

Digital Social Memory

ETHICS, PRIVACY, AND
REPRESENTATION IN
DIGITAL PRESERVATION

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With the in-house development of Webrecorder—an initiative that puts high-fidelity web archiving and playback capabilities into the hands of users—Rhizome has been working toward the goal of fostering a more durable, ethical, decentralized, and inclusive future for digital social memory.

If social memory can be defined as “how and what social groups remember,” then digital culture, as Richard Rinehart and Jon Ippolito point out, changes both the what and the how of social memory. What is remembered must now include a wide range of new kinds of web-specific cultural practices; how it is remembered is often mediated by new technical environments. Digital social memory often takes shape in informal settings outside of traditional institutions, and is often subjected to invasive surveillance and unwanted publicity.

This conference will convene a diverse range of experts in various facets of digital social memory for an afternoon of case-studies and conversations addressing the implications of Webrecorder’s model for the web archiving field and for digital social memory as a whole.

Organized by
RHIZOME

Hosted by
**NEW
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NEW YORK NY
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MUSEUM**

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Ethics, Privacy, and Representation in Digital Preservation

2:00 PM WELCOME REMARKS

Zachary Kaplan,
Executive Director, Rhizome
Michael Connor,
Artistic Director, Rhizome

2:20 PM ARCHIVAL NARRATIVES
AND COUNTER-NARRATIVES

Far from serving as a neutral reflection of events, digital social memory can actively shape political reality. Chaired by Shannon Mattern, Associate Professor of Media Studies at the New School, this panel explores the political uses of web archives, focusing on the White House’s archiving of President Obama’s Twitter account and Net Freedom Pioneers’ efforts to deliver web archives to areas affected by internet censorship. Participants include Mehdi Yahyanejad, founder of Net Freedom Pioneers; Josh Miller, Director of Product Management for the White House’s Office of Digital Strategy; and Dragan Espenschied, Preservation Director at Rhizome.

3:20 PM FAIR USE, PUBLICITY, AND
PRIVACY

Social media archives often reuse copyrighted material in order to support the efforts of journalists and scholars. At the same time, this kind of fair use may violate the privacy or contextual integrity of individual users’ posts. Chaired by Rhizome’s Artistic Director Michael Connor, this panel explores the tension between public and private information with participants including Jack Cushman, attorney, programmer, and a developer of Perma.cc; Bruce Goldner, Partner at Skadden and co-head of its Intellectual Property and Technology Group; Amanda Levendowski, a teaching fellow with NYU’s Technology Law and Policy Clinic; and Alice Marwick, social media researcher and fellow at the Data & Society Research Institute.

4:40 PM KEYNOTE: FAILURES OF CARE

Drawing its title from a question posed by artist Theaster Gates, “Who feels responsible for the failure of care around the legacies of great black people around the world?”, this panel explores the urgent task of archiving black culture in the face of historical erasure. It features panelists Bergis Jules, University and Political Papers Archivist at the University of California, Riverside; Simone Browne, Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Texas at Austin; Doreen St. Felix, writer at MTV News; and artist, educator, and writer Kameelah Janan Rasheed.

Simone Browne

is Associate Professor in the Department of African and African Diaspora Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. She teaches and researches surveillance studies, digital media, and black diaspora studies. She is also a member of Deep Lab, a feminist collaborative composed of artists, engineers, hackers, writers, and theorists.

Jack Cushman

is a fellow of the Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society and a member of the Harvard Library Innovation Lab, where he works on projects at the intersection of law and computer science. Those projects include Perma.cc, a tool to fight legal reference rot that has been adopted by the majority of American law schools, and the Caselaw Access Project, which is exploring new legal research methods based on digitization of 40,000 volumes of caselaw at the Harvard Law Library. Other ongoing research topics include jurisdictionally diverse archival encryption, crowdsourcing of legal knowledge regarding copyright law, and market concentration in web hosting.

Bergis Jules

is the Community Lead for the Documenting the Now project, which seeks to build tools and develop a community of practice focused on addressing the ethical collection, long term preservation, and access to social media and other web content. He is an archivist at the University of California, Riverside library, and also a student in the PhD program in Public History at the University of California, Riverside.

Amanda Levendowski

is a teaching fellow with NYU's Technology Law and Policy Clinic. Her projects and research address how to develop practical approaches to digital problems. Before joining NYU Law, she worked as an associate with Kirkland & Ellis LLP and Cooley LLP, where her practice focused on copyright, free speech, privacy, and trademark law.

Alice E. Marwick

(PhD, New York University) is a fellow at the Data & Society Research Institute and an Assistant Professor of Communication at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. She is the author of *Status Update: Celebrity, Publicity and Branding in the Social Media Age* (Yale 2013), an ethnographic study of the San Francisco tech scene which examines how people seek social status through attention and visibility online. Her current book project investigates the impact of networked privacy violations on marginalized populations.

Shannon Mattern

is an Associate Professor of Media Studies at The New School. She writes about information architectures, maps, urban data, media infrastructures, and spatial epistemologies. You can find her at wordsinspace.net.

Josh Miller

was the White House's first Director of Product, under President Obama. Prior to that, Josh founded the conversation-focused startup Branch, which Facebook acquired in 2014.

Kameelah Janan Rasheed

is a Brooklyn-based interdisciplinary artist and former high school teacher. She is currently a Smack Mellon artist-in-residence, faculty at SVA, and curriculum developer for New York public schools. Rasheed is interested in selective legibility as a political strategy as well as black traditions of covert literacies, self-publishing, and experimental writing.

Bruce Goldner

is the head of Skadden's New York office and is co-head of the firm's Intellectual Property and Technology Group. His principal areas of concentration include transactions, licensing and counseling involving brands, designs, technology, social media, content, software, persona rights, and pharma and biotech, and oversees Skadden's U.S. and international trademark clearance and prosecution practice. Mr. Goldner also is chair of the firm's New York office Diversity Committee.

Doreen St. Félix

is a writer for MTV News. Her writing has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *the Fader*, *Vogue*, and others. She's from Brooklyn.

Mehdi Yahyanejad

is the founder of Balatarin.com, a user-generated news website in Persian that played a crucial role in the pro-democracy movement in Iran in 2009. He is the executive director of NetFreedom Pioneers, a nonprofit organization that provides access to digital information via satellite to regions of the world with limited internet access. Yahyanejad holds a PhD in Physics from MIT, having graduated in 2004. He is also a researcher at USC working on anti-censorship technologies.

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