

General viewing but some scenes
may be unsuitable for young children



Look - it's that guy that's you!

**Virtual 3D Sex and Pedagogy -
should academics care?**

Terminology

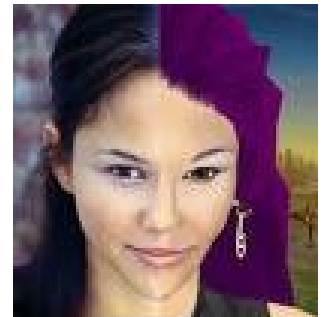
- **SL** – “Second Life”
- **RL** – “Real life.” RL is often used in order to discuss SL fluently!
- **Avatar** – your animated persona in a virtual world (normally younger and better looking)



Quick Fact:

“80 percent of active Internet users will be in non-gaming virtual worlds like Second Life by the end of 2011”

Gartner Group



Current Virtual Worlds

- Habbo Hotel – 80,000,000 members, 7,000,000 regular users – mostly young children (*i.e. the next generation?!*)
- “There” 500,000 members, 50% female av. Age 22 – recently bought by MTV
- Entropia – turnover \$365,000,000 per year
- Club Penguin (Disney bought for \$350,000,000) 12,000,000 children 6 to 14 yr olds

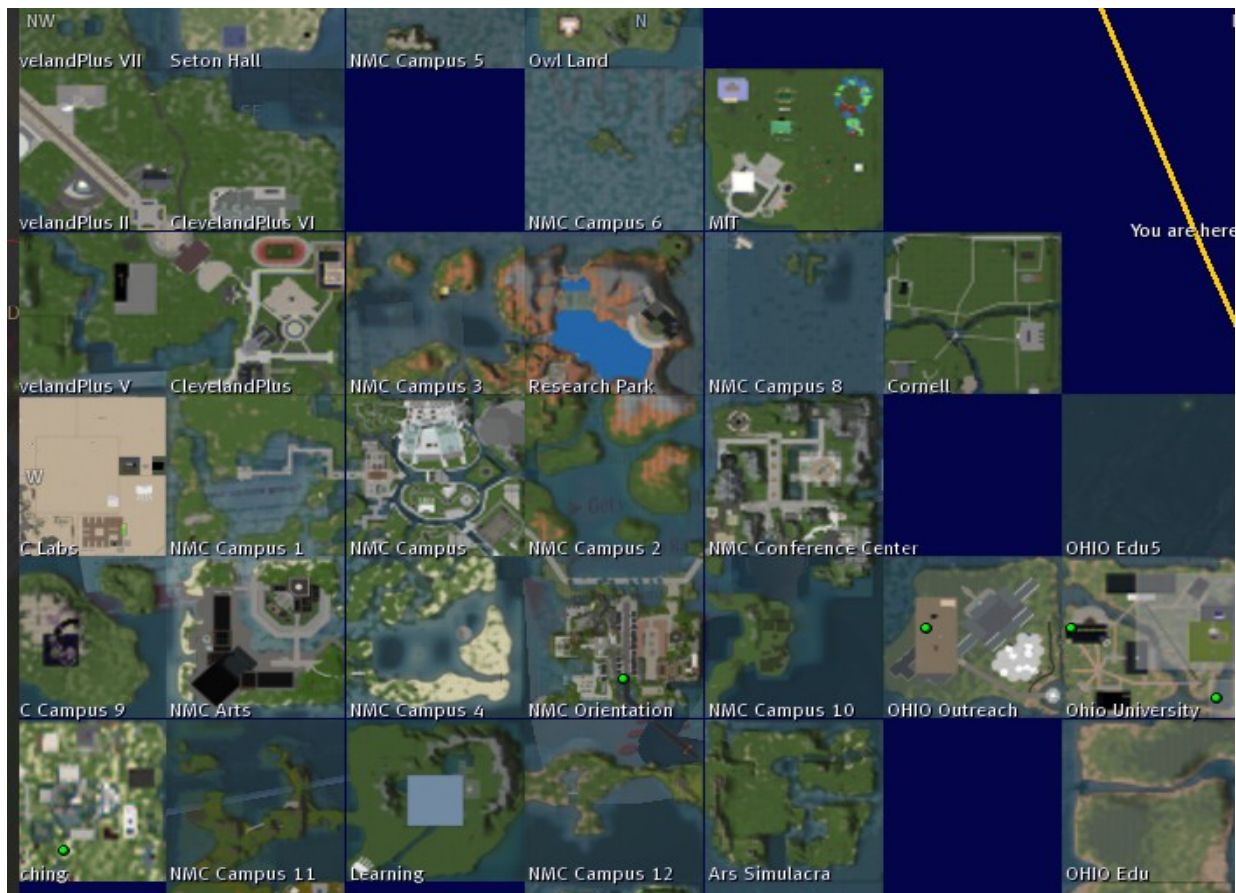
Current Virtual Worlds II

- Cyworld – 43% of the population of Korea are members
- Project Bejing – will support 9-10 virtual worlds each able to support 150,000,000 residents
- Second Life – Teen Grid <18yrs old
- Whyville.net - more than 1,500,000 reg. players ages 8-16
- Stardoll – 6,000,000 members, 93% female



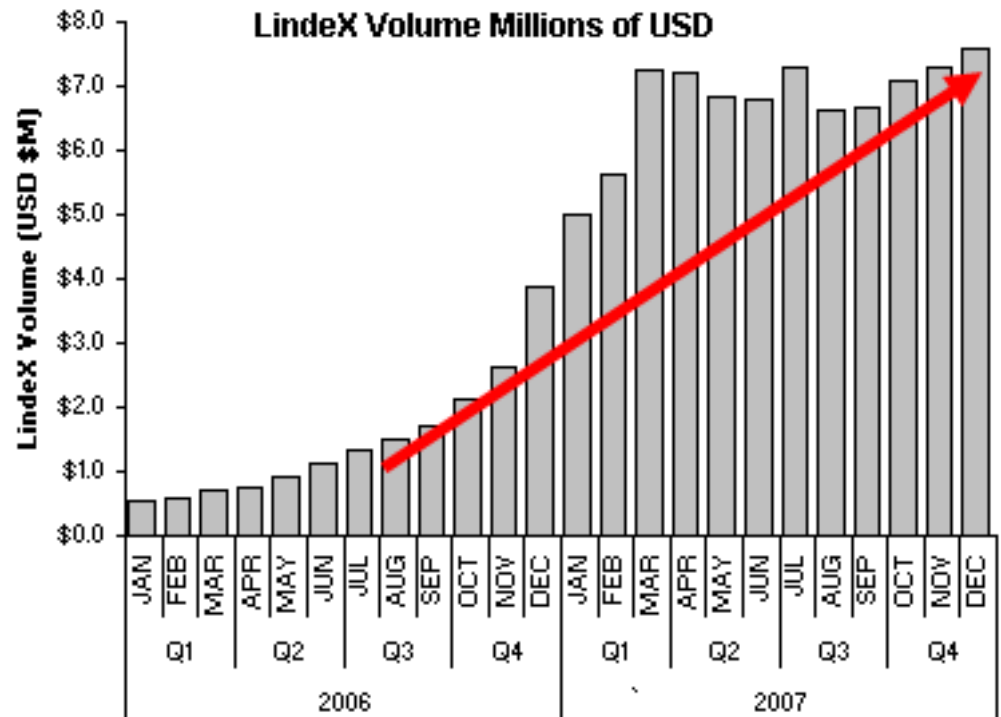
Focus on Second Life (SL)

- Total size of SL: 10k regions 411km²



Economic activity in Second Life

- grew 13.2% to nearly \$7.6 million USD for December 2007 and \$22 million USD for the full quarter.



‘Virtual’ business in SL

- Virtual market: Real estate, clothing, buildings
- Recently banned Virtual banks and Casinos
- Real: Aloft, digital prototype for a new chain of hotels planned by Starwood Hotels and Resorts.
The same day,
- Sony BMG, is opening a complex called Media Island.
- Nissan promotion - featuring a gigantic vending machine dispensing cars people can “drive” around.

‘Real’ business in SL

- Aloft, digital prototype for a new chain of hotels planned by Starwood Hotels and Resorts – used a SL focus group
- Sony BMG, is opening a complex called Media Island.
- Nissan promotion - featuring a gigantic vending machine dispensing cars people can “drive” around.
- News agencies CNet and Reuters, have reporters embedded full-time in the virtual realm

SL terminology

- **Griefers** (SL)... Idiots(RL) ABC Island “bombed” by Patriotic Nigras' (or PN's).
- **SLurl** – e.g; <http://slurl.com/secondlife/The%20Pond/129/130/40>



SL demographics

- 40% female: games industry median 10-15%
- SL is now more European than US
- median age 33



SL in the press

- Quote of the day re-quoted by Stephan Downes - “A story too good to check..!”
- SL is a hotbed of pornography, paedophilia, gambling etc. etc.
- There is no business model – it’s a flash in the pan

Ring any bells?



Sleaze and Filth...



Papers on sex in SL related

- **Docile Avatars: Aesthetics, Experience, and Sexual Interaction in Second Life:**
http://www.bcs.org/upload/pdf/ewic_hc07_lppaper1.pdf
- JISC: Learning in Immersive worlds - A review of game-based learning

Other SL info:

- educators@lists.secondlife.com
- slrl@list.academ-x.com
- secondlife@JISCMAIL.AC.UK



CBS News – from the sublime to the ridiculous?

- http://www.cbsnews.com/sections/i_video/main500251.shtml?id=3547970n&channel



SL Workplace/Tech Issues

- Can look like “playing”
- May be firewall/policy restrictions
- Needs a hi-spec computer
- Can get cornered by virtual bores
- Not as easy as email for keeping records of conversations

And the learning technologists
say...

***“..we know its great - but we're not quite
sure what to do with it yet”***

Players in SL

- Linden Labs, IBM, Nature Publishing, National Physical Laboratory, UN
- US HE: Harvard, MIT, Stanford, Ohio, New York Law School
- UK HE: Hull, Derby, Leicester, Loughborough, Sheffield, Nottingham, Sheffield, Coventry, Plymouth, Imperial, Wolverhampton, Warwick, OU, Manchester Met, Surrey, Bristol, Greenwich, Oxford Imperial, Edinburgh, Paisley, Aberdeen etc.
- UK FE: Barking College, Myerscough College, Belfast Met., Bromley
- Commercial: American Apparel, Toyota, Sony, Reebok, ABC, Reuters, Nike

Case study - Nature

Joanna Scott - Web Publishing department
at Nature SL double island - Second
Nature

- Wont effect the publications business
- What they liked – enhanced 3D visualisation
- Ideas: use SL for conferences, demos interactive exhibits

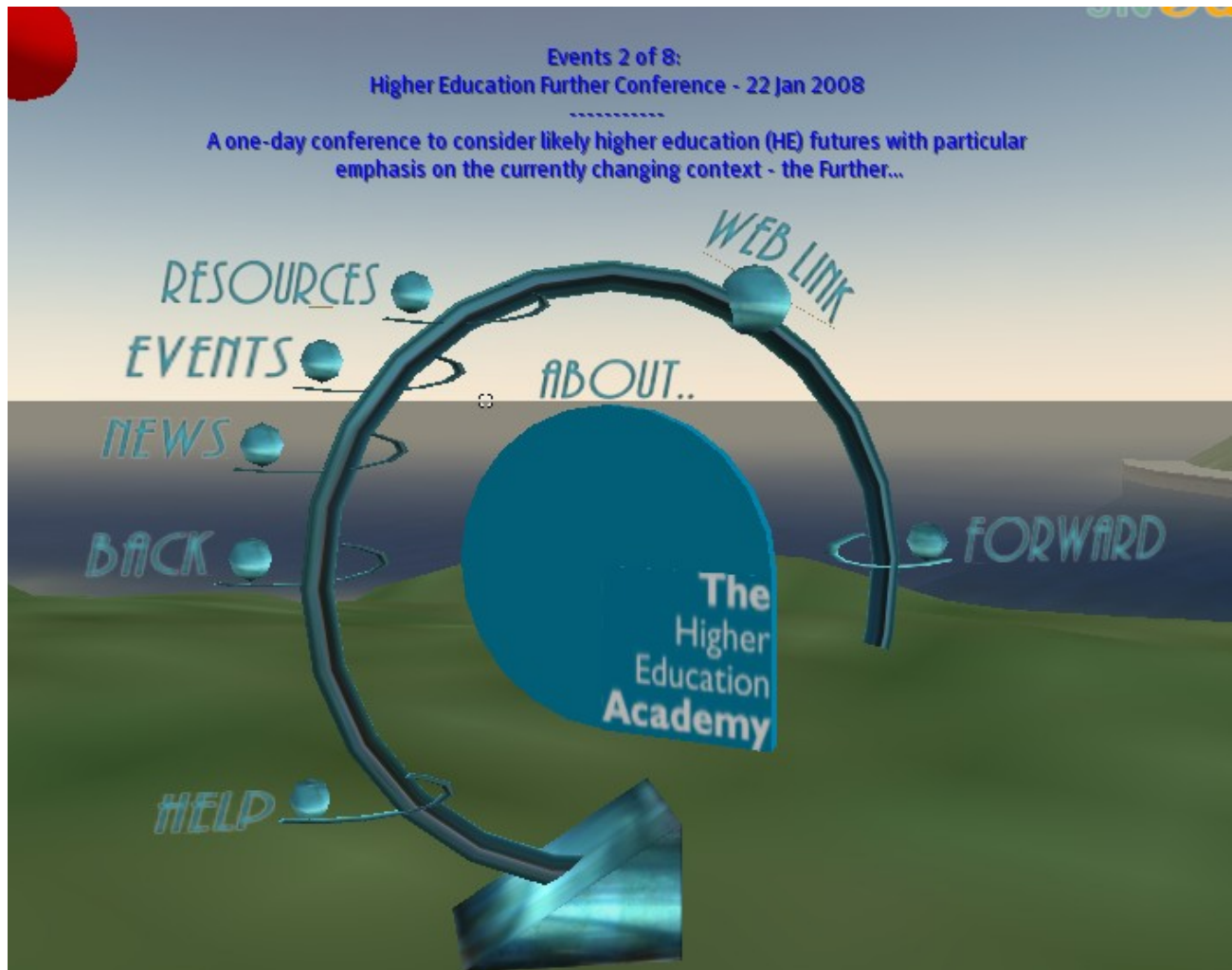
Subjects utilising SL

- Law
- Molecular Biology
- Computing (all types)
- Art and Design
- Performing Arts
- Social Sciences (anthropology, sociology, psychology, history)
- Pharmaceutical science (group visualisation)

What can we use it for?

- Utilising advanced techniques like 3D geo-spatial presentation of data
- Visualisation: Noah island - ***schizophrenia*** appreciation
- Interactive: Gene pool island - genetics
- PALATINE & English SC – virtual buildings no longer in existence

Mash-ups – Materials/EngSc datalinker



Conclusions 1 of 2

- Make your own mind up - don't kick it till you've tried it - get a free avatar and take a walk
- SL wont generate an audience itself; like the web, projects in SL have to be supported by promotion in other mediums
- Developing for SL takes time and expertise but much can be achieved
- SL is *immersive* – it adds resonance to the interactive experience seeing an object in “real” context is better than in isolation on a computer screen

Conclusions 2 of 2

- challenges students & has proven value supporting distance learning communities
- Most virtual worlds are actually *social* spaces – for no other reason than that we should understand them and how they may change student expectations
- Commercial possibilities yet to be fully realised