

INFO 203. Social and Organizational Issues of Information

Spring 2017

Tu & Th: 12:30-2:00

210 South Hall

Prof. Paul Duguid (duguid@berkeley.edu)

office hours: Tues, 2:30-4:00 pm by appointment, location: Room 305b

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GSI:

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Course Description

We have only recently become accustomed to looking at information technology as “social.” This course is designed to be an introduction to the topics and issues associated with the study of information and information technology from a social and also an organizational perspective, with the goal of understanding what the arrival of phrases like “social media” might tell us about technology, information, and organization. The course will explore social aspects of media, trying to set the design and use of contemporary media in the larger and longer-term context of social (and individual) assumptions about and attitudes towards technology. By the end of the course, all students will be familiar with social scientific approaches to information and information technology, as well as many of the key issues and the methods used to gain insight into these issues through empirical research. Such knowledge is essential to having a well-rounded understanding of information issues in professional environments.

Assignments & Grading:

Class participation (10%) -- this will be based on large and small group discussions in class and will involve a peer-review component.

Weekly reading responses (30%) – you will write and submit a reading response on most weeks, for a total of 10 responses.

Midterm essay (20%)

There will be midterm essay. We will present a selection of prompts, based on the readings of the first half of the semester, for you to choose from by March 14 and your 3 page response will be due on March 24.

Final Research Paper (40%)

The remaining 40% of your grade will come from the final paper. You will be asked to submit a topic applying the content of the course to your interests by April 7. You will then be asked to submit an outline by April 14th. Together, these will contribute 10% to your final grade. Your final paper of 3,000 words, excluding bibliography, is due by the end of Exam Week, May 12, for 30% of your final grade.

All assignments will be submitted online through this bCourses page and analyzed by the **Turnitin** service which provides an 'originality' score (which you will be able to see) and detects plagiarism. For more information on that see:

<https://www.ets.berkeley.edu/discover-services/academic-integrity/turnitin-students-getting-started> ([Links to an external site.](#))

Texts

1. Course readings are linked to from the [Syllabus](#) page. Links go either to the original sources of the reading or to pdfs stored on the [Files](#) page of the bCourses.

And Finally...

A Note on Plagiarism

Some cases of plagiarism stem from a poor understanding of how and when to cite sources. We will clarify expectations and best practices up front at the beginning of the semester. In addition, we expect all students to abide by the Berkeley Student Code of Conduct (see <http://students.berkeley.edu/uga/conduct.pdf> ([Links to an external site.](#))). Cases of plagiarism will not be tolerated. The consequences include failing the assignment, a referral to the Center for Student Conduct and Community Standards, possibly a failed grade in the course, and even expulsion from the program (*****ALL OF THESE OUTCOMES HAVE HAPPENED IN THIS COURSE*****). Plagiarism includes (as noted above) copying material from a book or article (word-for-word or paraphrased) **without** citing the source as well as extensively summarizing the written work of someone else without clarifying that the ideas and analysis are not your own. Other examples of unacceptable conduct: turning in as your own work a paper written by another student who has previously taken this course, a paper you found on the Internet, or a paper you paid a commercial term-paper service to write for you. Note: if you are feeling stress about workload and deadlines rather than resort to such desperate measures please come visit one of us in office hours to work out a plan of action for completing course requirements.

Instruction about citation practices will be covered in this course...if in doubt, please ask! And please visit the '[citation practices](#)' page for further details.

WEEK 1

17 Jan: Introduction

19 Jan: Why are we here?

Reading

Brown, John Seely & Paul Duguid. 2017. "Reassessing the Social." pp. xi-xxvi in *The Social Life of Information*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press. [[bCourses](#)]

Cairncross, Frances. 1997. "The Trendspotter's Guide to New Communications." pp. xiii-xvii in *The Death of Distance: How the Communications Revolution is Changing Our Lives*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press. [[bCourses](#)]

WEEK 2

24 Jan: People and technology

Reading

Geiger, R. Stuart, and David Ribes. 2010. "The Work of Sustaining Order in Wikipedia: The Banning of a Vandal." In Proceedings of the 2010 ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work - CSCW '10, 117–26. [[pdf](#)]

Mathew, Ashwin J., and Coye Cheshire. 2017. "Risky Business: Social Trust and Community in the Practice of Cybersecurity for Internet Infrastructure." In Proceedings of the 50th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences, 2341–50. Waikoloa, HI, USA. [[pdf](#)]

Section 1: Social and Technical

26 Jan: Social and technical

Reading

Ackerman, Mark S. 2000. "The Intellectual Challenge of CSCW: The Gap between Social Requirements and Technical Feasibility." *Human-Computer Interaction* 15 (2): 179–203. [[acm.org](#)]

Keshav, S. 2016. "How to read a paper". [[pdf](#)]

"7 Critical Reading Strategies". [[web](#)]

WEEK 3

31 Jan: Technological determinism

Reading

Kelly, Kevin. 2010. "Listen to Technology." pp 157-173 in *What Technology Wants*. New York: Viking. [[bCourses](#)]

Marx, Leo. 2010. "Technology: The Emergence of a Hazardous Concept," *Technology and Culture*, 51(3): 561-77. [[JSTOR](#)]

2 Feb: Technology and politics

Reading

Winner, Langdon. 1980. "Do Artifacts Have Politics?" *Daedalus*, 109 (1): 121-136. [[JSTOR](#)]

MacKenzie, Donald. 1996. "Economic and Sociological Explanations of Technical Change." pp. 49-65 in *Knowing Machines: Essays on Technical Change*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. [[MIT](#)]

WEEK 4

7 Feb: Technology and users

Discussion class

Reading

Kline, Ronald, & Trevor Pinch. 1996. "Users as Agents of Technological Change: The Social Construction of the Automobile in the Rural United States." *Technology and Culture* 37(4): 763-795. [[JSTOR](#)]

Norman, Don. 2009 "Cautious Cars and Cantankerous Kitchens." Pp. 1-33 in *Design of Future Things*. New York: Basic Books. [[ebrary](#)]

Section 2: Individual and Collective

9 Feb: Individual and collective 1

Reading

Benkler, Yochai. 2003-3. 'Coase's Penguin, or Linux and the Nature of the Firm,' *Yale Law Review*, 112: 369-446. [[Yale.edu](#)].

Ostrom, Elinor. 2011 [1990]. "Reflections on the Commons." pp. 1-28 in *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*. New York: Cambridge University Press. [[bCourses](#)]

WEEK 5

14 Feb: Individual and collective 2

Reading

Rainie, Lee, & Barry Wellman. 2012. "The New Social Operating System of Networked Individualism." Ch 1 in *Networked: The New Social Operating System*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press [[IEEE Xplore](#)]

van Dijck, José. 2013. "Engineering Sociality in a Culture of Commodity." Ch 1 in *The Culture of Connectivity. A Critical History of Social Media*. New York: Oxford University Press. [[bCourses](#)]

16 Feb: Labor, technology, and organization 1

Reading

Irani, Lilly C. and M. Six Silberman. 2013. "Turkopticon: Interrupting Worker Invisibility in Amazon Mechanical Turk." Paper presented at CHI 2013. [[bCourses](#)]

Scholz, Trebor. 2016 "Platform Cooperativism: Challenging the Corporate Sharing Economy" [[Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung](#)]

WEEK 6

21 Feb: Labor, technology, and organization 2

Discussion class

Reading

Taylor, Frederick Winslow. 1919. "Fundamentals of Scientific Management." Pp. 9-29 in *The Principles of Scientific Management*. New York: Harper & Brothers. [[Hathi Trust](#)].

Orr, Julian. 1996. "The Work of Service." Pp. 104-124 in *Talking about Machines: An Ethnography of a Modern Job*. Ithaca, NY: IRL Press. [[bCourses](#)]

Section 3: Information and Practice

23 Feb: Information and knowledge

Reading

MacKenzie, Donald, & Graham Spinardi. 1995. "Tacit Knowledge, Weapons Design and the Uninvention of Nuclear Weapons." *American Journal of Sociology* 101(1): 44-99. [[JSTOR](#)]

Sellen, Abigail, & Richard H.R. Harper. 2002. "Paper in Support of Working Together." Pp 107-137 in *The Myth of the Paperless Office*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. [[bCourses](#)]

WEEK 7

28 Feb: Information and education

Reading

Sims, Christo. 2017. "Introduction" & "Conclusion: The Resilience of Techno-Idealism." From *Disruptive Fixation: Techno-Philanthropism and the Resilience of Idealism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.[[bCourses](#)]

Negroponte, Nicholas. 2014. "Nanobots in Your Brain Could Be the Future of Learning." Big Think. [[YouTube](#)]

Warschauer, Mark, and Morgan Ames. 2010. "Can One Laptop per Child Save the World's Poor?" *Journal of International Affairs* 64 (1): 33–51. [[JSTOR](#)]

2 March: Social problems and informational solutions

Discussion class

Reading

Jensen, Robert. 2007. "The Digital Divide: Information (Technology), Market Performance, and Welfare in the South Indian Fisheries Sector." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 122(3): 879-924. [[JSTOR](#)]

Srinivasan, Janaki, & Jenna Burrell. 2015. "On the Importance of Price Information to Fishers and to Economists: Revisiting Mobile Phone Use Among Fishers in Kerala." *Information Technologies and International Development* 11(1): 57-70. [[ITID](#)]

Section 4: History

WEEK 8

7 March: The past in the present

Reading

EITHER John, Richard R. 2010. "Making a Neighborhood of a Nation," and "Mr. Morse's Lightning." pp. 1-64 in *Network Nation: Inventing American Telecommunications*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press. [[ebrary](#)]

OR Fischer, Claude S. 1992. "Technology and Modern Life," "The Telephone in America," & "Educating the Public." Pp. 1-85 in *America Calling: A Social History of the Telephone*. Berkeley: U.C. Press. [[ACLS](#)]

Section 5: Digital and Social Media

9 March: Platforms

Reading

Gehl, R. W. 2015. "The Case for Alternative Social Media." *Social Media + Society* 1 (2): 1–12. [[Sage](#)]

Gillespie, Tarleton. 2010. "The Politics of 'Platforms.'" *New Media & Society* 12 (3): 409–25. [[Sage](#)]

WEEK 9

14 March: Writing class

Reading

tba

14 March Midterm Exam made available

16 March: Algorithms

Reading

O'Neil, Cathy. 2016. "Arms Race" and "Propaganda Machine." Pp. 50-83 in *Weapons of Math Destruction: How Big Data Increases Inequality and Threatens Democracy*. New York: Crow. [[bCourses](#)]

Christian, Brian, & Tom Griffiths. 2015. "Introduction: Algorithms to Live By" and "Optimal Stopping: When to Stop Looking." Pp 1-31 in *Algorithms to Live By: The Computer Science of Human Decisions*. New York: Henry Holt. [[bCourses](#)]

WEEK 10

21 March: Fake News

Reading

Reddy, Michael. 1979. "The Conduit Metaphor." Pp: 284-324 in A. Ortony, ed., *Metaphor and Thought*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. [[bCourses](#)]

Silverman, Craig. 2015. "What We Know About the What, How, and Why of Rumors". pp 17-56 in *Lies, Damn Lies, and Viral Content*. [[pdf](#)]

23 March: Search and advertising

Discussion class

Reading

Wu, Tim. "We Won't Be Fooled Again." Pp 267-327 in *The Attention Merchants: The Epic Scramble to Get Inside Our Heads*. New York: Alfred Knopf. [[bCourses](#)]

Brin, Sergey, & Lawrence Page. "The Anatomy of a Large-Scale Hypertextual Web Search Engine." Research Paper, Computer Science Department, Stanford University. [[Stanford](#)]

24 March Midterm Papers due 12:00 pm

WEEK 11

27-31 March: Spring Break

Section 6: Identity and Politics

WEEK 12

4 April: Protest

Reading

Zuckerman, Ethan. 2014. "New Media, New Civics?" *Policy and Internet* 6 (2): 151–68. [[bCourses](#)]

Tufekci, Zeynep. 2014. "The Medium and the Movement: Digital Tools, Social Movement Politics, and the End of the Free Rider Problem." *Policy and Internet* 6 (2): 202–8. [[bCourses](#)]

6 April: Place and placelessness

Reading

Donath, J. 1997. "Identity and Deception in the Virtual Community." In P. Kollock and M. Smith (eds). *Communities in Cyberspace*. Boston, MA: MIT Press. [[MIT Press](#)]

Miller, Daniel, & Don Slater. 2001. "Conclusions." Chapter 1 of *The Internet: An Ethnographic Approach*. [[douri.sh](#)]

7 April Title and abstract for final papers due 12:00 pm

WEEK 13

11 Apr: Race and gender 1

Reading

Cockburn, Cynthia. 2004. "The Circuit of Technology: Gender, Identity, and Power." Pp 197-212 John Thornton Caldwell (ed.) *Electronic Media and Technoculture*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. [bCourses]

boyd, danah. 2012. "White Flight in Networked Publics." In *Race After the Internet*, edited by Lisa Nakamura and Peter A. Chow-White, 203–22. Routledge. [bCourses]

13 Apr: Race and gender 2

Discussion class

Reading

Dibbell, Julian. 1999. "A Rape in Cyberspace." In *My Tiny Life: Crime and Passion in a Virtual World*. Holt Paperbacks. [juliandibbell.com]

Suchman, Lucy. 2002. "Located Accountabilities in Technology Production." *Scandinavian Journal of Information Systems* 14 (2): 91–105. [aau.dk]

14 April Outline for final papers due 12:00 pm

WEEK 14

18 Apr: tba

Reading

tba

Section 7: Values and Ethics

20 Apr: Values in technology

Reading

Flanagan, Mary, Daniel C. Howe, and Helen Nissenbaum. 2008. "Embodying Values in Technology: Theory and Practice." Pp. 322–53 in Eero van den Hoven and John Weckert (eds). *Information Technology and Moral Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [bCourses]

Vertesi, Janet, and Paul Dourish. 2011. "The Value of Data: Considering the Context of Production in Data Economies." In *Proceedings of the ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work 2011*, 533–42. New York: ACM. [[bCourses](#)]

WEEK 15

25 April: Ethics

Discussion class

Reading

Philip, Kavita, Lilly Irani, and Paul Dourish. 2012. "Postcolonial Computing: A Tactical Survey." *Science, Technology & Human Values* 37 (1): 3–29. [[bCourses](#)]

Friedman, Batya, and Helen Nissenbaum. 1996. "Bias in Computer Systems." *ACM Transactions on Information Systems* 14 (3): 330–47. [[bCourses](#)]

27 April: Wrap

WEEK 16

Reading Week

WEEK 17

12 May: Final Papers Due