

**N E W M E D I A a n d D E M O C R A C Y:**  
An Open Discussion on the Global and Local Effects of New  
Information Technologies.

Thursday 21st of April 2005, 10.00am-17.00pm. Room 27.1.47.  
KUA Njalsgade 80, 2300 Copenhagen

**PROGRAM**

- 10.00 – 10.10** Welcome and introduction. **Francesco Lapenta**
- 10.10 – 11.00** Wikipedia, an Encyclopaedia Made by a Community All Over the Internet. **Alexandre Alapetite**
- 11.00 – 11.15** Break, tea and refreshments.
- 11.15 – 12.15** The Material Aesthetics of War: The Power of Photography in a Network Society. **Arild Fetveit**
- 12.15 – 13.15** Lunch at local Kantine (DKK 30-40)
- 13.15 – 14.15** Embeddedness and Escape: Mobile Phones and Internet in Ghana. **Don Slater**
- 14.15 – 14.30** Break, tea and refreshments.
- 14.30 – 15.20** Brands as Informational Capital. **Adam Arvidsson**
- 15.20 – 15.30** Break, tea and refreshments.
- 15.30 – 16.20** Digital Democracy in Ten Steps. **Francesco Lapenta**
- 16.15 – 17.00** Open Discussion and Conclusion.

## **NEW MEDIA and DEMOCRACY:**

An Open Discussion on the Global and Local Effects of New Information Technologies.

Organised with the contribution of **MODINET** Center for Media and Democracy, and the **Department of Sociology**, University of Copenhagen

### **ABSTRACTS**

**Alexandre Alapetite**, Risø National Laboratory, Systems Analysis Department

***Wikipedia, an encyclopaedia made by a community all over the Internet.***

Wikipedia is a collaborative Web-based encyclopaedia, started in 2001. In 2005, with more than 1.5millions articles in 100+ languages, it is the first successful encyclopaedia built online; the two main explanations are: free content, and instant editing even for anonymous visitors.

**Arild Fetveit**, Department of Film and Media Studies, University of Copenhagen

***The Material Aesthetics of War: The Power of Photography in a Network Society***

This paper discusses why the photographs from the Abu Ghraib prison were so potent in recalibrating sentiments for the U.S. engagement in Iraq. It links this to the too idealised image of the U.S. which has been projected in political discourse as well as in popular films, and to the aesthetics of the images themselves. The paper also addresses the new ontology of photography where pictures can spread faster and more out of control than with earlier image technologies.

**Don Slater**, Department of Sociology, London School of Economics.

***Embeddedness and escape: mobile phones and Internet in Ghana***

Mobile phone and Internet use have taken off in explosively in Ghana over the past 5 years, giving the impression of a West African information technology revolution. In fact, ethnographic research shows that the two technologies are used in completely different - indeed dialectically opposite - ways: internet is largely framed as a magical means for accumulating foreign social capital ('escape'), whereas mobile phones are framed as a very practical means for managing the demands of existing relationships ('embeddedness'). The two technologies therefore also link to development strategies (personal and collective) in quite different ways, which need to be reflected in ICT policy and development strategies.

**Francesco Lapenta**, Department of Film and Media Studies, University of Copenhagen.

***Digital democracy in Ten Steps.***

Although the Information Age has somewhat blunted the force of A.J. Liebling's famous dictum "freedom of the press is guaranteed only to those who own one" new media and new information technologies do not guarantee by themselves the conditions for democratic communication. This paper looks at ten key issues in the contemporary expansion of new information technologies.

**Adam Arvidsson**, Department of Film and Media Studies, University of Copenhagen

***Brands as Informational Capital.***