



# The Critical Life of Information

Friday, April 11, 2014

An interdisciplinary workshop that will consider questions of scale posed by the rise of Big Data as a cultural and political force. The workshop will address how new notions of information as property, and its harvesting from people in contexts ranging from shopping to health care to social media, condition humanistic inquiry and its concepts of the individual and the collective.

William L. Harkness Hall, Room 309 | 100 Wall Street  
[wgss.yale.edu/bigdata](http://wgss.yale.edu/bigdata)

## The Critical Life of Information: Program of Events

### Panel I: Big Data and the Law

10:00 am - 12:00 pm

### Panel II and Lunch: Visual and Quantitative Analytics

12:00 - 2:00 pm

### Panel III: Big Data and the Arts

2:00 - 4:00 pm

### Coffee Break

4:00 - 4:15 pm

### Panel IV: Big Data and Governance

4:15 - 6:15 pm

### Reception

6:15 - 7:00 pm

10:00 am - 12:00 pm

### Panel I: Big Data and the Law

---

Margot Kaminski, Yale Law School

*Framing Big Data in the United States: A Legal Overview*

With an eye towards interdisciplinary conversation, this presentation will discuss the ways in which the legal community in the United States struggles with defining both the harms and the benefits of Big Data. This presentation will try to give the audience a taste of how the law, particularly US law, approaches big data issues. It will summarize some basic regulatory principles, will outline current legal regulation of big data in the United States, and will outline recent and pending proposals for reform. It will provide an overview of the FTC's 2012 report, and explain how the Snowden leaks have revived the conversation in the United States. And it will use a few concrete recent examples to show why other features of the U.S. legal system—such as the First Amendment—may make attempts at big data regulation in the U.S. different from abroad.

Malavika Jayaram, Harvard Berkman Center

*Performing Welfare Through Identity Theatre: A Tale of Big Data, Biometrics and Bias*

Big Data doesn't get much bigger than India's identity project. The world's largest bio-metric database—currently consisting of almost 600 million enrolled—exemplifies several strands of the discourse about data and scale. A narrative of granularity, accuracy and efficiency is extended through a techno-utopian vision of targeted delivery of welfare. In a frictionless world without corruption, subversion, contestation or negotiation, the dark side of data and development is subsumed by the promise of inclusion, identity and legitimacy. Ignoring the fact that the most marginalized sections of a population are disproportionately impacted due to a gaping digital divide and the embedded biases within technologies of surveillance, the project functions as identity theatre, privileging the voices of certain actors and particular practices, while diminishing others. Doing so in a legal vacuum, without parliamentary approval or statutory sanctity, in a country that lacks a horizontal data protection framework, complicates the power imbalances further.

In this session, Malavika will outline the schema of this ambitious project, and locate it in a global frame. Far from being a hyperlocal project without cross-border implications, the scheme portends the growth of India as a biometrics hub, assisting other countries with their national ID programs, and exporting technologies of control once they have been tested on a massive population that has little agency and limited ability to withhold consent. By offering a perspective that is somewhat different from the predominantly western focus of privacy, she hopes to generate a more inclusive discourse about the social impact of Big Data projects.

#### Respondents:

- Laura Wexler, Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies and American Studies, Yale University
- Caleb Smith, English, Yale University
- Fred Ritchin, NYU Tisch School of the Arts

12:00 - 2:00 pm

## Panel II and Lunch: Visual and Quantitative Analytics

---

Peter Leonard, Yale University, Digital Humanities

*Macroscopic Perspective: Data Visualization in Humanities Research Projects*

Elena Grewal, Senior Data Scientist, Airbnb

*Experimentation in the World of Big Data: Common Pitfalls and Best Practice*

Group Discussion

2:00 - 4:00 pm

## Panel III: Big Data and the Arts

---

Kenneth Goldsmith, University of Pennsylvania

*The Cultural Artifact in the Digital Age*

In 1969 the conceptual artist Douglas Huebler wrote, “The world is full of objects, more or less interesting; I do not wish to add any more.” I’ve come to embrace Huebler’s idea, though it might be retooled as: “The world is full of texts, more or less interesting; I do not wish to add any more.” It seems an appropriate response to a new condition in writing: With an unprecedented amount of available text, our problem is not needing to write more of it; instead, we must learn to negotiate the vast quantity that exists. How I make my way through this thicket of information—how I manage it, parse it, organize and distribute it—is what distinguishes my writing from yours. This attitude belies a new relationship toward the cultural object, both as producers and consumers (though the lines between who is a producer and who is a consumer are becoming increasingly blurred). At a time when everything is available, the best information manager, the best filterer, the best sorter becomes the most powerful arbiter of culture. In a time of abundance, where the more of something there is the more powerful it is, the art world’s model of scarcity is becoming increasingly irrelevant. Sometimes I feel that the average office worker in a cubicle understands contemporary art better than people in the art world do. Democratic and distributive cultural models (social networking, file-sharing) create the most powerful cultural modes. In the age of big data, content – that which we once thought to be the primary focus of the cultural artifact – has taken a back seat to a host of mechanisms surrounding the artifact. In a sense, the apparatuses – vis-à-vis Flusser – that propel the digital artifact into existence have become its primary content. This explosion of cultural artifacts have shifted the focus from production to management, turning many of us into unwitting archivists, hence the rise of archiving studies and more broadly, digital humanities. Archiving and collecting has become a new kind of folk art, something that is widely practiced and has unconsciously become integrated into a great many people’s lives. I think it’s fair to say that many of us today spend as much time organizing our vast collections of media as we do actually interacting with them. We have more music on our hard drives than we’ll ever be able to listen to – and yet we keep getting more. We spend as much time acquiring, cataloging and archiving our artifacts these days as we do actually engaging with them, suggesting to me that the ways in which culture is distributed and archived has become profoundly more intriguing than the cultural artifact itself. What we’ve

experienced is an inversion of consumption, one in which we’ve come to engage in a more profound way with the acts of acquisition over that which we are acquiring; we’ve come to prefer the bottles to the wine.

Sumanth Gopinath, University of Minnesota and Jason Stanyek, University of Oxford

*The BPMs of Capital: Nike+, Big Sonic Data, and the Sensorization of the ‘Human Race’*

This talk stems from a collaborative book project tentatively titled Nike + Music: The Specters of Corporate Sonic Futures. The project treats the Nike Corporation as a wealthy and ambitious agent for musical curation and sponsorship and examines its recent projects (both advertisements and commodities) that undertake various mappings of musical data and developments of new musical technologies. Following a brief overview of some of the more familiar entanglements of music with (big) data (including recommendation engines, audio fingerprinting, the Music Genome Project, music information retrieval, and more), the talk will discuss examples from Nike, including considerations of its Original Run series of commissioned albums, its project with the Japanese breakbeat duo Hifana, and, most importantly, its sonico-musical work with the Nike+ Sport Kit, developed in tandem with Apple. We argue that Nike’s projects are especially novel and extreme in their work with cross-domain data mapping and manipulation and that they betray a preoccupation with sensorization, involving transformations of sensory information in ways that both amplify and transfigure the scope and power of the ever-growing process of datafication.

Respondents:

- David Joselit, The Graduate Center, CUNY
- Francesco Casetti, Film Studies, Yale University
- Natalia Cecire, English, Yale University

4:00 - 4:15 pm

Coffee Break

---

4:15 - 6:15 pm

## Panel IV: Big Data and Governance

---

Nishant Shah, Centre for Internet and Society, Bangalore

*Writing the Subject: Intellectual Property, Big Data and the New Subject of Governance*

If we take the shift from being information societies to becoming data societies seriously, we need to understand that the subject of governance that we have taken for granted, will have to be revisited and rewritten. Looking at three case-studies historical and contemporary, around the writing of this subject of governance, and locating the crisis on the debates around intellectual property and big data, this talk looks at the normative construction of a data subject and the need to identify new data subjectivities which are often in a condition of illegibility or illegality.

## Kath Weston, Anthropology, University of Virginia

### *Old MacDonald Had a Database: Lessons from America's National Animal Identification System*

Many of today's hotly debated surveillance technologies made their debut in applications with animals. In the United States, the National Animal Identification System is a voluntary state-sponsored Big Data scheme that proposes to render each animal destined for the dinner table capable of being tracked and traced, in whole or in part, throughout its material existence, in the name of protecting public health and facilitating international trade. The NAIS represents a historical shift away from prevention and inspection of food production facilities, toward an investment in traceback operations that attempt to secure the nation's food supply by securing the animal body. Under the scheme, each pig, sheep, and cow receives a "unique individual identifier" sutured to its body using a range of surveillance devices and mapped onto a premises registry. This paper examines what is at stake in the sociocultural struggles that have ensued in the wake of implementation of the NAIS: struggles over animal citizenship, bio-intimacy, techno-intimacy, and the meaning of protection.

Respondents:

- Inderpal Grewal, Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Yale University
- Aradhana Sharma, Anthropology, Wesleyan University
- Rebecca Wexler, Yale Law School

---

**Francesco Casetti** received a MA at the Catholic University of Milan, where in 1974 he also received an "advanced degree" in Film and Communication Studies. Assistant Professor at the University of Genova (1974-1980), Associate Professor at Catholic University of Milan (1984-1994), Full Professor at the University of Trieste (1994-1998) and then at Catholic University of Milan, where he served also as the Chair of the Department in Communication and Performing Arts. He taught as "Professeur associé" at Université de Paris III - la Sorbonne Nouvelle (1977) and as visiting professor at the University of Iowa (1988, 1991 and 1998), at the University of California - Berkeley (2000) and then at Yale. He has largely written on semiotics of film and television, about genres, intertextuality, and enunciation. After an expansive study on the implied spectator in film (*Inside the Gaze*, Indiana, 1999, or. 1986) and in television (*Tra me e te*, 1988), he combined in an original way close analyses of media texts and ethnographic researches of actual audiences (*L'ospite fisso*, 1995), defining the notion of "communicative negotiations" (*Communicative Negotiation in Cinema and Television*, 2002). He has also written extensively on film theories (*Theories of Cinema. 1945-1995*, Texas, 1999, or. 1993). More recently he explored the role of cinema in the context of modernity (*Eye of the Century. Film, Experience, Modernity*, Columbia, 2008, or. 2005). He is currently studying the reconfiguration of cinema in a post-medium epoch, comparing this shift with the rise of cinema at the beginning of XX Century.

**Natalia Cecire** studies economies of knowledge in American literature and culture from the nineteenth century to the present. Topics of particular interest include history of science, gender, childhood, media studies, and digital humanities. Her current book project, "Experimental: American Literature and the Aesthetics of Knowledge, 1880-1950," argues that we must understand the concept of "experiment"—taken from the sciences—historically in order to speak rigorously about what makes literature exper-

imental. Examining the places where notions of experiment are most under stress, she reads works by Stephen Crane, Gertrude Stein, Marianne Moore, and William Carlos Williams in relation to epistemological limina like popular science (e.g. the overwhelmingly female Audubon Societies), the natural history museum, and "scientific" public spectacles like the magic lantern show, in addition to the biological and social sciences. Literary experimentalism, she argues, is not a hermetic formalism, but rather a historically specific aesthetics of knowledge that thrives best where the boundaries of epistemic authority are contested, often by the performance of gender, sexuality, race, and "popular" modes.

**Kenneth Goldsmith's** writing has been called "some of the most exhaustive and beautiful collage work yet produced in poetry" by Publishers Weekly. Goldsmith is the author of eleven books of poetry, founding editor of the online archive UbuWeb (ubu.com), and the editor of "I'll Be Your Mirror: The Selected Andy Warhol Interviews," which was the basis for an opera, "Trans-Warhol," that premiered in Geneva in March of 2007. An hour-long documentary on his work, "Sucking on Words" was first shown at the British Library in 2007. He teaches writing at The University of Pennsylvania, where he is a senior editor of PennSound, an online poetry archive. He held The Anschutz Distinguished Fellow Professorship in American Studies at Princeton University for 2009-10 and received the Quartz Electronic Music Award in Paris in 2009. In May 2011, he was invited to read at President Obama's "A Celebration of American Poetry" at The White House, where he also held a poetry workshop with First Lady Michelle Obama. In 2011, he co-edited, "Against Expression: An Anthology of Conceptual Writing" and published a book of essays, "Uncreative Writing: Managing Language in the Digital Age," which won the 2011 Association for the Study of the Arts of the Present Book Award. Goldsmith participated in dOCUMENTA(13) in Kassel, Germany (2012). dOCUMENTA(13) published his "Letter To Bettina Funcke" as part of their "100 Notes - 100 Thoughts" book series. In 2013, he was named as the inaugural Poet Laureate of The Museum of Modern Art in New York.

**Sumanth Gopinath** is Associate Professor of Music Theory. He is the author of *The Ringtone Dialectic: Economy and Cultural Form* (MIT Press, 2013) and co-editor, with Jason Stanyek, of *The Oxford Handbook of Mobile Music Studies* (Oxford UP, 2014). His writings on Steve Reich, musical minimalism, Marxism and music scholarship, the Nike+ Sport Kit, the ringtone industry, Bob Dylan, and Benjamin Britten have appeared in various scholarly journals and edited collections. He is working on a book project on musical minimalism and is conducting research on sound in new and formerly new media, Bob Dylan's musicianship, the aesthetics of smoothness, and the music of the Scottish composer James Dillon.

**Elena Grewal** is a Senior Data Scientist at Airbnb, an online community connecting people with a space available with guests who need a place to stay, a part of the newly titled "sharing economy". She leads a team of data scientists responsible for the user online and offline experience, using data to understand and optimize all parts of Airbnb's complex ecosystem, and to identify opportunities for improving the product. She regularly communicates findings across the company to key stakeholders and also has helped structure Airbnb's data warehouse and access. Prior to Airbnb, Elena completed a doctorate in Education at Stanford University School of Education where she built predictive models of friendships in schools and modeled the impact of friendships on educational outcomes. She received a B.A. from Yale College in Ethics, Politics, and Economics.

**Inderpal Grewal** is Chair and Professor of the Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies Program, a Faculty in the South Asia Council, Ethnicity, Race and Migration Studies Program, and Affiliate Faculty in American Studies and Anthropology at Yale University. She is author of *Home and Harem: Nation, Gender, Empire and Cultures*

of Travel (Duke, 1996), and *Transnational America: Feminisms, Diasporas, Neoliberalisms* (Duke, 2005). She is co-editor (with Caren Kaplan) of *Scattered Hegemonies: Postmodernity and Transnational Feminist Practices* (University of Minnesota Press, 1995), and *Introduction to Women's Studies: Gender in a Transnational World* (McGraw Hill, 2001, 2005). With Victoria Bernal, she has edited *Theorizing NGOs: States, Feminisms, and Neoliberalisms* (Duke University Press, 2014). Her areas of research include feminist postcolonial theory, cultural studies of South Asia and its diasporas, and contemporary global feminist movements. She also writes Opinion Blogs for Huffington Post, and was one of the founders of Narika, a Berkeley, California, based non-profit working to end family violence in the South Asian community.

**Malavika Jayaram** is a Fellow at the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University, focusing on privacy, identity and free expression. She is also a Fellow at the Centre for Internet and Society, Bangalore, and the author of the India chapter for the Data Protection & Privacy volume in the Getting the Deal Done series. Malavika is one of 10 Indian lawyers in The International Who's Who of Internet e-Commerce & Data Protection Lawyers directory. In August 2013, she was voted one of India's leading lawyers - one of only 8 women to be featured in the "40 under 45" survey conducted by Law Business Research, London. In a different life, she spent 8 years in London, practicing law with global firm Allen & Overy in the Communications, Media & Technology group, and as VP and Technology Counsel at Citigroup. During 2012-2013, she was a Visiting Scholar at the Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania. She is working on a PhD about the development of a privacy jurisprudence and discourse in India, viewed partly through the lens of the Indian biometric ID project.

**David Joselit's** art-historical work has approached the history and theory of image circulation in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries from a variety of perspectives, spanning Marcel Duchamp's strategy of the readymade, in which commodities are reframed as artworks, to the mid-twentieth ecology of television, video art, and media activism, and the current conditions of contemporary art under dual pressures of globalization and digitization. Working as a curator at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, during the 1980s, Joselit co-organized several exhibitions that helped to define the art of that decade, including *Endgame: Reference and Simulation in Recent Painting and Sculpture* (1986). He taught in the Department of Art History and Ph.D. Program in Visual Studies at University of California-Irvine from 1995 to 2003, and at Yale University from 2003 to 2013, where he served as Department Chair from 2006 to 2009. Joselit's art criticism has spanned all visual media and recently has engaged extensively with contemporary painting. He is author of *Infinite Regress: Marcel Duchamp 1910-1941* (MIT Press, 1998), *American Art Since 1945* (Thames and Hudson, World of Art Series, 2003), *Feedback: Television Against Democracy* (MIT Press, 2007), and *After Art* (Princeton University Press, 2012), and he is a contributing author to the second edition of *Art Since 1900* (Thames and Hudson, 2011). He is an editor of the journal *OCTOBER* and a frequent contributor to *Artforum*.

**Margot E. Kaminski** is a Research Scholar in Law, Executive Director of the Information Society Project, and Lecturer in Law at Yale Law School. She is a graduate of Harvard University and Yale Law School and a former fellow of the Information Society Project. While at Yale Law School, she was a Knight Law and Media Scholar and co-founder of the Media Freedom and Information Access Practicum. Following graduation from Yale Law School, she clerked for The Honorable Andrew J. Kleinfeld of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. She has been a Radcliffe Research Fellow at Harvard and a Google Policy Fellow at the Electronic Frontier Foundation. Her research and advocacy work focuses on media freedom, online civil liberties, data

mining, and surveillance issues. She has written widely on law and technology issues for law journals and the popular press and has drawn public attention to the civil liberties issues surrounding the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement.

**Peter Leonard** is Librarian for Digital Humanities Research at Yale University Library, where he helps scholars answer humanistic questions with digital methods. Prior to coming to Yale, he was responsible for Humanities Research Computing at the University of Chicago. During 2011 he served as a UCLA post-doctoral researcher on a Google Digital Humanities Grant, where he worked on text-mining literature in the Google Books corpus. He received his doctorate in literature in 2011, and has published in the fields of both multi-ethnic European literature and the digital humanities.

**Fred Ritchin** is professor of Photography & Imaging at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, and co-director of the NYU Photography and Human Rights Program. He is author of three books on the future of imaging: *In Our Own Image: The Coming Revolution in Photography* (Aperture, 1990, 1999, 2010), *After Photography* (W. W. Norton, 2008), and *Bending the Frame: Photojournalism, Documentary, and the Citizen* (Aperture, 2013). He is also former picture editor of the New York Times Magazine. The website that he created with photographer Gilles Peress, "Bosnia: Uncertain Paths to Peace," was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in public service by the New York Times. His current research is on the photography of peace.

**Nishant Shah** is the co-founder and Director-Research at the Centre for Internet and Society, Bangalore, India. He is an International Tandem Partner at the Centre for Digital Cultures, Leuphana University, Germany and a Knowledge Partner with the Hivos Knowledge Programme, The Netherlands. In these varied roles, he has been committed to producing infrastructure, frameworks and collaborations in the global south to understand and analyse the ways in which emergence and growth of digital technologies have shaped the contemporary social, political and cultural milieu. He is the editor for a series of monographs on 'Histories of Internet(s) in India' that looks at the complicated relationship that technologies have with questions of gender, sexuality, body, city, governance, archiving and gaming in a country like India. He is also the principle researcher for a research programme that produced the four-volume anthology *Digital AlterNatives With a Cause?* that examines the ways in which young people's relationship with digital technologies produces changes in their immediate environments. Nishant works and writes on a range of issues at the intersection of digital cultural practices, legal and regulation frameworks, and critical Humanities studies to look at questions of materiality, identities, subjectivities, political action and pedagogy as constructed in wake of emerging and ubiquitous digital and computing technologies.

**Aradhana Sharma** received her B.A. from The New School for Social Research in Economics and Politics and Feminist Studies in 1991, a masters degree from the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University in 1993, and finally a Ph.D. in Socio-Cultural Anthropology from Stanford University in 2001. Her broad intellectual project can be defined as an anthropological study of the global projects of neoliberal development and governance: how they articulate with different social worlds, how they transform specific places and are in-turn transformed, and what kinds of subjects, institutions, social relationships and popular struggles they facilitate. She specifically focuses on empowerment as a globally dominant strategy of development and democratic governance and examine its effects on citizen and state identities and relationships in contemporary India. While her previous research approached the politics of empowerment through a government-cum-feminist initiated women's development program in rural north India, she is currently studying empowerment mobilizations and citizen-activist-state interfaces in New Delhi in the context of the Indian Right to

Information Act (2005). Her broad regional interest lies in South Asia and her theoretical emphasis is defined by a number of interdisciplinary influences, including political economy, critical development studies, cultural analyses of the state and neoliberal governance, feminist studies, transnationalism, postcolonial studies, and social movement theory.

**Caleb Smith** is professor of English and American Studies at Yale University and the author of *The Oracle and the Curse* (2013) and *The Prison and the American Imagination* (2009). He is working on an edition of "The Life and Adventures of a Haunted Convict," an 1858 narrative by Austin Reed, an African American inmate of New York's Auburn State Prison, which will be published by Random House in 2016. His writing on contemporary media and the arts appears in *Bomb*, *The Los Angeles Review of Books*, *Paper Monument*, *Yale Review*, and *Avidly*.

**Jason Stanyek** teaches at the University of Oxford where he is Associate Professor of Ethnomusicology and Tutorial Fellow at St. John's College. Before arriving to Oxford he was Assistant Professor at New York University, Visiting Associate Professor at Harvard University, and External Faculty Fellow at the Stanford Humanities Center. He has published on subjects ranging from Brazilian hip hop to Pan-African jazz, from the Nike+ Sport Kit to posthumous duets, from samba in Rio de Janeiro to the performance of choro in diasporic Brazilian communities. The two-volume *Oxford Handbook of Mobile Music Studies* (co-edited with Sumanth Gopinath) was published in early 2014 and his ethnographic monograph on music and dance in the Brazilian diaspora and a co-edited volume (with Frederick Moehn) on the history of bossa nova in the U.S. will be published in 2015. "Deadness: Technologies of the Intermundane"—co-written with Benjamin Piekut and published in TDR—was given the Association of Theater in Higher Education's Outstanding Article Award in 2011 and was also named by MIT Press as one of the 50 most influential articles published across all of its journals over the past 50 years. From 2013-2018 he will serve as Reviews Editor of the journal *Twentieth Century Music*.

**Kath Weston** is Professor of Anthropology and Women, Gender, and Sexuality at the University of Virginia. She has held visiting professorships at Cambridge University, Tokyo University, Harvard University, and Olin College. Her publications include *Traveling Light: On the Road with America's Poor*, *Families We Choose: Lesbians, Gays, Kinship*, *Long Slow Burn: Sexuality and Social Science*, *Gender in Real Time*, "Biosecuritization", and "Political Ecologies of the Precarious." She teaches courses on topics such as Disaster; Capitalism: Cultural Perspectives; Anthropologies of Technoscience; Gender and Environmental Justice; and Body Politics and the Body Politic. She is currently working on two book projects: *The Intimacy of Resources: Making Visceral Sense of Living in a High-Tech Ecologically Damaged World* (Duke, forthcoming) and *The Magic of Capital: A Cultural Critique of Circulation and Generation in Finance*.

**Laura Wexler** is Professor of American Studies and of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Yale University. She is also the founder and director of The Photographic Memory Workshop at Yale. She holds an affiliation with the Film Studies Program, the Program in Ethnicity, Race and Migration, and the Public Humanities Program. She chaired the Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies Program from 2003-2007, and co-chaired the Yale Women's Faculty Forum from 2008-2011. She is a Fellow of the Center for the Critical Analysis of Social Difference at Columbia University, and a former Fellow of the Whitney Humanities Center of Yale University. From 2007 to 2010 she was a Principal Investigator of the Women, Religion and

Globalization Project, supported by a grant from the Henry R. Luce Foundation as well as a grant from the William and Betty MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies at Yale. From 2011 through the present, she has been the Principal Investigator of The Photogrammar Project, constructing a mobile, interactive geospatial digital map of the more than 170,000 photographs in the Farm Security Administration - Office of War Information Archive held at the Library of Congress. Photogrammar is supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. She is a member of FemTechNet, and of the Steering Committee for the Distributive Open Collaborative Course (DOCC) initiative. Laura Wexler's scholarship centers upon intersections of race, gender, sexuality and class within the visual culture of the United States, from the nineteenth century to the present. Her book, *Tender Violence: Domestic Visions in an Age of U.S. Imperialism*, won the Joan Kelley Memorial Prize of the American Historical Association for the best book in women's history and/or feminist theory. She is co-author, with Sandra Matthews, of *Pregnant Pictures*, and co-editor, with Laura Frost, Amy Hungerford and John MacKay, of *Interpretation and the Holocaust*. Her most recent publication is "A More Perfect Likeness; Frederick Douglass, Photography and the Image of the Nation." Currently she is working on family photograph albums in post-conflict societies.

**Rebecca Wexler** is an independent documentary filmmaker and co-founder of the ISP Yale Visual Law Project, which applies filmmaking as an analytic form of knowledge production in the law. She is co-directing a program at Yale Law School to produce video products with professional production value while disturbing the methodological boundaries of textual scholarship. Her research interests also include the impact of network technologies on moral, ethical, and spiritual questions of human behavior at a collective level, with a particular focus on hackers. She holds an M.Phil in the history and philosophy of science from Cambridge University (2006, Rausing Dissertation Prize) where she studied visual culture in science on a Gates-Cambridge fellowship. She holds a B.A. from Harvard College (2005). She has worked with filmmakers Alex Gibney (producer of *Taxi to the Dark Side*, and *Enron*), Richard Leacock (producer of *Primary*, and *Crisis*), Ross McElwee (producer of *Sherman's March*), Helen Whitney (producer of *Faith and Doubt at Ground Zero*), Michael Epstein (producer of *Combat Diary*), and Robb Moss (producer of *Secrecy*). She has worked on documentaries distributed by PBS/American Experience (*Grand Central*), HBO (*Taxi to the Dark Side*), VH1 (*Sex! The Revolution*), and Verve (*Rock Docs*), and has produced, directed, filmed, and edited documentaries distributed by the Yale University Art Gallery, La Maison Européenne de la Photographie, the Long Wharf Theatre, and the Provincetown International Film Festival. She is currently completing work as Associate Producer on a four-hour North American broadcast PBS documentary about Forgiveness directed by Helen Whitney, and Directing/Producing/Editing a documentary for the Yale Art Gallery about the D'mba masked dance performance from Guinea, West Africa.

**Sponsored by:**

**Edward J. and Dorothy Kempf Memorial Fund  
The Photographic Memory Workshop at Yale  
Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies  
South Asian Studies Council  
Yale University Library**