

The Community

Henrik Schrat

Context

The project 'The Community' tries to catch the emergence of a loosely connected, globally scattered community with partly shared interests in art and organization. Started by David Barry as an academic email network called ACORN (Art, Creativity, & Organization Research Network), it began to take on its own, still very fragile life. Through email, the web, and some meetings at conferences it is beginning to emerge. A website exists, even if not much frequented, but now and again email discussions pop up and die out.

'The Community' tries to get hold of this process and the people involved. It initiates a process which could give this very moment of coming-together a face. It could become a guide book for a strong community-to-be or could be a snapshot of a process, of a not yet existing community which is drifting apart again after that.

'The Community' is a double play: It uses AACORN as a case study for a contemporary way in which these kinds of communities build up and develop their own narrative, ideas and rules. On the other hand it indeed does that within AACORN, it works with this very act as a community building tool.

Shortcut

You get some text lines, which you are to continue with a story of 1700 - 2300 keystrokes. The story should deal with your interest in the AACORN community. Take the list of acting persons and hints into account.

You have 3 days time to pass it on.

During this time, search already for someone who comes after you, by asking persons from the memberlist if she/he has the time and is able and willing to participate. You are the tutor of your follower; you have to make sure that it works, and then gets passed on from there.

Pass on to your follower:

*2 - 3 lines, where the next text bit can start from (+ list of acting persons)
The list of AACORNERS, where you have ticked off your own name*

Mail to henrikschrat@gmx.net

Your full text

An image (see below)

Three statements (see below)

The name of your follower

Depending on the interest of the AACORNERS and the speed they work with, it can run between 6 an 18 months. It will made public and available in a well laid out PDF format, or, if enough people join, as a printed version.

The project

All centers around a story, written by the ones who are on the books of the network.

It's again the old game: one starts to write a story, passes his last lines to the next person, who continues and so on. There are a few rules and guidelines for this.

In addition to writing this story, there are a four more requests:

1. Please, give a quote which reflects the context of what the community is about.
2. Please suggest a rule or recommendation for a community like this.
3. Please give a criterion for including people in the community. Please give a criterion for excluding people from the community, or for not letting them in.
4. Please mail an image which best visualises for you what this could be all about.

Procedure

The process is kicked off by the artist, who starts to write a story and sends the last few phrases to another person from the network, whom he has asked before if she/he is able and willing to participate.

This is the procedure: You ask somebody from the network (look at the address list) if she/he is able and willing and has the time to take part. It's voluntary. Then you are in charge and you are to take care that your follower does the job and finishes it within a maximum time of three days and passes it on.

If your hoped-for follower is too busy at the moment, on holiday or whatever, choose somebody else. The movement has to go on.

A list of the names of the Aacorn members gets mailed around with it, where the ones who have already taken part are already ticked off.

The texts should be somewhere around 2000 characters long, but just the few last lines get passed on to aour follower.

There is a list of acting personsin the story, important objects and hints for the set. You can add things to the list.

It would be advisable to check the list, if you start to write, for persons you could use in your bit. (like in a theater set: George, a fat old man, smoking cigars. Doris, a 25 year old carrier focused academic, etc.)

When you are done, please mail your text piece together with the four other things and the name of your follower to henrikschrat@gmx.net.

Result?

The text will be collected, and for the EURAM conference in next May in Oslo, where some of the participants are likely to meet, a first version will be produced, as a PDF or as printed matter.

In the chat board of the AACORN website there will be a thread about this project. Excerpts from the incoming texts will be posted as teasers.

