

CJT 615: Proseminar in Communication and Information Systems
Spring, 2007
Wednesday, 3:30-6 PM in Grehan 223

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Office hours: Tuesday & Wednesday 1- 3, Thursday 2-4, & by appointment

Course Description: This course is an introductory graduate-level survey of theory and research on human communication mediated by information technologies. This course is designed to cover the areas not typically addressed in traditional courses on mass or interpersonal communication, including theory and research on the use of computers and electronic communication over a variety of communication and information systems, and the social, political and economic issues that arise from them.

Course Objectives:

- To become familiar with the various information and communication technologies that mediate mass and interpersonal communication.
- To examine the historical development of communication media and their interaction with human needs and problems.
- To understand the social and psychological dimensions of technology.
- To critically consider the issue of technological determinism.
- To understand the recent history of debate regarding specific policy issues, particularly regarding freedom of speech, intellectual property rights and privacy.
- To become familiar with the Constitutional Sections, Amendments, Acts, laws and court decisions that govern information, communication and media in the United States.
- To be able to apply ethics and social theories to technical and policy issues.

Grading. The three papers (9-12 double-spaced pages each) responding to the directions given in this syllabus, each account for 25%. Participation in the course meetings and online discussions counts for the remaining 25%.

Grading Procedures and Policies. Papers are assigned a tentative grade upon first reading, based on originality, length, quality of thought and writing style, thoroughness of research and references. The final grades are based on comparisons among papers. Pluses and minuses are indicated on grades and used to calculate the final grade, which may also include either a plus or a minus; the UK registrar currently recognizes only the letter grade awarded, however.

Reading Sources:

Required Texts: Bucy, E. P. (2005). *Living in the information age: a new media reader*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. 2nd edition. ISBN 0534633404. About \$43.95 from online sellers.

Levinson, Paul. (1998). *The soft edge: A natural history and future of the information revolution*. Routledge. ISBN 0415197724. \$19.95 or less from general and online bookstores.

Online articles: We will read several articles (all available through the UK Libraries Reserves desk or website) from four journals: *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *New Media & Society*, *Information, Communication & Society*, and *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*.

1/17: WEEK 1: No meeting this week. Go to Young Library A/V Services and view this film (on reserve):
Visions of heaven and hell, part one, "Selling the future" (52 minutes).

1/24: WEEK 2: The history of media and the issue of technological determinism.

Bucy, Ch. 1: The Communications Revolution.

The Roots of Revolution (Frances Cairncross). The Trendspotter's Guide to New Communications (Frances Cairncross). Technological and Economic Origins of the Information Society (James R. Beniger).

Read/Discuss: Case, D. (1998). Ethusiasts, Deregulators, Guardians and Skeptics: Contrasting policy views of the National Information Infrastructure. *Library & Information Science Research*, 20(4) 377-413.

1/31: WEEK 3: Applicable theories: diffusion of innovations, game theory, etc.

Bucy, Ch. 2: New Media Theory.

Principles of Mediamorphosis (Roger Fidler). Uses of the Mass Media (Werner J. Severin & James Tankard, Jr.).

Read and discuss: Lin, Carolyn A. (2004). Webcasting Adoption: Technology Fluidity, User Innovativeness, and Media Substitution. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 48 (3) 446-465. [Available thru Libraries website.]

2/7: WEEK 4: Models of governance: the Print Model.

Levinson, P. (1998). Chapter 1: Introduction, pp. 1-10.

Levinson, P. (1998). Chap. 2 & 3: The first digital medium, The printed authorship... pp. 11-36.

Read and discuss: Kibby, M. D. (2005). Email forwardables: folklore in the age of the internet. *New Media & Society*, 7 (6), 770-790. [On reserve at Young Library.]

2/14: WEEK 5: Models of governance: The Common Carriage Model.

Levinson, P. (1998), Chapters 5 & 6: Telegraphy, Telephone, pp. 49-68.

Read and discuss: Light, J. S. (2006). Facsimile: A forgotten 'new medium' from the 20th century. *New Media & Society*, 8 (3), 355-378. [On reserve at Young Library.]

2/21: WEEK 6: Models of governance: The Broadcasting Model; Media Monopolization.

Bucy, ch. 4. Media Concentration.

The New Global Media (Robert W. McChesney). Global Media (Benjamin Compaine). The Threat to the Net (Pat Aufderheide). Big World: How Clear Channel Programs America (Jeff Sharlet).

Read and discuss: Duff, A. S. (2004). The Past, Present, and Future of Information Policy. *Information, Communication & Society*, 7 (1), 69-87. [Available through the UK Libraries website.]

Due: Discussion Paper 1 (Diffusion, Displacement and Lifecycles of Technologies).

2/28: WEEK 7: The convergence of media and models, e.g., in electronic publishing.

Bucy, ch. 3. Convergence, Content, and Interactivity.

Convergence and Its Consequences (John Pavlik and Shawn McIntosh).

Read and discuss:

Brown, J. S. & Duguid, P. (1996). The Social Life of Documents. *First Monday*, 1 (1). Available at <http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue1/documents/>

3/7: WEEK 8: The self, social life and information overload.

Bucy, ch. 5. At the Interface: New Intimacies, New Cultures.

Nation of Voyeurs (Neil Swidey). Weblogs: A History and Perspective (Rebecca Blood). Love.com (Anna Mulrine).

Bucy, ch. 6. Media Saturation and the Increasing Velocity of Everyday Life.

Supersaturation, or The Media Torrent and Disposable Feeling (Todd Gitlin).

Prest-o! Change-o! (James Gleick). Spam Wars (Evan I. Schwartz). The First Law of Data Smog (David Shenk).

Read and discuss: Humphreys, L. (2005). Cellphones in public: social interactions in a wireless era. *New Media & Society*, 7 (6), 810-833. [On reserve at Young Library.]

3/14: WEEK 9: Spring Break: No meeting on 3/14.

3/21: WEEK 10: Intellectual property rights, and copyright.

Bucy, ch. 11. Copyright and Regulation.

Who Will Own Your Next Good Idea? (C. Mann). The Next Economy of Ideas (J. P. Barlow). Free (L. Lessig).

Read and discuss: Besser, Howard. (2001). Intellectual Property: The Attack on Public Space in Cyberspace. <http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/~howard/Papers/pw-public-spaces.html>

Due: Discussion Paper 2 (Privacy).

3/28: WEEK 11: Privacy of personal information. Ethics and technologies.

Bucy, ch. 12 Privacy and Surveillance.

Remembrance of Data Passed: A Study of Disk Sanitization Practices (Simson L. Garfinkel and Abhi Shelat). In Defense of the Delete Key (James M. Rosenbaum). Privacy and the New Technology: What They Do Know Can Hurt You (Simson Garfinkel). The Challenge of an Open Society (David Brin).

Read and discuss:

Case, D. (2000). Stalking, monitoring and profiling: A typology and case studies of harmful uses of caller ID. *New Media and Society*, 2 (1): 67-84.

4/4: WEEK 12: Political participation, electronic democracy, and the public sphere.

Bucy, ch. 9. Electronic Democracy.

Media Participation: A Legitimizing Mechanism of Mass Democracy (Erik Bucy and Kimberly Gregson). Smart Mobs: The Power of the Mobile Many (Howard Rheingold). Universal Access to E-mail (Robert H. Anderson, Tora K. Bikson, S. Law, and B. Mitchell). Fragmentation and Cybercascades (Cass R. Sunstein).

Read and discuss: Garrett, R. Kelly. (2006). Protest in an Information Society: a review of literature on social movements and new ICTs. *Information, Communication & Society*, 9(2), 202-224. Available: <http://www-personal.umich.edu/~garrettk/Garrett-ProtestInfoSociety.pdf>

4/11: WEEK 13: Digital divides, information gaps and universal service.

Bucy, ch. 10. The Digital Divide.

Rethinking the Digital Divide (Jennifer S. Light). Routes to Media Access (John Newhagen and Erik Bucy).

Read and discuss: Kvasny, L. (2005). The role of the habitus in shaping discourses about the digital divide. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 10(2). <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol10/issue2/kvasny.html>

4/18: WEEK 14: The new economy: Automation, productivity, and commerce.

Bucy, ch. 7. Networked Computing: Promises and Paradoxes.

The Productivity Puzzle (Thomas K. Landauer). The Computer Delusion (Todd Oppenheimer).

Read and discuss: LaRose, Robert; Eastin, Matthew S. (2002). Is Online Buying Out of Control? Electronic Commerce and Consumer Self-Regulation. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 46 1(4) 549-564.

4/25: WEEK 15: The future and unresolved issues.

Bucy, ch. 8. Questioning Information Technology.

Further Explorations into the Culture of Computing (Clifford Stoll). Plan 9 from Cyberspace: The Implications of the Internet for Personality and Social Psychology (Katelyn McKenna & J. Bargh).

Read and discuss: Hand, M. (2005). The people's network. *Information, Communication & Society*, 8(3), 368-393. [Available through UK Libraries website.]

Due: Paper 3 (Information Society)

CJT 615 Assignments: Guidelines for Papers Spring 2007

For each paper, prepare a written response of 8-12 double-spaced pages. Emphasize what you have learned from the reading and lectures, your interpretation of what you learned, and questions that could be answered through research, and/or observation. *Refer to the course (and other) readings whenever relevant.*

Discussion papers are graded on two bases: a major component will be whether or not you have understood the readings and lectures, and thought about their content, as evidenced by your references to them; the other aspect is how considered, original and well-written are your responses.

Paper 1: Diffusion, Displacement and Lifecycles of Technologies.

A new communication medium usually does not completely replace an older one, contrary to what is sometimes called "Displacement Theory". For example, films and radio did not replace the book as a means of story-telling; TV caused a temporary decline in the size of radio and film audiences, but did not extinguish those earlier media. Instead, when new media are adopted, uses of the old media change. Radio variety shows became less popular with the advent of TV, but were simply replaced by other types of programming, e.g., radio talk shows.

What would you predict about the effects of the Web (and other electronic innovations) on the print and music publishing, and the broadcasting industries? E.g., is print gradually being replaced by electronic media? Will all music be downloaded from the Web? What might be the effects of interactive television services on the usual ways that American entertain and inform themselves? Will people use networks to do research, or to retrieve texts and images, rather than going to the public library? What will happen to the library, and to works of both fiction and nonfiction? In your answer, consider the *types* of information and entertainment offerings, the *economics* of producing, transmitting and marketing them, and their likely *popularity* (i.e., the extent of adoption and usage).

Consider what changes in media habits you have seen in your own life and those of your family and friends over the last two decades. E.g., are children you know reading less? Speculate freely, but give evidence for what trends you identify.

Paper 2: Privacy.

Organizations in our society hold a great deal of information about us. For the first part of the paper: Make a list of what data various organizations have about you (e.g., the Internal Revenue Service, universities, medical services, creditors, the State Department, insurance agencies) and the types of information they have about you (e.g., income, sources of income, subjects studied, grades in courses, purchases, travel, driving record). If all of this data could be assembled in one database, what overall generalizations might be drawn about you, your lifestyle, your wants and your problems? If you were a company with this information, what kinds of products or services would you try to sell to a person like yourself? What else would marketers want to know about you, "the customer," to help them in their marketing? Use concrete examples, e.g., probably you have bought items online before (for example, perhaps a text for this course); what did those purchases "say" about you?

For the first part of the paper, address these questions: Should there be stronger laws affecting the availability of personal information to others? If you believe so, then you must describe how usage will be monitored and regulated, how we will pay for such regulation, and how people will react to increased regulation. Or should the value of personal information be left to the marketplace? If so, what problems and opportunities do you foresee regarding the sale of information in our society?

Paper 3: The Social and Psychological Reality of the Information Society.

Is the "information society" a reality? Are we in an economy in which most of us earn our livings doing "knowledge work," and relying less on physical resources (e.g., less commuting to work, less manufacturing)? Is this an attractive vision to you? What do you think about the vision of the information society as presented in the film(s) *Visions of heaven and hell*? Do you think that the filmmakers' vision is unduly pessimistic? Which parts of the film ring true and which do not? (We saw part one the first month of classes; part three is on reserve at Young Library Media Services -- use one of their viewing rooms to see the film before writing the paper.)

As space permits, you may also wish to attempt answers to the following questions:

If you believe that the Information Society is real: do developing countries have the potential to become information societies, or will they remain agricultural and manufacturing economies? If many "information societies" exist, where and how will the manufacturing be done? If you were the head of a country, or of a large business enterprise, what do you think your view would be about the "Information Society" concept -- favorable or unfavorable?

For this paper, you are to draw upon (i.e., make reference to) at least three specific sources: The "Visions" films discussed above, and what the textbooks and other readings have to say about the "knowledge society". In each case, say to what degree you think the authors' viewpoint is accurate as regards the economy and politics of the information society -- at present or in the near future.