

Smart Mobs:

Implications of Cell Phones and Text Messaging



Information Technology and Social Life

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Smart Mobs

- Howard Rheingold - authority on the social implications of technology - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Howard_Rheingold
- Also wrote Virtual Community
- Smart mobs “consist of people who are able to act in concert even if they don’t know each other.”
- Relies on the connection of mobile devices
- Impact can be both beneficial/empowering and malignant.
- Handheld personal devices poised for the same growth that PCs had in the 80s-90s.



Smart Mobs

- Online Social Networks
- Netwar - assemblages that circumvent standards of control and dissemination, ex. Phillipines, Seattle
- Combination of social networks, sophisticated communications technologies, and decentralized organizational structure.
- Difficult to deal with; control
- Beyond war to realms of citizens, journalists, scientists, friends, customers, etc.
- Lovegty - interpersonal awareness device
- ImaHlma - alert you if friends are nearby
- Upoc (universal point of contact) - like listservs, but provide information on mobile devices about topic (ie celebrity sightings, terror alerts, etc.)
- Peer to peer journalism networks
- Personal area network - an interconnected network of devices worn or carried by user.
- "The computer and the Internet were designed, but the ways that people used them were not designed into either technology, nor were the most world-shifting uses of these tools anticipated by their designers or vendors" - emergent uses



Cell phones

- Currently take photos, Internet connections, send email, calendar, contacts, mp3s
- Future enhancements - more power, better screens, enhanced battery life
- Megapixel photography, streaming TV, video, games, calls from airplanes, integrated GPS