

## *Cybercities*

10:762:352 and 34:970:653 Bloustein School of Planning and Policy, Rutgers University  
Spring 2010. Civic Square Building computer lab 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. Thursdays 1.10-3.50  
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“There can be no gainsaying about the fact that a great revolution is taking place in the world today...That is, a technological revolution with the impact of automation and cybernation...Modern man through scientific genius has been able to dwarf distance. Through our genius we have made this world a neighborhood. And yet we – we have not yet had the ethical commitment to make of it a brotherhood. But somehow, and in some way, we have got to do this.” Martin Luther King, four days before he died in 1968.

2008 was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ARPA (Advanced Research Projects Agency) which nurtured the net and the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mosaic, the first widely used browser which brought the internet to the people! This course explores some of the social and economic implications of the new communications technology – especially the internet/WWW – focusing on the changes the net is bringing to urban life. “As the English urbanist Sir Peter Hall has observed, the difficulty in predicting the impact of the internet on our metropolitan areas can be compared with the difficulty observers faced 80 years ago in predicting the impact of the automobile...Some observers assert that the internet will doom cities to obsolescence as cyberspace communication replaces face-to-face contacts that cities used to provide. Others see big cities reborn as hip environments where the art world and other urban-based centers of creativity meet the new technology of communications” (Robert Fishman “The American Metropolis at Century’s End: Past and Future Influences” [www.fanniemaefoundation.org](http://www.fanniemaefoundation.org) accessed 8/27/2006).

Like the communications technology this course is about, its structure is fluid and changing. The course will include some rudimentary technological material on, for example, bandwidth, cable vs. wireless, mobile technologies, but it is not a “how to” or technical course. Rather, we explore how the IT revolution is changing employment, education, entertainment, security and interpersonal communications. While society is changing in scales from the global to the local in response to these new technologies, our focus is on cities. This may be part of what MIT deemed the new field of Web science!

The ancient professor of this course may be the least technologically literate person in the room and will be learning with you. The format will usually be presentation/discussion for the first half of the class and on-line assignments for the second half. We’ll have guest speakers and videos. This is your class and you should be prepared to participate and contribute. Pair/group projects are encouraged.

Reading and evaluation. There is no text for this class but you are expected to read for several hours each week, either from books or online material. Some recommended books include: The Future of the Internet by Jonathan Zittrain, (2008). Born Digital: Understanding the First Generation of Digital Natives. By John Palfrey and Urs Gasser (2008). Everything is Miscellaneous: The Power of the New Digital Disorder by David Weinberger, 2007. The Cybercultures Reader Ed David Bell and B. Kennedy (2007). Rewiring the World from Editon to Google by Nicholas Carr (2008). The

Cybercities Reader edited by Stephen Graham (Routledge 2004).. The Cybercultures Reader ed. David Bell (2007) Mobile Communication and Society: A Global Perspective by Manuel Castells (2006). Wikinomics: How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything by Don Tapscott and Anthony Williams (2006). Campaigning Online: The Internet in US Elections by Bruce Bimber and Richard Davis (2003). Who Controls the Internet? By Jack Goldsmith and Tim Wu (2006). Computers, Phones, and the Internet: Domesticating Information Technology eds Robert Kraut, M. Brynin and S. Kiesler (2006). The University of Google: Education in the (post) information age by Tara Brabazon. Social Consequences of Internet Use: Access, Involvement, Expression by James Katz [at SCILS, Rutgers] and Ronald Rice (2002). Magic in the Air: Mobile Communications and the Transformation of Social Life by James Katz (2004). Some journals to browse include New Media and Society; The Journal of Community Informatics and International Journal of Web Based Communities. There is a large and growing relevant literature and other reading will be assigned/suggested. Evaluation will be discussed in the first class and your suggestions taken into account, but will probably include several short assignments, a mid-term paper/project and a final project to be presented in class. One assignment suggestion is a book review of your choice. All students are required to follow the Rutgers regulations concerning academic integrity. See <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>

### **Preliminary Schedule (subject to change)**

**January 21 Introduction to course and history of technological change in communications.** (PP “Cybercities”) See Maria Bakardjieva Internet Society: the Internet in everyday life (2005). Verna Gehring (ed) The Internet in public life (2004). For interesting, though specialized, reading suggestions (some with e-links) see syllabi for Internet Law class at Yale ([http://islandia.law.yale.edu/isp/Internet\\_Law\\_RG/syllabus.htm](http://islandia.law.yale.edu/isp/Internet_Law_RG/syllabus.htm)) and UCLA course on Internet and Society at <http://polaris.gseis.ucla.edu/pagre/is30.html> and 2000 Stanford report at [http://www.stanford.edu/group/siqss/Press\\_Release/Preliminary\\_Report.pdf](http://www.stanford.edu/group/siqss/Press_Release/Preliminary_Report.pdf) Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard at <http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/home/> Pew Internet Center at <http://www.pewinternet.org/> See “Cybercities Library Search” in resources.

### ***Activity: Digital collage***

**January 28 Growth and structure of the net. Uneven development. Digital Divides. One Laptop per Child** (PP “Internet history” “OLPC”) “Next generation” (e.g. 4G wireless) developments in the offing. Video: “Networking the Nerds” about the origin of the Internet. See Graham Part I Section 1 (*Cybercities archeologies*), Marcelo Bonilla and Gilles Cliché (eds) Internet and society in Latin America and the Caribbean (2004). Philip Agee “Cyberspace as American Culture” in Science as Culture 11 (2) 2002 at <http://polaris.gseis.ucla.edu/pagre/sac.html> . See this new (2008) report on citizen empowerment via web globally. <http://rising.globalvoicesonline.org/library/Introduction-to-Citizen-Media-EN.pdf> For Web 2 For article on wireless communications in developing countries see

[http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?\\_ob=ArticleURL&\\_udi=B6V80-4MGVJ63-1&\\_user=526750&\\_coverDate=01%2F31%2F2007&\\_rdoc=1&\\_fmt=&\\_orig=search&\\_sort=d&view=c&\\_acct=C00023759&\\_version=1&\\_urlVersion=0&\\_userid=526750&md5=1ab8bea7f50512a2e0c83211a7654013](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleURL&_udi=B6V80-4MGVJ63-1&_user=526750&_coverDate=01%2F31%2F2007&_rdoc=1&_fmt=&_orig=search&_sort=d&view=c&_acct=C00023759&_version=1&_urlVersion=0&_userid=526750&md5=1ab8bea7f50512a2e0c83211a7654013) For mini-history see [http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP\\_Web\\_2.0.pdf](http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_Web_2.0.pdf) For info on 50X15 initiative see Inequality in cyberspace. Negroponte's *One Laptop Per Child* initiative. See Zaheer Baber (ed) *CyberAsia: the Internet and society in Asia* (2005) [http://www.50x15.com/en-us/internet\\_usage.aspx](http://www.50x15.com/en-us/internet_usage.aspx) . See "Internet History" in resources.

*Activity: First-hand accounts*

**February 4 Wired cities, "smart" building, wireless "hotspots" and mobile communications.** (PP WiFi) Podcast by Rob Kitchin on "Soft Cities". Should government provide (publicly funded) broadband access to citizens? Technological obsolescence and the next "Big Thing." See Graham Part 1 Section 2 (*Theorizing cybercities*) See the British Broadcasting Society's website for iCan – intended to build local community <http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/actionnetwork/> also [www.govtech.net/digitalcommunities](http://www.govtech.net/digitalcommunities) See "Bandwidth as OPEC 2" in resources.

*Activity: Outrageous homes*

**February 11. E- Government.** (PP E-Govt & Cyberpolitics) Online government information and services. E-voting pros and cons see Sarah Oates et al, *The Internet and politics: citizens, voters and activists* (2006) See [www.govtech.net](http://www.govtech.net) For Pew Research Center report "Internet's Broader Role in Campaign 2008" (Jan 11, 2008) see [http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/Pew\\_MediaSources\\_jan08.pdf](http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/Pew_MediaSources_jan08.pdf) For a 2008 Pew report on the 2008 election see [http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/252/report\\_display.asp](http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/252/report_display.asp) Obama administration policies for internet.

*Activity: Polls and clickers*

**February 18. Digital economy and E Commerce.** (PP Digital Economy and E Commerce) Work and employment on the net. The Dot Com economy. Video: "Secrets of Silicon Valley" (a "prophetic glimpse of the next labor movement"), and/or video "Startup.Com". Impacts on traditional retail, new distribution centers, traffic implications. S. Schaffer *The Role of Trust on the Internet* Verlag 2004. See home page and explore on Ecommerce times at <http://resources.ecommercetimes.com/ecommercetimes/MainServlet?ksAction=Home> For less-than-rosy forecast of e commerce growth see <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/20321999/> For recent graphs of e commerce growth see <http://www.26econ.com/e-commerce-growth-in-the-united-states/>

*Activity: Job and resume*

**February 25 E-Education.** (PP E-Education) Distance learning implications. “The internet is as revolutionary as the printing press.” Steve Jones and Camille Johnson “Professors online: The internet’s impact on college faculty”. First Monday 10,9 (2005) at <http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue10-9/jones/index.html> Or a rather dated (2001) analysis of implications of online learning for universities at [http://www.iec.ac.uk/resources/e\\_education\\_costs.pdf](http://www.iec.ac.uk/resources/e_education_costs.pdf) See “Is Google making us stupid?” and “Online school debate” in resources.

*Activity: Adobe Connect Pro*

**March 4 E-Health.** (PP E-Health) On-line health information and consulting. Specialist video-conferencing. Online medical records. For recent developments see <http://www.ehealthinitiative.org/> and <http://www.jmir.org/2001/2/e20> and <http://www.ehealthinternational.org/>

*Activity: Bad health advice*

**March 11 Social networking online. MySpace, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.**

**Tamara Swedberg**

For a Dec. 2007 Pew Internet report on Online identity management and search in the age of transparency see

[http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP\\_Digital\\_Footprints.pdf](http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_Digital_Footprints.pdf) For parental guide see <http://onguardonline.gov/socialnetworking.html>

For business connections for working mothers see [www.cybercitiesmommies.com](http://www.cybercitiesmommies.com) For an article detailing the benefits to corporations of social online networking see <http://www.rheingold.com/Associates/onlinenetworks.html> See “Blogs and Community” in resources.

There are millions of sites with information about this. Explore!

*Activity: Exploring social networking sites*

**March 18 Spring Break**

**March 25 Tamara Swedberg Blogs and Virtual Communities – Second Life.** (PP , Second Life, Community without propinquity) .

[http://www.pbs.org/mediashift/2007/01/digging\\_deeperyour\\_guide\\_to\\_th.html](http://www.pbs.org/mediashift/2007/01/digging_deeperyour_guide_to_th.html)

*Activity: Second Life*

**April 1 Intellectual property, identity, privacy in the wired world.** (PP Intellectual property) Wikipedia and other wikis. DVD “Digital dark age: help we’re disappearing” (about “potentially catastrophic impact of data loss on cultural identity” as digitization proliferates, platforms become incompatible, storage media degrade etc.) For the University of Missouri’s instructions see <http://www.umsystem.edu/ums/departments/is/ip/> Or see the Electronic Frontier Foundations webpage on intellectual property at <http://www.eff.org/issues/intellectual-property> For long report from the World Intellectual Property Organization see <http://www.wipo.int/ipisforum/en/>

*Activity: Online quiz*

**April 8 Regulating the web. Censorship issues. Guest: Martin O’Reilly, Director of IT, Bloustein** (PP Regulating the Web). Cybersecurity and “Homeland” Security. Online gambling. Video: Hate and the Internet: Web Sites and the Issue of Free Speech. See Matthew Williams Virtually criminal: crime, deviance and regulation online (2006). For discussion of censorship see <http://www.chillingeffects.org> US Air Force Cyber Command. <http://www.afcyber.af.mil/> See “Al Queda’s Web” in resources.

**April 15 Predictions for the future.** Come to class prepared to discuss what you think will happen in the near/later future of communications and how it will affect cities, urban life, human interaction.

**April 22 and 29<sup>th</sup>.** Student project presentations.

*All final course papers/projects must be submitted by Friday May 7, 5pm..*

**Assignments and evaluation.**

For ten of the class periods, there will be a short assignment that can be completed in class or with minimal time outside of class. Each of these assignments is worth two points, for a total of 20 points.

Activities: 20

Project 1: 40

Project 2: 40

Or for Grad students, major paper is 80 points.

*Undergraduate Students*

For the main grade for the course undergrads should select two topics/projects they would like to work on. One will be due March 5<sup>th</sup>, the other at the end of semester. If you want to focus on one topic all semester you should give me part of the work on March 5 – enough for me to give you a grade. Your project/s can be a conventional term paper, but also you may make a web page, create an ideal city in Second Life, carry out a survey on a relevant topic (but be sure to check IRB certification), develop a plan to

make a town a wifi area, make a map of “hotspots” in New Brunswick, or other project. You will make a presentation of your work to the class during the last two weeks of semester.

### *Graduate Students*

Graduate students are expected to produce a “graduate level” research paper with scholarly citations – about 20pp.

Some suggestions for short (10 pages) or long (20 pages) papers.

- Some impacts of the Internet on Korea (or another country outside US)
- Skype – its contribution to international understanding
- What has Myspace wrought? Some effects of social networking in cyberspace.
- Plagiarism at Rutgers.
- Gambling and the Internet: Regulation issues.
- Oneline voting: promise and peril.
- The 2008 presidential campaign online
- Government’s role in monitoring internet content: some issues.
- The case for (or against) online universities.
- City/Community newspapers in the internet age.
- Blogs as tools for building community in real time/space
- The impacts of e-commerce on urban form.
- Web-enabled surveillance in cities: implications?
- Impacts of E-Commerce on downtown retail (e.g. disappearance of bookstores!)