

The Future of the Internet and How to Stop It: A short series of two seminars given by Professor Jonathan Zittrain*

Lecture I: The End of the Internet (Tuesday 4th March)

Time: 17:00-18:30

Venue: D.202 – Second Floor Clement House (see map over)



The Internet is primed for a meltdown-and the most obvious cures are just as bad.

The engine that has catapulted the Internet from backwater to ubiquity is sputtering precisely because of its runaway success. With the unwitting help of its users, the generative Internet is on a path to a lockdown, ending its cycle of innovation – and facilitating unsettling new kinds of control. iPods, iPhones, Xboxes, and Sky+ represent the first wave of Internet-centred products that can't be easily modified by anyone but their vendors or selected partners. These "tethered appliances" have already been used in extraordinary but little-known ways: car GPS systems have been reconfigured at the demand of law enforcement to eavesdrop on the occupants at all times, and digital video recorders have been ordered to self-destruct thanks to a lawsuit against the manufacturer thousands of miles away. New Web 2.0 platforms like Google mash-ups and Facebook are rightly touted – but their applications can be similarly monitored and eliminated from a central source. As tethered appliances and applications eclipse the PC, the very nature of the Internet – its "generativity" – is at risk.

Lecture II: Saving the Internet from Itself (Wednesday 5th March)

Time: 16:00-17:30

Venue: D.502 – Fifth Floor Clement House (see map over)

The Internet's current trajectory is one of lost opportunity. Its salvation lies in the hands of its millions of users. Drawing on generative technologies like Wikipedia that have so far survived their own successes, this book shows how to develop new technologies and social structures so users can participate in solutions, becoming true "netizens." How can we achieve the wisdom of crowds instead of the madness of mobs?

* The Departments of Law and Media and Communication at the London School of Economics are pleased to host Professor Jonathan Zittrain. Jonathan Zittrain holds the Chair in Internet Governance and Regulation at the University of Oxford and is a Principal of the Oxford Internet Institute. He is also the Jack N. and Lillian R. Berkman Visiting Professor for Entrepreneurial Legal Studies at Harvard Law School, where he co-founded Harvard Law School's Berkman Center for Internet & Society in 1996. With students, he began Chilling Effects, a web site that tracks and archives legal threats made to Internet content producers. Google now sends its users to Chilling Effects when it has altered its search results at the behest of national governments. His book about the future of the now-intertwined Internet and PC will be available in spring 2008 from Yale University Press and Penguin UK - and under a Creative Commons licence at <<http://www.jz.org>>.

Finding your way to rooms D.202 and D.502



Room numbering

The number indicates both the floor and the room. Room numbers in the basement begin with a zero, numbers 1-99 are on the ground floor, 100-199 are on the first floor, 200-299 on the second floor and so on. Some rooms are identified by name rather than number.