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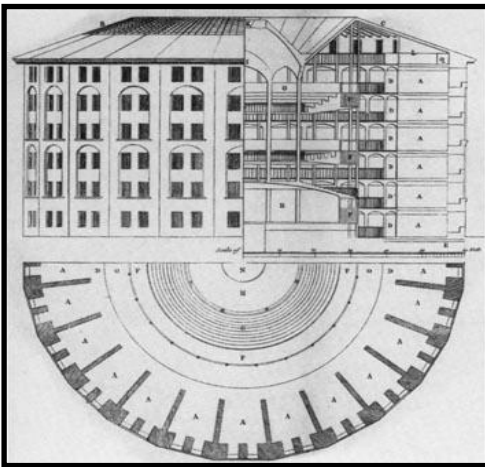
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## Fall 2008 Speaker Series

INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL STUDIES CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

# “Digital Democracy and Digital Citizenship: Emerging Trends and Empirical Studies”



**Dr. Ravi Vatrapu**  
**Dr. Scott Robertson**

*Dept. Informational & Computer Sciences  
University of Hawaii at Manoa*

In this talk, we discuss how the emergence of technological intersubjectivity as a mode of human social relations, and digital positivism as a mode of human relations with external reality, are resulting not only in new discursive formations, but are also leading to a civic panopticon, or the civic surveillance of people and places of power. Situating digital deliberation spaces such as blogs within discourses on virtual publics, we argue that online spaces such as political blogs can be theoretically construed and empirically evaluated as public spheres, albeit with some technological and sociological limitations. However, there is a danger of online public spheres such as political blogs evolving into partisan spheres. Moreover, issues of digital illiteracy and digital divide need to be addressed in designing, developing, and evaluating digital democratic and digital government applications. There has been little empirical research on the interactional and interpersonal dynamics of technology mediated political information seeking, browsing, and voting. Using VotesBy.US, we are conducting a program of empirical research aimed at understanding digital deliberation in the context of making voting decisions.

**Date:** Wednesday, September 17th  
**Time:** 12 pm – 1:20pm  
**Place:** Burns Hall Room 2118

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Telephone: 808-944-7593

Fax: 808-944-7070

Office: Burns Hall #2069

Email: [culture@hawaii.edu](mailto:culture@hawaii.edu)

Website: <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~culture>