CARGC Symposium ✕

Turning Points: The Long 1990s in Internet History

October 16 & 17, 2023

OK

<u>Organizing Committee:</u>

Aswin Punathambekar, University of Pennsylvania
Jing Wang, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Kinjal Dave, University of Pennsylvania
Ignatius Suglo, University of Pennsylvania
Devo Probol, University of Pennsylvania

<u>Co-sponsors at the University of Pennsylvania:</u>

Annenberg Center for Collaborative Communication
Center on Digital Culture and Society
Center for Advanced Study of India
Center for Africana Studies
Center for East Asian Studies
Center for Latin American and Latinx Studies
Middle East Center

Turning Points examines critical moments that shaped the development of media in various parts of the world, circumstances and histories leading to these moments, and their impact on media development in subsequent periods. Steering clear of Anglophone, north-Atlantic media histories, this symposium returns to the 'long 1990s', a period defined by major political-economic, social, and cultural transformations across Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East, to ask: what new histories of the internet emerge into view if we think from the moment of 'reform' and 'economic liberalization' in varied regional contexts? In what ways would our understanding of Internet histories and digital futures shift if we were to draw insights from media histories, practices, and environments from varied Global South contexts that do not or will not follow an easily comprehensible, linear path toward a seemingly inevitable digital horizon?

Program

Plenary: *Belatedly Global Internet Histories*
Venue: Slought, 4017 Walnut St

4:00-4:15 PM

Welcome & Introductory Remarks

4:15-5:30 PM

Plenary: *Belatedly Global Internet Histories*

Armond Towns, Carleton University

"CLR James and the State Capitalist History of the Internet"

Paromita Vohra, Parodevi Pictures

"90s girls, Hinglish, Cybersex: In through TV out to the World Wide Web"

Moderator: Jing Wang, University of Wisconsin-Madison

5:30-6:30 PM

Reception

Tuesday, October 17

The Long 1990s in Internet History

Venue: Agora at the Annenberg Public Policy Center, 202 S. 36th St + Annenberg Plaza Lobby, 3620 Walnut St

8:30-9:00 AM

Breakfast and Registration
Agora at the Annenberg Public Policy Center, 202 S. 36th St

9:00-9:15 AM

Welcome and Opening Remarks
Agora at the Annenberg Public Policy Center, 202 S. 36th St

Aswin Punathambekar, University of Pennsylvania

9:30-11:00 AM

Panel 1: In Other Times and Places
Agora at the Annenberg Public Policy Center, 202 S. 36th St

Douglas Wade-Brunton, University of the West Indies

"WOW! - It happened here: Infrastructure and the Trinidadian internet"

Geeta Patel, University of Virginia

"Analogue Currencies: Insuring the Netizen Right"

Hatim El-Hibri, George Mason University

"The Gulf War that Did Take Place: Liveness and the Problem of Network Formalism"

Marc Steinberg, Concordia University

"Japanese Convenience Stores as the Internet of the 1990s"

Moderator: Devo Probol, University of Pennsylvania

11:00-11:30 AM

Coffee & Tea Break
Agora at the Annenberg Public Policy Center, 202 S. 36th St

11:30 AM-1:00 PM

Panel 2: Imagining Communities
Agora at the Annenberg Public Policy Center, 202 S. 36th St

Madhavi Mallapragada, University of Texas at Austin

"Rediff.com: Belonging and Indian American Network Cultures"

Guobin Yang, University of Pennsylvania

"BBS and the Refashioning of Cultural Style"

Shaohua Guo, Carleton College

"Wenxuecity: Literary Roots of the Early Chinese Internet"

Anikó Imre, University of Southern California

"Telecottage in the Village: Postsocialist e-utopias of community and education in 1990s Hungary"

Moderator: Kinjal Dave, University of Pennsylvania

1:00-2:00 PM

Lunch
Annenberg Plaza Lobby, 3620 Walnut St

2:15-3:30 PM

Panel 3: Textual Relays
Agora at the Annenberg Public Policy Center, 202 S. 36th St

Kevin Driscoll, University of Virginia

"Who owns your inbox: Portability and the commercialization of internet email"

Sandeep Mertia, University of Pennsylvania

"Satellite Data Links and Software Parks: Spatializing Former Futures of Computing in India"

Sara Mourad, American University of Beirut

"Mama Told Me Not to Chat With Strangers: Cruising mIRC in Beirut"

Florence Madenga, University of Pennsylvania

"Dear Comrades: Surviving and Owning Robert Mugabe on the Internet"

Moderator: Eszter Zimanyi, University of Pennsylvania

3:30-3:45 PM

Coffee & Tea Break
Agora at the Annenberg Public Policy Center, 202 S. 36th St

3:45-5:15 PM

Panel 4: Network Dreams and Political Futures
Agora at the Annenberg Public Policy Center, 202 S. 36th St

Angela Xiao Wu, New York University

"Golden Bridge, E-government, and the Politics of Platforms in China"

Anita Say Chan, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

"Of Metrics, Merit, & Myth: The Bell Curve, Cognitive Elites and Techno-Eugenics in the Knowledge Economy"

Natalie Fenton, Goldsmiths University

"Traces of hope or trails of hopelessness: the protest and politics of Indymedia and the anti-globalisation movement"

Seyram Avle, University of Massachusetts Amherst

"From 'unbreakable' to 'not innovative': Mapping materialities and geopolitics with the Nokia 3310"

Moderator: Ignatius Suglo, University of Pennsylvania

5:15-5:30 PM

Closing: What Next?
Agora at the Annenberg Public Policy Center, 202 S. 36th St

5:30-7:00 PM

Reception
Annenberg Plaza Lobby, 3620 Walnut St