

T610: NETWORKED SOCIETY

Class # 28539

Spring 2011

Instructor: Harmeet Sawhney

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Course Meetings: Thursdays, 5:45-8:15 p.m., Rm. TV 169

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this seminar we will examine the rise of the network configuration as the distinctive signature of our times, by engaging questions such as: Why was the industrial age marked by hierarchical structures? Why are we now seeing the transformation of hierarchical structures into flatter networks? We will start by considering the socio-economic context of these transformations. We will then examine the flattening of the socio-technical systems that undergird the networked society. Thereafter we will look at the modalities of coordination and control in networked organizations, cities, and societies. We will approach these issues via readings from diverse disciplines -- economics, political science, public affairs, cultural geography, regional planning, cultural studies, history, information science, education, and communications. You are most welcome to make your own contribution to the brew!

READINGS

The specific articles for each class are listed in the calendar section of the course syllabus. This reading list will be modified if the class discussions move in directions beyond the areas selected for this particular seminar.

COURSE GRADE

The relative weights of the different components of the final grade will be as follows:

Synthesis Paper 1	15%
Synthesis Paper 2	15%
Synthesis Paper 3	15%
Synthesis Paper 4	15%
Synthesis Paper 5	15%
Class Participation	10%

Synthesis Papers: There will be 5 synthesis papers (5-8 pages) in which you are expected to identify and develop themes that cut across the different readings. You are encouraged to build one synthesis paper over another so that your thoughts develop in a cumulative way over the semester. The papers will be due on the dates mentioned on the calendar.

Class Participation: Class participation is an essential element of a seminar class. The success of this seminar to a very large degree depends on the quality of contributions you make. Therefore a significant component of the overall grade has been assigned to class participation.

CALENDAR

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic & Readings</u>
Jan 13	Introduction
Jan 20	<i>Culture, Consciousness, and Technological Development</i> John—"The Postal System as an Agent of Change" John—"The Communications Revolution" Tetreault — "Beneficial Spaces: The Rise of Military Libraries in the British Empire" Mumford—"Cultural Preparation"
Jan 27	<i>Systems and Control</i> Beniger—"Control Revolution" Thompson—"Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism" Sreitfeld — "So You're Dead? Don't Expect that to Stop the Debt Collector" Mulgan—"Networks and Post-industrial Societies" Dandeker—"Bureaucratic Surveillance in a 'Society of Strangers'"

Feb 3

Systems, Control, and Consciousness

Zuboff— "The Laboring Body"

Zuboff— "The Abstraction of Industrial Work"

Forster— "The Machine Stops"

Gleick— "Addicted to Speed"

Carey— "Technology and Ideology: The Case of Telegraph"

SYNTHESIS PAPER # 1: Due Monday, February 7th

Feb 10

Systems as Artifacts

de Gournay— "Telephone Networks in France and Great Britain"

Attali and Stourdze— "The Birth of the Telephone and Economic Crisis: The Slow Death of Monologue in French Society"

Stephenson— "'No One is Here' Telecommunications in the Soviet Union"

Sawhney— "The Public Telephone Network: Stages in Infrastructure Development"

Sawhney— "Information Superhighway: Metaphors as Midwives"

Feb 17

Metaphors, Consciousness, and Artifacts

Black— "Metaphor"

Black— "Models and Archetypes"

Streeter—"The Cable Fable Revisited: Discourse, Policy, and the Making of Cable Television"

Nord—"The Ironies of Communication Technology"

Wofsey—"Back to the Future"

Feb 24

Gow—"Spatial Metaphor in the Work of Marshall McLuhan"

Parsons—"Defining Cable Television: Structuration and Public Policy"

Uncertainty and System Development

Sawhney—"Excess Capacity and the Innovation Imperative: The Case of Cable"

Sawhney—"Dynamics of Infrastructure development: Metaphors, Political Will, and Creative Error"

SYNTHESIS PAPER # 2: Due Monday, February 28th

Mar 3

Hierarchy and System Design

Mueller—"The Switchboard Problem: Scale, Signaling, and Organization in Manual Telephone Switching, 1877-1897"

Huber—"The Geodesic Network"

Noam—"The Future of the Public Network: From the Star to Matrix"

Gilder—"The Rise and Fall of Television"

Berners-Lee—"Information Management: A Proposal"

Mueller—"Competing DNS Roots: Creative Destruction or Just Plain Destruction?"

Mar 10

Collapse of Hierarchy

Cleveland—"The Twilight of Hierarchy"

Bridges—"The End of the Job"

Reich—"From High Volume to High Value"

Reich—"The New Web of Enterprise"

Reich—"The Three Jobs of the Future"

Zuboff—"Managing the Informed Organization"

Schrage—"A Spreadsheet Way of Knowledge"

SPRING BREAK

Mar 24

Un-order as an Organizing Principle 1

Giese—"From ARPAnet to the Internet: A Cultural Clash and Its Implications in Framing the Debate on the Information Superhighway"

Douglas—"Amateur Operators and American Broadcasting: Shaping the Future of Radio"

Sawhney—"Circumventing the Center: The Realities of Creating a Telecommunications Infrastructure in the USA."

von Auw—"Engineers and Economists"

Dober—"Circulation"

Agre—"Real-Time Politics: The Internet and the Political Process"

SYNTHESIS PAPER # 3: Due Monday, March 28

Mar 31

Un-order as an Organizing Principle 2

Cats-Baril and Jelassi—“The French Videotex System Minitel: A Successful Implementation of a National Information Technology Infrastructure”

Schneider—“Evolution in Cyberspace: The Adaptation of National Videotex Systems to the Internet”

Brousseau—“E-Commerce in France: Did Early Adoption Prevent its Development?”

Sawhney—“The Slide Towards Decentralization: Clock and Computer”

Agre—“Peer-to-Peer and the Promise of Internet Equality”

Lee—“‘No Artificial Death, Only Natural Death’: The Dynamics of Centralization and Decentralization of Usenet Newsgroups”

Apr 7

Un-order as an Organizing Principle 3

Lehr & McKnight—“Wireless Internet Access: 3G vs. WiFi”

Sawhney—“Wi-Fi Networks and the Reorganization of Wireline-Wireless relationship”

Johnstone—“Wiring Japan”

Associated Press—“Japan Reveals Plan to Catch Up with West in Technology”

Washington Post—“Steep Phone Fees Add Up for Internet Users in Japan”

Pollack—“Now its Japan’s Turn to Play Catch-Up”

Baker and Capell—“The Race to Rule Mobile”

Kunii and Baker—“Japan’s Mobile Marvel”

Tanikawa—“Phone Surfing for a Few Yen”

Suri and Sawhney — “The Internet and its Wireless Extensions in Japan”

Barzilai-Nahon and Barzilai — “Cultured Technology: Internet and Religious Fundamentalism”

Apr 14

Un-order as an Organizing Principle 4

Shirky — “It Takes a Village to Find a Phone”

Shirky — “Sharing Anchors Community”

Shirky — “Failure for Free”

Shirky — “Promise, Tool, Bargain”

Sawhney and Suri — “From Hierarchy to Open-Configurations: Decentralization and User-Generated Content”

SYNTHESIS PAPER # 4: Due Monday, April 18

Apr 21

Networked Configurations

Mintzberg — “The Essence of Structure”

Staw and Cummings — “Neither Market nor Hierarchy: Network Forms of Organization”

Leavitt — “Unhuman Organizations”

Prakken — “Uncertainty, Information, and (Re)Organization”

Tarr, Finholt, and Goodman — “The City and the Telegraph: Urban Telecommunications in the Pre-Telephone Era”

Castells — “Prologue: The Net and the Self”

Castells — “Conclusion: the Network Society”

Apr 28

Values and System Design

Pool— "Communications for the less Developed Countries"

Samarajiva and Shields— "Telecommunications in the Third World: Value Choices in Resource Allocation"

Mumford— "The Highway and the City"

Carey — "Space, Time, and Communications: A Tribute to Harold Innis."

Mumford— "Authoritarian and Democratic Technics"

SYNTHESIS PAPER # 5: Due Monday, May 2