

Constituents of a Theory of the Media

Enzensberger is seen as a classic Marxist thinker, who sought a socialist system of media. He also described the convergence of media in pre-digital eras, predicting that this would become a dominant trend within media.

“Radio must be changed from a means of distribution to a means of communication. Radio would be the most wonderful means of communication imaginable in public life, a huge linked system... allowing the listener not only to hear but to speak, and did not isolate him but brought him into contact.”

- Bertold Brecht, Theory of Radio 1932

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TXTMob is a service, similar to electronic mailing lists and predecessor to Twitter, that lets users share mobile phone SMS text messages with both friends and total strangers. Users can sign up to send and receive messages to and from various groups, which are organized around a range of different topics.

TXTMob was first developed by the Institute for Applied Autonomy for protesters at the 2004 Democratic National Convention in Boston and the 2004 Republican National Convention in New York City (see 2004 Republican National Convention protest activity). Tad Hirsch, a researcher in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Smart Cities Group and Computing Culture Research Group,[1] continues to offer TXTMob cleaned up, packaged and released under the GPL via SourceForge.

TXTMob was one of the example services which was used as a model for the service Twitter when it was originally created.

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The electronic media do away with cleanliness; they are by their nature «dirty». That is part of their productive power.

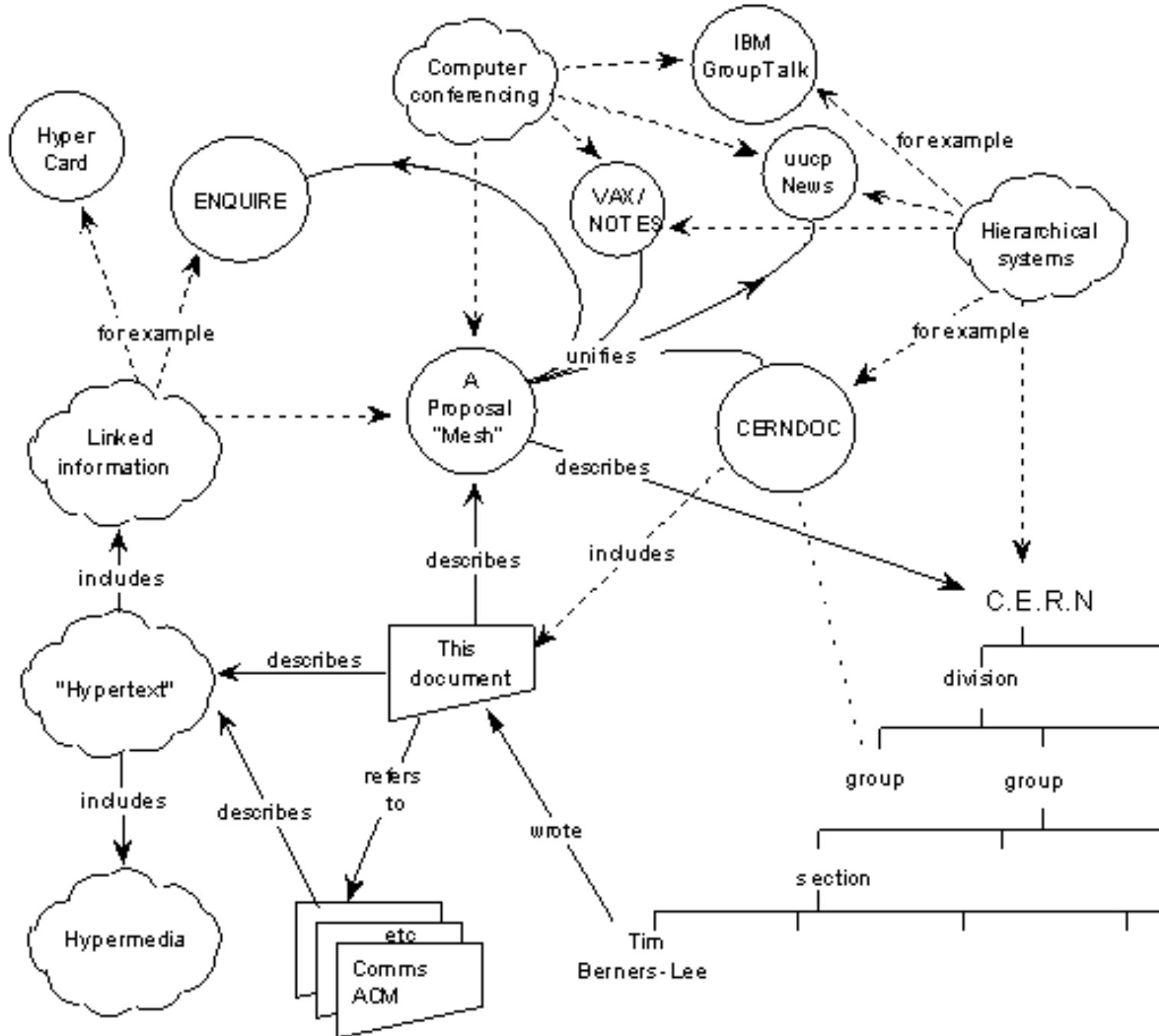
The new media are egalitarian in structure. Anyone can take part in them by a simple switching process. The programs themselves are not material things and can be reproduced at will.

Hans Magnus Enzenberger in his 1970 essay/manifesto, “Constituents of a Theory of the Media” is a call to arms to the left to embrace the media as a vehicle toward democracy, freedom of expression and to not allow it to become only a means of advertisement and consumption. The following table to summarize the social dichotomy of the media:

Repressive Use of Media	Emancipatory Use of Media
Centrally controlled program One transmitter, many receivers Immobilization of isolated individuals Passive consumer behavior Depoliticization Production by specialists Control by property owners or bureaucracy	Decentralized program Each receiver a potential transmitter Mobilization of the masses Interaction of those involved, feedback A political learning process Collective production Social control by self-organization

The Consciousness Industry is a term coined by Hans Magnus Enzensberger, which identifies the mechanisms through which the human mind is reproduced as a social product. Foremost among these mechanisms are the institutions of mass media and education. According to Enzensberger, the mind industry does not produce anything specific; rather, its main business is to perpetuate the existing order of man's domination over man.

Enzensberger, H. M. (1974). *The Consciousness Industry: On Literature, Politics and the Media*. New York: Continuum Books/ Seabury Press.



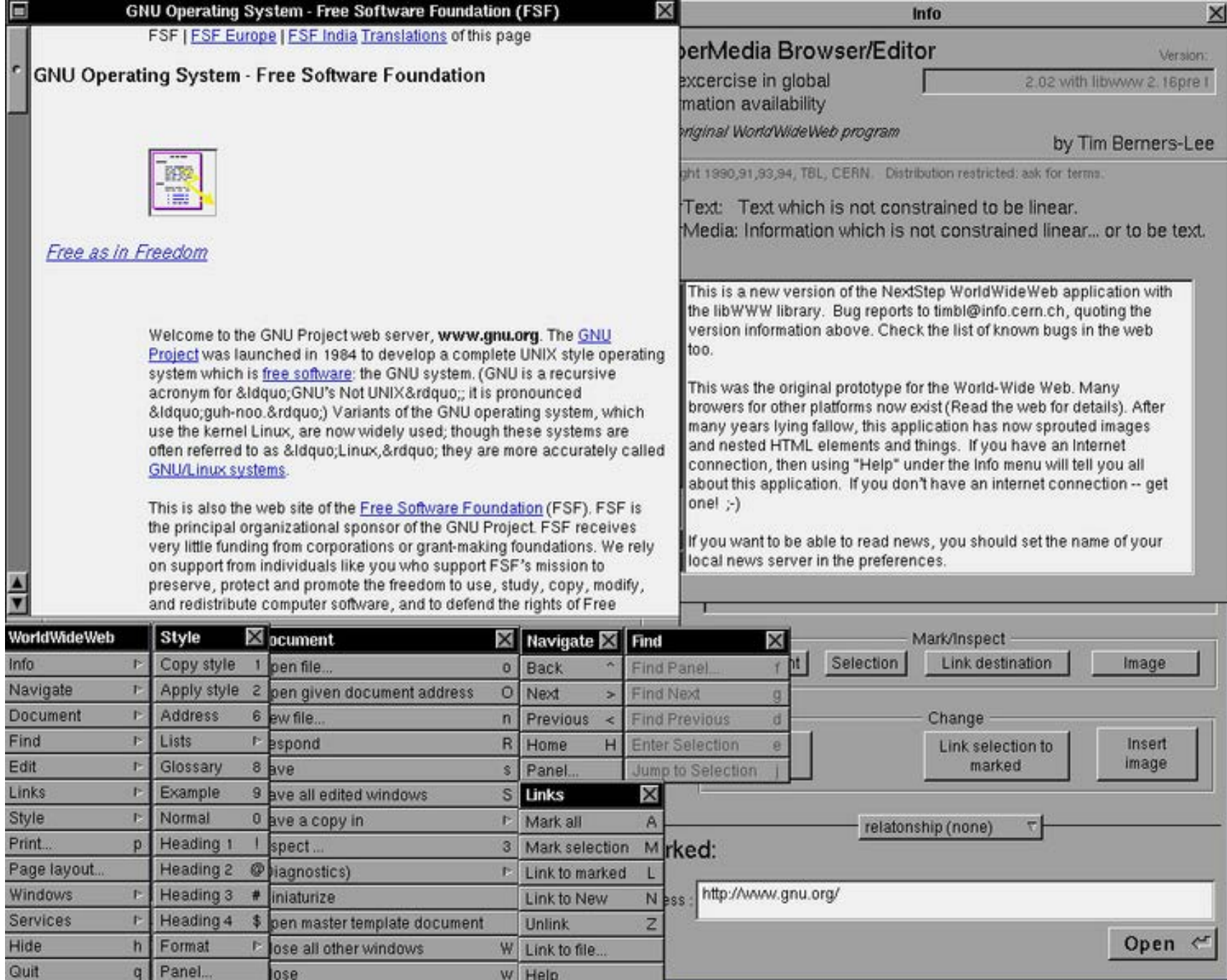
March 1989 "Information Management: A Proposal" by Tim Berners-Lee at CERN

History of the Internet

- 1989 CERN creates HTML so all different types of computers and OS (DOS, UNIX, Apple) can access the Internet
- Creates HTTP (hypertext transfer protocol)
- Creates the URL (uniform resource locator)
- CERN distributes the www software for free over the Internet



Tim Berners-Lee



WorldWideWeb (later Nexus), 1990 developed by Tim Berners-Lee for CERN

History of the Internet



In the fall of 1993, Marc Andreessen a college student working part-time for \$6.85 an hour at the National Center for Super Computer Applications (which had recently adopted the www) at the University of Illinois tried to give the web a more graphic media rich interface. He created the Mosaic web-browser and posted it for free.



1993: MOSAIC – clean, simple, reliable & first graphical web browser



World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) maintains international standards for the web. founded by Tim Berners-Lee after he left the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) in October, 1994.

Public to Private transfer of the Internet

In 1996, President Bill Clinton signed the Telecommunications Act, a law that deregulated the telecommunications industry, allowing for the first time since the New Deal (enacted between 1933-36) nearly unlimited corporate cross-ownership of the media: cable companies, radio stations, film studios, newspapers, phone companies, television broadcasters, and, of course, Internet service providers.

The law triggered massive consolidation, culminating in just a handful of vertically integrated companies owning the bulk of the American media market. “This law is truly revolutionary legislation that will bring the future to our doorstep,” President Clinton declared when he signed the act.

- Levine, Y. (2018). *Surveillance Valley: The Secret Military History of the Internet*



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net neutrality

the principle that Internet service providers should enable access to all content and applications regardless of the source, and without favoring or blocking particular products or websites. In 2015 this rule ended and currently the Internet Freedom Act is winding through Congress. The FCC which had authority over ISPs has stepped aside.

“When the Ajit Pai-led Federal Communications Commission (FCC) killed federal net neutrality rules in late 2017, the order didn’t just eliminate rules protecting an open internet—it also dramatically rolled back the FCC’s authority to reign in giant broadband providers.”

- Motherboard, 2 April, 2019