

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING
AND PRESERVATION — URBAN PLANNING PROGRAM

PLA6229
Social Communication Planning
Class: Tuesdays 4-6 pm.
Lab: Thursdays 9-11 am.

Spring, 2004
Prof. T. Vietorisz
Matias Echanove,
ICT consultant

OBJECTIVE

Social Communication Policy should address issues of the twin infrastructures — technological and socio-cultural — needed for the more effective functioning of democratic, collaborative social communications. Planning for the latter should support a high quality of life within an open society in which people are empowered to control their own communication structures and processes, so that necessary changes may proceed with cultural continuity and a preservation of community identities.

This is a new course to be given initially in the Spring of 2004. Its object is to study how urban and regional planning practice can adapt to the impact of the Internet and other advanced information and communication technologies (ICT). Such study has to include not only the new technologies but also new processes of social communication and organization; hence the label "social" in the title of the course. Some of these processes, such as e-commerce, are by now well established. Others, such as e-government, are still feeling their way and have not settled down into established patterns. Finally, many new initiatives, for example the WTO protests or the surprising Dean presidential campaign, are emerging experimentally from dispersed and informal beginnings and have yet to show what and how they might contribute to the society of the future.

The course will deal with planning for two kinds of infrastructures of social communication. The first is the technological infrastructure, for example, end-to-end optical fiber build-out for Gigabit-speed Internet. The second is what might be termed the "cultural infrastructure" of social communication. This includes the economic and business arrangements underlying the utilization of the new technologies. It also includes the cultural predispositions and values that facilitate modernization and adaptation and thus enable a community to transition, without a loss of its identity, to the new era of low-cost, ultra-fast, near-universally accessible global communications looming just beyond the horizon.

COURSE ORGANIZATION

The course contributes to the perspectives of both the Development and the International sector specializations within the Master's Program. It has no prerequisites and is acceptable for partial fulfillment of the requirements for either of these two sectors. It can be taken during the first or the second year.

Unlike housing, land use, or transport planning, long included in planning curricula, communication planning has so far apparently not been offered anywhere, though the impact of advanced communication technologies on cities and regions, both in the First and the Third Worlds, is enormous and increasingly recognized. Since there are no examples to follow, the course will proceed with the tentative structure that is spelled out by the themes listed below, but this structure is intended to be flexible. Students are encouraged to explore these or other related themes from their own perspectives and offer their findings, as appropriate, in seminar-type class discussions and/or in the lab.

The lab will offer an opportunity to develop technical skills. Students will have the choice of working on the Urban Image Network, on Trading Places projects, or on similar projects that they may propose and initiate, preferably in teams. Students working on the Urban Image Network might be awarded traveling grants from the Fannie Mae/Trading Places fund for photographic expeditions. Through the lab, shared virtual sessions will also be arranged, in so far as possible, with Trading Places groups and with ICT experts at other locations, some of them overseas.

TERM PROJECT

Students should select term project topics in consultation with the instructors. Projects are encouraged that might become the foundation of the student's Master's Thesis, as are projects that complement previous work or team projects.

Students should use concept maps as a preferred medium for presenting progress on their term projects and their reports on other assignments, in a condensed visual form that emphasizes interrelations among ideas. Construction and presentation of concept maps will be discussed at the start of the semester.

Given the pioneering nature of this course, students may also select for their term projects to put together class and reading notes of term paper length for specific themes in the Syllabus or emerging from flexible changes of the Syllabus in the course of the semester.

KEY READINGS

Students, working together two at a time, will take turns at making half-hour class presentations of key readings. Use of concept maps for presentations is encouraged; outlines, concept maps, and suggested discussion topics should be circulated in time for review before class. You are expected to cover each key reading prior to the scheduled presentation, for participation in class discussion

BACKGROUND READING

Concept maps. Novak, Joseph D. (1985) *Learning How to Learn*. Cambridge University Press. (Fundamental reference on concept mapping.) Also: (1998) *Learning, Creating, and Using Knowledge: Concept Maps As Facilitative Tools in Schools and Corporations*. Practical notes on using concept maps will be distributed in class.

Day-to-day, advanced telecommunications. Subscribe to the CANARIE-NEWS list. To do so, send e-mail to: majordomo@canarie.ca In the body of the e-mail, place the following text:

subscribe news
end

Day to day-general. *The Economist* (London), weekly. A highly knowledgeable and literate source, with worldwide coverage. Read critically. The Economist is committed to an ideology rather close to market fundamentalism, but it is fair; it gives the facts on the basis of which one can disagree with its conclusions. Beautifully written. Also, *The New York Times*. Using both of these sources, follow relevant events systematically around the world, especially those relevant to class discussion and your term project.

SYLLABUS

When printing materials downloaded from the Internet that follow metric standards (e.g. European documents) provide page setup for a reduction to 90% of original size, otherwise bottom of page will be clipped.

You should cover the key reading(s) associated with each theme prior to class presentation. It is assumed that familiarity with the themes in the syllabus will vary. *Select your readings accordingly, also with consideration of your term paper.* For some of the material to be covered in class, no good summary sources exist. Taking careful class notes is important; you are all encouraged to pool notes.

PART ONE—COMMUNICATIONS AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 1 Introduction and overview.** Open communications and the open society. Three pillars of a social communication policy for the coming era of world connectedness: optical fiber networks, end-user ownership, and modernization/adaptation/transitioning under community control. Planning for social communications.

- Vietorisz, T. (2003) *UN WSIS/IRFD slides*. Geneva, December. Download from <http://www.communicationplanning.org>.
- 2 **Joint evolution of communication technologies and social structures.** From language to writing, printing, electronic/wireless, and optical communications. Changes in the nature of the community with each major advance. Modern communications and their role in the development of the economic base and competitiveness of U.S. cities. Planning issues.
- Matthew P. Drennan (2002) *The Information Economy and American Cities*. Baltimore, Md. Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Morten H. Christiansen and Simon Kirby (2003) *Language Evolution*. New York, Oxford University Press. Chs. 1 and 12
- 3 **Advanced optical fiber networks (AFN) vs. wire and cable: the Schumpeterian revolution of creative destruction.**
- IEEE-USA (2003) *Accelerating Advanced Broadband Deployment in the U.S.* Position statement of the IEEE-USA Board of Directors, Washington, DC, February. <http://afn.johnson.cornell.edu/>
- Reed Hundt (2003) *Reforming Telecom Policy for the Big Broadband Era: Why is Government Subsidizing the old Networks when "Big Broadband" Convergence is Inevitable and Optimal?* New America Foundation. Spectrum Policy Program, Spectrum Series Issue Brief #14. December. <http://www.newamerica.net/Download Docs/pdfs/Pub File 1431 1.pdf>. Reed Hundt is former Chair of the Federal Communications Commission.
- Alan K. McAdams (2003) *UN WSIS/IRFD slides*. Geneva, December. <http://www.communicationplanning.org>.
- Lessig, Lawrence (2003) "Fiber to the People: When Customers Own the Network Everyone Wins." *Wired*, December. <http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/11.12/view.html?pg=5>.
- 4 **The Internet, infrastructures, society's innovation common, and regional development.** The goals of regional and urban development. Regional/national cultures and economic competitiveness. Some key dimensions of cultural functioning; contrasts between early and late industrializers. The open society and telecommunications monopolies. The issue of unfiltered access to information and its relationship to technological and social innovation. Communication and knowledge transfer across cultural barriers.
- Vietorisz, T. (2003) *Regional Development Gains from the Gigabit Ethernet Over Fiber Revolution*. Revised version of working paper prepared for the IEEE-USA Workshop On U.S. National Policy for Accelerating Broadband Deployment Washington, D.C., June 17-18, 2002. <http://www.communicationplanning.org>
- Lessig, Lawrence (2001) *The Internet Under Siege*. *Foreign Policy*, Nov-Dec. "Who owns the Internet? Until recently, nobody. That's because, although the Internet was 'Made in the U.S.A.,' its unique design transformed it into a resource for innovation that anyone in the world could use. Today, however, courts and corporations are attempting to wall off portions of cyberspace. In so doing, they are destroying the Internet's potential to foster democracy and economic growth worldwide. <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/issue novdec 2001/lessig.html>
- CAnet-3-NEWS (2002) *New Copyright System proposed for Content developers* (W). Developed by Lessig with cooperation from MIT, Duke, Harvard and Villanova universities. See also Lemley and Lessig ex-parte testimony before FCC (1999) on the question of open access and its relationship to the end-to-end architecture of the Internet. (W)
- 5 **Culture change, telecenters, and the digital gap: the paradigm for third world rural areas.** The primacy of social and cultural issues over technological initiatives. Closing the digital gap as one aspect of reducing pervasive dualisms in the world's
- Comment:** [Geneva Vietorisz 3Grev.ppt]
- Comment:** [Hundt New Amer Foundn Spec14]
- Comment:** [geneva-mcadams-final3.ppt]
- Comment:** [Lessig 03 Fiber to the People]
- Comment:** [GEF Regional Gains rev2.rtf]
- Comment:** [Lessig 01 Internet Under Siege]
- Comment:** [Lessig 02 New copyright system]
- Comment:** [Lessig FCC open internet.pdf]

less advanced areas. Key role of autonomous community control over culture change in achieving successful modernization without loss of community identity. The telecenter movement.

United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Task Force UN ICT TF (2003)

Connected for Development: Information Kiosks and Sustainability. Presented by Kofi Anan to the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society (UN WSIS), Geneva, December 12-14. Download from <http://www.unicttaskforce.org/wsisis/books.asp>. See especially pp. 191-198, T. Wormald and M. Gaspar, Hungarian Telecottages. (W)

Comment: [UN Connected for Development.pdf]

Gáspár, Máttyás (2002) Telecottages—The chance for small communities to develop. In:

Foundation for the Development of Democratic Rights (FDDR) *Telecottages in Yugoslavia*, 13-32; DemNet Series No. 5, Paktum Bt., Budapest, Hungary, ISBN 9630097346. See also pp. 8-12. (W) also (2001) *Telehouses in Hungary*. *Development Communications*, Kuala Lumpur, Vol 12 No 2, December (W). See also other articles in the above special number of the Journal (2001) *Development Communications*, Kuala Lumpur, Vol 12 No 2, December (W)

Comment: [Gás Hu Telecot 191-8 UN Connec]

Comment: [Gaspar Telecottages HU/YUG]

Comment: [Gás Te in Hu 60-84 Dev Comm]

Douglas Schuler, Tom Stone (Editor). (1996) *New Community Networks: Wired for Change*. Paperback: 528 pages; Addison-Wesley Pub Co.

Comment: [Dev Comm jourl telecenters1.pdf] [Dev Comm jourl telecenters2.pdf] [Dev Comm jourl telecenters3.pdf]

Latchem, Colin and Walker, David, eds. (2001) *Perspectives on Distance Education: Case Studies and Key Issues*. Vancouver, Canada, The Commonwealth of Learning. (COL) (Chapter 5: case study on Hungary). Free download from http://www.col.org/Telecentres/telecentre_intro.htm.

Comment: [COL 01 Telecentres download]

Balazs Koranyi (2002) Hungary's Telecottages Introduce The Internet for a Welcome Stay. *The Wall Street Journal* 08/07, p. B8C. (W)

Comment: [Koranyi.doc]

6 New York City Community Technology Centers: in search for an effective approach to the digital gap in disadvantaged urban neighborhoods.

Community Technology Centers in New York City: Strategic Plan (2002) Sponsored by the New York City Community Technology Center Bank—A joint effort by the Institute for Learning Technologies, the New York City Council, and the Economic Development Corporation. Project Director: Bruce Lincoln. New York, Teachers College Columbia University. (W)

Comment: [CTC Strategic Plan-CTC Bank.pdf]

Jeffrey L. Otto, Ofelia A. Rodriguez, and John Tran (2002) *New York City Community Technology Centers: Catalysts for Social Change or Business as Usual?* Columbia University, Urban Planning Program paper (W)

Comment: [F 3 Rodz Tran Otto CTC final]

PART TWO—SOCIAL PROCESSES DRIVEN BY ADVANCED COMMUNICATIONS

7 e-Commerce: what it means for the urban/regional economic base.

Philip Evans and Thomas S. Wurster (1999) *Getting Real About Virtual Commerce*. *Harvard Business Review*, Nov/Dec. Functions and power of “navigators” that bring pressures toward “commoditization”; defenses against such pressures; the factors of “reach” vs. “richness” as tools that can add to or detract from such defenses. Waldman, Amy (2004) *Indian Soybean Farmers Join the Global Village*. *The New York Times*, January 11.

Comment: Distribute or show in class current version of [McA Deepti 1.jpg]

8 e-Government, NGOs and citizens: toward more open social decisionmaking at the local level.

Thomas B. Riley (2003) *E-Governance To E-Democracy: Examining The Evolution*. International Tracking Survey Report '03: Number Five. Download from <http://www.rileyis.com/publications/> (As e-government principles and practices have been applied in the past few years it has been clear that fundamental governance issues determine the workability of the application of e-services

Comment: [India Soybean choupal ITC Ltd]

delivery and e-programs.) See also preceding four reports on same website.
European Commission (2003) *The Role of eGovernment for Europe's Future*. September.

Comment: [Riley 03 eGov to eDem.doc]

Download from
http://europa.eu.int/information_society/eeurope/egovconf/index_en.htm |

Comment: [egov_communication_en.pdf]

European Commission (2003) *eGovernment Resource Book: Synopses of IST Projects Relating to eGovernment*. Information Society Technologies. March. Download from
http://europa.eu.int/information_society/programmes/egov_rd/fp5/fp5_projects/index_en.htm | See especially the following projects: AGORA (regional/urban planning), CENTURI21 (community empowerment), EDEN (electronic democracy), EURO-CITY (urban), MEASURE (evaluation), PANDORA (rural), REGIONAL-IST (indicators), VISUAL ADMIN (open info systems), VSIIS (inclusiveness), and WEBOCRACY (direct participation).

Comment: [EUCOM 03 eGov IST projects]

Comment: [EUCOM 03 eGov IST projects]

- 9 **Digital networks and grassroots participation.** Beginning with Linux open-source software movement, ICTs have allowed the development and spread of new types of grassroots organizations and participatory movements such as Linux, Trading Places, URBZ, or the Dean campaign. In keeping with McLuhan's dictum "the medium is the message", the new types of organizations which have flourished using the World Wide Web all share certain characteristics—horizontal communications, informal linkages, flexibility, interactivity, and a networked mode of operation. Using the above specific cases, the course will offer an opportunity to discuss and assess the qualities that make the Internet such a good tool for grassroots participation, organization, and open public knowledge accumulation. Further, the question will be raised and explored how ICTs can be used by urban planners for communicating with the public and involving it in the planning process. Students should explore the websites specified below. In addition, each student should find two activist websites of interest for the course, to be jointly discussed evaluated. Please e-mail the links to the instructor two days before class.

Yohai Benkler (2001) *Coase's Penguin, Linux, and the Nature of the Firm*. (W)

Comment: [Benkler 01 Coase's Penguin Linux]

Matias Echanove (2003) *UN WSIS/IRFD slides*. Geneva, December. Download from
<http://www.communicationplanning.org>
<http://www.linux.org/> and <http://www.redhat.com/> Explore these and the following websites.

www.tradingplaces.org and www.urbz.net
www.globalpolicy.org
www.deanforamerica.com

- 10 **Urban micro-structure, signs, and symbols: the informal understructure of formal social communications in the networked city.** Complementarity between the most advanced and the simplest symbol/sign-based communication techniques, the simplest taking on disproportionate importance in contacts between individuals who share no common language. Examples of visual/sign/symbol communication systems. The alphabet: Pictures and signs 30,000 years ago. The pre-Columbian native American sign interlingue remarked upon by anthropologist Lucien Levy-Strauss. Gesturing and signing among Deaf from different cultures to-day. Computer translation systems: the IBM English/Chinese simultaneous interpretation experiment.

<http://www.jakovich.net> Explore this website which covers Joanne Jakovich's research on temporal/situational sign systems in an urban context. A virtual discussion session with Ms. Jakovich will be arranged, if possible, through the lab. See also *Jakovich Signs 1*, *Jakovich symbol_diagram.jpg*, and *Jakovich Anonymous_Symbols.jpg* (W) |

Comment: [Jakovich Signs 1], [Jakovich Anonymous_Symbols.jpg], [Jakovich symbol_diagram.jpg]

Varga, Csaba (2001) *Jel, jel, jel* (Sign, sign, sign). Budapest: Frig Publ.
(untranslated from the Hungarian original) Will be presented in class |

Comment: Pages for Hypothetical Ancestral lphabet 104-5 and for Hungarian Runic Alphabet 209

<http://home.istar.ca/~bci> Explore this and the following two websites as examples of

visual/sign/symbol communication systems.

<http://www.khm.de/~timot/langOverview.html>

<http://www.kwikpoint.com>

- 11 Global flows and new nomadism: urban planning in the information society.** Notions of widespread circulation in advanced societies during the Twentieth Century, such as the nuclear family, the welfare state, a job for life, or a safe homeland, have vanished or are rapidly fading in recent years as the institutions of the global market are progressively spreading, together with the technologies that support them. Today the values and institutions of stable, established societies are threatened as never before since the fall of the Roman Empire. The struggle between "sedentary" and "nomadic" forces is visible everywhere. Well recognized examples of this struggle include proprietary software and copyright vs. open source programs and the mass pirating of copyrighted materials; media control over information vs. decentralized information software generation and transmission; internet security and control vs. viruses and hackers; or national economic strategies vs. uncontrolled global financial flows. The Internet is both a metaphor for the nomadic society and a factor responsible for its emergence. The course will assess the role of ICTs in the new *risk society* and ask what planning means in a nomadic world.

Jacques Attali (1999) *Labyrinth in Culture and Society: Pathways to Wisdom*. North Atlantic Books.

William Mitchell (2003) *Me++ : The Cyborg Self and the Networked City*. MIT Press.

- 12 Conclusion and synthesis: urban/regional planning and social communications planning.** Interconnected issues of the open society, ecological sustainability, zero waste, social/cultural sustainability, access and spatial/urban sustainability, and the globalizing knowledge economy. The ideological debate. Toward a sustainable social communication policy

Ulrich Beck (1999) *World Risk Society*. Blackwell Publishers.