

Syllabus
Seminar: Information Policy and Issues (IS 209)
Department of Information Studies
Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, UCLA

Dr. Leah A. Lievrouw
Fall 2006 / Tuesdays 1:30 – 4:50 pm
Office Hours: Wednesday 10:30 am – 12:30 pm or by appointment
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Course website: <http://courses.gseis.ucla.edu>

Course Description

This course provides a broad overview of different perspectives on the development of the *information society*, drawing from a range of disciplines and theories. Debates about the nature of social change, about modernity vs. post-modernity, and about the large-scale social, economic, technological, and cultural shifts associated with information, are presented.

Goals and Objectives

This course is designed as a graduate-level seminar for students in information studies and other fields with interests related to social change, social theory, and information policy issues. As a result of their participation, all students in the seminar should be able to:

1. Describe and discuss the major theoretical perspectives on the emergence of the information society
2. Identify the major themes and debates in information society studies since the 1970s
3. Summarize the work of key theorists and analysts in information society studies
4. Discuss the implications of the various perspectives for social policy and information institutions.

Course Requirements

Readings/Discussions. The course is taught in seminar form, and students are expected to make cogent and prepared contributions to class discussions. Students should come to class having read the assigned material, and have a broad familiarity with information- and technology-related policy issues as presented in the popular press and online.

Required Texts: Required readings will be posted on the course website. In addition, students are strongly encouraged to purchase their own copies of two books that will be excerpted throughout the course:

Kumar, K. (2005). *From Post-Industrial to Post-Modern Society: New Theories of the Contemporary World* (2nd ed.). Malden, MA and Oxford: Blackwell.

Webster, F. (2002). *Theories of the Information Society* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge

Assignments: Students will write reviews of two books chosen from a bibliography provided by the instructor. One will be due during the 5th week of class, and the other during Exam Week. More information about the assignments will be available on the course website and discussed in class.

Grading Formula: Grading for the course will be based on the following formula: 50% for the quality of the student's preparation for, and participation in, the seminar; and 25% for each of the book reviews.

Weekly Topics and Readings

October 3 Introduction: Revolutions and Evolutions

Sztompka, P. (1993). Fundamental concepts in the study of change. In *The Sociology of Social Change*, pp. 3-23. Oxford and Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Alexander, J. (1994). Modern, anti, post and neo: How social theories have tried to understand the "new world" of "our time". *Zeitschrift für Soziologie*, 23(3), June, 165-197.

October 10 Themes and Debates in Information Society Studies

Schement, J.R. and Lievrouw, L.A. (eds.) (1987). *Competing Visions, Complex Realities: Social Aspects of the Information Society*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Introduction: The fundamental assumptions of information society research, pp. 1-10.

Chapter 3, A third vision: Capitalism and the industrial origins of the information society, pp. 33-45.

Webster, Chapter 2, "The idea of an information society," in *Theories of the Information Society*

Kumar, "The revival of post-industrial theory," in *From Post-Industrial to Post-Modern Society*

October 17 Bell's *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*

Bell, D. (1979). The social framework of the information society. In M.L. Dertouzos and J. Moses (eds.), *The Computer Age: A Twenty-Year View*, pp. 163-211. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Kumar, "The information society," in *From Post-Industrial to Post-Modern Society*

Duff, A.S. (1998). Daniel Bell's theory of the information society. *Journal of Information Science*, 24(6), 373-93.

Ferkiss, V. (1979). Daniel Bell's concept of post-industrial society: Theory, myth and ideology. *Political Science Reviewer*, 9, fall, 61-102.

Webster, Chapter 3, "The information society as post-industrialism: Daniel Bell," in *Theories of the Information Society*

October 24

Castells: The Network Society and the Space of Flows

Castells, M. (2000a). Materials for an exploratory theory of the network society. *British Journal of Sociology*, 51(1), 5-24.

Castells, M. (2000b). Toward a sociology of the network society. *Contemporary Sociology*, 29(5), September, 693-699.

Stalder, F. (1998). The network paradigm: Social formations in the age of information (review essay of *The Information Age* trilogy). *The Information Society*, 14, 301-308.

Webster, Chapter 5, "Informational capitalism: Manuel Castells," in *Theories of the Information Society*

October 31

Book Review Presentations I

Reviews must be submitted online no later than start of class.

November 7

No Class Meeting / Prof. Lievrouw attending ASIS&T

November 14

The Critique: Information Society as Ideology

Webster, F. and Robins, K. (1989). Plan and control: Towards a cultural history of the information society. *Theory and Society*, 18, 323-351.

Robins, K. and Webster, F. (1999). The long history of the information revolution. In *Times of the Technoculture: From the Information Society to the Virtual Life*, pp. 89-110. London and New York: Routledge.

Slack, J.D. (1984). The information revolution as ideology. *Media, Culture & Society*, 6, 247-256.

Hamelink, C. (1986). Is there life after the information revolution? In M. Traber (Ed.), *The Myth of the Information Revolution: Social and Ethical Implications of Communication Technology*, pp. 7-20. London: Sage.

November 21

Post-Fordism: The Régulation School, Flexible Specialization

Hirst, P. and Zeitlin, J. (1991). Flexible specialization versus post-Fordism: Theory evidence and policy implications. *Economy and Society*, 20(1), February, 1-56.

Lipietz, A. (1982). Toward global Fordism? *New Left Review* 1/132, March-April, 33-47.

Lipietz, A. (1997). The post-Fordist world: Labor relations, international hierarchy and global ecology. *Review of International Political Economy*, 4(1), 1-41.

Kumar, "Fordism and post-Fordism," in *From Post-Industrial to Post-Modern Society*.

Webster, Chapter 4, "Information, restructuring and globalization," in *Theories of the Information Society*.

November 28

Modernity and Post-Modernity

Sztompka, P. (1993). Modernity and beyond. In *The Sociology of Social Change*, pp. 69-85. Oxford and Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Kumar, "Rethinking modernity," "Modernity and post-modernity (1): The idea of the modern," and "Modernity and postmodernity (2): The idea of post-modernity," in *From Post-Industrial to Post-Modern Society*.

December 5

Poster: *The Mode of Information*

Poster, M. (1990). Introduction: Words without things. In *The Mode of Information: Poststructuralism and Social Context*, pp. 1-20. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Poster, M. (1994). The mode of information and postmodernity. In D. Crowley and D. Mitchell (Eds.), *Communication Theory Today*, pp. 173-192. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Poster, M. (1995). Postmodern virtualities. In *The Second Media Age*. Oxford and Cambridge, MA: Blackwell. [Available: <http://www.hnet.uci.edu/mposter/writings/internet.html>]

Webster, Chapter 9, "Information, postmodernism, and postmodernity," in *Theories of the Information Society*.

Kumar, "Millennial themes: Endings and beginnings," in *From Post-Industrial to Post-Modern Society*.

Exam Week

Book Review Presentations II

Reviews must be submitted online no later than midnight,
December 10