

Jaime Lee Kirtz

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EDUCATION

PhD in Media and Communication Design and Research Practice 2019

University of Colorado, Boulder

Dissertation Title: *Encoded Inequality: Hacking the Gender Bias in Media Technology*

Committee: Andrew Calabrese, Janice Peck, Stewart Hoover, Lori Emerson (co-Chair), Nabil Echchaibi (co-Chair)

MA in English and Creative Writing 2014

Concordia University, Montréal, QC

Thesis Title: *We(s)t Coast*

Committee: Darren Wershler, Bina Freiwald, Sina Queyras (Chair)

Theory & Writing* 2013

Université de Montréal

Certificate in Creative Writing 2011

Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, BC

Dual Bsc & BA in Physics and English Literature 2010

University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC

Physics & English Literature* 2009

University of Toronto

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Engaging with social and cultural aspects of new media technology and infrastructure within cultural, historical and political contexts. Specific areas of focus include: socio-cultural aspects of communication technology, algorithmic culture, critical infrastructure studies, media history, critical data studies, democratization of information, hypermediation, gendered labor in media industries, media in the public sphere, and communication privacy and policy.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Doctoral Researcher 2014-2019

Department of Media Studies, University of Colorado, Boulder

- Performing material deconstruction and remaking of modern technologies
- Developing methods and theories of feminist revisionist praxis within Media Studies
- Examining and synthesizing theory from the fields of Media Studies, Communication History,

Infrastructure Studies, New Media Theory, Science and Technology Studies, Big Data Studies, and Communication Ethics and Policy

- Conducting primary source research at national and university archives, such as the Library of Congress, Library and Archives Canada, and the New York Historical Society

Research Fellow

2015-2019

Center for Media, Religion and Culture, University of Colorado, Boulder

- Presented talks on topics including: misinformation, big data, affect, algorithms
- Conducted interviews for the Media Ambivalence Project
- Constructing the digital aspect of the hypermediation and public scholarship project
- Participating in weekly meetings and discussions
- Contributing entries for the keywords media project

McLuhan Residency Fellow

2017

McLuhan Center, University of Toronto

- Conducted research on labor ethics and standards within modern information communities
- Participated in weekly workshops with fellow graduate students
- Attended weekly meetings to discuss future collaborative projects and development of the McLuhan Center for Culture and Technology during the summer semester

Research Assistant

2016-2017

Department of Media Studies, University of Colorado, Boulder

- Assistant to Dr. Andrew Calabrese, employing new editing technologies and assembling materials for a digital database for upcoming publications
- Co-authored a long-form chapter on the media ethics and social-political issues arising from the predatory double bind of food corporations and regulations (on going)
- Conducted primary and secondary research on food politics and social justice through digital archives and collections

Research Assistant

2013-2014

TAG Lab, Concordia University

- Conducted online data collection from torrent groups of comic book scanners
- Examined issues of legality, copyright and online communities
- Analyzed data in network visualizations

CURRENT RESEARCH

Encoded Inequality: Hacking the Gender Bias in Media Technology

Utilizing a case study of video game systems, my dissertation project interrogates the gendered biases and assumptions embedded within media technologies at multiple levels of production and play through reverse engineering practices. Currently video games and associated hardware reflects the consumers (white, male, middle-class), but has no representation of the minority, female, lower-class workers who make technology. The socio-cultural aspects of video game and new technology and its production have fundamentally changed intersectional class, gender and race relations; for example, in China a new class of female, migrant workers, the dagongmei, have been not only culturally conceptualized but institutionalized through recent governmental designation. However, instead of these changes leading to a realization of the ways in which

technology reinforce class/gender/race hierarchies, these changes remain obscured to the consumer because the products are designed to be unknowable. Consumers do not open the physical enclosure (blackbox) of games nor do we investigate or open the mediated material and discursive processes that determine the relationship between identity, society and technology.

Drawing from scholars, such as Lisa Parks, Safiya Noble and Lisa Nakamura, to develop a theoretical intervention, I also look to the DIY innovative method of ROM hacking, which is a process of disassembling a game cartridge, hacking or modifying the game, and reassembling the system so that the original technology is modified in both external and internal ways. I use the components of the video game system that become visible through the hack to discuss the ways in which this technology acts as and influences discursive practices, socio-cultural practices, material practices. Examining current feminist ROM hacks and hacking culture, I argue that we need to re-imagine technology through an intersectional feminist lens that not only represents the workers but that fundamentally reconfigures the relationship between society and technology.

The Chip Chronicles: Tracing Silicon Chips Through the Global Environment

This project follows a single silicon chip from its origins as sand and metallic elements to its installation and use in computer systems. It focuses specifically on the laborers and the practices and structures that govern them at the moments of material extraction and processing, production and assemblage, transportation, and purchase. In considering these laborers and associated discursive structures, I seek to expose the power relations and forces of legitimization, and how they manifest in new media economies.

Critical Infrastructures of Digital Culture

Foregrounded by my dissertation as well as my work at the Center for Media, Religion and Culture, this project is a collaboration with Stewart Hoover that examines affect through assemblage and infrastructure. My section looks specifically at the interplay between cultural geography, designations of power, and Google cloud computing centers. The project's projected outcome is an innovative theory that reconceptualizes affect through non-human and human assemblages that are multi-faceted, multi-layered and interwoven with each other.

TEACHING INTERESTS

Developing interdisciplinary courses and courses in media and communication disciplines that examine, integrate, and question new media technology using critical thinking. Specific sub-genres include: media archaeology, new media theory, communication technology, platform studies, research methods and communication history.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Primary Instructor Positions

Instructor

2018- 2019

Department of Media Studies and Program for Writing and Rhetoric, University of Colorado, Boulder

- Designed and taught upper division course on comics, graphic novels, and rhetoric
- Designed and taught lower division honors course on new media and writing
- Utilized and instructed students on research technology
- Utilized and instructed students on visual tools (Infographic makers, Tableau)

Instructor**2018***Advertising, Public Relations and Media Design, University of Colorado, Boulder*

- Designed and taught upper division course on qualitative and quantitative methods
- Utilized and instructed students on research technology (Qualtrics, SPSS, Excel)
- Helped students develop communication strategy documents for clients
- Provided instruction on interviews, focus groups and ethnographic research
- Communicated with students as well as grading assignments

Instructor**2016***Department of Media Studies and Program for Writing and Rhetoric, University of Colorado, Boulder*

- Designed new course on comics and graphic novels for a joint program and certificate in Media Studies, English, and Writing and Rhetoric
- Integrated cultural and media studies theory with an interdisciplinary focus on the production elements as well as circulatory methods of comics
- Utilized media and instructional technology to inform pedagogical techniques
- Taught course, which included workshops on student's assignments, assisting students with media skills, and daily communication

Instructor**2014-2016***Program for Writing and Rhetoric, University of Colorado, Boulder*

- Designed and taught upper division courses on new media, civic engagement, and rhetoric
- Integrated digital media technologies into assignments and readings
- Adapted and revised the course for the new Technology, Arts and Media program
- Utilized network analysis as well as multimodal writing to understand the impact and effects of new media while also developing students' analytical skills

Instructor**2014-2015***Program for Writing and Rhetoric, University of Colorado, Boulder*

- Designed and taught first year composition courses on rhetoric, new media and multimodal composition
- Integrated new media technologies with composition pedagogies

Teaching Assistant Positions**Teaching Assistant****2018***Department of Communication, University of Colorado, Boulder*

- Assistant to Dr. Ruth Hickerson
- Lead once-a-week recitations and guest lectures
- Communicated with students as well as grading assignments

Lead Teaching Assistant**2017***Department of Media Studies, University of Colorado, Boulder*

- Lead Assistant to Dr. Janice Peck in MDST 2002 Communication and Media History
- Responsible for all TAs, created weekly lesson plans for TAs, guest lectured, and established grading consistency
- Lead once-a-week recitations, worked one-on-one with students and graded assignments

Teaching Assistant **2017***Advertising, Public Relations and Media Design, University of Colorado, Boulder*

- Prepared and composed all course tests and study guides
- Communicated with students and aided with course content

Teaching Assistant **2012-2014***Department of English, Concordia University*

- Led weekly 45 minute seminars on English Literature from 600-1600 AD and 1660-1900AD
- Graded all student assignments and gave student feedback on essays

AWARDS AND GRANTS**Doctoral Fellowship** **2015-2019***Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, \$80,000***Graduate WACC Summer School Scholarship** **2017***German Academic Exchange Service, \$2000***Center for Media, Religion and Culture (collaborator)** **2017***Henry Luce Foundation Grant, \$500,000***Graduate Summer Research Fellowship** **2017***Department of Media Studies, \$2150***Travel Grant** **2015***United Government of Graduate Students, \$300***Graduate Scholarship** **2012-2013***Graduate School Department, Concordia University, \$7000***PUBLICATIONS**

"Democracy Versus Design: Social Media Constructions of Publics and Political Power in America"
After 2016: The Crisis in Digital Democracy. Eds. John Jones and Michael Trice. (Forthcoming)

"Liberating Labor: American Neoliberal Discourse in Digital Economies." *Canadian Review of American Studies*. (Forthcoming)

"Breaking the blackbox: Recovering female labor through circuit bending ROM chips," *Ada: A Journal of Gender, New Media, and Technology*, no. 13 (2018).

"Gaga over Google: Problematizing Democratization of Information in Capitalist Communication," *Media Development* 12, no. 3 (2017): 16-20.

"Computers, Comics and Cult Status: A Forensics of Digital Graphic Novels," *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 8, no. 3 (2014). <http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/8/3/000185/000185.html>

"Autoplay, AI & Alterity: How YouTube Discriminates through Recommendation Features," *Media, Culture & Society* (submitted).

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Conferences

“Imagining Feminist Media Through Hacking.” International Communication Association Conference, Prague, CZ, May 24-28, 2018.

“All about Algorithms: Bias and Fake News in Social Media.” Media Research and Practice 2017 Colloquium, Boulder, CO, Dec 6, 2017.

“Electrical Extensions: Applying Media Archaeology to Communication History.” International Communication Association: Communication History Division Conference, San Diego, CA, May 25-29, 2017.

“Plugging into Gender: Hidden Histories of Electric Media Outlets, Gender and Media Infrastructure.” Society for Cinema and Media Studies Annual Conference, Chicago, IL, March 22-26, 2017.

“Scanning as Global Media.” Modern Language Association Annual Convention, Austin, TX, Jan 7-10, 2016.

“To Download or Not to Download? An Examination of Academic Publishing and Knowledge Dissemination in an Internet Era.” HASTAC 2015 Conference, East Lansing, MI, May 27-30, 2015.

“Digital Paratextuality as Subversion: How New Technology Alters Traditional Processes of Textual Production and Reading.” American Comparative Literature Association Annual Conference, Seattle, WA, March 26-29, 2015.

“Anonymity and Authorship in Modern Graphic Novels.” University of British Columbia, Graduate Conference, Vancouver, BC, May 10-11, 2013.

“Computers, Comics and Cult Status.” University of Maryland, At the Mercy of the Masses: Popular Culture and Academia Graduate Conference, College Park, MD, April 12-13, 2013.

“Collaborative (de)reconstruction.” Simon Fraser University Graduate Conference, Vancouver, BC, May 21-23, 2013.

Invited Talks

“Archives as Processes of Production: Interrogating Archival Infrastructure, Labor and History” Ischool, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON, Nov 28, 2016.

“Interrogating the Standard.” Input/Output Symposium, Montreal, QC, Nov 24-25, 2016. (Plenary Speaker)

“What is Media Archaeology?” 300 Level Media Theory Course, Boulder, CO, Nov 15, 2016.

UNIVERSITY SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE

Curator **2014-2019**

Media Archaeology Lab, University of Colorado, Boulder

- Educating visiting student groups and faculty
- Collecting, re-animating, and organizing collections of media technologies
- Working with visiting researchers and artists

Assistant Developer **2017-2019**

Department of Media Studies, University of Colorado, Boulder

- Collaborating development of the digital portion of the Hypermediations project with scholar-in-residence Nathan Schneider
- Community development and editing of online content

Digital Historian and Archivist **2017**

Graduate Student Association, Department of Media Studies, University of Colorado, Boulder

- Creating digital databases for archival purposes
- Assisting the association with IT and communication support

Outside Productions Coordinator **2011**

Creative Writing and Publishing Department, Simon Fraser University

- Co-ordinated the annual department anthology and employed specialized publishing software to produce final drafts

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Summer School Participant **2017**

Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nürnberg

- Attended and contributed to a week-long workshop and summer school on communication rights in the global digital society

Summer School Participant **2016**

Residual Media Depot, TAG Lab, Concordia University

- Attended and participated in a collaborative course on media archaeology led by Dr. Darren Wershler, Dr. Stephanie Boluk, and Dr. Patrick Lemieux
- Produced hacked video games through reprogramming vintage Nintendo cartridges
- Published daily blog entries on theoretical and practical readings

HASTAC Scholar **2015-2016**

HASTAC Scholars Program

- Contributed blog posts about digital media and materialism
- Attended yearly conference

Workshop Participant **2015**

Digital Humanities Summer Institute, University of Victoria, BC

- Collected research from special archives at the University of Victoria
- Conducted research on connections between pre-digital and digital interfaces
- Completed the Pre-Digital Book Workshop

Discussion Leader and Participant**2010-2012***Lacan Salon, Simon Fraser University*

- Attended biweekly meetings to discuss and translate the works of Jacques Lacan
- Prepared presentations, seminars, and papers for group discussion

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**Editor****2013-2014***Lemon Hound Literary Journal, Concordia University*

- Composed articles on creative writing and rhetoric
- Selected and edited poetry submissions electronically

Federal Intern**2010***House of Commons, Government of Canada*

- Conducted research on ecological literature and policies
- Helped write proposed bills for the ecological preservation of BC coastlines from oil tankers

Academic Archivist**2010***City of Vancouver, BC*

- Appointed by the poet laureate, Brad Cran, for the Vancouver 125 Poetry Conference
- Conducted research through interviews, observations, and pre-reading of text with contemporary poets
- Assimilated research and interviews for the digital City Archives

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

- Society of Cinema and Media Studies
- International Communication Association
- Modern Language Association
- Association of Writers and Writing Programs
- Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- Data Collection: Qualtrics, Social Studio, Twitter Analytics, YouTube Reporting, YouTube Analytics API, Google Trends, Facebook Page Insights
- Data analysis: SPSS, Excel, Gnuplot, MatLab
- Data Visualization: GDelt, Piktochart, Canva, SPSS
- Word Processing: Office Suite, LaTeX

LANGUAGES

- English: Fluent
- French: Proficient at writing and reading

ADVANCED GRADUATE COURSES

Media Studies

- MDST 7841 – Independent Study Advanced Methods: Communication and Media History
- MDST 6071 – Critical Theories of Media and Culture
- MDST 6301 – Communication, Media and Concepts of the Public
- MDST 6711 – Media and Popular Culture
- MDST 7011 – Proseminar in Media and Communication Theory 1
- MDST 7021 – Proseminar in Media and Communication Theory 2

Media, Communications and Information Studies

- CMCI 6051 – Theories of Mass Communication
- CMCI 7051 – Qualitative Research Methods in Media
- CMCI 7061 – Quantitative Research Methods in Media

External Courses

- SMTC 7000 – Media Archaeology (Transfer Credit – Concordia University)
- ENGL 5529 – Doing Digital Humanities
- ENGL 5849 – Independent Study Advanced Methods: Digital Humanities, Algorithmic Culture, and Infrastructure Studies
- ANTH 7000 – Ethnographic Theory
- WRTG 5050 – Writing and Rhetoric: Teaching Pedagogies

*did not receive degree from institution and credit was transferred