK universities'

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Call For Papers

5th IEEE Workshop on Mobile Computing Systems and Applications WMCSA 2003

October 9–10, 2003
Santa Cruz, California, USA

Hard submission deadline: May 23, 2003
Notification to authors: July 28, 2003

for full information:

http://wmcsa2003.stanford.edu/

My PhD
or "Never take seriously people in trains"

Stavros Kammas

I started my PhD because I didn't have anything better to do… Wrong! A PhD is not a waste of time (although sometimes it feels like it is!). It is a long, three-year process, during which sometimes you become more creative, and sometimes you just run out of ideas. For me, it is certain, however, that the primary reason for starting is to get a PhD.

Whenever I am on the train during the weekdays I see people, almost isolated from the rest of the carriage, using their mobiles or bent over their laptops or PDAs trying to work. My main concern was always how these people can work under these circumstances. So I decided to do it as a research question for a PhD.

The first year of my PhD wasn't very creative in terms of writing. I spent plenty of time in libraries and internet portals trying to decide what I really wanted to do. Because, honestly, you don't really stick with the initial proposal that you submitted when you applied for a place at a university. You start thinking that you need to be more specific, and to look more deeply into your subject. However, you have to be careful how deep you go because at the end you might not be able to see where you started.

Returning to the incident in the train, these people were creating a temporary virtual office in the carriage where they were trying to do their work. The focus I initially found to my study was on 'Knowledge Management in Virtual Environments' and this made me more enthusiastic about the work. My supervisor helped me specify tasks that I would be able to carry out in the time provided. I realised I had to be strict with myself because I had a lot of work to do inside my final three-year deadline.

Having finished the first year of my PhD, I spent most of my time on reading about definitions, creation, understanding and management of knowledge. It was a good chance for me to become more familiar with the subject.

I was working at the same time on a research project called SANE so I had the chance to brainstorm with people from different disciplines and, basically, put my work under the microscope. SANE stands for Sustainable Accommodation in the New Economy (*www.saneproject.com*) and the main objective was the creation of a framework for workplace design for mobile knowledge workers. The project changed the focus of my PhD from knowledge to communication. I was rather interested now in the shared knowledge that was created while people communicate.

The second year of my PhD was spent doing fieldwork studies at three engineering companies using qualitative interviews. The main question was 'What do knowledge workers need in order to do their work?', and the studies were conducted as three-stage interviews. The empirical research was attempting to investigate the communicative needs for mobile knowledge workers (access to people and resources). I found the process really interesting but it was difficult for me to design the methodology. Reading the literature and similar research gave me some ideas. The analysis of the results was the most fascinating thing. By making maps of 'cause and effect' relationships I was trying to relate issues that were raised by the different organisations. Suddenly I became really creative and innovative. The maps helped me identify norms within the issues, rules that were governing the work context of the mobile knowledge workers. I started talking about things that I had never seen before anywhere in the literature. I believe that this is normal after a year of research, reading books and practical experience. Besides, during a PhD, you become an expert in your field.

As I had now finished my second year of my PhD, I felt I was really more productive than in the first year. Empirical research puts your PhD in space and time as you make contact with real people and talk about real problems that you thought of or read about in the literature. And of course the results help in the refinement of the research questions during the last year.

Being in the third year of my research at the moment, my writing has started (at last!). I am developing a methodology for modelling the communication of multidisciplinary nomadic teams. As this methodology has to be evaluated I consider that the returning to the companies with a prototype and the collection of some results will be necessary for the completion of my thesis. It is intensive work but I have got used to working under these circumstances. I even wake up quite early in the morning! I am trying to take advantage of my time and do work anywhere, including on trains, in cafés and in parks. I became the object of my research myself, a mobile knowledge worker. However, it is important to keep some balance in your life with some activities that are not necessarily intellectual. I am off to fencing now! ;o)

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Vet's column

"Hon*n*i soit qui mal y pense ..."

Alistair Kilgour

'Aisle, altar, hymn' — these are apparently the three reassuring words that an anxious bride-to-be needs to repeat to herself while she awaits her grand entrance. My only excuse for mentioning them is that someone recently presented this as a counter to the claim of another well-known story to have as its punch line the only triple pun in the English language. This concerns three brothers who inherit their father's cattle ranch, and look for a new name to reflect the change in management. Eventually they decide the new name has to be 'Focus', because that's where the sons raise meat. I will leave it to you to decide whether the uniqueness stands intact — or to let me know of other rival claimants I am unaware of.

My post-mature decision to learn French was motivated, I now realise, more by a desire to enlarge the pool in which I could fish for unusual and intriguing words, than by any desire to be able to communicate more effectively. I recently acquired (from *amazon.fr*, on the recommendation of a friend who is fluent in French) a wonderful book by Henriette Walter, *professeur émerité* [I like that] at the University of Haut-Bretagne, entitled "Hon*n*i soit qui mal y pense", with subtitle, '*L'incroyable histoire d'amour entre le français et l'anglais*'.

As well as the usual discussion of the many *faux amis* in the French language designed to mislead the unsuspecting English-speaking learner, the book includes a comprehensive list of what the author refers to as *très bons amis* — words that have exactly the same meaning and spelling (though not of course pronunciation) in both languages.

Notwithstanding this large overlap, I keep coming across wonderful words in French that seem to be crying out for adoption in English. What about *groupuscule*, for example? What better designation for the sub-committees formed in the recent restructuring of the HCI Group's executive committee? And *banalisation*, for the erosion, through repeated exposure, of our ability to be shocked or amazed, for example by violence, or by outstanding originality — how has English got along for so long without a word for this? Or *zizanie*, which I would like to pretend I came across by starting to read the dictionary backwards. It seems to convey a cross between chaos and enmity. My dictionary gives as an example of its use the phrase, '*semer la zizanie dans une famille*' — not something you would ever do, of course.

Arose by any other name

This preamble is by way of introduction to a discourse on words, the need for precision and sensitivity to context in using them, and, more importantly, in inventing new ones. It's really about the usability of language, in particular HCI terminology. Although there is a common saying in English, 'The French have a word for it', it is surprising in fact how often the French don't have a (single) word for it — they use a phrase instead. (Try 'clockwise' for example, which came up in my French class just this morning. English even has two words for this, the other being *deasil*, the opposite of which is, of course, *widdershins*.) I believe there are many cases in English where clarity would be improved if we followed the French approach, instead of inventing new words or, as is more often attempted, hijacking an existing word and giving it a specialised new meaning in our discipline.

Take, for example, the areas of requirements capture and conceptual design. I have been tutoring the OU M873 module ('User Interface Design and Evaluation') for a couple of years, and will quote from its course material in illustration. (Overall I think it's an excellent course, and will give a wider critique later. In regard to the definitions discussed here, the course follows conventions established by previous authors.) In the beginning, brothers and sisters, there was the *scenario*, or to be more precise, the *task scenario*. (The 'task' qualifier seems to be necessary here — I guess, in general, a scenario need not incorporate an example of goal-directed behaviour.) A task scenario is defined in the M873 course notes (Unit 2, p38) as, 'a narrative description of a task, describing the *current* use of a computer system. … Task scenarios are usually personalised, and describe a specific instance and situation of use' [my italics]. So far so good — although the inclusion of the word 'current' may raise some questions. After all, the current system was presumably at one stage just a glint in a previous designer's eye, and that designer may have envisaged at the design stage this very task scenario, before there was any system to support it.

In any case, when discussion turns to conceptual design of a new system, the vocabulary changes in a confusing and unnecessary way. For the target system being designed, the task scenario is to be called a 'use scenario', described in M873 (Unit 2, p39) as: 'also a narrative description of a task, again at a very detailed level. It differs from a task scenario [only] in that it describes future use of the computer system'. In other words, it's a *proposed* task scenario, so why not just call it that? Nothing but confusion is added by changing 'task' to 'use' — and in any case it's always advisable in my experience to avoid like the plague any expression in which 'use' appears as an adjective.

Swimming wit' da fishes

Suppose now you want to remove the details of the named real, or more often fictional, user from the (proposed) task scenario, to make it more generic. What does it then become? Why, a 'concrete use case' of course. (Please let me out, my head hurts. A triple pun this surely isn't— perhaps a triple antonym?) The intelligent novice might naïvely imagine that making something generic was a process of abstraction — but the last thing you would expect as the outcome of abstraction is 'concrete'. Never mind, at least the albeit troublesome middle term 'use' hasn't changed. But the last word of the trio has metamorphosed from 'scenario' into 'case', for no plausible reason. Indeed there are many very good arguments against such a change. For one thing, 'use case' has a very particular (though still hotly argued over) meaning in the UML community, which the HCI learner may already know about,

promoting the question, "What, if anything, is the connection between the (concrete) use case as defined here, and a 'Use Case' in UML?" On this the notes are silent.

The (proposed) generic task scenario, sorry, 'concrete use case', is still not the end of the story. Suppose more abstraction is needed, to distil out the canonical user action and the expected system responses, removing not only the user's identity, but also any reference at all, by noun or pronoun, to a generic user. At least, at last, you might be able to guess this one — the required change is from 'concrete' to 'essential' (use case), in one easy step. You might think that the change from 'generic' to 'essential' (task scenario) might be even easier, but now is not the time to quibble. In fact in this case, given the format in which the 'essential use case' is usually recorded, there might really be an argument in favour of changing the name completely, for example to 'action-response table'.

On reflection, what I am arguing for here is perhaps an object-oriented approach to the design of terminology. Invent a name for the highest level category, and then use that name, with a suitable qualifier or qualifiers, for all subcategories derived from it. Using different terms for variations of the concept only serves to confuse the learner, often inducing feelings of incredulity, if not derision. I have found that students on M873 have most difficulty with this area of task analysis and conceptual design, not I believe because the ideas are inherently difficult, but because the recommended terminology is confusing and counter-intuitive.

Teaching to the converted

Overall, though, the students I have supervised on M873 have almost without exception become converts to the user-centred design ethos, in spite of the difficulties of working on their own, on an individual rather than group project, and of being geographically separated from (though in electronic and telephone contact with) other students and their tutor. The quality and range of the back-up and support material provided to students are excellent. The two videos are well up to the OU's usual high standards, in particular the first, which is a general introduction and motivating mission statement for the course, featuring an impressive range of HCI pioneers and gurus such as Don Norman and Bruce Tognazzini in sparkling form. This would make an excellent starter for any course for HCI novices, and the OU could do a great service to the community by making it available for purchase separately from the other course materials. In addition to the videos, two CD-ROMs are provided which include audio and video clips of these and other HCI researchers and practitioners, designers, users and application domain experts, though strangely the credits and contextual information (e.g. the names and biographies of the speakers) are not included on the CD, but have to be downloaded separately as 'media notes' from the course web site.

In addition to printed units on requirements capture, design, and evaluation, there are separate books on case studies and industrial applications. Students undertake three assignments and a written examination. The assignments include informal analysis of usability problems with an interface or artifact selected by the student, a redesign of the selected interface, and an empirical, observational evaluation of the redesign with a small number of sample users. A particularly pleasing and unusual aspect of the course units is the coverage in Unit 8 of aspects of the politics of HCI, for example the issues and conflicts which can be encountered when a new convert to usability undertakes a campaign to spread the message within their organisation. This unit is entitled 'User-centred development in organisations', and was prepared for the course team by Caroline Jarret. It has proved particularly helpful, I have found, to students who encounter, as many do, resistance or incredulity in their organisation when seeking support for the practical work of the course.

Although the course videos show snippets of various types of evaluation being carried out, in my experience most students find the planning and execution of the empirical evaluation of their redesigned interface the most challenging and sometimes intimidating aspect of the course. It would be a great help to these students to have access to a video showing a novice like them carrying out this kind of informal evaluation exercise with one or two users. Perhaps the course team considered this, and decided against it because they felt that perhaps students would be tempted to follow too slavishly the structure and format of the particular exercise shown on the video. But on balance this might have been a risk worth taking. In general I have found OU students to be mature enough to rise above such a temptation, though not always so confident in themselves as not to benefit from seeing someone else grappling with the same kind of dilemmas and challenges they are about to tackle themselves.

The course materials include a commercial interface prototyping system, Bean Builder, based on Java. However development of this package has been discontinued, and it is no longer supported by the manufacturer. I have not encountered any student who has used it other than running the few supplied examples. The vast majority use paper prototyping for their redesign and evaluation exercise, while the few who are experienced programmers use other tools they are already familiar with and have access to through their work such as Visual Basic, JavaScript, or in one case PowerPoint. I think this is a pity. While paper prototyping is fine for many purposes, I think students would benefit greatly from being able to build a computer-based prototype with at least some of the planned functionality and interface dependencies operational. It is sadly true though that, in spite of the early promise of Java, it is still difficult to find a powerful but reasonably priced prototyping tool which would allow the non-expert programmer to build and adjust surface prototypes without extensive training. However I hope the M873 will not give up the search for a better alternative to what is currently provided in this area.

Another more general issue about M873, which it shares with many other HCI texts and courses, is the lack of embedding of the interface design process within a software engineering context. The interface design approach presented on M873 is clearly object-oriented, and, as already mentioned, some terminology from the UML world is imported, though without reference to its different and possibly conflicting significance elsewhere in software engineering. The OU has a general problem in this connection, of which this is just one of many examples. Cross-referencing between different modules is kept to a minimum, to the extent that in my experience it is almost

non-existent. This is intended to maximise the flexibility of students to take modules in any order, but the downside is that it can lead to duplication of essential material in several different modules or, as in this case, to the absence of reference to prior knowledge which some students may have, which can leave them at best puzzled, or at worst disconcerted by apparent contradictions between what they already know and what they are now being told.

In any case, the days are, I hope, long past when HCI educators could get off with talking and behaving as if the functionality, correctness and efficiency of the systems, whose interfaces they were designing, were trivial matters to be dealt with by alien beings in some parallel universe. The bit of HCI that concerns design of computer-based systems is in my view an essential and ineluctable part of software engineering. Usability needs to be up there with correctness, robustness and efficiency as one of the fundamental concerns of system design — and to a large extent that battle is already won. But it does mean that cross-referencing to the wider software design process should be an essential aspect of any HCI course that belongs in an IT or computing syllabus. In the case of M873, it would not be difficult to include enough about object-oriented system analysis and software design methodologies to allow learners to resolve any conflicts with prior knowledge, and to provide links to further study for those for whom HCI is the first aspect of software engineering that they encounter.

Surely, books would be cheaper…

So would someone wishing for a 'crash course' in HCI be just as well reading a good book, such as Preece, Rogers and Sharp, rather than committing to (at least) six hours a week for six months of work and anxiety (with quite a lot of fun and enlightenment as well, of course) by enrolling with the OU on M873? Unless they were unusually dedicated, almost certainly not. For all but the few, 'self-paced' learning means no learning at all. The OU as an organisation, like most individuals, only works because of deadlines. And although students are physically separated, there is a strong sense of community, supported and strengthened through electronic communication such as the FirstClass conferencing system, among a group of learners following the same course of study, and subject to the same pressures and deadlines. Also, excellent though the Preece, Rogers, Sharp book is, in the nature of things no single textbook, even supported by a well-populated web site as this one is, can match the richness and diversity of the resources and support materials provided to learners on an OU module like

M873. Another crucial advantage of the OU route is the excellence of the tutorial support — though I shouldn't really be the one to say so.

Most important of all though is that the OU course is essentially practical — it forces the learner to go through, at least once, the evaluate, redesign, re-evaluate cycle. (Unfortunately, because of the short timescale, the target system or interface for the practical work is usually not one that the individual student has had a hand in designing in the first place.) It is only by going through this process for themselves that learners begin to accept, and internalize, the core verities of user-centred design. It is unlikely that someone reading a textbook on their own would put themself through this experience with the care and rigour which M873 engenders. Even if they did, though, they would miss out on the feedback that the OU student will receive from their tutor.

Joy of X updated. No beards this time!

In closing let me mention XonX — the joy of X redoubled. Somewhere buried in my archives I may still have the issue of *ACM Transactions on Computer Graphics* in which the first few papers on the X10 (as it was then) window system appeared — I think it was around 1986. At that time many people in the UK academic community (including me) turned up their noses at X windows, preferring the more elegant and powerful, though slightly flaky, NeWS system from Sun. But the X window system was the one which survived (though it could be claimed that NeWS was reborn as Java a decade later), and it eventually became the *de facto* standard for Unix, and later Linux, workstations and servers throughout the world.

Now at last X11 has become available for Macs running OS X, downloadable from Apple's web site. I have just transferred all 40Mb of it over a phone line, and am looking forward to being able to run some of the 12,000 or so open source applications which the Unix and Linux world have enjoyed up to now. Some of them, in particular OpenOffice (which I already use on both a real and a Virtual PC), may even turn out to be useful.

It is a special pleasure when you stick around long enough to witness such a surprising and unexpected convergence of two quite separate technologies, whose history you have watched in wonder, and in a small way participated in, over the past few decades.

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Book Reviews

I've got a cold and I don't feel like doing much so I thought Schneiderman would entertain me without making my temperature rise any more. *Leonardo's Laptop* is an interesting read because it's Schneiderman speculating and having

visions, and people's dreams are always interesting, though some of Schneiderman's look like they'd be my nightmares – being mailed other people's digital holiday snaps sounds horrific and soporific and slow. But I can imagine Schneiderman being much nicer about it than I could be.

I'm not sure what to say about LL. It's an interesting departure and quite unlike the wonderful textbook that has so successfully reached three editions

without running out of steam or having tantrums. There's a nice 'sound bite' from Norman on the back. But Ben Schneiderman isn't Don Norman. He lacks Norman's fire and irritation. Norman always goads me into thinking; Shneiderman cajoles me. I wouldn't read Norman when I had a cold.

Fans of Schneiderman will enjoy this. It'd make a nice present for someone too. It's a kind and generous

book that recognises there is more to HCI than getting the screen right and the buttons arranged. Industry may well listen to Shneiderman because he is so calm and rational. Norman always sounds OTT and then you kick yourself for not believing him. I'm still amused that the Teddy predicted people's behaviours with mobile phones with a measure of perception that borders on witchcraft.

MIT Press's pricing policy is impressive. I know that recommending their books won't send you all spiralling into bankruptcy. They are scrupulously fair and the books are a delight, nicely printed and nicely presented. The covers are always a treat. LL is no exception. It is a very nice package indeed.

This is a nice book to read round the fire of a winter's evening, a glass of Jamesons and some company to speculate with. And it would have been a sweet gift for the stocking. But I'm left thinking that Shneiderman is over-generous and there are parallels between Leonardo and software engineering that he is too nice to see. Leonardo often promised more than he could deliver, delivered late and over budget and didn't always test sufficiently. But LL is a fitting and timely direction for HCI and shows the growing maturity of our field.

If the loved one has been neglectful and didn't buy you this, then treat yourself as a reward for surviving Christmas. Tell them I said so.

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The New SocioTech
Coakes, Willis and Lloyd Jones (eds)
Springer CSCW series, 2000
pp 224, £37.50
ISBN 1-85233-040-6

This is another in the excellent Springer series of CSCW texts, each edited by guest editors. The aim of this particular collection is to show how socio-technology can ensure the optimisation of performance in organisations.

Coakes et al kick off their collection by explaining their aims and why they've chosen to put this particular collection together. There is then a quick history lesson on the influence of socio-technical principles on modern organisational practices. This provides

a foundation to the contributions that follow.

Part 2 starts with a super contribution from Enid Mumford on technology and freedom and goes on to examine the role and expectations of socio-tech in today's world. There's even a contribution on the impact on UK university curricula by Brian Hopkins.

Part 3 looks at redesign and starts by combining usability engineering and socio-technological concepts. There's a nice section here on practical hints and tips. The final part, part 4, looks at some particular cases and what can be learned from them.

This is a dense and varied collection of essays on socio-tech and should make interesting reading for anyone interested in CSCW, but my guess is that some of these contributions will appeal to those in business and sociology. In fact, this is a feeling I've had about other titles in this series, so no change there.

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The Language of New Media
Lev Manovich
MIT Press, 2001
pp 355, £23.95
ISBN 0-262-13374-1

The first part of this book is hard going and I had a couple of attempts to get into it. There's not very much to struggle through but struggle through I did. So, if like me you feel like giving up, start at page 6 – Theory of the Present – and you should find things much more to your liking, you can then return to the beginning once you've reassured yourself that things do get much better! And they do! It's worth perseverance.

This is a mixture of history lesson and trying to put the present new cultural media into context while we are still tussling with it. And it really is a book that anyone in HCI will be fascinated to read simply because it takes HCI for granted and has a slant on us that maybe we haven't thought about. I particularly liked: '… HCI is like a chameleon that keeps changing its appearance, responding to how computers are used in any given period.' It would be nice if that's true and HCI really does respond, adapting

itself to users rather than painting them all green because it's easier.

It's an attractively produced book that has had a lot of thought put into its physical appearance and the result is a very nice book for your shelves. Manovich has to speculate a great deal because our understanding of what will be the history of the new media and where it leads is incomplete. We just haven't had time enough of it as yet.

This is a brave book, nicely written, nicely opinionated and nicely backed up too. It will make you think. Those of you who are interested in computers for more than word processing and programming may enjoy the sections on games and the technology they have utilised. I found it fascinating to see all of this in an historical setting.

This is an interesting book for your shelves and for post-grads. Undergrads doing projects in the new media might find it interesting, otherwise I think it's for those doing media studies or arts. This will add to a steadily growing section in the library that is witnessing the development and growth of our field into something a little more mature and interesting than word processing and databases, worthy though they are.

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Interaction design: beyond human–computer interaction
J Preece, Y Rogers, & H Sharp
New York: Wiley & Sons, 2002

In recent years we have seen growing recognition of the importance of context in the design of human–computer systems and as that context changes and enlarges then so too must the key texts that are used to support the teaching and learning of human–computer interaction and related subjects. That this is such a key text will seem obvious to most readers, but how effective is it – does it meet users' needs? In growing the subject do we swamp the learner?

As lecturers and trainers, we are faced with an ever-expanding domain: encompassing usability engineering to interaction design, interacting *with* computers to interacting *through* computers, work-based applications to home and leisure-based applications. This shift is the focus of this text,

which, in the words of the authors, '*is concerned with the broader scope of issues, topics, and paradigms than has traditionally been the scope of hci*'.

The central theme of this book, however, remains the same – the focus is on understanding the user, the centrality of evaluation, closely interleaved with design as an iterative process. However, the scope has been broadened through consideration of a wider range of application areas and application types, ranging from personal devices (mobile phones) and applications (desktop diaries) to work-based systems (phone-based response systems). Understanding users goes beyond exploring basic cognitive psychology to exploring social aspects including collaboration and affective issues. A range of design approaches are explored, followed by evaluation. The book then concludes with detailed case-studies, which help bring the preceding theory alive.

A user-centred or rather learner-centred approach is taken to the design of the book with a number of supportive features to encourage learners to engage with the text. I have been using it for two semesters now, with third year students (CO32005 Interaction Design), and the time seems right for a review.

Each chapter opens with an introduction setting the scene, and the aims of the chapter are then outlined – although these are couched in terms of what the chapter seeks to do (e.g., '*describe what is involved in the process of ID*'), they can also be thought of as learning outcomes; that is, what the learner can do after completing the chapter. I would have preferred to see them written more directly in that way. A small difference, perhaps, but one that highlights the need for active involvement of the learner rather than more passive reading, particularly when the underlying philosophy is to engage the learner in activities, which are interspersed through the text. These can be used as the basis of classroom discussion and more open-ended assignments which could form the basis of the courseworks or tutorial work. Summaries are also provided along with suggestions for further reading.

One feature that I particularly liked was the inclusion of dilemmas, which encourage reflection and introduce learners to some of the decisions and compromises they will be faced with as designers. This helps to illustrate that design is a thinking process – not just following a series of steps.

There were also a number of interviews with well-known practitioners and designers, which helps to make the subject real. This is further reinforced through the case studies presented in the final chapter.

The authors have sought to relate the subject to the learner's own experience of using interactive devices, encouraging them to reflect on their experiences of using poorly designed systems. Examples such as mobile phones work particularly well – most students (if not their lecturers) have experience of using these and I have certainly found that exercises on phone design and other familiar devices are generally successful in prompting discussion in my own classes.

The book is supported with a web site (*http://www.ID-Book.com*),which has a range of resources, including sample lecture slides, to complement each chapter, as well as links to case studies, interactive applications that learners can use, and a discussion corner for students.

In the opening section, the authors explore different ways in which the text can be used to support teaching and learning. I found these interesting and they reflected some tensions that I have been grappling with in teaching my own module.

Whilst we all stress that design is a highly iterative process and highlight the centrality of evaluation to our students – there is a tendency to structure our teaching in a linear way. For example, in the past I have started with exploring 'what is HCI/ID?', then gone on to examine understanding the user, followed by the design process and finally coming to evaluation at the end. As a result some students may then view design as a series of stages with evaluation done at the end, rather than as an iterative process with evaluation central to the whole lifecycle. (I have thought about starting with evaluation but if you have not explored design, and understanding the user, it makes it difficult then to discuss criteria for evaluation).

One solution may be to adopt a spiral approach to delivery – perhaps focusing on a broad overview in the first couple of weeks – looking at key issues in the discipline (Ch 1), the design process (Ch 6) and evaluation (Ch 10), then returning to explore user issues in more depth, more design and more evaluation, ending with some case studies or interleaving these throughout. The authors helpfully provide in the preface a number of such possible routes through the text, for different scenarios (or perhaps personas!).

However, achieving all this in the 12 weeks of class contact that my university's modular structure supports will be challenging! The authors suggest that 15 chapters = one per week for a semester but this does not reflect UK teaching. In any case, most of the chapters seem too much for a typical student's learning in a week of a single 15-credit module.

Perhaps we will explore this area further in the forthcoming HCI Educators' workshop (*www.hcie2003.org*).

All in all I have found this to be a useful book and one that I will continue to recommend to my students and to integrate into my teaching. Anecdotal feedback from students suggests that they too enjoy it, but perhaps what I should do next is a more detailed evaluation with them.

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I still, some sixteen years on, have Proustian flashbacks to the place and time, an under-heated lab at 3am on an Autumn morning with a deadline looming, when I 'got' Pascal. The rigid syntax suddenly seemed capable of expressing my sloppy ideas as well as the sloppy Basic I had been hacking in for a short time previously.

I have used a lot of languages since, if only for just a single term, but have never had to question how it is that I am able to program, nor what my learning processes were before my moment of epiphany, or since. The dreaded moment comes in most lecturing careers, though, when the words 'Computer Programming 1' appears on one's list of duties for the coming academic year. Seemingly to one's rescue comes this book, which the purchaser hopes might explain

how it was that they were able to learn to program and how they now might teach others, or enable others' learning as QAA-speak would have it. So have we been thrown a life belt, or a ring of lead?

The field of the psychology of programming has always seemed confusing. Despite the high numbers of people who take up programming as a career (according to figures, as far back as 1988, 100,000 people in the US became professional programmers that year), the academic population studying how programmers learn and work has appeared small. There seem, to an outsider from a related discipline, to be very few conference series at which researchers meet, and the literature amounts to a very small number of books (most out of print) and a comparatively small number of articles (scattered across unfamiliar journals).

To someone who randomly samples these articles, their results seem contradictory. There appears to be no agreement on which theoretical frameworks and experimental methods to adopt, and (much-needed?) educational models are absent. Détienne is a major figure in the psychology of programming, and the reader might hope that she can explain the issues that researchers address, that she can make sense of the field to the newcomer, and that she can offer practical wisdom on how teachers can address profound, but seemingly vague, concepts such as design, quality, and expertise. The reader expecting, or hoping for, these things, is unfortunately likely to feel short-changed.

The book begins by telling the history of the psychology of program-ming, which is a short one divided into two periods. The first of these was the 1970s, which in Détienne's view was characterised by a bias towards experimentation, a theory void, and abuse of then mainstream cognitive psychology to fill this void. The second period demonstrated a shift, still evident in work today, to a greater emphasis on theory employing ideas that ironically came to prominence during the 1970s, such as Kintsch's work on understanding texts, Rosch's results in categorisation, cognitive and educational models of learning, knowledge representation models such as schemas and frames, and Newell and Simon's work on problem solving.

These ideas are revisited during the remainder of the book as Détienne surveys definitions of what a computer program actually is, how one is designed, how an existing one is read for understanding and documenting, and how modules and objects are reused. The last two of these are welcome in that they address two important issues: the rise of open source development; and fast turnover in staff resulting in programmers not just having to work on modules without knowing the big picture of the several thousand, or million, line programs they are contributing to, but also having to complete or maintain modules that they themselves did not begin or code.

This book, however, never manages to be more than a surprisingly short survey of the field. It is disappoint-ingly short if one considers its price. While a valuable primer and useful in giving a fairly complete reading list to embark on, the short length of some of the sections gives them the feel of being little more than an annotated bibliography.

The longer sections also feel light. While always readable, they do little more than survey and summarise results, but not in a way that allows wider conclusions to be drawn. The feelings of confusion are only eased, not calmed completely. The literature still seems scattered; major theoretical and methodological differences are apparent; and too often still it appears that toy problems are considered when we are educating students to embark on projects that rival the great civil engineering feats in terms of time scale and workforce.

While Détienne concludes each chapter with research suggestions and practical advice, the lack of depth in the preceding discussion makes them feel disconnected and not satisfactorily justified. Often these amount to little more than a paragraph of citations. Détienne has, I think, written the right text for the wrong book. If her chapters were opening remarks to sections of a book in the Morgan Kaufmann 'Readings in' series, say, I would praise what she has achieved. Without the papers themselves being contained in the same volume, or a far more in-depth work being undertaken, the questions to which I, and probably many others, seek answers are just better formulated, but certainly not answered. Writing my slides and lab exercises is postponed still until after I fill in a very large number of inter-library loan requests.

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This book is hard work. It's not that the content is hard work; it's the layout. It's very densely set out with one of the smallest fonts in existence, and with lines close together. And it's justified both sides with hyphenation used to make the lines fit. The result is a strange jerkiness that reminds me of reading aloud at junior school. By some strange quirk of fate, 'systems' finds itself inevitably in the position where it's split to 'sys-tems', and 'lan-guage' also suffers but not so much as 'automati-cally.' Obviously, along with the times tables, no one bothers to teach when and where it's ok to split words with a hyphen so it's far off being an easy read, I warn you, and that's a shame because the author isn't to blame for that. The typesetter has left the poor author stuttering along through requirements engineer-ing in a way that makes the whole thing almost as slow as requirements gathering itself.

However, despite Springer's attempts to make requirements engineering even more unpalatable than it is (it has to be done; people don't like doing it), this is actually a very useful book with which, from the point of view of writing and referen-cing, I have no gripes. It's been scrupulously researched and there are references enough to make me happy. They appear as a long impressive list at the back although I do wish they'd also be presented at the end of each chapter. I get fed up with turning to the back every time I want to check something. Also, against all odds, Springer found an even smaller font for the references so checking citations is no easy matter.

Having said that, the writing is very clear, the language is simple and Sutcliffe avoids those long involved sentences that put students off. But the

blurb writer says this is a book designed for graduate courses (actually undergrads will manage this as well) so there's no surprise there. Sutcliffe gives the impression that he knows what students are really like and that he isn't pretending to write for them while actually trying to impress academics instead.

There's a nice introduction, setting out the history of RE and a set of good reasons for doing it and getting it right. Sutcliffe avoids the passionate and the self-righteousness and simply explains it as it is. Even the most careless of systems builders would have to listen to his reasoning. It's flawless. After the introduction there are sections on understanding people (from a requirements point of view) but there are some interesting inclusions here on memory, problem solving, attention and arousal – I can understand his reasons for that but found myself a little impatient to get on with the story. Sections on power and trust though are needful. Getting end users to trust you as you do your requirements gathering can be hard work and understanding that power is one of the motivators and trust once lost is hard to get back, is a good lesson to give us here. Again, Sutcliffe is dispassionate and that tone is successful.

There follow chapters on RE tasks and processes – that is, how to go about it and what to use. There's a well-needed section on understanding requirements conversations and an introduction to discourse theory. Again, this is a timely inclusion. The book goes on to show how the problems must be represented and then to look at scenario-based requirements engineering and requirements for safety critical systems.

The final chapter looks at the future of RE and does some speculating based on fact. Don't expect to find Sutcliffe miraculously transformed into the Delphic Oracle or a *Star Trek* wannabe; his feet remain as throughout, firmly based in reality.

This is a different book from the Sommerville one and from a different angle. Sommerville offers an engineering approach to requirements; he recognises what the engineer needs to get in order to fulfil his engineering commitment to the user. Sutcliffe's is a user centred angle and he sees everything from a people perspective. The

two books complement each other rather than jostle for a place on your bookshelf. The library should definitely get a handful of copies. I think students will like this text.

The faults in this book are at Springer's door finally. I can't believe that Sutcliffe didn't rant and rave about the excessive use of hyphens that the page format has caused. You get used to it after a bit but then I expect you'd get used to banging your head against a brick wall as well. You could wait until Springer relent, produce the second edition and reformat. It certainly deserves to be a long runner. The content is truly excellent; it's the readability that got to me. Or you could gird your loins and tackle it as it is. I girded and am glad that I did. But I'm not going to make you lot strip for action and I'm not going to specul-ate. You must decide for yours-elves.

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This new book of invited contributions 'from leading practitioners in both industry and academia' fleshes out the 'New Human Factors'. The new publication consists of two sections. The first, entitled 'Beyond Usability', contains 12 articles ranging from discourses on luxury products to empirical studies of people and product interaction.

The *Design Techniques* section is made up of 17 articles. These are based on case studies that encompass all areas of design, from the motor industry to the web. The book is unique, in bringing together such a range of contributors, but it is not perfect. The quality of the work and the writing is uneven; the editing could be better; even the co-editor's introduction quotes 'Beaudrillard' (sic). There is a healthy bias towards Scandinavia, and to design and innovation. The publishers point the book toward Human Factors specialists and designers, although its market is wider. I would argue that its real constituency contains students, researchers and designers wishing to develop new skills and knowledge.

The style is refreshing, although maybe somewhat academic for some. But this reflects the complexity of the issues it deals with and is a welcome change from the dumbed-down literature on usability.

Patrick Jordan has staked his claim on the future of new human factors. In *Designing Pleasurable Products; an introduction to the new human factors,* he argued for design research to move beyond usability to embrace a holistic view of people and products. He contends that in assisting the design of pleasurable products the 'new human factors' adds value to product users and manufacturers. In this classic book, he illustrated the transience of usability through a hierarchy of user needs. This pyramid model has safety and well-being at ground level, with functionality and then usability (first and second floors), leading up to the apex of pleasure. He then fitted out the concept of pleasure in terms of its component parts: 'Socio-Pleasure', 'Psycho-Pleasure', 'Ideo-Pleasure' and 'Physio-Pleasure'. The new publication takes these ideas and develops them.

Most contributors to *Pleasure with Products: Beyond Usability* justify their adoption of moving beyond usability. In some cases the rationale seems elusive, so that "The 'aestheticisation of everyday life', individuality, and the rise of the inner oriented, self searching consumer are evident in many contemporary lifecycle descriptions" (p78) is asserted without evidence. Others' reasons for the shift from old usability are more verifiable. The discretionary use of technology, the complexity of consumer preference and expectations, the limitations of a focus on evaluation and problem finding, the character of people's relationship with products are all marshalled in to justify the move. And these are all just reasons for expanding the subjective aspect of product interaction. Usability is not jettisoned, but is inadequate to account for the whole people–product relationship. But just how new are the 'new human factors'? In terms of research, empirical aesthetics goes back to the nineteenth century with Fechner. Theories of product language go back to the 1970s. And, arguably, trained designers have always considered the experiential aspects of design. Raymond Loewy (think Lucky Strike,

Skylab and Studebaker) said that 'ugly looking products are hard to sell' in the 1930s. He also said that 'good design is an upward sale curve' – and Nokia and Sony provide the most convincing arguments for the marketability of pleasurable products in the present day.

So what does pleasure with products mean? *Pleasure* is defined in the introduction as 'A feeling of satisfaction or joy: sensuous enjoyment as an object in life'. 'Pleasure with products' is therefore the *experience* of *positive feelings* accessed through the *senses* with '*an object in life*' – an artefact that has *meaning* to us. Thus many of the contributors investigate the sensory experience; for instance, Alistair Macdonald develops Dreyfuss's Environmental Tolerance Zone. Others look at positive feelings of product use; Jan Noyes and Richard Littledale investigate the role of play in attitudes to computers. Many contributors investigate the meanings of products to people and their relationships with products, including Mirja Kälviäinen's excellent chapter on consumer taste.

The book starts to build on what seems to be a growing consensus around what we might call experience design. Whilst the book offers many examples, Rothstein's 'a(x4)' method is characteristic of the move toward the experiential in design. He argues that products have become indistinguishable commodities and that what distinguishes services and products is not their features but the experience of using them. Forget products, think experiences. He goes on to describe 'a(x4)' in terms of methodology, as 'a scenario building tool … created to explore and communicate stories about user experience'.

'A(x4)' is organised around actors, activities, artefacts and atmosphere and "in short 'a(x4)' integrates ethnographic and scenario-building methodologies. It specifically focuses on telling of stories about people's experience, an activity that both ethnography and scenario building share. Ethnography tells stories about the past or the present. Business and design scenarios tell stories about the future". Such qualitative and descriptive methods that put design as a research tool are common to many of the chapters in the new book. So that Kälviäinen's chapter alludes to 'methods of distinction and categorisation', projective techniques, the 'anthropological view' and 'staging as the visualisation of taste'.

The range of materials presented in *Pleasure with Products: Beyond Usability* is impressive and ensures that a wide range of readers will value it. The HCI community are likely to appreciate the empirical studies and the many examples of innovative design projects. The usability community should find the new design and evaluation methods useful. Designers will welcome the supporting role that design research is given in the various case studies, and an acknowledgement of the complexity of their task. Moreover, many of these examples integrate the roles of designers and researchers, utilising the designer's skills in visualisation – a far more harmonious relationship than the blame culture that prevailed in the early days of usability. I think that students, of any of the contributing disciplines, will get the most value from the book, from the succinct introductions to ethnography and Kansei Engineering to the wide-ranging and informed treatments of the issues. I enjoyed this book, but like other aspects of the 'new human factors', dislike the hyperbole. However, I look forward to any additions to the Jordan cannon; the latest is called '*How to Make Brilliant Stuff that People Love and Make Big Money Out of It*'. No one can argue with that.

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The Brits are Coming

<div align="right">**Gilbert Cockton**</div>

A BHCIG executive in-joke has cast me as Professor Evil, intent on taking over the HCI world. Luckily, I can see the funny side and there'll be no payback in the foreseeable future. Still, I'd agreed to chair CHI 2003 before Andrew Monk declared that he really had to stand down as BHCIG chair, and also before Brian Shackel had decided to step down as the UK's first HCI representative to TC13. So, all my 'promotion' chickens came home to roost at once. I was just a boy who couldn't say "No" (I can now, I assure you!)

The CHI 2003 chicken will be well and truly cooked by April 10, after which I'll be spending a lot more time with my family. Before then though, let's put the spotlight on this first CHI with European co-chairs (my co-chair is Panu Korhonen of Nokia).

You should have your CHI 2003 Advance Program [sic] by now. If not, visit *www.chi2003.org*. You'll see the Brits are doing well. For example, the Equator project (*www.equator.ac.uk*) has had 5 full papers accepted out of a total of 72. You'll find more Brits among the full papers, as well as among tutorial presenters, panellists, demonstrations and the Design and Usability sessions. When the SIGs, posters and short talks come in, I expect to see more UK HCI specialists sharing the best of British HCI with the world.

CHI 2003 is in Fort Lauderdale. It's a lot warmer than Minneapolis and I hope to see as many BHCIG members there as possible. You can book your housing and register via *www.chi2003.org*. By the way, there are presentations from countries outside of the UK too! Catch up with the best of the world's HCI in Fort Lauderdale in April.

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Profile   Tom McEwan

The retiring editor of *Interfaces*, Tom McEwan is a lecturer in the Multimedia and Interactive Systems Design Group at Napier University, where he launched the MSc in Interactive Technologies for e-Commerce in 1999. He is communications chair of the British HCI Group, and has edited *Interfaces* for the last three years. His technology transfer programme (usability and DRM) with Dig ltd recently won TTI award.

Schooled in Scotland and Washington DC, he got a Maths degree from St Andrews, before spending most of the 1980s as a singer-songwriter on the UK campus circuit. When money ran out, he took an SSADM diploma in 1988 (Opening line from the course notes: "why SSADM? – for the users' sake!"). He worked for Unibit plc in Bradford, writing screeds of C for expert systems, before joining Unisys's Image Systems Group in Scotland and then Detroit, all the while playing blues harp in downtown bars and nipping off to Nashville to record.

After an MSc in Multimedia at Napier he joined a start-up called Delphic that did amazing things with multimedia in the 1990s – winning awards for visitor centre Archaeolink (1996), a networked multimedia expert system plus virtual fly-thrus based on Ordnance Survey digital maps, and BT National Business Communications mobile training centre (1997), which combined instructor-led MPEG video with XTOL handsets for feedback from the trainees.

What is your idea of happiness?
That moment on stage when you are so in tune with your audience, the environment and your motor skills that you play the instrument, or sing the song, better than you ever knew you could

What is your greatest fear?
I had pretty bad hearing loss before recent neurosurgery, and at one point they thought I would lose the ability to hear in stereo, which seemed heartbreaking at the time – worse than the fear of not surviving the op! So deafness … and snakes … really don't like them at all; they should be kicked out the country and sent to where they came from.

With which historical figure do you most identify?
Rabbie Burns and Hank Williams – they lived fast, loved hard, died young and left beautiful memories

Which living person do you most admire?
The consummate contextual communicator – Bob Dylan – "he steals what he loves and he loves what he steals"

What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?
Inability to ask other people to do things I can do myself

What is the trait you most deplore in others?
Inability to recognise that this guy needs help but is too proud to ask

What vehicles do you own?
A Renault Scenic – perfect for a dad with a wife and three bored children

What is your greatest extravagance?
Anything you can buy in PC Superstores

What makes you feel most depressed?
Unused manuals, books etc for gadgets bought from PC superstores that I never did get any use out of

What objects do you always carry with you?
Palm Tungsten, Wallet, Staff Card and, all too often, my four year old Sony Vaio that Brian Shackel praised at the Interact99 conference after-dinner speech, while I crawled under a table in embarrassment (Although drinking with L MacKinnon and F Culwin clearly hadn't helped.)

What do you most dislike about your appearance?
The thirty pounds of lard added over the last fifteen years after I stopped being a fulltime musician and started working at computers all day long

What is your most unappealing habit?
Sitting at a computer all day long

What is your favourite smell?
The beach at St Andrews on a Sunday morning in February

What is your favourite word?
Just (that's just "just", and not "just just")

On what occasions do you lie?
When sleeping

Which words or phrases do you over-use?
Just just

What is your favourite building?
Terminal 2 at Charles de Gaulle Airport

What is your least favourite building
Terminal 1 at Charles de Gaulle

What is your favourite journey?
The train(s) from Edinburgh to London to Paris to Angoulême to St Bryce. I've done it a few times and every year it gets shorter – one day it will bypass London

What or who is the greatest love of your life?
It had better be Sandra Cairncross, my wife, our daughter Anna, and my other children Kyle and Rosie.

Which living person do you most despise?
Other than those who arranged the World Trade Centre atrocity? I find it hard to despise … but I'll make an effort for Jeremy Clarkson and the boy racers he inspires or maybe Brian Sewell and the sewage he spews.

What is your greatest regret?
Not realising that I could have written papers about all the stuff we did in industry. At the time we were too busy doing it.

When and where were you happiest?
I can think of lots of glory days at different stages of life, and these are pretty good times now. But for the ultimate no-worries-happiness, it would be in early '85, when I was touring the country, singing my songs to growing audiences with a new album out, I had mastered the recording studios, acoustic and electronic instruments, played with video and computers and anything seemed possible. I even got a good review in Electronics and Music Maker!

How do you relax?
Helping organise things for the HCI community. It's a never ending source of entertainment. How can so many intelligent people be unable to visualise anything until they see a prototype?

What single thing would improve the quality of your life?
Bluetooth devices, if I could afford them

Which talent would you most like to have?
I'm not sure – probably decisiveness, but then again maybe not

What would your motto be?
Always keep your commitments (it's an aspiration at present)

What keeps you awake at night?
Remembering all the things I've promised to do and never managed to persuade anyone else to do instead

How would you like to die?
Backstage after a sell-out gig in some dingy club, preferably in my nineties!

How would you like to be remembered?
As a great songwriter who was never really recognised in his lifetime except for the way he brought some notions of interactivity from music to HCI

British HCI Group – Application Form 2003

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Tel. .... Fax ....

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The data on this form will be treated as confidential to the BCS. Names and address may be used, under our strict control, for mailings judged by the British HCI Group Executive to be of value to the membership.

Membership Directory

Do you wish your contact details and professional interests to be listed in the Membership Directory sent to all members of the group? (We will NOT use your home address, unless that is all you have given us.)   Yes ☐   No ☐

Getting Involved…

We are always looking for people interested in contributing to HCI group activities by, writing for Interfaces magazine, helping run the annual conference or joining the executive. If you are able to contribute in this way or if you have ideas for 1-day meetings or new activities please contact the membership secretary, Peter Wild (peter.wild@acm.org; Fax. +44(0) 1895 251686).

Membership Fee

Membership classes and fees for 2003 are:

BCS Member £25 ☐   Non BCS Member £30 ☐   Student £10 ☐

Corporate £195 ☐ Corporate membership entitles the organisation to 8 copies of Interfaces and other mailings; membership rate for any 4 individuals at British HCI Group events, as well as, a free one-page entry in the membership handbook.

Journal Subscription to 'Interacting with Computers'

The HCI Group manages a journal, *Interacting with Computers*, published quarterly by Elsevier Science. Members may subscribe to this journal at a reduced rate.

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