

**Union for Democratic Communications: Circuits of Struggle  
Toronto, ON**

**ABSTRACTS: Friday May 1**

**9-10:30 am Panel session 1**

**1a. The World Forum of Free Media (WFFM) and the Charter of Free Media**

**Stéphane Couture, Gretchen King, Sophie Toupin**

This presentation of the World Forum of Free Media and the Charter of Free Media invites people to join the process. The following text is based on draft and published documents by the World Forum of Free Media:

Linked to the history of countless experiences and struggles of independent media, the first edition of the World Forum of Free Media (WFFM) was held in 2009 during the World Social Forum (WSF) in Belém, with the slogan "Communicate to mobilize and mobilize to communicate". In 2011, during the WSF of Dakar, the movement promoted a convergence assembly on communication rights. The second WFFM was held in 2012 at the Rio + 20 People Summit, and approved the recommendations aimed at the movement, like regulations in favor of democratic media, the central role of technological appropriation and free and open source technologies. Finally, the third World Forum of Free Media, held in Tunis in 2013, started a debate on the need for a common framework of principles and struggles for the organization of the field, which resulted in a proposal to develop a World Charter of Free Media.

The goal of this charter is to create a reference document for activists in this field, which can be used to assess the media situation over time and to compare it with that of other countries. The Charter will also be a strategic platform for joint actions of movements and organizations fighting for media democratisation throughout the world. In Tunis, in 2013, participants put forward the first ideas for fundamental principles and rights to entitlement to be included in the document. Regional events are held in Brazil, Morocco, Tunisia and France, and provide opportunities to deepen the debate on the first version and on regional issues. The draft document will be submitted to an online consultation during the first part of 2015. The final version will be adopted in Tunisia in 2015, during the 4th WFFM.

The WFFM invites people from different horizons to get involved in this international process. English-speaking people and North Americans are especially welcome since they are not much involved yet.

**1b. Historical Perspectives on Media, Representation, and Struggle**

**Lee McGuigan:** Procter & Gamble, Mass Media, and the Making of American Life

As an unmatched sponsor of commercial broadcasting and a purveyor of ubiquitous homemaking goods, Procter & Gamble has had a profound impact on culture and society

in the United States. From a critical political economy approach, this article analyzes P&G's historical contributions to the commercial system of broadcasting in the US. Combining entertainment, industry, and domesticity, the case of P&G provides a unique opportunity to probe the political economy of capitalism in the US, with particular emphasis on commodity consumption and the reproduction of labor power in the home. It is argued that the significance of P&G has less to do with direct message effects, and more to do with the institutional formation of broadcasting as both an advertiser-supported industry and a daily ritual commanding human resources of time and attention.

**Kristen Hoerl: Growing Up and Selling Out: Fictional Television Portrayals of the Sixties Counterculture during the Reagan Revolution**

For many who grew up in the United States during the Eighties, the meaning of the Sixties is comprised primarily of popular culture images of anti-war dissent and the free love movement. Popular family television programs including *Family Ties*, *thirtysomething*, and *The Wonder Years* featured characters whose lives were profoundly influenced by their participation in the counterculture. These programs aired during the Reagan Revolution, when conservative politicians dismantled Great Society programs and civil-rights initiatives. This paper explores how fictionalized depictions of late-Sixties activists during the Eighties worked ideologically to position social justice struggles as relics of the past and establish neoliberalism as a common sense inevitability. This paper draws from a larger book project exploring how a variety of television programs and films have depicted late-Sixties radicalism since the mid-Eighties. The history of late-Sixties era dissent is a particularly rich case study in how groups of people took militant action in order to challenge social injustice. Mass demonstrations and actions across the globe questioned the legitimacy of global capital and called for revolutionary social change. We continue to struggle with the social injustices that late-Sixties activists protested over forty years ago. Working from scholarship in collective memory, I describe the ideological implications of Hollywood's portrayal of this time period. As Lipsitz (1990) writes, "cultural forms create conditions of possibility, they expand the present by informing it with memories of the past and hopes for the future; but they also engender accommodation with prevailing power realities . . . internalizing the dominant culture's norms and values as necessary and inevitable" (p. 16).

I argue that Hollywood portrayals of the late-Sixties cultivate selective amnesia about the role of radical dissent under late-capitalism. Eighties-era programming cultivated the imagistic icon of the Sixties-era radical to contain the value of dissent to a distant past. These programs routinely trivialized and negated the contributions of Sixties-era social movements. Narrative and character development across multiple seasons of these programs provided a welcoming environment for the political and economic shifts of the Eighties. While supporting characters learned to grow up and out of the Sixties counterculture, lead characters were neoliberal citizens, vaguely aware of the social injustices surrounding around them. By suturing activism to the Sixties decade itself, these programs encouraged audiences to temper their potential enthusiasm for progressive movements and causes. Ultimately, they gave televisual form to the assumptions of neoliberalism and postfeminism undergirding the Reagan revolution. These depictions suggest that political organizations rooted outside of the electoral

system have no legitimacy in a democracy. This project should be of interest to scholars and activists interested in democratic communications because it highlights how mainstream broadcast media have constrained popular resources for envisioning social change. Social justice advocates might counter Hollywood's selective amnesia of activism by promulgating more promising counternarratives of contemporary struggle and dissent.

Lipsitz, G. (1990). *Time passages: Collective memory and American popular culture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

### **Robert MacDougall: A Fight With an Octopus: Lessons from the Struggle for a People's Telephone 100 Years Ago**

The Bell System dominated telecommunications in the United States and Canada for most of the twentieth century, but its monopoly was never inevitable. In the decades around 1900, ordinary people established tens of thousands of independent telephone systems, stringing their own wires to bring a new technology to the people. This independent telephone movement was a messy mix of farmers' cooperatives, quasi-municipal systems, and for-profit businesses. It was leaderless and fractious; it flourished in some areas while stymied in others; ultimately it lost its battle with nation-spanning capital. Yet it rivaled the Bell / AT&T monopoly for a time, and it represented a genuine alternative: an attempt to build a communications infrastructure that was locally-oriented, that prized access over efficiency, and that was owned and operated by the people it served. The independents were animated by their vision of a "telephone for the people." They saw communication as a democratizing force and an instrument for defending the autonomy of local communities against the nation-spanning corporate order of their day. Their fight with the Bell System was more than just a commercial skirmish. The dueling networks of turn-of-the-century telephony came to embody, in their very poles and wires, dueling arguments about the organization and scale of social and economic life.

This paper summarizes and builds on my recent book, *The People's Network: The Political Economy Of Telephony In The Gilded Age* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014). That book was a work of history, and in writing it I tried to avoid drawing direct parallels between the early history of the telephone and struggles for democratic communication today. In this paper, I will not avoid those parallels. Instead, I will make them explicit, drawing lessons for today's activists, scholars, and radical entrepreneurs from the fight for a people's telephone one hundred years ago.

### **Rianne Subijanto: *Openbare Vergaderingen* and the Geography of Resistance**

This paper is part of my dissertation research on the communication history of the communist anti-colonial movement in the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) in 1920-1927. My dissertation seeks to understand the development of the communist anti-colonial struggle of this period by examining the existing communicative sociotechnical systems. Methodologically, I utilize underexplored connections between transport and social networks as aspects of communication systems to look at the ways they reveal the geography and political economy of imperialist power as well as the social relations and

mental conceptions of the colonial society. This paper looks at one existing communicative strategy, *openbare vergaderingen* (public gatherings), and accounts for its role in the history of the anti-colonial communist movement in the Dutch East Indies. Based on over 850 cases of *openbare vergaderingen* held in 1920-1925, using geographic information system (GIS) mapping, I reconstruct the geography of resistance in the region to explain how ordinary people organized and mobilized themselves in the first nation-wide, globally connected, radical movement against the state. By comparing these maps with those produced by the Dutch colonial government (production maps, transportation maps, tourism maps etc), I find that while the implementation of transport and social means of communication was intended to strengthen Dutch control and extend capitalist infrastructure over the vast archipelagic colony and beyond, they in fact became the very means by which the revolutionaries organized and propelled their movement against colonialism. Through the geographic reconstruction, we learn how circuits of capital were turned into circuits of struggle.

### **1c. The Promises and Complexities of Open Data**

**Andrew Clement and Jonathan Obar:** Data Privacy Transparency Reporting in Canada: The 'Keeping Internet Users in the Know or in the Dark' Reports

In the wake of the Snowden revelations about NSA surveillance, recent calls for greater data privacy recommend that internet service providers (ISPs) be more forthcoming about their handling of our personal information (e.g. Cardozo, Cohn, Higgins, Opsahl & Reitman, 2014; MacKinnon, 2014). This paper describes the development of the 'Keeping internet users in the know or in the dark: An analysis of the data privacy transparency of Canadian internet service providers' annual reports, summarizes their findings, and discusses their implications for telecommunications reform. We are currently working on a 2014 edition of the 'Keeping internet users in ... the dark' report with updated criteria to be launched in March 2015 in collaboration with the media advocacy group Openmedia.ca. We will report on its findings, highlighting any changes in privacy transparency by carriers, and discuss the prospects for further opening up the personal information handling practices of Canadian internet service providers and holding them more democratically accountable.

**Daniel Pare:** Enhanced Democracy? Really? Assessing Design-Reality Gaps in Canadian Municipal-level Open Government Platforms

Much hope is expressed about the cultural, economic, political and social justice opportunities afforded by Geoweb and open data / open government initiatives. Echoing earlier promises of e-government wherein the delivery of services to clients was conflated with citizens' democratic engagement, the basic premise underlying much of the contemporary hyperbole is that open data / open government offers: (i) a mechanism for citizens to inform data; and for data to inform citizens; and (ii) a mechanism to facilitate civic engagement in the form of a 'conversation' between citizens and their governments. The changes espoused by this vision anticipate a revitalizing of mechanisms for informing and contributing to the making of policy and for engaging citizens. Such a

view, however, tends to overlook the role of socio-technical factors that mediate the gap between where we are now and where the system design is meant to get us. It is precisely this gap – a design-reality gap - that comprises the opportunities and constraints (i.e., access, data literacy, privacy, intellectual property) that influence what people can do with open data, and how open data / open government is manifest and experienced.

Drawing of the findings of research conducted with the SSHRC funded partnership grant, How the geospatial web 2.0 is reshaping government-citizen interactions, this paper presents early results of an ongoing detailed investigation of the open data / open government platforms of the 100 largest municipalities in Canada. Analysis of variables including, data policies, data formats, accessibility, data literacy skills required to work with the data provided reveals that while the opportunity to enhanced openness, transparency, and social justice may be tangibly manifest, its actual realization is constrained by a host of technological and non-technological considerations that are often overlooked in mainstream accounts. To this end, the findings directly confront the historical amnesia about expectations for the democratic, economic, political, and social virtues of previous communication technologies that seemingly inform much fanfare associated with narratives of the supposed progressive and emancipatory powers of geospatial media and participatory social networking tools.

Geoweb and open data / open government initiatives, and the technologies that enable them, are inherently political and their politics are directly impacted by the contexts within which stakeholder decisions are made about such things as the platforms to employ and the policies to implement. By ignoring gaps between the affordances of technological platforms and the resources, skills, values and motivations of the intended beneficiaries, the current hype risks runs the risk of creating unrealistic expectations of what can be achieved in opening up the workings of government.

### **Evan Hamilton:** A Critical Analysis of Open Data Policies in Ontario Municipalities

This paper seeks to uncover the political and social factors shaping how Ontario municipal governments are implementing open data policies. Through comparing open data programs in Ottawa, Toronto and Hamilton, and interviewing stake-holders and key members of municipal departments overseeing open data initiatives, this project will evaluate the impact of open data programs on community development and civic engagement. Through a series of semi-structured interviews with key influencers in the policy development process, it will be shown that municipalities who focus their open data policies on businesses will discourage community groups from engaging with open data. Open data initiatives will be shown as a political tool used by government to showcase transparency and open government, however, municipalities rarely use this data to become more efficient, improve services, and foster community development. This project will provide policy recommendations for future open data programs in hopes of encouraging greater dialogue with community groups in the policy process, and implementing open data programs that engage with educational institutions, community advocacy groups, and not-for-profits.

## **Christopher McConnell:** Empowering Platforms? Civic Hacking and Local Open Data

Two related trends in government and NGO information technology, open data and civic hacking, offer significant potential for activists, media producers, and others interested in informing the public and improving communities. Open data refers to the relatively recent practice of publishing government and NGO data in machine-readable formats, so it can be used for further analysis or incorporated into a software application.

Organizations release open data for a variety of purposes including inter-agency cooperation and data journalism, but one of the most visible uses of open data is civic hacking. Civic hackers, who are often volunteers, develop applications intended to improve life in local communities. Examples of civic-hacking projects include a website that shows the closest polling place, interactive maps showing crime reports, and “matchmaking” services for volunteers. Civic hacking does have considerable potential for engaging Internet-using members of communities and raising awareness of local issues.

Open data and civic hacking are not unambiguously positive trends, however; tools and data can be used in exclusionary ways. (Kranzberg, 1986) Much of the enthusiasm surrounding open data rests on a widespread belief that more information is empowering and democratic. Although observers such as Winner (2010) have argued that more data does not, in itself, lead to more democracy, this myth (Mosco, 2005) perpetuates among open data’s advocates and producers. This aura of democracy, I will argue, masks troubling power relationships implicated in the publication of open data, and open data itself may in practice be more of a tactic of control rather than of liberation. Improving access to data may have many favorable outcomes, but its constitutive role in shaping power relationships between institutions, clients, and users should be examined.

This paper compares two civic-hacking projects with similar content, but different purposes and somewhat different modes of production. Comparing the New Orleans BlightStatus service with Detroit’s Residential Parcel Survey can provide some insight into how open data can be used in ways that reinforce existing hierarchies or in more democratic ways. While both projects use data about the condition of real estate in their respective cities, they frame the data in different ways. New Orleans’ BlightStatus is a component of the city’s blight-reduction program, informing residents and potential residents about blighted properties in an area as well as affording users the ability to make code-enforcement complaints through the application. In contrast, Detroit’s Residential Parcel Survey was initiated in part to reduce foreclosures in the city, although it is now used to coordinate the efforts of a variety of organizations. While BlightStatus, created by a San Francisco technology non-profit, uses a pejorative framing of urban decay, the Residential Parcel Survey, built by local non-profits and government agencies is neutral and perhaps more sympathetic. Civic hacking is not unequivocally democratic; projects and systems reflect the values of the individuals and organizations that develop them. These two examples of civic-hacking projects built on open data illuminate how similar projects built with different values can have different relationships with their cities.

Kranzberg, M. (1986). Technology and History: “Kranzberg’s Laws.” *Technology and Culture*, 544–560.

Mosco, V. (2005). *The digital sublime : myth, power, and cyberspace*. MIT.

Winner, L. (2010). *The whale and the reactor: A search for limits in an age of high technology*. University of Chicago Press.

### **1d. Every Step You Take: Surveillance in the Digital Age**

**Anthony Nadler:** *Captains of Habit Formation: Marketing in the Age of Big Data*

In an article promoting “The Institute of Decision Making,” a new research unit of global advertising giant DaftFCB, director Matthew Willcox warns companies to be wary of advertisers putting too much emphasis on branding. Willcox suggests that for too many marketing firms, marketing has mistakenly become synonymous with “the brand building business.” Willcox claims, however, that branding only serves as one heuristic through which consumers make their choices, and one that seems to be diminishing in its importance. Instead of only focusing on strategies for promoting meanings and brand identity, The Institute of Decision Making promises to draw on cutting edge academic expertise from the fields of behavior economics, evolutionary psychology, and neuroscience to “provide our clients with behaviorally based insights on how to influence consumer choice.”

In this presentation, I examine why marketers like Willcox are proposing these ways of understanding consumer psychology and why these shifts should be a concern for critical media scholars. The notions of consumer psychology coming out of the age of Big Data are quite different from marketers’ previously prevailing conceptions. Much of the push towards behavior economics and other emerging behavioral sciences comes as marketers adjust their theories of consumer choice in light of their growing digital toolkit. Large sets of data on consumer behavior have proven especially fruitful for interpreting consumers through the lens of habit and behavioral patterns. This approach has also been reinforced by popularized narratives of neuropsychology supporting the thesis of humans as a habit-driven species due to our neuro-architecture.

The increasing importance of the behavioral sciences for marketers poses new challenges for critical media scholars. Since Stuart Ewen’s landmark *Captains of Consciousness*, the most prominent critical studies of advertising’s own cultural work (rather than its significance for the larger political economy) have sought to understand advertising through semiotic or psychoanalytic models, not behavioral ones. Semiotics has probably been the most influential scholarly lens, and critical scholars have analyzed meaning-making within consumer culture and the ways in which commodities have been fetishized and animated with magical powers through advertising’s encoding processes. Yet, semiotic analysis is limited in explaining what happens as advertisers shift their strategies to careful behavioral targeting. Popular attitudes about commercial surveillance appear to be conflicted today. Widespread acceptance of increasing consumer monitoring is clearly an important site of struggle over corporate control of the digital media landscape. Media scholars have offered at least two compelling critiques of commercial surveillance to help push this issue beyond a vague sense of privacy invasion. These scholarly critiques point to the potential for data discrimination and the

use of consumer data as an exploitation of labor. I argue that building a critique of this emerging consumer psychology and detailing its fundamentally manipulative character can also add to public criticism of commercial surveillance.

### **Shea Smock and Jennifer Proffitt:** The Oppression and Potential of Digital Surveillance

Until just a few years ago, most surveillance cameras provided grainy footage that was wiped or lost every few days. Thanks to rapid innovations in technology, digital surveillance cameras can now store massive amounts of high quality footage that can be combined with face and voice recognition software to pinpoint a likely suspect much more quickly (Angwin, 2014). Unfortunately, lawmakers have not been able to keep up with surveillance technology development. Drones can fly over your home and take photos and video. Cameras across the street may be pointed right into your window. If you're in public, you can assume your face is being watched by something, and unless you're in a private restroom stall – it's all legal. We are often only reminded of our recorded selves when digital evidence is being used against us in the court of law. So how is all of this footage being used? This institutional analysis will examine current public and private digital surveillance regulation. Next, we will pose the question: Does an increase in surveillance lead to an increase in justice for citizens, or do governmental institutions and/or commercial entities benefit? What are the consequences of so many cameras being produced, purchased, and mounted? Finally, we will analyze the counterbalance to surveillance. How are digital technologies such as cell phones and tablets being used to empower citizens to surveil those in positions of authority?

### **Timothy Libert:** The Logic of Connective Surveillance

Recent scholarship on collective action has highlighted the retreat of traditional organizations and the rise of distributed, ad-hoc, issue-based networks. This change has given rise to the theory of "connective action", an Internet-age version of "collective action" in which digital communications networks have supplanted traditional bureaucracies. However, while social movements appear to have become less centralized, they increasingly rely on highly centralized communications infrastructure. This infrastructure is often controlled by a handful of powerful corporations whose business models rely on surveillance to leverage data about user interests in order to create "tailored" advertising. The constellation of companies tracking users online adheres to the theory of the "surveillant assemblage" in which centralized surveillance is supplanted by an array of entities pursuing individualized agendas. This online assemblage of surveillance facilitates mass observation and identification of those participating in, or even curious about, social movements. This surveillance is most plainly visible in social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter where group members are often identified by name. However, there is also a hidden form of surveillance which extends to the websites hosted by social movement organizations as well: that of web tracking.

This study investigates the degree to which digital rights organizations do or do not facilitate mass surveillance on their websites via hidden corporate intermediaries. The websites associated with organizations are analyzed to determine whether they are hosted independently or by a centralized commercial organization, if transport encryption is used



in the delivery of web content, and to what degree third-party entities may intercept the traffic of those visiting such websites. It has been determined that while the vast majority of sites are independently hosted, only 20% implement transport encryption, and 77% leak user data to third-parties. Given that digital rights movements are far more concerned with privacy and security than other social movements, this finding is cause for concern and highlights the need of greater awareness of this problem within the activist community at large. Finally, suggestions for improved website privacy and security are made in the hope they may be adopted by the full range of activists who use the web for advocacy, education, and organization.

**Jeff Blevins** (University of Cincinnati) and **Duncan Brown** (Ohio University): The Panoptic Missort: The Political Economy of Digital Media Privacy

Personal digital media devices, such as iPads, androids, iPhones and tablets record just about every moment of our social lives. They have the potential to describe the interests, desires, fears, health and well being of a single individual. Data miners collect and categorize information from our email, search engines, web browsing, and social media apps. They know a lot about who our friends and associates are, where we go, and what we do. All of this digital data collection should allow marketers to make very calculated inferences about what we will purchase and thus deliver very targeted messages.

Although, written in the early dawn of the digital media era, Oscar Gandy referred to this kind of data gathering in his 1993 book as the “the panoptic sort” that guides the modern capitalist system in which individuals are sorted according to their political and economic value. In Gandy’s view, applying a traditional Marxist critique, the panoptic sort is a technology of power as it identifies, classifies and makes assessments while robbing consumers of the surplus value that is generated by their personal information. The analysis to be presented here will reexamine Gandy’s famous 1993 critique in the context of the current digital media environment, especially his concern that the panoptic sort is devoid of contextualization and reproduces biases along the lines of race, gender, age, class, culture and consciousness. While bias still occurs along these lines our analysis will show another disturbing byproduct of current online data gathering and the panoptic machine whose operation it supports. This is the misrepresentation of individuals through a ‘missort’ of their personal information.

The missort is a mismeasurement, and a miscalculation that occurs through the process of preprocessing and standardizing the meaning of data it gathers. It has varying degrees of imprecision based on a measurement that attempts to dichotomize information and fix its cultural meaning. If the panoptic sort (as described by Gandy) generates efficiency, the panoptic missort generates inefficiency, and potential harm. Drawing upon several contemporary cases our analysis will focus on instances where digital media surveillance has led to false and, perhaps, politically and economically harmful depictions of a targeted individual. Our analysis will show that that current U.S. data privacy law doesn’t properly address the missort of an individual’s personal information or provide adequate redress. Our work endeavors to build critical theory in this area by questioning ownership and control of personal data and arguing for the rethinking of false light privacy torts in the digital media era. By allowing the subjects of the panoptic sort to at least correct the record could serve the public interest and business interest at the same

time. Without some form of access, control, and redress, the subjects of digital media surveillance may continue to be misrepresented to prospective employers, health insurers, friends, and associates. Moreover, they may suffer the consequences for political, economic and social decisions that were made about them based upon missorted information.

### **1e. Roundtable: Professors, Partners, and Parents: The State of Work-Family Policies in the Academy**

**Molly Niesen, Safiya Noble, Christine Quail, Michelle Rodino-Colocino**

On the surface, working as a faculty member in higher education is ideally suited for caring for family members and dependents because of its flexibility and security. This myth beguiles the reality of family leave and family care policies in higher education. Very few universities in the United States offer any paid parental leave after the birth or adoption of a child, and unpaid family leave is often dealt with on a case-by-case ad-hoc basis. Tenure-track faculty are often left in bureaucratic confusion about if, how, and when to “stop” tenure clocks, and what the soft-power implications will be on their jobs. Adjunct (U.S.) faculty face a unique set of issues because they do not qualify for the U.S. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which guarantees job security and healthcare for 12 weeks, but only for “full-time” employees, and most often without salary. This differs from Canadian institutions, which are governed by various provincial and federal policies that protect longer (e.g., in Ontario 37 weeks) unpaid leave for leave for faculty, which becomes paid or partially paid for most faculty due to further benefits. Additionally, parenting responsibilities beyond leave are at issue. While some governments or universities have further policies regarding parenting and childcare and work, others do not. Higher education workers on this roundtable discuss their own experiences with managing work-family balance with the hopes to promote a dialogue with attendees about how faculty member can organize to create more humane parental and family leave and family care policies in the academy and in broader social policies in general. We will discuss the differences between the United States and Canadian family leave and family care polices and benefits within broader contexts of unionization, social policies, and political projects. We intend to spark discussion around these issues, with an eye toward inspiring strategies to make systemic change so that “work-life balance” can become a reality rather than an easy slogan.

### **1f. May We Have Your Attention, Please? Critical Perspectives on Advertising**

**Inger Stole:** Advertising America: Selling Europe on Free Enterprise in the late 1940s

By the mid-1940s, the United States had emerged as the most powerful nation in the world by a wide margin, in a manner unrivalled in modern times. At the same time, the capitalist economic system that was so necessary for American’s continued success and world dominance was threatened by political upheaval and a great deal of public skepticism toward the US and its international intensions. This, in turn, prompted U.S. corporate leaders and government policymakers on a quest to secure political and

consequently economic dominance. In January of 1946, the U.S State Department unveiled the Office of Information and Educational Exchange (OIE), an elaborate organization designed to provide “a full and fair picture of American life and of the aims and policies of the United States Government,” to other parts of the world. In addition to its shortwave radio operation known as Voice of America, the OIE utilized a whole range of mass media, including documentary films (in 28 languages) and maintained libraries and cultural centers for the purpose of “teaching “American culture and language to people across the globe. Still, with the Second World War in fresh memory, political leaders in the US were cognizant that any program might be viewed as propaganda by political enemies and fuel “anti-American” sentiments.

This project explores the ways in which the US State Department attempted to “whitewash” its propaganda by seeking assistance from American business and the advertising industry in hopes that non-governmental publicity campaigns might not raise the same suspicion as messages emanating directly from the United States Information Service. More specifically, I trace the conceptualization and implementation of the “United States Good-will campaign abroad,” that was launched by the Advertising Council in early 1948 and targeted at the sixteen European countries involved in the “Marshall Plan” (a program lending US economic support in exchange for removal of trade barriers, modernization of industry, and securing commercial markets for American firms). Drawing primarily on archival sources, I explore the relationship between the Export Advertising Association (which had proposed the campaign), the Advertising Council, and the US State department. I discuss why product advertising aimed at the international market was viewed as a particularly effective addition to the government’s own “information” programs. I conclude by evaluating the complex set of negotiations involved in the project and to what extent the campaign was considered successful.

**Kyle Asquith:** Resisting Advertising in Schools: The Case of the Canadian Youth News Network

This exploratory paper considers the Canadian “Youth News Network” as an example of successful resistance to the commercialization of public schools. I argue that the case of the Youth News Network is pertinent and worth revisiting in light of current cuts to education. Advertisers, since the Great Depression, have preyed on budget constraints in public education, offering financial support and/or promotional materials in exchange for captive student audiences. The rise of neoliberalism in the 1980s--the combination of government cuts and the hypercommercialization of social life--exacerbated this long-term project. Media educators and activists have made the presence of advertising in public schools a major target for at least 25 years. Dozens of books and documentaries spotlight and condemn the most prominent example of in-school advertising, Channel One, which has been operating in the United States since 1990. Less attention has been given to the Youth News Network, the Canadian equivalent of Channel One. Emulating Channel One’s business model of providing schools with audio-visual equipment in exchange for mandatory programming and ad viewing, the Youth News Network launched in the early 1990s. The company used a school in Mississauga Ontario--notably close to the 2015 UDC conference!--as one of its first sites. Parents, educators, and provincial education ministers sought to prohibit the Youth News Network in Canadian

classrooms. Teachers' unions played a vocal role. By 2000, after securing few contracts and never fully getting off the ground, the company folded.

This paper revisits the unsuccessful years of the Youth News Network and highlights opposition by various individuals and organizations. Relying on newspaper accounts, union newsletters and press releases, and statements from policymakers, I hypothesize why the Canadian Youth News Network never reached the success of America's Channel One. The story of the Youth News Network is also worth considering in the contemporary context. Numerous Canadian provinces, including Ontario, have plunged their education systems into a state of crisis under the neoliberal rhetoric of "responsible spending" and "managing deficits." Over the last five years, Canadians have witnessed unprecedented austerity measures in the education system. This current era of budget cuts offers fertile grounds for eager marketers who have, historically, capitalized on such crises. We must look to previous examples of successful resistance to appraise the current environment.

**Andrea Benoit:** 'Heart and Soul:' Promoting the M.A.C AIDS Fund in the Contemporary Brandscape

This paper offers a case study for investigating both the potential and the limitations of corporate activism within the contemporary 'brandscape.' M.A.C Cosmetics is one of the very first companies devoted to HIV/AIDS philanthropy, beginning in Toronto in the late 1980s when companies did not want to be associated with AIDS. M.A.C has raised more than \$350 million for its charity since 1994, the M.A.C AIDS Fund, formally advertising only these philanthropic efforts. M.A.C enlisted both employees and consumers in a type of activism that challenged the oppressive beauty ideals characteristic of the cosmetics industry, while redirecting the fear, ignorance, and homophobia associated with the AIDS epidemic into a celebration of life and creativity.

Since 1998, when M.A.C was purchased by cosmetics conglomerate Estée Lauder, the brand's communications have assumed a new and unusual texture. Promotional communications self-reflexively highlight M.A.C's brand history and emphasize how employee labour and commitment underpin the company's long-standing corporate social responsibility regarding HIV/AIDS. These stories have been purposefully put to work within the circulation of information about the M.A.C brand, and, while ostensibly serving its philanthropic interests, also increase its brand value within the marketplace. I argue that, taken together, M.A.C's promotional strategies bear the hallmark of immaterial, or affective labour, which has been discussed by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, Maurizio Lazzarato, and others as one of the hallmarks of post-Fordist capitalism. Affective labour has always been intrinsic to M.A.C's advertising and consumer response to the AIDS epidemic. However, what is particularly noteworthy now is how M.A.C has exploited the affective labour of its employees in the retail service environment, and then developed promotional discourses specifically about this labour, effectively bypassing conventional cause marketing strategies. Based on evidence from archival sources, interviews, and discourse analysis of its promotional communications, I argue that M.A.C's unusual corporate social responsibility exemplifies the material and immaterial qualities of contemporary brand culture.

## **Anne MacLennan: Creating Empathy or Sympathy? The Global Images of Poverty in Charitable Campaign Advertising**

This work will expose the culturally embedded notions of poverty within culture on a global scale that present the world, in part, from solving poverty. The importance of definitions of poverty, as history demonstrates, is that our understanding of the issue has far more influence on what we do about it than do its depth and severity (Edelman, 1977). It is for this reason that the meaning of poverty is continually contested (Lister 2004). In contemporary Western societies much of this contestation is playing out in and through media. Dominant narratives about “the poor” and poverty are reproduced daily in Western mainstream media and popular culture. This research employs a large sample of over three hundred advertisements to document the messages communicated about poverty in an attempt to raise funds to assist with the challenges of meeting the daily needs of the poor. The campaigns come from sources such religious groups, government, NGOs and other independent organizations. While the organizations and people who work with the poor know that the roots and causes are complex, requiring major societal changes the advertising campaigns that appeal to the public for support send a different message. The appeals do not suggest these changes, rather they default to often repeated stereotyped media depictions of the poor, rooted in the culturally-embedded notions of poverty that blame the poor individually for poverty (Bauman 1998; Gans 1995; Katz 1990). In order to create sympathy for the poor and perhaps ultimately a form of empathy the advertising campaigns recycle old notions of poverty that emphasize individual failure, weakness and specific situations. The sample of global advertisements provides an opportunity to examine the impact of neoliberal changes within some of the world’s wealthiest nations in contrast with images from all over the world. The sample demonstrates the similarities and differences in paradigms with regard to the struggle of the poor (Baudrillard 1998, Bauman 2005, Campbell 1997).

### **10:45-12:15 Panel session 2**

#### **2a. Posters from Social Movements in Quebec, 1964-2014**

##### **Jean-Pierre Boyer, Jean Desjardins**

Since 1978, our research centre on popular imagery (CRIP-UQAM in Montreal) has been archiving, implementing, creating and distributing sociopolitical and cultural posters and artifacts from multiple social movements in Quebec, such as labor unions, political activist groups, grassroots organisations, women's groups, international solidarity organisations and graphic artists. Our collection of more than 25,000 posters nowadays constitutes a visual memory of popular struggles and social history, mainly in Quebec but also elsewhere in the world for the past fifty years : a vivid treasure from the past for the benefit of present and future generations of activists and citizens. My communication shall focus on our archiving methods, implementation and creative strategies, and multiple distribution activities at the CRIP. But a significant place will also be given to effective images created from the sixties till today, and especially to posters and artefacts produced in the context of the student social movement struggles of 2012 in Quebec.

## **2b. New Views on History as Theory for Critical Communications Research**

### **Victor Pickard:** History as a Weapon: Destabilizing the Present for an Alternative Future

Historical research can intervene in present policy debates by revealing three general patterns: parallels, contingencies, and forgotten antecedents. Drawing on archival materials, this presentation will trace these patterns in a case study of 1940s American media policy debates and various kinds of reform activism. Resolutions from these policy battles determined the social contract between news media institutions, various publics, and government, especially the Federal Communications Commission. The legacy of these debates has left Americans with a heavily commercialized media system characterized by unaccountable oligopolies, weak regulatory oversight, and systemic market failure. This analysis brings into focus a “history of the present” to highlight the politics and discourses around media infrastructures, and holds much contemporary relevance for debates ranging from net neutrality to the future of journalism. Providing this historical context helps make sense of the impoverished public interest principle in American media policy and the preponderance of monopoly power in US-based communication systems. It also helps explain the logic of corporate libertarianism, which continues to constrain the parameters of legitimate media policy discourse. Situating current policy debates within a longer historical arc also reminds us of a long rich tradition of media reform activism that fought to democratize the American media system by establishing nonprofit, community-controlled news outlets. Knowing this history is a first necessary step toward creating structural alternatives in the digital age.

### **Molly Niesen:** Witnessing Change: The Powell Memo, Industry Archives, and the Rise of a Neoliberal Consensus

The Powell Memo, sometimes referred as the Powell Manifesto, is a notorious memorandum written by corporate lawyer Lewis Powell to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in 1971. The confidential memo sounded alarm bells about the growing opposition to the free enterprise system, and was a call to arms for corporations to pool resources to influence high schools, scholarly research, academic hiring, mass media, lawmakers, and the courts. Existing scholarship has nodded to its importance, but none have spelled out exactly how the Powell Memo’s recommendations were taken up by major corporations. This paper discusses the how empirical archival research from industry documents can map out how the Powell Memo came to fruition, by popularizing a new business-friendly economic paradigm. Industry archives and the business trade press offers a lens through which to witness the strategies used on behalf of corporate America at a pivotal moment in the U.S. political economy, and allows us to understand the forces that bear on the shape of contemporary political reform.

### **Brian Creech:** Seeing Things in Context: Historicizing Technology and Practice

As critical scholarship has turned to technologies in recent years, many scholars have focused on the ways in which devices are enmeshed in contemporary practices, often

leading to the reassertion that “technology is society made durable “ (Latour, 1992). Such approaches have troubled the seeming inevitability surrounding technological development by deconstructing technology’s role in broader social processes. This essay takes a critical historical bent to discuss how a critical approach to the history of technology reveals lurking possibilities in the ways technologies develop and are deployed at the behest of contemporary social relations.

Using the 35mm camera as an example device, this essay shows how the camera’s uptake among journalists reveals a broader and shifting epistemology of image production, one that links individual perception to revelation of broader, humanistic truths. The journalistic use of the 35mm camera exemplifies an assemblage of technical capability and human consciousness that results in what can be considered journalistically valid photographs. By sublimating the camera’s workings to the talents of the individual photographer, news discourses further exemplify just how broadly the 35mm camera has been accepted as an epistemologically legitimate device while simultaneously foreclosing other forms of image production as being capable of bearing similar forms of truth.

By looking at a disparate collection of primary source material, ranging from patent documents and technical guides to trade publications and professional materials, this paper substantiates the broad field of cultural practice the camera is enmeshed within. By focusing a historically rooted critique around a seemingly stable device, this paper shows the possibility for uncovering alternatives embedded in the practices that extend from these technologies over time and point to how contemporary conditions and relations of power partially rely upon an inert and overdetermined understanding of technological possibility.

### **Matthew Crain:** Historical Social Construction as a Defusing Concept

When Leo Marx called technology a “hazardous concept,” he was critiquing historical narratives that privilege it as an all-encompassing agent of change. Instrumental understandings of technology risk degrading the role of other important factors of social development. As media converge into digital platforms, and as scholarly attention turns to “disruption” and “innovation,” technology as an analytical concept remains as hazardous as ever. Political economic study of media technology development is a key element of the toolkit that defuses the hazard of technology, particularly through the lens of historical social construction. Historical work of this nature shows that media technologies were designed, implemented, and appropriated in specific social contexts, highlighting the structuring roles of political, institutional, and market relationships. A critical understanding of large-scale processes within capitalism, particularly relating to technological and organizational dynamism, brings to light historical continuities that can be otherwise overshadowed by a focus on what is perceived as new.

This presentation underscores the value of political economic history for digital media studies by tracing an arc that connects early 20th century scientific management and proto-marketing to emerging forms of internet advertising. Practices of online data collection and consumer profiling are accelerations of well-established trajectories within commercial media systems. History productively demonstrates how the instrumental power of specific technological arrangements (such as online advertising networks) are

deeply linked to capitalist imperatives such as the rationalization of production and consumption. Put another way, history prompts us to counter the reification of technology by foregrounding the particularities of human social relations.

**James F. Hamilton:** *The Presence of the Past: Radical History as Critical Social Theory in the British New Left*

This paper discusses the constitution of popular history as critical social theory with contemporary implications. It locates a particularly valuable example in the late 1950s and early 1960s with the international formation of a variety of New Lefts. The immediate need for popular political strategies and tactics proved to be fertile ground for their emerging relevance as part of new progressive-left politics worthy of the moniker “new left.” The key intellectual task was to formulate a workable critical position vis-à-vis capitalist consumerism, but one that created modes of popular political action outside of the reigning opposition of vanguardism and liberalism.

Granting varieties of critical European and American theorizing throughout much of the 20th century, what gained most traction in the British New Left was working-class radical socialism. And yet, perhaps uniquely among the various New Lefts, the form this contemporary political and intellectual effort took was radical historical work that, while grounded in theoretical reflection, stressed the creative, lived making of critical positions that were equally worldviews, and organizational and cultural forms of practice. Such work revitalized contemporary activism by redefining affirmatively popular political action of the past and thus validating emergent, contemporary popular political action.

## **2c. Circuits of Struggling Interns: Internships, Social Justice, and Resistance**

**Michelle Rodino-Colocino, Stevie Berberick:** “You Kind of Have to Bite the Bullet and do Bitch Work”: How Internships Teach Students to Unthink Exploitation in Public Relations

“You kind of have to bite the bullet and do bitch work before you can work your way up the ladder, which is totally relevant in the PR industry.” — Jessie, female senior Public Relations major

To intern in public relations is to do bitch work. In public relations (PR), the field Jessie is studying, women make up 70-85% of the workforce below the executive level whereas men make up 80% of upper management. At Penn State, where Jessie attends school, 87% of PR majors are women. Additionally, over three-fourths of unpaid interns in the US are women. Conversely, computer science majors, 72% of whom, upon graduation are men, may work in some of the highest paid internships in the US, earning from \$4,000- \$7,000 per month. For Jessie, bitch work, furthermore, constitutes grunt work that precedes “good work” that awaits her upon her ascent “up the ladder.” Internships, however, do not seem to help graduates ascend. One national study finds that students without internship experience are only 2% less likely to receive a job offer than those who complete unpaid internship, and those who completed unpaid internships were paid less in their first career-related position after graduating college than those with no



internship experience. Although the term connotes a feminized form of exploitation, male and female undergraduates negotiate bitch work. As we explain in this essay, “bitch work” both names the gendered, exploitative realities of working as a PR intern and denies it. Based on critical analysis of three focus groups with PR majors at Penn State, we argue that describing PR internships as “bitch work” highlights key material and ideological lessons about labor, gender, and exploitation. Analyzing interviews of PR interns through Marxist and feminist perspectives, we explain the dynamics of viewing PR internships as “bitch work.” We discuss how three smaller lessons teach the larger one that doing bitch work means *not being a real employee who does real work*. These smaller lessons involve learning that internships signify good luck in a lottery-like market, learning to “love” internships, and learning to “hope” (Kuehn and Corrigan 2013) that internships will lead to the “good work” for which creative industries are known (i.e., work that yields personal satisfaction, happiness, and respectable pay). These three lessons teach interns to *unthink work*, our phraseology for the general process of viewing internships as almost-but-not-quite labor. In this logic, doing bitch work precedes and thus precludes “real” work. Accordingly, internships do not register as exploitative. The following sections critically analyse and theorize each lesson as interviewees describe them, attending to their contribution to unthinking work generally and to rendering bitch work specifically. We conclude with a call to rethink internships as work, to recognize the gendered exploitation of interns, and suggest how to compensate interns for their real labor. We hope that critical scholars of communication will intervene to eliminate interns’ exploitation and do away with a system that demands bitch work.

### **Jenna Jacobson, Leslie Regan Shade:** Short Circuiting the Struggle of Precarious Work

Unpaid internships operate alongside a host of other forms of free labour in the creative industries – an unrelenting reality that needs to be critically interrogated (de Peuter, Cohen, & Brophy, 2012). For many young people in North America, internships are the mechanism to launch them into the career of their dreams by providing the “hands-on experience” necessary to differentiate them from their peers in a fiercely competitive job market. However, in many industries, particularly within the creative sector, internships have become the obligatory norm; the unfortunate reality is that internships are increasingly unpaid. For young adults the internship thus becomes not the optimal opportunity, but rather a necessary rite of passage in the hope that it may lead to a less precarious paid opportunity.

In this paper, we present findings based on twelve in-depth qualitative interviews conducted with young female interns in the creative industries. Women are the focus of the research because they dominate unpaid internships in the creative sector (Perlin, 2012). We identify three implications of unpaid internships: Internship as a free trial, Internship as conveyor-belt labour, Internship as displacement of paid employment. The young women we interviewed cited a need to “pay their dues” and start from the bottom of the employment ladder; however, they are disappointed when they play by the rules in the capitalist game and still cannot achieve paid employment. They believe that internships should be paid and have an understanding of “acceptable” versus “unacceptable” free labour. Interns recognize that companies want free labour, but there

is less of a recognition of the societal implications of hundreds of thousands of unpaid interns.

De Peuter, Greig, Nicole Cohen, and Enda Brophy. 2012. Interns Unite! You Have Nothing to Lose – Literally. Briarpatch Magazine, November 9.

Perlin, Ross. 2012. Intern Nation: How to Earn Nothing and Learn Little in the Brave New Economy. London: Verso Books.

### **Sandra Smeltzer:** Challenging the Neoliberal Order Through Social Justice-Oriented Communication Internships

In this presentation, I will examine university-level, for-credit communication internships geared towards advancing the public good. This form of experiential pedagogy, often referred to in academic literature as critical service learning, strives to marry theory and practice and explicitly forefronts social justice objectives (e.g. Porfilio and Hickman 2011, Mitchell 2008). For some communication students, this form of critical pedagogy may take place with non-governmental, non-profit, and community-based organizations. To help ensure their experience is rewarding academically, personally, and potentially professionally, students must: 1) receive appropriate support and supervision from both their academic institution and host organization, especially in cases where they bear witness to disconcerting forms of inequality and marginalization; 2) engage in meaningful work with a fair and defined number of work hours; and 3) be guided through a process of action and reflection (à la Paulo Freire) that incorporates critical communication theory.

Post-secondary administrations are keen to promote this form of community engagement as long as it does not jeopardize their institution's image, brand, and relationship with sponsors and benefactors. However, a growing body of literature suggests that students wanting to pursue social justice should be allowed to partake in internships that move beyond incremental changes to the existing political and economic framework and instead actively challenge the status quo both on and off campus (e.g. Bickford and Reynolds 2002, Boyd and Sandell 2012; Bruce and Brown 2010, Johnston 2011, Vogelgesang and Rhoads 2003). These kinds of placements, which could take place with a range of organizations, networks, movements, and associations within and beyond the 'ivory tower', provide students with an opportunity to question how and why systems of inequality exist in the first place and what role they can play in addressing such systemic disparity. The capacity to mount such internships depends to a large extent on the political freedom afforded by, and financial capacity of, one's department/faculty/institution, as well as one's (in)secure position in the tiered, increasingly precarious, academic system (e.g. Flood, Martin and Dreher 2013).

I argue the academic and societal value of these social justice-oriented, communication internships with two key provisos. First, we need to guarantee educational standards (e.g. through rigorous selection criteria for placements, appropriate supervisory capacity, and principled evaluation procedures). Second, we need to have mechanisms in place (e.g. a program/department adjudication group operating according to shared overarching principles) to openly discuss what constitutes the 'public good'/'social justice', recognizing that our personal and professional beliefs may not

correlate with those of our students or colleagues (Dean 2008, Smeltzer and Grzyb 2009). In sum, the objective of this presentation is to consider whether and how communication scholars should encourage and support critical service learning that aims to transform the contemporary neoliberal order and, if so, the factors that need to be taken into consideration in its implementation. This discussion draws on 12 years of experience supervising communication internships, semi-structured interviews with students, staff, and faculty involved in social justice internships, and research that informed a forthcoming article for tripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique.

**William Webb:** Ontario Interns Fight Back: Modes of Resistance Against Unpaid Internships in Ontario

Recent estimates suggest that between 100,000 and 300,000 illegal unpaid internships take place in Canada annually, many of which occur in Ontario (Langille, 2013). Scholars and activists have criticized unpaid internships on the grounds that they are often illegal, unfair, precarious, exploitative of vulnerable demographics, restrict social mobility, and devalue certain types of work (Oakley 2014; Seibert and Wilson 2013; de Peuter 2010). In light of the negative social, economic, and existential conditions fostered by unpaid internships, many interns and activists are presently challenging the status quo in Ontario. In this presentation I report on three ways that interns and those sympathetic to their plight are opposing unpaid internships, focusing on the Ontario Case. First, I analyze the ways that interns engage in social activism to raise awareness about the problems with unpaid internships. In particular, I focus on activism by the Canadian Intern Association, Students Against Unpaid Internship Scams, and Andrew Langille. Second, I examine several lawsuits that interns have waged against companies in an attempt to secure back pay, namely, Girex Bancorp v. Hsieh, Sandhu v. Brar, and Patel v. Bell Mobility Inc. Third, I analyse the Ontario Ministry of Labour's response to the growing concerns surrounding unpaid internships, and recent policy proposals that aim to strengthen governmental regulations. These policy proposals have come in the form of pre-budget recommendations from the Youth Alliance for Progress, Students Against Unpaid Internship Scams, the Canadian Intern Association, and Andrew Langille, a Private Member's Bill from Member of Provincial Parliament Peggy Sattler, a Private Member's Bill from Members of Parliament Andrew Cash and Laurin Liu, and a Government Bill from then-Ontario Labour Minister Yasir Naqvi. Arguing that possibilities for change have arisen largely due to the efforts of interns themselves, I conclude each section by noting some of the strengths and limitations afforded by each type of resistance.

**2d. Media Perspectives on War and Violence**

**Abbe Depretis:** Race, Consumption, and the Politics of Looting

“Looting” was one of the key words used by mainstream media to frame the uprisings in Ferguson, Missouri. The act of looting is a result of pervasive commodification in the United States, which makes money and goods the equalizing factor among disparate citizens. According to John Fiske, “Commodities are goods that speak as well as goods to use, and unequal access to commodities is part of the same system that makes access to

public discourse unequal” (473). Based in the economics of Black Nationalism espoused by Malcolm X and others, looting serves as a way of expressing anger towards the occupation of Black communities by outside business owners. Looting may also serve as an attempt to level the playing field, or as a way for the underprivileged to access commodities previously unavailable to them.

Because looting is considered violence (albeit against property rather than persons), media reactions to looting are uniformly negative. Citizens, politicians, and journalists categorize looters as “junkies,” “druggies,” “thieves,” and “thugs.” Rarely, however, the looters in Ferguson are being compared to the looters of Wall Street and the corruption of the capitalist system in the U.S. Based on these two preliminary depictions of looters, it is easy to see the ways that race plays a role in defining this type of act. With the riots in Los Angeles and New Orleans still looming in people’s minds, comparisons to former uprisings are also frequent.

This paper will analyze looting as a political discourse as it was constructed by citizens of Ferguson, mainstream media, politicians, and the general public during the days and weeks following the decision not to indict Darren Wilson. Utilizing twitter data and the looting hashtag in particular, this paper seeks to understand the purpose of looting as a tool of political discourse, contrasting the discourse of the citizens of Ferguson to that of the dominant media depiction and the ways that the general public understands looting as a tool of social change.

#### **Kim Nguyen: Post-9/11 Iconic Photography and World War II’s Analogical Aesthetic**

This paper will explore the various ways in which the rhetorical form of American iconic images of World War II has functioned to construct what a victorious and ‘good’ war looks like. With particular analytical focus on the image of Iwo Jima along with the image of “The Kiss,” the rhetorical force of the iconic images that emerge out of this period lie in their visual and affective expressions of how the contemporary American subject can relate to the American involvement in the War itself as well as its aftermath. Although most scholars focus on how WWII is remembered as a challenge to Germany’s Nazi regime, the iconic imagery reproduced to describe American historical involvement in WWII (like the famous speech delivered by President Roosevelt) illustrates a different story—one where the US was brought into the worldwide conflict through an unprovoked attack by the Japanese on Pearl Harbor. The photographic aesthetic of WWII celebrates the War’s narrative conclusion as heroically cohesive. With the image of Iwo Jima, the atomic bombing of Hiroshima Nagasaki is justifiably required, and with the image of “The Kiss,” the American soldier is reintegrated in the family and society.

This paper will argue that the contemporary commemorative rhetoric of 9/11 encourages support for the internationally waged War on Terror by taking up and reconfiguring the visual features of the World War II iconic photographic aesthetic on the setting of Ground Zero. Both the flag-raising image at Ground Zero and the contemporary reenactment of “The Kiss” invoke Ground Zero as an unprovoked attack site and the American male soldier as a present-day family man serving society reminiscent of post-WWII, 1950s-era culture. The use of World War II iconic aesthetic analogizes the events of 9/11 with the bombing of Pearl Harbor and encourages audiences to draw uncritical similarities and ignore differences within the local contexts

of each event. In effect, post-9/11 iconic imagery that takes up WWII's analogical aesthetic discourages critical evaluation and democratic deliberation over the War on Terror.

**Michelle Kearl, Nadia Martinez-Carrillo, Daniel Tamul:** Holy Drones!: Media Framing and the Writing of a Hagiography of American Predator Drones

Hagiography is a traditional construction of the religious biography of holy people. While generally studied in relationship to formally and informally canonized saints, hagiographies have been constructed and identified in literature, among social activists, and in a host of secular locations. Using data from a media framing analysis, we argue that coverage of the American military's drone use in the Afghanistan and Iraq wars not only constitutes the drones as agentic, giving them pseudo personhood, but also tells a story of the drones as saints—constituting a hagiography of drones. As both a biography and the construction of the subject as holy, hagiography is comprised of the following general characteristics: few specific biographical details in deference to documenting extraordinary characteristics, the stressing of ethical principles and the subject's innocence, strengthen the goodness and truth of the subject, and, finally, construct the subject and their characteristics in such a way that they may be imitated by readers.

In the expansive analysis section we use media framing data that demonstrates drones are predominately characterized as agentic—that is, drones are drawn to possess human characteristics. They can make decisions and they need no human motivation or influence to do their job. Establishing the human-ness of the drones is central to the hagiographic narrative. Once human, the drones are glorified to reflect their goodness, justness, and power in theatre wars. Because drones fundamentally change the impact of ground wars on troops from the United States, they are imagined as a savior from increased casualties. Drones are not just saviors of U.S. troops, however. Drones are imagined as a more precise way to ensure that the “right” targets are killed versus the flawed nature of human warfare. Further, John Arquilla, executive director of the Information Operations Center at the Naval Postgraduate school, underscores the ethicality, justness, and strength of drones—the essential components of a hagiography: “I stand my artificial intelligence against your human any day of the week and tell you that my A.I. will pay more attention to the rules of engagement and create fewer ethical lapses than a human force.” In this form, the drones become exemplars of humane warfare, models that individuals may emulate or strive to imitate.

We ultimately argue that the construction of drones as holy, saintly, or even simple exemplars of warfare is critically troubling because it gives lie to the possibility of ethical conflict. Framing drones as superior to humans in both philosophy and execution of war excuses both direct and indirect responsibility and culpability in the military industrial complex, war culture, and the othering of enemies. Further distancing the American public from the material reality of conflict, death, and disaster precipitated by warfare cements American militarism.

## 2e. Redefining Community Through Advocacy and Alternative Media

### **Maggie Reid:** ICTV-Toronto: Independent, Community led Media in the Making

In *Who Owns the Media: global trends and local resistances* (2004), Robert McChesney maintains that the public interest that should be furthered by information and communications infrastructures should be one of universal access to information and the ability for informed public participation to take place. Media communications systems however, can serve to enhance or deny democracy (3). This paper explores the possibilities, opportunities, and shortcomings that exist for meaningful public participation in the media landscape in the Greater Toronto Area. As a large city with a diverse population, I argue that it is vital that there are diverse voices represented in the media to reflect the populous as well as financially accessible and meaningful ways to participate and gain the skills necessary to participate in the media making process.

Historically, community media organizations have served as training hubs for aspiring media workers with varying levels of success. This paper seeks to examine some of the gaps that exist in Toronto with respects to providing truly democratic and barrier free media organizations- including an analysis of Rogers Communications' management of community television in Toronto. Additionally, I seek to highlight a community-based project that is currently under way that seeks to rectify some of these problems that have been identified as precluding the ideal of universal access to media making. A group of scholars, media practitioners and community members have begun the process of developing an application to establish an independent community television channel and media hub in Toronto. The projected TV channel/multimedia resource centre that we are striving to establish would include: a community TV channel free to air and on cable; a web portal uniting community newspaper, audio, and video by Torontonians, and a network of production facilities where Torontonians can learn and produce multimedia content. The channel is to be commercial-free, secular, fully accessible and reflective of the cities diverse communities.

### **Gretchen King:** The Radical Pedagogy of Community Radio and the Case of Radio al-Balad 92.4 FM: Community Radio News Audiences and Political Change in Jordan

Community media institutions, like community radio stations, provide locally-owned infrastructure for accessing media production and broadcasting. By community media, I mean non-profit, participatory media institutions that are largely volunteer-run and provide a service to a specific community. Community radio stations worldwide are mandated to empower audiences and facilitate participation in community life. Thus, the perspectives of listeners are vital to ascertain how effective community radio stations are in facilitating political learning environments that motivate listener engagement in the station and in the community. This paper is based on five-weeks of data gathered among listeners and staff of Radio al-Balad 92.4FM, Jordan's first community radio station. Drawing on these data, this research scrutinizes the station's goal to "exercise democracy" in Jordan by revealing how listeners and participants evaluate the station's presence in and service to the community based on their experiences. The first qualitative

study on the impact of community radio in the Middle East, this research paper documents how community radio, from the perspective of Radio al-Balad 92.4FM listeners and members, offers a transformative experience by providing a participatory platform for media and political education, broadcasting programming that raises civic awareness, and providing space for autonomous collective action through which audience members can increase their access to political power as well as opportunities for social change. This paper will also consider some of the practices that can help sustain the radical pedagogy of community radio.

**Joanna Adamiak, Sandra Jeppesen, Sharmeen Khan, Holly Nazar:** Autonomous Media and Technology: The Isolation of Profeminist Media Activists

The Media Action Research Group (MARG), a five year SSHRC-funded research project which started work in September 2013, is researching understudied groups of profeminist (anti-racist, anti-colonial, feminist, radical queer) activists engaged in autonomous media networks in North America. MARG is a four person collective comprised of a tenure-track faculty member, two doctoral candidates, and a media activist. We have an ethical commitment to accessible participatory research and dissemination, working as a non-hierarchical collective. We work from three different cities, collaborating through the help of technology mostly. We use online video chats, emails, document collaboration on web servers, and phone calls to work on a day-to-day basis, meeting in person a few times a year. Our research about non-hierarchical media activism is mirrored in our internal collective process of making decisions about the direction of research together using anti-authoritarian feminist frameworks.

Completing research in six Canadian cities (Vancouver, Victoria, Ottawa, Halifax, Montreal and Toronto) in the form of participatory group interviews with media activists, we have asked questions regarding what challenges profeminist media activists face; how autonomous media groups and networks can be strengthened; and how they interact with social movements. This paper will present our preliminary findings in relationship to conclusions we are drawing about the internal workings of our collective. Participants highlighted that autonomous media producers can feel isolated, for example, if they broadcast at a community radio station, they may not have a chance to meet others working on similar programs at the same station. The cost of renting space limits media activists from creating gathering spaces, where face to face interactions can occur as media is being produced. Furthermore, spaces that do exist in the activist community are sometimes perceived as unwelcoming to people of colour. The findings from our research participants share a common thread with our experiences in MARG, namely that both feminist media activists and feminist media researchers feel isolation and disconnectedness despite having technology that allows for different levels of contact, interaction and dissemination on a near-global scale.

This paper will also present methodological changes to our research that are a response to these initial findings of isolation and disconnectedness among media activists. We will critically think through our methodological shift away from interviews as the central method to our research. While we are still interested in conducting interviews as conversations to capture marginalized voices and document media activism from a profeminist perspective, we are shifting toward engaging in project-based activist-

community-led research-creation that addresses some of the feelings of isolation, and creates spaces for working together face to face.

**Crystal R. China:** *Can Prisoners Speak? Advocacy Media Organization, Form and Practice in The Sentencing Project, 1986-2014*

The social and cultural production of agency is a difficult, uncertain historical process. Due to severe conditions of incarceration, the specific case of prisoners underscores this difficulty and uncertainty. As one organization that seeks to improve the conditions that constitute prisoners as prisoners, The Sentencing Project, a Washington, D.C.-based media organization, engages in and publishes research on sentencing and incarceration. The Project serves as an authoritative source for news organizations, lawyers and politicians who wish to address and perhaps correct the broader impact of sentencing policy. To produce this research, the Project employs a professional staff of researchers rather than, for example, collecting the individual stories of prisoners themselves. The purpose of this study is to explain and analyze the relationship between the purpose, form, structure and use of the Project and its implications for producing agency of prisoners. What makes The Sentencing Project worth considering is not only its prominence as a long-standing organization and authority as a source, but also its constitution as a professionalized social-reform organization. Within the spaces it chooses to operate—i.e. government, mainstream media and the criminal justice system—it must establish itself as a credible, authoritative source of information. To do this, it restricts who can contribute to its work to those who possess the skills and status necessary to produce reputable research. The key resulting issue for this research is what kinds of subjectivities and agencies are produced by a professionalized social-advocacy organization like The Sentencing Project, and what the implications of these forms of agency are for prisoners.

The study begins by tracing the emergence of the tradition of professionalized social reform of prisons, in order account for the persistence and current authority of The Sentencing Project. It then discusses the emergence of The Sentencing Project itself to document the ways in which the organization functions as a professionalized reform organization. The study then considers key ways that The Sentencing Project's research is used by major social and political institutions in order to provide evidence of the Project's role as a leading source of information on incarceration and sentencing policy. The final section seeks to account for the place of The Sentencing Project in major, dominant institutions through an analysis of the form of the Project's research reports and how they produce authority and credibility. The study concludes by reflecting more generally on the implications of professionalized reform organizations for constituting the agency of the subaltern.

The Sentencing Project plays an important role in the discourse on incarceration and penal policy. Its fact-based, expert-driven research informs public discourse on crime and punishment, which in turn informs the policy decisions regarding a dysfunctional penal system. However, it removes via abstract representation the subjects of these reform efforts, which are prisoners. The professionalization of social reform in this case requires that subjects and subjectivities be excluded from the data-generation and



reporting process, in order to preserve claims to scientific method and authority it establishes with dominant institutions. Prisoners participate, but as statistical aggregates.

## **2f. Social Media and Social Movements**

### **Rhon Teruelle: Carrément dans le rouge**

Social movements often times become identifiable by the tactics that they employ. For instance, while the Sixties' anti-war movement was characterized by the rallies, demonstrations and sit-ins attended by thousands of individuals protesting the war in Vietnam, the recent Occupy movement was understood (and both commended and vilified) for its purposeful lack of hierarchy and leaders, ongoing mic checks, and strategic occupation of significant locales. This paper will discuss the tactical use of social media in relation to the escalation of tactics employed by the Québec students who challenged the Quebec provincial (Liberal) government's decision to increase university tuition fees in 2012. This research is timely given the dearth of studies into the Québec students' use of social media while on strike.

As Gerbaudo (2014) indicates, young activists have “exploited the cracks of these corporate platforms.” Because nowadays “activists invade spaces they know do not belong to them and over which they have little control” (Gerbaudo 2014a). And just as McChesney (1997) problematizes the existence of an oligopolistic market in mass media, wherein very few organizations and individuals control the production of news, Fuchs (2008) likewise suggests that similar problems exist due to the monopolies in the computer and software industries which directly affects social media. Fuchs (2008) argues that dominant ideology can be created and promoted due to these monopolies. Additionally, it is said that the primary goal of all social media is to make a profit by selling advertisement space (Fuchs, 2008; van Dijck, 2013). Fuchs (2008) suggests that individual users are commodified and ultimately sold as the product to advertisers. Thus, for young activists, this tension is even more explicit and problematic. Not only do they have to conform to the terms of the website as mandated by ownership, but they must also accept their own commodification as the products sold to advertisers. In order to utilize social media for political gain, current young radicals are invariably not only subjecting themselves to commodification (as the product sold to the advertisers), but social media companies are also profiting from the immaterial labour that they produce through their acts of dissent, in addition to monetizing the content that they create. Yet, despite all of this, as evidenced by the Québec student strike, the use of social media continues to be integral to current movements. The majority of the participants in my study have acknowledged the importance of their political use of social media during the 2012 Québec student strike. In particular, I am struck by the “organic organization” that many of the leaders gestured towards, as the students themselves (without leadership help) organized through social media in order to sustain a nightly demonstration which took place for three consecutive months! I am also encouraged that despite the challenges they faced and hardships that they encountered, the majority of my participants would continue their involvement in just causes.

**Jaigris Hodson, Omar Grant: #Ferguson: Twitter on the Front Lines**

Once a tool for documenting the mundane in 140 characters or less, with the success of the Arab Spring, Idle no More, and even the Occupy movement, Twitter rose in the popular and scholarly consciousness to become a symbol of web 2.0's democratic potential (Benkler, 2006, Drache 2008, Shirky, 2010). However, more recently, Twitter has taken a turn, and has been viewed by many scholars as primarily a mouthpiece for the amplification of already dominant media and corporate interests (van Dijck, 2013; Morozov, 2013; Hodson, 2013; Bergie and Hodson, forthcoming). Into this contested communications landscape exploded the news of the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO during the month of August, 2014. This paper explores the ways that news about Ferguson spread throughout Twitter and how the coverage on Twitter differed from the coverage in the web pages of more traditional news media outlets. Multimodal corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis is employed to understand the Twitter activity that took place during the first week of the Ferguson protests, and to capture key patterns in language use that both emerge out of and run counter to discourses in traditional or mainstream media sources. Key influencers responsible for spreading the discourses on Twitter are identified, and the popularity of terms such as "protest" vs. "riot" or the description of Michael Brown as a "teenager" or a "man" are compared over time and across platforms. The analysis reveals that while there are key differences between the story as covered by Twitter and the story as covered by mainstream media outlets, key individuals responsible for driving the discourse forward tend to originate from large media sources such as television, and thus carry a measure of celebrity and influence afforded by their participation in the mainstream media. In other words, while Twitter offers an alternative discourse to that offered by mainstream media outlets, the Twitter discourse only becomes popular when it is bolstered by those same mainstream sources. Thus the case of Ferguson serves to demonstrate how Twitter remains a contested space for online activism, both able to counter dominant media discourses, and also simultaneously amplify them.

**Matthew Flisfeder: \*Social\* Media Does Not Exist: A Critical Reading of Social Media "Revolutions"**

Beginning by taking up the song project, "Two Blobs Fucking," by the alternative rock band, The Flaming Lips, this paper questions the efficacy of political mobilization through social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter. The song, "Two Blobs Fucking," is available for free on YouTube; however, all of the recorded tracks of the song, of which there are twelve, are divided into separate videos. The objective being that, in order to hear the song in its complete form, users must come together in real shared physical space to play the tracks together on multiple devices simultaneously. "Two Blobs Fucking" will serve as a model for thinking critically about the role of social media in the case studies examined in this paper, which include the so-called "Arab Spring," Occupy Wall Street, Idle No More, and the Canadian "Maple Spring." Drawing on contemporary Lacanian political theory (particularly the work of Jodi Dean and Slavoj Žižek), this paper argues that social media does not exist - at least in the sense of forming a coherent "social." Although social media played an important and significant role in

organizing and mobilizing political resistance in these movements, I argue that it was in fact the actual coming together of people in real shared physical space, as well as the work of organization and mobilization outside of social media that accounts for their impact. Although we have heard much about “Facebook Revolutions,” the political and emancipatory message of these movements truly has been that social media does not exist - at least, not in the sense attributed to it in mainstream discourse.

**Hend Abdalmotagally:** An Ethnographic Study of the Re-conceptualization of Opinion Leadership via Twitter amongst Egyptian Revolutionaries in The Post-Jan25 Revolution Era

This study applies the two-step-flow-of-information model within an ethnographic approach (Being There) to explore the two-step-flow of information model for re-conceptualizing opinion leadership via Twitter in the post-Jan25 revolution era. The study is inspired by the 25th of January revolution that shacked many of the taken-for-granted theories and concepts. As an Egyptian researcher, conducting this paper aims at providing an academic paper representing a closer on-the-ground look at the doers of a culture-in-making so-called Arab Spring. The study argues that 'the user is the tool,' and 'the sender becomes the message.' The data collection tools are (a) seven months of participant-observation conducted on a purposive sample of approximately 400 Egyptian tweeps, (b) online semi-structured interviews conducted with a purposive sub-sample of eighteen tweeps, and (c) seventy online questionnaires.

The indications refer to Twitter, not as a new tool of communication, but rather a 'sphere,' 'zone,' or 'platform' of interaction within which mass media content, user-generated content, and interpersonal communication are integrated. These complicated dynamics imply three main changes, (1) that opinion leaders do more of organizing, filtering, summarizing, and analyzing than leading, while the rest of thought-absorbing process is the responsibility of (2) the followers to depend on more than one source for information, including various opinion leaders, and (3) seek exposing to opposite opinions. Regarding the relationship between leaders and non-leaders/followers, the results show that it is a temporary mutually-equal relationship, and the effectiveness of the relationship depends on the followers as much as on the leaders. Specifying the reasons for following a tweep on Twitter, an overlapping circles of opinion leadership is addressed. The tweeps provided similar characteristics of opinion leaders proven in the literature. This means that, on Twitter the tweeps do follow the traditional opinion leaders (those with high number of followers, high rate of retweets and mentions, and the politicians and public figures), but at the same time, they follow the sub-opinion leaders who are considered 'original, trustworthiness, at the heart of the events, objective, consistent in their views, and rebellion in their tone and spirit.

The results are questioning the 'linearity' of the model. The networked innovative communication and information technology empowered the users who became senders as well as receivers; it allowed variety of choices with new tools for self-expression and knowledge-exchanging and experience-sharing among the audience members. It opened the way for many other players, both individual and groups/lobbies, to offer or impose their opinions. Instead, this study argues that the "circular" relationship is closer to reality. In the light of the uniqueness of the ethnographic approach in addition to applying

it to Twitter, the results of the study are indications pushing for re-conceptualizing the major concepts related to opinion leadership, followers, and the flow-of-information via Twitter. The results, as well, question the 'social' nature of Twitter in the post-Jan25 era. The results show indications for reconsidering the nature of the relationship between social networks and traditional media on one hand, and media audience dynamic on the other hand. The analysis implies that comparison between Twitter and traditional media is not a comparison based on the advanced technology applied to the means; 'traditional versus new,' 'printed versus electronic,' but it is more or less related to the content, the perceptions and the policies guiding the performance and practice, and most importantly the characteristics of the users and their interests.

## **2g. Struggles for Food and Justice**

**Garrett Broad** (University of Pennsylvania): Stories of Food and Justice: Competing Visions of Youth Empowerment

Citing intersecting concerns related to health, the environment and the economy, critics of the contemporary industrialized food system insist that we are in crisis. Thanks to pressure from advocates, recent years have seen issues related to food, agriculture and nutrition receive a nearly unprecedented level of public and media attention. In documentary films and on network television, in bestselling books and in the halls of the White House, a discursive explosion related to food issues has propelled the "alternative food movement(s)" into international prominence. However, when it comes to providing substantive remedies to many of the food system's most intransigent challenges, the solutions proffered by alternative food movement activists have consistently come up short. Indeed, in the neoliberal environment of the United States, high-profile solutions to food system crises tend to come across as utterly simple and generally solvable through basic individual consumer choices. This philosophical orientation -- perhaps best encapsulated by the dual mantras, "Vote with your fork three times a day," and, "Grow your own" -- often overlooks the dynamics of structural inequality and exploitation that perpetuate injustice in the food system.

This presentation highlights the work of advocates who aim to actively advance a vision of "food justice", providing a counter not only to the dominant players in industrial food, but also to elements of the mainstream alternative food movement itself. Grounded within historically marginalized, low-income communities of color, advocates for food justice argue that activities like urban agriculture, cultural nutrition education and food-related social enterprises can be an integral part of an agenda for systemic social change. Even still, they insist, such initiatives will only prove transformative if they remain connected to legacies of social justice activism, and in solidarity with ongoing struggles for economic and racial justice in both local and global contexts.

Drawing from ethnographic participant observation, interviews and critical media analysis, this work provides a case study of Rooted in Community (RIC), the only national network of community-based organizations working explicitly at the intersection of food justice and youth development in the United States. It describes how the RIC network uses a complement of community organizing tactics, digital media technologies and youth-led conferences to build a collective critical consciousness among engaged

young people. At the same time, the research also demonstrates how the work of these food justice activists is simultaneously bolstered and constrained by the activities of media celebrities and media-savvy non-profits who have themselves entered the food politics landscape with great fanfare. Offering insights for scholars, activists, workers and media producers, the work suggests that food justice groups like RIC must continue to develop more sophisticated digital storytelling practices, using media as a way to amplify community voices and advance their ambitious agendas for cultural and policy change. If grassroots advocates are unable to tell their own stories of struggle and success in the quest for food justice, the research argues, someone else will surely try to tell their stories for them.

**Jaclyn Nardone (Western University): From The Kitchen To The Streets: Fast-Food Workers Protest For Labour Rights**

From steamy kitchens to crowded streets, entwined in ‘circuits of struggle,’ activist fast-food workers have made a recent dent in protest history. Dedicated to the critical study of labour and workplace justice, and debunking capitalist structures that endanger wage equality and workers’ rights in the fast-food industry, this essay is designed to focus on how contemporary communication practices are being met with organized struggle and resistance against corporate subjugation felt by workers at Taco Bell, Dominos and the like. In November 2014, hundreds of fast-food workers struck in New York City, demanding higher wages for their work and the right to unionize. These walk-outs inspired subsequent walk-outs, which—together—have been coined the largest umbrella movement of fast-food strikes in history. Supported by the “Strike Fast Forward: Low Pay is Not Ok” and “Fight for 14” campaigns, the Service Employees International Union and Twitter, fast-food labourers in 33 countries walked off their jobs in solidarity in May 2014 and workers in 150 cities similarly took to the streets in September 2014. Contextualizing this nuanced fast-food movement, and the isolated strikes that exist within it, this essay critiques how these current strikes are similar and different from those that emerged at the height of the fast-food industry in the 1980s. Theoretically incorporating literature on the foremost fast-food industrial complex of McDonalds (George Ritzer, *The McDonaldization of Society*, 2011), as well as York University professor Ester Reiter’s 10-month research/work experience at Burger King (*Making Fast Food: From The Frying Pan To The Fryer*, 1996), this essay is designed to critique how the current working conditions in said fast-food kitchens theoretically mimic the managerial tactics of ‘Taylorism’—as critiqued by intellectual activist Harry Braverman (*Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century*, 1974)—and speak to Cameron Macdonald and Carmen Sirianni’s critiques on the rise of service industry work (*Working in The Service Society*, 1996). Examining main themes of this movement through prominent articles from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—regarding Dignity, Family Care and Wage Justice—helps situate this topic in a social justice framework that seeks to bring to the fore human rights violations occurring within this the fast-food industry and encourage social change. Brainstorming approaches of change, that debunk the neoliberal capitalist order, this essay concludes by offering suggestions as to how these activist fast-food workers might continue in their inspiring fight for union rights and wage equality.

**Diana Eidson** (Auburn University): La Via Campesina International Peasant's Movement: Circuits of Struggle for Food Sovereignty

There is no more potent symbol of the almost absolute control wielded by the international agri-food system (from landgrabbing to retailing), than the factory farm. ... This system is imposed on us, on humanity, and represent[s] in one crisis the sum of multiple crises. ... However, the people are organizing and having more and more conversations and debates in an attempt to comprehend this together. This is very subversive, because our collective memory, and continuing to produce our own foodstuffs, according to our own peasant traditions, represents essentially the most fundamental basis for our autonomy – allowing our peoples, with all our ways and wisdom, to persist, and even to cool the earth, and attain lives of justice and dignity in the present and into the future. ~ Nyelini Newsletter, Number 2, March 11, 2011

Arguably, the most obscene effects of neoliberal economic policies have manifested in the food sector as millions of farmers have been dispossessed, millions of acres raped and ruined, and millions of human beings starved under the forced precarity of the worker and the engineered scarcity of affordable foodstuffs. Since 1993, a global movement of peasants, small and medium-size farmers, landless people, women farmers, indigenous people, migrants, and agricultural workers from around the world has formed a broad grassroots coalition to fight against corporatized food systems. This slogan from the International Day of Peasant's Struggles encapsulates their mission: "Bury the corporate food system! Peasant agriculture can feed the world!" Fighting against globalization and for the dignity and sovereignty of human bodies against violence and exploitation, La Via Campesina has waged a struggle consisting of strategies and tactics that engage dialogue, subvert hegemony, and assert indigenous wisdom. Their direct action tactics encompass 164 organizations in 73 countries.

Using a combination of indigenous understandings of nature and globalized technologies of communication, Via Campesina organizes subversive struggle to promote fair trade, seed saving, land rights, gender equity, and sustainable agriculture. This study examines the online rhetoric of La Via Campesina distributed in emails, newsletters, reports, and web articles. Using critical theory from thinkers such as Doreen Massey, Michel de Certeau, Paulo Freire, and Jacques Ranciere, the presenter develops a new theory concerning the ways in which this movement teaches stakeholders and enacts human agency through discourse. To date, no scholar has done a rhetorical analysis of La Via Campesina's online presence. This work seeks to promote the work of transnational agrarian movements, update previous studies on the movement, and contribute to an ongoing conversation about these movements by scholars in other fields such as Eric Holt-Gimenez, Raj Patel, Vandana Shiva, Annette Aurelie Desmarais, Hannah Kay Wittman, and Marc Edelman.

According to the Worldwatch Institute's State of the World 2014: Governing for Sustainability Report, in a period from 2006 to 2013, there were only 49 protests worldwide concerning agrarian/land reform, 29 dealing with food prices, and 133 on jobs, wages, and labor conditions. Much of the struggle continues online, and La Via Campesina has remained in the thick of it. Their efforts demonstrate a concerted and

sustained effort toward positive change in food systems and human interactions; thus, these circuits of struggle merit our closer attention.

**12:30-2 pm                      Lunchtime Activist Keynote**

**Building Indigenous Circuits of Struggle: Community Media in Oaxaca**

Peter Bloom and Loreto Bravo

Mexico has recently been the focus of international outrage over the forced disappearance and likely extra-judicial murder of over 40 rural teaching college students who were protesting the implementation of neoliberal labor policies in education. This event has helped to unmask a regime of terror in Mexico that uses old-school repression along with high-tech surveillance to systematically eliminate dissent. As part of the wholesale implementation of neoliberal policies and structural reforms beginning in the 1980's and reaching new levels of intensity in the past 10 years, the Mexican state is aiding and abetting the territorialization of capital, with over 50 percent of the country sold off to mining companies for exploration and extraction. But where there is oppression there is resistance, and southern Mexico has been the birthplace of two important liberation movements that have and continue to use media, new and old, to advance the struggle against neoliberal capitalism. The most widely known of these is the EZLN in Chiapas, whose use of the nascent Internet and digital media has been an example and inspiration for many throughout the world. The second is the popular uprising or "Commune of Oaxaca" in 2006, during which community and independent media flourished in both the city and rural areas of Oaxaca state. The legacy of 2006 is evidenced by the unparalleled presence of over 60 community radios, 16 community cellular networks and a handful of independent wireless ISPs to provide internet access.

In light of these historical and geographic contexts, this talk will focus on how indigenous communities in Oaxaca are building and rethinking community media in terms of both infrastructure and content in order to preserve indigenous languages, promote and protect human, cultural and socioeconomic rights, and organize resistance to capital's exploitation and enclosure of life, land and livelihood.

**2:15-3:45 pm                      Panel session 3**

**3a.    Media Education and News 2.0: Solutions for the Digital Generation**

**Rob Williams, Julie Frechette, Nolan Higdon**

We are now a network and networked society, one in which the key social activities and structures are organized around electronically processed information networks. This shift has altered the skills required for economic and democratic participation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Currently, 70% of US jobs require specialized knowledge and skills. This figure was only 5% at the dawn the last century. With the new Web 2.0 Internet, the rise of new digital and social media platforms, and the arrival of mobile forms of communication technology, changes in how democracy in the US and around the world operates are already happening at a rapid pace. Citizenship and equitable participation in the 21<sup>st</sup>

century economy requires skills that are attainable mostly through colleges and universities, such as the ability to design, evaluate, and manage one's own work; frame, investigate, and solve problems using a wide range of tools and resources; collaborate strategically with others; communicate effectively in many forms (i.e., multiple platforms); find analyze and use information for multiple and often overlapping purposes; and develop new products and ideas. Further, the type of work and skillsets needed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will likely change rapidly. However, students are not being trained to navigate and participate in this changing democracy due in part to a deficit in media literacy education. This panel will discuss solutions to the gap between the rapid dependence on new technologies and student's literacy of them.

### **3b. Perspectives on Political Economy in the Era of Ubiquitous Media and Markets**

**Vincent Manzerolle:** Consumption Capacity and the Convergence of Finance and Digital Media: Contributions to a Field Theory of Ubiquitous Media and Markets

The release of the latest Apple iPhone offered one important, and long anticipated feature: a mobile payment system built on the near-field communication (NFC) standard. To compliment this new technical feature, Apple developed an entire payment service ecosystem that integrated both retailers and credit card companies. Paralleling similar efforts by other new media entities like Google, Facebook, Snapchat, and Twitter, Apple's foray into mobile payment and transaction has popularized this feature and prospectively created an economy of scale, the search for mobile payment standard has a long history. Indeed, mobile payment is widely used in many markets globally, but has been slow to develop in North America. Interest in converting mobile media into payment and transaction platforms is, however, symptomatic of a more profound trend: the converging interests of financial and media industries. In Canada, this is evidenced by Rogers Communications' application to become a bank. As this paper will demonstrate, the purported goal of this convergence is to convert ubiquitous, personalized media into platforms enabling an omnipresent market logic.

Mobile payment technologies, through their ubiquitous connectivity, enable the market to exist as a field homologous to the electromagnetic phenomena that its key features depend upon. This paper sketches the fraught convergence of financial and digital media interests using Marx's concept of "consumption capacity"—a significant barrier to the extended circulation and reproduction of capital itself addressed in *The Grundrisse*. Understood in this context, the search for a mobile payment standard is both seen as an opportunity to create new revenue sources for both financial and technology companies, but also to more fully integrate market relations into the fabric of everyday life by making every possible moment/experience an opportunity for transactions. To reduce the satisfaction of desire to a "twinkling of an eye." Our means of communication become our means of payment, and in so doing, our communicative capacities themselves become intertwined with our capacity to consume. Not only to maximize consumption capacity by creating a market field, but also to monetize and capitalize on this very capacity itself.



**Lee McGuigan, Graham Murdock:** The Medium is the Marketplace: Producing Consumption in Digital Times

Taking Marx's analysis as the point of departure, and drawing on a range of concrete examples, this paper argues that rather than concentrating on the "new" forms of social and economic intercourse animated by digital media, and especially internet-enabled mobile devices, critical analysis needs to trace the ways that digital consumption is intensifying the progressive integration of marketing, marketplaces, and payment processing, which has been central to the generation and realization of surplus value from the emergence of the modern consumer system at the turn of the twentieth century. Interrogating new marketing technologies, and attending to their place in a longer history of modern retailing, we consider how the digital media environment contributes to the production of consumption. With the convergence of marketing and marketplace, facilitated by digital forms of credit and payment processing, the motives and manners of modern consumption are pitched toward accelerating circulation. Digital technologies are being mobilized not only as delivery platforms for advertisements, but as instruments for mediating instant, credit-based purchases and harvesting feedback data about consumers and their behaviours. Stimulation of desire through marketing, and the expansion of means of exchange, amplify "consumption capacity" and contribute to an "enriched systems of needs" (Marx, 1973, p. 405-409). The digital mediation of modern consumption illustrates Marx's assertion that capital development calls into service ever more contrivances for the "annihilation of space by time." Drawing on the work of Dallas Smythe, we also address how expanding and digitalizing the means of exchange produces consumers as social and economic products: individuals are situated as consumers by being connected to digital marketplaces anywhere, any time; and as people use this infrastructure, marketers produce "consumers" as data-based commodities.

Marx, K. 1973. *Grundrisse*. Trans. Martin Nicolaus. New York: Penguin.

**3c. Activating Bodies In/to Digital Media Networks: Materiality, Narratives and Molotov Cocktails**

**Marusya Bociurkiw:** Molotov Cocktails & Facebook Pages: Feminist Uses of Embodied & Digital Protest in Eastern Europe

Global populist forms of social media are proving to be a kind of synopticon (the few watched by the many), on one hand, or a way of surveilling the state, and on the other hand, a panoptical device for government authorities. For example, it was not until Pussy Riot's performance at Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Saviour went viral on Youtube that the three Pussy Riot members were confronted and arrested. But there is also no doubt that worldwide outrage expressed in part via social media had an impact on reducing Pussy Riot's sentences. This paper will examine more recent uses of social media for protest by feminist activists in Eastern Europe in this context, but particularly in relation to Ukraine's Euromaidan revolution of 2013/14. Activists spoke of a 'physical maidan' that operated in tandem with a 'digital maidan'. While women's bodies were initially abjected from the front lines of protest, digital organizing worked to integrate

these and other marginalized bodies – Tatar, LGBT and others – into all aspects of protest on the Maidan. This paper will examine how social media works differently in Ukraine, compared to Western forms of protest. In particular, consideration is given to how women have historically taken hold of communications technologies in Eastern Europe, the relationship of these strategies to Russian propaganda networks, and what the West has to learn from these forms of activism.

**Laura Forlano:** Hacking the Feminist Body: Media, Materiality and Things

This paper develops feminist understandings of hacking the body through socio-technical systems such as the sensors and devices that are employed in the quantified self-movement as well as related medical technologies. Due to their relative lack of diversity and inclusion (Bueno, 2014), which has been well documented both within Silicon Valley as well as from afar, masculinist approaches to hacking, tinkering, geeking, and making focus on places and projects that continue to create explicit divisions between traditional Western dichotomies. Specifically, feminism has a history of contemplating the body as the site where socio-technical tensions and ‘matters of concern’ (Latour & Weibel, 2005) play out in everyday life. Since Haraway’s (1991) account of the cyborg self, scholars have argued for the important role of hybrids (Michael, 2004) in mediating discrete, rational categories. These cyborg narratives have only become more relevant as humans have become increasingly augmented with networked technologies. Yet, most discourses around these technologies that originate in Silicon Valley make positivist assumptions about the importance of certain kinds of sites of innovation (Suchman, 2011) as well as the value of the transmission of data (geolocation, calories burned, video captured) rather than a more qualitative description of the rituals (Carey, 1988) and the mess (Law, 2004).

**Mary Elizabeth Luka:** Regulatory Bodies: Let’s Not Talk TV Anymore

Imagine that you live in a high-rise building in an urban centre that is so wired you can use any media-playing device you own (TV, smart phone, tablet, radio) anywhere in your home. Perhaps you share “how to” videos, or play games and “binge-watch” TV or radio episodes. Maybe you remix music videos or build family photo albums on Facebook or Vimeo, or your spouse’s company runs training sessions using simulators. The concept of creative citizenship I have developed suggests that artists and creative workers who undertake collaborative media production and distribution are also occupied with the dynamics of networked civic engagement in relation to culture. I study how Canadians become involved as co-creators and narrowcast audiences through creative citizenship in the digital media age. In the last two years, the primary regulator in this environment, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, has become involved in reshaping digital television services through a consultation process titled “Let’s Talk TV”. How and why were individual Canadians invited to participate in this process, and how did they? This paper considers how the regulatory body attempts to reconnect fully-wired Canadians with conventional networks in a digital-first environment, despite the latter’s efforts to hang on to broadcast TV as primary revenue generators and to geofence Canadian relationships from over-the-top (OTTs) distribution and other digital offerings. How these efforts intersect with national broadcast mandate requirements has

implications for civic engagement by creative workers and ordinary Canadian citizens already deeply immersed in the global digital media environment.

**Mél Hogan:** Electromagnetic Soup: EMFs, Bodies, and Surveillance

In thinking about our wired techno ecologies, where connectivity is either imposed (for surveillance) or regarded (and fought for) as a human right, a drive to always be ‘on’ becomes evident. What is less evident perhaps is the queer transcorporeality of such a set up, where substances - the electromagnetic flows (EMFs) required to make our gadgets speak to cell towers, satellites, servers, and so on - flow in and out of our bodies, and inconspicuously so for most. I argue that these bodily manifestations are mere entry points into larger questions of media ecologies and technologies of surveillance, whereby our wired wireless techno ecologies deny the physical body in order to surveil it. By bringing the body to fore through a feminist framework, we can reconsider the utopic vision of largely and intentionally ‘invisible’ technologies that co-constitute wireless technologies, wifi, and EMFs. I suggest that by probing the porosity of EMF as a technology, we become better able to understand and critically engage with forces that propel and reinforce what counts, persists, dominates, and is made visible in utopic techno ecologies, at the expense of what remains hidden. On another layer, this becomes a question at the intersection of trackability and network formation. As such, the idea that invisibility is the underlying technology of surveillance is at the crux of my contribution. In techno ecologies that dominate the landscape, the body is dismissed while simultaneously construed as target and transmitter. We are reconstructed in new media imaginaries as ‘users’ - but we are used - anonymous aggregates feeding into endless pools of big data and algorithms.

**3d. Second Shifts: Women’s Labour and Feminist Activism**

**Rosemary Clark:** The Dramatic Form of Hashtag Feminism: A Case Study of #WhyIStayed

The dawn of digital media and social networking sites has reenergized the feminist movement in the United States. Feminist media research, however, has been slow to grasp the full implications of digital media for the movement and social movement research has yet to model the conditions under which activists might successfully mobilize online. This paper responds to Shaw’s (2012) call for feminist researchers working at the intersection of media and social movements to develop a theoretical framework that more accurately depicts the activist work of online feminists, whose alternative media practices challenge existing discourse regarding gender norms and roles. Through a case study of a recent viral feminist Twitter protest that arose in response to the domestic abuse controversy involving NFL running back Ray Rice, #WhyIStayed, I frame U.S. feminists’ digital media practices as an extension of the movement’s historically rooted discursive tactics. Within this framework, online feminism’s narrative form becomes evident and the conditional requirements for a successful, digitally-mediated feminist protest can be understood as the elements of an effective dramatic performance, like those found in compelling theater or story-telling. I

identify the examples of the dramatic elements that create the conditions under which routine online interaction becomes online collective action through a textual analysis of 2,657 randomly selected Tweets published under the hashtag #WhyIStayed during the protest's first month.

#WhyIStayed is a compelling example of feminist discursive activism in the form of collective storytelling, wherein the hashtag prompts a particular narrative focus for a user's personalized expression. But feminists take to Twitter every day, publishing personal narratives under different hashtags with far more limited reach. To what, then, can we attribute the viral success of #WhyIStayed? Using Turner's (1982) understanding of social drama, I argue that #WhyIStayed resonated with countless people because it followed the narrative logic of a dramatic performance, with a beginning, middle, and end (Poletta, 2006). The #WhyIStayed narrative began with a breaching event when footage of Rice beating his fiancé was leaked, and then rose to the level of social crisis with the appearance of the hashtag, which set the stage for conflict between outraged domestic abuse survivors and the NFL, the narrative's protagonists and antagonists, respectively. As a social networking site, Twitter is a platform that enables active audience participation, which in turn propelled the action of the #WhyIStayed narrative forward, until it garnered a critical mass of attention that forced the NFL to address the situation by suspending Ray Rice indefinitely. Through the #WhyIStayed case study, this paper advances a theoretical framework that highlights the narrative logic of collective action, so that feminism's discursive activism and the conditions which enable successful digital protests might be better understood.

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### **Victoria O'Meara:** Hollaback! and the Resistant Potential of Immaterial Labour

This paper explores the online anti-street harassment campaign, Hollaback!, as an example of autonomous labour organizing within the immaterial labour economy of Web 2.0. This work is motivated by recent criticism of the continued invisibility of the work of women and gender more broadly in the scholarship of immaterial labour and the potential for collective struggle that emerges from it (McRobbie, 2011). I offer this analysis as a small contribution to the effort to weave the work of (primarily) women into these discussions. Hollaback!'s emphasis on modern communication technology and explicitly feminist aims provide an opportunity to investigate where this example of online feminist organizing sits in relation to the so-called "innovation power of immaterial labour" (Dyer-Witheford & de Peuter, 2009, p.8). Hollaback! is a network of regionally based websites that encourage local users to publicly recount their experiences with street harassment in an effort to disrupt the power of perpetrators, and raise awareness of the pervasiveness of these attacks in various contexts worldwide. While the movement requires a critical mass of immaterial labourers willing to share their experiences of

personal violation, it also requires volunteer website organizers to dedicate a great deal of time to the launch and subsequent maintenance of these websites. These individuals undergo technical training, organize events, participate in ongoing “advanced training webinars”, contribute to collaborative working groups via Skype, and check in with Hollaback!’s governing bodies with reports of progress towards their goals (Start a Hollaback!, 2014). This paper focuses specifically on the work of these organizers, exploring the seeming autonomy of their labour deployment and postulating on the resistant potentials of such a system of organizing within the dominant capitalist system.

Indeed, this labour expenditure is intense. However, it is also distinct from the exploitation of digital workers that we have come to expect from for-profit social media (for examples see Cohen, 2008; Fischer, 2012). These workers have organized around a goal quite separate from a profit-driven relation. Dyer-Witthford explains that while capital relies on labour, the inverse is not necessarily true; labour can find new ways to organize outside of the waged relation (1999). In this light, might we understand the actions of Hollaback!’s regional organizers as an autonomous deployment of the technical and collaborative skills entrenched by capital’s demand for communicative and computerized labour of the immaterial labour economy (Lazarato, 1999)? And if so, what is the transformative potential of this form of labour organizing? Indeed, while potentially ‘autonomous’, Hollaback! comes with a set of contradictions that make suspect its liberatory potentials under capitalism. Organizers boast that they embody a decentralized leadership structure that empowers all members to lead, reminiscent of Hardt and Negri’s multitude (2004). However, ongoing efforts to acquire corporate sponsorships and underlying hierarchical command systems point to a structure that upholds the existing inequalities of the dominant order. This paper will examine these contradictions and explore the resultant potential for change brought forth by the collective labour of these workers.

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**Natalia Pietrzykowski:** Digital “Women’s Work:” Commodification and Capitalist Reproduction on Pinterest

Female-identified individuals comprise the majority of Pinterest users, a social networking site where virtual content collections are created and displayed. As these collections frequently centre on activities related to the domestic sphere, the historical site of women’s unwaged labour, Pinterest is also typically constructed as a women’s space in popular media. Thus, Pinterest presents a fertile ground for an investigation that questions the ways that capitalism is reproduced through the commodification of unwaged, now digital, “women’s work.” Utilizing a feminist political economic perspective, and drawing on the works of Terranova, Andrejevic, Fuchs and van Dijck to frame a dialogue on the topic of digital labour, this paper elucidates the power dynamics between female Pinterest users and the greater capitalist corporate structure in which they participate. Although there are multiple strata to the digital labour performed on Pinterest in terms of the economic value that may be accessed by discrete users, surveillance techniques employed by the site serve to alienate users from their labour-power by commodifying content and behavioral data to produce targeted advertising.

This paper employs a culturalist viewpoint to complement the materialist focus of the literature reviewed in order to further probe the relationship between gender and labour on Pinterest, as well as those structures in the capitalist cycle of production that foster user complicity. An analysis of promotional materials created by Pinterest highlights the construction and marketization of both consumptive and productive user subjectivities. The corporation propagates narratives of a unique pleasure in Pinterest-facilitated discovery and a personal enrichment achieved by a union between online and offline selves. The duality in the construction of Pinterest users echoes the coexisting processes whereby the users experience pleasure in the face of exploitative conditions. The production of meaning on Pinterest is inextricably linked to the reproduction of capitalist values. Furthermore, the conditions of digital labour exploitation on Pinterest are gendered, as previously unwaged domestic work becomes commodified and alienated from the user through dataveillance. Thus, the exploitation of digital “women’s work” on Pinterest facilitates the expansion of capital and capitalist social reproduction. Hence, resistance to the structures of inequality that are perpetuated by this particular social network have deeper sociopolitical implications and is intrinsically tied to a movement towards the social valuation of labour in the domestic sphere.

**Aimee-Marie Dorsten:** Women in Communication: A Challenge to the Imagination

Women have both cause for celebration and lament in the field of communication and media: on one hand, women’s current marked significance to our field; on the other, reckoning with the fact the significance has been, and continues to be, hard-won. This piece seeks to establish a historical milieu for communication from a feminist perspective. From here, we can clearly see the several stages of women’s struggle to enter into the field: 1) in the early mid-twentieth century, when women worked as part of a research team or couple and 2) from the mid-twentieth century until the 1980s, when women “jumped the fence” into stable academic positions in communication. This piece highlights some of this early history of the field but also features interviews with

Gertrude J. Robinson, Brenda Dervin, and Sue Curry Jansen, who assert that their scholarly legitimacy has still been at times been a “challenge” to the imagination of those defining communication research.

### **3e. Protest Beyond the Law: Hacktivism in Class Struggle**

**Safak Etike** (Ankara University): Technology as a Practice of Class Struggle: Red Hackers During Gezi Protests

The main problematique of this paper is to reveal the limits and potentialities which the Internet, as a most effective new communication technology in social processes, carries for practices of class struggle. The study first discusses the argument that in the new information age brought forth by the globalization of capital, the Internet is constructing the ideal democratic civil society by overcoming class conflicts and evaluate with a critical outlook; and the Internet will be conceptualized as a new ground of struggle for labor-capital conflict, which has not been dissolved in the age of networked capitalism. Starting from the claim that the Internet, which serves as an instrument of disseminating the “classlessness” ideology of globalization, in fact opens up a new field for class struggle, the study aims to show the potentialities presented for the political organization of class in this field, the possibilities of new forms of organization specific to this field, and the limits of the new practices of struggle within this field. This study aims to update the answers to the following questions in regard to the increasing influence of the Internet: Does the Internet weaken collective action by dissolving social and class connections? Is the creation of fields and symbols of collective expression possible in virtual public sphere? Can the socialization created by the Internet be transformed into solidarity? Can the Internet dissolve the common interest-based class belonging of instrument and mediated communication? This study is also a step taken towards centralizing the concept of “class struggle” in new media studies and theorizing “media and struggle”.

In this study, as a step of looking at the class struggle in social media in Turkey, the Turkish hacker group The Union of Redhackers will be examined as an alternative to the studies of cyber-activism, social network activism and hacktivism in new media studies. Coming to the forefronts of the social practices of struggle prior to and during Gezi resistance, Redhack openly put forth its class identity and announced itself as a counter-part to the class struggle in the digital field. Within the scope of the study, in-depth interviews have been conducted with 14 Turkish academics who follow Redhack and the origins of Redhack’s social effect, which has been an instance of an efficient struggle of class in digital field, has been analysed. The main question that needs to be answered is: Is it possible to read Redhackers as a practice of responding to network capitalism in its own language by the class and for the class; an extension of the struggle of the class for classless society in the field of new communication technologies; and a new form of the political organization of class?

**Rianka Singh** (McMaster University): On Hacker Manifestos, Collectivity, and Violence

This paper uses the hacker manifestos published by four major hacktivist groups, Lulzsec, Hacktivism, Cult of the Dead Cow and the Computer Chaos Club, to investigate how hackers think about elements of physical protest in relation to their online tactics. Specifically, the collectivity of protestors and violence in protest are examined in relation to hacktivism. Drawing upon the theory of the multitude put forth by Hardt and Negri, I explain how hackers write about the formation of monstrous flesh, that are born and live online. I also investigate how Butler and Athanasiou's discussion on the momentum provided by protestors sharing physical spaces can be adapted in online environments, according to hackers. In the violence section of the paper, I define violence and consider how hacking might be violent. Here, I use theories of violence put forth by Žižek, Tilley, Arendt and Benjamin to explore the topic. Ultimately this paper argues that when virtual spaces are used as a location for protest, new outcomes become possible.

**Anne-Sophie Letellier** (Université du Québec à Montréal): Aesthetics of Anonymity: A Symbolic Resistance in a Time of Globalized Surveillance

This paper is part of a research that analyzes the ways in which different types of advocacy groups rationalize in their discourses and activities the notion of surveillance and anonymity online. While various types of explicit resistance to surveillance can be identified – i.e legal (promotion of a legal reform of privacy online) and technical (development of encryption tools) -, this presentation will examine, through the case study of Anonymous' Operation Payback, how the aesthetics of anonymity induced an implicit symbolic transgressive resistance to surveillance. For this matter, I'll analyze how the aesthetic aspect of anonymity - as incarnated in this case by the Guy Fawkes mask – revealed itself as eminently transgressive insofar as it was used to justify divergent framings of the collective by both mass medias and by the activists. The presentation will ask the following question: How did the aesthetics of anonymity challenge the codes (Feenberg, 2004) inherent to a neoliberal (Harvey, 2005) strategic environment (de Certeau, 1990) in Anonymous' Operation Payback?

This problematic is grounded in a theoretical framework that associates the concepts of communicative capitalism (Dean, 2009) and hyperindividualism (Mondoux, 2009). As the neoliberal mode of governance aims to reign in the multiplicity by “capturing the ideals of individual freedom and turning them against the interventionist and regulatory power of the state” (Harvey, 2005, p. 42), it integrates the individuals by granting them with freedom associated with the liberty of consummation, expression, cultural practices and with the protection of physical integrity that, when linked to national security in governance discourses, permits the legitimation of digitally-enabled surveillance (Greenwald, 2014). In this perspective, if technical objects are bearers of values (Stiegler, 2004), then the materialisation of neoliberalism in technologies impacts governance practices insofar as it promotes the inclusion of subjectivities while relying on their capacity to provide information, making social life more predictable. Therefore, I will argue that the framing of the aesthetics of anonymity in the Operation Payback demonstrates how symbolic anonymity transgresses codes of this strategic environment. While the mass media's discourses associate anonymity with the decentralized nature of



Anonymous and with the relative impossibility to identify individuals participating in its operations - making the collective harder to monitor and, therefore threatening -, the hacktivists link anonymity with a subsumption of the individual behind the collectivity and promote, through an ideological and organizational permeable structure, the idea that everyone can become Anonymous. While both discourses associate the Guy Fawkes mask with the unpredictability of the collective, the meaning attributed to it is radically different: it represents a threat for one, and a way to symbolically escape the surveillance inherent to the neoliberal strategic environment for the other. In this way, this aesthetic resistance to surveillance reveals itself as profoundly political. Indeed, if the “ethics of the future (...) come from transgression, from reaching beyond current ways of negotiating social conflict” (Jordan, 2002), then the aesthetics of anonymity have the potentiality to impact substantially the way in which people protest in a time of globalized surveillance.

**Nazli Bulay Dogan** (Koc University): *Between a Social Movement and a Revolutionary Promise: The Case of RedHack*

The main problem of this research is based on the issue of hacktivism, which means “the manipulation of any technology in an original, unorthodox and inventive way for political reasons” (Jordan and Taylor, 2004). In this examination, the focus will be a three-sided discussion on hacktivist movements. Departing from the example of Redhack, a hacktivist group who became apparent precisely in the end of the 1990’s in Turkey, I categorize this debate under three parts. In the first part, I will discuss hacktivist movements, as a new strategy for “old and new” social movements. In this part, the aim of creating a public opinion and the reappropriation of technology for social and class struggles by positioning itself as a continuity between classical and new social movements will be important points for the discourse analysis of Redhack. Some practices of Redhack will be the case study of this part.

The second part of the research is another debate, always centered on the social movements’ literature. Different from the difference between classical and new social movements, in this part, I will study the possibility of considering hacktivist struggles, as belonging to the “commons” discussion. This part will be a discussion from one side, on the capitalist crisis and its “second enclosure movement” (Boyle, 2003) and on the other side, on digital commons, as a response or as a reason of this enclosure. Hacktivist activities and especially the case of Redhack will be once again a guide to understand these commons, especially when examining the struggle against the enclosure of knowledge – considering knowledge as a common – through information leaks. Many information leaks performed by Redhack in Turkey, from intelligence files to corruption documents, will be examined in this part.

In the last part, I will focus on how technology creates a dominant discourse in the global political economy of our era, how computer technologies create new possibilities for the reappropriation of the very same technology and where the acts of hacktivism take place in this reappropriation process will be analyzed. This part will be an interrogation of the revolutionary promises of hacktivist movements, based on its reappropriation capacity. While for some researchers, hackers present “a liberal critique from within liberalism” (Coleman, 2013), there are also others who claim that hackers – as producers

of new abstractions, in the most general sense – are a class that will end the monopoly of the ruling class (Wark, 2004). Even though Wark sees possibilities for revolutionary politics in hackers, too, what I consider significant in the issue of hacktivism is different from the perspective of Wark. Considering the place of technology – especially of computer technology – in the global political economy, hacktivists and also hackers create a very central concept if these activists are assumed as laborers of the information-based capitalist system of our era. In this perspective, they transfer class-based discussions onto the virtual realm and the discussion of this part takes the shape of whether hacktivists have the potential to challenge the neoliberal order.

In this last part, the perspective will be more on the perception of some hackers in Turkey and I will try to examine how they consider their own acts, as liberal critics within liberalism or as a challenge to the neoliberal order with a revolutionary promise, in their own eyes.

### **3f. Journalism as a Site of Struggle**

**Brandale Mills, Alisa Valentin, Dionne Clemons:** The Transition: An Examination of Black Female Journalists' Departure from the Newsroom to the Blogosphere

Media is commonly referred to as the fourth estate, or power, in which a democratic society functions. Traditionally, older White men have had control over this estate; however, the traditional newsroom organizational culture is collapsing, leaving space for individuals to enter the new media model. This new model has created a safe space for both ethnic minorities and women, because they have a place to escape discrimination, reach their full potential, and allow their voices to be heard. A section of this safe space is the blogosphere, in which many former Black female journalists have entered, thrived, and made countless strides in improving their own personal lives and the lives of their readers. This study examined how the traditional newsroom structure led to a formation of ingroups and outgroups within the organization, excluding Black female journalists from decision making roles. The research assessed the types of oppression these outgroups experienced and moreover how the new media, specifically the blogosphere, saved these individuals from their oppressive state in the newsroom. This study utilizes the social identity theory as a theoretical framework to explain how Black female journalists are identified by others in the organizational structure of a newsroom. The researchers used textual analysis to examine 20 Black female bloggers' blog posts and published books, noting the motivations behind these journalists' departure from the traditional newsrooms to find refuge in the blogosphere. Based on coding themes identified in the review of literature, the researchers viewed these posts and books noting trends that correlated with the defined themes.

Consistent with the research questions and the social identity theory, most of the bloggers examined experienced feelings of isolation, stereotypes and tokenism, potentially contributing to their move from the newsroom to the blogosphere. The anecdotes shared by these bloggers in their books and on their websites illustrated a clear division between ingroups and outgroups formed within the newsroom. This lack of acceptance and systematic oppression can be considered a major factor contributing to why Black women may consider the blogosphere a safe place to display their freedom of

expression. These findings show that traditional media is struggling to compete with social media because of the accessibility and freedom social media provides for many of these journalists who have had their voices stifled in the newsroom.

**Syed Irfan Ashraf:** Journalists Held Hostage: Reporting on Terror from the Tribal Belt of Pakistan

This study examines working conditions of reporters who are caught between the global nature of the officially structured war-on-terrorism and its consequences in the troubled Pak-Afghan bordering belt of FATA. One manifestation of the violence against journalists is the lack of accountability apparently due to weakening state institutions. But impunity is essentially interdependent at different levels. With the help of in-depth interviews with ethnic Pashtun journalists and the application of Agamben's (1998) conceptual framework of 'necropolitics,' this study explains the structural nature of impunity and threats and the repercussions of both for working journalists. The study finds: the clearer is the status of the "zone of indistinction," the worst is the form of necropower and the least independent is the gatekeeper's news selection job (decision making). Threats and impunity in FATA are different manifestations of the two rival sovereign nodes, serving identical purpose. Both however contribute to the strength of a necro-framework that chisels out crippling self-censorship. For tribal reporters, death is not the only threat; living with the fear of death is more challenging. And threats also do not necessarily need be genuine to be effective. It is within the existing social system that scholars need to understand the magnitude of inhibitive forces (threats and impunity) working on journalists. The study looks upon threat in a broader sense to understand conditions in which journalistic routines are embedded, effecting not only production of news at source (choices leading to news selection) but also define the symbolic production of work itself as social value (identity as a journalist).

**Sean Phelan, Leon Salter:** When the Journalist Becomes an Advocate: Campbell Brown, Teacher Tenure Reform and Neoliberal Reason

This paper examines the political and cultural resonances between a journalistic habitus that "doesn't do ideology" and a form of neoliberal reason that is performed as post- and anti-ideological (Phelan, 2014). Our case study examines the former CNN news reporter and anchor, Campbell Brown, who, in one programming incarnation, was marketed under the title of Campbell Brown: No Bias, No Bull. Since leaving the network in 2010, Brown has become a high-profile education campaigner, institutionalized in her establishment of the Parents' Transparency Project in June 2013 and her membership of the board of directors of a New York academy of charter schools. She has been a particularly prominent advocate of teacher tenure reform, which gained a new media visibility in June 2014 following a Californian legal case – paid for by the Silicon Valley entrepreneur, David Welch – which judged the state's tenure laws unconstitutional because of their alleged harmful effects on children. Brown has not only played a central role in arguing for the wider national significance of the Californian ruling in media spaces, she is now the public figurehead of a similar lawsuit in New York that is due in court in early 2015.

One straightforward reading of Brown's transition from journalist to advocate – the one internalized in journalists' traditional professional credo – is to see it as constituting a sharp break and departure: from simply reporting on politics to being political. As Paul Farhi puts it in *The Washington Post*, “after years as a journalist, steeped in notions of fairness and balance, Brown has transformed into an advocate, taking a very public side in one of the many contentious battles over public education”. Against this one-dimensional image of a break in identity, we explore the “affinities of habitus” (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 37) between Brown's journalistic subjectivity and her campaigning posture and rhetoric. Drawing on different texts, we highlight the importance of four interlinked discursive logics to both of Brown's identities, namely logics of accountability, transparency, modernization and facticity. While none of these logics are monopolized by their neoliberal iteration, Brown's attack on tenure highlight their ongoing capacity to energize a populist imaginary that, three decades after the political institutionalization of neoliberalism, still casts “the trade union establishment” as the problem – and still positions unions and their political supporters as the uniquely ideological ones. We end by briefly reflecting on the implications of Brown's case for critical understandings of the relationship between neoliberal and journalistic logics.

### **Robin Andersen:** Citizenfour and the Challenge to Government Surveillance

This paper analyses the critical intervention made by the film *Citizenfour*, a documentary that narrates the activities of NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden, as he and others challenge the forms of surveillance made possible by new media technology. Filmmaker Laura Poitras identifies her documentary style as *cinéma vérité* (France) or *direct cinema* (North America) and this documentary structure is an example of legacy media. In this case the film was created to expose and challenge the oppressive use of new technology by government and corporate actors, and can be considered within the context of circuits of struggle. An analysis of the visual and narrative forms used to tell this story, and to represent government surveillance over a range of media technologies, seeks to understand the interactions between legacy media and new media and to assess the effectiveness of this critical collaboration. As documentary scholar Bill Nichols and others understand, the rebirth of documentary in the last decades of the twentieth century was facilitated by new forms of distribution, and the interactions between new media technologies and the documentary form. This paper explores the effectiveness of the collaboration between documentary and new media on a number of levels, and evaluates the ability of these combined efforts to present challenges to oppressive government surveillance strategies. In tracking the film's media presence, critical awards and online discussions, this paper seeks to assess the film's ability to influence a variety of democratic forums in its efforts to expose the role back of civil liberties, the government's dogged efforts to prosecute whistleblowers and demand that journalists reveal confidential sources. These cascading forms of oppression are all related to the continuing use of new technology for citizen surveillance and social control. This paper seek to understand the ways in which legacy media and new media technologies combine distribution, representation and discursive strategies to create effective circuits of struggle.

### **3g. Restructuring Space and Place: Critical Intersections of the Virtual and Physical**

**Chris Russill:** The Programmable Earth: Google Earth's "Climate Change Tours" and the Geoengineering of Perception and Planet

In 2009, Google Earth initiated a series of "climate change tours" that were intended to visualize climate change effects in hopes of supporting the international negotiations on climate change policy then underway in Copenhagen. Narrated by prominent figures and organizations, including Al Gore, Kofi Annan, and Greenpeace, and distributed more widely via Youtube and lesson plans tailored for the classroom, Google Earth's climate change tour permits users to program the effects of climate change using the scenarios, data, spatial scales, and temporal expanses that interested them most. Google Earth, in short, offers a culturally authoritative conception of the earth as programmable as a solution for climate change.

How did we come to understand the earth as programmable? How has this notion become popular, culturally authoritative, and deployed to encourage modes of perception that situate global environmental crises as solvable through geoengineering interventions? How do geoengineering proposals on offer presume the earth as a programmable object while occluding the dependence on technically complex, capital intensive, and militarily secure environmental observing systems that would be necessitated by such solutions? In this paper, I trace the origins of the programmable earth from the modes of earth imaging developed during the cold war through the IT inspired solutions to environmental crisis pioneered in the 1990s to Google Earth today. I rely, in particular, on Paul Virilio's account of the rise of Big Optics as a militarily organized system of observing the earth to illustrate how the politics of climate change are converted into logistical problems of technical programming. I begin with the acquisition of the first whole earth images during the 1960s, revisit Al Gore's reliance on a pixelated earth in the 1990s, and return to the example of Google Earth, which suggests numerous virtual climates are latent in our atmosphere – awaiting only a programmer to properly configure the chemical composition of our atmosphere to bring a desired future into existence. I conclude by suggesting that the industrial destabilization of earthly systems is increasingly viewed as an opportunity to extend markets and military authority – both those organizing perception (Google) and those engaging planetary engineering as a field of technological innovation.

**Gemma Richardson, Dan Rowe:** Dissent in the Tar Sands: Depictions of Tar Sands Opponents in Local Newspapers in Northern Alberta

The development of oil sand deposits in Canada continues to be a highly controversial issue. The environmental impact caused by tar sand extraction is frequently criticized by environmental groups, as well as by Indigenous communities, yet the economic benefits of increased development continue to be extolled by the Canadian and provincial governments. While Northern Alberta and Saskatchewan are very much at the centre of the policy debate over the mining of the tar sands, they are removed - geographically, at least - from the large regional and national news sources where the issue is being

contested. This study will examine news coverage in several local media outlets in the northern Alberta region, focusing on how voices who dissent from the pro-tar sands development perspective are portrayed (if at all) in local newspaper stories, unsigned editorials, op-eds, and letters to the editor. Using a grounded theory approach, an analysis will be conducted on a sample of articles that explicitly refer to opposition to the tar sands development that were published throughout 2014 in local newspapers in five towns. The newspapers analyzed in this study will include Fort McMurray Today, Peace River Record Gazette, Grande Prairie Daily Herald-Tribune, Cold Lake Sun and the Lloydminster Meridian Booster, all located in towns in Northern Alberta that are within close proximity to tar sand deposits. This study will provide unique insights into the local coverage being viewed by those who live and work in Northern Alberta. The results of this study can then be compared to studies of larger regional and national news sources, as well as broader research on media coverage of dissenting voices.

**Ali Karimi:** Street Fight: The Politics of Place-Naming in Kabul City

In 2001, after the fall of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, the warring groups from different political and ethnic backgrounds laid their arms, came together, and formed a coalition government. The war was over, however, the fight was not: the former enemies started a fierce political contestation in the cultural sphere in an effort to shape the narrative of the war. The urban public spaces have been one of the main domains where this ideological conflict is fought. Renaming streets and public institutions, building monuments, and other efforts for place-naming and place-making in Kabul city, have turned the streets of the Afghan capital into an ideological battleground. In this paper, I argue that commemorative place-naming practices in post-Taliban Kabul has been an extension of the Afghan war. This is a battle of stories, the kind of conflict almost common in all post-war or contested cities. Drawing mainly on debates in urban communication, this paper will present a brief history of ideological place-naming in Kabul before assessing the post-Taliban efforts in memorialising history on street signs. Place-naming in Kabul, I will conclude, has not been a systematic approach for construction of a cohesive national metanarrative, rather, it represents a variety of conflicting sub-narratives which somehow mirrors the fragility and fragmentary state of the current Afghan politics. There is a wealth of scholarship on the post-2001 conflict in Afghanistan, but the majority remain focused on insurgency, terrorism, and other forms of violent conflict . A study of place names will help us refine our understanding of cultural conflict in Afghanistan, explore the ways urban space preserves and mediates public memory, and see how place-naming serves as a tool for political negotiation in the Afghan public sphere.

**Leslie Regan Shade:** The Use of the Geoweb for Social Justice Activism

This paper focuses on how the geoweb (geospatial media and participatory social networking tools) is being deployed for social justice activism. The geoweb refers to a set of geospatial social networking tools and services that are used to curate and interact with web-based locational content and new forms of spatial data generated through participatory mapping or crowdsourcing of information. Alongside access on the web,

social media tools and smart phones have popularized everyday uses of the geoweb and provided ‘accessible’ and often ‘free’ platforms. Discourses surrounding the geoweb include those promoting civic engagement, democracy, equality, and public participation for a wide variety of audiences, including academics, civil society, government, policymakers, the private sector, and the general public. However, these claims pose important questions about whether and how citizens are indeed empowered through the geoweb, and how effective the geoweb is for various forms of social justice activism.

This paper will therefore provide a review of how the geoweb is being used for mapping social justice activism and its use in digital humanitarianism. Through several global case studies, the paper will examine how the geoweb has been used to give testimony, to document, archive and preserve protest movements, to monitor political abuses in repressive regimes, to coordinate activities and actions with on-the-ground activists and citizens and other organizations, and to conduct investigative work on a range of social issues. The political economy of the geoweb, and privacy issues of security, surveillance and privacy will also be discussed. The paper will also explore challenges in the use of the geoweb, notably issues around access, inclusion, diversity, data literacy, and intellectual property. This paper draws from research conducted with the SSHRC-funded partnership grant, Geothink.ca project: How the GeoWeb 2.0 is Shaping Government and Citizen Interactions.

#### **4-5:30 pm Panel session 4**

4a. Workshop: Building mini-transmitters with Peter Bloom and Loreto Bravo

This workshop will run until 7pm. Please sign up in advance at the registration desk.

#### **4b. Laboring Cultural Production: Circuits of Struggle in Historical and Contemporary Perspectives**

**Michelle Rodino-Colocino:** Making Media Work: Key Moments in the Cultural History of New Media and Management

From film technologies of the early twentieth century to smart mobile devices of the early twenty-first century, new media has figured in labor management schools of thought as forces of change and justifications for it. Despite the fact that such media, when they were new, were clunky and unpredictable, they became key instruments in the formation of new labor management theories and practices. Frank Gilbreth, famous for his time-motion studies of bricklayers and typists in the 1910s and 1920s, used a hand-cranked camera that (because it was hand cranked) could not represent actions in real time. Thus, Gilbreth placed a microchronometer (a clock that he developed to measure small intervals of time) in the shot. Gilbreth’s motion studies contributed to the promotion of scientific management, a school of labor management that emphasized efficient movements to boost workers’ productivity. By the century’s end, despite early personal computers’ inability to boost workers’ productivity (especially in white collar and service work), they featured centrally in labor management theory “reengineering” that Michael Hammer touted in his influential 1993 *Reengineering the Corporation*. Reengineering called for

downsizing and re-organizing workplaces into still more efficient, productive teams. Into the twenty-first century, labor management discourse seeks to intensify work and boost workers' productivity amidst layoffs by promoting the "flexible workplace" enabled by smart phones and wireless internet technologies. Thus, new media technologies, despite their limitations, have figured centrally as means to speed up and intensify work and, in the words of one reengineering mantra, to "do more with less." As a media studies scholar who explores the intersection of labor, feminist, and new media studies through a critical-cultural lens, I find labor management's use of new media and labor's response to be a fascinating, under-explored area in communications. My UDC presentation will share archival research I am doing now with a special emphasis on key texts from the early twentieth century that show Gilbreth's view of film in his "micromotion studies" that branded his scientific management. I will also share labor's response to scientific management, and I hope I will have found some specific texts on workers' response to the use of film in time motion studies of their work. I am also attending to how scientific managers and workers responded to arguments that immigrant workers, workers of color, and women should be made more productive.

**Steve Macek:** Salt of the Earth in Chicago: Anti-Communism and Censorship in the Taft-Hartley Era

Film scholars have written an enormous amount about the case of radical 1954 film *Salt of the Earth*. The product of a collaboration between blacklisted Communist-affiliated Hollywood talent and a left-wing miner's union, the film tells the story of the 1950 Empire Zinc strike in New Mexico and the leadership role played in the conflict by Mexican-American women. Famously attacked by members of the House Un-American Activities Committee and by anti-Communists in the labor movement, *Salt of the Earth* faced serious problems with distribution from the outset (and in fact was only shown in twelve theaters in the U.S. in the decade following its initial release). Interestingly, in Chicago, the film was actually passed by the city's censor board (although there were a couple of loudly dissenting votes who viewed it as "labor union propaganda" that "could create trouble"). What kept the movie out of city's theaters was the refusal by members of the conservative projectionist union, Moving Picture Machine Operators Union Local 110, to handle the film and pressure from the America Legion. Supporters of the film, in particular the Illinois chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union and journalists the University of Chicago's student newspaper *The Maroon*, resisted the blacklisting in a variety of ways, including by attempting to arrange private screenings of the film at nonprofessional venues.

Drawing on archival research using the papers of both the Chicago film censor board and the ACLU—Illinois Division, and building on the pioneering scholarship of James Lorence, this paper analyzes the skirmish over the exhibition of *Salt of the Earth* in Chicago as a small episode in the larger cultural war against the labor left in the period following the 1948 passage of the Taft-Hartley Act.



**Mary E. Triece:** Studying “Circuits of Struggle”: Corporate Neoliberalism and Cyberprotest in Food Activism

In the past 10 years, the “alternative foods” movement—also referred to as the sustainable foods or local foods movements—has been widely embraced by the corporate media. Michael Pollan has received widespread attention for his books, *The Omnivore’s Dilemma* and *In Defense of Food*, both of which have sold millions of copies and appeared on the New York Times Bestseller list. Critics have praised popular food films such as *A Place at the Table* as “beautifully shot,” *Fast Food Nation* as “rich and complicated,” and *Food Inc.* as “visually stylish” and “even-handed.” The paper proposed for the 2015 Union for Democratic Communications conference panel offers a two-part argument regarding the uses of media in movements that address the politics of food, suggesting a “circuit of struggle” between corporate and vernacular media efforts. First, I argue alternative food discourses have gained mainstream acceptance in the broader public because they align with the neoliberal common sense espoused by corporate media. Alternative food discourses shore up a neoliberal paradigm that prizes individuality, entrepreneurialism, self-reliance (Slocum, 2006, p. 330) and freedom through consumption. These food discourses rely at once on masking white privilege and mystifying food work. Food discourses maintain white privilege by subsuming the racialized aspects of food work under the banner of a colorblind healthy foods movement. And they subsume worker issues under a celebration of healthy consumption. These two rhetorical moves allow primarily white middle class consumers of “healthy foods” to remain blind to the ways their consumptive practices enable race and class exploitation in the food industry.

In contrast to alternative foods rhetorics that fit well within the corporate media neoliberal paradigm, food workers who labor in various parts of the “farm to fridge” process use a variety of discursive and protest strategies to counter neoliberal assumptions regarding the politics of food. The proposed paper will contrast corporate media depictions of food activism with the ways food workers themselves use Internet activism or “cyberprotest” (van de Donk, Loader, Nixon & Rucht, 2004) to expose the production side of food. Specifically, I will explore how food workers in the Wobbly-influenced Focus on the Food Chain and the food manufacturing and distribution organization, Brandworkers, use website, blogs, and social media to give voice to the race and class dimensions of food production.

Kamp, D. (2006). Deconstructing dinner. *Sunday Book Review*. Accessed November 26, 2014.

Slocum, R. (2006). Anti-racist practice and the work of community food organizations. *Antipode*, 38, 327-349.

van de Donk, W., Loader, B. D., Nixon, P. G., and D. Rucht. (2004). *Cyberprotest: New Media, citizens and social movements*. London: Routledge.

**Brian Dolber:** Media and Academic Labor in the Converged Economy: Towards a New Methodology in Production Studies

Under neoliberalism, higher education and the creative industries have become sites of accumulation in an era of economic stagnation. Both sectors have been transformed by new technologies, which enable the extraction of value at increasingly more efficient ways at lower costs. Drawing upon research I conducted alongside the Filipino Street Art Project—an independent transmedia documentary project in Manila, the Philippines-- I argue that autoethnographic methods (Denzin and Lincoln, 2002) may be used to explore converging relationships between media and academic labor. The classic research in production studies has focused on professional media work (Tuchman, 1978; Gitlin, 1983/2000), ignoring Smythe’s “blindspot,” that the production of value in media industries is performed by unpaid audiences. The emergence of the “prosumer” within convergence culture, (Jenkins, 2007) has also led to an expanding number of critical perspectives that put the productive value of non-professional media labor front and center. While much media studies scholarship continues to offer “humanistic treatments” that “reaffirm the distinctions between those who have authorial status and those without it” relying upon trade magazines and interviews with above-the-line talent, the proliferation of media production in everyday life demands a cultural approach to understanding production (Mayer, 2011, p. 17). The fluidity between consumer and producer and the diversification of forms of accumulation within media industries demand new ethnographic interventions in order to understand the contemporary dynamics of media labor.

Like the creative industries, the academy has also been restructured in accordance with neoliberal principles. While higher education blossomed alongside the Keynesian welfare state, predicated on producing research to benefit U.S. Cold War goals and a middle class of consumers (Aronowitz, 2000), students are now compelled to go into increasing amounts of debt in order to finance the possibility of attaining a middle-class lifestyle on the other side. There are growing pressures to deliver measurable outcomes—the likelihood of economic success and security following graduation-- at lower costs. Thus, media work and academic work have become de-professionalized and casualized according to similar logics as part of a broader historical conjuncture. This has particular implications for media studies scholars, as communication programs have come to comprise a second tier of the humanities aimed at teaching skills to middle-class and working-class students (Miller, 2012), while scholars are encouraged to brand themselves and engage with the public through social media formats. An autoethnographic approach to production studies may help build “a civic, participatory collaborative project, a project that joins the researcher with the researched in an ongoing moral dialogue” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2012, p. x), advancing possibilities for solidarity within the knowledge economy, and between instructors and students.

#### **4c. Policing the Populace: Corporate Media, Social Media and the Mobilization of State Violence against Racialized Minorities**

**Derek Antoine, Miranda J. Brady:** Policing Elsipogtog: Media Discourse and Struggles to Protect First Nations Natural Resources

On October 17, 2013, RCMP officers and the people of the Elsipogtog Mi'kmaq First Nation in New Brunswick engaged in a confrontation which ended in torched police cars and rubber bullets flying. Images in the popular press included masked Indigenous assailants and police property set ablaze and was accompanied predominantly by official RCMP accounts of the events. What had begun as a blockade meant to stop the encroachment of corporate fracking as part of shale gas development on Mi'kmaq territory turned into a press frenzy with the most conservative of news outlets (i.e. *The National Post*) claiming that the Mi'kmaq were anti-progress, that they preferred to collect welfare and engage in acts of terrorism rather than accept the jobs which might be made available through the tapping of their ancestral lands for resources. The Ignoble Savage, or violent "Indians on the Warpath," a common discourse used to frame Indigenous peoples since the beginnings of colonization, was conveniently employed in several news outlets which focused on the tempting violent images rather than the nuances of the First Nations' long struggle for sovereignty. At the same time, Indigenous activists like Leanne Simpson used media outlets like the *Huffington Post* to implore the Canadian public to understand this event as one in a long line of dispossession engaged in by large corporations and supported by the government. Using discourse analysis to examine press coverage of the October 2013 events in Elsipogtog, this presentation will review the competing discourses constituting the realities of Mi'kmaq struggle. We argue that while convenient binaries of Indigeneity are employed in this case, opportunities for counter-discourses were also made available in the *CBC*, the *Halifax Media Coop*, and other news outlets.

**Chenjerai Kumanyika:** Beyond Techno-Utopianism: The Twitter Activism of @OpFerguson

In an effort to support the ongoing protests of racialized police brutality in St. Louis Missouri, Anonymous — an internationally distributed collective of hacktivists that have targeted a variety of government agencies and corporations — launched "Operation Ferguson." Using a mashup of video footage scored by sound bytes of Malcolm X, Operation Ferguson's videos urged citizens to "get up off their couches, turn off the TV, and to gather and raise our voices." There are many reasons for concern about Anonymous' techno-anarchist style of political intervention. Aspects of their performative rhetoric of techno-agency seem to support the claims of capitalist silicon-valley entrepreneurs. There also may be ways that the spectacle of hacktivism consumes and overshadows the labor of less glamorous and older offline efforts. Nevertheless, it is difficult to fully reject @OpFerguson's contribution. In addition to providing a centralized space for the distribution of information about protest events and tactical information to protesters, the coordination of livestream feeds, and critical - if asynchronous - debate, the Twitter feed provided relentless coverage that continued

beyond and in between that of mainstream media outlets. By November 2014, the account had amassed 32,900 followers and distributed over 12000 tweets globally. This study examines the role that the @OpFerguson Twitter account played in the Ferguson protests during the fall of 2014. By interpreting and categorizing Tweets from the @OpFerguson account, the analysis offers a rich and nuanced description of the forms, functions, and problems of “social media activism” and the social media efforts of hacktivists.

**Aziz Douai, Julianne Condon:** Police Brutality in the Age of New Media: Online Audiences and the Framing of Police Use of Force against Racial Minorities in Canada

The growing influence of social media platforms and online news environments invites critical media scholars, social movement theorists and grassroots activists to grapple with the impact of these new technologies on racial equality and other pressing social justice questions. With that agenda in mind, this research investigates how news media users’ debate police brutality and racial relations on the online commenting sections of two mainstream media outlets in Canada. While the commenting functions of online news media have promised to enhance audiences’ interactivity and involvement in news coverage, more research needs to examine the implications of such interactivity on the news process and how these users can contribute to more equitable media coverage of social issues. In this paper, I will investigate the democratic potential of these user communities to counter and influence mainstream media narratives about police and racialized crime in Canada. Some of the questions the paper will tackle include: How do these online users’ frame police brutality? How do they respond to mainstream media’s coverage of police brutality? How could these online deliberations foster critical spaces for on the ground/offline collective action? Using the police shooting of Sammy Yatim in Toronto as a case study, the paper will critically assess the implications of these new communication technologies on racial relations and policing issues.

**Doug Tewksbury:** ‘I’ll Share What I See Here with the World:’ Social Media, Shared Empathy, and Online-Offline Interconnectedness among Ferguson Protesters

This paper explores the social and mobile media uses of Ferguson protesters in the wake of the killing of Michael Brown by Ferguson police to contribute to the development of a theoretical framework that encompasses the mobility-turn era of online-offline political action and public discourse. While traditional media institutions led much of the mainstream narrative, the discourse occurring on social media and through user-generated content was central to the coalescing of the movement, particularly in terms of the interconnectedness of various participant communities. Participatory media build affective connections that come through shared empathy and emotional interconnectedness, two ideas that have always been fundamental to political movements amongst marginalized peoples. In this case, the testifying and replicating functions of network-based, mediated sharing provide a discursive response to the institutionalization of state violence. Ferguson serves as a case study for this new mobilization, a laboratory for experimental democracy with new technological tools used alongside traditional, boots-on-the-ground actions in a effort to give public representation to populations that

may be marginalized through institutionalized cultural, economic, political, and indeed, policing norms. This paper addresses these issues through a qualitative ethnographic study of participants in the Ferguson protests using interviews conducted in a site visit to Ferguson in the days following the killing of Michael Brown by police, alongside critical discourse analysis of user-generated media content. It finds that this case study, representative of the hybridized online-offline communities of several other post-2011 social movements, suggests that the effectiveness of building online-offline interconnectedness through sharing within a mobilized community has at least the possibility to develop new modes of democratic participation. It is the hope that this research will provide new avenue to realize the cooperation and interconnectedness of marginalized individuals that is fundamental for both the recognition of oppressive structures and the creation of a society more representative of democratic ideals.

#### **4d. Education, Pedagogy, and Critical Literacies**

**Jennifer Simpson:** The “Streamlining” of Higher Education: Resisting Neoliberal Epistemology and Imagining Justice

This presentation will focus on higher education, and specifically the undergraduate classroom, as a space in which educators confront liberal norms and neoliberalism and can opt to resist related ideologies and practices. Higher education constitutes a location in which students learn to orient themselves to public life, and to engage performances of agency, democracy, and resistance. Likewise, the epistemological, communicative, and educational discourses that instructors pursue actively shape the possibilities and futures that undergraduates can imagine for themselves across a range of communities and settings. This presentation will a) identify the liberal norms that implicitly and explicitly shape educational practices, b) link neoliberal ideologies with normative epistemological claims, particularly as communicated by textbooks required in undergraduate curriculum, and c) address epistemological and curricular starting points that will support democratic communication. The presentation will draw on classroom examples, investigate educational and epistemological theoretical assertions, and place liberal and critical thought in dialogue with each other.

The presentation assumes that democratic communication requires an engagement with power, with material and embodied practices, and with the mechanisms and consequences of structural inequity. Further, the presentation claims that in North America, we live within the tensions of democratic aspirations and historical and ongoing forms of injustice. In this sense, educational institutions must address how to practice democratic communication even as individuals and institutions endorse undemocratic forms of living in routine and profound ways. Two specific contributions this presentation will make to the discourse on circuits of struggle within educational institutions and as related to the increasing normalization of neoliberalism include a) a nuanced and located identification of the ways in which day-to-day educational practices assume liberal norms and endorse a politics of business as usual (even while claiming to be neutral, apolitical, or objective); and b) a discussion of epistemological neoliberalism.

In regard to the prevalence of liberal norms, all faculty members and course instructors work within a set of educational constraints that in various ways prioritize and value liberal assumptions. The presentation will make these assumptions explicit, and

provide in-depth attention to how these assumptions bear on the day-to-day practices of both students and instructors. Linked to liberal educational norms is the increasing presence of neoliberal ideologies in all aspects of public life. The presentation will address epistemological neoliberalism, or the ways in which taken-for-granted epistemological practices in undergraduate classrooms (particularly as evidenced by the epistemological architectures of introductory textbooks) work to assert logics of efficiency and homogeneity in ways that actively deny possibilities for democratic communication, relational ethics, and the constitution of just communities. In sum, the presentation will examine higher education as a central space for the identification of undemocratic forms of communication and public life, and for practicing a language and imagination for the public good and for justice.

**Herbert Pimlott:** “‘The Curricula of Struggle’: Communication Tactics, Media Technologies and Campaign Strategies in and Against the Neoliberal University

The growth in the ‘precarious professoriate’ or contract faculty (aka ‘adjunct’ professors or ‘hourly-paid’ or ‘visiting’ lecturers) in the postsecondary education sectors of such developed nations as the USA, UK and Canada, has led to a growing public awareness of the vulnerability of white-collar and middle-class professionals and the intensification of the exploitation of their (academic) labour. This awareness has grown particularly after a number of ‘eruptions’ around labour disputes and resistance to corporatization agendas at individual universities, including student resistance to the rapid growth in tuition fees and loan debt. Nevertheless, the growth in the use of such ‘part-time’ education workers in universities has until recently remained largely outside the focus of discussion amongst policy makers, governments and even faculty unions. As contingent professors become increasingly discontented with their situation, a growing number of struggles are highlighting both old and new issues in the use of communication tactics, media technologies and campaign strategies during negotiations and labour disputes with employers. This paper focuses on identifying communication strategies and tactics that are part of a broader resistance to the exploitation of academic labour and the growing ‘neoliberalization’ of the academy. To do so, this presentation draws upon a participant-analysis of the use of print and digital media from at least two negotiations campaigns, including one strike, in support of contract faculty struggles at a Canadian university. This analysis highlights the important strengths and weaknesses of the use of ‘disposable literature’ (Pimlott 2011), such as cards, leaflets and flyposters, social media, including Tumblr and Twitter, and media relations. This presentation will also emphasize key communication techniques in the campaign strategies that highlight how particular traits of print and social media enhance labour campaigns while enabling vulnerable workers to engage in such campaigns. The presentation will also highlight the application of some general qualities of such techniques to struggles beyond the academy. An underlying issue is also one of union organization, whereby those who are engaged in struggles against the employer are also subject to control and potential retaliation by ostensible allies who are implicated in the management of contract faculty in the same institution. This presentation highlights some key areas of concern that have potential lessons for other struggles beyond the university. For example, questions that will be addressed include: How do you include workers in a campaign, if they are vulnerable to retaliation

from managers and employers? What media forms work best in reaching out to and/or mobilizing primary and secondary audiences? How does one communicate demands and criticisms to primary and secondary audiences when there is a need for anonymity and/or one's involvement in such an institution is tied to the success of that institution? The author of this paper draws upon his own education, experience and expertise as both a media professional and an alternative media scholar as well as his work as a communications director, media relations officer and campaign strategist on several contract faculty campaigns.

**Patricia Keeton:** From Wealth Inequality and DIY to Occupy and Ferguson: New Opportunities for Teaching Marxist Concepts in the Media Studies Classroom

The new openness to radical ideas as a result of Occupy Wall Street, Ferguson, and growing wealth inequality have changed the way I teach media studies, and this paper focuses on strategies I have developed for my media studies classes to teach “surplus value,” “hegemony,” and other Marxist concepts. I approach my teaching from the premise that “profit” is the very foundation of the capitalist system, so building a movement for an egalitarian society won't happen until people, like our students, understand the nature of exploitation and surplus value. My strategy for teaching this to media students is to use a unit on creative labor, a subject of great interest to my students, who worry about the job market but often do not see themselves as members of a socially exploited working class and, moreover -- in ways that are certainly contradictory -- often identify with and see themselves as individuals who are destined to be successful professionals. For this unit, I rely on theoretical readings and case studies. Students study the decentralization of media structures as a result of digital technologies (from Fordism to post-Fordism) and apply it to their career goals; we use case studies like Napster's attack by the recording industry, the 2007 Writers' Strike, and reality television, as well as their own research into careers of potential interest to them through the press and Occupational Outlook Handbook of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, to see how the new “flexible specialization” of labor has masked the exploitation of contemporary media workers through the hype of crowd-sourcing and “DIY” successes as well as the disproportionate profits of media conglomerates. This assignment helps set the stage for a culminating month-long final project that has students examine contemporary policies that are likely to impact their future from the perspective of both their representation in the media and the behind-the-scenes processes through which these policies get formulated and implemented through government channels. Working in groups, students analyze a contemporary topic (ranging from the Iraq war to ISIS, racial profiling to police militarization and Ferguson, the health care crisis to “Obamacare,” unemployment to low-wage worker organizing against the fast food industry and Walmart, to fracking, GMOs, Occupy Wall Street, tax policy, student debt, and others). Methodologically, students utilize G. William Domhoff's class-domination of power theory to gain insight into how the power elite uses the policy-discussion, candidate-selection, special-interest, and opinion-shaping processes to define its policy positions, work behind-the-scenes and in through sponsored political candidates to get them implemented governmentally, and ensuring public support through their framing and control of the corporate mass news and entertainment media. The goal of the assignment is two-fold: first, for students to learn

about the extent to which power elites and the institutions they control use mass media to build public support for policies crucial to them but, equally importantly, through an analysis of alternative media, media watchdog sources, and studies by public interest policy institutes not controlled by the power elite, to gain a critical understanding of ways in which the majority outside the power elite might more effectively challenge – and/or have challenged -- these strategies (counter-hegemony).

**Karen Smith, Leslie Shade:** Iteration, Design and Privacy Literacies

Hive Toronto is a digital literacy network in Toronto with over 40 youth serving organizations as members, including libraries, museums and after school programs. In 2014-2015 Hive Toronto received a grant from the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada to co-design open badges for privacy education with Toronto area teenagers. Open badges rely on an open technical specification, to combine images and metadata to signify learning. Open badges are present on Mozilla's Webmaker ([www.webmaker.org](http://www.webmaker.org)) site and also used by other sites across the web. Our goal for this research project was to engage 8 teens as peer researchers to co-design 10 privacy badges and the associated curriculum that would be appropriate to utilize to educate other youth about Canada's Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA), and privacy more broadly.

Our research project began with the belief that youth as the end-users of privacy education curriculum should be involved in its design. Our workshop involved convening 7 day-long workshops with eight Toronto teenagers and 12 interviews with educators (i.e., community center workers, and teachers). We also held an educators' workshop to share the curriculum with formal and informal educators and to encourage its uptake in Canada. The curriculum we created with youth and community participation includes an ecosystem of 10 badges and the associated learning activities. Various themes are represented in the curriculum such as "privacy in everyday life," "legal knowledge," and "passwords." Two participatory research traditions that informed us, participatory action research (PAR) and participatory design (PD), suggest that the arc of a project includes iterative loops. In this presentation, we focus on identifying the key moments of iteration within the project to ensure the curriculum was co-designed to bring forward youth and educator interests. Iteration was prompted by factors such as youth proposals for badges and deep descriptions of the educators' contexts. Taking a participatory research approach, led to unexpected changes and adjustments of the curriculum during the research process.

**4e. Digital Enclosures: Manufacturing Scarcity in Networked Environments**

**Greg Elmer:** Going Public: Accounting and Accountability in the New Media

This paper is concerned with accounts and accountability in the new media industries. For decades, if not centuries, accounts have served as the principal interface between individuals (as clients, consumers, users) and institutions such as governments, banks, utilities, and a bevy of private businesses. Such accounts typically serve to enumerate, in contractual terms, the roles, responsibilities, and limits of such relationships. If there is



ever a disagreement between parties, the account serves as a key site through which accountability is mediated. The account is in this sense not only an interface between individuals and institutions, it is also the place where the terms of accountability itself – manifest in privacy policies, interest rates, end user agreements, etc -- are written and rewritten, over and over.

But what becomes of the promise and possibility of political and economic accountability when the user account itself is undermined and displaced? When users no longer formally and expressly enter into agreements or contracts with new media companies? What pathways to justice, what forms of accountability remain for those individuals and communities who are always already accounted for by new media? One need only request information on services or products today to have an account of sorts opened. Such ‘dormant’ accounts are particularly pervasive on the internet, world wide web, and on social media platforms, like Facebook or Google where information is collected on individuals regardless of whether they have formally established a user account or not....

.... To better understand the implications of this impersonal form of capital, and its impact of the promise and possibility of accountability, the paper investigates how the forms, technologies, and practices of accounting (in some instances as legislated by company law and other statutes) in a series of new media companies served to intensify their efforts to not only cost their businesses and boost profits, but to de-couple or depersonalize the information of its users and non users alike. Such “impersonal capital” – separating the personal information from both accounts and users themselves -- has served to produce a business model not unlike the modern cost or management accounting industry itself. New media and social media, in other words, now serve as one of the key sites where potential economic value is enumerated and costed. To summarize, at the core of this paper is the relationship between publicity and accounting: the publicity requirements in corporate legislation that led to the birth of the modern accounting industry, the incorporation of accounting practices & public relations campaigns by early media companies in advance of public listing on stock exchanges, through to the more explicitly technological discussion of how Facebook, Twitter and Google have designed their platforms to encourage, mine, and sell the publicity of their users and content. By investigating the terms of publicity in particular periods of crisis and change in industrial and post-industrial (financial) capitalism the paper tracks and critiques technologies of accounting within broader social, political and economic appeals for regimes of accountability, that is meaningful avenues, techniques, and practices where individual and social forms of justice can be enacted.

### **Robert Prey: The Struggle over Streaming: SoundCloud and the Production of ‘Abstract’ Space**

Streaming services are currently transforming how music is being distributed and consumed. On- demand music streaming services such as Spotify, Rdio, Soundcloud and Deezer, and personalized Internet radio services like Pandora and iTunes Radio, have exploded into the mainstream in recent years. Taken together they are the fastest-growing sector of the global music industry and represent the future of music distribution and consumption. The shift to streaming can be seen as an attempt to regain control of digital

music, which was lost in the post-Napster file-sharing era. Furthermore, as digital purchases have declined in recent years, the recording industry has largely decided that if music is becoming increasingly difficult to exchange as a commodity, then the very spaces of music consumption must be commodified. This paper attempts to illuminate this conflicted process through the lens of Henri Lefebvre's theory of the production of space. It argues that with streaming services, online spaces of music consumption are undergoing a transformation from "social spaces" - the space of use values produced through everyday interaction - into "abstract spaces" - the space of capitalism.

One of the most revealing and current examples of this transformation involves SoundCloud, the immensely popular audio streaming and music sharing platform that is often called the 'Youtube of Music'. SoundCloud has long been celebrated for its ability to foster grassroots connections and collaborations amongst musicians and fans. However, recent re- designs of the service, privacy policy changes, and the introduction of advertising, have angered many early adopters. They claim that SoundCloud is experiencing a loss of community as it attempts to monetize its growing listener base and placate its investors and major record labels. This presentation will focus on how SoundCloud users have reacted to these changes, and how such struggles reveal wider contradictions between 'social space' and 'abstract space' in the new media economy. The example of SoundCloud demonstrates how the production of abstract space is always contested, open-ended, and indeed, dependent on social space. Thus, this paper draws from Lefebvre's spatial theory to propose a trialectical approach; one that is sensitive to the perceived, conceived and lived dimensions of the tensions between social and abstract space. Recent media attention on music streaming has focused on disputes over royalty payments between streaming services and artists such as Taylor Swift. While this is a critically important issue, less attention has been paid to the wider implications and internal struggles that accompany the shift to music streaming. This paper is an attempt to begin such a conversation.

**Benjamin Birkinbine:** From the Commons to Capital: Free Software, Peer Production, and Red Hat, Inc.

Red Hat, Inc. is the largest and only publicly traded corporation whose business model relies entirely on free software products and services. Because Red Hat's free software projects are protected by the GNU General Public License (GPL) – a copyleft license that requires derivative works to be made freely available – Red Hat cannot rely on traditional copyright protection to prevent other parties from using or producing copies of its software. Indeed, since 2004 the free and open source software project CentOS has been based on the underlying source code for Red Hat Enterprise Linux (RHEL) and has been designed as a functionally compatible replacement for RHEL. Despite the challenge from CentOS, Red Hat has consistently grown since its founding in 1995, and the company reported more than \$1 billion in revenue for the 2013 fiscal year. In this paper, I examine how Red Hat has been able to transform free software products into proprietary commodities that provide the foundation for its business model. To do so, I describe the relationship between Red Hat's core commodity, Red Hat Enterprise Linux, and the Fedora Project, a free software project supported by Red Hat. This includes a discussion of how the Fedora Project is governed by a Community Advisory Board, which includes

representatives from Red Hat. Further, Red Hat controls the contributions to its free software projects by requiring contributors to sign a Fedora Project Contributor Agreement, which restricts the types of licenses that contributors can assign to their contributions. Finally, I demonstrate how Red Hat relies on trademark to protect its proprietary software in lieu of copyright. The findings from this case study have important implications for our understanding of commons-based peer production under capitalism, and the ability of alternative intellectual property licenses to protect commons-based resources. In this sense, Red Hat provides an illustrative example of how corporate involvement in free and open source software projects constitutes a key circuit of struggle.

**John Sullivan:** Video Streaming Protocols and the Creation of Artificial Scarcity in Online Video Markets

The transition from analog to networked, digital media has been excitedly catalogued by scholars, essayists, and futurists who have heralded a new “era of abundance” in information creation, storage, and distribution. There is no doubt that the rise in preeminence of computerized devices and Internet has greatly expanded consumers’ access to the tools to create, remix, and mass distribute cultural artifacts. However, as corporate interests in the Internet have expanded in the past 20 years, it is becoming increasingly evident that capitalist modes of production and value creation are also slowly transforming (and in some cases, curtailing) the democratic potential of these new technologies. Much of the control being exerted on forms of online communication is largely invisible to end users because it occurs beneath the user interface, at the level of software code (Lessig, 2000). Indeed, software has become an increasingly important intermediary layer between media content and end users since it serves as consumers’ primary entry point to media content. While we still speak of distinct media industries such as film, radio, and television, it is clear that much of the content provided by these industries are increasingly being exhibited on small-screen, Internet-enabled digital devices. Therefore, grasping the central dynamics of 21st Century media industries requires an understanding of the functions, internal logics, and economic foundations of software (Berry, 2011; Chun, 2013; Fuller, 2008; Kitchin & Dodge, 2011; Manovich, 2013).

In this essay, I explore one type of software – video streaming protocols – and their importance for the development trajectory of next-generation online video markets. Protocols refer to the computer code which enables the inter-operability of different types of software and hardware. Galloway (2001, p. 83) explains the concept of protocol as “voluntary regulation within a contingent environment. Protocols operate at the level of coding: they encode packets of information so that they may be transported, they code documents so that they may be effectively parsed, and they code communication so local devices may effectively communicate with foreign devices.” Most of the most popular and most commercially successful video streaming websites, such as YouTube, Hulu, Netflix, and Amazon Prime, including some of the smaller websites like Blip, Dailymotion, and Vimeo, rely on a small handful of proprietary video streaming standards such as Flash (Adobe), Silverlight (Microsoft), and HTML5. In addition, these streaming protocols are often restricted in the types of video coding formats they support,

such as H.264 (championed by Apple and Microsoft), WebM (Google) and VP8 (Google again). Following a brief discussion of the genesis of these different protocol formats and their links to valuable technology patents, the essay outlines the current battles being waged among major technology companies and free-open source advocates for a unified video streaming standard. As more and more users access video online, this struggle over protocols will have a major impact on the ability of corporations to control the architecture and development of online video markets.

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#### **4f. Theoretical Approaches to Democratic Communications**

**Amanda Earley** (University of Leicester): *The Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted: Reconsidering the Mediascape of Occupy Wall Street*

Over the past two decades, the debate on the relationship between social media and activism has raged from neo-Ludditism to cyber-utopianism. This presentation reconsiders this discussion within the context of the original Occupy Wall Street encampment in New York City. Inspired by news reports which echoed traditional cyber-utopian narratives, this study endeavoured to examine the media practices of activists in situ. Here, I found that a simple infrastructural issue--the more or less complete lack of electricity at the protest site--largely structured the media practices available to and eventually chosen by the activists. In turn, this constraint shaped the culture, organisation, and goals of the movement. Specifically, sustaining a community and creating an alternative economy on site became ends in themselves, and seemingly anachronistic media practices like pamphleteering became essential to furthering the interests of the organisation. Indeed, naturalistic observation reveals an incredibly diverse system of communications media used by the movement. Within these findings, it is argued that face-to-face communication strategies from simple conversation to working groups to the General Assembly were the lifeblood of the movement. Indeed, the dramatic decline of Occupy Wall Street after the loss of the park is evidence of the irreplaceability of face-to-face communications.

The presentation seeks to theorise these findings with recourse to discussions of democracy, community, and space within political philosophy. Here, it is argued that creating a non-hierarchical lived community and an egalitarian, communist economy was not just a side project of the movement, but actually essential for the movement's goal of

creating truly democratic communications. Ultimately, the project raises questions not only about the connections between new media and radical politics, but also concerning the methods used to produce evidence in this debate. Specifically, one finds that a more general approach, focusing on the nature of the social movement and all possible media practices employed, actually provides a more accurate starting point than a technocentric approach, which risks privileging technologically-inclined members of social movements and reproducing techno-utopian narratives. The paper concludes with implications for activists, of whom the author is one; without whom the project would not have been possible; and for whom the project is conducted. In the end, the importance of living communally for encouraging democratic communication practices raises vital questions about the nature of communications outside of such environments. Specifically, it stresses the necessity of contending with issues of class and access directly, rather than downplaying them as "soon to be resolved" as social media participation proliferates. Indeed, inspired from a critical media studies perspective, the project stresses that such divisions are frequently built into platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. Moreover, from even a traditional communications approach, questions are raised about the relative importance of internal, high influence, small-scale communications versus the externally-focused, "mass communications" approach to activism

**Robert Danisch** (University of Waterloo): Rhetorical Pragmatism, Social Democracy, and Small Group Communication

John Dewey was perhaps the most vocal and important advocate of participatory democracy in the American liberal tradition. His work argues that democracy is a way of life, and as such requires specific communicative practices. Those communicative practices include face-to-face communication, deliberation, and small group communication. In this presentation, I will outline the argument for small group communication as a necessary practice in a social democracy. I will show the roots of this argument within the American pragmatist tradition (along with the theoretical underpinning of a commitment to deliberation), the ways in which this argument promotes a kind of rhetorical citizenship (or a set of communicative practices of positive democratic participation), and how this argument was expressed in the contemporary Occupy Wall Street movement (as the latest in a long line of American liberal attempts to show the lived texture of democracy as a way of life). Small group communication is essential for the development of relational power and relies on modes of inquiry and artistry for its effective development. When media technologies promote small group communication, they are able to enhance social democracy, but when they inhibit such encounters then they become instruments of neoliberal oppression. The purpose of this essay is to outline the historical argument for democracy as a way of life and as a set of deliberative communication practices and to assess the ongoing relevance and importance of this argument given the contemporary scene of neoliberalism and massive technological change. Pragmatism has shown that certain rhetorical structures make different kinds of citizenship, as a practice of participating in political life, possible and others impossible. These rhetorical structures organize collective life and tether citizens to one another in specific ways. Thus the social order is stitched together by connecting disparate groups and heterogeneous peoples through the repetitive symbolic action of

larger structural entities. Rhetorical structures can be more or less democratic. The job of rhetorical theory is to test the kinds of connection made possible by such rhetorical structures and determine the extent to which they promote equity, freedom, and collective decision-making. Rhetorical agency, in other words, is always implicated within larger structures that act rhetorically as well. The tension between agency and structure can reveal what kind of democracy we have and whether or not it measures up to our ideals. The individual agent, from this perspective, is connected to other agents within democratic life only through the larger rhetorical structures within which we are all implicated.

**Susan Driver** (York University): Affective Media Practices: Youth Articulating Difficult Feelings, Ambiguous Desires and Contradictory Identifications

This paper draws extensively upon affect theories from across disciplines including Queer, Feminist and Postcolonial approaches (S.Ahmed, L. Berlant, L. Blackman, A. Cvetkovich, D. Eng, J. Puar, J. Munoz). I make use of theoretically rich articulations of subjectivity, relationality and embodiment to think through the affective lives of youth across situated, diverse and mobile practices of communicating online. My goal is to think through the affective complexities of selves, relations and community formations with regard to specific youth media practices, with a focus on active engagements (liking, sharing, commenting, posting, tagging, poking, messaging etc.) using social media platforms including Tumblr and Facebook. I intervene in youth media studies which has tended to be underdeveloped and reductionist in its theoretical elaborations of the mediated psychosocial dynamics of subjectivity. I also draw upon social media scholarship (D. Boyd, C. Fuchs, J. Garde-Hanson, M. Gregg, A. Lasen, S. Turkle, J. VanDijck) with the goal of embedding critical thinking about technologies and transmediation within the situated contexts of youth media practices. Criss-crossing the disparate fields of queer affect theory with a focus on youth media studies allows for productive questioning of the status of the communicative subject at the limits of representation. At stake is a willingness to think about the public feelings of youth online beyond conventional framings of commercial cooptation as well as rational political discourses of resistance. A more vulnerable and tentative approach is called for that risks and values areas of uncertainty and unknowability. My goal is to interweave interpretations of empirical data connected to everyday social media experiences of youth with critically dynamic and expansive conceptualizations about power, desire, identification, attachment and recognition. My work also theorizes the affective constraints of individualizing neo-liberal discourses centered on normalizing notions of youth “happiness” and corporatized ideals of “connectivity,” exploring “negative,” heterogeneous and ambivalent affective responses and corresponding mis/communications as openings from which to understand alternatives that contest and exceed hegemonic understandings of corporatized media consumption as well as normative models of democratic participation.

**James Steinhoff** (Western University): “Your Body is Deathtrap”: Revolutionary Potentials in Transhumanist Conceptions of the Body

Transhumanism is the philosophy that humans can and should be upgraded to a material state beyond humanity 1.0 through technological means. Transhumanists thus view humanity as a slipshod work-in-progress that should be improved on. From transhumanism's birth in the cyber culture of 1990s Silicon Valley, it has been closely linked to the economic and political strategies of capital. Transhumanists generally endorse libertarianism or liberal democracy (with emphasis on the liberal). Capitalist competition is generally seen as essential to developing the advanced technologies required for radical upgrading. Transhumanism has shown little sympathy for revolutionary socialist thinking. Yet, transhumanism is itself a revolutionary project in that it seeks to redefine what it means to be human. This paper shows that transhumanist conceptions of human nature run interestingly parallel with the conception of humanity put forth by the young Marx. Further, this paper argues that, in this respect, transhumanist thinking actually extends Marx's logic to new extremes which may be useful to revolutionary thought. The focus here is on the corporeal. Transhumanism regards the body as what Deleuze and Guattari would call an apparatus of capture by conceiving of it as a technology. This paper explores ways to usefully mobilize this conception.

**Rachel Melis** (Western University): Anonymous Identities: From the Individual to the Collective

Privacy may be a necessary condition for ensuring a free society, but it is not a sufficient condition; one may have privacy, but live in an unfree society. Ubiquitous surveillance practices are linked to a late-modern experience of social and technological control where our understanding of the subject undergoes a significant change from early modern figurations. This paper develops the concept of anonymity within the discourse of privacy and within the larger context of civil liberties. To the extent that surveillance practices on the part of the state and private enterprise have become entwined in our daily lives, the ways in which we might individually resist these intrusive practices continue to be framed in terms of privacy within the discourse of civil liberties, and legislated under the law. There are few models that consider resistance to surveillance practices as a collective endeavour, even though the aggregation of data in our increasingly informationally-enhanced everyday environments affects all of us. By comparing anonymity and privacy as complementary strategies, but as qualitatively and politically different strategies, I contend that anonymity is a more effective shared mode of resistance.

As I hope to illustrate, there are some similarities among notions of privacy and notions of anonymity, but the differences are key, and when we focus on these, we may find ourselves moving away from the logic of surveillance, and moving towards a shared commons of the secret. I will consider the roles of transparency and secrecy, as Clare Birchall has suggested, especially as they relate to Leftist political thinking. Birchall argues that secrecy, instead of transparency, can be viewed as a strategy for developing the commons. Anonymity will factor in situations where surveillance rhetoric demands transparency of the subject, but does not allow for the necessary secrecy desired by the individual. I suggest secrecy and transparency, as the space of conflict for the Internet, highlight the importance of sociality in the information age. Privacy might be a difficult concept to mobilize when the playing field shifts from the individual to the collective, or

more appropriately, to the relation among individuals that would otherwise constitute a networked collectivity.

#### **4g. Media Justice and Activism**

**Letrell Crittenden** (Robert Morris University): Hands Down: Media Justice and the Decline of NABJ

Founded in 1975, the National Association of Black Journalists represents one of the oldest and largest media advocacy organizations in the United States. Developed in the shadow of the Freedom Rights Movement, the founders of NABJ specifically believed the organization should challenge institutional racism by filing FCC challenges against offensive broadcasters, and through an active media monitoring effort via a national newsletter. Yet over the past 20 years, NABJ has largely stood on the sidelines in challenging the mainstream media's coverage of African Americans, especially in comparison to other media advocacy organizations. As a result, the organization founded by pioneering journalists like Chuck Stone and Vernon Jarrett has drifted into near-obscurity on issues related to media reform and media justice. This presentation will analyze the organization's lack of action on media monitoring issues, with a specific emphasis on both NABJ's official magazine, the NABJ Journal, and NABJ's press releases. Established as the organization's official monitoring vessel, the Journal, once edited by Richard Prince, one of the nation's most reputable journalists on media diversity issues, was actively engaged in media monitoring throughout the 1990s. As the organization suffered through economic difficulties at the beginning of the century, the Journal began to publish less frequently and rarely engaged in any efforts related to media monitoring. Today the NABJ Journal serves public relations needs of the organization, and engages in no criticism of institutional racism within the mainstream media.

Additionally, NABJ has stayed on the sidelines with regard to major political issues related to media advocacy, notably over the past eight years. The organization that once released a study analyzing the racially problematic coverage of the 1992 Los Angeles riots has had next to nothing to say about some of the most egregious cases of stereotypical news coverage, notably the mainstream media's coverage of the Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown shootings. The organization has also stayed on the sidelines during the battle for net neutrality. This presentation will also dissect how the organization's increased reliance on corporate funding has potentially played a role in hampering its efforts to engage in direct criticism of the mainstream media. A direct correlation can be made between NABJ's increased reliance on corporate funding, and the organization's declining emphasis on challenging racism within media coverage.

**Crystal China** (University of Georgia) and **Steven Giannino** (Southern Illinois University): The Revolution will be Tweeted: Occupy the Hood Radio as Dissidence in a Mainstream Medium

The production of social movement and dissident media is as old as the production of social movements themselves. Recognizing the need to create communications that both



provided members of movements with relevant information and updates and gave the marginalized members of social movements voice in the public sphere, activists in nearly every major social movement have produced some sort of periodical to speak for and about their cause. Largely rejected, ignored, vilified and harassed by mainstream media outlets for their “radical” ideology, those involved in social movements opted to create their own newspapers and periodicals to make their voices heard (Kessler, 1984). Unlike the broader category of alternative media, social movement/dissident media speak for a particular cause and seek some sort of change in society (Streitmatter, 2001). These publications reflect an ethos of subversion and resistance. However, these media also work, somewhat paradoxically, within the same conventions, and often the same channels, as the mainstream journalism they seek to challenge.

Hamilton (2008) addresses this paradox in his work, refuting rigid categorical distinctions between alternative and mainstream media. He contends that scholars should understand mainstream and alternative/dissident media not as two poles of media practice, but as two articulations within a single, “highly contradictory social formation.” (2008, p.4). This research will examine Occupy the Hood (OTH) Radio, one such example of a medium that works within such contradictory spaces. OTH Radio operates as the news medium of the Occupy the Hood movement, which, borrowing from the Occupy Wall Street movement, seeks to challenge the dominant (white supremacist) culture by advocating for the interests of poor black and brown communities. Occupy the Hood Radio is not an actual radio station; rather, the “station” is a Twitter account the organization uses to disseminate news items relevant to the communities it represents—those that are largely ignored, whitewashed or downplayed by the mainstream press. This paper will investigate the ways in which OTH Radio works through a “mainstream” medium as a dissident news organization. Though Twitter, like many social media sites, is designed to promote democratic communications and encourage citizen journalism, the site qualifies as mainstream due to its popularity (271 million active users worldwide) and the significant presence of commercial news organizations (i.e. CNN, MSNBC, Fox News, BBC News, Huffington Post, among others) on the site. Using a flexible textual analysis, this research will explore how Occupy the Hood Radio is articulated simultaneously as a dissident and mainstream medium by working through mainstream channels and conventions to advocate for the rights and equity of poor people of color

**Chris Robe** (Florida Atlantic University): Video Guerrillas, the New Anarchism, and Lifestyle Politics

As Eve Chiapello and Luc Boltanski have documented in their book *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, the late 1960s and early 1970s marked a dialectical struggle between industrial capitalism and a younger generation of students, workers, and women who grew frustrated with its alienating practices and hierarchies that structured the workplace, the family, and unions. Demands for authenticity, anti-hierarchy, and autonomy forced capitalism to restructure itself into a network-based, neoliberal form. Yet capital’s ability to adapt itself to such demands allowed it to sustain itself and further extend its practices out of the workplace and into everyday life, viewing subjectivity itself as a central site of contestation. The emerging 1970s video guerrilla movement in the United States, with its affinity with anarchism and reliance upon the newest, affordable digital technology,

marks a key moment of struggle between the counterculture's desire for autonomy, authenticity, and anti-hierarchy and neoliberalism's desire to re-inscribe such practices back within capitalism's vectors. This paper explores some of the key struggles that groups like Videofreex, TVTV, Ant Farm, and Optical Nerve engaged during the early 1970s in attempt to free media-making, communal living, and everyday life from the logic of capital. They saw media-making as a central device in not only representing their vision, but also in organizing their lifestyles around consensus-based, non-hierarchical, direct action practices. Although not all the groups self-identified as anarchists, they were all directly influenced by anarchist-inflected practices, in particular viewing lifestyle orientation as a form of prefigurative politics. As eco-anarchist Murray Bookchin notes at the time, "The lifestyle is indispensable in preserving the integrity of the revolutionary" in offering resistance to bourgeois practices and establishing alternatives. But as Laura Portwood-Stacer also observes, lifestyle politics are problematic as a form of activism because they are a product of neoliberal conditions while at the same time fighting against them. This paper explores how video guerrillas attempted to establish an "authentic" life by fusing work with play and emphasizing process over product while simultaneously succumbing to techno-utopian visions that were deeply enmeshed in corporate culture and implicitly relying upon white, male privilege that structured their projects and overall labor. The video guerrillas reveal how battles over affect and lifestyle become primary in the new regime of neoliberalism and how network-based structures and digital technology can simultaneously free people from some aspects of hierarchy and capitalist ideology while more firmly entrenching them in others.

**Andy Opel** (Florida State University): Direct Action Pedagogy: Project Nero, Climate Change and the Florida Legislature

In the spring of 2014, Environmental Science and Policy majors joined forces with Digital Media Production majors creating a class that set out to answer the questions; "Who is blocking climate change legislation in the State of Florida and Why?" Under the leadership of two faculty members, one from Environmental Science and Policy and one from Communication, this class was titled Project Nero, in reference to the fifth emperor of Rome who was said to play a fiddle while Rome burned<sup>1</sup>. Updating this idea, the class set out to find modern day Nero's who were fiddling while the planet burned. Using a range of technologies - video cameras, social media and investigative reporting - students hoped to get direct answers to questions about climate policy and then use communication technology to publically shame politicians who willfully denied science and the public interest.

Students formed small teams to research the legislators, advocacy groups and policy history as they prepared for the eight-week legislative session. Students used social media – a FaceBook page<sup>2</sup>, a Twitter account<sup>3</sup> and a blog<sup>4</sup> - to both coordinate the activities of the class and to promote those activities to a broader audience. In addition, students created a series of videos<sup>5</sup> in an attempt to draw attention to the issue of climate change and the impacts on Florida. Drawing on the work of Salzman<sup>6</sup>, students staged an image event on the opening day of the legislative session where numerous students dressed in togas, wore laurels on their heads and had sashes that said, "@ProjectNeroFSU". These students handed out a pamphlet to legislators in an attempt

to educate them about the science of climate change. These encounters were filmed as part of the class media strategy. The last element of the class was an attempt to document the student response to their direct action encounter with politics. Each student was asked to answer a series of questions, alone in a room with a video camera, much like the ubiquitous video confessional of reality television. Each student did “confessional” video sessions three times over the course of the semester with the understanding that faculty would not look at the video until the course was over. These video confessions provide insight into the process of direct action pedagogy and reveal the individual reactions to engaged academic activism. In the tradition of Freire, Frey & Carragee, and Jarvis & Han, this project builds on the deep literature of communication activism pedagogy and introduces the activist strategy of direct action<sup>10</sup> as a tool for civic engagement and engaged scholarship. This project presentation includes video testimony from the students as well as samples of the student produced media. Classroom lessons from an interdisciplinary project and a model of direct action pedagogy are presented as findings.

**5:30-7 pm Book Launch: [\*Nothing to Lose but Our Fear: Resistance in Dangerous Times\*](#)**

- **Fiona Jeffries**, followed by a reception, sponsored by Between The Lines press

As the Egyptian revolution gained momentum in the winter of 2011, a common refrain echoed across Cairo’s Tahrir Square: “The wall of fear came down!” Mass protests against fear and authoritarianism have also rumbled across the aggrieved streets and plazas of Tunis, Athens, Madrid, New York City, Istanbul, Rio de Janeiro, Mexico City, Delhi, and beyond. While the scale of these new uprisings may be unprecedented, the refusal of fear is not unique to our time.

*Nothing to Lose but Our Fear* brings together an international group of scholars and activists ([Marcus Rediker](#), [Silvia Federici](#), [David Harvey](#), [Nandita Sharma](#), [John Holloway](#), [Lydia Cacho](#), [Sandra Moran](#), [Gustavo Esteva](#), and [Wendy Mendez](#)) and asks them how can we think critically and act productively in a world awash in fear. Their conversations with Fiona Jeffries provoke consideration of the often hidden histories of people’s emancipatory practices and offer reflections that can help us understand the conjuncture of systemic fear and resistance.