

Critical Cyberculture Studies Conference Panel Proposal

Visual Cultures, Visual Practices: Subjectivities, Identities, and New Technologies

Our interconnected panels contribute to the evolution of the field of critical cyberculture studies. The papers exemplify a range of ways by which the emerging field can productively engage with theories of subjectivity, technology, new media, vision, and visual cultures. Text-based research and text-based theories have dominated Internet-focused research in the U.S. and in doing so have limited our ability to understand how subjects are interpolated into discursive and experiential terrains of new media technologies. Our mode of being with, and subjectively within, these technologies, while amenable to textual and discourse analyses and explanation, is also influenced and ideologically positioned by the visual narratives that *depict*, in ever more precise and frequently fantastical detail, how new technologies will necessarily enrich everyday life and the “sources of the self.” These narratives, extending Susan Buck-Morss, take the form of the emblem—composed both of texts and images to constitute the very fabric from which art and ideology today issue. Panel One examines ways by which individuals and groups imagine and organize themselves through (or are imagined and organized by) technological mediation, and Panel Two looks at ways by which digital technologies seek to impress themselves directly onto subjectivity formations.

Panel One—Technologized Identities

Extending Sloterdijk’s Critique of Cynical Reason and Grossberg’s concept of “disciplined mobilization,” Nathan Epley explores how produced cynicism and productive engagement with certain types of popular culture are imbricated with the late-capitalist labor practices and technophobic discourses to which IT professionals are particularly subject. Both theoretically and methodologically, the emerging approach of web site analysis can benefit from visual culture perspectives.

Working from Hebdige’s studies of subcultural style, Tara Kachgal examines Goosehead.com’s appropriation of youth subculture and its potential as a site of resistance. Targeted to a burgeoning online teen population, Goosehead depicts itself as an alternative space of “Counter-Culture Programming” for teens, constructing a media discourse around its idealized sixteen-year old founder Ashley Powers.

James Cahill examines the performance and policing of identity and desire on www.HotorNot.com, a virtual meet/meat market where users rate self-submitted snapshots on a “hot-ness” scale of 1-10. Drawing upon Laura Kipnis’ theorization of self-display in personal ads and Susan Buck-Morss’ work on Benjamin’s dialectic image, his paper explores the possibilities and political consequences of HotorNot’s economy of images.

Commentator/Chair Ken Hillis

Panel Two—Identity Technologies

Jonathan Lillie analyses Hewlett-Packard’s vision of “Cooltown” technologies. He considers how new media narratives mediate realities of media use within what amounts to a “new” liberation theology where technology individuates and ameliorates social relations creating a safe haven for the smooth flow of capital and labor.

Ken Hillis combines literary analysis and an examination of emblematics to show how the multiple points-of-view afforded by avatar-based on-line chat environments, combined with a novelistic use of free indirect discourse in chat, work to promote a “shattered” sense of self. On-line avatars, with both multiple points-of-view and ironic “middle voices,” reformulate the tensions inherent in free indirect discourse to create a greater sense of ambiguity, irony and abstraction of the self and others that has important implications for how these environments suggest new ways to reimagine subjectivity through depiction.

Commentator/Chair Nathan Epley

- Education**
- University of North Carolina**, Chapel Hill, NC
PhD Candidate in Communication Studies, Concentration in Media & Cultural Studies, fall 1999 to present, Committee members: Ken Hillis (director), Victoria Johnson, Lawrence Grossberg
 - Virginia Tech & Virginia Western Community College**, Blacksburg & Roanoke, VA
Coursework in Computer Science, 1998 to 1999
 - College of William & Mary**, Williamsburg, VA
Coursework required for Virginia Postgraduate Professional Teaching License in English, summers 1993 and 1994
 - University of Virginia**, Charlottesville, VA
MA in English Literature, August 1992
 - Duke University**, Durham, NC
BA *cum laude*, Comparative Area Studies and English, May 1990
- Awards & Honors**
- Special Initiative Award** (for work with Wordshed Productions), Department of Communication Studies, University of North Carolina, 2001
 - Merit Assistantship**, The Graduate School, University of North Carolina, 1999-2000
 - Assistantship in Womens Studies**, University of North Carolina, 2001-2002
- Conference Presentations**
- “Reaching for Stars: Identification and Discursive Female Roles in *Now Voyager*,” Presented at English Graduate Student Colloquium, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia, April 1992.
- Employment**
- Department of Communication Studies**, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
INSTRUCTOR
Comm. 24, “Gender & Communication,” spring, summer, fall 2000, spring, fall 2001.
Comm. 34, “Audio/Video/Film Production,” summer, fall 2001.
TEACHING ASSISTANT
Comm. 134, “Narrative Film Production,” spring 2000
Comm. 10B, “Communication & Social Processes,” fall 1999
Comm. 24B, “Gender & Communication,” fall 1999
 - Kaplan Educational Center**, Roanoke, Virginia
INSTRUCTOR, January 1997 to 1999
 - Ferrum College**, Ferrum, Virginia
ENGLISH INSTRUCTOR, September 1997 to May 1998
 - The New Community School**, Richmond, Virginia
ENGLISH INSTRUCTOR, 1992 to 1996
- Other Experience**
- Media Production & Freelance Writing**
 - ~ Film Video Producer and Executive Board Member, Wordshed Productions, UNC, 2000 to present.
 - ~ Produced and edited experimental video of Samuel Beckett’s “What Where” as part of Wordshed’s festival of Beckett plays September 2000.
 - ~ Directed two two-minute silent films, *Deficit* and *To The Death* and one five-minute sound film, *Dyslexia or Trickery?* (all 16mm), spring 2000.
 - ~ Completed 96,000-word novel, *Office Hours*, September 1996 to July 1997

TARA M. KACHGAL

Park Fellow and Ph.D. Student
School of Journalism and Mass Communication, CB# 3365,
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC 27599

P.O. Box 15, Chapel Hill, NC 27514, 919.968.0036, tarakachgal@netscape.net

EDUCATION

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| Ph.D. Student, Mass Communication, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill | 2000-present |
| M.A., Telecommunications, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois | 1998-2000 |
| B.S., Advertising, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign | 1988-1992 |

CONFERENCES AND PRESENTATIONS

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|---|------|
| Top Student Paper, First Place, Commission on the Status of Women, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Washington, DC | 2001 |
| 2 nd Place Award (Debut Category), Paper Competition, Gender Issues Division, Broadcast Education Association, Las Vegas, Nevada | 2000 |

RESEARCH AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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|---|--------------|
| Research Assistant, TEEN MEDIA, UNC Research duties for five-year, \$2.6 million grant funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD #RO1 HD38508-01A1) to examine effects of mass media content on adolescent health attitudes and behaviors. | 2000-present |
| Conference Assistant, Global Fusion 2000, SIU Pre-conference planning and promotion of a regional conference on international and intercultural communication co-endorsed by AEJMC, ICA, and BEA. | 2000 |
| Teaching Assistant, MCMA 201: Media in Society, SIU Coordinated the instruction of introductory, large-lecture mass communications course. Administered course website. Designed and implemented on-line instructional activities and assessments. | 1999, 1998 |

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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|--|------|
| Technical Support Specialist, CUNA Mutual Group, Madison, Wisconsin Troubleshoot technical problems on computer and mainframe systems. Installed, tested and supported insurance and financial software. Generated reports to assist with management decision-making. | 1998 |
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James Leo Cahill

Department of Communication Studies, CB#3285
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 27599
Tel: 919-968-6609, E-mail: jcahill@email.unc.edu

Education

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Department of Communication Studies Masters Degree Program: Media and Cultural Studies.

Occidental College

A.B. Department of History, with honors

Grants & Awards

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Tuition Waiver and Stipend (2000-date)

Latané Interdisciplinary Summer Research Grant - \$2,000 (2001)

Outstanding Achievement in Graduate Service and Leadership (2001)

Teaching

Instructor, Introduction to Media Production (Fall 2001)

Teaching Assistant, Victoria Johnson, Introduction to Media Criticism (Fall 2001)

Instructor, Introduction to Media Production (Summer 2001)

Teaching Assistant, Gorham Kindem, Introduction to Media Production (Spring 2001)

Teaching Assistant, Ken Hillis, Media and Popular Culture (Fall 2000, Spring 2001)

Teaching Assistant, Ted Striphas and Tim Muehlhoff, Communication as Social Process (Fall 2000)

Professional Experience

Editor and Writer, Film Reviews and Blurbs, Muze, Inc., New York (1999-2000)

Graphic Designer, Shanachie Records, New York (1998-1999)

Curatorial Assistant, Museum of Television and Radio, New York (1997-1998)

Research Assistant, Professor Esther Yau, Department of Film and Visual Studies, Occidental College, (1994-1996)

Positions Held

Instructor/Teaching Assistant, Department of Communication Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (2000-date)

Graduate Student Association Co-President (2001-date)

Graduate Student Association Social Chair (2000-2001)

Membership in Professional Associations

American Society of Composers, Authors and Producers (1998-date)

National Communications Association (2001)

Society for Cinema Studies (2001)



Jonathan James McCreddie Lillie

Park Doctoral Fellow

New Media and International Communications
The School of Journalism and Mass Communication
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
<http://www.ibiblio.prg/jlillie>

129 Windsor Cir.
Chapel Hill, NC 27516
919.960.7901
jlillie@nc.rr.com

Curriculum Vitae

Education

Ph.D. Candidate – The School of Journalism and Mass Communication
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Expected Completion – May, 2003
Research Interests: New Media & Culture, Communication Policy, Cyberporn, Community
Networking

Current Projects

Managing Editor of a new online peer-reviewed journal, NMEDIAC: The Journal of New Media & Culture. Paper under review by the Journal of Sexuality & Culture. Paper under review by the Journal of the Information Society. Session organizer, “Doing Cultural Studies in Cyberspace,” for The Crossroad in Cultural Studies Fourth International Conference, June 29 - July 2, 2002, Tampere, Finland.

Most Recent Publications

Lillie, Jonathan J. (2001). Cultural Uses of the Internet : Implications for US Latinos. *Pending publication*. Newcastle, UK : The University of Northumbria Press.

Goldberg, Ken. (Ed.). (November, 2001). *The Robot in the Garden: Telerobotics and Telepistemology in the Age of the Internet*. Book review by Jonathan Lillie. The Resource Center for Cyberculture Studies. <<http://www.com.washington.edu/rccs/>>

Herman, Andrew, and Swiss, Thomas. (Eds.). (September, 2001). *The World Wide Web and Contemporary Cultural Theory*. Book review by Jonathan Lillie. The Resource Center for Cyberculture Studies. <<http://www.com.washington.edu/rccs/>>

Most Recent Conference Presentations

Cante, Richard, and Lillie, Jonathan. (2001). “The Cultural Analysis of Internet Pornography: Towards a Post Cartesian Internet Studies.” Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association of Internet Researchers, the University of Minnesota, October 12, 2001.

Carroll, Brian and Lillie, Jonathan. (2001). “Newspaper Readership and E-mail Immediacy: Can a Publication Have Its Cake and Eat It Too?” Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Communication Association, Boone, North Carolina, October 5, 2001.

Lillie, Jonathan. (2001). “Virtually Pornographic: A Theoretical Analysis of Pornography on the World Wide Web and A New Agenda for Research.” Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Communication Association, Boone, North Carolina, October 5, 2001.

Curriculum Vitae

Ken Hillis

Department of Communication Studies
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
919.962.4950 khillis@email.unc.edu
www.unc.edu/~khillis

Education

1996 Ph.D. – Human Geography. Department of Geography, University of Wisconsin - Madison.

Appointment

1997 - date Assistant Professor. Department of Communication Studies, UNC at Chapel Hill.

Selected Publications

Book

1999 *Digital Sensations: Space, Identity and Embodiment in Virtual Reality.* U of Minnesota P.

Journal Articles

2000 "So Near, So Far, And Both at Once: Telepresence, Telefetishism and Digital Identities." *Space and Culture*, 7/8/9.

1998 "On the Margins: The Invisibility of Communications Geography." *Progress in Human Geography*, 22:4.

1996 "Position Paper: GIS, Language, and Disadvantage." *GIS and Society: The Social Implications of How People, Space, and Environment are Represented in GIS, Scientific Report for the Initiative 19 Specialist Meeting*, Technical Report 96-7, National Center for Geographic Information and Analysis.

1994 "The Power of Disembodied Imagination: Perspective's Role in Cartography." *Cartographica* 31:3.

Book Chapters

2002 THE MIND@': Analyzing the United States Virtual Trade Mission's Promotion of Globalization Through Discourse and Corporate Media Strategies," *Placing Scale*, Andrew Herod, ed. London: Blackwell.

1999 "Toward the Light Within: Spatial Metaphors, New Optical Media, and Changing Subjectivities." *Virtual Geographies: Bodies, Space and Relations*, Michael Crang, Philip Crang, and Jon May, ed. London: Routledge.

"Insights into . . . Cyberculture." *Introducing Human Geographies*, Philip Crang, ed. London: Arnold.

1998 "Human.language.machine." *Places Through the Body*, Steve Pile and Heidi Nast, ed. London: Routledge.

Selected Conference Participation

2001 "The Culture of Virtuality and the Logic of Actuality," Association of Internet Researchers 2 Conference, Oct 10 - 14, Minneapolis MN.

Keynote Speaker: Sexualities, Medias and Technologies: Theorizing Old and New Practices, University of Surrey, June 21 - 22. London UK.

Invited Speaker: Symposium on Immersive Environments. Center for Art and Technology. Northwestern University, May 25 - 26. Evanston IL.

2000 Archaeology of Multimedia Conference, Malcolm Forbes Center and the Department of Modern Culture and Media, Brown University. Providence RI..

1999 "So Near, So Far, And Both at Once: Telepresence, Telefetishism and Digital Identities." Knowing Mass Culture Conference, Center for Twentieth Century Studies, UW - Milwaukee.

Recent Awards

2001 Philip and Ruth Hettleman Prize for Outstanding Artistic and Scholarly Achievement by Young Faculty, UNC (\$5,000)