

INLS 690-189: Social Media and Society: A Theoretical and Empirical Overview

Fall 2013

Tuesday-Thursday Thursday 2:00-4:45p Manning Room 0208

Professor:

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Office Hours: Tuesday or Thursday 12:45-2:00p Manning Hall 202. (Also by appointment).

Course Description:

This course examines the increasingly important technologies of connectivity from a theoretical and empirical perspective. We will explore the evolution, implications and complications of social media in multiple spheres of life including sociality, community, politics, power and inequality, education, knowledge, and information. Our emphasis will not be on any one current platform (such as Facebook or Twitter) or even a particular device. Rather, we will study how different configurations of connectivity encourage or stifle different socio-cultural practices and values. This course will provide conceptual and methodological foundations for studying and evaluating current and future developments in this area.

Expectations

The success of this class depends on your active engagement. I expect everyone to come to class not just having read the assigned readings as well as weekly responses written by their classmates, but also to have thought about the topics and be ready to discuss them. This is a new field and creative, bold thinking is encouraged; on the other hand, you must be ready and willing to defend your opinions with empirical and philosophical support. We expect people in this class to disagree and to respectfully argue different points of view. The goal is for all of us to emerge having learned more than just the content of the readings.

There will be three components to your assignments in this class. First, you will be writing a weekly response to the readings. These should be around one single-spaced page (around 500) and actively engage the readings. There will be no right or wrong answers but analytical and thoughtful content will be expected. Second, I will expect everyone to read one book related to class topics and present it to the class on the week closest to the topic of the week in terms of content. Third, you will be asked to write a term paper at the end of the class on a research question which will have to be cleared with the instructor in advance.

Course Requirements:

1. *Reading:* Students are expected to complete assigned readings **before** coming to class. There will be weekly reaction papers to the readings. Reaction papers of graduate students should be about two or three pages (about 500-750 words) while undergraduates can write a little less (about 400-500 words). No reaction paper can be more than three pages! (One double spaced page is 250 words). There are 11 possible reaction papers. **I will drop the lowest one and you will be graded on your best 10 out of 11.**
2. Start reading! Keep reading!
3. *Attendance:* Attendance is required and is in your best interests and what makes the class work. You may miss one class without any penalty in grades; after that I will subtract THREE percent for each class that you miss.
4. *Book Review :* You will be required to review a book and make a short (15 minute) presentation to the class and post your review on Blackboard for other students to read two days before your presentation. (10 percent)
5. *Leading Discussion:* You will be expected to choose a week for which to lead the class discussion for 20 minutes. You should summarize and synthesize the readings, bring up questions and issues. (5 percent).
6. *Final Paper:* Graduate students will produce a final paper on a topic. The final paper should be 20 pages, or 5000 words. Undergraduate students will write a 10 page, or 2500 word, paper. Topic must be cleared with the instructor. (35%)

Grading Policy

Participation, Attendance: 15%

Book review and presentation: 15 %

Leading class discussion: 15%

Weekly reaction papers: 20%

Final project: 35%

Plagiarism is may result in failing this class as well as further, university-level reporting and action.

FALL 2011 SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Week 1. Aug.22	Introduction to the Class
Week 2. Aug.29	Bits and Atoms: Restructuring the Architecture of Information and Sociality
Week 3. Sept.5	Web 2.0 and the Social Web
Week 4. Sept.12	Digital Inequalities
Week 5. Sept.19	Mediated Social Interaction: Relationships and Communities
Week 6. Sept.26	Authenticity and Identity
Week 7. Oct.3	Privacy and Reputation
Week 8. Oct.10	Surveillance
** Fall Break**	
Week 9. Oct. 24	Big Data
Week 10. Oct. 31	Authority, Information and Knowledge
Week 11. Nov. 7	Algorithms, Filter Bubbles and Serendipity
Week 12. Nov.14	Collective Action and the New Connectivity
Week 13. Nov.21	Presentations

August. 29 Bits and Atoms: Restructuring the Architecture of Information and Sociality

Norman, D. (1993). Things That Make Us Smart. Addison-Wesley, New York. pp. 155-174. (Sakai)

Weinberger, D. (2007) Everything is Miscellaneous: The Power of the New Digital Disorder. NY: Times Books. pp.1-23. (Prologue: "Information in Space" and Chapter 1: "The New Order of Order.")
Also available: <http://www.kilibro.com/en/book/preview/220899/everything-is-miscellaneous>

Shirky, C. (2008). Ontology is Overrated: Categories, Links, and Tags. Available at: http://www.shirky.com/writings/ontology_overrated.html

Lessig, L. (2006). Cyberspaces. In Code 2.0. New York: Basic Books. pp.113-130. Available at: <http://codev2.cc/download+remix/Lessig-Codev2.pdf>

Sept. 5 Web 2.0 and the Social Web

Rainie and Wellman. Networked: The New Social Operating System. Chapter 1: "The Triple Revolution" and Chapter 2: "The Social Network Revolution." (Pages 1-59)

Oreilly, Tim. What is Web 2.0: Design Patterns and Business Models for the Next Generation of Software. Communications & Strategies. First Quarter 2007. Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1008839>

Clay Shirky. *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations*. New York: Penguin Press, 2008. pp. 25-54. (Sakai)

Carr, Nicholas. 2005. The Amoral of Web 2.0. Available at: http://www.roughype.com/archives/2005/10/the_amorality_o.php

Jurgenson, N. (2012). When atoms meet bits: Social media, the mobile web and augmented revolution. Future Internet, 4(1), 83-91. In Sakai.

Sept.12 Digital Inequalities

Hargittai, Ezster and Hsies, Yu-Li Patrick. Digital Inequality. Available:

<http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199589074.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199589074-e-7>

Pew Internet: (2012) Digital Differences.

http://pewinternet.org/~media//Files/Reports/2012/PIP_Digital_differences_041312.pdf

Kaiser Foundation. January 2010. GENERATION M2: Media in the Lives of 8- to 18-Year-Olds. Available at

<http://www.kff.org/entmedia/upload/8010.pdf> Read pages 1-5.

Jenkins, H. (2009) Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century. MIT Press. pp.1-18. Available:

http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/download/nwp_file/10932/Confronting_the_Challenges_of_Participatory_Culture.pdf?x-r=pcfile_d

Forrester. January 19, 2010. Conversationalists Get Onto the Ladder. Available at:

<http://blogs.forrester.com/groundswell/2010/01/conversationalists-get-onto-the-ladder.html>

Shirky, C. (2003). Power Laws, Weblogs, and Inequality. Blog post at:

http://shirky.com/writings/powerlaw_weblog.html

Sept.19: Mediated Social Interaction: Relationships and Communities

Rainie and Wellman (2012). Chapter 5: Networked Relationships and Chapter 6: Networked Families. 115-170

Hampton, K. (2010). Technically Speaking. Interview with Keith Hampton in Computer Power User, February 2010. (on Sakai).

Deresiewicz, W. (2009) Faux Friendship. Chronicle Review. Available at:

<http://chronicle.com/article/Faux-Friendship/49308/>

Smith, Zadie. (2010) Generation Why?

<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2010/nov/25/generation-why/?pagination=false>

Madrigal, Alexis. (2010) Literary Writers and Social Media: A Response to Zadie Smith

<http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2010/11/literary-writers-and-social-media-a-response-to-zadie-smith/66257/>

Tufekci, Zeynep. Either this: <http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2012/04/social-medias-small-positive-role-in-human-relationships/256346/> or my Public Culture essay (if it is out by then).

Watch: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/digitalrevolution/2009/11/rushes-sequences-sherry-turkle.shtml>

Sept.26: Authenticity, Identity and Context Collapse

Jurgenson, Nathan. 2011. The Faux-Vintage Photo: Full Essay (Parts I, II and III)

<http://thesocietypages.org/cyborgology/2011/05/14/the-faux-vintage-photo-full-essay-parts-i-ii-and-iii/>

Rosenbloom, Stephanie. 2011. Cultural Studies: Authentic? Get Real.

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/11/fashion/for-only-the-authentic-cultural-studies.html?_r=2&pagewanted=all

York, Jillian. 2001. A Case for Pseudonyms. <http://jilliancyork.com/2011/07/29/a-case-for-pseudonyms/>

Tufekci, Zeynep. Notes on Amina, Facebook and the Reverse Tragedy of Commons: Pseudonymity under Repressive Conditions. <http://technosociology.org/?p=481>

Watch: Dick Hardt presentation on Identity 2.0: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RrpaicAgR1E>

Clive, Davis. 2008 I'm so Digitally, Totally Close to You.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/07/magazine/07awareness-t.html?pagewanted=all>

Davis, Jenny. Context Collapse: A Literature Review: in *Cyberology*.

<http://thesocietypages.org/cyborgology/2013/01/10/context-collapse-a-literature-review/>

Oct. 3 Privacy and Reputation

Solove, D. (2007). When Poop Goes Primetime. In: *The Future of Reputation*. Yale University Press. pp.1-13 Available at: <http://docs.law.gwu.edu/facweb/dsolove/Future-of-Reputation/text/futureofreputation-ch1.pdf>

Little Brother is Watching You: <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/17/magazine/17FOB-WWLN-t.html>

Nissenbaum, Helen. (2009). Privacy in Context. (Excerpt in Sakai).

Schneider, Bruce. 2010. A Revised Taxonomy of Social Networking Data. Available at:

http://www.schneier.com/blog/archives/2010/08/a_taxonomy_of_s_1.html

Madrigal, Alexis. 2011. What Does Your Phone Know About You? Available at:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2011/04/what-does-your-phone-know-about-you-more-than-you-think/237786/>

Madrigal, Alexis. 2011. My Life According to iPhone's Secret Tracking Log: Available At:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2011/04/my-life-according-to-the-iphones-secret-tracking-log/237636/>

Oct 10. Surveillance

Read: <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/blog/2013/jun/14/nsa-prism>

Read: <http://www.cnn.com/2013/07/31/opinion/schneier-nsa-trust/index.html>

Read: http://www.washingtonpost.com/investigations/us-intelligence-mining-data-from-nine-us-internet-companies-in-broad-secret-program/2013/06/06/3a0c0da8-cebf-11e2-8845-d970ccb04497_story.html

Watch: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kaRvzQ887HM>

Watch: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWmXNVO15AU>

Solove, Daniel. (2007.) "I've got nothing to hide" and Other Misunderstandings of Privacy. Available: <http://tehlug.org/files/solove.pdf>

Morozov, Evgeny. (2013). Information Consumerism: The Price of Hypocrisy. <http://www.faz.net/aktuell/feuilleton/debatten/ueberwachung/information-consumerism-the-price-of-hypocrisy-12292374.html>

Read: Marc Ambinder: <http://theweek.com/article/index/248478/5-reasons-the-nsa-scandal-aint-all-that>

<http://theweek.com/article/index/248479/4-reasons-the-nsa-scandal-is-troubling>

Explore: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/special/politics/prism-collection-documents/>

**** Fall Break****

Oct. 24 Big Data

Lohr, Steve (2012). The Age of Big Data. In *The New York Times*.

http://rkbusinessschool.com/uploads/2_The_New_York_Times_on_The_Age_of_Big_Data.pdf

Lazer et al. (2009) in Science: Life in the network: the coming age of computational social science. In

Science. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2745217/>

Schwartz, Paul M. and Solove, Daniel J. The Personally Identifiable Information Problem: Privacy and a New Concept of Personally Identifiable Information. Available at SSRN:

<http://ssrn.com/abstract=1909366> Read page 3 and 4 to understand definition of PII and then read pp. 20-44

boyd, danah and Crawford, Kate. 2012. Provocations for a cultural, technological, and scholarly phenomenon. In *Information, Communication and Society*.

Issenber, Sahsa. "Obama Does it Better" and "Project Dreamcatcher." *Slate*.

http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/victory_lab/2012/10/obama_s_secret_weapon_democrats_have_a_massive_advantage_in_targeting_and.html and

http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/victory_lab/2012/01/project_dreamcatcher_how_cutting_edge_text_analytics_can_help_the_obama_campaign_determine_voters_hopes_and_fears_single.html

Tufekci, Zeynep. Big Data: Pitfalls, Methods and Concepts for an Emergent Field. (in Sakai)

October 31: Authority, Knowledge, Attention Span and Information

Rainie and Wellman, Chapter 8 and 9.

Anderson, Chris (2004). The Long Tail. Available at:

http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/12.10/tail_pr.html

Shirky, C. (2008). *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations*. New York: Penguin Press. pp. 55-109

Listen: Gleick, J. (2011). The Information: A history, a theory, a flood. [WBUR Interview, 45 Minutes. Available: <http://onpoint.wbur.org/2011/03/18/james-gleick>]

Carr, Nicholas. 2008. Is Google Making Us Stupid?

<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2008/07/is-google-making-us-stupid/306868/>

Pinker, Steven. 2010. Mind over Mass Media. In the *New York Times*.

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/11/opinion/11Pinker.html?_r=0

Lehrer, Jonah. 2010. Our Cluttered Minds. In The *New York Times*.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/06/books/review/Lehrer-t.html?src=me&ref=books>

Optional Extra Readings:

<http://www.wired.com/wiredscience/2010/06/the-shallows/> and

http://www.routhtype.com/archives/2010/06/selflinking_beh.php

Nov.7 : Algorithms, Platforms, Filter Bubbles and Serendipity

Gillespie, Tarleton. (2010). The Politics of Platforms. *New Media and Society*. 12. No 3. (2010)

Ethan Zuckerman: <http://www.access-controlled.net/wp-content/PDFs/chapter-5.pdf>

Pariser, Eli. Filter Bubbles. Read: <http://www.brainpickings.org/index.php/2011/05/12/the-filter-bubble/>

Zuckerman, Ethan. 2001. Desperately Seeking Serendipity. Available at:

<http://www.ethanzuckerman.com/blog/2011/05/12/chi-keynote-desperately-seeking-serendipity/>

Zuckerman, Ethan. 2013. *Rewire: Digital Cosmopolitans in the Age of Connection*. Excerpt.

Nov.14 **Collective Action and Social Media**

Habermas, Jürgen. 1964 The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article.

<http://www.propertyistheft.com/courses/social-web-media/readings/habermas-1964-the-public-sphere.pdf>

Shirky, Clay. 2011. The Political Power of Social Media Technology, the Public Sphere, and Political Change. http://www.gpia.info/files/u1392/Shirky_Political_Poewr_of_Social_Media.pdf

Gladwell, Malcolm. Response to Shirky. <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67325/malcolm-gladwell-and-clay-shirky/from-innovation-to-revolution>

Morozov, Evgeny. 2011. The Internet is a Tyrant's Friend.

<http://www.newscientist.com/article/mg20928026.100-the-internet-is-a-tyrants-friend.html>

Morozov, Evgeny. 2010. Why Kierkegaard Hates Slacktivism.

<http://www.publicaffairsbooks.com/morozovch7.pdf>

Abdalla, Rasha. November 2011. The Revolution Will be Tweeted.

<http://www.aucegypt.edu/gapp/cairoreview/Pages/articleDetails.aspx?aid=89>

Tufekci, Zeynep. New Media and People-Powered Uprisings.

<http://www.technologyreview.com/view/425280/new-media-and-the-people-powered-uprisings/>