

Molly Sauter
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oddletters.com

C.V.

education

PhD McGill University: Communication Studies (expected 2019)
Supervisors: Gabriella Coleman (primary), Darin Barney
Committee: Gabriella Coleman, Darin Barney, Jonathan Sterne
Working title: *Breaking Through the Signal: Disruptive Politics and Network Communications Technology*

SM Massachusetts Institute of Technology: Comparative Media Studies (2013)
“Digital Civil Disobedience Through the Lens of Distributed Denial of Service Actions”
Committee: James Paradis, Ethan Zuckerman

BA University of Pittsburgh: History and Philosophy of Science (2010)

St John’s College (Annapolis): Philosophy, History of Science and Mathematics
(August 2005-December 2007)

Research interests: Social movement studies; infrastructure studies; political philosophy; internet studies; hacker culture; cyberlaw; science and technology studies; philosophy of technology; media studies; information security

Coursework:

History of Communication Studies (Darin Barney)
Feminist Interpretive Methods in Media (Carrie Rentschler)
Global Media Governance (Marc Raboy)
Emerging Media and Hacker Studies (Gabriella Coleman)
Social Movements and Sabotage (Darin Barney)

Summer Workshops:

Oxford Internet Institute Summer Doctoral Program (2017)
Data & Society Workshop on Media Manipulation and Propaganda (2017)
Annenberg-Oxford Media Policy Summer Institute (2014)

Comprehensive exams: History and theory of American, Canadian, and European social movements (1600s to the present); The politics of “disruption”; Deployments of “disruption” in techno-culture

awards + grants

Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship (2015-2018)
\$50,000 yearly stipend, awarded to 50 doctoral students nation-wide each year

Media@McGill Travel Grant, McGill University (2014)

Richard H. Tomlinson Doctoral Fellowship, McGill University (2013-2015)
\$25,000 yearly stipend, awarded to one doctoral student university-wide each year

McCall MacBain Fellowship in the Arts, McGill University (2013-2015)
\$5,000 yearly stipend

CMS/Civic Media Summer Research and Development Grant, MIT (Summer, 2012)
Awarded to support research and development at the Electronic Frontier Foundation

Comparative Media Studies Professional Development Grant, MIT (2012, 2013)

Center for Civic Media Research Assistantship, Media Lab, MIT (2011-2013)
Full tuition and stipend.

J.K. and Gertrude Miller Award, Department of English, University of Pittsburgh (2009)
Awarded for "The Problem with 'Completely Original.'"

Brackenridge Research Fellowship, University Honors College, University of Pittsburgh (2009)
Awarded to complete original research on remix practices and IP law.

fellowships + affiliations

Cyber Security Fellow, New America, Washington D.C. (2015-2016)

Fellow, Consortium for Emerging Technologies, Military Operations, and National Security, Case Western Reserve University (2014-2015)

International Relations and Digital Technology Collective, Canadian International Council, (2013-2015)

Research Affiliate, Berkman Center for Internet and Society, Harvard University (2013-2015)

Research Affiliate, Center for Civic Media, MIT (2013-2015)

Fellow, Berkman Center for Internet and Society, Harvard University (2012-2013)

publications + presentations

books (peer reviewed)

The Coming Swarm: DDOS Actions, Hacktivism, and Civil Disobedience on the Internet, Bloomsbury Academic, New York NY (October 2014)

articles (peer reviewed)

“LOIC Will Tear Us Apart: The Impact of Tool Design and Media Portrayals in the Success of Activist DDOS Attacks,” *American Behavioral Scientist: Special Issue on New Media and Social Unrest*, editors Zeynep Tufekci and Deen Freelon, *American Behavioral Scientist*, Volume 57 Issue 7, July 2013, pp. 983 – 1007. DOI: 10.1177/0002764213479370

book chapters + encyclopedia entries (peer reviewed)

“Kevin Mitnick, The New York Times, and the Media’s Conception of the Hacker,” *Making Our World: Hacker and Maker Movements in Context*, editors Andrew Schrock and Jeremy Hunsinger, Peter Lang (forthcoming) (pre-print available at: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2943042)

“Activist DDoS, Community, and the Personal,” *Civic Media: Technology, Design, Practice*, editors Eric Gordon and Paul Mihailidis, MIT Press, Cambridge MA (June 2016)

“Distributed Denial of Service Actions,” *International Encyclopedia of Media Literacy*, Wiley-Blackwell, Hoboken, NJ (forthcoming)

scholarly essays

“Persuasion and the other thing: a critique of big data methodologies in politics,” *Ethnography Matters*, 24 May 2017, available at <http://ethnographymatters.net/blog/2017/05/24/persuasion-and-the-other-thing-a-critique-of-big-data-methodologies-in-politics/>

“The Illicit Aura of Information” *limn*, Issue 8, February 2017, available at <http://limn.it/the-illicit-aura-of-information/>

law review articles

“Show Me on the Map Where They Hacked You: Cyberwar and the Geospatial Internet Doctrine,” *Case Western Journal of International Law* (2015)

academic book reviews

“Book Review: Terrorism in Cyberspace: The Next Generation,” *Journal of Communication*, Volume 65 Issue 6, December 2015, pp. E13-E15.

selected invited talks

“The Current State of Cybersecurity,” Twice-yearly invited lecture series, NAVAIR Leadership Development Seminar, Naval Post-Graduate School (May 2015-present)

“Radical Nostalgia and the Politics of Disruption,” Databite Speaker Series, Data and Society (June 2016)

“Disruption as Radical Nostalgia,” ISP Law and Technology Speaker Series, Yale Law School (April 2016)

“Liberation Technology and Digital Dissidence,” Northwestern University, Northwestern University Conference on Human Rights (17 January 2015)

“The Coming Swarm: A Fireside Chat with Molly Sauter and Laurie Penny,” Berkman Center, Harvard University (29 October 2014)

“The Geospatial Metaphor of the Internet and Cyberwar Policy,” International Regulation of Emerging Military Technologies, Case Western Reserve University School of Law (5 September 2014)

“The Digital Street: Disruption and the Dilemma of Civil Disobedience Online,” Ideas Lunch Series, Information Society Project, Yale Law School (December 2013)

“Where is the Digital Street: Disruption, Activism, and Free Speech Online,” Inamori Center for Ethics and Excellence, Case Western University (November 2013)

“‘LOIC Will Tear Us Apart’: The Impact of Tool Design and Media Portrayals in the Success of Activist DDOS Attacks,” Berkman Center Lunch Talk, Harvard University, (January 2013)

“What You Say Is What You Get: Why Using ‘Hacker’ as a Synonym for ‘Criminal’ Is Killing Political Speech Online,” Ignite talk, News Foo Camp (November 2012) ([video](#))

selected conference talks

“Technically Unequal: Representational Issues in Technology Scholarship and Journalism,” panel presentation, AOIR, Berlin (October 2016)

“The Performative Turn in Hacker Epistemic Politics,” ICA, Seattle, (May 2014)

“The Future of Direct Activism Online,” panel presentation, SXSW Interactive, (March 2014)

“Kevin Mitnick, the New York Times, and the Media’s Conception of the Hacker,” IAMCR, Dublin (June 2013)

“[Kevin Mitnick, the New York Times, and the Media’s Conception of the Hacker](#),” Media In Transition 8, MIT (May 2013)

“[Closing Plenary: Summing Up, Looking Ahead](#),” Media In Transition 8, MIT (May 2013)

“The Ethics of Activist DDOS Actions,” solo lecture, Chaos Communication Congress (29c3), (December 2012)

“Activist DDOS Attacks: When Similes and Metaphors Fail,” solo talk, HOPE NUMBER 9 (July 2012)

“Lolitics: Politics and Memes,” panel (moderator) ROFLcon III (May 2012)

“DDOS as an Activist Tactic: Anonymous in Context,” (paper presentation, session chair), PCA/ACA National Conference (April 2012) (April 2012)

“Policy Effects of the Media Portrayals of Hacktivists,” solo lecture, SXSW Interactive (March 2012)

“Participatory Culture and Interactivity in Literature,” Brackenridge Research Lecture, University Honors College, University of Pittsburgh (July 2009)

selected keynotes

“DDoS Actions and the Internet of Things”, keynote address, Inman Hacker Connect (January 2017)

“Public Computing and the Revolution,” keynote address, ACCESS 2015 (September 2015), available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CtzmFrLnGo>

“The Securitized State,” keynote address, BSIDES Boston (May 2015), available at <https://www.irongeek.com/i.php?page=videos/bsidesboston2015/k00-the-securitized-state-where-it-came-from-where-its-going-what-can-be-done-about-it-molly-sauter>

selected popular publications

essays

“Instant Recall,” *Real Life Mag*, 27 June 2017, available at <http://reallifemag.com/instant-recall/>

“The Apophenic Machine,” *Real Life Mag*, 15 May 2017, available at <http://reallifemag.com/the-apophenic-machine/>

“When is a Hack an Act of War?” *VICE Motherboard*, 28 July 2016, available at <http://motherboard.vice.com/read/policy-directive-41-cyber-incidents>

“Sorry Boss: Citizens Not Celebrities Must Sway Anti-LGBT Policies,” *Globe and Mail*, 12 April 2016

“Hactivist Action Came Too Soon in Ottawa,” *Metro*, 25 November 2014, available at <http://metronews.ca/news/canada/1221939/hactivist-action-came-too-soon-in-ottawa/>

“The Future of Civil Disobedience Online,” *iO9*, 17 June 2013, available at <http://io9.com/the-future-of-civil-disobedience-online-512193648>

“If Hackers Didn’t Exist, Governments Would Have to Invent Them,” *The Atlantic*, 5 July 2012, available at <http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2012/07/if-hackers-didnt-exist-governments-would-have-to-invent-them/259463/>

“Guy Fawkes Maskology,” *HiLoBrow*, 30 April 2012, available at <http://hilobrow.com/2012/04/30/mask/>

“The Visual Life of Occupy Wall Street,” *In Media Res*, Spring 2012, available at http://cms.mit.edu/news/features/2012/02/the_visual_life_of_occupy_wall.php

Jonathan Zittrain and Molly Sauter, “Will the U.S. Internet get a “kill switch”?” *MIT Technology Review*, 4 March 2011, available at <http://www.technologyreview.com/web/32451>

Jonathan Zittrain and Molly Sauter, “Everything You Need to Know About Wikileaks” *MIT Technology Review*, 9 December 2010, available at <http://www.technologyreview.com/computing/26875/>

Dan Jones and Molly Sauter, “Wikileaks and the Information Wars” (podcast) (producer) Radio Berkman (Harvard) 8 December 2010, available at http://wilkins.law.harvard.edu/podcasts/mediaberkmann/radioberkman/2010-12-09_004JZLESSIG.mp3

Dan Jones and Molly Sauter, “Jonathan and Larry Take on...Net Neutrality!” (podcast) (producer) Radio Berkman (Harvard) 15 October 2010, available at http://wilkins.law.harvard.edu/podcasts/mediaberkmann/radioberkman/2010-10-14_002JZLESSIG.mp3

Dan Jones and Molly Sauter, “I Am Not A Lawyer: Competition!” (podcast) (producer, co-host) Radio Berkman (Harvard) 16 September 2010, available at http://wilkins.law.harvard.edu/podcasts/mediaberkmann/radioberkman/2010-09-09_IANAL.mp3

Dan Jones and Molly Sauter, “Jonathan Zittrain and Larry Lessig Take on...Competition!” (podcast) (producer) Radio Berkman (Harvard) 9 September 2010, available at http://wilkins.law.harvard.edu/podcasts/mediaberkmann/radioberkman/2010-09-09_JZLL01.mp3

book reviews

“Are We For Sale? Tim Wu’s *The Attention Merchants* Explores the Price We Pay for Content,” *The National Post*, 26 October 2016

“Algorithm Is Gonna Get You: Cathy O’Neil’s Weapons of Math Destruction Explores How We’re Trapped By Big Data,” *The National Post*, 19 October 2016

“How Do We Make America Great? ‘Necessary Trouble’ and ‘Against Democracy’ Take Contrasting Views,” *Los Angeles Times*, 6 September 2016

“Gretchen Bakke’s The Grid Illustrates the Right Way to Fix What’s Wrong with the Future of Energy,” *The National Post*, 29 July 2016

“Death by Video Game: What is it About Video Games That Inspires Such Intense Engagement?” *The National Post*, 23 June 2016

“In Televangelist of Technology Kevin Kelly’s Divinely-Guided, The Inevitable, The Future Isn’t Quite For Everyone,” *The National Post*, 7 June 2016

press coverage

expert interviews

My research has been featured in [Popular Mechanics](#), [Boing Boing](#), the [BBC](#), and [Der Spiegel](#).

“Canadians not terribly savvy about digital privacy, poll finds,”
<http://www.cbc.ca/news/investigates/cbc-poll-digital-privacy-habits-canadians-1.3851498> *CBC News*, 30 November 2016

“DDoS attack against whitehouse.gov eyed as a valid protest,”
<http://www.computerworld.com/article/3158904/security/ddos-attack-against-whitehouse-gov-eyed-as-a-valid-protest.html> *ComputerWorld*, 17 January 2017

“How ISIS uses the tools of activism for its own violent goals,”
<https://www.pri.org/stories/2015-03-16/how-isis-uses-tools-activism-its-own-violent-goals> *The World*, PRI, 16 March 2015

“Tape over your laptop camera? Why it might not be as paranoid as it seems,”
<http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/laptop-camera-security-tape-1.3649678> *CBC News*, CBC, 24 June 2016

“Popcorn Time/New Ransomware”
<http://www.cbc.ca/radio/asithappens/as-it-happens-thursday-edition-1.3896872/dec-15-2016-episode-transcript-1.3900921> *As It Happens*, CBC, 15 December 2016

“Mirai/Internet attack,”
<http://www.cbc.ca/radio/asithappens/as-it-happens-friday-edition-1.3814209> *As It Happens*, CBC, 21 October 2016

“The Age of Robin Hood Hackers” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MaEhq780sGo>
The National, CBC, 10 April 2016

“When Hackers Make Headlines,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IY4mN9euSYs>
The National Sunday Talk, CBC, 26 August 2015

“[How hacktivism intersects with law.](#)” *Marketplace*, American Public Media, 28 April 2017

“[Which Cyber Hacks Should We Worry About](#),” *Science Friday*, PRI, 16 January 2015

“[Lizard Squad goes after Twitch. Cyber criminals or just Internet Trolls?.](#)” *Christian Science Monitor*, 28 August, 2014

“[The fight to make DDoS attacks a legitimate form of protest.](#)” *The Daily Dot*, 19 June 2014

“[Civil disobedience comes online.](#)” *Marketplace*, American Public Media, 24 June 2013

“[CyberBunker: Hacking as Performance Art.](#)” *BusinessWeek*, 4 April 2013

“[The Pirate Bay and DDOS Actions.](#)” *Outriders*, BBC5, 29 January 2013

“[So geht ziviler Ungehorsam im Internet.](#)” *Der Spiegel*, 28 December 2012

“[Crowds.](#)” *The Digital Human*, 4 June 2012

“[doing it for the LULZ.](#)” *Too Much Information*, WFMU, 9 April 2012

“[SXSW: The hacker you think you know doesn't exist.](#)” *Popular Mechanics*, 16 March 2012

“[LulzSec hackers take a dive on account of a stoolie.](#)” *Marketplace*, American Public Media, 7 March 2012

“[Four signs 'hacktivism' has gone mainstream.](#)” *CBC News*, 7 February 2012

“[Hacktivism.](#)” *Click On*, BBC4, 31 October 2011

“[Impulsan en EU 'apagón estratégico' de internet.](#)” *Reforma*, 6 March 2011

“[Hackers' attacks alarm the Web.](#)” *The Boston Globe*, 10 December 2010

“[Cercos a WikiLeaks levam a temor de censura.](#)” *Folha de S. Paulo*, 14 December 2010

coverage + reviews of *The Coming Swarm*

selected academic reviews

[“...a strong and timely reminder of a nearly forgotten history of Internet radicalism and a reclamation of DDoS as a legitimate tool for civil disobedience.”](#) Guobin Yang, *Contemporary Sociology*, American Sociological Association, Vol 45, Issue 2. (2016)

[“...provide\[s\] \[a\] thorough analysis of activism in the age of new media and offer\[s\] a critical appraisal of digitally mediated potentials for progress and democracy...”](#)

Mariam Betlemidze, *New Media and Society*, Vol 18, Issue 5. (2016)

[“...a valuable source for researchers, activists and even policymakers, and it should find specifically a home on the shelves of social movement and collective action scholars.”](#)

Leonie Maria Tanczer, *London School of Economics and Political Science Review of Books*. (May 2015)

selected popular reviews + coverage

[One of Science Friday's Best Science Books of 2014](#)

[One of io9's Best Science Books of 2014](#)

[One of the EFF's "Must-Reads" of 2014](#)

[“...essential for those who are interested in the future of activism and the role that the internet might play in it...”](#) Sofia Romualdo, *The Curious Curator*, 24 August 2014

[“The History of DDoS Attacks as a Tool of Protest.”](#) Joseph Cox, *Vice Motherboard*, 1 October 2014

[“DDoS Attacks: Legitimate Form of Protest or Criminal Act?”](#) Sophia Stuart, *PCMag*, 20 October 2014

[“Legalise online protests to safeguard democracy.”](#) Christopher Baraniuk, *The New Scientist*, 25 October 2014

[“Molly Sauter's quest to make political DDoS legitimate,”](#) Joe Urchill, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 8 December 2014

[“...\[The Coming Swarm\] is an excellent source on the history of the tactic.”](#) – Kevin Carson, *Center for a Stateless Society*, 18 December 2014

[“...a thought-provoking little bomb of a book that raises issues activists in 2014 can't afford to ignore...”](#) – Astra Taylor, *Salon*, 26 December 2014

experience

research

McGill University, Montreal, QC (2013-2015)

Research assistant to Gabriella Coleman

Electronic Frontier Foundation, San Francisco, CA (Summer, 2012)
Activism intern under Rainey Reitman, research under Hanni Fakhoury

Center for Civic Media, MIT Media Lab, Cambridge, MA (2011-present)
Research assistant, working on projects covering multiple areas including: collaborative design processes under Sasha Costanza-Chock; global digital activism under Ethan Zuckerman

Berkman Center for Internet and Society, Cambridge, MA (2010-2011)
Research assistant to Jonathan Zittrain, working on projects covering multiple areas including: ubiquitous human computing; Internet regulation and governance; circumvention and hacktivism; information security; cyberwar; IP law and cyberlaw

Berkman Center for Internet and Society, Cambridge, MA (Summer, 2010)
Summer intern working with: ICANN Accountability & Transparency Review; Digital Natives; Radio Berkman; Jonathan Zittrain; William Fisher (on user innovation)

University Honors College, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA (Summer 2009)
Brackenridge Research Fellow; completed original research in post-print literary criticism, IP law, and digital remix traditions

teaching

Harvard Law School, Cambridge MA (2011)
Teaching assistant, Difficult Problems in Cyberlaw II, a joint seminar between Stanford and Harvard including law, business, design, and undergraduate students, under Jonathan Zittrain

Stanford Law School, Stanford, CA (January 2011)
Teaching assistant, Difficult Problems in Cyberlaw (joint Harvard Law School-Stanford Law seminar), under Jonathan Zittrain

Harvard Law School, Cambridge, MA (2010)
Teaching assistant, Identifying Difficult Problems in Cyberlaw, under Jonathan Zittrain

University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA (2010)
Teaching assistant, Advanced Digital Composition, under Jamie Skye Bianco, English Dept

University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA (2010)
Instructor, Russian Fairy Tales, under David Birnbaum, Slavic Department

St John's College, Annapolis, MD (2006-2007)
Lab assistant, Freshman & Junior Lab, under Alan Pichanick and Jonathan Badger

professional

Steel Penny Games, Austin, TX (2008)

Lead Narrative Designer; responsible for creating six-part story arc including original characters, wrote cut-scene and incidental dialogue.

myYearbook.com, New Hope, PA (2006-2007)

Head Content Creator & User Wrangler

invited conferences

State Responses to Cyber Threats Workshop (2016): Invited Presenter, Berkeley, CA

[Security and Human Behavior Workshop\(2016\)](#): Invited Presenter, Cambridge, MA

Microsoft Research Social Computing Symposium (2013): Invited Participant, New York, NY

[Security and Human Behavior Workshop \(2013\)](#): Invited Presenter, Los Angeles, CA

NewsFoo (2012): Invited Participant, Phoenix, AZ

Digital Media and Disruptive Publics Workshop (2012): Invited Participant, Nairobi

Global Voices Citizen Media Summit 2012: Invited Participant, Nairobi

conference organizing + program committee + staff

Workshop on Free and Open Communications on the Internet (USENIX Security Symposium) (2017): Program Committee, Vancouver, BC, Canada

Abusive Language Workshop (Association of Computational Linguistics)(2017): Program Committee, Vancouver, BC, Canada

Innovation and its Contestants (5th Annual Emerging Scholars Conference) (2014): Organizing Committee, McGill University, Quebec, Canada

ShmooCon 2011: Staff, Washington DC

Four Ideas for a Better Internet (2011): Co-Organizer, Stanford University, CA

Penguicon (2009-2010): Staff

languages

English (native speaker), French (speaking + reading: intermediate), Mandarin Chinese (speaking + reading: elementary), Ancient Greek (reading: elementary)

computer languages, design + productivity programs

Processing, Audacity, Inform 7, Adobe Flash, Actionsript, Dreamweaver, Photoshop, Illustrator, Premiere, Soundbooth, HTML/XML/CSS, WordPress

volunteer work + professional activities

Harvard-MIT-Yale Cyberscholars Working Group (2011-2013)

Co-coordinator

International Game Developers Association (2008-2011)

Assistant Editor, Game Writers Quarterly

Copy editor, IGDA Newsletter

University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA (2009-2010)

University Honors College Lecture Coordinator

History and Philosophy of Science Association President

Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Pittsburgh, PA (2009-2010)

Scientific Illustrator: Section of Mollusks, Section of Vertebrate Paleontology

associations

Association of Internet Researchers

International Association of Media and Communication Researchers

International Communication Association

Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association

International Game Developers Association