

OSTROM WORKSHOP COLLOQUIUM SERIES

Doc Searls

Center for Information Technology & Society at the
University of California, Santa Barbara

“What the Internet Makes of Us”

Monday, October 7, 2019

12:00–1:00 PM • Ostrom Workshop, 513 N. Park



Marshall McLuhan says our tools not only extend and shape us, but "work us over completely." By now it should be clear that no tool in human history extends, shapes and works us over more completely than the electronic rectangles we use on our desks and laps, and carry in our pockets and purses. Through these we are now digital as well as physical, inhabiting a second world that is absent of distance and gravity—while still living a physical existence. This new second world is the Internet. Through the lenses of McLuhan's Laws of Media and Aristotle's Four Causes (the most relevant of which is formal cause, which determines the form something takes) Doc Searls looks at how we are being worked over, and what we are becoming. He argues that, while it is too early to know what our mature digital form will be, we can at least know that it will not be entirely human—and that our challenge is to make that form as human as possible.



[Doc Searls](#) is a veteran journalist, widely-read author, pioneering blogger and oft-quoted opponent of uninvited tracking of people online. He is a leader in the movement to increase personal agency and privacy online, both through ProjectVRM at Harvard's Berkman Klein Center and Customer Commons, the nonprofit he co-founded with Joyce Searls, his wife and collaborator. He is also co-author of *The Cluetrain Manifesto* (a business bestseller) author of *The Intention Economy: When Customers Take Charge*, and a fellow of the Center for Information Technology & Society (CITS) at the University of California, Santa Barbara. In *The World is Flat*, Tom Friedman calls Doc "one of the most respected technology writers in America."

Presentations are open to the public and are live streamed (see our website for URL and papers). You are welcome to bring your lunch. For questions, contact Allison Sturgeon (sturgeon@iu.edu; 812/855–3151).