

## SIGCIS 2013 WORKSHOP: CALL FOR PAPERS

### Workshop Theme

Information technologists have little time for old thinking, or for anything else old. Entrepreneurs seek the new new thing, computer scientists tackle the grand challenges of future computing, and management consultants chase the next fad. Scholars in the humanities, who are professionally skeptical about the nostrums of neoliberalism, the myth of progress, and the allure of the technological fix, can nevertheless exhibit a similar weakness for the shiny allure of new technologies. In short, information technology is rarely understood as something rooted in history. Its cultural associations are with the future, not the past.

For the SIGCIS 2013 Workshop, we invite scholars to turn their attention to something different: old ideas and their relationship to information and computer technology. Perhaps to their overlooked charm, their enduring power, and their continuities with the putatively new. Such papers might:

- Reclaim from what was famously termed the "enormous condescension of posterity" the ideas about information and information technology held by specific historical actors, explaining what they really thought they were doing and how they understood the world around them.
- Demonstrate hidden historical continuities, by showing that technologies, ideas, or practices generally assumed to be of recent origin have a close relationship with those formerly known by different names.
- Advocate explicitly or by example the relevance of less fashionable historical approaches, such as quantitative analysis, old-school Marxism, or micro-level studies of technical practice to understanding the history of information technology.
- Explore connections between historical research on computing, and the burgeoning recent literature on software studies, game studies, platform studies, etc. produced by scholars in other areas of the humanities.
- Place topics within the history of information technology into broader arcs of birth, aging, and death – whether of individuals, institutions, or social practices.
- Illuminate the cultural work done to construct some things as old and others as new, and explain who is carrying out this work and why.

If none of the above fit your work, even with some creative twisting, then despair not: we also accept new ideas! SIGCIS has a tradition of welcoming all types of contributions related to the history of computing and information, whether or not there is an explicit connection with the annual theme. Our membership is international and interdisciplinary, and our members examine the history of information technologies and their place within society from a variety of scholarly perspectives including the history of technology, business history, labor history, social history, the history of science, science studies, communications, gender and sexuality studies, computing, disability studies, and museum studies.

## **Suggested Formats for Submissions:**

Proposals for entire sessions and individual presenters are both welcome. We hope to run special sessions featuring dissertations in progress and other works in progress. The workshop is a great opportunity to get helpful feedback on your projects in a relaxed and supportive environment. All proposals will be subject to a peer review process based on abstracts.

Individual contributions can fit one of a variety of formats:

1. Traditional 15 to 20-minute presentations followed by a question and answer session. In this case, a one-page abstract (maximum 400 words) will be reviewed and included in the electronic conference program. Abstracts should address the paper's topic, argument, evidence used, and contribution to the existing literature. A full version of the paper should be sent to the session commentator at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting. We welcome proposals for entire sessions (3-4 papers that elucidate a common theme) or for individual presentations.
2. Dissertation proposals. We intend to continue SIGCIS's tradition of hosting special sessions that feature dissertations in progress so that scholars can receive critical feedback in a relaxed and supportive environment. Interested students should submit a dissertation proposal (for projects in the early stages) or draft dissertation chapter together with table of contents of the whole dissertation (for those nearing completion), which will be pre-circulated in the electronic conference program if accepted. Participants will be encouraged to read this prior to the session. You will have five to ten minutes to introduce the material, leaving the bulk of time available for discussion.
3. Works in progress. This is your chance to receive informal and expert discussion of draft dissertation chapters, journal articles, or book chapters. Submit a one page abstract (maximum 400 words) including discussion of the current state of the work and any specific kinds of feedback you are seeking. If your proposal is accepted you will need to supply the draft for discussion by 1 September for inclusion in the electronic program for the workshop. You will have five to ten minutes to introduce the material, leaving the bulk of time available for discussion.
4. Proposals in other formats are also welcome, such as round table discussions, "works in progress" proposals for early-stage research projects, demonstrations of software of interest to historians of computing and information, or "author meets critics" sessions.

SIGCIS follows traditional practices for the submission of papers for professional historical conferences, specifically: selection based on abstracts rather than full papers; no pre-circulation or publication of full papers (with the exception of dissertation proposals as noted above); and the requirement that presenters share their full paper with the session commentator at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting. Presenters are encouraged to submit their work the SIGCIS Member Contributions collection.

## **Submission Procedure**

All submissions should be made online via the SIGCIS website by June 30, 2013. People already scheduled to participate on the main SHOT program are welcome to submit an additional proposal to the SIGCIS workshop, but should make sure that there is no overlap between the two presentations. However program committee may choose to give higher priority to submissions from those not already presenting at SHOT. The same person should not be included as a panelist or speaker in more than one proposal to the SIGCIS Workshop, though it is OK to appear both as a speaker/panelist in one session and a chair or discussant in another.

Individual submissions should be made at <http://www.sigcis.org/workshop13a>. Note that this requires a one page curriculum vitae as well as the proposal itself in the form described above.

Proposals for complete sessions should be made at <http://www.sigcis.org/workshop13b>. They should include:

- a description of the session that explains how individual papers contribute to an overall theme)
- the names and email addresses of each presenter)
- an abstract and title for each presentation (in the form described above)
- a one-page c.v. for each presenter and other participant (including commentator or chair if named)

### **Travel Support**

The top financial priority of SIGCIS is the support of travel expenses for graduate students, visiting faculty without institutional travel support, and others who would be unable to attend the meeting without travel assistance. The submission page includes a box to check if you fall into one of these categories and would like to be considered for an award. There is no separate application form, though depending on the volume of requests and available resources we may need to contact you for further information before making a decision. Details on our travel grant program are at <http://www.sigcis.org/travelaward>. Any award offered is contingent on registering for and attending the workshop and, for participants in work in progress or dissertations in progress sessions, on fulfilling the deadlines set for providing work in progress to be shared on the workshop website.

Funding sources include donations from SIGCIS members at our annual meeting, income from the Mahoney Fund <http://www.sigcis.org/mahoney> and support from MIT Press for our annual book auction. Please note that SHOT does not classify SIGCIS presentations as participation in the SHOT annual meeting and so acceptance by SIGCIS does not imply eligibility for the SHOT travel grant program.