What do we mean when we say 'content moderation'?

Digital Censorship, Surveillance, and Creative Workers

May 25-26, 2019

An interdisciplinary symposium on freedom of expression in the age of digital censorship and surveillance

Art Museum

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This symposium addresses urgent concerns regarding control of digital space within and beyond the art and creative communities in Canadian and international contexts. It explores how artists and creators can contribute to a more ethical web. Some of the key topics of the symposium include:
• activism against censorship and surveillance in the arts in the Canadian and international context
• current artist- and tech-involved initiatives aimed at "taking back the web"
• empowering alternatives in the digital sphere (i.e. introducing Mesh Networking and sharing information in low- or no-bandwidth areas.)

The symposium explores three modes of artist- and tech-involved activism against two main and interconnected systems of oppression: artists as developers/co-developers of the web's infrastructure; artistic "gestures" as activism against online censorship and surveillance; and storytelling— changing narratives through technology and science fiction.

Code of Conduct
This symposium is dedicated to providing a harassment-free environment for everyone, regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, age, religion, technical skill level, or academic level. Our Code of Conduct can be found at contentmoderation.art/code-of-conduct.

Curator's Acknowledgments
I'd like to express my gratitude to the MVS faculty, especially my Principal advisor Barbara Fischer for her caring guidance throughout each stage of the process; my external advisor Katie Micak, whose presence brought courage and insight; the Art Museum and Hart House team, in particular Rebecca Gimmi for sharing her valuable experience throughout the intensive process of public programming; my peers and friends for their continued encouragement; Julie René de Cotret for her heartfelt support; and Centre for Free Expression, Toronto Mesh, Our Networks, Citizen Lab, InterAccess, and Ones & Zeros communities for their generous support and involvement. Lastly, my deepest gratitude to my partner and my family for creating a space in which I could thrive.

Map
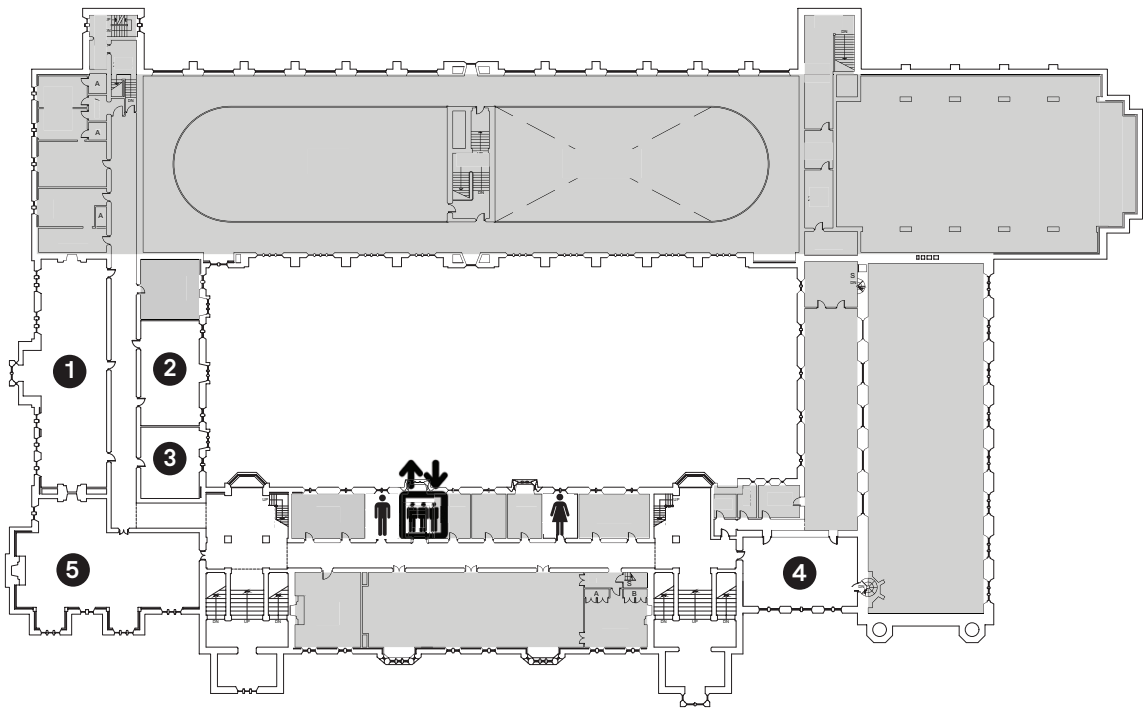
Hart House - Second Floor
1 Music Room
2 South Dining Room
3 Board Room
4 Gallery Grill
5 Library

Washrooms

Elevator

* Accessible washroom is located on the Main Floor.

Schedule

10:00am	Reception + Welcome
10:30am	Opening Keynote
	Negative Space: Erasure and Resistance on the Social Canvas
	Jillian C. York
11:30am	Lunch
12:30pm	Plenary Talks & Panel Discussion
	Cobwebs that connect us: What is a social network?
	Sarah Friend
	Understanding the Impact of Surveillance
	Jonathan Penney
	Can you hear me?
	Mathias Jud
2:15pm	Participatory Workshop
	Bursting the Cloud: Alternative Architectures
	Connor Turland
2:15pm	Participatory Workshop (South Dining Room)
	It Works On Paper: The Networks We Need
	Dante Sanchez
14:15pm	Participatory Workshop (Board Room)
	Tools for the Next Revolution
	Mathias Jud
3:45pm	Coffee Break
4:00pm	Closing Keynote
	Towards Thrivance: Changing Narratives Through Digital Media and Science Fiction
	Skawennati

Sunday, May 26

12:00pm	Welcome
12:30pm	Participatory Workshop
	Speculative Design: Protocol, Platform, and Peers
	Garry Ing

Contributors

Jillian C. York is a writer and activist whose work examines the impact of technology on our societal and cultural values. Based in Berlin, she is the Director for International Freedom of Expression at the Electronic Frontier Foundation and a fellow at the Center for Internet & Human Rights at the European University Viadrina.

Jillian co-founded Onlinecensorship.org, an award-winning project that seeks to encourage companies to operate with greater transparency and accountability toward their users as they make decisions that regulate speech. She is a frequent public speaker on topics that include censorship, surveillance, and the impact of social media on our lives and our societies. Her writing has been published by the *New York Times, Al Jazeera, the Atlantic, the Guardian, Quartz, The Washington Post,* and *Die Zeit*, among others.

Skawennati makes art that addresses history, the future, and change from her perspective as an urban Mohawk woman and as a cyberpunk avatar. Her early adoption of cyberspace as both a location and a medium for her practice has led to groundbreaking projects such as CyberPowWow and the Skins workshops on Aboriginal Storytelling and Digital Media. She is best known for her machinimas—movies made in virtual environments—but also produces still images and sculpture. These are included in both public and private collections and have been widely presented across Turtle Island in major exhibitions such as *Now? NOW!* at Denver's Biennial of the Americas and *Looking Forward (L'Avenir)* at the Montreal Biennale.

Born in Kahnawà:ke Mohawk Territory, Skawennati graduated with a BFA from Concordia University in Montreal, where she resides. She is Co-Director of Aboriginal Territories in Cyberspace (AbTeC). In 2015 they launched IIF, the Initiative for Indigenous Futures.

Mathias Jud was born in Zurich and lives and works in Berlin. He has been working in a collective with Christoph Wachter for over twenty years. Professors at the Weißensee Academy of Art Berlin, they have participated in international exhibitions and have been awarded many international prizes. Their art works include open-source projects that uncover forms of censorship of the Internet, undermine the concentration of political power and even resolve the dependency on infrastructure. The tools, provided by the artists, are used by communities in the USA, Europe, Australia and in countries such as Syria, Tunisia, Egypt, Iran, India, China and Thailand. Even in North Korea activists participate. However, not everyone is fond of these projects.

Contributors

Jillian C. York

Skawennati

Mathias Jud

Sarah Friend

Jon Penney

Garry Ing

Dante Sanchez

Connor Turland

Dawn Walker

Their findings on secret prisons on US military bases in Guantanamo and Iraq have not been covered by the US media. The PR China denied Wachter and Jud to enter the country since 2013.

Sarah Friend is an artist and software engineer with special interest in blockchain and the p2p web. She was a member of Consensys for over two years and is currently contributing to CirclesUBI, a permissionless democratically-operated universal basic income. When not doing that, she creates games and other interactive experiences. She is a proud Recurse Centre alum, and is one of the organizers of "Our Networks," a conference on all aspects of the distributed web in Toronto.

Jon Penney is a Research Fellow at the University of Toronto's Citizen Lab and Director of the Law and Technology Institute at Dalhousie University. He is also a Research Associate at Princeton's Center for Information Technology Policy and the Civil Servant Project at the MIT Media Lab. From 2012 to 2015, he was a Fellow and then Research Affiliate at the Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University. A native of Halifax, Nova Scotia, he has studied law at Columbia Law School as a Fulbright Scholar and at Oxford as a Mackenzie King Scholar. He holds a doctorate in Information, Communication, and the

Social Sciences from the interdisciplinary Oxford Internet Institute at the University of Oxford (Balliol College, 2016). Jon's research lies at the intersection of law, technology, and human rights, with strong empirical, interdisciplinary, and social science dimensions. From the Internet to AI and beyond, his work aims to understand technology's role in censorship, surveillance, and other emerging threats to people's rights and interests.

Garry Ing is a designer and researcher currently residing in Toronto. He is a contributor at Toronto Mesh, sessional faculty at OCAD University teaching interactive media, and co-organizer of Our Networks, a conference about the past, present, and future of building our own network infrastructures. His research practice is around network poetics, irl-to-url methods, near-future software, and net art. Previous work and collaborations has been with the Strategic Innovation Lab (sLab) at OCAD University, the Technologies for Aging Gracefully Lab at the University of Toronto, Normative, and Format.

Dante Sanchez graduated from the University of Toronto with a Bachelor in Applied Science. In the last twelve years, he has developed instrumentation for Geophysics, Environmental, and Life Sciences research. He joined Toronto

Mesh two years ago after growing increasingly concerned with issues surrounding online access, privacy, and surveillance. Toronto Mesh is a volunteer group dedicated to helping communities create better networks with open-source and peer-to-peer technologies that promote digital literacy and privacy.

Connor Turland is a software developer, educator, and facilitator, with a focus on collaborative, open source, and peer-to-peer technologies. He is especially concerned with finding ways to augment the conversations, and thus the thinking, that is necessary for humans to address the wicked challenges that face us collectively. This has led to much technical and social experimentation in tools and processes that restore agency, unlock higher potentials and collective intelligences. His work also hinges on the theory and practice of peer-to-peer as a basis for social interaction and non-hierarchical power structures.

Dawn Walker is a researcher and PhD student at the University of Toronto focused on participatory design tactics for building environmental civic technologies. She also imagines possibilities for grassroots and decentralized (environmental) data with EDGI and Data Together. A keen urban agriculturalist, Dawn would rather be in the garden.

Curated and organized by Pegah Vaezi, this symposium is produced as part of the requirements for the MVS degree in Curatorial Studies at the John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design, University of Toronto.

Cover image: Skawennati, *Becoming Skywoman*, machinimagraph from *She Falls for Ages,* 2016. Courtesy of the artist.