UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE
EXPLORING THE DIGITAL CITY
TAPE 4 1-2

NB: The discussion section of this session has very low volume and not all of what is said is clearly audible.

Man: Detract you before you ran it, manipulated your image and it was part of a two part installation but it was dealing with notions of super version and surveillance in society, I mean this goes back to the 1990's but when it was shown in Germany it actually upset a lot of people and it was interesting how different cultures have different responses to the types of work that's been shown. In the UK it wasn't too bad because we're, I think we're used to surveillance, in Germany of course they have different rules and different laws which Govern surveillance. A lot of people got quite upset about this, so I mean that was another interesting thing which came out of the piece of work. I'm also dealing with, with this, these ideas of a sense of place where we, we feel we are in the world but where we might imagine ourselves to be and this piece of work was called firefly. It was actually shown in the DCA but it's actually based on the American firefly, based on some research I was doing about the flash codes of the American fireflies and how they actually communicate with one another, how they, how different species of firefly actually use different flash codes to communicate with one another and how they use different flash codes for different rituals like mating and communicating with a mate and all sorts of other things like, so I built this computer based installation which essentially as you walked in there were, there were three computers which governed, which looked at how you're using the space and try to predict where you were going to move in the space and then what they would do was start a flash code above your head as you walked into the space and that flash, that simulated firefly would communicate with an adjacent firefly and so that cycle would continue until the laws which govern how these creatures actually flash to one another, determining whether they would died off or continued to communicate in this, so you ended up with this, this rolling morass of, of sort of flashing lights above your head and followed them around the space as you walked in the space. When we actually showed it downstairs I actually, we covered the floor in, in this dark emulsion which again gave off smells and it actually gave it a sense of actually being in a woodland somewhere at dusk where all these fireflies suddenly started to appear. What I didn't realise was that there were actually eggs, actual fly eggs in, in the emulsion and they all hatched because the heat and the space and actually came out on the opening night and we were all flying around interacting with a piece of work as well. So I mean that's, that's sort of serendipitive, those unexpected things which you come across both in terms of urban context and, and this simulator context which, which I find quite fascinating as well. I'll just show you quickly, these are called digital gateway. This was, this was actually a piece of work which stemmed from the firefly piece it was, it was seen by the curators of the National Museum of

Photography on television in Bradford, they saw the firefly piece when it was in Germany and they wanted me to, they commissioned me to do a piece of work, an entrance piece of work for a new gallery that they were developing at the MNPFT called the wide worlds gallery and this gallery was actually given over to artists who used computers as a medium and, sort of people like Geoffrey Shaw, Jane Crawford, Simon Perier, you may or may not know some of these people but essentially it was people, artists that use computers as a large part of their creative space as it were. So the brief for this, it was very brief, they wanted me to produce a piece of work which gave, encapsulated the motion of moving through from the analogue realm into the digital world as an entrance piece, as a gateway into this digital world that people brought back, so I came up with this idea of a piece which actually digitised you as you walked through into the gallery space and then played and manipulated your imagery in these little light emitting dials, these red LED's as you actually moved through into the gallery space. So let me just quickly sort of try and show you. This is about three minutes long. I'll leave the sound off and I'll just sort of briefly talk over it as it's, as it's very intriguing. That's not my work it's just the building. So essentially it, it just gives you a sense of the sort of scale, I mean I've got some very large scaled installations and very small scaled installations it, it's usually within an outdoor or an indoor sort of context in that sense. So what you have is two enormous glass, you've got two glass walls which were sort of like see them, see the opposite walls to them and this near wall that I'm just installing some of these modules which fitted into this thing, so the whole thing was, it was actually quite complex, it took about a year on and off negotiating with the various companies involved just, but I actually never saw the piece until I got on site a year later and, and saw how it was actually constructed but it was all done by fax and email and, and working with various design companies and the museum. The whole thing is actually, it contains something like a hundred and eight computers with microprocessors which and, and hundreds of infra red sensors which look at people as they actually move through this space and so what, what happens is that it, as you move through the space you are actually digitised but it insulates your silhouette as you actually move through the space. This is just showing you some of the reflections of some of the set up processes of this thing. There's a little bit, a section later on which will give you an impression of how the thing actually operates. One of the sort of unexpected benefits of this was that because there were two large glass screens and it is was very dark in space, you've got this wonderful internal, total internal reflections between the two walls so you've got this unexpected sort of depth to the piece which is something I hadn't really accounted for but it added to this, this notion of an immersive environment within which you're actually placed in terms of a digital environment. So here you just get some sense of what scale of one of the walls and it goes through a number of different states it goes through a, if there's nobody interacting with the piece of work then it will actually go through its own particular patterns of display.   When people are interacting with it, it will then start to interact in real time with people involved as they're going through. You'll probably see a slight resemblance to the little flashing lights, I

call that the firefly mode because it was actually harping back my other piece of work called firefly so it's an old piece, embedded within this piece of work somewhere as well. So this is just to give you a sense of sort of, what happened was you were sort gradually digitised and countered as zeros and ones as you actually went through into the gallery. That was the idea, it wasn't quite as high resolution as I wanted it to be, we didn't have enough funding to be able to do what I really wanted to do but at the end of the day it, it satisfied their brief and, and children seemed to like it quite a lot as well sort of running through it quite happily. Okay you get a sense of that, just sort of slightly moved on from, from that notion of this sort of internal space, digital space that, this immersive space that people, we work with, I put in an eggshell asking me about his research council bit to develop some research based on notions of well it was to do with some original ideas which were related to aboriginal culture and how within that culture there's this notion of the ancestors actually walking on the landscape and actually singing the, the birds and the snakes and the rocks everything else into existence so I mean as an idea it's quite a beautiful sort of notion that you can actually sing things into existence and I think that what I wanted to do with this piece of work was actually to then to take our urban environment and actually get those to sing back to us. So what I did was I went round a number of cities, I actually shot panorama's, moving panoramas of, of various cityscapes at night and daytime and then through the use of computer programming I developed this, you can probably see on this, this sort of panorama, sorry it's not an excellent image but you can see this little red blind sitting on the image. These are actually interactive scan lines which were moving, constantly moving across this dead space and images that you can pull onto the computer. As these scan lines moved across the image they actually extracted the data from the cityscapes and then use that to compose a score of music on, on the fly as the scan lines moved across the image. So the idea was that the image of the cityscape was actually generating sound and music based on information that's contained in the cityscape. That's just a sample of interfacing, you can actually control each of the scan lines, you could change its height and how fast it was moving across the image so it was quite, and the sound that was being produced was done on the fly so there was nothing pre-recorded it was all being generated purely from the image base itself. This is just a sample of the installation as it was sited downstairs. It's been showed around as well, it's been shown in Boston and Europe and other places. Just to give you a sense of some of the sounds of the generators, if I can get this to work. (Sounds being heard) Ok so some of sounds look like cacophony, cacophonous some of them were quite melodious. It was dependant on the type of image that was being used and how it was actually, how you actually change the scan lines. So again a lot of this was very evocative and very malted depending on the image that we pulled up as well but you get the idea. (Sounds being heard). I also learned from that, I also developed a web version with this, this piece of work called vox, vox, I'm sure whether I've got, I can get access to this but, if the wireless connections are working and this was, because it was a web based version, I'm going to perform this live now so, I'm not quite sure whether it's going to

work. Because it's actually a web based version, I had to work to the lowest common denominator in terms of the band with that people had access to. So unlike the actual installation version which was using looped large scale images with a lot of information in this is actually based on still images. So let's see if we can get this to work very quickly and you can actually go on the web and actually try with out but you, you can keep it on your desktop, you can use it as a sort of screen saver if you want. If you get bored with the work that your doing putting round your desk you can actually, actually play with this, if you're feeling musically inclined. So again what we have here this is all being pulled off the web now so it's all live as it were. So here we have the, these are these scan lines here. (Noises heard). So again it becomes a bit like a music instrument that you can actually start to play with (Noises heard). You get the idea and finally if you've got time, I'll show you very quickly some current work, just bear with me a second okay I'm working on some current research with a colleague at the moment on something called due vision which is a gesture based recognition system for artists and performers but the idea is that one of the great difficulties that artists have is that we, there's always problems with finding suitable interfaces for these things in terms of non-invasive interfaces it used to be a, it tends to be a mouse or a click or a point or a direct interface so what I'm working on is something which works using gesture or hand gesture or body gesture or crowd gesture in terms of space and if I can demonstrate if it's going to work, I'll quickly show you what this is about. I do need a bit of light but I'll try without light it'll probably be okay actually and it might actually work. What I'm going to do here is try and capture, try and use the light from the screen but I just need to capture a model of my hand, I'll just try and teach the system what it's looking for, let's try that. Anybody recognise the base at all? There we go its Times Square, this is just simply a, a very, quick time this is a panorama, a virtual panorama, a panorama of this location but the idea is that this is just an example to demonstrate how this might actually work but the idea is that through this notion of non-invasive activity we can travel perhaps through other spaces using our bodies, it's working remarkably well actually. This is just the first stage of the research of it but it's quite interesting how already it sort of opens up new avenues in terms of exploring this notion of urban space I suppose on one level, a digital urban space you get the sense of what it might be about but if you imagine that it can also work off tracking peoples sort of body gestures in terms of how that might change the space within which we're operating perhaps change of location you can actually have, I was reading in the paper the other day that someone's actually developed new materials that buildings could potentially be made of which enable you to create huge projection, projection spaces, display spaces, so this could be part of that sort of installation space and really I mean that's my sort of take on where, how I sort of operate within this environment and alters effectively this context within which one is working, so that's what you mean. Thanks.

Woman: What's it recognising when, when your hand's there?

Man: Well it's recognising the, the model of the hands so it, it, it's, the idea is that it's an intelligent recognition system in the sense that you train it to recognise the thing that you want it to recognise it.

Woman: So a shape or the…

Man: So well it's actually just looking look at the shape at the moment yes, but it's actually sensitive enough to determine what the fingers are doing…

Woman: Yes even when you were doing this, when it doesn't have the shape of a hand it still recognises it.

Man: Yes, yes that's why you have to go through that initial teaching stage just to show it what institute, I mean it could be a cup and saucer you're showing it but it's just my hand.

Man: Does it only work on a plane?

Man: No it will actually work in 3D space as well, well it should do eventually.

Man: Can you zoom, can you get closer to…

Man: You can but not with hand level, it's possibly going to turn into a trip at the moment. (Sound demonstration).

Man: What, what is the sound relating to?

Man: The sound it's, it's just a very simple thing it's just using the positioning of the image to generate synthesised sound from the internal synthesiser on the computer.

Man: Do you anticipate the next generation might be able to distinguish hand?

Man: Sorry?

Man: Do you anticipate the next generation proper lighting, you'd be able to distinguish hand and …

Man: I'd like to predict but possibly, I don't see why not, I mean, I mean good protection is very difficult to, to deal with all of this because it's all real time stuff and, and it's, you're having to do an awful lot of work, to recognise fingers is a tremendously difficult thing to actually do at ten levels. You don't even need drugs to, hey that's, that's my bit.

Man: Thank you (Clapping). Do we need lights?

Man: I mean I don't know whether to add anything else on.

Lorens: No, I mean now is the time for discussion so we all need now to get intelligent with what we've been listening to and I mean I, I mean perhaps there are questions that should, people might want to ask or comments to make.

Woman: I would like to ask a little bit more about this concept of reclusive urbanism that you mentioned; you mentioned that the link to the notion of the subject which is sort of interests me as a Wall Street person and I just wondered if you could say a bit more about the social reclusive urbanism, what is the [inaudible] existing in…

Lorens: Well the short answer is no I can't, I was just, I was proposing it as a possibility which I, I don't really understand, I don't know if its, I mean I understand it in so far as I, I know like what, how assembling and coping and what not is used in other art forms in video or, and film and, I mean even to some extent in, in photography where like people like Lee Freelander, Lee Freelander always making sure that when he takes a photo he gets himself in it or there's a photograph of a photograph that kind of thing. So I know what it is in other art forms I haven't a clue what it would mean with urbanism I mean but I, it, it occurs to me that, that if and so I'm kind of setting it, I'm sort of putting it on the table as a possible, it's something we might explore here if anybody's interested in that but I don't know what it would mean in urbanism but I mentioned it because it seems to me that, that it would be a far more like radical idea about, about city space than if one can get could ones head around it then the way, or at least most of the way form is explored using digital technology which is, always goes in the direction of incredibly refined, incredibly beautiful objects, but I don't, I don't have a sort of … maybe it's rubbish, maybe they've just said it's something you can do with video that you can't do movies in these spaces.

Man: Let me take this up and I'm making a guess three years I ran a new lab which varied in size and funding but it was a downtown building site office and round the corner you might even know, the 80 Groundville, in Ground Shoes, if you know that term, actually as you left my club, when the club was closed and they then became practicing artists and it was almost okay where's the material come from, you've got this equipment, you've got the pipe, you've got the [inaudible] what are we going to do with this, how are we going to think about the city, are we going to think about the street. Many of these people would practice in technologies, photo shop in editing but that was always here and it was, okay think about those things from skills and technology that you're now going to use as your pulling in, you're just off the street putting yourself into the street among people from the street and creating this ongoing collage, cut and paste a group and so in all, it developed as a period of just of I'm not going to be around this place all the time telling you what to do, what not to do, why don't you just begin to think about think about the skills, the street and your combinations and make sure you have that sort of play in the street and

so over a period of time people developed a more agile sensibility of thinking about the skills that they used here in the screen and now its relationship to this foreground, background. I know it's just kind of a tab that I used and kept it going and some of it could be very interesting, some of it could be rather banal but it's seemed to offer some sort of direction in that you're moving through downtown on the street, you're getting a sense of yourself falling into the town, that's where I kind of first kind of used…

Woman: So would it be fair to say that's a sort of repetition of that urban space or of an elder to the urban space but that sort of breaks down the distinction between there being an original urban experience and the digitised urban experience so that, sort of the, well the bricks and mortar aren't privileged over the digital repetition of it.

Man: Yes, yes but I'm, you see I don't, I mean yes I guess so but that doesn't, that doesn't mean anything to me I mean as a kind of, I'd like to think that as an Architect and a realist in certain ways or a hard line materialist or something it doesn't believe in fanciful and that's still too fanciful, I don't know, I don't really know what it would be to repeat, repeat a plan endlessly.

Man: What was nice about Paul's account just then was I think this social sort of aspect and you've mentioned praxis a few times in your talk which is something that sort of gets left out sometimes when people talk about digital media and, and some of the [inaudible]esque sort of metaphors. Anyway what have I got here socio technical systems are the way we think of these things perhaps and repetition and recursion within that domain. I guess what one would want to avoid with the notion of recursive urbanism is fractals and certainly one thinks of plans of New York city which are being used by some purists on fractals so where you think of the small configuration of laneways as somehow mirroring what's the larger configuration of streets and so it goes on this sort of holistic romantic fractonism I suppose which is a formal thing. I think what you're introducing here or suggesting is something that's to do with human practice.

Man: Yes actually a couple of DJ's that started there had background in fractals and were starting to do these sort of things and I said no that's kind of soulless, I mean we're on the street right now, think about the other possibilities of what you're seeing, what you're doing, was going out on the street and maybe use a little bit of that and you just create another ambiance and another voice and depending upon their own, a depth of sensibility and vision, it moves somewhere else but we kept it going and it was not just some sort of flat dimensional kaleidoscope.

Man: It seems to me, it worries me that it is something that's on the surface rather than something that's embedded or sold in terms of architecture and in terms of spaces that were built and I guess what I'm interested in is this kind of notion of inclusion and exclusion and I seem to kind of come up with a number

of things that we've talked about today for example the installation downstairs. I was intrigued by the fact that there was a space where you were included when you were on camera and a space in between where the vision, where you were excluded you could be in this other environment beyond the gaze if you like and it was interesting also with the kind of digitalisation of somebody coming into the environment where you're included if you're digitised when you're outside the environment you're not and I'm interested in how that kind or relates to this, the way that you're either included or excluded and also related to that idea of hacking, hacking technologies in some way and I kind of think that in order for this type of thing not to be just a surface thing we need to go to hack into it and we will hack into surveillance technologies and using a camera, one had different kinds of interaction with the space in that way, does anybody else think that?

Man: Well the idea of appropriation and subversion I think is really interesting in this sort of context contrary to Lawrence's pessimistic outlook I thought at the beginning I think he seemed to suggest that something has happened to a specific space where it's no longer what it was but nonetheless these days well perhaps always there's been this impulse to subvert and it's not to say it's always successful but anyway it's just something to be taken into account that there is this propensity within the human spirit to somehow stuff things up or to appropriate which is to grab and use to your own ends and there seems to be loads of evidence of that in, in areas of culture theorists have studied in this to do with the mass media, to do with spaces.

Woman: I think, thinking on something you said earlier I think it's that thing, it was a loop hole that has come back, that, that these, it's all about practising, it was all about human beings and acting in with them to earn a creative environment so I guess I'm kind of intrigued by how the sort of modernist … a lot of the conversations have been kind of, a great deal of dualism is bouncing around today, I've loved all these kind of lovely little connections with these like Geddes and all the rest of it and just through my little bit is that what fascinates me about for example (unclear 35.03) was that they were of that generation of guys who came out and they were old guys who came out of World War II seeking to impose order on chaos and very much connected with for example the growth of (unclear 35.16) psychology in America at that time, when (unclear 35.18) was born, communications theory was born and this was all part of that era and I just kind or curious about, I noticed that in Europe you got as far as the nineteenth century and then you leapt into the Gulf war and there's, there's a whole bunch of stuff that's interesting about the interim to the new social construction of states and the rural practice and that sort of experience so I'm kind of curious to see how we could bring a little bit back inside and maybe just even by doing what you do naturally anyway would explain these links and teething out some of the links. Maybe that's where the philosophers come into it, I don't know.

Man: Well McLuhan has been famously charged as being an environmental sort of turbo, technological determinist, that's there in the sociology literature and I think he's more nuanced and interesting in a way than just simply categorising in that way but nonetheless yes I think it's worth looking at such as technology, there's a social, socio technical system or technological system.

Man: Those kind of questions for me that came out were on this notion of free will those seem to be quite central for me in what you were, I'm maybe just reading into it probably but if you read the urban environment as a system of information as Ventury proposes in a sense then to what extent is that acting upon the subject. To what extent is that determinist environment or to what extent have we, are we free agents within that, I think that's a very interesting question and it seems to be quite crucial in, in the pages we heard and I don't know whether it's particularly motivating or not it's maybe something to kick around.

Lorens: I, well in, with relation to the exhibition actually the whole thing about surveillance wasn't really something that we talked about that's kind of been broached adequately but the idea about having, I mean Catriona you said, you take us back to 1950 and all these guys and I'm also thinking well the guiding metaphor, I mean it's not 100% but the sort of figure in the back of my mind I guess with what I was talking about would be an identity statement from the state is kind of like Big Brother and 1984 [inaudible] as well so perhaps everything I say is derived from more or less from where I was born but the, I think there's an awful lot of ways to understand public space besides that space that you have to, to some extent be able to keep your identity yourself in order to use that space politically. In other words how you, how can you kind or escape from this kind of scrutiny of government or whoever so you can be free to do what you want and I'm sort of, I mean I think there's a hell of a lot more to how we understand space than that but that is one function of space it's for the generation of, of political debate, it's for the generation of culture and you can only do that to some extent if you're not being scrutinised okay so it's just quite simply that but if we do follow that a little bit maybe one of the. and I don't really know actually but if say we become completely monitored and I'm not saying that's going to happen but I just, I'm really pointing to how I think what we, how we think about urban space is shifting, I'm not actually, nothing I said was about sort of like, the sort of plan you would draw up for urban space but it's more about what it means to us and I'm thinking that if space ceases to function as a forum for in this case political debate like the way with the exclusions that are part of it you can't actually walk with a plaque then obviously we have to find other places to do it and that doesn't mean that, that we then do it in virtual spaces it just means we are finding other modes in which to exercise freedom of speech but what that means is well then what we use space for has changed. It is just not the same as it was when we could, when everything that is with that aspect of the discourse of urban space which is about kind of the body politic and kind of ideas about the civic i.e. it's

somehow representing kind of political will and body politic that's going to shift if won't be that…

Woman: I don't know whether it's shift as much as it's the technologies that support that process, let's go back to the original owner so that (unclear 41.03) unwanted space and the Greeks had taken a great deal of interest in what was going on and just what's maybe interesting here is the range of technology that (unclear 41.22). I mean it kind of takes me back to something I was mulling on when you were both talking which was just this kind of sense of is there anything generally that we do about that … (unclear 41.39). Is there anything genuinely new on this scale … ?

Man: That comes the pecking order that is actually needing to go back to the same question which I keep looking at which is how does technology and media affect the design of urban spaces and it is an interesting thought, this morning when we started talking about the urban spaces outside Rome, it's the grandness and some kind of reality and what really sort of struck me was that your response was very visible and spatial and the initial first instinct (unclear due to sound level being too low 42.22) and you put forward a proposition, a theory about what that should be and it was completely something that (unclear) … were much the same. I just want, I mean these are sort of deeply human concerns, if you like, these conclusions are (unclear 42.55) and I just wonder in a sense whether digital technology fits in to that kind of category because that's an essential component of (unclear 43.05) to urban space. Much of it seems, fascinating as it is, it relates to a sort of well there are two issues, it related to a perception of urban space rather than a conception and also it just relates more to how existing urban space might be mediating slightly (unclear to sound being too low 43.35).

Woman: I can see it in the sense of being designed for just…

Man: That's what I was meaning about conception and perception, they're two different things. Conception of urban space which is the first part of the question meaning some deep human communication and it is often in form quite visceral and responding to that is quite tough, but in terms of analysing and understanding it in a historical sense then that can be quite interesting. I'm not saying it doesn't come in a pecking order of designers of urban spaces but it comes in a pecking order of other issues somewhere, I'm not sure it's very high in the pecking order myself.

Lorens: I'm sorry what's not very high?

Man: Digital media.

Man: The spontaneity that took place this morning which was kind or exciting because of both backgrounds and we might respond to these sorts of things, it has nothing to do with we're involved in but what one desperately wants to do

is to establish other forms out there that allows that sort of discourse to take place that involves these other generations, these other people who can be as passionate and can have that sort of exchange with the belief that this happened here and here and here all these sites are going on but maybe something will, something necessary has to happen.

Man: That's kind of rarefied discussion. I expect it's quite a high level of …

Man: But I, I think the same level of discussion can occur within other individuals in the community involving media and some ideas of these other forms in public places are created, I really do.   I've seen it because I work in some of these oddball places. It doesn't happen all the time but you'll see people you'd otherwise just be part of one of the screens. When their forced to be in place and to flip the screen in a public place it actually moves somewhere else they begin thinking on another level and you see those exchanges occurring.   The problem is they're rarely place at those stages, they're after frustration, they're not putting into practice setting in these stages which allow them to get, some are passionate and I, I think it's more passionate than rarefied.   I mean we both may have these feelings towards these places and we're able to look at but it will happen or it should happen and that has to be for me always the, the ultimate goal, all of this created in places where these other people are as equally engaged as I am and it can happen because I see it and it collapses.

Lorens: I read an interesting paper a short while ago it was actually in the, published in a book edited by one of the people who's coming here and it was written by a sociologist who was looking at what he called large scale conversations, no, no I'm sorry very large conversations, VLC's and he invented that, that word and that term and what he was looking at were basically internet chat rooms and he said that for a Sociologist they are, produce serious methodological problems when you try to study them because they're somehow huddled between the two, the small and the large scale research surveying techniques either you interview people on the street and it's a kind of one on one thing and that tells you a lot of information about what one person knows or thinks or whatever or you do kind of statistical surveys which will in the case of like a chat room sort of establish certain kind of parameters like sort of broadly what's being talked about and the number of times a certain subject is mentioned each day or something and the problem with both of those is that the one on one interview doesn't really give you a sense of the scale of the, the activity in the chat room. These are like chat rooms of about a thousand people in quite large rooms and, and the statistical stuff doesn't get at the essence of the chat room which is still essentially one on one conversation, it isn't, it isn't really demographics it's, it's one person responding to something else that someone had, had said so it's like how, how the Sociologist gets to grip with thousands of little one on one permutations and he had proposed something that, something which I'm not going to go into, I probably can't quite remember but I was thinking what I wanted to say

was I was thinking that in effect you could virtually everything you said about these chat rooms you can say about like a city because in a sense a city all, it is like a very large conversation, a city is the sort of summation of every single encounter that goes on in it whether it's two people talking, somebody buying a bag of crisps, someone knocking a building down or someone building one all these things are the sum total of all the activity going on in a city and it's almost even more complex because it's more heterogeneous and, and diverse and so I, I think the, the question I guess, the general question that maybe we've all been talking about in different ways has to do with, with forums for well this sounds so bizarre, forums for communiqué, forums for the transaction of words, ideas, money whatever it may be and where, where they occur, how the occur, I mean someone could sort of as a research project it might not ever get specific enough to be satisfied I don't know but one can imagine a research project where you just survey every single type of transaction going on in the city. We could take Dundee and it would be, I mean we would first have to think of probably an enormous number of categories of things, then we'd have to relate them to all the places they occur and you'd get probably this incredible sociological/spatial map and it would have to be done in a way that was probably interactive or something I don't know because you would want be able to, at the same time and this was the problem that the guy had studying these things he wanted to be able to get the overview and then he also wanted to be able to zoom in and see a specific form but couldn't do it with either technique that he had at his disposal and, and it would in a sense be the same program for studying the city that way and you would and so the, the general question here I think it isn't so much me with my cranky observations about god I can't find a place out of the sun, I can't out of the scrutiny of George Bush or something except if I go and join Osama Bin Laden it isn't, it isn't really about that it's just, it's about well okay where, what are the forums, what are the different kinds of activities we do and what are the forums for and don't they shift okay, it maybe that some that have traditionally been embedded in, in urban space will need to move into other forums, I don't know what they would be, chat rooms or the local men's club, it could be anything and other activities which may have once occurred in one form may shift to another and I guess that's a more, rather than talk about, referring now to what I was talking about urban space and it, it's kind of at least with respect to certain kinds of freedom of expression being diminished maybe a more general comment would be just quite simply take freedom of expression, define it in certain ways and then look at where it occurs and notice how it may or may no longer occur in certain kind urban spaces and occurs elsewhere.

Man: Yes, that's, that was a recent report that relates to what you're saying about you've reminded me of, basically talking about new public spaces. I think it's the Demos think tank that produces this. Essentially arguing that democratic public spaces were to be found in unexpected sort of locals now, the street itself being so much overseen by technologies by other means as well and of course city centres etc, etc so in fact these public spaces which were functioning in such big democratic ways, allotments for example,

allotments were cited as a place where people could come across one another almost in a sort of accidental way the interaction might occur and so, or to say a new … (unclear 53.55).

Man: I can see where that report is coming from and it does relate to something you were talking about this morning but I'm not sure that these arguments capture the different scales in which we should be taking into account if think about public space, that is we tend to think about public space perhaps as occurring at the level at which we're studying in Dundee but in order to try to understand how people behave relates at function with a mass within that public space and we'll take that into account other space that you can't see but if our contents (unclear 54.49) … so you say it may not be possible to get outside the field of observation, George Bush has actually gone to the Pakistan border but not a lot of people don't perhaps at root want to get out into the (unclear 55.13) and personalise it, and in a sense that I think there was a certain amount of acceptance, more acceptance possibly of the idea of surveillance and you were conveying because I think they were the same sort of pessimistic people and I think that that's because of the interaction of different space, a social complex in which behaviour in public spaces at a local level is (unclear 55.44) and so there were overarching arguments about security and risk so that come to play, that influence how (unclear 55.56).

Man: There's a quick because you saw the laser in this, it's obviously the, the box, the security camera also part you really sound a bit more [inaudible] dealing with public domain and dealing with issues of Disney, this issue was shown at one piece but like it says the thing the service of the public have always said even though Mickey mouse was going out in copyright and there were all sorts of things going on in the United States but all the surveys of the public felt that Disney corporation they should control that company they should always control that company so, so be it their willingness to allow the Government to sort of, making surveillances more for private corporations to have copyright gratuity those are problem allegations to deal with a certain public, I agree with that.

Man: (Unclear to sound being too low 56.58)… say for these restricting the use of public space as in kind of local drug dealers or whoever who offer a kind of threatening presence to other kind of groups so there's all sorts of kind of conflicts around what publics are making use of those spaces. I suppose the other, one of the other kind of issues that I feel comes out of this is the way in which so much of our kind of social and economic life is spent in mass private property whether that's in shopping malls or that's in institutions whether that's in retail parks and so on and that it's increasingly the gaze of a private enterprise of corporations rather than the state but is following us, monitoring what we're doing and so on. A lot of people do spend their lives very little, in fact very small parts of their lives in public space most of it is within kind of private spheres which are being monitored by corporations and so on rather than the state.

Man: Slovo Ginjek is a great Lecanian exponent has an interesting article about the Big Brother television show and from this he extracts his observations of that show, he extracts an argument to do with in fact the real anxiety is that in fact there's nobody watching it, there's nobody at the other end of the screen, no one looking at the monitors and perhaps that is a new anxiety that we have to deal with, what if after all there isn't somebody watching to see that we're safe on the street or even interested in the fact that we're walking around town. There's, that was spurred by your earlier comment that, that it's a complex relationship we have with the notion of being watched and watching and it isn't only restricted to surveillance technologies but also just generally the idea that there are people looking at me now and interested perhaps and that we are in fact under each others gaze. So it's not just something that's to be addressed in relation to a Big Brother scenario meaning one big government entity watching us and controlling us.

Man: (unclear 59.17) information there's always some information being stored by us at different times but that mass of information just must be getting bigger and bigger and bigger and how do you, how do you deal with trying to kind of decipher that information and kind of find out the facts that you want to know.

Woman: Yes there are huge databases of information that nothing ever happens it just sits there and eventually the…

Man: Because there's too much information.

Woman: The data storage format goes out of date and it disappear off and that's it so yes and I kind of know what you mean about the anxiety that nobody is watching and certainly a lot of those cameras in those streets are not actually observed and often the tapes aren't changed and the number of cases…

Man: And we know these guys have got no tape in them.

Woman: There's nothing in there.

[All talking at the same time]

Man: What, on the web?

Lorens: Just a micro point of information to the extent that some of this is referring back to some of my comments this morning, I was actually not talking about CCTV surveillance I was actually talking about storing data on people from a central point, collection and collection of data and like with the identity cards when I was saying scrutiny I wasn't referring to visual scrutiny but the idea that we're effectively completely controlled by a central point because it

hasn't happened yet but if with the ID card system it will be the way that we interface with every single social and public service and whether we like…

Woman: It has actually happened in the UK but only if you're disabled. In fact it's happened in Scotland because I've just had to renew my disabled bus pass and discovered that the only way I can get a new one is to buy into the new Scottish Governments Scotland wide scheme for an ID card that will incorporate my library card they told me, my bus pass, has all my house details, my council tax details, my inland revenue details everything's tied in so we're being guinea pigged the rest of you will get there shortly but the disabled are already on the data base. They're obviously worried about us crips running wide.

Man: Does it bother you?

Woman: Yes it does actually yes.

Man: Do think this kind of neurosis about surveillance does it, can you, does it tie in with a sort of family developing sectors society and is there something about the law a sort of restructure and so on where there was litter they, we were being surveyed from above?

Man: Well I mean all of, yes I mean to, the only surveillance that you can't escape from really is the super ego right, that sort of voice that's saying I'm watching you, don't fuck up or God, I mean some people would, would reckon that God is a kind of exteriorised version of the super ego effectively that kind of hallucination, group hallucination but I mean that's, I mean that's another yes more or….

End of Discussion

1 hour