# Networked Knowledge

ATEC 6V81

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Fall 2008                                                            Office Number: 1.502

R 11:30-2:15 ATEC 1.606                        Office Hours: T 12:00-1:00, R 9:00-10:00

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## Course Description:

In the introduction to *Smart Mobs*, Howard Rheingold argues that in the future people will be divided between "those who know how to use new media to band together [and] those who don't" (xix). In this class we will examine how the technological change from the analog to the digital effects the ability to produce and disseminate knowledge and how networked media are changing not only the form of knowledge but its content as well. Once powerful institutions seem to be losing relevance by the day (consider how quickly *Wikipedia* has trumped *Britannica*). At the same time we should not too quickly view these new networked digital spaces as utopian democracies, for there are still substantial rhetorical and cultural forces at work. Central to our examination will be how technology, rhetoric, and ethics shape our use of networked communication.

## Required Texts:

(all texts are available at Off-Campus Books)

> *Smart Mobs,* Howard Rheingold
>
> *Everything is Miscellaneous,* David Weinberger
>
> *Blogs, Wikipedia, Second Life and Beyond*, Axel Bruns
>
> *Here Comes Everybody,* Clay Shirky
>
> *Orality and Literacy,* Walter Ong
>
> *Thinking Otherwise,* David Gunkel
>
> *The Networked Society,* Manuel Castellas
>
> *The Exploit*, Alexander Galloway & Eugene Thacker
>
> *My Mother was a Computer*, Katherine Hayles
>
> *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe,* Elizabeth Eisenstein

There will be several readings available online or via eReserve, which you will need to print out and bring to class.

## Course Requirements:

The primary requirement for this course is class participation. To do well in this course you will need to come to class having done the reading for the week prepared to discuss the text at hand. I realize that the reading load for this class is heavy at times, however, we are going to be covering some complex and complicated issues and in order for the class discussion to proceed and for everyone to benefit the most from our time in class it is necessary for every student to have a shared basis from which class discussions can proceed.

Thus for every class it is your responsibility to come to class not only having done the reading, but to have spent time considering the issues that each text raises, ready to engage in a lively

discussion about the questions at hand. Missing more than one class can lead to a lower grade. In addition to attendance and participation the following are required for this class.

**Participating in the class blog:** There is a website for this class (see below). Every week you will need to compose a substantial post, in the form of a comment, to the class site. This gives you a chance to comment on the reading before we get to class, to see what others have made of the reading, and provides me with some feedback about how the class has approached the material. I will often use this online forum as a place from which to begin our in class discussion. Thus, you should post your comment *no later than midnight on the Monday before class*, and plan on visiting the website sometime on Wednesday to look over what others have written. These posts need not be long essays but rather one or two paragraphs (300-400 words); they should give a sense of what you thought of the material and places where you would like to begin the discussion. Think of these as questions rather than a thesis.

**Midterm:** There will be a short take-home midterm for this class (1500-1800 words) that will ask you to reformulate and synthesize readings from the first half of the semester.

**Final Project:** For the final paper you can choose one of two approaches. (Note: If you are pursuing a PhD or plan on pursuing a PhD you must choose the second option.)

- Two short papers each engaging a different topic/issue that we have discussed in class. I will hand out sample topics/ideas after the midterm, but you will be responsible for developing your own specific topic(s). Each paper should be 1,900-2,000 words.

- One academic paper. Your paper should focus on one topic/issue we have discussed in class and be a sustained examination of said issue. I will work with you to develop your topic after the midterm. Your paper should 4,250-4,500 words. The goal here is to produce a draft of what can become a conference paper or journal article.

## Course Website:

The course website for this class can we found at <http://www.outsidethetext.com/arche>. You should get in the habit of checking this regularly as I will post suggestions and thoughts about the readings here, as well as links to other things that might interest the class. The syllabus can be found here as well, and any changes to the syllabus will be posted here. If you forget the web address you can always find it from <http://www.outsidethetext.com>, an easier url to remember.

## How to Reach Me:

The best way to reach me is by email <dparry@utdallas.edu> or you can find me online at <http://www.outsidethetext.com>. I check email frequently throughout the day. If you email me and do not receive a response within 48 hours (usually I will get back to you within a day), please feel free to email me again (I might not have received your first one) and give me a reminder. I promise not to consider this harassing.

My office hours are Tuesday 12:00-1:00, Thursday 9:00-10:00, or by appointment (as I am frequently on campus). I am always happy to meet with graduate students, so if these times do not work please email me and we can find another time. My office is ATEC 1.502.

## Networked Knowledge (Schedule of Readings)

**Week One-**August 21st
　　Class Introduction

**Week Two-**August 28th
　　*Smart Mobs,* Howard Rheingold

**Week Three-**September 4th
　　*Orality and Literacy*, Walter Ong

**Week Four-**September 11th
　　*The Printing Press in Early Modern Europe*, Elizabeth Eisenstein

**Week Five-**September 18th
　　*Archive Fever* & *Paper Machine*, Jacques Derrida

**Week Six-**September 25th
　　*Question Concerning Technology,* Martin Heidegger

**Week Seven-**October 2nd
　　*Thinking Otherwise,* David Gunkel

**Week Eight-**October 9th
　　*The Networked Society,* Manuel Castellas
　　***\*Midterms Distributed\****

**Week Nine-**October 16th
　　*Everything is Miscellaneous,* David Weinberger
　　***\*Midterms Due\****

**Week Ten-**October 23rd
　　*Blogs, Wikipedia, Second Life and Beyond,* Axel Bruns

**Week Eleven-**October 30th
　　*Blogs, Wikipedia, Second Life and Beyond*, Axel Bruns
　　***\*Paper Proposals Due in Class\****

**Week Twelve-**November 6th
　　*The Exploit*, Galloway & Thacker

**Week Thirteen-**November 13th
　　*My Mother was a Computer,* Katherine Hayles

**Week Fourteen-**November 20th
　　*Here Comes Everybody,* Clay Shirky
　　***\*Paper Draft Due in Class\****

**Week Fifteen-**December 4th
　　Final Class

　　***\*Final Paper Due December 12th\****