

Information and Communications Technologies and Society

MC 7290

Spring 2013

T/R 2:30-3:45

Shatzell Hall 128

Contact Information

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ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR

I hold a Master's degree in Communication and Media Technologies from the Rochester Institute of Technology and a PhD in Mass Communication from Penn State.

My formal communications interests have focused on social science research that explores the effects of communications technologies on both individuals and communities. In addition to this work, my most recent work has focused on research in the field of human computer interaction. HCI research has its roots in computer science, where the focus has been on UI/UX (user-experience/ user interface design). My work in this area has focused on the design of mobile applications that support civic, social and economic goals of geographic communities.

There are many similarities between HCI and media effects research. My research has epistemological roots in both traditions.

ABOUT THE CLASS

From the invention of the printing press to the World Wide Web to more recent advancements with mobile applications and social media, scholars have examined the social and psychological impacts of information and communications technologies (ICTs) on community life. Theorists have often been divided on the extent to which such technologies facilitate any significant positive societal change. The purpose of this course will be to contextualize that debate as well as explore such topics as the impact of ICTs on social capital, community identity, civic and political engagement, and community collective efficacy.

Course Objectives:

- To develop an understanding of the historical and cultural contexts in which information and communications technologies (ICTs) are situated
- To examine various theoretical approaches used in ICT research

- To gain an understanding of the various methodological approaches used in ICT research
- To examine contemporary research that explores the effects of ICTs on society, with a particular emphasis on the impact that ICTs have on community life
- To apply ICT research towards the development of more effective interface designs
- To develop original research that explores the impact of ICTs on community life

MATERIALS NEEDED AT EACH CLASS SESSION

Course materials will be made available on the class website. You are also encouraged to bring a laptop, as we will be exploring various web-related technologies throughout the semester and documenting our activity in class.

Wiki Space: <http://mc7290.bgsu.wikispaces.net/>

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Class Participation (15%): Part of your final grade will be based upon effective participation in class. This means that not only are you expected to be present but to contribute regularly to class discussions and keep up with the class readings and lectures. The quality of your comments will be included in this score.

You will also be expected to volunteer throughout the semester as class “historian.” In this role, you will record the highlights of the class discussion on the class wiki.

Class Discussants (20%): Twice during the semester you will work with another student to lead the discussion for the class. You have several goals as you carry out this role.

- First, provide everyone with a short summary of the readings. You are also encouraged to bring in other context relevant to the papers.
- Second, be critical/skeptical of the papers that we’re discussing. In this role, your goal is to pick away at the arguments, methods, assumptions, etc discussed in these papers. The idea is to help us all become more aware of the kinds of criticism that we’ll face in our own work, so that we might develop sharper research skills.
- Third, while you may work with another person to facilitate this discussion, you should independently submit a 4-5 page critique of the works you’re discussing.

Discussion Questions (20%): Each class you should post to the class wiki, in advance, at least one question about each assigned reading. That is, if you have three readings, you should have at least three questions. Posts should be put on the wiki by noon on the day of the readings.

In your post, clearly identify the article from which your question is based. Class discussions will center around these questions. You are also encouraged to incorporate concepts from other classes and readings/research outside of class. Questions that are thoughtful and thought provoking will be awarded full points. Questions that simply seek factual answers will be awarded minimal or no points.

If you are the discussant for that week, then you will not need to post additional questions.

Community Interview (10%): You are to interview one individual who works with communications technologies in either the non-profit sector or with community-related technologies. The purpose of the interview will be to learn more about their day-to-day experiences. What do they think about new media technologies? What challenges do they face?

What role do they think ICTs will play in the future? These are the kinds of questions you should ask. Summarize your findings in a 4-5 page paper and prepare to present your findings to class.

Community-Based App Design (10%): Throughout this semester you will be thinking a lot about how technologies can be used to improve culture and society. You will be developing a conceptual (or actual if you wish) prototype of an app or website that could be used to address some aspect of community life. This may be a design idea that could be tested and developed into a prototype or that could be tested in experimental settings. You will present these projects to the class and include a 4-5 page paper discussing your choice of design.

Final Paper and Presentation (25%): You will develop an original research paper that will be presented at the end of the semester. The paper should come from one of the topics we've discussed during the course. The paper should follow standard APA research practices and contain the following: 1) an introduction 2) literature review 3) statement of research questions or hypothesis, 4) actual or proposed methodology 5) results or proposed strategy for analysis 6) concluding discussion about what you've learned or what you intended to learn.

IMPORTANT DATES

2/28	Interviews Due
4/2	Design Prototypes Due
4/23- 4/25	Paper Presentations
4/30	Final Papers Due

GRADING INFORMATION

Grading Scale: (Based upon percentages of points earned)

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	0-59

ACADEMIC HONESTY / CODES OF CONDUCT:

Acts of dishonesty in academic work constitute academic misconduct and may result in an F for a particular assignment or an F for the course. These include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

1. *Cheating* -- Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise.
2. *Plagiarism* -- Representing the words, ideas or data of another as one's own in any academic exercise.
3. *Fabrication* -- Unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
4. *Aiding and abetting academic dishonesty* -- Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another student commit an act of academic dishonesty.

The instructor and students in this course will adhere to the university's general Codes of

Conduct as defined at www.bgsu.edu/studenthandbook.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Any students with disabilities should follow the procedures established by the university. Students with disabilities must verify their eligibility through the Office of Disability Services for Students at 413 South Hall (419-372-8495). In accordance with the university policy, if the student has a documented disability and requires accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, he or she should contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester and make this need known. For more information, please see: <http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/disability>.

COURSE READINGS

Theories of Communications Technology

Week 1: Introduction to Community Informatics and Historical Approaches to Communication and Technology

Cary, J. (2008). Technology and ideology: The case of the telegraph. In *Communication as Culture: Essays on Media and Society* (pp. 201-230). NY: Routledge.

Gurstein, M. (2007). *What is Community Informatics*. (pp. 1-21). Italy: Polimetric.

Dahlberg, L. (2001). Democracy via cyberspace: Mapping the rhetorics and practices of three prominent camps. *New Media & Society*, 3(2), 157–177.

Smith, M. R., & Marx, L. (1994). *Does technology drive history?: The dilemma of technological determinism*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Week 2: Technological Agency and Dystopian Views

Ellul, J. (1989). The search for ethics in a technicist society. In *Research in philosophy & technology*, edited by F. Ferré & C. Mitcham. Vol. 9. London and Greenwich: JAI Press, Inc.

Fischer, C. S. (1992). *America calling : A social history of the telephone to 1940*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Postman, N. (1993). The ideology of machines: computer technology. *Technopoly* (pp. 107-122). New York: Random House.

Turkle, S. (2011). Always On. *Alone Together* (pp. 151-170). New York: Basic Books.

Week 3: Social Influences on Technology

Arceneaux, N., & Weiss, A. S. (2010). Seems stupid until you try it: press coverage of Twitter, 2006-9. *New Media & Society*, 12(8), 1262–1279.

Campbell, S. W., & Russo, T. C. (2003). The Social construction of mobile telephony: an

application of the social influence model to perceptions and uses of mobile phones within personal communication networks. *Communication Monographs*, 70(4), 317–334.

Park, N., & Lee, K. M. (2010). Wireless Cities: Local Governments' Involvement in the Shaping of Wi-Fi Networks. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 54(3), 425–442.

Pinch and Bijker, The social construction of facts and artifacts: Or how the sociology of science and the sociology of technology might benefit each other," in Wiebe Bijker, Thomas P. Hughes, and Trevor Pinch, *The Social Construction of Technological Systems: New Directions in the Sociology and History of Technology* (The MIT Press, 1989).

Week 4: Psychological Effects of Technology: Sense of Community

McMillan, D. W., & Chavis, D. M. (1986). Sense of community: A definition and theory. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 14(1), 6–23.

Mersey, R. D. (2009). Online news users' sense of community. *Journalism Practice*, 3(3), 347–360.

Stavrositu, C., & Sundar, S. S. (2012). Does blogging empower women? exploring the role of agency and community. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 17(4), 369–386.

Sum, S., Mathews, R. M., Pourghasem, M., & Hughes, I. (2009). Internet use as a predictor of sense of community in older people. *Cyberpsychology & Behavior: The Impact Of The Internet, Multimedia And Virtual Reality On Behavior And Society*, 12(2), 235–239.

ICTs and Geographic Communities

Week 5: Non Profit Uses of Communications Technologies

Lovejoy, K., & Saxton, G. D. (2012). Information, community, and action: how nonprofit organizations use social media. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 17(3), 337–353.

Merkel, C. B., Xiao, L., Farooq, U., Ganoë, C. H., Lee, R., Carroll, J. M., & Rosson, M. B. (2004). Participatory design in community computing contexts: tales from the field. In *Proceedings of the Eighth Conference on Participatory Design: Artful Integration: Interweaving Media, Materials and Practices - Volume 1* (pp. 1–10). New York, NY.

Shafir, S. M., & Yuan, Y. C. (2012). Getting the Feel: Email usage in a nonprofit community organization in a low-income community. *Communication Quarterly*, 60(1), 103–121.

Waters, R. D., Burnett, E., Lamm, A., & Lucas, J. (2009). Engaging stakeholders through social networking: How nonprofit organizations are using Facebook. *Public Relations Review*, 35(2), 102–106.

Week 6: Networked Neighborhoods and Urban Life

Ganoë, C. H., Robinson, H. R., Horning, M. A., Xie, X., & Carroll, J. M. (2010). Mobile awareness and participation in community-oriented activities. In *Proceedings of the 1st*

International Conference and Exhibition on Computing for Geospatial Research & Application (pp. 1–8). Washington, D.C.: ACM.

Hampton, K. N. (2007). Neighborhoods in the network society the e-neighbors study. *Information, Communication & Society*, 10(5), 714–748.

Hampton, K. N., Lee, C., & Her, E. J. (2011). How new media affords network diversity: Direct and mediated access to social capital through participation in local social settings. *New Media & Society*, 13(7), 1031–1049.

Humphreys, L., & Liao, T. (2011). Mobile geotagging: reexamining our interactions with urban space. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 16(3), 407–423.

Satchell, C., Foth, M., Hearn, G., & Schroeter, R. (2008). Suburban nostalgia: the community building potential of urban screens. In *Proceedings of the 20th Australasian Conference on Computer-Human Interaction: Designing for Habitus and Habitat* (pp. 243–246). Cairns, Australia: ACM.

Week 7: ICTs, Social Capital and Civic Engagement

Dutta-Bergman, M. J. (2005). The antecedents of community-oriented internet use: community participation and community satisfaction. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 11(1), 97–113.

Mesch, G. S., & Talmud, I. (2010). Internet connectivity, community participation, and place attachment: A longitudinal study. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 53(8), 1095–1110.

Skoric, M. M., Ying, D., & Ng, Y. (2009). Bowling online, not alone: online social capital and political participation in Singapore. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 14(2).

Williams, D. (2006). On and off the 'net: scales for social capital in an online era. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 11(2). Retrieved from <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol11/issue2/williams.html>

Week 8 and 10.1 : Designing Community Based Applications and Software

***Denotes Readings for Week 10.1**

Thursday February 28 Interview Projects Due

*Brynskov, M., Leong, T. W., & Fritsch, J. (2011). Bridging the affective gap to make news felt: spaces of aestheticized public voice. In *Proceedings of the 5th International Conference on Communities and Technologies* (pp. 50–59). Brisbane, Australia: ACM.

Du, H., Rosson, M. B., Carroll, J. M., & Ganoe, C. (2009). “I felt more of a member of this class”: increasing students’ sense of community with video commenting. In *CHI '09 Extended Abstracts on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 4405–4410). Boston, MA, USA: ACM.

*Erickson, I. (2010). Geography and community: new forms of interaction among people and places. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 53(8), 1194–1207.

Gough, K., & Hamilton, J. (2012). Designing locative and social media technologies for community collaboration and social benefit: PetSearch. In *Proceedings of the 24th Australian Computer-Human Interaction Conference* (pp. 158–161). Melbourne, Australia: ACM.

Seeburger, J., Foth, M., & Tjondronegoro, D. (2012). The sound of music: sharing song selections between collocated strangers in public urban places. In *Proceedings of the 11th International Conference on Mobile and Ubiquitous Multimedia* (pp. 1–10). Ulm, Germany: ACM.

Week 9: Spring Break

Week 10.2 and 11.1: Online Communities and Identity

***Denotes Readings for Week 11.1**

*Carter, M., Gibbs, M., & Arnold, M. (2012). Avatars, characters, players and users: multiple identities at/in play. In *Proceedings of the 24th Australian Computer-Human Interaction Conference* (pp. 68–71). Melbourne, Australia: ACM.

Donath, J. (1998). Identity and deception in the virtual community. In P. Kollock & M. Smith (Eds.), *Communities in Cyberspace*. London: Routledge.

*Looy, J. V., Courtois, C., & Vocht, M. D. (2010). Player identification in online games: validation of a scale for measuring identification in MMORPGs. In *Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on Fun and Games* (pp. 126–134). Leuven, Belgium: ACM.

Wellman B (2001) Physical place and cyber-place: Changing portals and the rise of networked individualism. *International Journal for Urban and Regional Research* 25(2): 227–252.

New Media Technologies and Community

Week 12: Sense of Virtual Community

Abfalter, D., Zaglia, M. E., & Mueller, J. (2012). Sense of virtual community: A follow up on its measurement. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 28(2), 400–404.

Blanchard, A., & Markus, M. (2002). Sense of virtual community-maintaining the experience of belonging. In *Proceedings of the 35th Annual Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS'02)-Volume 8 - Volume 8* (p. 270.2–). Washington, DC, USA: IEEE Computer Society.

Lev-On, A. (2010). Engaging the disengaged: collective action, media uses, and sense of (virtual) community by evacuees from Gush Katif. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 53(8), 1208–1227.

Tonteri, L., Kosonen, M., Ellonen, H.-K., & Tarkiainen, A. (2011). Antecedents of an experienced sense of virtual community. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 27(6), 2215–2223.

Week 13.2: Virtual Communities: Space and Place and Interactions

Tuesday April 2- Design Prototypes Presentations Due

Harrison, S., & Dourish, P. (1996). Re-place-ing space: The roles of place and space in collaborative systems (pp. 67–76). ACM Press.

Preece, J., Nonnecke, B., & Andrews, D. (2004). The top five reasons for lurking: improving community experiences for everyone. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 20(2), 201.

Week 14: Citizen Generated Content and Community Engagement

Rotman, D., & Preece, J. (2010). The “WeTube” in YouTube - creating an online community through video sharing. *Int. J. Web Based Communities*, 6(3), 317–333.

Williams, D., Caplan, S., & Xiong, L. (2007). Can you hear me now? The impact of voice in an online gaming community. *Human Communication Research*, 33(4), 427–449.

Farnham, S., Keyes, D., Yuki, V., & Tugwell, C. (2012). Puget sound off: fostering youth civic engagement through citizen journalism. In *Proceedings of the ACM 2012 Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work* (pp. 285–294). Seattle, Washington, USA: ACM.

Robinson, S., & Deshano, C. (2011). Citizen journalists and their third places. *Journalism Studies*, 12(5), 642–657.

Week 15: Citizen Generated Content and Community Engagement

Harris, U. S. (2007). Community informatics and the power of participation. *Pacific Journalism Review*, 13(2), 29.

Poell, T., & Borra, E. (2012). Twitter, YouTube, and Flickr as platforms of alternative journalism: The social media account of the 2010 Toronto G20 protests. *Journalism*, 13(6), 695–713.

Week 16: Final Presentations

4/23- 4/25 Paper Presentations
4/30 Final Papers Due