

Computers, Ethics, and Society

STSC 465 • Summer 2007



This course will explore the various social implications of information technology: social, cultural, political, and economic. By considering a wide variety of perspectives on the Information Revolution, we will examine the relationship between new information technologies and changing notions of community, identity, property, and democracy. Topics will include intellectual property rights, Linux and the free software movement, cyber libertarianism, and the rise and fall of the dot.com economy.

Professor Nathan L. Ensmenger
nathanen@sas.upenn.edu

STSC 465: Computers, Ethics, and Society

Professor Nathan L. Ensmenger
Office Hours: M-W, 4-6 pm, 362 Logan Hall
nathanen@sas.upenn.edu

Course Format:

This course will meet twice a week. Due to the compressed format of the summer sessions, preparation and attendance are particularly important. If you do need to miss class please let me know in advance. Grading will be based on three components: class participation (30%), short reading response assignments (40%), and a final paper (30%).

Course Schedule:

Introduction

May 21: Everything you wanted to know about the Information Revolution but were afraid to ask

Cyberpunks

May 23: Hacker Ethics & Hacker Crimes

Steven Levy, *Hackers: Heroes of the Computer Revolution*, chapters 1-2.
Spafford, *Are Computer Break-ins Ethical?* Available [online](#).

Software, Spleens and Shamans

May 30: Intellectual Property and Information Technology

Richard Stallman, "Why Software Should be Free." Available [online](#).
Eric Raymond, "The Cathedral & Bazaar." Available [online](#).

The Open Society

June 4: Open Sources and Public Spheres

Cass Sunstein, "The Future of Free Speech." Available [online](#).
Winner, Langdon. "Cybertarian Myths and the Prospects for Community." In *Cyberethics: Social and Moral Issues in the Computer Age* (Eds. Baird, Ramsower and Rosenbaum).

The World is Flat?

June 6: Globalization and the Internet

Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*. Selected excerpts.

Code is Law

June 11: Can we regulate technology?

Lawrence Lessig, *Code, and other laws of cyberspace*. Selected excerpts.
In-class discussion: *Case study on Digital Music*

Like nailing jello to the wall . . .

June 13: Does Google change China, or does China change Google?

Timothy Wu, James Goldsmith, *Who Controls the Internet?*. Selected excerpts.

I know what you did last summer

June 18: Living in the surveillance society

Jeffrey Rosen, *The Unwanted Gaze*. Selected excerpts.

Web 2.0

June 20: You are your social network . . .

In-class discussion: *Towards an ethnography of Facebook*

Where did all the women go?

June 25: Digital divides in contemporary culture

Susan Herring, "Gender and Power in Online Communication." Available [online](#).

Lisa Nakamura, "Race In/For Cyberspace: Identity Tourism and Racial Passing on the Internet." Available [online](#).

The Big Finish

June 27: In which all is made clear