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What is This?

The leisure divide: can the 'Third World' come out to play?

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Abstract
As billions of dollars are invested in mitigating the digital divide, stakes are raised to gain validity for these cost-intensive endeavors, focusing more on online activities that have clear socio-economic outcomes. Hence, farmers in rural India are watched closely to see how they access crop prices online, while their Orkuting gets sidelined as anecdotal. This paper argues that this is a fundamental problem as it treats users in emerging markets as somehow inherently different from those in the West. After all, it is now commonly accepted that much of what users do online in developed nations is leisure-oriented. This perspective does not crossover as easily into the Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D) world, where the utilitarian angle reigns. This paper argues that much insight can be gained in bridging worlds of ICT4D and New Media studies. By negating online leisure in 'Third World' settings, our understandings on this new user market can be critically flawed.

Keywords
online leisure, digital divide, ICT4D, international development, new media

Introduction

In this Web 2.0 era, evidence is mounting on human ingenuity and creativity with and within online spheres. Much has been documented on how users innovate in a myriad of ways, opening possible economic and techno-social opportunities through play. From initially being viewed as 'wasteful' and 'idle,' cyberleisure is steadily being recognized as potentially productive, labor-intensive and commercially fruitful. In fact, online leisure has stimulated a novel virtual economy where, for instance, 'dragon sabers,' a cyber-weapon of the *Legend of Mir III* sell on eBay, and 'Farmville,' an online application on Facebook, propels users to speed up their virtual harvest with real currency. In this global and information society, such innovation has become fundamental to getting ahead as the rat race moves online.

That said, when we look at the world of Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D), a different story seems to emerge. Much focus is placed on how the net needs to be used for a range of utilitarian means such as healthcare, education, and employment. An army of commercial ethnographers from Microsoft, Intel,

Google and Hewlett Packard, as well as the usual international non-governmental organization (INGO) suspects, have been unleashed to capture the newly empowered in action. As billions of dollars are being invested to bridge the digital divide in developing countries, much is at stake on amassing evidence that the poor are, in fact, leapfrogging chronic socio-economic barriers through ICT. Hence, visions of the farmer accessing crop prices online, ridding himself of the tyranny of the middlemen, infuse policymakers and practitioner discourses, streamlining research agendas even more so on measuring how ICT is being used for pragmatic ends. The underlying assumption here is that somehow users in Third World countries are inherently and intrinsically different from those in the Western world. While there is no pretense on the fact that what most users do online in the West

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is primarily social and leisure oriented – social networking, porn, idle browsing and media consumption and production – there seems to be a belief that users in the emerging markets will have a more conventional work ethic online; they will virtuously reach out for ways to get information for healthcare diagnostics and treatment, online education and agricultural best practices. While undoubtedly this happens, this paper argues that there is a possibility that much of what users do *even* (and arguably, one can say, *especially*) in 'Third World' countries is, in fact, heavily leisure oriented.

Recent field studies on computer usage in such regions hint at such a proposition as well as past analysis of older technology usage such as the telephone, radio and television. This allows for a bolder statement that perhaps the field of international development should not turn a blind eye to such cyberleisure practices that they encounter in the field. Admittedly, the morality that drives this field by focusing on 'serious' outcomes for human development sits uncomfortably with the supposed trivial notion of 'leisure.' Yet, if we are to genuinely examine what people in 'Third World' countries are doing with ICTs, we need to look at them as *typical* users and not the exotic and virtuous recipients of new technologies they are often made out to be. In fact, if we are to keenly focus on how users in the emerging markets play within such online spaces, it may perhaps reveal novel social practices that emerge through initial innocuous e-leisure behavior. This provides an essential platform to critically examine the complex entanglement of labor and leisure within this virtual sphere, an important arena to investigate in this contemporary information age. Thereby, this article is a call to ICT4D researchers and practitioners to take cyberleisure among the Bottom Of the Pyramid (BOP) netizens seriously. It may be found that it is not, after all, an alien practice among them and in fact, inhabiting such worlds may lead them, much like users in the West, to chalk out novel opportunities for themselves that can be social, cultural and, yes, economic in nature.

To build this case, this paper first examines the relationship between labor and leisure, a) historically and b) comparatively, online and offline. After which, we investigate how new information and communication technology usage has been situated in context of supposedly developing nations – intentions versus actual practices. Lastly, this paper traces out the commonalities between 'First' and 'Third' world nations' practices with new media usage, underlining recent emerging leisure behavior online. The main argument here is that we need to stop exoticizing users in emerging markets as more utilitarian-driven and work-conscious and start examining instead the complex labor-leisure relations that play out online. Hence, this paper calls for a conscious inclusion of cyberleisure in the larger analysis of new media usage in supposed Third World countries.

The power couple: Labor and Leisure

Leisure has traveled quite a journey to gain credibility. Puritans lost their grip on the worldview of "leisure as sin" particularly during the industrial era in the second half of the 18th century. Here it was discovered that productivity at work was enhanced by leisure in social life (Arcangeli 2003; Roberts 2006); "an idle mind is a devil's workshop" gave way to "all work and no play, makes Jack a dull boy." That was a revolutionary shift in human perspective. Leisure was found to have a legitimate role after all. That said, leisure was defined as that which was *not* work, or that which was in relation *to* or a product *of* work. In other words, leisure existed to serve labor or labor existed to produce leisure but the "twain were believed to not meet: 'leisure and labor are two sides of man's shield; both protect him. Labor enables him to live; leisure makes the good life possible'" (Woody 1957: 4). This perspective has its roots far back, as evinced through Aristotle's pontifications on the relationship between these two domains, stating that, "we labor in order to have leisure" (in Rosenzweig 1985: 31).

Clear dichotomies were laid out in the conceptualizing of these two realms, where work was a necessity that served utilitarian ends, while leisure was a luxury that was earned through labor. As prosperity grew in the industrial nations, leisure became more central a preoccupation. From the 'labor for the many, leisure for a few' thinking of feudal times, the new phenomenon of the modern era was the massification and democratization of leisure (Robinson 1978). While the boundaries between leisure and labor continued to stay relatively firm, what did transform were the occupied spaces of these entities in people's lives. Leisure expanded into a range of activities and infused numerous social spaces, while work continued to be demarcated in its sacrosanct box.

In the United States, for instance, between 1890 and 1940, it was found that American leisure grew exponentially, even during the Great Depression era of the

1920s–1930 s (Fischer 1994). This is particularly interesting given the fact that the popular conception of leisure is of it being correlated to economic security, where higher classes have more access to leisure (Veblen 1899; Florida 2003). While no doubt there is evidence to support this perspective, it is still one part of the larger matrix of leisure-labor relations. Looking across cultures and contexts, one finds that in spite of lower financial status, poor communities carve opportunities for leisure to sustain their cultural and social capital (Hutchison 1988; Marshall et al. 2007; Snir and Harpaz 2002). Further, it is revealed that there is a range of leisure behavior amongst different groups that continues to be debated along lines of race, ethnicity and nationality. Take, for example, the ongoing discussion of why there are such distinct differences between the United States and Europe when it comes to work and leisure. According to the National Bureau of Economic Research, its report concludes that a combination of tax systems, labor laws and other structural mechanisms shape the perspectives towards these two entities:

> Our punch line is that Europeans today work much less than Americans because of the policies of the unions in the seventies, eighties and part of the nineties and because of labor market regulations. Marginal tax rates may have also played a role, especially for women's labor force participation, but our view is that in a hypothetical competitive labor market without unions and with limited regulation, these tax increases would not have affected hours worked as much. Certainly micro evidence on the elasticity of labor supply is inconsistent with a mainly tax based explanation of this phenomenon, even though ''social multiplier effects'' may ''help'' in this respect. (Alesina, Glaeser and Sacerdote 2005: 30)

Other perspectives argue for a more culturally based angle to understand differences in leisure patterns amongst groups. A case in point is the feminist approach to this dichotomy where 'work' in the industrial sense is seen as problematic, negating the informal domestic work that goes on due to the lack of financial remuneration (Henderson 1996). Thereby, it is argued that women's leisure becomes an invisible field, as it is not tethered to the typical work domain, and that women experience leisure in their own diverse and expansive ways.

Also, contrary to conventional modernization thinking of the 'modern' replacing the 'traditional' lifestyle and mindset as per the *Gesellschaft* for *Gemeinschaft* model (Tonnies [1887] 2002), it was found that many new leisure practices augmented old ways of experiencing leisure rather than replacing them. As leisure came into its own, more attention has been paid to its varied dimensions, where questions abound: *Is leisure becoming more commoditized and commercialized? Is leisure more a private affair than a public activity? Is leisure more organized than informal in nature?* At last, leisure has gained centrality and become an entity in its own right.

Perhaps so much so that one can argue that the pendulum has swung to the other side, where leisure has generated much attention (and at times, fear) with regard to its role in education and business spaces and practices (Arora 2010, 2010a, Tapscott 2009). At the heart of this momentum is new and social media that promises (and at times threatens) to exponentially scale these practices, calling for urgent analysis of its implications on contemporary society.

New technologies and new transformations in leisure and labor

New technology developments have been credited with stimulating reorganizations in leisure and labor patterns in society. Each new invention, be it the phonograph, the TV, or film, brings with it the possibility "to revise ordinary orientations of leisure by dramatically increasing our sense of interdependence and our access to information and entertainment" (Rojek 2000: 24). What seems to be an established pattern is that with the onset of each new information and communication technology, there are overarching concerns, explicit expectations and strong moral codes that engulf these shifts. Take television for instance. As this tool became a popular medium, consumed at a domestic level, the fear of its influence on social order and values became a dominant concern (and continues to resurface frequently in media debates even today) (Robinson 1978; Bryce 2001). Part of this can be attributed to the fact that these leisure mediums are harder to regulate than conventional work tools; also, creating consensus on what constitutes 'appropriate' leisure practices has historically been a significant challenge. Thereby, it is not a coincidence that with the onset of each new tool, efforts for formal education step in, with the intent to streamline these tools to more productive ends.

For instance, in the 1960s, a survey of the use of television in education in Britain presented the medium "as a new facility through which the teacher can better achieve traditional educational aims."

(MacLean 1968: 151). The medium was analyzed according to its "ability to magnify, distribute vision instantaneously, store visual material, and to assemble large amounts of heterogeneous material". There was a concerted effort to focus on this tool as a potential mass educational conduit for society. The Web 2.0 in this context is hardly different. Argued to be one of the most important emerging locations of contemporary leisure activity (Bryce 2001; Miah 2000), this online spatial context has managed to attract the attention of the public, with concerns similar to that of 'old' leisure mediums. The utilitarian angle is apparently hard to avoid, at least at a discursive level. That which is hard to regulate, is often feared.

Yet, over time, these new leisure tools for the most part free themselves from utilitarian expectations, and become broadly accepted as mediums of pleasure. There are several reasons for this. Partly, it is because of the overarching neoliberal belief in the West that leisure is synonymous to exercising one's individuality. Freedom, choice and access are seen as central to leisure, reinforcing the liberal tradition (Iso-Ahola 1997). Partly, it is because it is seen as an essential social glue and safety valve for society, particularly as contemporary society is seen to become more fragmented and stressful in its complexity (Maffesoli 1996). And then partly, neglecting this realm is seen as commercial suicide, given the fact that this territory is a significant economic market and that leisure is a lucrative and exponentially growing consumer product in itself (Roberts 2006).

The Internet, with about two decades of public exposure, has reached a stage of becoming accepted as a leisure space, at least in the West. The Web 2.0, the new generation of the net marked by user-driven content and social networks, is principally oriented towards leisure over labor (in the conventional sense). Interestingly, as might have been expected, notions of labor have not remained static and unchanged. The concept of work, online and offline has also undergone a shift, blurring the boundaries between leisure and labor.

Encountering leisure when laboring and vice versa

Strong demarcations between work and play have been attributed, as mentioned above, as a product of the industrial age. The division of labor came with a division for leisure. Time and space have been specialized by this dichotomy; a case in point is the 5-day

workweek and the leisure-oriented weekend. Leisure has been commonly associated with "constructs such as freedom, release, fun and choice; work with constructs such as compulsion, routine and restriction" (Guerrier and Adib 2003: 1399). Yet, these realms often entangle as people find ways to incorporate leisure in their work life (du Gay 1996) and sometimes exercise tremendous effort to enable leisure. In fact, in contemporary society, as the middle class expands, as choices increase, and mobility and access widen through new technologies, expectations on the type of labor people are willing to engage in have begun to shift. Emphasis is placed on being 'authentic' to oneself by creating coherence between our work and leisure lives (Bauman 2001). In this perceived individualistic age, "people are encouraged to 'know themselves', 'be themselves' and 'be true to themselves' especially through their leisure activities" (Guerrier and Adib 2003: 1401). In fact, the ideal 'job' is now constructed around its proximity to leisure, stimulating personal satisfaction. Even corporations are now seeing the benefits of leisure to enhance innovation and creativity at the workplace (Arora 2011).

The main difference between the industrial and the digital age in its perspective of leisure is that in the former, leisure was to *supplement* labor while the latter recognizes that leisure can also *be* labor. The blurring of distinctions becomes more pronounced as we enter the world of Web 2.0, where users spend tremendous number of hours shaping their online avatars in *Second Life,* editing pages on *Wikipedia,* and giving technical feedback on *AskJeeves.com*. In fact, the concept of this kind of 'serious leisure' is not new but entrenched in decades of study on how people can immerse themselves completely, systematically and sustainably in a pursuit or hobby (Stebbins 2007). Thereby, one can argue that this 'hard play' that people engage with in the online world is not that different from that of the past (Arora 2011). While this paper is not really targeted at resolving whether new media leisure and labor are inherently different from that of old media practices, it is worth pointing out that many of our contemporary practices do have strong roots in the past.

What is more at focus here is that this kind of serious leisure online has stimulated a digital market with an ambitious promise of becoming the new age economy (Tapscott 1996). Social network sites, for instance, are being looked at as leisure spaces within which labor can effectively operate, be it by corporations donning their own Facebook pages to new

marketing schemes capitalizing on the free labor of users of such sites in recommending brands to their friends. In fact, people's efforts online have not gone unnoticed; on the contrary:

> Technological advances in everything from product design software to digital video cameras are breaking down the cost barriers that once separated amateurs from professionals. Hobbyists, part-timers, and dabblers suddenly have a market for their efforts, as smart companies in industries as disparate as pharmaceuticals and television discover ways to tap the latent talent of the crowd. The labor isn't always free, but it costs a lot less than paying traditional employees. It's not outsourcing; it's crowdsourcing. (Howe 2006: 2)

New business models are being shaped that fundamentally depend on users inhabiting and investing in these online spaces. In other words, the secret of the new economy will be in identifying the critical set of incentives that propels users to commit to an online space for their leisure experiences, laboring hard while at it.

More interestingly, the emergence of online entrepreneurs is also a promising dimension in this virtual economy. We can construe users to be 'self-employed' as they earn while digitally laboring to solve an issue online and 'entrepreneurial' as they create applications for smartphones or cyber-toys for gaming worlds. With these seemingly lower barriers of entry, this new virtual economy leverages on the recently emergent "creative class" (Florida 2003), a social class that engages in servicing people in areas of leisure and pleasure.

Of course, one should be careful of romanticizing and overstating the potential of this virtual economy, given that these worlds are just as capable of creating and mobilizing "digital sweatshops" and "Net-slaves" where people are seen to be exploited directly and indirectly for their "free" labor (Terranova 2000). Also, there is no ignoring the fact that online porn is perhaps the biggest 'leisure' industry across the board. Further, the creative economy, while no doubt a new reality, does not necessarily negate conventional working practices, as many contemporary institutions continue to be entrenched in traditional practices and mindsets (Peck 2005). These are some important arenas of contemporary debate. That said, as we move into the world of ICT for international development, these debates seem to recede into the background. In other words, by not giving credence

to the fact that cyberleisure is an important arena of study amongst 'Third World' users, we will not be able to engage in these debates that are essential for our understanding of online practice in these regions, as the next section will demonstrate.

Comparing apples and oranges? Commonalities between 'First' and 'Third' world users

On 26th January 1999, Dr. Mitra, a long-term educationist and scientist of international repute, teamed up with NIIT, an IT learning solutions corporation, to install a computer kiosk in a slum in Kalkaji, New Delhi. They carved a 'hole in the wall' that separated the NIIT premises from the adjoining slum. Through this hole, a freely accessible computer was put up for use. This computer proved to be an instant hit among the slum dwellers, especially the children. With no prior experience, the children learnt to use the computer on their own. This small experiment attracted attention in terms of funding, national and international awards and significant media coverage (Arora 2010b). The 'Q&A' in the Oscar winner movie 'Slumdog Millionaire' was based on this initiative. The author, Vikas Swarup, says,

> My book is about hope, optimism and triumph of the human spirit. I was inspired by the Hole-in-the-Wall project . . . That got me fascinated and I realized that there's an innate ability in everyone to do something extraordinary provided they are given an opportunity. (*Economic Times* 2009).

This idea has attracted tremendous accolades, being awarded the coveted Digital Opportunity Award, and has been extensively covered by media sources as diverse as Business Week, CNN, Reuters, and The Christian Science Monitor. The founder himself has been featured at the annual TED Conference in 2007.

So why did this idea receive stardom on such a scale? What was so groundbreaking that it continues to compel and engage even after a decade of such an experiment? Did it inherently stimulate something radical and novel amongst the poor children in India? Arguably, one can say that this simple experiment achieved change not so much amongst the poor in India but rather amongst people in the West. It stood as a wakeup call that children, even in the poorest of slums in India, were just as playful, creative and ingenious in their capacity to learn and engage with new

technologies. The fact is that a child in the West figuring out the computer would not have gained the same kind of attention and euphoria as what this HiWEL[1] initiative achieved. To reiterate, what is groundbreaking here is the ability of this project to disrupt conventional notions among policy makers, researchers and practitioners, of 'Third World' technology users being somehow different and unique from those in the West.

Following up on a decade of intensive research by this organization through the setting up of 300 computer kiosks across India, as well as international outreach in Botswana, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Swaziland, Uganda, and Zambia, it is revealed that children across the board engage in creative, playful and leisure-oriented pursuits regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds (Dangwal, Jha and Kapur 2006; Mitra 2003; Inamdar and Kulkarni 2007). Of particular interest to this organization is that when engaged in such activities, children learn a tremendous amount about the technological medium itself as well as a range of knowledge essential to getting ahead in this information society. Here, leisure and labor are seen to fruitfully align to maximize this novel medium.

In the author's own fieldwork in the last decade, similar results were revealed (Arora 2006, 2006a, 2005). In 2002, Hewlett Packard partnered with the state government of Andhra Pradesh in South India to adopt Kuppam, a rural township and infuse it with computers in schools and cybercafés (Arora 2005). Hewlett Packard's vision for this rural region was to create an "i-community[2],"

> ... to turn Kuppam into a thriving self-sustaining economic community where information and communications technology solutions are strategically deployed to drive economic and social development and improve the lives of its citizens.

The goal was for information and communication technology to be strategically deployed to help improve literacy, job creation, income, access to government services, education, and healthcare. While in the field, HP sent out vans with these new ICT facilities into rural villages so people there could access services such as soil testing, online ration cards, crop prices to health information for women and children. However, what was revealed was that the most popular services were more leisure oriented:

> We asked the children about HP's i-community project. There was silence and blank stares. Soon someone timidly asked if we were referring to the mobile van. Over time, we realized that HP was better known across villages, among both children and adults as the mobile van. The mobile van was in actuality a large bus converted into a computer lab with laptops, printers, scanners, digital cameras, and speakers. There was a shelf of education and video game CDs. At the back of the van, there was a small compartment for soil testing. This equipment was supported by a solar generator attached to the van. In the evenings, the van doubled up as a movie theatre and showed government documentaries during the intermission. This was the most popular feature by far. Ironically, this was one of the few features that HP did not charge for. HP charged for services ranging from soil testing, requests for ration cards, crop prices to health information. They also charged for video games, and digital photographs. Interestingly, amongst these services, the most popular was the video games, followed by digital photography. In fact, the children primarily associated the mobile van with video games and the free evening movie. (Arora 2005, p.23)

In 2007, the Indian government launched the Mission 2007 initiative to connect all of India's 600,000 villages with computers, with the stated ambition to wire the nation for socio-economic mobility (Garai and Shadrach 2006). This gave rise to important schemes like the *e-chaupal* initiative for accessing agricultural markets online, telecentres for digital diagnostics, e-governance for citizenship participation to virtual classrooms for extending and enhancing public education (Mathur and Ambani 2005; Arora 2010b; Cecchinia and Scott 2003). This has spawned tremendous research within the ICT4D sphere. While much focus has gone into analyzing the extent to which these initiatives have been effective in fulfilling these designated outcomes, far less has been documented about other engagements online at these cybercafés and other such portals intended for pragmatic ends.

For instance, in 2009, the researcher embarked on an eight month fieldwork project in Almora, another rural town, but this time in Central Himalayas, with a goal of gauging how *newbies* in supposed Third World countries use new media technologies (Arora 2010b). Broadband had just entered this region a year ago. What was found was that cybercafés in this region owed their survival to cyberleisure, particularly to sites like Orkut. While people did use the net for practical means, the majority of computing centered on friendship and dating sites, Bollywood song portals, Google images and Photoshopping with film

stars. Also, much labor often went into these leisure activities, as the youth in this region spent hours on such pursuits. Having interviewed almost 100 young people from diverse economic and social backgrounds, it became evident that, in general, youth associated computers with leisure more than labor:

> What is most interesting is their perception of computers as a tool of leisure over that of cellphones and television. This is surprising, given that computers are positioned by the media as tools of economics and mobility. After all, most students have access to cellphones and televisions despite class differences while few have computers. Yet, regardless of this current inequity in computer access and usage, common leisure perceptions persist. Youth across board see computers as portals of entertainment. (Arora 2010b: p. 154)

Other scholars have encountered similar findings. Rangaswamy and Toyoma (2006), for instance, state that "even the poorest populations have desires that go beyond those required for physical sustenance" (p.3). Entertainment media have been and continue to be a vital force in rural areas around the world. Village folk are neck and neck with their urban counterparts when it comes to entertainment – popular soap operas, television serials, and music – leveraging on a range of old and new technologies such as the radio and television. Recreation is at the heart of village life, extended by new technologies:

> From field ethnography, we find that urban youth slang and speech styles do not lag behind in villages. Neither do communication styles and channels. Instant messaging is immediately embraced by younger kiosk operators. Fan clubs of matinee idols bring in youth fashion and trends along with film music. Most popular films and film music are released within a month in hub-towns. Cassettes, pulp-film magazines, and even VCDs are snapped up quickly by rural consumers. We found in one case, that women from a village in Tamil Nadu flocked to a rural kiosk where an online celebrity chat was organized with the director of a contemporary soap opera. (Rangaswamy and Toyoma 2006: 5)

Even with a shortage of money, villagers invest and share expenses to gain access to entertainment. For instance, one-third of cable TV installations in India happen to be in rural areas (Cooper-Chen 2005). Strong value is placed on entertainment even as people in poor areas continue to struggle for their basics. This is contradictory to Maslow's seminal theorization on human motivation, where it is argued that until the basic needs are met, people will not aspire for more leisure goods and services. This predictive hierarchy of needs is disbanded as entertainment oversteps physiological wants. In fact, Miller and Slater (2000), in their pioneering study of net usage amongst Trinidadians, warn us to not get seduced by the altruistic notion of initiating and domesticating 'Third' World nations with new technology. They claim that such communities are already attuned and completely engaged with computers through online gossip and 'saucy' public flirting. So, perhaps we need to make the case that the computer as a tool of empowerment may be getting retooled for 'less noble' purposes as a tool of pleasure and leisure.

Conclusion: a call for leisure inclusion

The neoliberal view espouses that the poor will 'leap-frog' conventional and chronic barriers for higher socio-economic mobility. Yet, if equity between the 'Third' and 'First' World is to be achieved, we should expect that the poor, just as the rich, the rural, just as the urban, folk, will use computers for 'frivolous' and 'trivial' purposes. One can argue that this persisting tension stems from a morality of poverty where the pragmatic and ameliorative are the main benchmarks concerning Third World computing. After all, the field of ICT4D emerged and arguably continues to be rooted in postcolonial discourse and practice with a focus on necessities for human and social development. Yet, through this narrowed lens, we can miss the actual engagements and ingenious strategies that the poor employ to cope and escape from their current plight. Entertainment is a key tool here with class taking a backseat.

While acknowledging that leisure is not necessarily harmless or virtuous, it is still a central arena to analyze, given that most people across nations and incomes inhabit and experience these spaces. No doubt, from pornography to political blogging, what starts as leisure can take on more serious consequences. Hence, we need to re-examine the positioning of labor and leisure that stubbornly persist at opposing ends of the development spectrum. Old class theories demarcated these two realms, where work and play were bounded and separate from one another. The modern division of labor views leisure as that which needs to be earned. In the recent decade or so, the shift has been from dichotomy to

dialecticism. The organization and perception of work has undergone change. Compartmentalized and rationalized thinking about these two realms have given way to a sophisticated intermingling of play and labor. Leisure does not come easy, as there is much labor embedded in good play.

In fact, 'serious leisure' can provide long-term accomplishments and deep-rooted skills through gratification. Besides, leisure can be deeply educative. People can develop skills and discover abilities that would otherwise have been untapped. Once again, this is possible because in leisure people can experiment and take risks without failure having devastating consequences. The benefit in paying attention to leisure with computers is in its potential social effect of binding people and contributing to personal health, wellbeing and fulfillment through sustenance of relationships and overall life satisfaction. Further, it can provide grounding for a new virtual economy that opens new avenues for revenue. Of course, the 'harmful' effects of such pursuits tend to gain more attention, given their economic and social ramifications, such as the industry of porn. Regardless, the point is not to debate the virtue of leisure. Instead, when concerning the field of ICT4D, we should start to take seriously this relationship between labor and leisure. As Roberts astutely argues, "the different classes do not do different things so much as more and less of the same things" (2006: 66). Thereby, the Right to Labor goes hand in hand with the Right to Play and, in doing so, equity in leisure can achieve center stage.

Notes

1. Hole in the Wall Project: http://www.hole-in-the-wall.com/
2. Hewlett Packard's i-community project in Kuppam: http://www.kupnet.org/

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