COM12: Information Society
Final Take-Home Exam

This requirement covers the chapters from *Pattern Recognition* that were discussed after the midterm requirement.

References to earlier chapters may be made, but the **emphasis** must be on **Chapters 23** ("Dickheads") to **43** ("Mail"), and the entire novel as a finished cultural artifact.

Like before, you are allowed to use **supplementary readings and resources**. These include the ones posted on our Wikidot site and listed on our syllabus, as well as the Steven Shaviro article we used to begin our discussions during the first week of class.

A judicious use of **other resources** you have found on your own is highly encouraged as well, but be certain that you have already critically assessed them to be reliable sources of insight and information.

You will work on **ten "items"**; your answers will vary in length depending on what you are asked to do. Especially for the longer answers, **the use of direct quotes** from the chapters is **mandatory**. Each idea or event cited from the novel must be accompanied by a **citation of the chapter(s) you have used as a source**.

The requirement is divided into three parts worth a total of fifty points:

The first part tests your skill in basic reading comprehension and is worth a total of fifteen points at three points per question.

The second part tests your ability to discuss features of the Information Society both in "real life" and in *Pattern Recognition*; this is worth another fifteen points at five points per question.

The third part tests your capacity to identify the development of complex ideas and to reflect upon them; at ten points per question, this is worth a total of twenty points.

Any opportunity you have to demonstrate—through your answers—that you have read the entire novel and understood it as a whole should be taken.

For **the first five questions**, pick any five non-consecutive chapters from 23 onwards and explain what their titles mean.

For **the next three questions**, pick any other three non-consecutive chapters from 23 onwards. Identify something from each of those chosen chapters that you can connect to something in contemporary reality. Be specific.

For **the final two questions**, pick any two "Big Ideas" that interest you. These can include technology, history, consumerism, globalization, identity, art and aesthetics, September 11, gender, fetishism, spirituality, Russia, etc. Trace the exploration and development of these ideas from one chapter to another, but make sure there is an emphasis on the later chapters.

These questions are broad enough to accommodate diverse perspectives and approaches, depending on how much you have read and understood from the novel. While you may be tempted to make the "easy" and/or "obvious" choices for the questions, be aware of your need to work for the points allotted for each number.

The best way to do well is to be strategic in your selections per question and to provide sufficient detail in your answers. Your goal is to provide answers that are "impressive" enough to deserve the points allotted per question.

For example: Explaining that the title of Chapter 30 refers to the email suffix for Russia and leaving it at that is not an incorrect answer *per se*. It is, however, too simple and unimpressive to deserve three points. You must explain further or, better yet, use Chapter 30 for some other part of the take-home exam instead.

There is neither a minimum nor a maximum page requirement; consequently, I demand strict adherence to paper format and mechanics:

- 1-inch margins on all sides
- double-spaced lines
- Times New Roman in either size 10 or 12–no more, no less, no in-between
- proper use of paragraphs and all aspects of formal/academic written English
- no real names: only ID numbers or an optional pseudonym
- black ink on white 8.5 × 11 bond paper
- no cover pages and/or folders
- no illustrations and fancy layouts
- no email submissions will be accepted, but you must keep your "soft copy" in case it is needed
- you must submit this requirement by **12 noon on 27 March 2009 (Friday)**
- any other stipulation will be mentioned in class