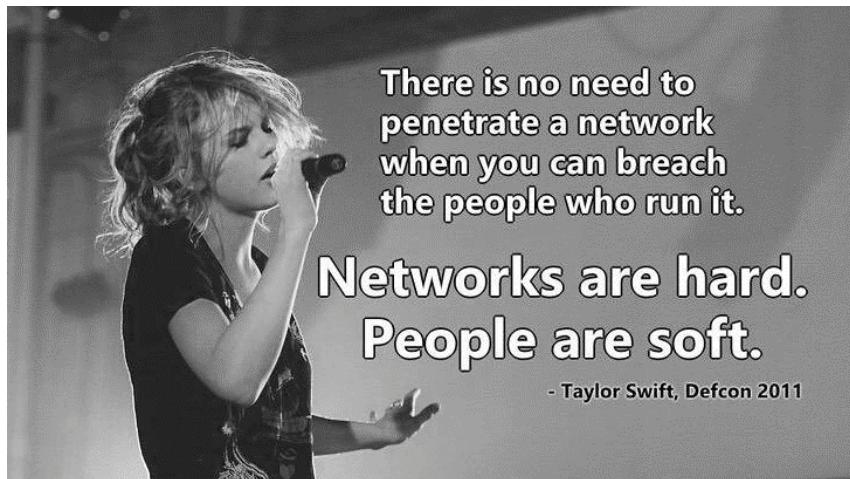


# Hackers, The Class

## (DRAFT but nearly there...)

### COMS 541

Department of Art History and Communication Studies, McGill University  
Professor Gabriella Coleman — gabriella.coleman@mcgill.ca  
Tuesdays 9:35 AM - 12:25 PM in ARTS W-5  
Office Hours = West Arts 285 by appointment  
Fall 2016



#### OVERVIEW

This course examines computer hackers to interrogate not only the ethics and technical practices of hacking, but to examine more broadly how hackers and hacking have transformed the politics of computing and the Internet more generally. We will examine how hacker values are realized and constituted by different legal, technical, and ethical activities of computer hacking—for example, free software production, cyberactivism and hacktivism, cryptography, and the prankish games of hacker underground. We will pay close attention to how ethical principles are variably represented and thought of by hackers, journalists, and academics and we will use the example of hacking to address various topics on law, order, and politics on the Internet such as: free speech and censorship, privacy, security, surveillance, and intellectual property law.

\*\*\*

The following is a “working schedule.” *Class materials are subject to change* based on the interests, understanding, and general pace of the class. It is your responsibility to keep on top of any schedule changes, whether you are in class or not. If you have a concern about any of the materials, please speak to me or the teaching assistants.

## Week 1

### September 6: Pranking, Phreaks, and Tricksters

Ron Rosenbaum, "Secrets of the Little Blue Box." Esquire Magazine, October 1971.

<http://www.lospadres.info/thorg/lbb.html>

Kembrew McLeod, "Pranksters: Making Mischief in the Modern World." 2014. (chapter 1)

Phil Lapsley, "Exploding the Phone." 2013. (chapters 1 and 13)

Gary Genosko, "Whistle Test: Blindness and Phone Phreaking." When TechnoCultures Collide, 2013.

*Graduate students:*

Lewis Hyde, "Trickster Makes this World: Mischief, Myth and Art." 2010. (Selections)

Kembrew McLeod, "Pranksters: Making Mischief in the Modern World." 2014. (chapters 6)

## Week 2

### September 13: The Internet, Early Hacking, and Historical Representation

Roy Rosenzweig, "Wizards, Bureaucrats, Warriors, and Hackers: Writing the History of the Internet." The American Historical Review, Dec. 1998.

<http://www.pne.people.si.umich.edu/PDF/ahrcwreview.pdf>

Steven Levy, "Hackers: Heroes of the Computer Revolution." 1984. (Sections of Part I)

Stephanie Ricker Schulte, "The 'WarGames Scenario': Regulating Teenagers and Teenaged Technology." Cached: Decoding the Internet in Global Popular Culture, 2013.

Molly Sauter, "Kevin Mitnick, the New York Times, and the Media's Conception of the Hacker." IAMCR, 2013.

*Graduate students:*

Kristin Ross, "May 68 and its Afterlives." 2002. (Introduction)

Tom Streeter, "Internet." Digital Keywords, ed. Benjamin Peters, 2016.

## Week 3

### September 20: Critical and Uncritical Trolling

Matt Goerzen, "Critical Trolling." M.A. Thesis.

Keller Easterling, "Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space." 2014. (Chapter 6)

*Graduate Students:*

Whitney Phillips, "This Is Why We Can't Have Nice Things: Mapping the Relationship between Online Trolling and Mainstream Culture." (Introduction and chapter 7)

**Class visit:** Matt Goerzen

## Week 4

## September 27: Freeing Software, New Publics, and Boundary Objects

Christopher Kelty, "Two Bits: The Cultural Significance of Free Software." 2008. (chapter 4 and 6)

Tara McPherson, "U.S. Operating Systems at Mid-Century: The Intertwining of Race and UNIX."

Race After the Internet, ed. Lisa Nakamura and Peter Chow-White, 2011.

Susan Leigh Star, "This is Not a Boundary Object: Reflections on the Origin of a Concept." *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, 2010.

<http://www.arch.mcgill.ca/prof/luka/urbandesignhousing/temp/other/isabelle/LeighStar2010.pdf>

*Graduate students:*

Michael Warner, "Publics and Counter Publics." *Public Culture*, Winter 2002.

[https://www.amherst.edu/system/files/Warner\\_o.pdf](https://www.amherst.edu/system/files/Warner_o.pdf)

## Week 5

### October 4: The Liberal Side of Hacking

Andrew Schrock, "Civic hacking as data activism and advocacy: A history from publicity to open government data." *New Media and Society*, April 2016.

<http://nms.sagepub.com/content/early/2016/02/15/1461444816629469.abstract>

Gabriella Coleman, "Code Is Speech: Legal Tinkering, Expertise, and Protest among Free and Open Source Software Developers." *Cultural Anthropology*, August 2009.

<https://culanth.org/articles/89-code-is-speech-legal-tinkering-expertise-and>

Sebastian Kubitschko, "The Role of Hackers in Countering Surveillance and Promoting Democracy." *Media and Communication*, September 2015.

<http://www.cogitatiopress.com/ojs/index.php/mediaandcommunication/article/view/281>

Michael Schudson, "The Trouble with Experts—and Why Democracies Need Them." *Theory and Society*, December 2006. [http://www.jstor.org/stable/4501762?seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](http://www.jstor.org/stable/4501762?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents)

*Graduate students:*

Stuart Hall, "Variants of Liberalism." *Politics and ideology*, 1986.

Class Skype Visit: Paul Tagliamonte, White House Gov Hacker

## Week 6

### October 11: Hacking and Social Movements

Todd Wolfson, "Digital Rebellion: The Birth of the Cyber Left." 2014. (Chapter TBD)

John Postill, "Freedom technologists and the new protest movements: A theory of protest formulas." *Convergence*, November 2014. <http://con.sagepub.com/content/20/4/402>

*Graduate students:*

More of the Todd Wolfson, TBD.

Alison Powell, "Hacking in the public interest: Authority, legitimacy, means, and ends." *New Media & Society*, April 2016. <http://nms.sagepub.com/content/18/4/600>

## Week 7

### October 18: Piracy

Lawrence Liang, "Beyond Representation: The Figure of the Pirate." *Access to Knowledge in the Age of Intellectual Property*, ed. Gaëlle Krikorian and Amy Kapczynski, 2010.

Kavita Philip, "Keep on Copyin' in the Free World? Genealogies of the Postcolonial Pirate Figure." *Postcolonial Piracy: Media Distribution and Cultural Production in the Global South*, ed. Lars Eckstein and Anja Schwarz, 2014.

Balázs Bodó, "The Common Pathways of Samizdat and Piracy." *Samizdat*, ed. V. Parisi, 2015.

[http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2672802](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2672802)

Daniel De Zeeuw, "Pirates and Privateers: An Introduction in Three Acts." *Krisis, Journal of Contemporary Philosophy*, 2015.

<http://www.krisis.eu/content/2015-1/Krisis-2015-1-01-deZeeuw.pdf>

#### *Graduate Students:*

Theodoros Lekkas, "Legal Pirates Ltd: Home Computing Cultures in Early 1980s Greece." *Hacking Europe*.

Jonathan Marshall and Francesca Da Rimini, "Playstation, Demonoid, and the Orders and Disorders of Piracy." *Krisis, Journal of Contemporary Philisophy*, 2015.

<http://www.krisis.eu/content/2015-1/Krisis-2015-1-02-MarshalldaRimini.pdf>

## Week 8

### October 25: Security, Risk, Attribution, and Deception

Sara Tocchetti and Sara Angeli Aguiton, "Is an FBI Agent a DIY Biologist Like Any Other? A Cultural Analysis of a Biosecurity Risk." *Science, Technology & Human Values*, September 2015.

<http://sth.sagepub.com/content/40/5/825.abstract>

Thomas Rid and Ben Buchanan, "Attributing Cyber Attacks." *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 2014.

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01402390.2014.977382?af=R>

Frank Bajak and Jack Gillum, "Snapping up cheap spy tools, nations 'monitoring everyone.'" *The Big Story*, August 2, 2016.

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/f799cf080b04b93a34df61fc007b096/snapping-cheap-spy-tools-nations-monitoring-everyone>

#### **Class visit:** Security Hackers

#### *Graduate students:*

TBD

## Week 9

## **November 1: Criminal Hacking , Deviance, and the Ethics of Illegality**

Benoît Dupont et al., "The ecology of trust among hackers." *Global Crime*, 2016.

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17440572.2016.1157480?journalCode=fjlc20>

Nicolas Auray and Danielle Kaminsky, "The professionalisation paths of hackers in IT security: The sociology of a divided identity." *Annales Des Télécommunications*, November 2007.

Kai T. Erikson, "Wayward Puritans: A Study in the Sociology of Deviance." 1966. (Chapter 1)

Kevin Poulsen, "Kingpin: How One Hacker Took Over the Billion-Dollar Cybercrime Underground." 2011. (Chapter TDB)

*Graduate Students:*

Read as much of the Poulsen as you can.

## **Week 10**

### **November 8: Hacking at the Margins and Infrastructure**

Erik Skare, "Digital Jihad: Palestinian Resistance in the Digital Era." 2016. (Chapter TBD)

Lilly U Nguyen, "Infrastructural action in Vietnam: Inverting the techno-politics of hacking in the global South." *New Media & Society*, April 2016. <http://nms.sagepub.com/content/18/4/637>

Brian Larkin, "The Politics and Poetics of Infrastructure." *Annual Review of Anthropology*, October 2013. <http://www.annualreviews.org/doi/abs/10.1146/annurev-anthro-092412-155522>

*Graduate students:*

Read the rest of the Skare

## **Week 11**

### **October 18: Pacifying Disruption**

Johan Söderberg and Alessandro Delfanti, "Hacking Hacked! The Life Cycles of Digital Innovation." *Science, Technology & Human Values*, 2015.

<http://sth.sagepub.com/content/40/5/793.extract>

Benoît Godin, "Innovation: The History of a Category." 2008.

<http://www.csiic.ca/PDF/IntellectualNo1.pdf>

Alexa Clay and Kyra Maya Phillips, "The Misfit Economy: Lessons in Creativity from Pirates, Hackers, Gangsters and Other Informal Entrepreneurs." 2015. (Introduction and Chapter 4)

Brett Scott, "The War on Cash." 2016.

<http://thelongandshort.org/society/war-on-cash>

*Graduate Students:*

Edwin Amenta, Neal Caren, Sheera Joy Olasky, and James E. Stobaugh, "Movements in the Media." *The Social Movements Reader*, 2014.

Before class watch: How Anonymous Narrowly Evaded Being Framed as CyberTerrorists

<http://livestream.com/internetsociety/hopeconf/videos/130645379>

## Week 12

### November 22 : Digital Disobedience and Dissent

William E. Scheuerman, "Digital disobedience and the law." *New Political Science*, 2016.

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/07393148.2016.1189027>

Gabriella Coleman, "From Internet Farming to Weapons of the Geek." *Current Anthropology*, Forthcoming.

Eric Hobsbawm, "The Machine Breakers." *Past and Present*, February 1952.

<http://web.csulb.edu/~ssayeghc/theory/wintertheory/machinebreakers.pdf>

*Graduate students:*

Molly Sauter, *The Coming Swarm. DDOS Actions, Hacktivism, and Civil Disobedience on the Internet*, 2014 (Chapter TBD).

## Week 13

### November 29: Anonymous and Obfuscation

Phillip Rogaway, "The Moral Character of Cryptographic Work." *Asiacrytp* 2015.

<http://web.cs.ucdavis.edu/~rogaway/papers/moral-fn.pdf>

Édouard Glissant, "Poetics of Relation." 1990. [http://shifter-magazine.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Glissant\\_For\\_Opacity.pdf](http://shifter-magazine.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Glissant_For_Opacity.pdf)

Adam Morris, "Whoever, Whatever: On Anonymity as Resistance to Empire." *Parallax*, 2012.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13534645.2012.714560>

Gabriella Coleman, "Epilogue: The State of Anonymous." *Hacker, Hoaxer, Whistleblower, Spy*, 2015. <http://gabriellacoleman.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/hhws-epilogue-extract.pdf>

*Graduate Students:*

Marco Deseriis, *Improper Names: Collective Pseudonyms from the Luddites to Anonymous* (Introduction and Chapter 5).