

Cyberrace

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REMEMBER *CYBER*? SURELY ONE OF THE MOST IRRITATING AND UBIQUITOUS PREFIXES OF THE NINETIES, *CYBER* QUICKLY BECAME ATTACHED to all kinds of products (the Sony Cybershot camera), labor styles (cybercommuting), and communicative practices (cyberspace) that have now become so normalized as already digital that the prefix has dropped out of the language. Photography, work, and social discourse no longer need be flagged as cyber since we can more or less assume that in postindustrial, informationalized societies they usually are. *Cyber* migrated widely during the nineties, but the legal scholar Jerry Kang's article "Cyber-race," which appeared in the *Harvard Law Review* in 2000, was the first to attach this prefix to race. Kang answers the question "can cyberspace change the very way that race structures our daily lives?" with an affirmative: "race and racism are already in cyberspace." He then proposes three potential "design strategies" for lawmakers to deal with the problem of race and racism in cyberspace: the abolitionist approach, in which users take advantage of the Internet's anonymity as a means of preventing racism by hiding race; the integrationist approach, in which race is made visible in online social discourse; and the most radical one, the transmutation approach. Strategies for transmuting race in cyberspace reprise some of the discourse about identity and performativity that was often associated with Judith Butler—"it seeks racial pseudonymity, or cyber-passing, in order to disrupt the very notion of racial categories. By adopting multiple racialized identities in cyberspace, identities may slowly dissolve the one-to-one relationship between identity and the physical body" (1206).

The notion that racial passing is good for you and, what's more, good for everyone else since it works to break down the rigidly essentialist notion of the body as the source and locus of racial identity legitimated a widespread practice in the pregraphic Internet period. In the days before widely supported graphic images generated on the fly using Web browsers became a common aspect of Internet use, the Internet was effectively a text-only space, and conversation by

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e-mail, chat, bulletin board, or MUD (multi-user dungeon—these were early social games in digital space) was the most popular way to communicate. Users' racial identities could not be seen as they interacted with others, yet as Kang rightly predicted, technological innovations and user desire would change that, and "it [would] become increasingly difficult to delay the disclosure of race" (1203). Improvements in interfaces, video devices, and bandwidth have made us more visual social actors; Kang claims, "as we move from communications that are text-only to text-plus, avatars will become more popular," and they have (1151). The wide range of imaging practices available to users such as profile photographs on social-network sites like *Facebook* and graphic avatars created by using the extremely popular Simpsons avatar-building engine guarantee that racial identity is now often visually signified as part of users' self-presentational practices. Yet while it lasted, the pregraphic Internet overlapped with the rise of digital utopianism, the beginnings of a Clinton-led neoliberal political dynasty in the United States, and a concomitant strategy of addressing racial problems by refusing to see race—Kang's abolitionist strategy writ large, which Patricia Williams identifies as the "colorblind" approach. At the same time, in the academy theories of social constructionism strongly challenged and indeed displaced essentialist understandings of race by asserting that race is an effect of social performance, thus empowering the individual agent to "jam" race through playful acts of recombining, confounding, and cutting and pasting existing identity markers. This a form of pastiche characteristic of "participatory media" such as mashups, animutations, and other contemporary forms of Web-user production, practices that fall under the umbrella term *Web 2.0*.

Indeed, the notion of identity as variable, modular, and granular, resembling most closely a program in perpetual beta release rather than a stable object, recalls the logic of

new media as defined by Lev Manovich and others. As Manovich puts it, "new media technology acts as the perfect realization of the utopia of an ideal society composed of unique individuals" because the variability of a new-media object guarantees that every user will generate and receive her or his own version of it. New media appeals to us so powerfully partly because it satisfies our needs in post-industrial society to "construct [our] own custom lifestyle from a large (but not infinite) number of choices" (42). Manovich questions this rosy picture of new media as infinite choice by calling attention to the bounded quality of choice in digital interactive environments, and Jennifer Gonzalez extends this notion by questioning the nature of the objects themselves. If identity construction and performance in digital space is a process of selection and recombination much like shopping, another privileged activity of the nineties, what types of objects are on offer, what price is paid, who pays, who labors, and who profits? Gonzalez calls out neoliberal digital utopians by characterizing bodies as an infinitely modifiable assemblage defined by "consumption, not opposition" (48). The illusion of diversity through digitally enabled racial passing and recombination produces a false feeling of diversity and tolerance born of entitlement:

What this creation of this appended subject presupposes is the possibility of a new cosmopolitanism constituting all the necessary requirements for a global citizen who speaks multiple languages, inhabits multiple cultures, wears whatever skin color or body part desired, elaborates a language of romantic union with technology or nature, and moves easily between positions of identification with movie stars, action heroes, and other ethnicities of races. (48)

If cyberace was distinguished from "real" race by its anonymity, composability, variability, and modularity, the task of debunking it as inherently liberatory was linked to

critiquing new-media utopianism generally. It was necessary for new media to be discussed in a more critical way, in the light of structural constraint, industrial imperatives, and global inequality, for race to be viewed as a salient category in what was then known as cyberspace. This was an uphill battle in the nineties, however, because the fetish of interactivity had yet to be exposed either as a marketing strategy or as a racial ideology.

The fetish of interactivity is alive and well—my students frequently claim that “the world is at their fingertips” when they use the Internet, a formulation that recalls television’s vast claims to “give us ten minutes, and we’ll give you the world”—but it was even more alive and well ten years ago. The ability to manipulate the “look and feel” of race by online role-playing, digital gaming, and other forms of digital-media use encouraged and fed the desire for control over self-construction and self-representation. This was quite an empowering ideology, and scholars such as Sherry Turkle, in her influential 1995 *Life on the Screen: Identity in the Age of the Internet*, claimed that the cyberspace was postmodern because it permitted unprecedented fluidity and composable identities. (Edward Castrovna makes similar claims for MMORPGs—massively multiplayer online role-playing games—as a radically level playing field and thus as radically democratic.) Turkle’s psychoanalytic approach took identity play extremely seriously, as identity work: this first wave of theoretical writing confirming the formative and subversive influence of online subjectivity, which included Julian Dibbell’s important “A Rape in Cyberspace” article, attempted to persuade us that virtual life and gender were real, not a difficult feat since many of us were already convinced. Yet this brought up a vexing question—if life online is real, are race and racism online real too?

In 1995 I published an article entitled “Race in/for Cyberspace: Identity Tourism and Racial Passing on the Internet” that dis-

cussed cross-racial role-playing and passing in MUDs as a form of identity tourism. Drawing on Edward Said’s work on tourism, racial passing, and travel in the imperial context, in *Cybertypes* I discussed how MUD users who created orientalist avatars such as samurai and geisha were able to temporarily “appropriate an Asian racial identity without any of the risks associated with being a racial minority in real life” and how online communities often punished users who wished to discuss race and racism (40). Identity tourism resembled off-line tourism because it gave users a false notion of cultural and racial understanding based on an episodic, highly mediated experience of travel, an experience rhetorically linked with digital technology use as the “information superhighway” and the “cyberfrontier,” as well as with the burgeoning travel industry.¹ Community hostility toward discussions of race and racism in LambdaMOO reflected the color-blind attitude held about race that characterized nineties’ neoliberalism, where neither asking nor telling was encouraged. Race in virtual space was “on you” in more than one sense: when users “wore” race in the form of a racialized avatar or performed it as racialized speech or conveyed it by sharing their “performance of tastes (favorite music, books, film, etc),” or “taste fabric,” this form of display was viewed as a personal decision, an exercise of individual choice. It was also “on you” because users were considered to be solely responsible for any negative consequences—such as racism.²

Identity tourism let users “wear” racially stereotyped avatars without feeling racist, yet it also blamed users who revealed their real races and were victims of racism online. The logic of identity tourism figured race as modular, ideally mobile, recreational, and interactive in ways that were good for you—part of the transmutation strategy with the supposed potential to “break” race as a concept and break its hold on our imaginations and bodies. However, the narrow range of racialized performance

visibly enacted in many online social spaces—gangstas, samurai, geisha, Latin lovers and hot Latin mamas—attested to the problem with seeing digital interactivity as infinite rather than bounded. “The illusory nature of choice in many interactive situations” contributed toward the conviction that the Internet was a postracial space because it was possible to “choose” a race as an identity tourist, as well as to withhold, or “cover,” racial identity; however, these choices were preconstituted by existing media texts (Patterson 117). Cultural images of race—our database of bodies, discourses, behaviors, and images—resemble all database-driven new-media objects in that they are experienced by users as much more profuse and open than they really are. As Zabet Patterson writes, “we often find this compensatory rhetoric and narrative of free choice, a cornerstone of American cultural ideology, inhabiting precisely those situations that, on a basic structural level, admit of little or no choice at all” (116). The limited interactivity available to identity tourists online promoted a comforting amnesia in regard to the lack of choice racial minorities faced in everyday life.

In 2001 Tiziana Terranova advocated a turn toward the political economy of digital culture and away from reveries of idealized Internet digital identities (“Free Labor”). Though race is not discussed overtly in her analysis, this turn is useful to new-media scholars because it enables a grounded discussion of race, power, and labor in digital culture. If post-racial cosmopolitans refused to acknowledge the ways that unequal access, limited forms of representation in digital culture, and images of race under globalization were shaping cyberace, it could not be denied that labor in postindustrial societies is racialized and gendered. She urged us to examine how the

“outernet”—the network of social, cultural and economic relationships which criss-crosses and exceeds the Internet—surrounds and connects the latter to larger flows of labour,

culture and power. It is fundamental to move beyond the notion that cyberspace is about escaping reality in order to understand how the reality of the Internet is deeply connected to the development of late postindustrial societies as a whole. (*Network Culture* 75)

Seeing the Internet as a virtual space that was like real life while being separate from it—a second life—figured it as a place to escape from reality, especially racial realities. Several new-media scholars studying race and gender before 2002 challenged this state of exemption. In 1996 Cameron Bailey wrote:

Faced with the delirious prospect of leaving their bodies behind for the cool swoon of digital communication, many leading theorists of cyberspace have addressed the philosophical implications of a new technology by retreating to old ground. In a landscape of contemporary cultural criticism where the discourses of race, gender, class, and sexuality have often led to great leaps in understanding—where, in fact, they have been so thoroughly used as to become a mantra—these interpretive tools have come curiously late to the debate around cyberspace. (334)

In the nineties and after, the Internet was pitched as a curative to racism, which was always framed as a problem of too much visibility by the telecommunications and computing industries and scholars alike, since the Internet permitted users to hide their race or pass as a different one. *Cyberace* was thus deemed an oxymoron at that time, a useful strategy for a computer industry and for a political regime that was struggling to get users to invest in, purchase, and believe in this technology. Updating the Internet’s image as a clubhouse for hobbyists and geeks involved representing it as a solution to especially knotty social problems like racism. As Alondra Nelson wrote in 2002,

Public discourse about race and technology, led by advertisers (and aided and abetted by cybertheorists), was preoccupied with the imag-

ined new social arrangements that might be made possible by technological advance. Advertisers relied on a shared message about race and ethnicity—the disappearance of the DuBoisian “color line”—to promote their products. (5)

As Nelson notes, this digital racial-abolitionist strategy was waged on two fronts—the commercial and the academic. Much of the important critical scholarship on race and new media noted this alliance and traced its trajectory through close readings of technology-industry texts such as advertisements.

Advertisements, films, novels, and the Internet itself produced a rich stream of content during this period that depicted racialized bodies in exotic locales juxtaposed with digital technologies. This advertising blitz was a result of the “thriving and competitive market for high-speed nationwide computer networking services” that quickly developed in the early nineties (Abbate 197). In 1995 the Internet’s backbone became a series of networks run by private companies (Shah and Kesan). IBM, Cisco, MCI, Worldcom, and others produced almost only this type of image, but it was a staple as well in cyberpunk science-fiction film, television, and literature. Wendy Chun’s, Tom Foster’s, and Alondra Nelson’s critiques of postracial utopianism analyze digital-networking advertisements and cyberpunk films and fiction and explain why race and cultural difference are continually invoked in them. Chun’s adept unpacking of digital racialization in telecommunications-company commercials from the nineties such as MCI’s “anthem” identifies how a

[r]ewriting of the Internet as emancipatory, as “freeing” oneself from one’s body, also naturalizes racism. The logic framing MCI’s commercial reduces to what they can’t see, can’t hurt you. Since race, gender, age, and infirmities are only skin-deep (or so this logic goes), moving to a text-based medium makes them—and thus the discrimination that stems from them—disappear. (132)

This racial-abolitionist rhetoric advocated technologically enabled disembodiment as a solution to social problems; Foster’s cogent critique of this strategy in *The Souls of Cyberfolk: Posthumanism as Vernacular Theory* discusses this discourse’s roots in cyberpunk science fiction such as William Gibson’s *Neuromancer*. Simply put, race and racism don’t disappear when bodies become virtual or electronically mediated. In his discussion of the Deathlok comic-book series, he writes, “neither becoming a cyborg nor accessing cyberspace is conceptualized as escaping the body, but rather in terms of a more complex relationship that is both productive and problematic” (156).

Critical race theory and political-economic approaches caught up to the Internet around the turn of the century, at a time when it was particularly ready to be caught—shortly after the stock-market crash of 2001 and right around the time when the term *cyber* started to vanish. It was only after the digital bloom was off the dot-com rose that it became possible to discuss cyberspace as anything other than a site of exception from identity, especially racial identity. Several collections such as *Race in Cyberspace* (Kolko, Nakamura, and Rodman), *Technicolor: Race, Technology, and Everyday Life* (Nelson, Tu, and Hines), *Asian America.Net: Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Cyberspace* (Lee and Wong), and *Learning Race and Ethnicity: Youth and Digital Media* (Everett) have been published since 2000, and, just as important, general new-media and cyberculture anthologies started to include chapters on race, such as David Trend’s widely taught *Reading Digital Culture*; David Bell and Barbara M. Kennedy’s *Cybercultures Reader*, now in its second edition; *Handbook of Computer Game Studies* (Raessens and Goldstein); Chun and Thomas Keenan’s *New Media, Old Media*, as did popular-culture anthologies such as *Popular Culture: A Reader* (Guins and Cruz) and *The Visual Culture Reader* (Mirzoeff). Digital media, an area of study that an entire generation of undergraduate students experienced

as the last couple of weeks of their courses on writing, media literacy, television and film, and literature, not only came to the fore as a discipline that merited its own courses but also began to integrate discussions of racial identity in digital media and online social space.³ The publication of several monographs signaled the growth of the field—my *Cybertypes: Race, Ethnicity, and Identity on the Internet* was published in 2002, Chun's *Control and Freedom* and Foster's *The Souls of Cyberfolk* in 2005, Adam Banks's *Race, Rhetoric, and Technology* in 2006, Christopher McGahan's *Racing Cybercultures* and my *Digitizing Race: Visual Cultures of the Internet* in 2007–08.

The “larger flows of labour, culture and power” that surround and shape digital media travel along unevenly distributed racial, gendered, and class channels (Terranova, *Network Culture* 75). As Caren Kaplan wrote in *PMLA* in 2002: “Questions about divisions of labor cannot be left out of an inquiry into representational practices in information and communication technologies. . . . [T]here is no discussion of the people who make the devices that are used to achieve the dream of subjectivity” (40).

Coco Fusco, Donna Haraway, Toby Miller, and Kaplan all urge us toward a concern with labor and embodiment, one less about fleeing, refashioning, and augmenting bodies with technology and more about viewing bodies within technophilic, informationalized societies—and noting the costs paid by racialized bodies. In contrast with the Internet's early claims to transform and eliminate both race and labor, digital-communication technologies today racialize labor, employing “virtual migrants” who perform tasks such as help-line staffing, online gamers who sell their virtual gold and leveled-up avatars to busy Americans and Europeans to use in MMORPGs, and a class of truly miserable workers who “pick away without protection at discarded First World computers full of leaded glass to find precious metals” (Miller 9). Significantly,

these workers are primarily Asian, a phenomenon that has led to robust anti-Asian racism in MMORPGs such as *World of Warcraft* (WoW), where “gold farmers” are despised and abused as their services are used promiscuously among its ten million players. Most players condemn gold selling as the rankest form of cheating yet purchase virtual gold in such quantity that they have turned the secondary market in virtual property into a massively profitable industry, one that is predicted to outstrip the primary digital-games market in the years to come.⁴ The anti-Chinese gold-farmer media produced by WoW players and distributed through *Warcraftmovies.com* and *YouTube* is especially salient in the United States context because it echoes anti-immigration discourse. The racialization of this type of digital labor as Asian, abject, and despised bears comparison with the ways the other forms of racialized labor are controlled and managed.

Around 2005 the Internet entered a new industrial, historical, and cultural period: Web 2.0.⁵ The software publisher Tim O'Reilly first circulated this term in his article “What Is Web 2.0: Design Patterns and Business Models for the Next Generation of Software.” The article claims that the Web as we use it today is a much more participatory and potentially profitable medium than it was before 2005, and indeed there has been a renewed interest in and faith in the Web as a renascent source of capital, as well as a new utopianism regarding user interactivity. Of course in semantic terms, today's 2.0 is tomorrow's cyber, but it is worth unpacking it to see what kind of ideological baggage it has. Web 1.0, or “cyber” space, conceptualized the Internet as an alternative reality, a different place in which one could exercise agency and live out fantasies of control. This control extended to all aspects of personal identity, including and especially race. Web 2.0 comes with a different imaginary. While it neither posits a postracial utopia based on racial abolitionism online nor envisions racialized

others and primitives as signs of cosmopolitan technofetishism, it does make claims to harness collective intelligence by allowing everyone to participate in a more or less equal fashion. These claims are implicitly postracial, and many contemporary advertisements for telecommunications hardware and software visually address the stubborn problem of digital inequality by showing “global kids” broadcasting video of themselves on the Internet in the most meaningful way possible—to be famous.

Cisco’s “Human Network” ad campaign, running since 2007, figures racialized performance and publicity through digital video broadcasting as both the ends and the means to a radical Web 2.0-inflected democracy. Its thirty-second video spot “Fame” depicts children of color in the United States and “global” children broadcasting digital video of themselves to ubiquitous digital screens viewed by their parents, red-robed monks in Tibet, other children around the world, and an idealized global public. In a reprise of famous viral performance videos such as the Chinese boys who lip-synched to the Backstreet Boys’ “I Want It That Way,” the “Human Network” Web site depicts an African American boy popping and locking for his father’s cellphone camera (fig. 1), a Latina girl flamenco dancing, a Russian man performing a “Russian” dance while his PC’s camera captures the performance (fig. 2), buskers in Europe playing violins, and an Asian woman in a kimono dancing with a fan, with the subtitle “one dance moves and grooves the world.”⁶ Uncannily, one of these video ads is entitled “Anthem,” harking back to the MCI ad from the nineties and conveying a similar message of digital-cultural triumphalism with a 2.0 twist: it reads “welcome to the network where anyone can be famous—welcome to the human network.” Yet while, as Chun notes, the original MCI-anthem ad touted cyberspace’s ability to hide users’ bodies and races, Cisco’s “Anthem” 2.0 works differently, by selling the network as a site of racialized performance

and visibility. The site’s users are also invited to contribute content in the form of stories, which are incorporated into the site in the true spirit of user-generated content. The work of racialization, or making race through digital means, is passed on and eagerly accepted by the children in these ads, just as the logic of Web 2.0 passes on and accepts all kinds of software and content-development work. The performance of stylized images of race and ethnicity is industriously undertaken by children of color in the Cisco “Human Network” campaign and is accepted as an inevitable and natural part both of the compulsory immaterial labor of becoming “famous” and of being seen on the multiple mediated screens embedded in everyday life—on cellphones; PDAs; PCs; televisions; and, in the “Myles” commercial, on the megascreens on tall buildings in Times Square. This is a privilege figured as an entitlement of digital citizens and as a justification for our continuing faith in the Web—so long as those citizens are able to labor properly, performing race in ways that will appeal to other users.

As Terranova notes in her pre-Web 2.0 article “Free Labor,” “The Internet does not



FIG. 1

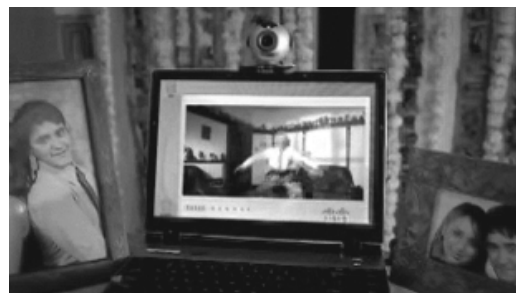


FIG. 2

automatically turn every user into an active producer, and every worker into a creative subject" (34). The question of what constitutes a creative subject in our current digital culture is racialized in terms of Web 2.0 entrepreneurship, the grueling immaterial labor of "making yourself." Tila Tequila, the Vietnamese American star of the 2007 VH1 reality television program *A Shot at Love with Tila Tequila*, is most likely the first Internet star, for the "signal reason for [her] breakout success may also be the basis for Ms. Tequila's unconventional fame, her boast that she has 1,771,920 MySpace friends" (Trebay). Tequila's immense popularity on a widely used social-network site (she has 2,940,387 friends as of 19 March 2008 on MySpace—a number that has grown since Guy Trebay wrote his article, partly because of the new audience generated by *A Shot at Love*) was leveraged on "the classic show-business redemption narrative" but, more important, also on constant claims of possessive individualism and rehabilitation through digital racial self-fashioning. Tequila's profile is, like any Web 2.0 object, in perpetual beta release. It is a valuable new-media object because it employs the labor of her "friends," using the posts both as a sounding board for Tequila and as unique content, and it capitalizes on her own racial and sexual ambiguity. The profile captures the sense of liveness characteristic of digital media that has migrated across so many other genres and platforms; it maps the development of Tequila's "deeply disoriented" identity growing up in a Houston housing project after emigrating from Singapore (Trebay). In an interview with *Car Tuner Magazine*, she explains, "I was really confused then, because at first I thought I was black, then I thought I was Hispanic and joined a cholo gang" (qtd. in Trebay).

Though Tequila's story has been read as a symptom of a radical change in the nature of media celebrity—as Trebay puts it, "a shift from top-down manufactured celebrity to a kind of lateral, hyper-democratic celebrity"—

Tequila emphasizes her own digital labor in the manufacture of her celebrity on MySpace, a celebrity that is racialized as diasporic and polysexual. Tequila depicts herself as a bisexual Asian woman fleeing religious repression, poverty, and urban violence—a modern day Horatio Alger in a G-string—and her constant references to her "fans" on MySpace as the source of her visibility and fame highlight the ways in which she needs to construct herself as "user generated" as well as self-made. Clearly Tequila's MySpace profile exemplifies what Celine Parreñas Shimizu terms the "hypersexuality of race"—it describes an Asian woman who will "friend" anyone and everyone, and who is endlessly responsive, invoking Asian American porn megastars such as Annabel Chong. Like other Asian female stars such as Anna May Wong, Nancy Kwan, and Lucy Liu before her, whose "hypersexuality is essentialized to their race and gender ontology and is constructed in direct relation to the innocence and moral superiority of white women" (Shimizu 62), Tequila is unfavorably compared to Paris Hilton by Trebay. Tequila's purported lack of talent is articulated to her racialized hypersexuality, digital promiscuity, and racio-sexual ambivalence.

Tequila's Web 2.0 narrative repeats the message of the Cisco "Human Network" campaign—digital fame accrues to racialized performance. Instead of "routing around" race, Web 2.0 creates Race 2.0 (Silver 138). Tequila and Cisco's human network demonstrate that while Race 1.0 was understood as socially constructed, a process that at least acknowledges that race and gender are historical formations, Race 2.0 is user-generated. Once again race is "on us," as Web 2.0 rhetoric positions us all as entrepreneurial content creators. The Internet's resurgence and rebranding as Web 2.0 incessantly recruits its users to generate content in the form of profiles, avatars, favorites, comments, pictures, wiki postings, and blog entries. Cyberrace has gone the way of the Cybershot, cybercommuting, and cyberspace,

and for much the same reason: racialization has become a digital process, just as visual-imaging practices, labor, and social discourse have. The process of racialization continues on both the Internet and its outernet, as the “dirty work” of virtual labor continues to get distributed along racial lines.

NOTES

1. In her analysis of cyberspace’s advertising discourse, Megan Boler describes this false sense of cultural understanding as “‘drive-by difference’ [that] presents difference and the other as something that can be ‘safely’ met or experienced—at a distance” (146).
2. In their study of friend connections in social-network sites, Liu, Maes, and Davenport formulated the term “taste fabric” to describe users’ creation of alternative networks for community formation (qtd. in Ellison and Boyd).
3. See Boler; Galloway for two excellent examples of new-media critique that incorporate critical race theory.
4. “The International Game Exchange states that the ‘2005 marketplace for virtual assets in MMOG’s is approaching 900 million,’ and that ‘some experts believe that the market for virtual assets will overcome the primary market—projected to reach 7 billion by 2009—within the next few years’” (Consalvo 182).
5. Lovink writes that “by 2005, the Internet had recovered from the dot-com crash and, in line with the global economic figures, reincarnated as Web 2.0” (ix).
6. The “Chinese Backstreet Boys” have been viewed over 6 million times on *YouTube* as of 26 March 2008. When a user types in “Backstreet Boys” as a search query on this site, the Chinese video for “That Way” comes in as number 7, ahead of some of the “official” Backstreet Boys content.

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