ABSTRACT

BLOGS: OPEN-SOURCE DIARIES

by
Kelly Schab

Weblogs, or blogs, are Web sites maintained by one person or a few select people, are usually about one distinct subject, are constantly updated, and attract repeat visitors. This form has become a popular means of self-expression because it empowers both the writer and the audience. Blogs empower writers by providing them with an easy way to self-publish their points-of-view to a wide audience. Blogs empower the audience when the writer either provides informative hyperlinks and references that the audience can use to verify the writer's claims or allows the audience to append their own text to the blog that could refute the writer's claims. When the blogger provides links to her sources and encourages her readers to challenge her arguments in much the same way as academic or scientific authors do, her blog feels more authentic. To understand how blogs empower people, a useful comparison can be made between blogs and traditional autobiographical writing, as well as the collaborative environment of the open source movement.

BLOGS: OPEN-SOURCE DIARIES

by
Kelly Schab

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of
New Jersey Institute of Technology
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science in Professional and Technical Communication

Department of Humanities

January 2005

Blank Page

APPROVAL PAGE

BLOGS: OPEN-SOURCE DIARIES

Kelly Schab

_____
Dr. Christopher Funkhouser, Thesis Advisor   Date
Assistant Professor of Humanities and Social Science, NJIT

_____
Dr. Burt Kimmelman, Committee Member   Date
Associate Professor of English, NJIT

_____
Dr. Robert Friedman, Committee Member   Date
Associate Professor and Associate Chair of the Humanities Department, NJIT
Research Professor, Information Technology Program, NJIT

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Author: Kelly J. Schab

Degree: Master of Science

Date: January 2005

Graduate and Undergraduate Education:

- Master of Science in Professional and Technical Communication
  New Jersey Institute of Technology. Newark, New Jersey, 2005

- Bachelor of Arts in English,
  Montclair State University. Upper Montclair, New Jersey, 1996

Major: Professional and Technical Communication

To Mom, Dad, Kathryn, and Stephen for their unconditional love and support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to extend my deepest thanks to Prof. Christopher Funkhouser who served as my thesis advisor and provided me with invaluable creative support. I would also like to give special thanks to Prof. Burt Kimmelman and Dr. Robert Friedman who took time out of their busy schedules to participate in my review committee.

My friends and co-workers deserve recognition for the emotional support and encouragement they gave me throughout the past year.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS
(Continued)

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

BLOGS: WHAT ARE THEY?

1.1 Overview

Weblogs, or blogs, are Web sites maintained by one person or a few select people, are usually about one distinct subject, are constantly updated, and attract repeat visitors. Blog entries can be brief or lengthy, usually giving insight into the blogger's personality (Dibbell 82). Blogs make extensive use of hyperlinks, linking to other sources for attribution, recognition, and more information (Barrett 26). Blogs often contain links to and analysis about articles that readers might not have found on their own (Mead 48). The blogger attempts to collect various links around which she constructs an argument. The more links the blogger adds to her entries, the more authentic the blog feels. In addition, bloggers and readers can use hypertext to collaborate with each other, which enhances the blog's content and empowers the readers by allowing them to contribute to the construction of the blog. The blogger is empowered as well by the ease of self-publishing that hypertext affords her, along with the fact that people can read blogs without charge. The blogger does not have to follow the whims of a publishing company in order to be published. To understand why blogs empower people, one can compare blogs to traditional autobiographical writing and the collaborative environment of the open source movement.

Blogs began as personal homepages in which people listed the Web sites they frequented. Web authors began sending bloggers the address to their Web sites so that the bloggers would post them (Blood, "History and Perspective" par. 1). As bloggers began

to know each other, they created a community that read each other's Web sites frequently. The community was small enough that people could easily keep up with each other's writing. Then in 1999, tools such as Pitas, Blogger, and Groksoup were launched that enabled people to easily build their own blogs, which made blogging more accessible to people who did not know how to write HTML code. As a result, the blogging community grew exponentially. These tools helped the community to grow from a size small enough to allow one woman, Brigitte Eaton, publisher of the blog, Eatonweb Portal, to easily maintain a list of "every weblog she knew about," to a flood of Weblogs that numbered in the hundreds (par. 4).

Blogs serve a variety of functions. Firstly, they serve as a filter of information. Whether the blogger writes about world events, issues in the media, or their personal lives, the blogger does not write about every thought that passes through her mind; rather, she selects issues and events that are important to her. In this way, blogs are a service to the Web surfer. Instead of having to sort through the vast amount of disparate information presented on the Internet, a person need only find a blog that discusses issues in which she is interested. Secondly, blogs serve as an alternative to traditional, corporate-owned media. Creating and maintaining a blog is inexpensive and easy so that anyone familiar with using a word processor and browsing the Web can maintain a blog. Bloggers do not have to rely on a publishing company to distribute their work and therefore do not have to kowtow to the demands of the publisher or the marketplace. The blog is a writing tool with which the author can redefine herself. As Jay David Bolter speculates, "It may be that cultures invent and refine writing technologies at least in part in order to refashion their definitions of mind and self" (189). The author redefines her

self as public and her knowledge and experience as communal. The low cost of publishing online empowers people to bypass traditional media to add their perspective (Blood, "History and Perspective" par. 8).

Blogs are democratic and empower the author to self-publish. It is inexpensive and easy for anyone to publish a blog herself without having to use the mechanisms of the publishing industry, allowing the blogger creative freedom. The blogger is not beholden to a publisher to deem her work to be worthy of being published. Various technologies such as Internet-enabled cellphones, wireless connections, and handheld messaging devices allow authors to post entries as soon as the writer thinks of them. If the blogger allows her readers to add their thoughts and opinions, then the blog becomes an interactive and collaborative effort in which both the author and readers are on an equal playing ground when contributing to the content of the blog. Finally, bloggers can write about anything they want and do not have to worry about being censored or about what readers want in order to gain readership. Blogs promote their reputation when other blogs and Web sites spread information about blogs through "word-of-mouth;" that is, links to the blog (Lasica 167). Reputation is important to bloggers, as this is the primary way in which readers find out about blogs (Blood Introduction xi).

Blogs empower not only the writer but also the blog's readers. Blogs that allow comments empower the reader to correct the blogger, and to add missing facts, viewpoints, and opinions. Blogs that do not allow comments attempt to keep most of the authority with the blogger. Blogs that allow comments are a combination of newsgroups and personal Web pages. Like newsgroups, blogs can allow readers to add their own information (Bolter 29). However, newsgroups allow any member to start a new

discussion. Blogs only allow the blog owners to start a new discussion. In this way, blogs are more like personal Web pages. While the owner of a blog that allows comments has control over what the blog looks like and the initial entries of the blog, she does not have control over the content of the comment. Comments do not even have to relate to the entry it is connected to.

1.2 Examples

To better understand what a blog is, it is useful to look at a few types of blogs: the personal diary blog, the collaborative blog, and the citation blog.

The Rant Room by Josh R., seen in Figure 1.1, is a personal diary blog that allows readers to comment on each entry. Josh R. comments on events that affect him personally as well as events about which he has a strong opinion. His blog is designed to keep the reader's attention on him. The page background is black, the main text is white, and links are gray, giving the main text more prominence in the reader's vision. Josh R. provides a partial portrait photograph in the right side of the blog, bearing visual testament that the blog is a partial autobiographical sketch of the author. A list of links to older posts follows underneath Josh R.'s picture, which is then followed by a list of links to blogs that he reads. Finally, Josh R. provides links to other, non-blog Web sites. Readers' comments range from notes of agreement, to observations made by people who attended the same event as Josh R., to providing additional information. Josh R. responds to his readers in his comments section.

Figure 1.1 Josh R's <u>The Rant Room</u>. 29 July 2004. 6 September 2004. <http://therantroom.blogspot.com/>.

Dan Gillmor, technology columnist for the <u>San Jose Mercury News</u> and SilconValley.com, maintains a blog called <u>eJournal</u>, shown below in Figure 1.2, through which he receives comments and suggestions from readers of his newspaper column. Gillmor's blog is not just about technological issues, but also about issues that affect him. His blog is part of SiliconValley.com, a commercial Web site that reports on technology news. His blog contains commercial ads on the top and right side of the page. On the left side of the page, he links to other SiliconValley.com features and to a blog about Gillmor's book, <u>We the Media</u>, which is about blogging's effect on traditional media. Gillmor encourages his readers to suggest column or blog entry topics and provides multiple ways to contact him. Gillmor lists books he is currently reading and movies he has seen, which provide autobiographical information. On the right side of the blog, Gillmor provides a calendar that links to entries posted on certain days, his blogroll, an archives list sorted by month, and an archives list of categories Gillmor has assigned to entries. In the main blog area, Gillmor uses both images and text to illustrate his points. Most importantly, Gillmor occasionally posts entries asking his readers for their opinions on technology topics. Gillmor collaborates with his readers and uses their suggestions and comments in his newspaper columns (Lasica 174).

Archives

SiliconValley.com features
and a link to the Weblog for
We, the Media

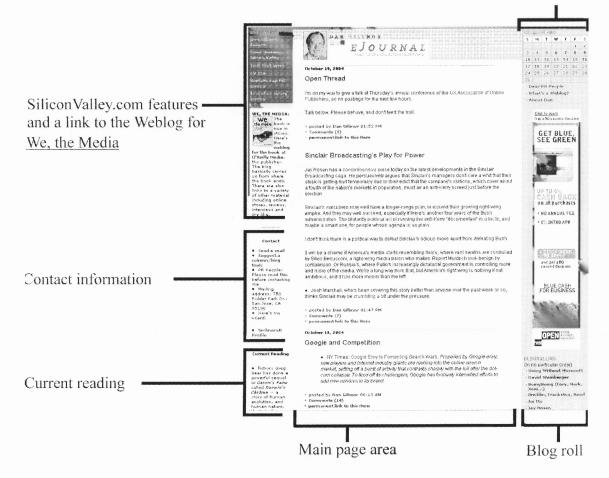Contact information

Current reading

Main page area

Blog roll

Figure 1.2 Dan Gillmor's <u>eJournal</u>. 1 January 2000. 6 September 2004.
<http://weblog.siliconvalley.com/column/dangillmor/>.

An example of a blogger making liberal use of hyperlinks is Digby, the author of the blog <u>Hullabaloo</u>, which is shown below in Figure 1.3. His blog is simply constructed: the left side of the blog shows an image of Peter Finch in the movie <u>Network</u> and a quote from Finch's character Howard Beale. Though Digby does not focus on himself in the blog and does not provide overt biographical information, the image and quote provide a clue about who Digby is. They suggest that Digby does not passively accept what the traditional media present and encourages everyone to question the authority and intent of the media. Adding to the implied autobiographical information, Digby lists political Web sites about the Democratic party and Ralph Nader. He then lists links to left-leaning news sources, news analysis sites, and blogs, and displays an ad paid for by the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. Finally, Digby provides a list of links to his older posts dating back to December 29, 2002. Digby's blog entries are displayed in the main area of the page in plain type, only using color and bold type to distinguish one day and entry from another. Much of Digby's entries are analyses of political and world events that link directly to the sources of his information, to sites that support his arguments, and to items he wants the reader see directly rather than read his description of them. Because of the simple Web page design, the links stand out from the rest of the text and encourage readers to leave <u>Hullabaloo</u> and explore other sources on their own.

Figure 1.3 Digby's Hullabaloo. 29 December 2002. 6 September 2004.
<http://digbysblog.blogspot.com/>.

1.3 Theory

For a well-rounded discussion of blogs, it is helpful to examine how blogs compare to autobiographical writing, the open source software programming movement, and hypertext theory. This section discusses such theories briefly while the following chapters discuss the respective theories in greater detail.

The blog is another form of published autobiographical writing. (This thesis compares blogs to published forms of autobiography and not to secret diaries or journals read only by the author.) As with other forms of autobiographical writing, blogs allow people to express themselves freely and experiment with their personas (Blood, Introduction xi). The writer can assert her authority over her own experiences by describing events in her own words, rather than having another writer provide the description. To present the most truthful account possible, the writer can choose to describe events in different writing voices, or personas. For example, if the writer believes that an event she is describing is solemn, she can use a serious, staid persona. On the other hand, if the writer is describing an event she does not consider worthy of seriousness, she can write in a more flippant, sarcastic tone.

Another important component of a blog is the audience, who can be just as important to the autobiographical writing as the author (Fleishman 109). The process of posting entries to a blog and the inclusion of an audience both serve to heighten the author's self-awareness, just as any form of writing does (Clark 68). Similar to a writer who intends to publish her autobiographical writing, a blogger knows that she will have an audience and anticipates its reaction to her writing. Both the blogger and the writer of

a traditionally printed book might balk at publishing opinions that might not fit with the persona she presents to the outside world.

Other beneficial components of blogs include their low cost and ease of maintenance. A blog allows the author to be free to write about anything she wants in whatever context she wants. As columnist J.D. Lasica notes, "Part of a blog's allure is its unmediated quality" (167). Just as a blank journal promises the diarist unlimited possibilities of subject matter, the theoretically unlimited boundaries of the Internet encourages the blogger to stake her territory and create her homestead in the style that suits her. The blog's audience can contribute to both the author's inner journey and the audience's own as people read and comment on blog entries. Finally, as the blog's author and audience become more comfortable with and accepting of each other, both parties feel freer to voice their true opinions and dissent without worrying about being ostracized from the blog's community (Lessig 45).

In addition to its resonance with, and expansion of, autobiography, the practice of blogging also follows the open-source software programming model. Where the open source community produces software, the blogging community produces knowledge, opinions, and friendships. Both communities produce their wares and improve themselves through voluntary group collaboration. The hypertext format of blogs and their location on the Internet encourage the blogger, her audience, and other bloggers to link to and collaborate with each other (Mead 51). This collaboration forms a community that resembles the open source community formed by software programmers. To maintain strong communal ties, the blogging community rewards its participants in much the same way that the open source community does. The blogger rewards her participants

with praise and thanks (Braff) and by linking to the participant's own blogs or Web sites, thus giving participants free publicity (Weinberger).

Hypertext and the collaborative structure of the Internet enable the blog to remediate autobiographical writing into an open source product. The blogger uniquely and authoritatively stamps her identity onto her blog even when she does not post personal information (Blood, Introduction xii). The combination of subject matter and writing style provide an impressionistic portrait of the blogger. The blogging community places a high value on links; the more links to external Web pages the blog contains, the more authentic is the blog (Mead 49). Links associate the blog with the other Web sites, creating a web of relationships. Hypertext also allows a blog's audience to collaborate with the blogger by providing the means to contribute comments, content, and more links.

CHAPTER 2

BLOGS, DIARIES, AND OTHER FORMS OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY

In academic circles, the term autobiography encompasses all forms of writing that describe the author's life as written by the author herself, whether the writing is contained in a diary, memoir, or journal (Berryman 72). Specifically, autobiographical writing is the means by which an author records significant events in her life, reflects upon her inner self and the outer world, and constructs the persona she presents to the world (Smith and Watson 36). The author actively constructs her persona through the open discourse she has with the physical world, other people, and her self (Smith and Watson 35). To give credence that the persona the author constructs is believable, she can provide evidence by filtering her writing through a particular context, which shows the persona in action. This focus on one aspect of her life can strengthen her awareness of and confidence in her identity (Ong 105), so much so that she can construct her autobiography to be a voice of dissent (Berryman 82). Autobiographical writing is comparable to Weblogs because Weblogs share the above-mentioned characteristics of autobiographical writing.

2.1 Constructing the Persona

Perhaps the most significant tenent in the theory of autobiography is that writing helps the author to construct her persona in several ways (Bolter 189). Firstly, the author constructs her persona as she interprets events for her audience through the writing voice she uses to present herself to her audience (Imbarrato 2). As the author strengthens her descriptions, she strengthens her writing voice and thus strengthens the part of her

personality she presents to her readers. Secondly, the author can strengthen her personality by engaging in a feedback loop with herself and her audience (Martinson 5). The author can re-read her writing and modify it as she writes, which creates a feedback loop with her writer-self and her reader-self. An author who blogs can engage in a feedback loop directly with an external audience. The feedback loop is created when the blogger allows her audience to add comments to the blog. The blogger reads the comments and chooses either to incorporate them into her writing or ignore them. Finally, the author can construct her persona through the tools she uses to write her story (Ong 83). The writer might think differently of herself when she writes using pen and paper to construct a diary than if she used a computer to make a blog. Using pen and paper, the writer might think of herself as traditional and in touch with the physical world. Conversely, using a blog, the writer might think of herself as modern, innovative, and in touch with the abstract world of the Internet.

One way in which the author imbeds her persona in her writing is by interpreting the events she describes in her autobiographical writing (Imbarrato 2). When the author interprets an event, she describes it from her point of view and decides which aspects of the event are significant enough to warrant a description. The author thinks about the event she is about to describe and how it affected her physically and emotionally. The author can experiment with her persona by interpreting the same experience many different ways over the course of her life (Smith and Watson 26). Each time the author interprets an experience differently, it is as if she is seeing the experience through different eyes. The author might be so profoundly affected by an event she is writing

about that she might change her beliefs and thus change her persona (Smith and Watson 81).

Before she writes one word, the author, either consciously or unconsciously, imagines how her text will be read and then chooses from the possible writing styles, interpretations, and audiences she will use to construct her text (Martinson 3). If the author does not like the end result, she can revise her text by changing the writing style, interpretation, or proposed audience. This revision process creates the feedback loop between the author and her text.

If the author publishes her autobiographical text, then the writer can engage in a feedback loop with her audience. The author can give a preliminary draft to her audience who may then give the author suggestions and comments. The writer in turn reacts to her audience's critiques and can respond either by revising her writing, by ignoring her critics, or by scrapping the text altogether and creating a new one from scratch. When the author uses a blog to publish her autobiographical writing, the author engages directly with her audience in two different ways. Firstly, the author connects directly to the audience because she types her thoughts in the same format as what the audience sees. This is different from the process used to publish a book, where the author might write her text in longhand and have her book published in printed type. The author might glean a different meaning from her longhand writing than the audience does from the printed text. Secondly, when the author allows the audience to post comments in her blog, she creates a direct connection between her audience and herself through which they can record a feedback loop directly in the text (Lessig 45). When the author provides the means for the audience to contribute to her text, she enables the audience to append to the

text, and thereby to change the meaning of the text, without having to wait for the author's review and approval.

The physical act of writing also influences the writer. Each change in the technology of writing (from papyrus to codex, from pen and paper to electronic word processors) influences how the author structures her story. A papyrus roll allows for a continuous, flowing story while a codex breaks the story up into pages and chapters. Writing with pen and paper takes more time to revise and organize in a more deliberate process than is experienced when writing with an electronic word processor with which the writer can organize and edit the text almost subconsciously as she types (Ong 83). Professors who teach distance learning courses that use electronic bulletin boards and chat rooms to maintain discussions reported that they had to change their teaching persona and writing style in order to use these media successfully (Coppola, Hiltz and Rotter 186). The blog format influences how both the author and the readers structure their writing. The audience is meant to read a blog on a computer screen, which limits the physical boundaries of the blog just as a printed book limits the physical boundaries of its text. However, the ability to link to other Web sites encourages the blogs to be very hypertextual, which gives the blog more dimensions as it branches out through cyberspace.

2.2 Audience

An important component of any autobiographical writing, including blogs, is the audience. Whether the author intends to show her diary to an audience is irrelevant; autobiography always has an audience. The audience becomes a co-writer and influences

how the author presents herself in her writing and the themes about which she will write (Smith and Watson 80).

The first member of the audience of an autobiographical work is the author herself. As she decides which aspects of her life she wants to describe and the tone in which she should describe these aspects, she constructs the self that she will present in her writing (Martinson 3). Her written persona does not have to be consistent; the author can use the diary medium to experiment with different personas in reaction to real-life situations. For example, if the author is meek and demonstrative in real life, she can present a more assertive, self-confident persona in her diary. In this example, the author is not recording the cold facts of her experiences as they appear to other people, but she is being true to herself, the self who wishes she were more assertive. To fully understand the author beyond what she presents in her autobiography, the reader should determine why the author presents herself in a certain way (Imbarrato 4).

The secondary audience of autobiography is the people who read the text after the author writes it. Whether the author intends to publish her writing or not, she is always aware of the potential that someone may read her writing. This awareness may influence her to keep her writing in line with her society's dominant values in order to please her audience (Smith and Watson 80). If the author expresses a dissenting opinion, her audience may at first be "skeptical, unbelieving, resistant, and even hostile" since the "authority of experience itself is culturally, historically, and politically motivated" (Smith and Watson 28). The audience may choose not to believe the author in order to promote its own agenda. For example, pro-slavery activists tried to debunk slave narratives in order to keep the institution of slavery intact (Smith and Watson 29). The author should

be aware of her audience's possible skepticism and provide enough proof in her argument to counteract it.

The urge to please her audience may induce the author to censor herself (Martinson 35). After realizing that someone will read her autobiography either with or against her will, the author's reaction may be to cover herself up, as if she had been caught naked. Virginia Woolf's husband read her diaries in the middle of her writing process, and edited her diaries for posthumous publication (Martinson 3). Not only did her husband intrude on her diaries by reading freshly written entries, but he also wrote two entries of his own (Martinson 23). Woolf's husband was not her only known audience; her father read everything she wrote as a child (Martinson 13). Afraid either to displease her father and husband or to appear vulnerable to them, Woolf did not address the more controversial sides of her personality, such as her sexuality, feminism, and madness, in her diaries. Rather, she delegated these themes to her fiction (Martinson 21).

Virginia Woolf's audience was prominent in her mind and she acknowledged that her audience acted as a mirror, or echo; her writing reflected off of her audience and back at her (Martinson 25). Woolf was always conscious of her audience, as evident when she explained the gaps in her diary (Martinson 35). If she was not aware of having an audience, she would not have bothered to explain, since she obviously would have known the reason for the gaps. She also acknowledged how other people sitting in the same room as she when she wrote influenced her writing as if the person could read her mind (Martinson 27). Clearly, Woolf was troubled and greatly affected by the presence of an audience for her personal diaries.

Many bloggers openly acknowledge their audience in their writing. The blogger, Duncan Black, in his blog <u>Eschaton</u>, often allows his readers to add whatever text they want in entries he calls "open threads." Threads are continuous lists of text posted by readers; the term is derived from news groups. The messages are usually "threaded" together by a common theme. Open threads do not have to have a theme; they are made up of whatever topic readers would like to discuss. In essence, Black is donating space on his blog to his readers to do with whatever they wish. Blogs that allow comments from readers not only become a metaphor of the author's self, but they also become a metaphor of the reader's self. Blogs have the same problems with audience as other forms of autobiography, but blogs that allow reader comments have the additional problem of the comments adding directly to the blog's content. If the blogger wants her blog to reflect a certain way, she must carefully mediate her readers' comments or else the readers will take over the blog. In a laissez-faire blogging atmosphere, the reader can change the tone, quality, and subject of the blog from that which the blogger originally intended.

2.3 Context

All forms of autobiographical writing, including blogs, can be written in as many contexts as there are sides to the author's persona. The context of a published piece of autobiographical writing depends on which persona the writer wants to project to the outside world. For example, an autobiography can be written as a parable, teaching its readers the life lessons learned by the writer. It can be a political autobiography, which gives the writer complete control over the public image she wants to project. The author can choose to write a travel autobiography that shows the reader not only the places to

which the author traveled, but also the author's impression of the locales. Finally, an author who is part of a minority group such as African-Americans, Hispanics, and Asians-Americans can write an autobiography expressing dissenting opinions against a status quo and add a point of view that might otherwise have been ignored (Smith and Watson 28-30).

The parable type of autobiography can be religious, political, or social in nature. In a parable autobiography, people keep diaries of their accomplishments or write memoirs in the hopes that future generations will learn from their successes and mistakes (Imbarrato 26). The religious autobiography began as a way for the colonial Puritan writer to strengthen her commitment to both her religion and her community (Imbarrato, xiii). Puritans had the ability to reflect upon religion and make their own choices without having to go through a church hierarchy. This authority held by the individual was a cause for some concern among the Puritan leadership, who insisted that to remain good, a person should be constantly vigilant about how she acts and how her actions affect her community (Imbarrato, xv). People such as Elizabeth Ashbridge and Jonathan Edwards wrote spiritual memoirs as a way to show their readers the paths they took to spiritual enlightenment so that the readers might follow their examples (Imbarrato 14).

The political autobiography provides an outlet in which the writer can explain herself in the context of her public life and craft her public persona before others can (Imbarrato 87). It can help the politician to reflect on her past and remind her to stay the course of helping her community (Imbarrato 92). The political autobiography is a sort of public performance piece, and can, according to Imbarrato, shape the audience's knowledge of historical events (93). The politician can perpetually explain her

accomplishments and the passion she felt when making those accomplishments. She can carefully craft her public persona by carefully crafting the message she communicates in her autobiography. When released at the right moment, and given enough marketing and fanfare, a political autobiography can overcome competing outlets of information that seek to shape the public's opinion about the politician. If the political autobiography successfully overshadows the messages conveyed by other people, then it can construct the public's perception of who the politician is (Imbarrato 86).

The political autobiography is not just a marketing tool. Politicians such as Thomas Jefferson and John Adams used their autobiographies to reflect on their past in order to assure themselves that they had remained true to their philosophies. Their writing helped them to stay focused on their original goals of helping their nation, not on the public fame they gained as a result of their political deeds (Imbarrato 92).

Another use of the political autobiography is as a collection of historical, albeit personal, accounts, which shape the audience's view of historical events. More un-biased documentation such as planning documents, accounting ledgers, and other records may have perished over time, leaving a hole in the historical narrative. Such is the case with the planning documents of the American Revolution. For security purposes, these documents were destroyed. Jefferson and Adams did not have these records to refer to while writing their autobiographies, so they had to rely on their own memories to describe the event. Either man may have forgotten key facts, or chosen to omit some memories while placing more importance on other memories as they wrote their accounts (Imbarrato 93). While first-hand experiences of important events are valuable and help to

create a well-rounded description, readers should not assume that first-hand accounts are factually complete.

Authors can shape their readers' opinions of the exterior world as well as of the author's interior world. The travel diary gives the author an opportunity to make sense of her surroundings and impose her personality on the description of her trip. Travelers often keep diaries to describe the scenery of the places they visit and present character studies of the people they meet. This type of diary can also be used to help others in a more practical manner: readers can more easily learn hints and tips that the author has learned through trial and error along the way. Travel diaries can serve as a more specific travel guide for a group of like-minded people than guides written for the lowest common denominator. Finally, future generations of readers can learn what a particular area of the country looked like centuries ago. Like the descriptions of past events, the descriptions of landscape, towns, and the people who live in those towns are colored by the autobiographer's perceptions and opinions. She describes the scenery that strikes her fancy, whether the scenery pleases her as it stands, or whether it provides a good starting point for farming or urban development (Imbarrato 47). As the author travels from town to town, each of which having its different ways of thinking and doing things, she can either assert her personality or experiment with it and determine which persona is most acceptable to the locals (Imbarrato 53).

A blog can have just as many contexts as any other form of autobiographical writing. There are blogs that critique traditional journalism (Black), blogs that review films and television shows (Schwartz), and blogs that discuss a company's research and development efforts (Microsoft). Some blogs are not as narrowly focused; their context

on the blogger's life, as is the case with Tom Coates's <u>Plastic Bag</u> and Josh R.'s <u>The Rant Room</u>. Each post can be written in a different context depending on what the blogger thinks is important at the time. Additionally, blogs that allow readers to comment on entries also contain the context added by the reader. An entry posted by the blogger might be written in one context, while the comments to the entry are written in an entirely different context.

2.4 Heightening Self-Awareness

In order for the author to hone her persona and impose her personality onto that which she describes, she must be aware of the characteristics that compose who she is. She can then decide which of those characteristics she wants to keep and which she wants to change. Writing facilitates this process by helping the author heighten her awareness of herself (Ong 105). Before the advent of writing, humans had to store thoughts constantly in active memory so that they could pass important information down from one generation to the next. This left little room for analysis and little chance to create strong philosophical arguments (Ong 51). Once people started to write, they recorded memorized information onto a separate physical space, which freed up memory for contemplation. Writing down thoughts also allowed people to analyze them as separate entities from their physical and emotional selves and to strengthen their arguments.

A blogger can become ever more self-aware because of the feedback loop created when she compares her blog entries to her readers' comments. Her readers might point out factual errors or post strong arguments that challenge the blogger to defend her opinions. <u>Eschaton</u>'s author, Duncan Black, decided to remove a post after many readers

railed against the opinions expressed in it (Black "Some Changes"). Black reviewed what he originally wrote and agreed that his post was unfair. He restated his opinions in a less incendiary tone.

2.5 Dissent

Autobiographical writing has a long history of being a medium for the voice of dissent. As the author becomes more self-aware and strengthens her persona through her writing, she becomes more confident. If the author is a marginalized person, she may decide to use her autobiography to assert herself and tell her side of the story (Smith and Watson 27). A minority or exploited person can create for herself a more powerful persona by confidently speaking out about her situation and calling attention to her oppressors. Having taken a stand and saying that her situation is wrong, the author can use her writing as a call for change.

To change the status quo, a significant amount of people who have the power to make these changes, either legally or socially, must believe the author's claims. Fortunately, merely providing a detailed account of the exploitation or marginalization serves to convince the audience that the autobiography is true (Smith and Watson 27). This inherent trust in autobiographical writing further compels the marginalized to proclaim her free will and redefine herself in her own words (Smith and Watson 42).

Minority or marginalized people can use autobiography to tell their stories when there is no one else to speak for them or defend them (Smith and Watson 131). They can also use autobiography to define themselves before the dominant group does (Smith and Watson 105). African-American slaves, for instance, described what it was like to be

subjected to the brutal institution of slavery. Showing others the slave's point of view made the audience more empathetic to the slaves' plight and showed that African-Americans were human beings and deserved to be treated as such.

Blogs have become a medium of dissent as they break the traditional media's hold on content (Talbot 170). By nature, blogs welcome everyone's point-of-view; anyone who can get access to the Internet can publish her story to the world. People who feel ignored by newspapers and television news shows can take action and publish their own accounts of events or clarify misconceptions or misunderstandings portrayed in the traditional media (Talbot 170). In China, Huang Jin'gao, the secretary to the Communist Party, voiced his dissent against government corruption in a blog published on the People's Daily Web site. While his blog has not been removed from the Web site and the Chinese government does not speak against it, he fears for his life and wears a bullet-proof vest in fear of retribution. In America, bloggers have become critics of the integrity of the traditional media, as the number of media outlets grows while the number of media owners shrinks as time goes by. It is difficult to ensure that members of the media police themselves because of conflicts of interest; therefore, some bloggers have unofficially created an ad hoc oversight community eager to report the first sign of carelessness committed by the traditional media.

2.6 Blogs and Autobiography Theory

In addition to the theories described above, blogs employ immediacy. They provide a continuous stream of information about the blogger that enables the reader eventually to know who the blogger is (Blood, xi). Blogs accommodate the immediate physical and

emotional reactions that make up the self. The immediacy of blog posts allow the blogger to more accurately describe how she physically feels about an event. Taking immediacy one step further, blogs that post pictures and audio recorded through a mobile phone allow people to share what they see with others. While the pictures do not convey every sensation that the blogger perceives, they provide more of an unmediated experience than plain text.

Blogs are more than just a medium used to project the blogger's persona. Like other forms of autobiography, blogs also fulfill a person's desire to leave something behind after she dies, provided that the blog's Website is maintained in perpetuity, but blogs allow more people access than traditional print (Graham 37). While they are vehicles of learning as they enable the blogger to learn more about the subject of her posts, having a participatory audience may encourage the blogger to research more fully the subject in order to project a thoughtful, well-informed persona out of fear of being corrected. Finally, blogs establish a sense of community. Both the blogger and her readers create the blog's content together (Graham 38).

The blog has changed how authors value personal information. Diarists often think of their writing as private, something not to be read by others. Bloggers, on the other hand, have come to view personal information as something to be shared with the rest of the world, perhaps because of the collaborative history of computing. In the same way that open source programmers share software code with each other in order to improve a software program, bloggers share the "software code" that composes their psyches in order to improve themselves. Bloggers can post thoughts or possibly embarrassing problems to their blog with the hope that one or more of their readers will

know how to fix a problem or at least offer some words of encouragement. Some bloggers think that writing personal narratives off of the Internet is absurd. Says one blogger, "The Web is the place for you to express your thoughts and feelings and such" (Mead 54). Many people believe that electronic text is a more authentic place to describe one's self than print, since hypertext more closely mimics people's associative way of thinking and the way in which our personalities change dynamically (Bolter 190). While diaries enhance self-reflection, blogs have become a prosthetic device with which the blogger can project her psyche to the outside world and possibly a means by which she can better understand not only herself, but also other people (Clark 68).

In our present-day culture, a myriad of special interests declare their legitimacy to the world and fight for its attention. Hundreds of cable channels, tens of satellite radio stations, hundreds of magazines, all become ever more specialized to distinguish themselves from the rest and to find a niche audience. While other forms of communication encourage people to separate themselves from the general population by separating one aspect of their personalities from the rest, blogs can help people reconnect to each other on a more personal level as complete persons. Bloggers bravely create these connections by publishing their autobiographical information to the world and inviting the world's criticism or encouragement. Blogs can use the tenets of autobiography theory to bind people together again by allowing participants to communicate on their own terms instead of as members of an advertiser's target audience.

CHAPTER 3

BLOGS AND OPEN SOURCE

The term, "open source" is used to describe a software programming philosophy that seeks to constantly improve software through collaboration and peer review (Open Source Initiative). Capitalizing on its strength in numbers and the higher quality of software produced when its programmers work on projects in which they are interested, the open source movement has grown from a curiosity to a serious contender in the software industry. Blogging mirrors the open source movement's collaborative and creative environment.

3.1 Overview

The open source philosophy is carried out through a set of software programming standards and practices that challenge traditional business models. According to Eric S. Raymond, the author of the open source manifesto, "The Cathedral and the Bazaar," open source is "the process of systematically harnessing open development and decentralized peer review to lower costs and improve software quality" (Raymond xi). Raymond compares the open source model to the way a bazaar functions and the traditional business models to the way a cathedral is built. The open source bazaar is a collection of a wide array of software programming projects from which the open-source participant can choose and a variety of work roles through which the participant can contribute. An open source participant collaborates with other participants to develop, test, and document each application. A participant can be a programmer for one project and a tester for another project simultaneously (Raymond 20). Traditional business models, on

the other hand, are like those used to build cathedrals: they are hierarchical, employ specialists to work on one small portion of the project through one work role at a time, and are slow to react to new requirements created from changes in society or industry (Raymond 20).

The open source movement is a product of the collaborative nature of science coupled with the practices of the computer programming and engineering professions; that is, curiosity, and play (Raymond 3). Scientists collaborate by publishing their research results and testing methods so that others can separately test and verify the findings (DiBona, Ockman, and Stone). Many computer programmers, such as the forefathers of the open source movement, enjoy experimenting with and programming computers for their personal enjoyment (Raymond 2). Both scientists and programmers have an innate curiosity to find out what makes things work.

The collaborative practices of computing were in place since the beginning of computer science. Created by scientists and engineers, the first computer debuted in 1945 (Raymond 3). By the early 1960's, researchers at Stanford University, Carnegie-Mellon University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) began using commercially developed computers such as the PDP series made by Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC), most notably the PDP-10 machine (Raymond 4). Stanford and Carnegie-Mellon continuously used DEC's operating system, TOPS-10 to run the PDP-10 machines, but after using a few generations of DEC's software, MIT created their own operating system, called the Incompatible Timesharing System (ITS) (Stallman 15). Developing their own operating system gave MIT researchers more control over how

their research was performed on the PDP-10s and made them less reliant on the whims of DEC (Raymond 5).

Using several of the PDP-10s, the United States' Department of Defense created the ARPAnet, the first computer network that spanned the continent "as an experiment in digital communications" (Raymond 4). Researchers and defense contractors across the country were linked together for the first time and could easily share ideas with each other (Raymond 4). Email and newsgroups were created for researchers to discuss their projects cheaply and over long distances (Raymond 7). The researchers used email and newsgroups also to socialize, maintain group cohesiveness, and create professional connections, all of which are vital to collaborative projects (Paulus and Nijstad 8). Early newsgroups such as NET.chess allowed researchers to discuss their hobbies (Hauben, par. 36). Though email programs and newsgroups were created for quickly disseminating research information, team members also used these utilities to pass along jokes or personal information in order to make the team environment less stressful, to get to know each other better, and to bridge the physical and temporal distances among them (Raymond 7).

In 1983, DEC cancelled the next generation of the PDP-10 machine. This was a problem for MIT since its ITS operating system could only run on DEC's PDP series of computers (Stallman 15). MIT programmers could have translated ITS to work on other machines, but this would have been costly and time consuming (Raymond 10). The researchers decided instead to start using Unix, another operating system invented in 1969 by Bell Labs (Raymond 9). Unix could be used on different types of computers, allowing programmers and researchers using different hardware to collaborate more

easily (Raymond 10). Several companies developed different variations of Unix and each company included software development tools in its package of the operating system. Researchers used the software development tools to create their own applications. Unfortunately, in the early 1990's, the Unix companies became blinded by the need to compete amongst each other and did not notice that Microsoft was becoming a strong competitor. Microsoft Windows, which did not come packaged with software development tools and thus discouraged users from creating customized applications and tools, became the most popular operating system used in businesses and at home (Raymond 14). The majority of Windows users were shut out of the operating system.

To counteract the push to proprietary software, which hindered collaboration among programmers, Richard M. Stallman, a member of MIT's Artificial Intelligence (AI) Lab, quit the lab in 1984 and began a project that would recreate the lab's collaborative environment (Stallman 17). Stallman developed a new system of free software called GNU (a recursive acronym meaning GNU's Not Unix) (Stallman 17). The word "free" in this sense means free "as in 'free speech,' not as in 'free beer'" (Buckman and Gay 5). Stallman's idea of free software is that anyone should be able to see a computer program's source code, modify the code, and redistribute it with or without the intention of selling the redistribution for money (Stallman 41). No one should be able to turn free software into closed proprietary software. The product of any combination of free and proprietary software should itself be free (Stallman 21). The rules governing free software are explained in greater detail in the GNU General Public License (GPL), which programmers can apply to their software to ensure that their software remains free (Stallman 195). Stallman began creating the GNU system by first

developing software that was compatible with Unix (Stallman 17). This ensured that the GNU system could be used on the computers already running Unix and that programmers could start using the GNU programs right away instead of waiting for Stallman to create a separate operating system (Stallman 18).

The GNU system broke free from Unix in 1991 when Linus Torvalds, with the help of a large group of fellow programmers, created the Linux kernel using GNU's programming toolkit (Raymond 15). A kernel is the most basic part of the operating system; it manages the computer's memory, tasks, and storage (Buckman and Gay 4). The Linux kernel combined with the GNU system created a complete operating system. The Linux programmers worked on a volunteer basis and coordinated their work through the Internet, a descendent of the ARPAnet, just as earlier software programmers had done in the research labs. The programmers released their work to the programming community every week so that others could use it, review it, and fix any problems (Raymond 16). The success of this process helped to break the idea that an operating system had to be developed in a closed, controlled environment by a small group of people (Raymond 16). In 1997, the concept of open-source programming came into being with the adoption of the Open Source Definition (OSD) (Raymond 71). As opposed to Stallman's "free software," the open source community wants to work with, not against, traditional software companies. "Open-source software" allows a person to modify free software in order to create proprietary software (Stallman 30).

3.2 The Open Source Model

The open-source programming model is built on collaboration; the blogging community functions much like the open source community by following practices similar to those of the open source community. Open source participants believe that a larger amount of contributors yields more creativity (Raymond 40) and a better chance that mistakes will be found and fixed (Raymond 30). To harness this wide variety of creative participants, open-source project leaders tightly control their projects (Raymond 102). The collaborative environment encourages participants to improve existing software rather than creating new software from scratch that serves the same purpose (Raymond 195). Improving upon existing software saves programmers time they could be using to develop innovative ideas. The mechanism that enables the open source community to function successfully is the feedback loop generated among the software programmers, testers, and users (Raymond 26). Participants are encouraged to contribute by being rewarded with prestige and name recognition, which are free and easily given away making the open source community a gift culture (DiBona, Ockman, and Stone). In a gift culture, social status is determined by what one gives away (Raymond 81).

The open source model relies on a large pool of volunteers who collaborate to create and improve software through a tightly controlled process involving cycles of programming, releasing, and testing. For example, after an open-source software developer creates a working application, she sends the application and its code to the open source community at large. The community uses this first draft of the application and reviews the code. If they find mistakes, they can fix them and send the corrected code to the developer. The developer can then add the corrected code to her program and re-

release the improved version of the application, beginning another test and review cycle (Raymond 50).

The software review cycle benefits from the variety of perspectives represented in the large open-source community. Having more people from diverse backgrounds look at the software increases the possibility that almost every problem will be found and fixed quickly (Raymond 30). This phenomenon is called "Linus's Law," where even if the person who found the problem is not able to fix it, there is still a good chance that someone else will (Raymond 31). The large size of the open-source community not only helps during the review process; it also affects the success of the project. This is explained by the Delphi effect, which states that as long as the collaborating group is made up of individuals who, on average, have a good amount of expertise, the group members will make the right decisions and the software will be more successful. Conversely, if the group is made up of too many novices, there is a good chance that the software will not be as successful (Raymond 31).

Like open-source software, the quality of a blog can improve when a diverse audience participates in its creation. The audience helps create the blog content when they add comments to the blog. Studies show that groups, such as a blogger and her audience, can be more creative and productive than an individual could be on her own (Paulus and Nijstad, Introduction 7) since ideas are almost always influenced and enhanced by other ideas and other people (Paulus and Nijstad, "Common Themes and Future Directions" 326). For example, a blog is successful when it is widely believed to be legitimate. A blog is seen as legitimate when many people read it, add their comments to it, and actively keep the blogger's factual claims in check. The larger and more diverse

the audience is, the likelier it is that someone in the audience will know enough about a given subject to be able to verify the blogger's claims. Diversity, trust, and an appropriate level of experience all help to make any group effort successful (Argote and Kean 283). When there is not enough balance in the group or blog audience, problems such as groupthink can arise. When this happens, members are either afraid to dissent out of fear of being shunned or cannot see problems that may impede their success (Stasser and Birchmeier 105). Such was the case with Howard Dean's Blog for America. Most of the people who posted to the blog added a lot of enthusiasm to Dean's campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination but they did not see the problems that led to the campaign's failure.

A strong group leader, or blogger, can offset problems by carefully controlling and setting limits on group interaction (Paulus and Brown 113) or blog comments. In either groups or blogs, the leader should attain a good balance by inviting experts into the group (Stasser and Birchmeier 99) and including people with a diverse set of backgrounds (Smith, "Constraining Effects" 28). Another way in which the group leader can ensure success is to invite newcomers to the group. Newcomers provide fresh new points of view that can serve to invigorate the group. When original group members explain the project to a new group member, they might find flaws in their processes (Levine, Choi, and Moreland 203) or, in the case of a blog, flaws in the blog's argument.

Perhaps one reason why open source is successful is that it follows the recommendation made for group collaboration that the group leader should keep tight control over the group's discourse. Blogs can benefit from following this recommendation as well. The open source community tightly controls projects through

different measures such as disciplining rule-breakers, centralizing control over a project by giving the project owner exclusive right to "distribute modified versions" of the application (Raymond 73), and insisting that participants confer with developers before they modify anyone's work (Raymond 102). In a blog, the blogger has exclusive control over the posts and ostracizes rule-breakers, or flamers, from the community. Only trusted audience members are given permission to post main blog posts, instead of comments, which are usually open to the general public. Finally, successful project leaders empower their group. The open source model advocates putting more control in the hands of the users by giving them access to the software code so that they can fix the problems they find while they use the application (DiBona, Ockman, and Stone). Bloggers empower their readers by allowing readers to append comments to blog entries even though it is possible that the quality of some comments may overshadow the quality of the blogger's entry.

The collaborative process that makes the open-source community so successful is made possible by the feedback loop between the software programmers and the people who use and test the software (Raymond 26). Blogs benefit from a similar feedback loop. Open-source programmers release their software quite often to the community ensuring that no one is side-tracked from her own project for too long (Raymond 29). To ensure in-depth and quality testing, programmers value their users and testers and treat them with respect (Raymond 38). The testers volunteer good ideas to the programmers, who might not have thought of such solutions otherwise (Raymond 40). In order to ensure constant improvement, it is important that programmers take constructive criticism graciously (Raymond 50). Collaboration conducted via the Internet, as how the open

source and blogging communities do, seems to be a promising way to share ideas simultaneously and improve the decision-making process (Paulus and Nijstad, Introduction 7). Using computers to communicate as a group reduces the fear of being evaluated, increases the chances that members will be able to change their opinions without the embarrassment that comes with face-to-face discussions, and ensures that every member has equal opportunity for participation (Stasser and Birchmeier 103). In a computer-mediated environment, members can share controversial ideas more freely (Dennis and Williams 160). Computer-mediated environments can have a negative effect as well since, there may be so many comments that participants cannot read them all. However, group leaders or bloggers can enforce a structure and members can choose to participate only in certain conversations (Dennis and Williams 166). Computers encourage broader participation, since they remove the constraints of time and space: members do not have to be in the same physical place, they can participate in multiple simultaneous conversations, and they can retrieve older conversations (Dennis and Williams 167).

Like open-source software programming, the creation of a blog's content relies on collaboration. A blog's audience joins in on the collaborative process by posting or emailing comments or suggestions. Often, bloggers like Zach Braff in his blog about his movie, Garden State, respond to their readers directly in their blog entries. Some bloggers actively ask their readers for input, as Meg Hourihan, the blogger of Megnut, did when she asked her audience for suggestions on what color to die her hair (Mead 51). Professional journalists, such as Dan Gillmor, maintain blogs to brainstorm story ideas with their readers (Lasica 174). Gillmor posts the beginnings of stories and his readers

give him additional information or tell him whether or not he is pursuing the right leads (Lasica 174).

People do not have to collaborate directly with each other in the same time period. When software code is shared with others in the community, programmers who improve older software collaborate indirectly with the programmers of the original version of the software (Raymond 195). The software's creators give the new programmers the original idea upon which the new programmers can build more ideas. This saves everyone time and effort since the software's creators can move onto new projects and the new programmers who are improving the software can release a new product without having to build one from scratch.

Sharing solutions helps fellow programmers solve new problems. When programmers share each other's software code, they can learn from each other's mistakes (Lessig 109) or provide each other with good ideas (Raymond 40). To ensure that the collaborative process is successful, participants in the open source community should feel free to criticize others and improve products through this criticism (Lessig 156). This collaboration is codified in the open source community: Eric S. Raymond's bazaar model of software development acknowledges that great ideas are based on other ideas and that people are influenced by others (Raymond 48). However, participants should ensure that their changes are truly innovative, not just small improvements (Raymond 95).

Bloggers often link to other Web sites either to illustrate their point or to critique the content of the other Web site. The links serve as a collaboration device. Instead of duplicating a Web site's content, the blogger only has to link to the Web site and, as previously mentioned, the more a blogger links to other sites, the better (Blood, xi). Blogs

benefit as much from transforming new ideas as open-source programming does. Meg Hourihan and another blogger, Jason Kottke, once simultaneously posted the same entry describing a childhood memory on both of their blogs. Other bloggers followed suit, posting the same entry word-for-word. Still others wrote parodies of the post (Mead 54). This exercise illustrated how quickly ideas can spread and how easily ideas can be modified through blogs. News aggregator blogs such as Slashdot transform the way in which the news is read. They collect links of articles from different sources about a specific subject such as politics or computer science so that the audience only has to visit a single Web site for a multi-faceted look at that subject. Personal blogs often contain critiques of current events, politics, the traditional media and other subjects. These critiques sometimes take the form of a parody or satire in which a blogger rewrites an original text or modifies an original image in order to make her point, as Lew Rockwell did in his blog when he parodied The Weekly Standard magazine and the United States' 2003 military actions in Iraq. Rockwell created a poster that satirizes convention-like ocean cruises featuring distinguished experts who speak about a central theme. The poster announces a cruise featuring such Neo-Conservative figures as Dick Cheney, Richard Perle, Donald Rumsfeld, and Paul Wolfowitz, and activities such as "nightly 'shock and awe' fireworks" (Rockwell).

Another reason for open-source programming's success is that it is not a mandatory assignment. Open-source programmers participate on a voluntary basis, which motivates the programmers to work on projects they enjoy (Raymond 108). It has been shown that group participants who have an interest in a project are more likely to explore all of the different possibilities and learn more about what they are working on (Milliken,

Bartel, and Kurtzberg 49). Participants must feel that they are playing rather than working and that their involvement is not controlled by external pressures (Hennessey 182), but is controlled by their own destiny (Hennessey 189). Peak creative performance from a group requires that members must be willing to take risks, experiment, and be motivated to do something for its own sake in order to attain their goal (Hennessey 182).

Additionally, tasks that encourage intrinsic motivation, such as those performed in an open-source project, have a clear start and a clear finish, require various demands, afford opportunities for social interaction, can be performed autonomously, and provide opportunities for learning (West 249). Since open-source programming groups are self-selected, participants are more likely to contribute something of value (Raymond 32). It is important to encourage participants' enthusiasm, because, as Raymond says, "*Insight comes from individuals*. The most their surrounding social machinery can ever hope to do is to be *responsive* to breakthrough insights – to nourish and reward and rigorously test them instead of squashing them" (Raymond 222).

When participants know more about each other's work by looking at the software code through the collaborative process, they can encourage each other in a more truthful manner by offering informed opinions about how to improve the software and fix mistakes (Raymond 50). The same idea applies to blogs. When a blogger shares her thought processes with her audience, the audience gains a deeper understanding of the blogger. Audience members with a deeper understanding can offer more informed opinions and suggestions.

Blogs encourage creativity in the same way as the open source community by voluntarily bringing different types of people together who share the same interests

(Williams 86). As with open source projects, non-commercial blog subjects are not mandated. A person can write a blog about any subject without the pressure of deadlines or requirements. Since personal blogs have no editors to constrain them, bloggers are free to experiment with different writing styles, formats, and contexts. Since blog audiences go to the blogs instead of the blogs being marketed to the audience, bloggers do not have to write with a specific audience in mind (Lasica 167). Because of this lack of constraint, bloggers are free to be as strange and quirky as they like (Lasica 172).

Although open source projects are voluntary and participants do not get paid, a reward mechanism is still needed. Open source programmers give away time, creativity, and energy in exchange for prestige, which makes the open source community a gift culture (Raymond 60). Gift cultures are created when survival goods, in this case creativity, hardware, and Internet usage, are plentiful and work produced by participants can be given away. The quality of open-source software also improves when programmers are rewarded with prestige, since people are likely to work harder for more name recognition and a good reputation (DiBona, Ockman, and Stone). Prestige encourages more people to volunteer for one's project. Reputation in a gift culture may spill over to the exchange economy or command hierarchy in which an open source programmer can gain respect and be hired for professional jobs in which she can be rewarded with money (Raymond 84). Groups can provide networking opportunities in which members create relationships that otherwise would not exist. Networking can provide access to resources and cultural information needed to attain social status (Hooker, Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi 231). Training with a person who has a higher status gives a stamp of approval to the novice. The mentor provides the novice with

visibility in the field while strengthening her colleagues' trust in the novice (Hooker, Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi 241).

The blogging community is a gift culture as well. Blogs provide content; content is social capital, and social capital enables people to break the ice and network at the water cooler. Content gives people something to talk about other than the weather (Rushkoff 117). The more links to outside sites that the blogger provides, the more content she provides and the easier it is to validate the claims the blogger makes (Blood xi). When many Web sites link to a blog, the blog gains prestige (Blood xi). The assumption is that if many people take the time and space on their blog to post to another blog, the other blog must be good. The Web site, <u>Blogshares</u>, attempts to measure the value of a blog through a fantasy blog market. Shares of a blog go up when more blogs link to it, showing that once again, links to and from a blog are a commodity in the blogging community.

3.3 Blogs and Open Source

The open source model need not apply only to software; it can apply to any effort that produces something tangible such as a new design for a car, or something intangible such as a set of business practices, or a blog.

Like open source, blogs are democratic (Trippi 4). By allowing everyone to have equal access, they empower participants and create an environment rich in collaboration. When a person publishes her thoughts in a blog, readers familiar with the situation can either verify or nullify the blogger's concerns. Blog readers often read blogs about topics in which they are most interested, creating the possibility that their comments will be

more informed and have more authority. Readers who have authority are more likely to post useful comments that help the blogger. Since the blogging community is a gift society, another way in which the blogger can encourage more useful comments is to praise and thank her readers.

Both open source and blogs put power back in the hands of the people. Blogs that allow comments empower the readers and give them a feeling that they have a stake in the success of the blog. When companies were compromising the quality and usefulness of software by making the inner workings of operating systems proprietary, programmers took back control by turning to open source (Stallman 16). When the quality of the Web was compromised when companies tried to change the Web from being purely information-based to commerce-based by creating sites that allowed people to buy products online, Web users took back control by using blogs to create their own content (Trippi 4).

Collaboration in a blog can produce a product in the real world. For example, Meg Hourihan, the blogger of Megnut, died her hair "white-blond after polling the readers about her hairstyling options" (Mead 51). In another example, journalist Dan Gillmor, as previously mentioned, "looks to his blogging to make his writing for print even more informed by a broader array of opinion" (Fleishman 110). Gillmor posts the beginnings of news stories to his blog so that readers can tell him if he's on the right track or not and give him more information if they have any (Lasica 174). For Gillmor, the "readers collectively know more than the reporter" (Lasica 175). The collaborative environment produced by a blog is a powerful force. Although the blogger and her readers might never meet in person, a blog's participants collaborate with each other by

sharing ideas, critiquing each other's plans, and otherwise encouraging each other to take action or create products they might not have if each individual were left on her own without a group of people to support her.

CHAPTER 4

BLOGS AND HYPERTEXT

Blogs are published on the Web using hypertext markup language (HTML). Hypertext is a remediation of printed text. Where print is fixed on the page, hypertext gives more control over the text to both the author and her readers. The author has more control because she can publish her text cheaply, easily, and without the need of a publisher. The readers have "immediate access" to the structure of the text since they can control both the display and content (Bolter 32). Hypertext more plainly calls attention to associative relationships between one text and another, calling out "subversive texts-behind-the-text" (Bolter 33). This ability to more plainly show associations encourages asynchronous collaboration between writer and reader. The writer can show the reader down a path of an argument while the reader can ignore the writer's path and follow her own path, creating a new text (Bolter 104).

4.1 Remediation

Writing and print strengthen the author's control over the reader by not providing a way for the reader to directly question the author as she reads the text. Socrates argued against the written word because the reader cannot directly ask the author for clarification. Plato attempted to create a written discussion by imitating Socrates's philosophical conversations in writing (Bolter 103). However, Plato could not be sure that his readers were able to clearly understand the dialogues, since not all of his readers could immediately give him feedback (Bolter 104). During the age of manuscripts, scribes were able to copy their marginal notes directly into a text. After the printing press was

invented, readers could no longer contribute to the end product of the book and the author's words became more authoritative. Authors began publishing their works to gain authority by completely replacing older works instead of alluding to the older works in their text (Bolter 164).

When Tim Berners-Lee developed the beginnings of the World-Wide Web in 1989 as a way to share drafts of research papers, he broke the control print had over the reader (Bolter 39). Ted Nelson invented the system of interlinked text, pictures, movies, and sound that he coined "hypertext" in the 1960s. Reviewers were free to incorporate their comments directly into the text (Bolter 34). Nelson realized that all of literature was interconnected. A network of computers would enable people to quickly and easily connect literature together, and would also allow writers not only to write with a topical structure in mind, but also to link to the actual text to which the writer alludes (Bolter 34).

Hypertext remediates print by taking the characteristics of print and presenting them in a new format (Bolter 23). The hypertext writer is not confined to writing in chapters and books and does not have to reword lengthy explanations that support her ideas. Rather, the hypertext writer can write in whatever length she pleases and link different parts of the text to each other and to external Web sites that illustrate her argument. The writer can link to different types of media that illustrate her ideas better than words. The computer screen, on which most hypertext is read, remediates the printed page. The computer screen provides vertical boundaries to the text, but allows for continuous scrolling, like a papyrus roll. Unlike print, the hypertext reader can read the text out of order as easily as she can read the text in order (Bolter 67). Readers can

rearrange a hypertext more easily by jumping freely from one page to the next, using links provided by the writer, by reading only passages that match a term the reader searched for, or by reading only passages that are categorized by the writer into certain subjects. The electronic page is nearly always in motion as the reader scrolls through the text and clicks links to visit related Web sites (Bolter 68).

Hypertext does not have to have closure; it can theoretically be continued forever, similar to a papyrus roll (Bolter 78). The need for a sense of closure did not manifest until texts were bound into codices and no longer written on papyrus rolls (Bolter 78). The codex was a different writing and reading space than a papyrus roll in that pages, book covers, and the limitations of binding gave the text a set beginning and end. While many early codices contained more than one volume of text, codices that later only included one volume more strongly shaped the identification of the text. The text became identified with the physical book in which it was published; the text began and ended between the covers. The strong identity awarded to codices made writers more able to argue special protections for the book as a separate entity from other texts (Bolter 79). Hypertext, on the other hand, more freely associates with other texts. Not only can a hypertext theoretically scroll forever but it can also branch out forever into the external Web sites to which it links (Bolter 79).

Web pages are much more animated than print. In a bid to become as transparent as possible, Web pages use many still images, movies, and sound (Bolter 72). As devices used to capture images and sounds become more inexpensive and portable, it is likely that bloggers will incorporate more non-textual elements into their blogs. Today the mobile blog, or moblog, mostly consists of pictures taken from the blogger's

cameraphone (a cell phone with a built-in digital camera). If digital video cameras are combined with cellphones, it is easy to contemplate the arrival of video blogs in which the blogger can share parts of her life in an even more transparent fashion.

Remediation does not work in only one direction. Printed books remediate digital media in the same way that digital media remediates print. The Web began as a research tool and has now become an outlet for commercial enterprises, entertainment, and news. Magazines and newspapers have created online versions of their product. Some like the New York Times format their Web page to look more like their newspaper by displaying text in columns. Others, like Shape magazine format the online version of their product differently from the printed version. They add interactive content such as fitness calculators and discussion boards along with additional articles not published in their print version. Print versions of newspapers such as the New York Times and USA Today provide information on the front page about stories of interest that appear deeper inside the newspaper much like a hypertext menu.

Television programming such as cable news channels and sitcoms are becoming hypermediated when they incorporate the principles of hypertext (Bolter 46). For instance, cable news channels display several different types of information on the screen at once, such as CNN's and FOX News Channel's text scrolls that display on the bottom of the screen. When a person is being interviewed, the screen displays small bits of information summarizing what the person is saying as she is saying it. Television sitcoms employ hypertext-like shifts. Rather than telling the story in chronological order, or having characters explain background information, some sitcoms such as Malcolm in the

Middle employ visual flashback techniques that notify the viewer of a shift in time and point of view.

Likewise, blogs contain several characteristics that are also found in diaries. Blogs began as personal homepages listing other Web sites interesting to a blog's author. Eventually, some blogs incorporated characteristics of the diary, such as short, chronological entries, and descriptions of an author's personal life (Blood, "History and Perspective" par. 5).

The way in which a person chooses to use a tool such as the computer remediates the tool (Bolter 19). The Web remediated the computer. When a person decides to create a Web page or a blog, she decides that she will use her computer along with hypertext to connect with people rather than using the computer to crunch numbers or write a memo. To accommodate the images, movies, and sounds the Web page author adds to her site, the computer must have enough memory and hard drive space to store these features. Computer manufacturers answer the demands of their customers by selling different variations of computer models that are optimized for each demand.

4.2 A Shift in Power

Hypertext remediates print's table of contents and index, putting more power into the reader's hands. Instead of trusting that the author has categorized her text in a useful way through chapter headings, or pointed out every bit of relevant information in the index, the reader can override the author and search for information using keywords that match her own thought process (Bolter 85). Additionally, readers can choose the path they will follow through the hypertext. In a printed book, the book's author can impose a structure

on the reading experience by creating subdivisions in the text, such as chapters and subheadings (Bolter 98). In a hypertext work, the reader can ignore this structure by clicking through the text. Indeed, many hypertext works do not necessarily present a set order for the reader to follow. To make more radical changes, readers can replace a hypertext by downloading the content of the hypertext, correcting or otherwise modifying the Web page on their computers, and publishing the modifications to the Internet in the same way the author did. The reader becomes a co-author or overpowers the author altogether (Bolter 4). The act of the reader conquering the blogger is akin to a reader rewriting a printed book and having the updated version published to replace the older edition, although republishing a printed book would be vastly more expensive to do than rewriting a hypertext. However, authors do not have to allow their readers full control over their hypertext. Web site authors can block readers from viewing the HTML source code and from saving the Web site to their computers. Authors can also loosen up or tighten control of their text by providing either fewer or more links, respectively, to external Web sites (Bolter 153). The fewer links to external Web sites the author provides in her text, the more the author can prevent the reader from leaving her site.

The ease and low cost of publishing hypertext gives more power to the author. Authors do not have to know how to write in HTML since many HTML editors exist that make creating a Web page as simple as using a word processor (Bolter 118). Because creating a Web page is highly affordable, Web site authors do not have to rely on outside sources for funding or access to the business mechanism of a printing press, distribution channels, and marketing forces. Web page authors are not required by anyone to edit their work and are free to design their page in any way they want. Hypertext allows an author

to create a more authentic text that has not been filtered through a corporate publishing house (Bolter 70). To publish her writing by herself, the author does not have to own a computer; she can use computers available at her local library or Internet café to write her text. In addition, the author can use one of several services that allow users to post Web pages for free. The hypertext author can control the reading of her text better than a printed author by choosing the texts to which the reader will refer. These links might satisfy the reader's urge to see other related texts, so the reader does not search for related texts not referred by the author (Bolter 175).

The authority of the hypertext author is tenuous and can come into question when Web pages or sites she links to disappear without notice (Bolter 179). If the author does not update her page by updating her links, then she does seem to be in control of her text, to the detriment of her credibility. The reader can either dismiss the author as not wanting the reader to verify the author's claims or the reader can search the Web to verify the author's claims for herself. It is for this reason that hypertext may not be the ideal medium for all texts. For example, many scholars of hypertext do not publish their research papers in hypertext (Bolter 111). Some scholars, such as Stuart Moulthrop, do publish their articles online but choose to add hyperlinks only within their list of references (Moulthrop). Rather, scholars tend to discuss their research in linear articles. It is possible that scholars do not want to give too much control to the reader, because if the reader restructures the argument by skipping around the text, the reader might get the wrong impression and misconstrue the scholar's argument or intent (Bolter 112). Some Web site authors, such as those who create shopping Web sites, do not want their audience to leave their site for another and may not provide links to external sites.

However, the absence of links to outside sites does not prevent the reader from browsing to another Web site either by typing in a new address in the browser's location text box or by selecting a Web site from the reader's list of favorite Web sites.

Perhaps a way to stabilize the authority of a text is for hypertext authors to consciously give their readers an equivalent role. Hypertext authors do not have to create narratives; they can also create discussions in which their readers can participate on equal grounds with the author. For example, teachers use hypertext and electronic bulletin boards to teach reading and writing (Bolter 113; Coppola, Hiltz, and Rotter). The teacher or a student can begin a discussion and classroom members, including the teacher, can participate by appending their messages onto others (Bolter 115). Giving the students the same authority as the teacher to initiate bulletin board discussions creates a cooperative classroom. Teachers can better understand their students when everyone works on the same level and no one is intimidated (Bolter 116). Students can then feel that their comments matter as much as the teacher's and, with the teacher's help, improve both their reading and writing skills by reviewing and commenting on each other's messages. The act of writing messages and commenting on others can help participants to become more aware of the mistakes they make and how to fix those mistakes (Bolter 116).

4.3 Collaboration through Association

Hypertext is associative; pages in a work of hypertext link to one another and to external Web sites. The multilinear nature of hypertext more closely mimics the associative nature of human thought than does linear narrative (Bolter 131). Linking together apparently unrelated works is not a new concept. Hypertext allows authors to link texts together

again by finding the related threads that run through seemingly unrelated texts and bind them together via hyperlinks. The ease with which hypertext writers can link to each other's works encourages writers to share information with one another and to lead readers to other sources of information. The writer can link to the sources she used to illustrate her argument and Web sites that inspired her to write. The blogger can link to sites that further explain her blog entry.

To understand how the associative nature of hypertext affects the act of reading, hypertext theorists turn to the work of postmodern critical theorists such as Jacques Derrida and Roland Barthes (Bolter 162). Postmodern critical theorists call attention to the meaning that exists between the lines of written or printed text. Meaning can be construed in different ways, depending on the context in which the texts are written and in which the texts are read (Bolter 106). Meaning is also influenced by the historical and cultural eras in which they are written and read (Bolter 180). When a reader views a hypertext or a blog more than once, it is possible that the reader will click different links than she did before, which creates different contexts and meaning for the text at each reading event. Additionally, if the reader returns to the hypertext or blog months after her initial reading, and the historical and cultural landscapes have changed in the interim, those changes can influence the meaning the reader construes from the text. For example, the blog reader may have initially agreed with an opinion posted by the blogger. During the time after the reader's initial viewing of the blog and before her next viewing, she may have had experiences that changed her opinion, causing her to now disagree with the blogger.

Hypertext makes it easy for any author or reader to deconstruct a text by pointing out hidden meaning and clearly associating one text with others (Bolter 175). Web browsing applications visually distinguish links from the rest of the text by displaying them in an underlined font or in a different color, or by changing the mouse pointer from an arrow to a pointing hand when the reader moves her mouse pointer over the link. Through linking, an author indicates which piece of literature is related to her text as well as the significance of that relationship through the link's placement within the text (Bolter 35). The hypertext writer creates a system of signs to indicate these relationships "by defining a link…from one element to another. When she [the hypertext author] links one Web page to another, she is in effect creating two new writing elements, each of which has become a unitary sign" (Bolter 37). The reader understands the sign to mean that the following Web page is related somehow to the page from which she started. The hypertext author can create a collage of texts where the links and the placement of the links provide an intrinsic meaning "that have no easy equivalent in speech" (Bolter 36). The meaning of the text is a combination of the text itself combined with the links the writer uses and the reasons why the writer linked to certain sites or placed the links in certain places of her text (Bolter 38).

The hypertext system of signs is not foolproof because the reader can misunderstand the writer's intent more easily as she can misunderstand the author of a printed book. Readers can either choose to ignore the hypertext path presented to them by the writer or unintentionally veer off the path if the writer links to outside Web sites, putting control of the writer's hypertext grammar into the hands of another. As is often

the case on the Internet, Web pages can "disappear," breaking the writer's hypertext path and its meaning.

As long as the destination Web pages are accessible, hypertext allows writers to refer more easily to other works that help illustrate their writing. An author can blur the lines between literature and theory by providing links to theoretical works within a narrative or by providing links to literary works within a theoretical text (Bolter 187). While traditionally printed books also provide references between theory and literature, the reader must take more time to switch back and forth between the two sources. Conversely, the Web allows readers to quickly switch between texts with minimal interruption, thus making the author's thought process more transparent (Bolter 25). The reader is able to see more clearly how the hypertext was constructed in relation to the Web sites to which it refers and can therefore better understand the writer's intent (Bolter 43). In traditional writing, the construction of the text is not as apparent to the reader. To see the thought process of and influences on the author of a printed book, the reader must first gather the physical texts and then find the exact passages within the texts used by the author. Unless the reader has quick access to a major library, the printed sources will not be as easily gathered as Web-based sources.

The power of hypertext lies in its ability to render texts transparent; that is, to make the reader understand the text in the same way the author understands it. The more transparent the author's intent is, the easier it becomes for the author and her readers to collaborate with each other. A blogger takes the transparency of hypertext one step further by making transparent not only the text, but also the blogger's personal life, which helps her readers to understand her as well as she understands herself. Once a better

understanding is achieved, the blogger and her readers can collaborate on shaping the persona of the blogger.

4.4 The Effect of Hypertext on Blogs

Both hypertext and blogs remediate the diary. By enabling the reader to immediately critique the text, hypertext removes some authority from the author and gives additional authority to the reader. The reader is empowered to collaborate with the author in the creation of the author's persona by adding comments and content to the blog. This collaboration with her audience provides the author with different perspectives.

The message of a blog, or any Web site, is the sum of its text, images, and sounds, plus the hyperlinks to outside Web sites (Bolter 127). The blog is a writing space, or the physical components that make up the meaning of the blog. The blog's writing space is made up of the blogger's computer hard drive, memory, and screen (Bolter 13). It is also made up of the reader's computer hard drive, memory, and screen. Because different computers may have different components and settings from each other, a blog can look differently on one computer than it does on another. How the writer and reader interpret a new writing space is determined by how they interpret the older writing space that is being subsumed. For example, the blog's writing space is most closely related to the diary or journal. Both writers and readers interpret the blog through their knowledge of what they know a diary or journal to be (Bolter 12). Readers of a blog may have a preconceived idea of the information it contains. They might assume that it contains the same type of information that is written in a diary or journal such as a description of everyday events, confessions, and secrets.

Bloggers give up a good portion of their authority to their readers either by allowing readers to add comments to blog entries or by linking to many different external Web sites. The blog reader can either offer suggestions and corrections to improve the blog or the reader can leave the blog by visiting the other sites to which the blog's author has linked. As opposed to a traditional diary, which is self-contained and closed off to additions by the reader, linking allows blogs to be more generous to its readers.

Hypertext remediates a diary or journal in the same way it remediates any other printed text, by allowing the blogger to link outside of her blog. For example, bloggers sometimes include a search tool that allows readers to search the entire Web. Many blogs allow the reader to view only entries that are assigned a certain subject by the blogger or only entries that contain keywords searched for by the reader. Hypertext makes this fluidity possible (Bolter 7). When one medium remediates another, its champions claim it to be better than the medium it is overtaking. For example, the blogger Jason Kottke claimed that personal thoughts should be posted on the Web, not in a physical diary that is hidden from the view of others (Mead 54). The blogging community, like the open source community, tends to believe in democracy and cooperation. Participants voluntarily share ideas and help each other in the hopes that everyone in the community will benefit.

The very format of a blog takes away some authority from the blogger. Some bloggers allow their readers to comment on entries. Readers can either make comments that are relevant to the entry to which they attach their comment or they can write whatever they want. Some readers, such as those who read John Kerry's blog, use the comment feature to speak directly to the blogger and ask him questions. Other readers,

such as those who frequent Duncan Black's blog <u>Eschaton,</u> add more information to the entry about which the blogger might not have known. Another way in which bloggers weaken their authority over the reader is by linking to other Web sites. Linking to outside sites takes the focus off of the blog and on to another object. This is one reason why some of Howard Dean's presidential campaign staff opposed Joe Trippi wanting to link to outside sites (Trippi 86). A blogger who links to other Web sites acknowledges that she is influenced by other people. The blogger does not have to link to other Web sites. Like any other Web author, she can keep her site self-contained. Like any other Web audience, a blog reader can easily leave the blog by pointing her browser to another site. The blogger who does not link to other Web sites that validate the blogger's claims risks losing her audience.

The Internet allows bloggers to create an associative web of information when they link to one another's Web sites. Writers are free to concentrate on their take on a specific topic and link to other sites that may have more information about the topic, a different opinion, or related information (Bolter 34). In blogs that allow readers' comments, the readers can create their own Web of information when they provide links that the blogger did not include in her entry. The Internet and other distribution media can encourage people to spread homogeneous information. Blogs are not immune from the creation of a closed circuit of hyperlinks as some blogs have formed such closed circuits by linking to each other. However, electronic media encourage writers to link to outside sources because they so easily can (Bolter 11).

Hypertext allows the blogger, her readers, and other bloggers and Web authors to collaborate with each other. When a blogger links to outside Web sites, she plugs her

blog into the Internet. Her blog becomes part of a larger story that is made up of Web sites about the same theme that link to each other. Every Web site in this ring of links is equally important (Bolter 27). Hypertext allows readers to comment directly in a blog. Readers' comments are much like marginal notes readers tend to add to a printed text. In medieval times, when texts were handwritten and copied by hand, these marginal notes eventually made their way into the text proper (Bolter 67). Bloggers can take advantage of the ability to add text to each others' blogs and combine resources to explore a topic together. Each blogger can research a specific piece of that topic so that a deep understanding of the topic is reached in a shorter amount of time than if only one person researched the entire subject.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

For a practical example of how the open-source characteristics of blogs help to change people and society, it is helpful to discuss Howard Dean's Blog for America. Joe Trippi, Dean's former campaign manager, wanted to use the Internet's power to get people involved in the political process, by employing a blog. Rather than develop a message about Dean to sell to the electorate, Trippi wanted people to collaborate with the Dean campaign by giving them tools with which they could talk to each other over great distances, send opinions and ideas to Dean's campaign, and implement changes to the campaign themselves. Trippi applied the open source model to the campaign, which lost its bid for the Democratic presidential nomination. This chapter will examine what open source principles Trippi applied and what he did not apply. This chapter will also make suggestions as to why the campaign failed.

Dean followed in the footsteps of recent presidential candidates who sought to reach out to voters on a personal level. Gary Hart, who ran for president in 1984 and 1988, employed an information-spreading technique. Hart would personally connect with a few voters in every campaign stop, convince them to vote for him, and hope that they would convince others to vote for Hart by word-of-mouth (Trippi 30). Jerry Brown and Ross Perot in the 1992 presidential race each employed an 800-phone number to give voters an easy way to volunteer for and contribute money to their campaigns (Trippi 49). John McCain was the first presidential candidate to establish a presence on the Internet with a Web site in 2000 (Trippi 59).

Trippi, long a technology enthusiast, decided to expand McCain's idea and convinced Howard Dean to add a blog to the campaign Web site (Trippi 89). A minority of the electorate had the ear of politicians who made decisions every day that affected the whole of his electorate. Dean believed that the electorate was disenfranchised and wanted to use blogging technology to put political power back into the electorate's hands (Trippi 82).

Trippi used the blog as a communications tool to gather already enthusiastic and motivated people scattered over long distances. The campaign empowered participants to improve the campaign, not just start it over from scratch. Throughout, the campaign used the blog and other Internet tools to communicate with participants in a feedback loop and to tell participants that they were doing a great job (Trippi 188). To change politics for the better and to get people motivated to vote again, Trippi sought a way to use the energy created during the early, collaborative days of computing (Trippi 13). Trippi wanted a better medium than television to draw the electorate into collaborating with the candidate.

As a one-way communication device, television is a part of the traditional, hierarchical model of campaigning. Television ads are created by the candidate's campaign staff and are paid for by campaign donors, which have traditionally been a small group of people relative to the size of the electorate. The process does not allow the electorate to voice their concerns and opinions or to otherwise collaborate with the candidate. Likewise, television ads do not tell the electorate how they can get involved with the campaign process (Trippi 38).

Dean's campaign followed the democratic bazaar model of campaigning, by designing a Web site with campaign information, information about how supporters could meet up with each other and get directly involved in the campaign, and a blog in which supporters could communicate their concerns and ideas to Dean (Trippi 86).

Howard Dean did not win the Iowa caucus or a primary. He dropped out of the race on February 18, 2004 (Lambro par. 1). Trippi asserts that the campaign failed because of the mistakes Dean's campaign made and because of traditional broadcast politics (Trippi 188). Dean's campaign never mastered the art of traditional campaigning and never reconciled the traditional cathedral model of the political system with the campaign's bazaar model. Reconciling the two models was crucial for survival in a world in which the traditional media did not understand Dean's unconventional campaigning practices (Trippi 162).

Perhaps Dean's campaign would have been more successful if Trippi had effectively explained the "open source campaign" (Trippi, 135) to the traditional media. Trippi and political commentator Pat Caddell did write a memo directed to the campaign staff, detailing how they could use open source practices to push the campaign to the finish line (Trippi 123). However, this memo was not enough to justify Dean's new way of campaigning to the outside world.

The open source founders realized from the beginning of their endeavors that in order to succeed in the traditional marketplace, they would have to explain open source to companies that followed the cathedral model of software development in terms that did not threaten those companies (Raymond 177). The open source leaders have successfully used this tactic to fend off the industrial competitors, such as Microsoft, in addition to

stressing the need to find ways that the cathedrals of the software industry could incorporate the open source bazaar in a way that all parties benefit (Raymond 162). Trippi could have worked more closely with traditional media instead of completely relying on the blogging community to get Dean's message out. Trippi's bypassing of traditional media might have made print and television journalists feel threatened that a different type of media was able to report on the campaign so quickly. Trippi could have worked with bloggers and traditional journalists together to synchronize the delivery of Dean's message across the different media.

Successful open source projects need strong leaders and a strong leader was missing from the Dean campaign. Time and again, Trippi mentioned that Dean was not the strong leader that his campaign needed. Dean did not hire a campaign chairman until it was too late and the campaign staff suffered from a lack of cohesion (Trippi 162). Dean's blog suffered the same consequences. Bloggers posted campaign ideas and implemented them without approval from campaign headquarters. Although the bloggers meant well and had good ideas, the ideas may have been too radical when implemented within the constraints of the traditional campaigning mechanism.

Reading the Dean for America blog just before the Iowa caucuses, one got the sense that the bloggers had entered into a group-think state of mind. Swept up in the thrill of being able to reach out to politically active people across the country, the bloggers seemed to believe that nothing could stop them. There were hardly any critics on the blog. If one got their news about the Dean campaign solely from the blog, one would think that Dean would sail through the primaries and on to the Democratic National Convention. It was not until the Iowa caucuses that reality set in. The C-SPAN coverage

of one Iowa caucus showed that Dean did not have as many supporters as the blog led one to believe because Dean came in third behind John Kerry and John Edwards. The Dean campaign trusted the bloggers, many of whom were inexperienced in traditional campaigning, too much and should have more aggressively led the participants into implementing more traditional campaigning methods.

Another aspect of open source projects that leads to success is tight coordination among group participants, which is facilitated by open communication with everyone involved. In the case of Dean's campaign, campaign workers, volunteers, and its blogging community did not coordinate well. Dean made decisions and hired people before discussing such decisions with Trippi (Trippi 173). Another blow to Dean's campaign was his decision to seal his gubernatorial records. This decision flew in the face of his open source campaign which otherwise openly volunteered information to supporters (Trippi 177). While the blogging community incited media hype about the Dean campaign, the reality was that the voters did not share this enthusiasm. The contrasting levels of enthusiasm indicated that the bloggers were disconnected with the rest of the campaign. If the campaign coordinated its plans more tightly with the bloggers, the bloggers could have used the power of the blog to think of more practical ideas for the campaign.

Despite the fact that Dean did not win the Democratic Party's presidential nomination, Trippi's experiment successfully empowered people to get involved in politics. People continue to post on Blog for America and to meet up with each other to discuss important issues. John Kerry, the Democratic presidential nominee of 2004, instituted his own blog, which allows readers to comment. Political blogs gained so much

attention during the presidential campaign that both the Democratic and Republican conventions invited bloggers to cover the proceedings. Bloggers also influenced campaign advisors, such as James P. Rubin, the Kerry campaign's foreign policy advisor (Klam, par. 9).

Clearly, the blog is a powerful medium that everyone can use to communicate to a wide audience. Bloggers can easily assert their opinions or publish known facts when traditional media is oppressive. The blogger and her readers can work together to communicate and to substantiate the blogger's statements by providing links to other sources. The more the audience coordinates with the blogger to find sources that back up the blogger's claims, the more credible and important the blog becomes. Bloggers bypass traditional media by using inexpensive or free blogging tools to publish themselves and make their voices heard to a wide audience. Because of the proliferation of the free blogging tools, independent bloggers do not have to be beholden to sponsors in order to publish and maintain their blog.

In uncovering connections between autobiography theory, the open source movement, group collaboration theory, and hypertext theory, one can see that these subjects converge at one point: empowerment. Autobiography empowers people to assert themselves. The open source movement empowers people to take back control of software programming. Group collaboration theory empowers people to work together for optimal creative performance. Hypertext theory empowers people to publish themselves and structure texts independently and inventively. All of these theories multiply empowerment exponentially when one combines them into the powerful medium of the blog.

REFERENCES

1. Argote, Linda and Aimée A. Kane. "Learning From Direct and Indirect Experience in Organizations: The Effect of Experience Content, Timing, and Distribution." Group Creativity: Innovation Through Collaboration. Ed. Paul B. Paulus and Bernard A. Nijstad. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. 277-303.

2. Aylward, Kevin. Wizbang. April 2003. 9 September 2004. <http://wizbangblog.com/>.

3. Barrett, Cameron. "Anatomy of a Weblog." We've Got Blog: How Weblogs Are Changing Our Culture. Ed. John Rodzvilla. Cambridge: Perseus Publishing, 2002. 25-27.

4. Berryman, Charles. "Critical mirrors: Theories of Autobiography." Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature 32 (1999): 71-85.

5. Black, Duncan. "Some Changes." Eschaton. 4 April 2004. 8 September 2004. <http://atrios.blogspot.com/2004_04_04_atrios_archive.html>.

6. --. Eschaton. 14 April 2002. 7 September 2004. <http://atrios.blogspot.com>.

7. Blogshares. 2004. 8 September 2004. <http://www.blogshares.com>.

8. Blood, Rebecca. "Weblogs: A History and Perspective." Rebecca's Pocket. 7 Sept. 2000. 18 April 2004. <http://www.rebeccablood.net/essays/weblog_history.html>.

9. --. Introduction. We've Got Blog: How Weblogs Are Changing Our Culture. Ed. John Rodzvilla. Cambridge: Perseus Publishing, 2002. ix-xiii.

10. Bolter, David Jay. Writing Space: Computers, Hypertext, and the Remediation of Print. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc, 2001.

11. Braff, Zach. Garden State Blog. 1 July 2004. 9 September 2004. <http://www2.foxsearchlight.com/gardenstate/blog/>

12. Buckman, Richard E. and Joshua Gay. A Note on Software. Free Software, Free Society: Selected Essays of Richard M. Stallman. Boston: Free Software Foundation, 2002. 3-5.

13. Clark, Joe, "Deconstructing 'You've Got Blog'." We've Got Blog: How Weblogs Are Changing Our Culture. Cambridge: Perseus Publishing, 2002. 57-68.

14. Coppola, Nancy Walters, Starr Roxanne Hiltz, and Naomi G. Rotter. "Becoming a Virtual Professor: Pedagogical Roles and Asynchronous Learning Networks" Journal of Management Information Systems. 18 (2002): 169–189.

15. Dennis, Alan R. and Mike L. Williams. "Electronic Brainstorming: Theory, Research, and Future Directions." Group Creativity: Innovation Through Collaboration. Ed. Paul B. Paulus and Bernard A. Nijstad. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. 160-180.

16. Dibbell, Julien. "Portrait of the Blogger as a Young Man." We've Got Blog: How Weblogs Are Changing Our Culture. Ed. John Rodzvilla. Cambridge: Perseus Publishing, 2002. 69-77.

17. Dibona, Chris, et al., ed. Open Sources: Voices from the Open Source Revolution. Beijing: O'Reilly, 1999.

18. Digby, Hullabaloo. 29 December 2002. 6 September 2004. <http://digbysblog.blogspot.com/>.

19. Fleishman, Glenn, "Been Blogging?" We've Got Blog: How Weblogs Are Changing Our Culture. Ed. John Rodzvilla. Cambridge: Perseus Publishing, 2002. 107-111.

20. Gillmor, Dan. eJournal. 1 January 2000. 6 September 2004. <http://weblog.siliconvalley.com/column/dangillmor/>.

21. Graham, Brad L. "Why I Weblog." We've Got Blog: How Weblogs Are Changing Our Culture. Ed. John Rodzvilla. Cambridge: Perseus Publishing, 2002. 34-40.

22. Hauben, Ronda. "Chapter 10. On the Early Days of Usenet: The Roots of the Cooperative Online Culture." Netizens: An Anthology. 6 June 1996. 28 October 2004. <http://www.columbia.edu/~rh120/ch106.x10>.

23. Hennessey, Beth A. "Is the Social Psychology of Creativity Really Social? Moving Beyond a Focus on the Individual." Group Creativity: Innovation Through Collaboration. Ed. Paul B. Paulus and Bernard A. Nijstad. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. 181-201.

24. Hooker, Charles, Jeanne Nakamura and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. "The Group as Mentor: Social Capital and the Systems Model of Creativity." Group Creativity: Innovation Through Collaboration. Ed. Paul B. Paulus and Bernard A. Nijstad. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. 225-244.

25. Imbarrato, Susan Clair. Declarations of Independency in Eighteenth-Century American Autobiography. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1998.

26. Katz, Jon. "Here Come the Weblogs." <u>We've Got Blog: How Weblogs Are Changing Our Culture</u>. Ed. John Rodzvilla. Cambridge: Perseus Publishing, 2002. 17-24.

27. Klam, Matthew. "Fear and Laptops on the Campaign Trail." <u>The New York Times</u>. 26 September 2004. 30 October 2004. <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/09/26/magazine/26BLOGS.html?ex=12538512 00&en=8b59680f1bd93479&ei=5090&partner=rssuserland>.

28. Lambro, Donald. "Dean Drops Out of Race." <u>Washington Times</u>. 19 February 2004. 9 September 2004. <http://www.washingtontimes.com/national/20040219-122929-8999r.htm>.

29. Lasica, J.D., "Blogging As A Form of Journalism: Weblogs Offer a Vital, Creative Outlet for Alternative Voices." <u>We've Got Blog: How Weblogs Are Changing Our Culture</u>. Ed. John Rodzvilla. Cambridge: Perseus Publishing, 2002. 163-170.

30. Lessig, Lawrence. <u>Free Culture: How Big Media Uses Technology and the Law to Lock Down Culture and Control Creativity</u>. New York: Penguin Press, 2004.

31. Levine, John M., Hoon-Seok Choi, and Richard L. Moreland. "Newcomer Innovation in Work Teams." <u>Group Creativity: Innovation Through Collaboration.</u> Ed. Paul B. Paulus and Bernard A. Nijstad. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. 202-216.

32. Martinson, Deborah. <u>In the Presence of Audience: The Self in Diaries and Fiction</u>. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2003.

33. Mead, Rebecca. "You've Got Blog." <u>We've Got Blog: How Weblogs Are Changing Our Culture</u>. Ed. John Rodzvilla. Cambridge: Perseus Publishing, 2002. 47-56.

34. Microsoft. <u>Channel 9 Forums</u>. 2004. 10 September 2004. <http://channel9.msdn.com/>.

35. Milliken, Frances J., Caroline A. Bartel, and Terri R. Kurtzberg. "Diversity and Creativity in Work Groups: A Dynamic Perspective on the Affective and Cognitive Processes That Link Diversity and Performance." <u>Group Creativity: Innovation Through Collaboration.</u> Ed. Paul B. Paulus and Bernard A. Nijstad. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. 33-62.

36. Nijstad, Bernard A. and Paul B. Paulus. "Group Creativity: Common Themes and Future Directions." <u>Group Creativity: Innovation Through Collaboration.</u> Ed. Paul B. Paulus and Bernard A. Nijstad. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. 326-338.

37. Ong, Walter J. <u>Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word</u>. Padstow, Cornwall: T.J. Press, 1982.

38. Open Source Initiative. 18 April 2004. <http://www.opensource.org>.

39. Paulus, Paul B., and Vincent R. Brown. "Enhancing Ideational Creativity in Groups: Lessons from Research on Brainstorming." <u>Group Creativity: Innovation Through Collaboration</u>. Ed. Paul B. Paulus and Bernard A. Nijstad. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. 110-136.

40. R., Josh. <u>The Rant Room</u>. 29 July 2004. 6 September 2004. <http://therantroom.blogspot.com/>.

41. Raymond, Eric S. <u>The Cathedral and the Bazaar: Musings on Linux and Open Source by an Accidental Revolutionary</u>. Cambridge: O'Reilly & Associates, 2001.

42. Rockwell, Lew. <u>Lew Rockwell.com Blog</u>. 30 June 2003. 26 August 2004. <http://blog.lewrockwell.com/lewrw/archives/000500.html>.

43. Rushkoff, Douglas. "The Internet Is Not Killing Off Conversation but Actively Encouraging It." <u>We've Got Blog: How Weblogs Are Changing Our Culture</u>. Ed. John Rodzvilla. Cambridge: Perseus Publishing, 2002. 116-118.

44. Schwartz, David. <u>Iggy's Movie Reviews Weblog</u>. 2002. 8 September 2004. <http://radio.weblogs.com/01087888>.

45. Smith, Sidonie and Julia Watson. <u>Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives</u>. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001.

46. Smith, Steven M. "Constraining Effects of Initial Ideas." <u>Group Creativity: Innovation Through Collaboration</u>. Ed. Paul B. Paulus and Bernard A. Nijstad. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. 20-32.

47. Stallman, Richard M. <u>Free Software, Free Society: Selected Essays of Richard M. Stallman</u>. Boston: Free Software Foundation, 2002.

48. Stasser, Garold and Zachary Birchmeier. "Group Creativity and Collective Choice." <u>Group Creativity: Innovation Through Collaboration.</u> Ed. Paul B. Paulus and Bernard A. Nijstad. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. 85-109.

49. Talbot, Neale. "Weblogs (Good God Y'all) What Are They Good For (Absolutely Nothing-Say It Again)." <u>We've Got Blog: How Weblogs Are Changing Our Culture</u>. Ed. John Rodzvilla. Cambridge: Perseus Publishing, 2002. 130-132.

50. Trippi, Joe. <u>The Revolution Will Not Be Televised: Democracy, the Internet, and the Overthrow of Everything</u>. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 2004.

51. Weinberger, David. <u>Joho the Blog</u>. 15 November 2001. 9 September 2004.
    <http://www.hyperorg.com/blogger/>.

52. West, Michael A. "Innovation Implementation in Work Teams." <u>Group
    Creativity: Innovation Through Collaboration</u>. Ed. Paul B. Paulus and Bernard
    A. Nijstad. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. 245-268.

53. Yan, Li Yong. "The Rare Tale of an Honest Chinese Cadre." <u>Asia Times Online</u>. 20
    August 2004. 25 August 2004.
    <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/FH20Ad04.html>.