



**Course** ATCM 6389  
**Course Title** Special Topics in Networked Cultures – Histories of the Internet  
**Professor** Dr. Josef Nguyen (he/him/his)  
**Term** Fall 2024  
**Meetings** M, 4:00-6:45PM in ATC 2.918

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### **PROFESSOR'S CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Email Address** [josef.nguyen@utdallas.edu](mailto:josef.nguyen@utdallas.edu)  
Please format and address all emails regarding the class professionally, include the course information in the subject line, and allow up to 24 hours for responses (and longer for weekends).

**Office Location** ATC 3.617  
**Office Phone** 972.883.7552  
**Office Hours** By email appointment, with in-office and online options

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### **GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION**

**Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, & other restrictions** n/a

**Course Description** This course focuses on histories of the internet along two key dimensions. First, it explores various histories and counter-histories about the development, use, and evolution of the internet as a communications technology. Second, it explores how the internet participates in documenting and recording histories and counter-histories of various kinds. In so doing, this course uses the internet as a focal point for unpacking contemporary technologies, practices, and conventions of generating and contesting histories and counter-histories.

To explore this, this class draws on diverse fields—including media studies, science and technology studies, feminist and queer theory, critical race and ethnic studies, disability and crip theory, and ecocriticism, among other fields—to examine the situated, contextual, and material conditions of power that shaped and continue to shape histories of the internet and the histories shaped by and on the internet.

**Learning Outcomes** Students will:

- Understand a range of theorizations and analyses of the internet as historically, materially, and ideologically situated
- Become familiar with approaches in critical and cultural studies of media and technology
- Integrate existing scholarship into their own original research with awareness of the concerns of academic publishing

## ATCM 6389: Special Topics in Networked Cultures – Histories of the Internet

### Required Texts & Materials

Tung-Hui Hu, *A Prehistory of the Cloud* (MIT Press, 2015)  
Marc Steinberg, *The Platform Economy: How Japan Transformed the Consumer Internet* (University of Minnesota Press, 2019)  
Moya Bailey, *Misogynoir Transformed: Black Women's Digital Resistance* (NYU Press, 2021)  
Minh-Ha T. Pham, *Why We Can't Have Nice Things: Social Media's Influence on Fashion, Ethics, and Property* (Duke University Press, 2022)  
Avery Dame-Griff, *The Two Revolutions: A History of the Transgender Internet* (NYU Press, 2023)

All other readings and materials are available in the Box folder for the course.

### COURSE POLICIES

<b>Grading Criteria</b>	Thoughtful Class Engagement	40%
	Midterm Assignment	20%
	Final Assignment	40%

### **Accommodations and Academic Support**

Students with disabilities are encouraged to utilize the on-campus resources at the Office of Student AccessAbility. You can contact the office at 972-883-6104 or by email: [studentaccessability@utdallas.edu](mailto:studentaccessability@utdallas.edu). Their office is located in the Student Service Building (SSB), suite 3.200. They can provide documentation and details for accommodations to address your individual needs. If you need any special accommodations to complete this course successfully, please provide me with this information as soon as possible, so we can make appropriate arrangements.

*Additionally, the information contained in the following link lists the University's academic support resources for all students.*

*Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/academic-support-resources>.*

### **Classroom Conduct**

It is our responsibility to work together to produce a classroom environment where everyone can share, discuss, and question the materials at hand as well as contribute their own work respectfully and productively. Conflicting perspectives are unavoidable. To ensure that participants feel comfortable contributing a diverse set of thoughts, comments, and views, we will not use oppressive or harmful language, tolerate harassment, personal attacks, and other forms of actions that unduly distract from the educational mission and inflict emotional, physical, or psychological harm on those involved.

Part of the role of encouraging a diverse learning environment is acknowledging that individuals should feel safe and respected to contribute to the classroom in good faith. This involves not only allowing everyone opportunities to contribute their thoughts but to be mindful of how we recognize and address others. Do not assume things about others' identities, backgrounds, or experiences—whether that is age, race, gender, sexuality, ability, class, etc... Address people by their names, pronouns, and other

identifiers that they disclose. Avoid insisting on imposing identity markers onto others. Allow people to self-identify as they feel comfortable.

What you share with and create for this class reflects not only you as both a student and a civic subject, but it also reflects on me as your instructor, the class as a learning community, and UT Dallas as an academic institution.

Please discuss with me any concerns you have regarding an unsafe or hostile classroom environment, particularly if something arises that causes distress.

**Class Attendance**

Attend class regularly and in full. Any absences should include documentation of a valid excuse (family or medical emergency, for example). Unexcused absences may impact course grades. Discuss upcoming potential absences with me to make appropriate arrangements.

Arriving more than 30 minutes late or leaving more than 30 minutes early, without prior clearance, may be grounds for marking that day as an absence. Failure to prepare for class participation (such as not having done the necessary reading) will also be regarded as conditions for an absence.

**Technology in the Classroom**

Laptops and computers can be used in the classroom solely for purposes directly pertinent to the activities and discussions at-hand. Excessive misuse of technology in the classroom will result in an absence for the day.

**Class Materials**

The instructor may provide class materials that will be made available to all students registered for this class as they are intended to supplement the classroom experience. These materials may be downloaded during the course; however, these materials are for registered students' use only. Classroom materials may not be reproduced or shared with those not in class or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved AccessAbility Resource Center accommodation.

Additionally, unless the Office of Student AccessAbility has approved the student to record the instruction, students are expressly prohibited from recording any part of this course.

Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

**Late Work**

Late work will be penalized 10% (a full letter grade) for each 24-hour period beyond the deadline and will not receive written feedback by default. For written feedback on a late assignment, please send an email request. If you need an extension, let me know in advance so we can make arrangements.

**Academic Honesty**

All work must be original for this class. Plagiarism is using the words and materials of others as if they were your own. It is a serious offense with consequences. Use proper citation to indicate the use of other people's work to strengthen your own. All suspicions of plagiarism will be investigated. Please consult [[utdallas.edu/dept/graddean/gspolDishonesty.htm](http://utdallas.edu/dept/graddean/gspolDishonesty.htm)].

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**Comet Creed**                      *This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same:*

*“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”*

**UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures**                      *The information contained in the following link constitutes the University’s policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please review the sections regarding the [credit/no credit](#) grading option and withdrawal from class.*

*Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.*

### **ASSIGNMENTS & ACADEMIC CALENDAR**

#### **Week 01: Monday, 19 August 2024**

**Beginnings and Ends**                      Janet Abbate, “From ARPANET to Internet,” *Inventing the Internet*  
Fred Turner, “Introduction,” *From Counterculture to Cyberculture: Stewart Brand, the Whole Earth Network, and the Rise of Digital Utopianism*  
Adrienne Shaw, “The Internet Is Full of Jerks, Because the World Is Full of Jerks: What Feminist Theory Teaches Us about the Internet”

Syllabus Overview  
Class Introductions

#### **Week 02: Monday, 26 August 2024**

**Cyberspace Fictions**                      Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, “Why Cyberspace?,” *Control and Freedom: Power and Paranoia in the Age of Fiber Optics*  
Lisa Nakamura, “Race in the Construct and the Construction of Race: The ‘Consensual Hallucination’ of Multiculturalism in the Fictions of Cyberspace,” *Cybertypes: Race, Ethnicity, and Identity on the Internet*  
Stephanie Ricker Schulte, “From Computers to Cyberspace: Virtual Reality, the Virtual Nation, and the CorpoNation,” *Cached: Decoding the Internet in Global Popular Culture*

#### **Week 03: Monday, 2 September 2024** **LABOR DAY NO CLASS MEETING**

#### **Week 04: Monday, 9 September 2024**

**Internet Revolutions**                      Avery Dame-Griff, *The Two Revolutions: A History of the Transgender Internet*

#### **Week 05: Monday, 16 September 2024**

**Infrastructures of Connectivity**                      Nicole Starosielski, “Against Flow,” *The Undersea Network*  
Esther Mwema and Abeba Birhane, “Undersea Cables in Africa: The New Frontiers of Digital Colonialism”  
Marisa Elena Duarte, “The Overlap between Technology and Sovereignty,” *Network Sovereignty: Building the Internet across Indian Country*

**Week 06: Monday, 23 September 20234**  
**Cloud Computing** Tung-Hui Hu, *A Prehistory of the Cloud*

**Week 07: Monday, 30 September 2024**  
**Regulating the Internet** Cait McKinney, “Crisis Infrastructure: AIDS Activism Meets Internet Regulation,” *AIDS and the Distribution of Crises* (eds. Jih-Fei Cheng, Alexandra Juhasz, and Nishant Shahani)  
Patrick Pétin and Félix Tréguer, “Building and Defending the Alternative Internet: The Birth of the Digital Rights Movement in France”  
Guy T. Hoskins, “Draft Once; Deploy Everywhere? Contextualizing Digital Law and Brazil’s *Marco Civil da Internet*”

Introduce Midterm Assignment

**Week 08: Monday, 7 October 2024**  
**MIDTERM NO CLASS MEETING**

**Midterm Assignment due Monday, 7 October 2024 by 11:59PM**

**Week 09: Monday, 14 October 2024**  
**Internet Platformization** Marc Steinberg, *The Platform Economy: How Japan Transformed the Consumer Internet*

Introduce Final Assignment

**Week 10: Monday, 21 October 2024**  
**Bodies Online** Michele White, “Too Close to See, Too Intimate a Screen: Men, Women, and Webcams,” *The Body and the Screen: Theories of Internet Spectatorship*  
Angela Jones, “Introduction to Camming: Technology, Embodied Authenticity, and the Demystification of Porn,” *Camming: Money, Power, and Pleasure in the Sex Work Industry*  
Emily van der Nagel, “Verifying Images: Deepfakes, Control, and Consent”

**Week 11: Monday, 28 October 2024**  
**Social Media, Part I** Minh-Ha T. Pham, *Why We Can’t Have Nice Things: Social Media’s Influence on Fashion, Ethics, and Property*

**Week 12: Monday, 4 November 2024**  
**NO CLASS NO CLASS MEETING**

**Final proposals due Monday, 4 November 2024 by 11:59PM**

**Week 13: Monday, 11 November 2024**  
**Social Media, Part II** Moya Bailey, *Misogynoir Transformed: Black Women’s Digital Resistance*

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- Week 14: Monday, 18 November 2024**  
**Archiving the Internet** Anna Reading, “Seeing Red: A Political Economy of Digital Memory”  
Jessica Ogden, Edward Summers, and Shawn Walker, “Know(ing) Infrastructure: The Wayback Machine as Object and Instrument of Digital Research”  
Maira McCammon and Jessa Lingel, “Situating Dead-and-Dying Platforms: Technological Failure, Infrastructural Precarity, and Digital Decline”
- FALL BREAK Monday, 25 November 2024**  
**NO CLASS NO CLASS MEETING**
- Week 15: Monday, 2 December 2024**  
**WORK ON NO CLASS MEETING**  
**FINAL**  
**ASSIGNMENT Work on Final Assignment**
- FINALS WEEK Final Assignment due Friday, 13 December 2024 by 11:59PM**
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*The descriptions and timelines in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.*