“What is a Blog?” Jill Walker Rettberg (2008)

Open Book Quiz

Note: you will be graded on the thoroughness and thoughtfulness with which you answer each question. You may answer the questions underneath the questions. Please indent your responses to make it easier for me to read. When you’re done, you will be posting this on your weebly site as a “document” on a Standard page called “Research.” I will give you more detailed instructions in class.

1. What do HTML & CSS stand for and what do they mean? Offer an example or two.

HTML stands for HyperText Markup Language. It is a code that’s used for writing a Web page, it’s displayed in the Web browser. For example, if the tag <p> is put at the beginning and end of a paragraph, it tells the browser that the specific text between those tags should be shown as a separate paragraph. It breaks the text up into different sections rather than have one long strand of text. CSS stands for Cascading Style Sheets. The CSS is a way of specifying how the Web browser should set up, or “style”, the pages that are marked up in HTML. So, this means that the CSS would be set to generate a “rule”, or desired set up, where all paragraphs should be indented on the first line.

1. What does RSS stand for? What does it mean/do?

RSS stands for Really Simple Syndication, and it’s basically another way of publishing. The RSS is a version of a Website that’s encoded in a way so that makes the content easy to manipulate. For example, the code <title> placed at the beginning and end of the title of an individual post. This makes it easy to indicate the start of a post.

1. What is Web 2.0? What distinguishes Web 2.0 from the “first wave of web developers”? Please offer some examples and explain why/how these are considered Web 2.0.

Web 2.0 is meant to characterize the second generation of websites. While the first Web developers focus primarily on publishing the content of the Website, Web 2.0 is intended for users to use the services the sites have to offer. They can publish their own content, or use the Web as a platform. Wikipedia, YouTube, and Facebook are all considered to be Web 2.0 site because their services are being used by those on the internet.

1. Please list and explain the 3 different types of blogs discussed by Rettberg. Explain what the defining feature of each are and how they are distinct from one another. What category do you think our “niche” blog fall into and why?

The first type of blog discussed by Rettberg is personal, or diary-style, blogging. This style of blogging is personal and specific to your life. This is where people post stories of their life. Sometimes, these blogs are not as public, they might only be directed towards close family and friends. However, some people are comfortable telling their story and exposing what makes them unique or vulnerable. The second type of blog was filter blogging, and this is less personal than the diary style. These blogs are typically a place for the writer to discuss their experiences on the web and preferences they might have. The final blog discussed was topic-driven blogging. These bloggers don’t keep themselves confined to writing about one topic. Their interests are typically not scattered or unorganized, but the bloggers prefer to write about whatever new or interesting information they’ve discovered about their desired topics.

I feel as though our “niche” blog falls under the personal category. We will be writing about something that connects to us personally. We will be using our own background information and experiences to fuel our blogs.

1. From where does the word “Blog” derive? Why is this significant?

The word “Blog” is a combination of the words Web and log. It’s derived from the fact that a blog is intended to be a log, that’s on the internet. The word log is actually being taken from it’s nautical term when a “logbook” was used to record the chronological order of events. Today, weblogs retain this information in chronological order for us. However, they are often displayed in reverse chronological order. Meaning that the most recent posts will be the ones read first, and the farther back you go into a blog, the older the post is.

1. Rettberg defines blogging by discussing the phenomenon in terms of genre and medium. Please explain why she does this and how it helps us understand the genre of blogging and how blogging functions as a medium.

Rettberg explains that the internet has blurred the lines between a medium and genre. This has caused a continuous discussion about whether a blog is a genre or a medium. Rettberg argues the fact that blogs are a medium, and within this medium you can discover various genres and subgenres. In the end, it’s your own personal perspective that decides if you view blogging as a genre or a medium.