

Introducing *PlayLab*

August 2020

What is PlayLab?

- An experimental course on inquiring on play design for new and emerging technologies.
- We don't know what to do with new tech, let's use play as a way of figuring out how.
- Making and thinking



**WE'RE ALL
GONNA DIE**



Course structure

- Lectures
- Reading seminars
- Workshops
- Lab sessions

Lectures

- Explaining the core contents of the course.
- Lectures are recorded and broadcast.
- 2-3 hours.
- The readings are *hard*, so it might be a good idea to read *before and after* the lecture (which means many of you will read *after*, but oh well).

Seminars

- In groups, present the core ideas of papers I have chosen.
- 15 minutes presentation, plus 30 minutes discussion.
- Nothing is mandatory, but this is a good exercise to prepare you for the master thesis.

Workshops

- Design sessions that will help us:
 - Figure out what the main challenges are for designing for an emerging technology
 - Conceptualize the prototype you'll make for that technology.
 - 3 hours long, enough to cover a lot of ground.

Lab Sessions

- I will be in the classroom/Discord/Zoom in case you have questions.
- You can come to this space (if this happens in a space) to develop your prototypes.
- No mandatory presence.
- Will be used for catch up if lectures are postponed.

Readings

- Some are *hard*: the course is designed to be an introduction to Master Thesis writing.
- The Method readings are *voluntary*: they are there to help you out, particularly when it comes to writing your report (and your Master Thesis)
- Always ask questions about them in class in case you have some specific doubts!

Grading!

- 2 prototypes: 1 small, 1 big.
- Prototype #1 should be done by week 41
- Prototype #2 should be done by hand-in date.
- We will talk about scope - varies depending on project.
- 5000 word (max., +/- 5%) essay, using the course literature, answering a very simple question:
 - Critical Technical Practice

**CRITICAL
TECHNICAL
PRACTICE**



#Laff



CRITICAL

Using *theory* to address
a particular state of
affairs,
**And to make an
argument!**



INNOVATION

Everything is a cat toy.

TECHNICAL

Exploring a technical (or, more specifically, a sociotechnical) construct.



PRACTICE

The doing of a thing is important.

People with no idea about AI
saying it will take over the world:

My Neural Network:



‘Pataphysical Software



ALL SOFTWARE IS RIDICULOUS

But some of it is useful

Critical

‘pataphysics (therefore
literature and history)



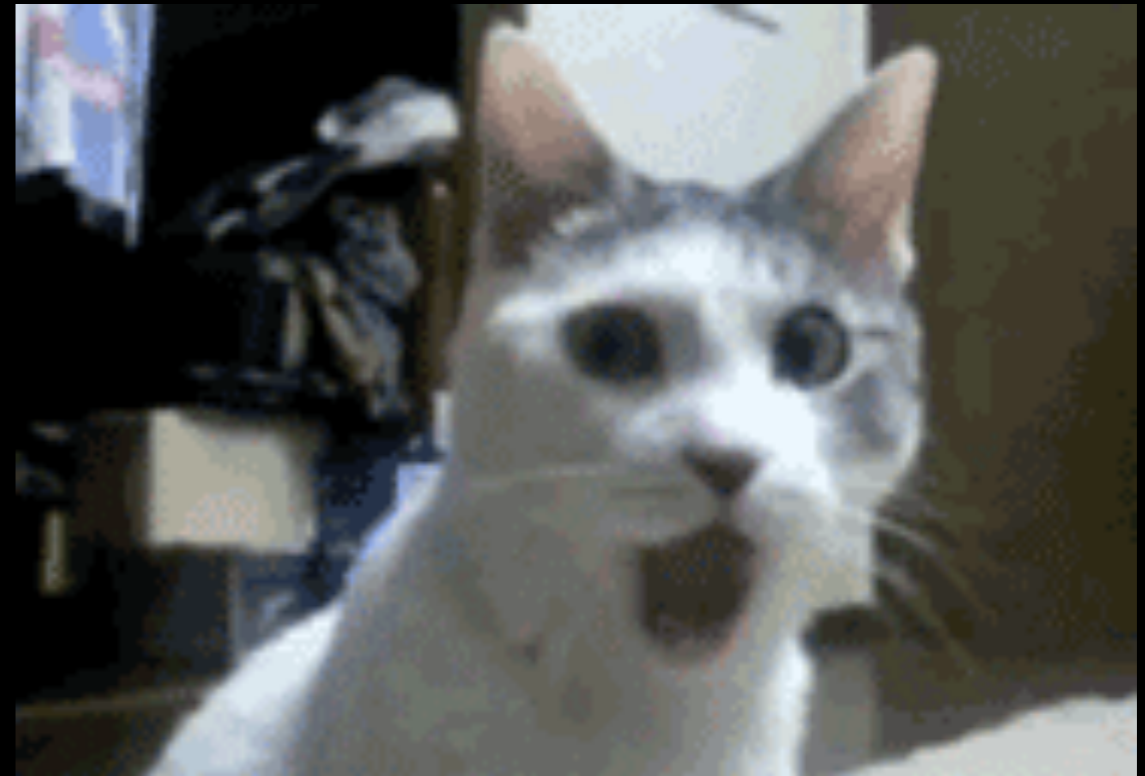
Technical Practice

Making ridiculous apps
and publishing them



The result

The paper is the summary of our CTP process: it poses an argument that is illustrated with an alternative critical practice, that wants to help reshape sociotechnical practices



Homework

- Friday we have our AR workshop
- 3 tasks:
 - Setup Unity to work with ARFoundation
 - Setup Unity to detect planes
 - Setup Unity to place objects in virtual space on tap



Questions

