

MEASURE, MODEL, MIX: COMPUTER AS INSTRUMENT

2017 SIGCIS Conference

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania | October 29, 2017

The Special Interest Group in Computing, Information, and Society [SIGCIS]
welcomes submissions to their annual conference

Proposal Due Date: June 30, 2017

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Joanna Radin | Department of History, Yale University

THEME

Computers are instruments of action. They are made to measure, model, and mix; count and aggregate; save and surveil; pick, parse, and select; and in a world of embedded systems, they are even designed to listen, wait, and relay. In many instances, these actions involve the computational transformation of other social and technological processes—from software that compiles the census to the suites of code assisting in the digital manipulation of sound and image. In other cases, computers register and create information at scales and speeds we have only begun to grasp: artificial intelligence, machine learning, and “big data” in all its local forms. And while often leveraged as democratizing, computers have long been known to amplify structural inequality, map over difference, and jettison “noise” that cannot be translated into a specific form of information.

Measure, Model, Mix invites scholars and independent researchers across the disciplinary spectrum to explore the historical conditions of computation. Areas of engagement may include:

- How have bureaucratic, scientific, and aesthetic computational instruments eroded, produced, and reproduced biopolitical and epistemological realities, past and present?
- How can we analyze the relationships between computing and identity categories such as race, gender, sexuality, and ethnicity?
- What are the historical foundations of computing’s contemporary capacity to recognize information?
- How have cultures, subcultures, political systems and identity groups mobilized computational techniques for their own ends?

SIGCIS is especially welcoming of new directions in scholarship. We maintain an inclusive atmosphere for scholarly inquiry, supporting both disciplinary and theoretical interventions from beyond the traditional history of technology, and with respect to promoting diversity in STEM. We welcome submissions from: histories of technology, computing, and science; science and technology studies; studies of women, gender, and sexuality; studies of race, ethnicity, and postcoloniality; film, media, and game studies; software and code studies; network and internet histories; music, sound studies, and art history; and all other applicable domains.

The annual SIGCIS Conference begins immediately after the regular annual meeting of our parent organization, the Society for the History of Technology [SHOT]. SIGCIS welcomes everyone, inclusive of gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, ability, age, appearance, race, nationality or religion. We are committed to fostering a positive, productive space for all participants.

SUBMISSION FORMATS

SIGCIS welcomes proposals for individual 15-20 minute papers, 3-4 paper panel proposals, works-in-progress (see below), and non-traditional proposals such as roundtables, software demonstrations, hands-on workshops, etc.

WORKS-IN-PROGRESS

We are pleased to announce a new format for the 2017 SIGCIS Works in Progress (WiP) session. This year, participants will not deliver presentations on their WiP, and there will not be an audience. Instead, the session will serve as a workshop wherein participants will discuss the works in small group sessions.

We invite works in progress—articles, chapters, dissertation prospectuses—of 10,000 words or less (longer works must be selectively edited to meet this length). We especially encourage submissions from graduate students, early career scholars, and scholars who are new to SIGCIS. Authors who submit a WiP will also commit to reading (in advance) two other WiPs, discussing them in a very small group setting, and providing written feedback on one of those WiPs. Scholars who would like to participate in this session without submitting their own WiP are certainly welcome; we ask that they commit to reading (in advance) at least two of the WiPs.

Submissions for WiP only require a 350-400 word abstract, but applicants should plan to circulate their max-10,000-word WiPs no later than October 8, 2017. Scholars who would like to be a reader of WiPs, please email a brief bio or 1-page CV, along with your areas of interest and expertise, to Gerardo Con Diaz [condiaz@ucdavis.edu].

SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

Submissions are due June 30, 2017. Applicants should download, fill out and follow the instructions on the application cover sheet at <http://meetings.sigcis.org/call-for-papers.html>. All submissions will require:

- 350-400 word abstract (full panel proposals should additionally include a 300-word panel abstract in addition to 3-4 paper abstracts)
- 1-page CV or resume

Please Note: Individuals already scheduled to participate on the main SHOT program are welcome to submit an additional proposal to our workshop, but should make sure that there is no overlap between the two presentations. However, SIGCIS may choose to give higher priority to submissions from those not already presenting at SHOT. Questions regarding submission procedure should be sent to Kera Allen [kera.allen@gatech.edu].

TRAVEL AWARD

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 cover sheet 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.

Any award offered is contingent on registering for and attending the SIGCIS Conference. Please note that SHOT does not classify the SIGCIS Conference as participation in the SHOT annual meeting, therefore so acceptance by SIGCIS does not imply eligibility for the SHOT travel grant program.

Details of available awards are at <http://www.sigcis.org/travelaward>.

SIGCIS CONFERENCE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Laine Nooney, Georgia Institute of Technology (SIGCIS Vice-Chair of Meetings)

Andrew Russell, SUNY Polytechnic Institute (SIGCIS Chair)

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