

An Examination of the Design,
Implementation and Impact of ICTs
developed in the Asian Region for Queer
Youth and HIV Advocates

Benjamin Jacob Hanckel

Supervisor

Professor Alan Morris

*A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the*

Institute of Public Policy and Governance
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

December 2016

CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

This thesis is the result of a research candidature conducted jointly with another University as part of a collaborative Doctoral degree. I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as part of the collaborative doctoral degree and/or fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Signature of Student:

Date: **30th June 2016**

Acknowledgments

The thesis, like most pieces of work, is never completed in isolation. Rather it is (re)made through much debate and discussion, which has taken place across the on/offline spaces that have made up my “work space” over the last 4 years. It has been (re)created in those moments of stress, of wonder and excitement as I have sought to bring together and understand the changing and dynamic space of development.

I would like to firstly say a huge thank-you to my supervisor, Alan Morris, who has been with me from the beginning of the thesis. His support, even as we moved institutions together, has been unwavering. His knowledge and his approach have pushed my boundaries, and constantly challenged me throughout my candidature. Alan, I could not imagine having worked on this project without your ongoing support.

Thanks must also go to Roberta Ryan and the *Institute for Public Policy and Governance* for providing not only financial support for my project, but also the space for collaboration and idea sharing.

To my co-supervisors and those academics who gave up their time to sit with me and talk – including Michael Wearing, Gregory Martin, Kyungja Jung and Amanda Third and those academics who assessed my progress during my candidature – your feedback and suggestions (at times uncomfortable) have been incredibly helpful. You have all contributed to this journey and to developing my skills as a researcher.

I would like to also thank *B-Change Foundation*, and particularly, Laurindo Garcia. He and his team allowed me to participate in their world as their ICT programs developed and were implemented globally. They know firsthand the implications of living in spaces that continue to problematise sexuality, gender identity and an individual’s HIV status. I am lucky to have spent time with them as they encountered challenges, made design decisions and attempted to make life better for those who continue to come into contact with their programs.

Finally, this acknowledgement cannot go without thanking my family. Firstly, to my parents for their ongoing support of all my pursuits and, in particular their support during this PhD. And last (but definitely not least), to my partner, who perhaps most felt the rollercoaster of emotions during this PhD. His unwavering support and his willingness to talk about and critique my ideas have helped me develop and clarify my own arguments and ideas. His caring nature and big smile have been crucial in this journey and I cannot imagine having done it without him (he was the glue that held things together at crucial times during this journey). Time for a real PhD break babe!

=====

I would like to also acknowledge that some of the material presented in this thesis has been published during my PhD candidature, and various aspects have been presented at conferences, in which I have been fortunate to attend. A list of the publications which have informed this thesis include:

Hanckel, B. Forthcoming. Book Review: Representations of LGBT Youth: A Review of Queer Youth and Media Cultures. *Journal of LGBT Youth*

Hanckel, B. 2016. Mitigating Risk and Facilitating Access to Capabilities: The Role of Affect in the Design of an ICT-Tool for Queer Youth in Asia. *Emotion, Space and Society*, Vol. 18, pp. 35–43. doi:10.1016/j.emospa.2016.01.007.

Hanckel, B, and A Morris. 2014. Finding Community and Contesting Heteronormativity: Queer Young People’s Engagement in an Australian Online Community. *Journal of Youth Studies*, Vol 17, No 7, pp. 872–86. doi:10.1080/13676261.2013.878792.

Hanckel, B, L Garcia, G-M Santos, and E Manalastas. 2014 Assessing Needs and Capabilities: Towards an ICT Resource to Support HIV-Positive Gay Men and Other MSM in Southeast Asia. *Digital Culture & Education*, Vol 6, No. 3, pp. 183–96.

Table of Contents

CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP	i
Acknowledgments.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iv
List of Illustrations.....	vi
List of Tables	vi
Abstract.....	vii
1. Introduction: Information and Communication Technologies in Development Settings.....	1
2. Defining Community and Examining the Affordances of ICTs for Queer Youth & HIV Advocates.....	15
3. Conceptualising ‘Development’ in ICT4D projects: The Capability Approach, Power and Affective Design.....	32
4. Methodology.....	53
5. Designing an ICT4D Initiative for Queer Youth in Asia: Mitigating Risk and Facilitating Access to Capabilities	71
6. From Activist Filmmaker to ‘Agony Aunt’: Examining Queer Filmmakers’ Experiences of Publishing and Sharing YouTube Content in Asia	87
7. Cyber Attacks and Stigma, Transnational Identity Exploration and Queer World Making: Examining the Launch of the BE Web-App.....	119
8. An Examination of the Development and Use of an ICT4D Resource for Globally Networked HIV Advocates.....	146
9. Technology for Social Change: Concluding Comments	173
References.....	180
Appendix A – BE User Interview Schedule	205
Appendix B – BE User Email Interview Questions.....	206
Appendix C – Filmmaker/Storyteller Interview Schedule.....	207
Appendix D – HA Interview Schedule	209
Appendix E – Staff Interview Questions	210
Appendix F – BE Interviews Consent Form.....	212

Appendix G – BE Interviews Participant Information Sheet.....	213
Appendix H – Filmmakers Interview Consent Form.....	215
Appendix I – Filmmakers Interview Participant Information Sheet.....	217
Appendix J – HA Interview Consent Form	219
Appendix K – HA Participant Information Sheet.....	221
Appendix L – Staff Consent Form.....	223
Appendix M – Staff Participant Information Sheet	224

List of Illustrations

Figure 1.1 - Uptake and Adoption of the Internet in 10 Countries in Asia (International Telecommunication Union, 2014)	5
Figure 1.2 - Mobile Adoption (Graph One) and Smart Phone Penetration (Graph Two) in Asia.....	7
Figure 3.1 - A Representation of an Individuals Capability Set and their Social and Personal Context (Source: Robeyns (2005)).....	39
Figure 4.1 - Screenshot of the BE Homepage (May 2015).....	58
Figure 4.2 - Screenshots of the HA website in 2012, and in 2015, after the redevelopment of the website ...	59
Figure 5.1 - ICTs as providing the space for circumventing or buffering existing barriers	76
Figure 5.2 - Example of the link to privacy on the BE web-app homepage.....	79
Figure 6.1 - Film Development & Distribution	94
Figure 7.1 - A Screenshot of the BE Homepage when it was officially launched in May 2015	122
Figure 7.2 - Image that was associated with the DDoS attack.....	124
Figure 8.1 - A Screenshot of the homepage of the <i>HIV Advocates</i> Website	150
Figure 8.2 - Conceptualisation of Needs by the Organisation.....	152

List of Tables

Table 4.1 - Overview of the Interviewees.....	62
Table 4.2 - Overview of the Internet Data collected for this project	67
Table 6.1 - Filmmakers' and Storytellers' interviewed for this project and Synopsis of Films	98
Table 6.2 - Overview of the YouTube Videos as of June 30th 2015.....	109
Table 7.1 - Overview of the Interviewees: 'Early Adopters' of the BE Program	127
Table 8.1 - Interview Participants	156

Abstract

Increasingly information and communication technologies (ICTs) are being used in community development settings in the global south to enhance human wellbeing outcomes. In this thesis I examine the construction, implementation and impact of three transnational ICTs targeting queer youth, and those working in/around and/or affected by HIV, developed by a community development organisation in Asia. This multi-site mixed methods study follows these three resources from development through to implementation and impact, as they move through on/offline spaces. In examining the design and construction, as well as implementation and impact of these ICT resources I use Sen's (1999) Capability Approach. I also draw on Bourdieu's concepts of capital and habitus, as well as recent work on affect and new technologies (Ash, 2014). My findings indicate the importance of symbolic affective markers (Ahmed, 2004) that are incorporated into the design of objects to orientate bodies towards them. These symbolic representations and markers seek to cumulatively engineer particular affects into digitally intimate objects, which work to orientate users towards the objects for the capabilities they can (potentially) enhance. In this way design considerations take into account the contextual capability deficits and structural inequalities (potential) users are likely to experience, and in so doing, use affect as a tool to respond to these concerns. As the affective intensities of these markers come into contact with (potential) users they leave imprints, or 'affective afterlives' (Ash, 2014). In doing so, both the producers and consumers come into contact extending the objects' reach across multiple networks in both private and public spaces. My findings indicate that this creates new forms of support and engagement for some, and results in on/offline encounters of personal sharing as well as debate and discussion about queer lives and discourses around HIV. This extends their existing capital and capabilities, and contributes to a broader life politics that is contextualised within local geographic space. For others, they orientate away from the artefacts when they do not have the capabilities to include them in their practices, or where the resources do not meet their capability needs. I conclude by considering the implications for a capability-focused design approach to technological artefacts and argue for the importance of considering both affect and the (potential) users' existing capabilities in thinking through the possibilities of ICTs in development projects.