SCHOLARS PROGRAM IN CULTURE & COMMUNICATION
The Annenberg School for Communication
University of Pennsylvania
3620 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104

A SYMPOSIUM
ANNENBERG SCHOOL FOR COMMUNICATION
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

CONTEXT COLLAPSE: REASSEMBLING THE SPATIAL

PRESENTED BY THE SCHOLARS PROGRAM
IN CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION

DECEMBER 6, 2013

Annenberg
SCHOOL FOR COMMUNICATION
UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

CONTEXT COLLAPSE: REASSEMBLING THE SPATIAL

Context collapse describes repeated shocks to settled notions of time and space that flow from changes in technologies of travel and communication. It is manifest in recalibrations of social distance, the emergence of unanticipated forms of power and vulnerability, and altered moral geographies. Though context collapse does not begin with digitization, its effects prod us to engage the spatial turn in new and challenging ways. Where is agency in rapidly shifting spatial contexts? What is at stake in new capacities for surveillance of disparate terrains? What consequences flow from the dematerialized spatial? What are the implications of thinking through space as assemblage, as mediator, as flow, as world substratum, as topologically folded and scaled, as networks of actants and intensities, as heterogeneous imaginaries? How does context collapse unsettle familiar frames of reference and habits of investigation?

Spaces of occupation and refuge, spaces of mediation and resistance, dematerialized and distributed spaces, spaces that are legible or opaque, non-spaces, composite, interrupted and ephemeral spaces, persisting and haunted spaces, spaces of production and representation, spaces of distant suffering, spaces that are repurposed and spaces that are wholly invented, spaces that shatter and are reconstituted: these and others will be open to consideration.

Directed by Carolyn Marvin, Frances Yates Professor of Communication

Hosted by Barbie Zelizer, Director of the Scholars Program in Culture and Communication

Speakers

MARK BOWDEN
University of Delaware

MARGARET KOHN
University of Toronto

CHRISTIAN LICOPPE
Télécom Paris Tech

JEREMY NÉMETH
University of Colorado, Denver

LISA PARKS
University of California, Santa Barbara

DAVID POST
Temple University

BABAK RAHIMI
University of California, San Diego

VIT SISLER
Charles University in Prague

ADRIANA DE SOUZA E SILVA
North Carolina State University

JOSEPH TUROW
University of Pennsylvania

RICHARD WITTMAN
University of California, Santa Barbara

Student Committee

SUN-HA HONG

EMILY LADUE

CORRINA LAUGHLIN

YOEL ROTH

AARON SHAPIRO

Program

8:30 A.M. – 9:40 A.M. ..... **COFFEE AND BREAKFAST**

9:00 A.M. – 9:30 A.M. ..... **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**
Michael X. Delli Carpini, *Walter H. Annenberg Dean*
Barbie Zelizer, *Director of the Scholars Program*
Carolyn Marvin, *Frances Yates Professor of Communication*

9:30 A.M. – 11:00 A.M. ..... **LEGIBILITY TAKES COMMAND: COERCION AND RESISTANCE**
Jeremy Németh
Babak Rahimi
Vit Sisler
DOCTORAL STUDENT MODERATOR: Emily LaDue

11:00 A.M. – 11:15 A.M. ..... **REFRESHMENTS**

11:15 A.M. – 12:45 P.M. ..... **PREDICAMENTS OF PROPER DISTANCE**
Richard Wittman
Margaret Kohn
Mark Bowden
DOCTORAL STUDENT MODERATOR: Corrina Laughlin

12:45 P.M. – 1:45 P.M. ..... **LUNCH**

1:45 P.M. – 3:15 P.M. ..... **HABITUS IN DIGITALIZED SPACES**
Christian Licoppe
Adriana de Souza e Silva
Joseph Turow
DOCTORAL STUDENT MODERATOR: Yoel Roth

3:15 P.M. – 3:30 P.M. ..... **REFRESHMENTS**

3:30 P.M. – 5:00 P.M. ..... **DISRUPTIVE SPATIAL IMAGINARIES**
Lisa Parks
David Post
DOCTORAL STUDENT MODERATOR: Aaron Shapiro

5:00 P.M. – 5:15 P.M. ..... **CONCLUSION**
Carolyn Marvin,
Frances Yates Professor of Communication

5:15 P.M. – 7:00 P.M. ..... **RECEPTION**

THE SCHOLARS PROGRAM IN CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION showcases the critical role culture and communication play in shaping public life. The program promotes dialogue among academics with interests that range from human rights to the geography of public places. Researchers from throughout the world visit Annenberg to give public lectures. Two scholars-in-residence visit Annenberg in the fall and spring terms offering lectures, colloquia, and classes. Summer immersion programs overseas allow students to grapple with important scholarly questions through fascinating case studies. Such forums give students and faculty the chance to examine the critical and social issues that lie at the intersection of culture and communication in a collaborative environment not readily available at most institutions.

Professor Barbie Zelizer holds the Raymond Williams Chair of Communication and is the Director of the Annenberg Scholars Program in Culture and Communication. Emily Plowman is the Program Coordinator for the Scholars Program. Please direct questions or comments regarding the program to eplowman@asc.upenn.edu.

Abstracts

MARK BOWDEN
HOW TO THINK ABOUT DRONES

Pilots who fly drones for the US military and CIA find that their killing strikes are especially intimate and disturbing, far more so than in traditional air attacks. Advanced optics and long surveillance times greatly increase the accuracy of their missiles, but also put them much closer to the death and destruction they cause. At the same time, they arouse feelings of profound disassociation. Some pilots wrestle with a lingering sense of unfairness, given that they themselves are in no danger when they attack. This emotional response suggests that when technology creates such an overwhelming advantage it can, by its seemingly inhuman nature, provoke even more horror than conventional war, and can provoke an outsized backlash in targeted areas that military strategists and government decision-makers ought to make part of their calculations.

MARGARET KOHN
ON THE URBAN QUESTION: DISPLACEMENT AND THE RIGHT TO THE CITY

One of the key methodological principles of spatial analysis is attention to the concrete, material and everyday life. The starting point of this paper is a particular case of "context collapse": the destruction of public housing projects in the United States funded by the Hope VI program. This program provided federal funds for the demolition of more than one hundred thousand severely distressed public housing units and promoted mixed income communities and rent subsidies as alternatives. Together with market driven gentrification these programs have displaced inner city residents from central cities. This paper examines the strengths and limitations of Henri Lefebvre's "right to the city" as a way of understanding the harm of dispossession and the possibilities of resistance. Does a right to housing or occupancy help secure the right to the city or does it undermine this goal by reinforcing an individualistic ethos? In order to answer this question, I focus on Judith Butler and Henri Lefebvre, two theorists who thoughtfully explore their ambivalence to the language of liberal rights.

CHRISTIAN LICOPPE
LOCATION AWARE SOCIAL NETWORKS AND THE RESHAPING OF THE CITY AS A "PLACE FOR STRANGERS": THE USES OF FOURSQUARE AND GRINDR IN PARIS

The recent emergence of mobile technologies, and particularly location-based mobile social networks, or LSMNs, provides specific possibilities for strangers to meet and reshape the experience of proximity. Urban public places must be thought of as "hybrid ecologies", where social interaction interweaves the physical environment as experienced through the 'unaugmented' body and the digital, screen-based environment. If places are understood as sites where we are "thrown together" and as performative encounters that unfold "there", what new public ecologies may emerge? Under what conditions do encounters between strangers spill into what were previously considered private places such as homes, unsettling familiar urban boundaries between public and private? We will discuss these shifts with respect to an ongoing empirical study of Grindr, a proximity-sensitive mobile app used mostly in gay male urban communities for fleeting sexual encounters.

JEREMY NÉMETH
SECURING THE SITES OF POLITICAL DEMONSTRATION

Recent events illustrate the importance of flexible, visible and open public spaces for political action and the expression of dissent. From Zuccotti Park to Taksim Square, public spaces play a pivotal role in modern democratic political discourse. Yet in the name of public safety powerful state and private sector actors have introduced anti-terror security landscapes that control behavior, limit access and monitor passersby. These landscapes control more than suspected terrorists. They also threaten urban vitality; disorient those who live, work and play there; and, crucially, threaten the viability of public spaces to function as democratic platforms. We analyze the sites of several recent major political demonstrations across the U.S. to determine what makes a space "good for democracy," focusing especially on how security measures influenced the nature, scale, duration, and fate of the demonstrations.

LISA PARKS
TARGETED HOMELANDS: NETWORKED VISIONS OF THE US DRONE WAR IN PAKISTAN

This essay begins with a contextual discussion of the US drone war in Pakistan, highlighting its endorsements from mainstream media, logistical challenges, legal controversies and casualty counts. I then move to a discussion of several examples of "drone media" – including drone attack scene photos, aerial assault videos, and protest media that have circulated on the Internet. Drawing on the work of Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri, Tiziana Terranova and others, I argue that these media: 1) draw attention to a vertical field of biopower—a ground to air domain of life, labor, histories, technologies, and mediation—that is increasingly integrated within the flows of network culture, 2) expose the logics of speculation and uncertainty that underpin drone warfare, and 3) make legible a new class of the disenfranchised which I refer to as "the targeted"— people who are the intentional or incidental victims of aerial violence.

DAVID POST
STATE, SPACE, AND CYBERSPACE

I will discuss the continuing unsolved challenges of mapping the "legal world" - the world of rules and regulations and norms and sanctions which together serve to constrain and channel our behavior and actions, a world in which the "spatial" plays a *most* fundamental role – onto interactions and transactions taking place on the largely space- and location-independent global network. To meet this challenge, "reassembling the spatial" is the precise opposite of where we should be heading - at least if "reassembling the spatial" is taken to mean propping up our aging system of allocating global legal power and authority geographically, *i.e.*, using space and location and distance as primary determinants of (and constraints on) the use of that power. Such efforts, I will argue, when applied to interactions and transactions across the Net, produce a system that is neither workable nor, more importantly, in accordance with the Rule of Law.

BABAK RAHIMI
BETWEEN DIGITAL ACTIVISM AND MATERIAL SPACE: INTERNET ACTIVISM IN THE IRANIAN 2009 POST-ELECTION UPRISING

Following the 2009 election, Iranian protesters deployed social media to challenge power in the material spaces of everyday life. Using that event as a case study, this paper conceptualizes digital activism as a creative interruption of lived space that unsettles familiar offline spatial frames. *Camouflaged* practices mobilize contentious performances to re-inscribe streets, squares and subways as spaces of protestation. The circulation of unofficial discourses and rumors of demonstrations works partly by reconfiguring the banality of urban routine. In this way online activists re-set the future. *Haunted* practices infuse material presence with digital commemoration. Disseminated on social media, a July, 2009, video of the death of Neda Agha Sultan transformed a street corner in central Tehran into a haunted place of remembrance. These and other blurrings of material and mediated spatialities connect urban space, dissent and digital memory in unexpected ways that generate new understandings of agency, resistance and public space.

VIT SISLER
REVOLUTION RELOADED: SPACES OF ENCOUNTER AND RESISTANCE IN IRANIAN VIDEO GAMES

The lecture analyzes the virtual spaces of Iranian video games and links them to the places of their production. In 2006, the Iranian government established the National Foundation of Computer Games in order to subsidize domestic game development. Since then the Iranian digital environment is subject to tensions within the state as well as between the state and the private sector. Whereas the Iranian government utilizes video games to promote Islamic values and foster national pride, independent producers maneuver within and around the state's interests and construct their own virtual worlds. The resulting spaces of game play are achieved through negotiations between the funding and restrictions of the Islamic state and the visions and engagement of private entrepreneurs. Given that Iranian games almost invariably appropriate their Western counterparts, what emerges from the Iranian game production is a story of cross-cultural exchange where resistance and encounter take place, and where "authenticity" as well as "hybridity" are simultaneously construed and contested.

ADRIANA DE SOUZA E SILVA
LOCATION MATTERS: THE USE OF LOCATION-BASED SERVICES IN BRAZIL

Co-authored with Mariana de Matos-Silva and Ana Maria Nicolaci-da-Costa

Location-based services (LBS) are fairly recent phenomena, but they are becoming popular around the world. The wide use of location awareness demands that we think carefully about how we manage social interactions, mobility and privacy in public spaces. Thus far most studies on LBS have focused on developed countries and framed these services from a western, if not American, perspective. The meanings of privacy, mobility and public spaces, however, are shaped by cultural, historical and economical forces. This paper explores the development of LBS in Brazil, focusing

on: (1) the roles specific cultural and socio-economic contexts play in the adoption and appropriation of LBS, (2) the extent to which the public sharing of location is perceived as a threat to personal security, and (3) how LBS use influences how people experience urban spaces. Answers to these issues come from an empirical qualitative study on the social uses of LBS in Rio de Janeiro.

JOSEPH TUROW

AISLE WARS: THE SPATIAL NEXUS OF PROTECTION AND PREFERENCE

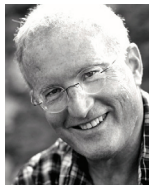
Prior to the digital age, the retail aisle was arranged through a negotiation between the goods manufacturer and the retailer. In the 21st century store that arrangement is being disrupted by the public's increasing use of digital media to subvert the prices and assortments that the retailers and manufacturers offer. My presentation examines this change through the lens of customer loyalty: the retailer's enduring desire to keep customers coming back by constructing a combination of protection and preference. The new digital challenges are leading retailers to reshape their spaces on several levels. Doing so, they are reshaping the meaning of loyalty for the digital age.

RICHARD WITTMAN

REPRESENTATION AND PHENOMENON IN THE PUBLICS OF THE LATE ENLIGHTENMENT: THE CASE OF ARCHITECTURAL SPACE

"Context collapse" does indeed predate digitization; it stretches back at least to the 18th century, when print culture constituted the first spatially exploded networks of discourse that were at once large-scale, impersonal, and ongoing. Participants in these networks not only had their social-spatial horizons dramatically expanded; their immediate experiences of the embodied spatial world were necessarily transformed as well. The emergence and mutation of such overlapping spatiotemporalities surfaced vividly in contemporary architectural culture; for although public buildings always possess broader political resonances, architecture by its nature is experienced phenomenally, in real time and space. These general claims will be explored here via a paradoxical example drawn from early 19th-century Rome, when the Catholic Church used print to mobilize the first-ever truly global network of donors in order to fund the reconstruction of a Roman church that monumentalized traditional Catholic emphases on the body, the relic, and the irreducibility of sacred space.

Biographies



MARK BOWDEN is a best-selling author and Writer in Residence at the University of Delaware. His ten books concern a wide range of subjects, everything from pro football to computer viruses. He is best known for "Black Hawk Down," which was a finalist for the National Book Award in 1999. His newest book is "The Finish," a *New York Times* bestselling account of the mission to kill Osama bin Laden. Mark is a contributing editor to *Vanity Fair*, and a national correspondent for *The Atlantic*.



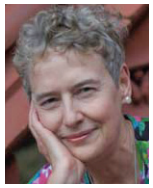
MICHAEL X. DELLI CARPINI is the Walter H. Annenberg Dean of the Annenberg School for Communication. Prior to joining the University of Pennsylvania faculty, Dean Delli Carpini was Director of the Public Policy program of the Pew Charitable Trusts (1999-2003), and member of the Political Science Department at Barnard College and graduate faculty of Columbia University (1987-2002), serving as chair of the Barnard department from 1995 to 1999. His research explores the role of the citizen in American politics with particular emphasis on the impact of the mass media on public opinion, political knowledge and political participation. He is author of *Stability and Change in American Politics: The Coming of Age of the Generation of the 1960s* (New York University Press, 1986), *What Americans Know about Politics and Why It Matters* (Yale University Press, 1996 and winner of the 2008 American Association of Public Opinion Researchers Book Award), *A New Engagement? Political Participation, Civic Life and the Changing American Citizen* (Oxford University Press, 2006), *Talking Together: Public Deliberation and Political Participation in America* (University of Chicago Press, 2009), and *After Broadcast News: Media Regimes, Democracy, and the New Information Environment* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), as well as numerous articles, essays and edited volumes on political communications, public opinion and political socialization. Dean Delli Carpini was awarded the 2008 Murray Edelman Distinguished Career Award from the Political Communication Division of the American Political Science Association.



MARGARET (PEGGY) KOHN is a Professor of Political Theory at the University of Toronto. Her main research interests are urbanism, critical theory, the history of political thought and colonialism. She is the author of three books including the prize winning *Radical Space: Building the House of the People* (Cornell 2003) and *Brave New Neighborhoods: The Privatization of Public Space* (Routledge 2004). Her most recent book *Political Theories of Decolonization* (with Keally McBride) was published by Oxford University Press in 2011. She has also published scholarly articles in journals such as *Political Theory, Journal of Politics, Theory & Event, Polity, Constellations, Perspectives on Politics* and *Dissent*. Kohn's current research focuses on the right to the city.



CHRISTIAN LICOPPE is a Professor of Sociology at the Department of Social Science in Télécom Paris Tech. Trained in history and sociology of science and technology, he has worked for a stretch in industrial research, where he managed social science research at Orange R&D before taking his current academic position. Among other things he has worked in the field of mobility and communication studies for several years. He has used mobile geolocation and communication data to analyze mobility and sociability patterns of mobile phone users. He has studied various phenomena related to the proliferation of mediated communication events and 'connected presence'. He has also studied extensively the uses of location aware games and proximity-aware mobile technologies communities. His recent work in mobile communication has focused on the development of methods to record and analyze the use of mobile communication in 'natural' situations (such as mobility and transport settings) and on the use of ethnomethodology and conversation analysis to understand the organization of mobile communication as in Skype and mobile video calls.



CAROLYN MARVIN is the Frances Yates Professor at the Annenberg School for Communication. She is the author of the prize winning book *When Old Technologies Were New: Thinking About Electrical Communication in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Oxford, 1988) and *Blood Sacrifice and the Nation: Totem Rituals and the American Flag* (Cambridge, 1999). Her work addresses the cultural history of media technology, the cultural opposition of texts and bodies, ritual form as group communication, and the politics and semiotics of material public space. She is writing a book on the history, semiotics and rituals of public space as a communicative form.



JEREMY NÉMETH is Chair and Associate Professor in the Department of Planning and Design and Director of the Master of Urban Design program at the University of Colorado, Denver. His recent research shows how attempts to privatize and secure public space have produced urban environments that are less open, inclusive and equitable. Prior to entering academia, Professor Németh practiced as an urban planner for several years. He has won several awards of excellence in teaching and research and his work has been cited in popular media outlets such as the *New York Times,* the *Associated Press* and the *Guardian*.



LISA PARKS is Professor and former chair of the Film and Media Studies Department at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where she currently serves as the Director of the Center for Information Technology and Society. Parks is the author of *Cultures in Orbit: Satellites and the Televisual* and co-editor of *Planet TV, Undead TV,* and *Down to Earth: Satellite Technologies, Industries and Cultures*. She is working on three new books: *Coverage: Media Space and Security after 9/11* (forthcoming), *Mixed Signals: Media Infrastructures and Cultural Geographies,* and *Signal Traffic: Critical Studies of Media Infrastructures*.



DAVID POST is the Herman Stern Professor at Temple University Beasley School of Law where he teaches intellectual property law and the law of cyberspace. He is also a Fellow at the Center for Democracy and Technology, a Fellow of the Institute for Information Law and Policy at New York Law School, an Adjunct Scholar at the Cato Institute, and a contributor to the influential Volokh Conspiracy blog. He joined the faculty of Georgetown University Law Center in 1994 and the faculty of Temple University Law School in 1997. Professor Post is the author of *In Search of Jefferson's Moose: Notes on the State of Cyberspace* (Oxford U. Press 2008), winner of the 2009 "Exemplary Legal Writing" award from the journal *Green Bag; Cyberlaw: Problems of Policy and Jurisprudence in the Information Age* (3d Edition, West, 2007) (co-authored with Paul Schiff Berman and Patricia Bellia), and numerous articles on intellectual property, the law of cyberspace, and the application of complexity theory to Internet legal questions.



BABAK RAHIMI is Associate Professor of Communication, Culture and Religion at the Department of Literature, University of California, San Diego. He was a Visiting Fellow at the London School of Economics and Political Science Department of Anthropology, 2000-2001. His book *Theater-State and Formation of the Early Modern Public Sphere in Iran: Studies on Safavid Muharram Rituals, 1590-1641 C.E.* (Brill 2011) studies the relationship between ritual, public space and state power in early modern Iranian history. His work has appeared in *Thesis Eleven: Critical Theory and Historical Sociology, International Political Science Review, The Communication Review, and the Journal of the International Society for Iranian Studies*. Rahimi's current research project is on the relationship between digital culture, politics and religion.



VIT SISLER is an Assistant Professor of New Media at the Faculty of Arts at Charles University in Prague. His research deals with information and communication technology in the Middle East and educational and political video games. He has published extensively in issues related to ICT, the Middle East and video games and his work has appeared in the *Communication Yearbook; European Journal of Cultural Studies; Information, Communication & Society; Global Media Journal,* and the *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication*. He is managing editor of *CyberOrient,* a peer reviewed journal of the virtual Middle East published by the American Anthropological Association. He was also a visiting Fulbright scholar at Northwestern University in 2008-2009.



ADRIANA DE SOUZA E SILVA is Associate Professor at the Department of Communication at North Carolina State University (NCSU), Associate Director of the Communication, Rhetoric, and Digital Media (CRDM) program at NCSU, and affiliated faculty of the Digital Games Research Center in the same university. Dr. de Souza e Silva's research focuses on how mobile and locative interfaces shape people's interactions with

public spaces and create new forms of sociability. She teaches classes on mobile technologies, location-based games and Internet studies. She is the co-author of *Mobile Interfaces in Public Spaces* (with Jordan Frith, 2013) and *Net Locality* (with Eric Gordon, 2011).



JOSEPH TUROW is Robert Lewis Shayon Professor of Communication at Penn's Annenberg School. Much of his work over the past two decades lies at the intersection of marketing, digital media and society. Among several other books, he is the author of *The Daily You: How the Advertising Industry is Defining Your Identity and Your Worth* (Yale U Press, 2011); *Niche Envy* (MIT Press, 2006); and *Breaking Up America: Advertising and the New Media World* (U of Chicago Press, 1996). He is a Fellow of the International Communication Association and received the Distinguished Scholar Award from the National Communication Association.



RICHARD WITTMAN (Ph.D. Columbia University) is Associate Professor in the Department of the History of Art and Architecture at the University of California at Santa Barbara. His work has appeared in *Grey Room, Representations, Histoire Urbaine, kritische berichte, Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians,* and elsewhere. He is the author of *Architecture, Print Culture, and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century France* (Routledge, 2007).



BARBIE ZELIZER is the Raymond Williams Professor of Communication and Director of the Scholars Program in Culture and Communication at the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School for Communication. A former journalist, Zelizer is known for her work in the area of journalism, culture, memory and images, particularly in times of crisis. She has authored or edited thirteen books, including the award-winning volumes *About To Die: How News Images Move the Public* (Oxford, 2010) and *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory Through the Camera's Eye* (Chicago, 1998), and over a hundred articles, book chapters and essays. Recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Freedom Forum Center Research Fellowship, a Fellowship from Harvard University's Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics, and Public Policy, and a Fellowship from Stanford University's Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Zelizer is also a media critic whose work has appeared in *The Nation, PBS News Hour, The Huffington Post, Newsday,* and other media organs. Coeditor of *Journalism: Theory, Practice and Criticism*, she is a recent President of the International Communication Association. Her work has been translated into French, Korean, Turkish, Romanian, Chinese, Italian, Spanish, Hebrew and Portuguese.