

## **FINN BRUNTON CURRICULUM VITAE**

Mail: Finn Brunton  
Department of Media, Culture & Communication  
239 Greene Street, 8th Floor  
New York, NY 10003  
Telephone: 212 992 6722  
Fax: 212 995 4046  
Email: [fb42@nyu.edu](mailto:fb42@nyu.edu)

### **POSITIONS**

**Assistant Professor.** Department of Media, Culture and Communication, Steinhardt School, New York University. Working on digital media; adoption and adaptation of media, computing, and information systems; special focus on research in privacy, anonymity, innovation, and social histories of networks. 2013-present.

**Assistant Professor of Information.** School of Information, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. 2010-2013.

**Postdoctoral Researcher.** Department of Media, Culture and Communication, Steinhardt School, New York University. 2009-2010.

### **EDUCATION**

**Centre for Modern Thought, University of Aberdeen, Scotland**  
Ph.D., Modern Thought, 2009  
Dissertation title: "Spam in Action: Social Technology and Unintended Consequences." Advisors: Prof. Christopher Fynsk, Prof. Mario Biagioli.  
Examiners: Prof. James Leach, Prof. Timothy Lenoir.

**European Graduate School, Saas-Fee, Switzerland**  
M.A., Communications Theory, 2006

**UC Berkeley, Berkeley, CA**  
B.A., Interdisciplinary Studies, 2002

### **AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION**

Digital and other new media (especially adaptation, modification, misuse and abuse); digital currency; privacy, anonymity and trust; digital humanities; obsolete and experimental media; network culture and mediated subcultures; hardware and infrastructure literacy; architecture and industrial design

## GRANTS

Co-Principal Investigator, National Science Foundation: “Future Internet Architectures – Next Phase (FIA-NP) EAGER: Values in Design for Future Internet Architectures – Next Phase,” January 2014, \$300,000

Co-Principal Investigator, National Science Foundation: “Workshop: Theory and Science of Obfuscation as a Methodology for Privacy and Security,” September 2016, \$50,000

## BOOKS

**Spam: A Shadow History of the Internet.** MIT Press, April 2013

Winner of the **2013 PROSE Award in Computing & Information Sciences**. Has been positively reviewed in numerous venues, including Evgeny Morozov in the *Wall Street Journal*; *Science*; *The Guardian*; *Scientific American*; *The Nation*; *Times Higher Education*; *The Los Angeles Review of Books*; *The Millions*; *Cyberlaw JOTWELL*; *Slate*; *INA Global*; and others.

**Obfuscation: A User’s Guide for Privacy and Protest.** With Helen Nissenbaum. MIT Press, 2015

## PAPERS, CHAPTERS, AND ARTICLES

“Speculative Currencies: Histories and Futures in Utopian Money.” Under review (*Cultural Studies*)

“The Extortion Stack.” *Limn* 2017 (in press)

“Spam” (book chapter). *The SAGE Handbook of Web History*. SAGE, 2017 (in press)

*Hello From Earth* (working title). In *In Search of Media* series, Leuphana University of Lüneburg: Meson Press, 2016 (under contract)

“Silver.” In *Payment Objects: Explorations with Transactional Things* (ed. Bill Maurer and Lana Swartz). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2016 (in press)

“WeChat / Weixin / 微信.” In *Appified* (ed. Jeremy Wade-Morris and Sarah Murray). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017 (in press)

“Petit guide de conversation avec les extraterrestres: Une autre histoire de l’intelligence artificielle.” *Le Monde diplomatique*, August 2016

“Une Histoire du Spam: Le revers de la communauté en ligne.” Translation of “Constitutive Interference: Spam and Online Communities” (*Representations* 117, Winter 2012) by Nona Libbrecht-Carey. In *La revue Réseaux* 197-198, March-April 2016

“Keeping the Books: Inside the Blockchain.” *Limn* 6, March 2016

“The Entropy Archives.” *Limn* 6, March 2016

“Où tu vas, j’y serai toujours.” In *Extra Fantômes* (ed. Clémence Seurat). La Gaîté lyrique: Paris, 2016

“The Bitcoin Protocol: Long-Term Promises and Dangers of Cryptocurrencies.” In *Technology: Impacts, Challenges and the Future*, The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research. ECSSR (Abu Dhabi), 2015

“An Affair to Remember.” *Artforum*, December 2015

“How to Hide in Plain Sight: A Visual Essay.” *Public Books*, December 2015

“Tempting Information.” In *The Rumours of the World: Rethinking Trust in the Age of the Internet* (ed. Omar Kholeif). London: Sternberg, 2015

“Heat Exchanges.” In *The MoneyLab Reader: An Intervention in Digital Economy* (ed. Geert Lovink, Nathaniel Tkacz, Patricia de Vries). Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures, 2015

“The Canon Cat: Processing Advanced Work.” With Lori Emerson. *Vlak: Contemporary Poetics and the Arts* (5), May 2015

“The Hidden Variable.” *Artforum*, November 2014

“Scholarrh interview! avec Finn Brunton.” *Tracés: Revue de Sciences Humaines*, June 25, 2014

“Summa Technologiae.” (Review.) *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, 2014

“Une histoire du spam.” *Le Monde diplomatique*, March 2014

“More Money More Problems.” *Artforum*, February 2014

“Kleptography.” *Radical Philosophy* 183, Jan/Feb 2014. Reprinted in *The Guardian*, January 7, 2014

“Insecurity Systems.” *Artforum*, October 2013

“Closer to the Metal.” With Gabriella Coleman. In *Media Technologies: Essays on Communication, Materiality, and Society*, ed. Tarleton Gillespie, Pablo Boczkowski, Kirsten Foot. MIT Press, 2014

“Political and Ethical Perspectives on Data Obfuscation.” With Helen Nissenbaum. In *Privacy, Due Process and the Computational Turn: The Philosophy of Law Meets the Philosophy of Technology*, ed. Mireille Hildebrandt, Katja De Vries. Routledge, 2013

“Chris Marker: 1921-2012.” *Radical Philosophy* 176, Nov/Dec 2012

“The Walled City: “Cannot One Dream of a Computer Hypothesis?”” *Radical Philosophy* 175, Sept/Oct 2012

“Constitutive Interference: Spam and Networked Communities.” *Representations* 117, Winter 2012

“Vernacular Resistance to Data Collection and Analysis: A Political Theory of Obfuscation.” With Helen Nissenbaum. *First Monday* vol 16, no 5

“Keyspace: Reflections on WikiLeaks and the Assange Papers.” *Radical Philosophy* 166, Mar/Apr 2011

“After WikiLeaks, Us.” *The New Everyday*, April 4, 2011

““Roar So Wildly”: Spam, Language, Technology.” *Radical Philosophy* 164, Nov/Dec 2010

## **PAPER PRESENTATIONS, LECTURES & WORKSHOPS**

“Making Media Middens.” SLSA, Atlanta, November 3 2016

“Introducing Obfuscation.” The New York Amateur Computer Club, New York City, February 11 2016

“Making People and Influencing Friends: Citation Networks and the Appearance of Significance.” Gaming Metrics: Innovation & Surveillance in Academic Misconduct, UC Davis, February 4-5 2016

“Understanding Obfuscation.” (Reading and book talk.) City Lights Booksellers, January 13 2016

“Memes and Online Culture.” (Video / interview.) Ideas Never Sleep, January 12 2016

“Felicitous Questions from the Interrogator: Privacy/Security and Other Category Errors.” UC Davis, November 17 2015

“Of Fembots and Men: Privacy Insights from the Ashley Madison Hack.” Privacy Research Group, New York University, October 28 2015

“Crypto and the Academy.” (Fishbowl.) Association of Internet Researchers, October 23 2015

“Hello From Earth.” The Terms of Media II: Actions. Brown University, October 8-10 2015

“Introducing Obfuscation: A User’s Guide for Privacy and Protest.” With Helen Nissenbaum. MIT CSAIL, October 2 2015

Mistakes Were Made: Computer History, Decompiled. (Moderator.) NYU, April 17 2015

“The Futurate: A Work in Progress.” Swarthmore, April 2 2015

“Two Rooms, Then and Now.” Media of Exchange: A Symposium on Cryptographic Currencies, NYU, March 4 2015

“Blockchains: History, Future, Identity.” Mellon Research Initiative in Digital Cultures, UC Davis, February 2 2015

“Shattered Illuminations: Revisiting The Work Of Art In The Age Of Mechanical Reproduction” and “The Politics of Memory at the End of Time/The Legacy of Walter Benjamin.” (Panels.) Haunted Reflections: Walter Benjamin in San Francisco, November 8 2014

“Making Money: Cryptocurrencies, Technologies of Trust, and a Decentralized Future.” Center for the Arts in Society, Carnegie Mellon University, October 27 2014

“ ‘I Hope in Ten Years Bitcoin is Really Boring.’ ” Money As Communication, October 10-12, USC

“Scams, Schemes, Cons, and Cryptocurrencies.” Digital Cash!, September 27-28, UCLA

“Interstitial: Angles of Incidence.” Lines & Nodes, September 19 2014, NYU

“Hacking Money, from Alexander the Great to Zerocoin.” HOPE X, July 19 2014

“Taking Only the Weapons.” Explorers & Pirates, June 18 2014, European University of St. Petersburg

“Getting Credit: Understanding Cryptocurrencies.” Digital Studies Colloquium, April 3 2014, University of Michigan

“The Bitcoin Protocol as a Technology: Long-Term Promises and Pitfalls.” March 18, 2014, The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, Abu Dhabi

“The Big Heat: The Materiality of Money and Computational Work.” Media, Materiality, Infrastructure Workshop, March 7, 2014, NYU

“Data Shadows: Anonymity and Digital Networks” (panel). February 27, 2014, apexart

“Security Threads and Blockchains: Understanding Monetary Security, On and Offline.” Security Research Seminar, February 18, 2014, NYU

“Sorting the Digital Humanities Out” (workshop). December 2013, HUMLab, Umeå University

“Embedding Values in UAS Design” (workshop). Drones & Aerial Robotics Conference (DARC), October 12 2013, New York University

“Privacy and Security Policy in the Present” (panel). PRISM Breakup, October 4 2013, Eyebeam

“Slash Slash Space: Digital Volatility and the Future of New Media Art.” Always Already Obsolete: Considering the convergence of analogue and digital media, September 7 2013, the New Museum

“Creativity & Mayhem: Anonymous Communities at Work.” With Gabriella Coleman and Quinn Norton. SXSWi, March 9 2013

“Four Remarks on Spam for Transmediale.” Transmediale, February 1 2013

“Thinking of Everything: Algorithmic Gaming and Thick Simulation.” Intel Science and Technology Center, November 19 2012, Cornell

“Concentrate Upon the Effect: Notes Towards a History of Radical Media.” A New Insurgency: The Port Huron Statement in Its Time and Ours, September 20 2012, University of Michigan

“Avenge Me: Anonymity, Publicity and Punishment on 4chan.” Canadian Communications Association 2012, May 30, University of Waterloo

“The Nonhumanities: Writing with Crowds and Algorithms.” Institute for the Humanities 2012 Spring Seminar, May 5 2012, University of Michigan

“The Metallurgical Machine: Exploring the Microchip with Dwarf Fortress.” Gaming the Game, April 12 2012, UC Davis

“All Tomorrow’s Pirates: Foucault, Gibson, and the Walled City.” Radical Philosophy Conference, October 21 2011, Columbia University

“Velocity/Growth: Essays and Experiments in the Digital Humanities.” Institute for the Humanities, October 4 2011, University of Michigan

“Dead Media: What the Obsolete, Unsuccessful, Experimental, and Avant-Garde Can Teach Us About the Future of Media.” USENIX ATC 2011 and Webapps plenary session, June 16 2011, Portland OR

“The Politics of User-Generated Content.” With danah boyd, Mizuko Ito, Andres Monroy-Hernandez, and Jonathan McIntosh at Digital Media and Learning 2011, March 3-6, Long Beach, CA

“Cryptography, Auditing, Perturbation, Obfuscation.” Computers, Privacy and Data Protection 2011, January 25-27, Brussels, Belgium

“Secret Languages: Privacy, Ownership and Federated Social Networks.” Privacy Research Group, October 6 2010, New York University

“Vernacular Resistance to Data Collection and Surveillance: A Political Theory of Obfuscation.” EASST 2010, September 2-4 2010, Trento, Italy

“An Infinite Continuum of Spewage: Bayesian filtering and the reinvention of spam.” International Symposium on Electronic Art, August 20-29 2010, Ruhr, Germany

“A User’s Guide to Lulzy Media, the Pleasure of Trickery, and the Politics of Spectacle: from Luddites to Anonymous.” With Prof. Gabriella Coleman at Hackers On Planet Earth, July 17 2010, New York City

“The Unbook.” Computers and Writing Conference, May 20-23 2010, Purdue University

“The Pleasure of Spam: Metagaming and Misuse in Early Computer Culture.” Cultural Studies Association, March 18-20 2010, UC Berkeley

“Creating and violating anonymity in online communities: the case of 4chan, Anon, and Dusty the Cat.” Privacy Research Group, February 24 2010, New York University

## **TEACHING**

NYU MCC-UE 1 — Introduction to Media Studies (Fall 2016)

NYU MCC-GE 2129 — Money As Media / Futures of Exchange (Spring 2016)

NYU MCC-UE 1406 — Hacker Culture & Politics (Spring 2016)

NYU MCC-UE 1 — Introduction to Media Studies (Fall 2015)

NYU MCC-UE 1406 — Hacker Culture & Politics (Spring 2015)

NYU MCC-UE 1033 — Critical Making (Spring 2015)

NYU MCC-GE 3150-001 — Special Topics in Technology Studies: Walter Benjamin and His Milieu (Fall 2014)

NYU MCC-UE 3-001 — History of Media & Communication (Fall 2014)

NYU MCC-UE 1406–001 — Hacker Culture & Politics (Spring 2014)

NYU MCC-GE 2129–001 — New Media Research Studio: Rethinking Reading (Spring 2014)

NYU MCC-UE 1200-06 — Ways of Being Free: Media, Ownership, and Creative Work Online (Fall 2013)

UM SI/UC 110 — Introduction to Information Studies (Winter/Spring 2013)

UM SI 535 — Dead Media: Preserving Culture & Context (Winter/Spring 2013)



UM SI/UC 110 — Introduction to Information Studies (Fall 2012)

NYU MCC 1021-001 — Dead Media Research Studio (Fall 2010)

NYU MCC E59 1003-001 — Introduction to Digital Media (Spring 2010)

University of Aberdeen — Digital Humanities: Contexts and Platforms (Co-taught with Dr. Kriss Ravetto.) (Fall 2008)

## **OTHER PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND SERVICE**

Editorial board member, *Internet Histories: Digital Technology, Culture, & Society* (Taylor & Francis)

Delivered a “Teaching Large Lectures” talk by request for the CAT Faculty Development Program, February 28 2016

Leaska Award reviewer

Member, departmental search and admissions committees: Media, Culture and Communication; Cinema Studies (Tisch)

Archives and Preservation Working Group, [Alliance for Networking Visual Culture](#), 2013-14

Manuscript reviewer, Princeton University Press and University of Chicago Press

Co-founder of the Office of Net Assessments publishing project, 2013

Co-organizing the Digital Environments / Cyberinfrastructure (DE/CI) 2013 Series

Co-organizing the Science, Technology, & Medicine in Society (STeMS) 2013 series

Member of the Digital Environments Cluster

Member of the Values in Design (VID) Council, working with the Future Internet Architecture Workshop for the National Science Foundation, 2010-present

Consulting on the Unbook Lab at Illinois State University, 2010

Member of the Privacy Research Group, NYU, 2009-10

Member of the Mediations Group, NYU, 2009-10

## **WEB PROJECTS AND COLLABORATIONS**

<http://enfoldment.net> Collaborated with Processing artists and Prof. Laura Marks to create companion site for *Enfoldment and Infinity* (MIT, 2010)

<http://finnb.net/a/b/> "Barricade/Labyrinth: Ten Years of Read/Writing Walter Benjamin," personal project, 2010

<http://crissp.poly.edu> Creating and managing website for the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies in Security and Privacy, 2010

Created or consulted on various academic sites

## **MEDIA AND INTERVIEWS**

Gave interviews about social networks, spam, and digital culture by National Public Radio, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, *IEEE Spectrum*, the *New York Times*, the *Corriere della Sera*, *FranceCulture*, etc.