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Call for Papers

Conference title: **Web_site Histories: Theories, Methods, Analysis**

One-day conference, October 14th 2008. The main purpose of *Web_site Histories* is to place the new and emerging field of Web History on the research agenda and to map the field of historical website studies.

Organizer: The Centre for Internet Research, University of Aarhus, Denmark.

The conference is associated the AoIR 9.0 conference "*Rethinking Communities, Rethinking Place*" in Copenhagen (<http://conferences.aoir.org>)

Confirmed keynote speakers:

Kirsten Foot, Associate Professor, University of Washington

Steven Schneider, Professor, State University of New York

Title: Object-Oriented Web Historiography.

Abstract: Foot & Schneider will present a keynote address that focuses on their proposal of an "object-oriented" approach to researching and writing Web history. They will consider the various meanings of object entailed within the notion of object-oriented Web historiography in order to advance both the theoretical foundation and methodological rigor of developmental analyses of Web artifacts in their hyperlinked contexts. Developmental analyses of any aspect of the Web, whether engaged in contemporaneously or retrospectively, entail dynamics within and between the (co)producers of Web artifacts, production practices and techniques, and Web artifacts themselves. These dynamics make it difficult but very important for scholars to identify and situate their object(s) of analysis historically and theoretically. See extended description at <http://www.cfi.au.dk/en/events/conferences/wsh08/keynote>.

Kirsten Foot and Steven Schneider are the authors of *Web Campaigning* (MIT Press 2006) as well as a number of articles about Web Sphere Analysis.

A panel will round off the conference by discussing the future directions of studies of Web History. Besides Kirsten Foot and Steven Schneider panel participant will be Niels Brügger, Associate Professor, the Centre for Internet Research, University of Aarhus.

The main purpose of *Web_site Histories* is to place the new and emerging field of Web History on the research agenda and to map the field of historical website studies. The focus on the Web can be seen as a specialization within the larger field of Internet History, but with another subset of questions and challenges. The underscore in the title reflects the uncertainty and variability of the object of study – are we talking about the Web in general, Web Spheres, individual websites, or web pages? The conference welcomes papers on any of these approaches or any other theme, topic or idea connected to the theories, methods or analysis of Web History. Theoretical approaches could be discussions of the object of study or reflections on doing historical research on this particular subject. Methodological approaches may include abstract or more specific considerations of the range of applicable methods, both old and new, to Web History. Finally, the analytical approach welcomes contributions exploring the practical hazards and possibilities of this special kind of empirical material, as well as papers on concrete empirical studies.

Papers are also welcome on a wide array of historically-grounded themes. The topics below are examples of the kinds of issues paper presenters are invited to address — but are not intended to limit topics suitable for paper submissions:

- General as well as more specific histories of the development of the Web, focusing on, for instance, technology, graphic design, culture etc.
- The history of the Web as a subset of the history of the Internet, with emphasis on, for instance, the development of hardware, software and protocols
- The organizational architecture of the Web in a global, national, transnational or local perspective
- Defining moments and events on the Web, either in terms of how the Web was conceived and built, or in terms of how it is or was perceived and used
- Demographical, social, cultural, or other factors influencing Web use and uptake
- Political, economic, institutional or personal histories of the Web
- The growing popularity of social networking sites in a historical perspective
- Interactivity, genre and media discussions in relation to the Web

- The histories of expectations in pre-web time meeting the reality of the Web
- Source availability and validity – the archiving of the Web
- The history of the Web in the larger framework of media history

Please send abstracts of no more than 300 words by April 15th 2008 (further instructions at <http://www.cfi.au.dk/en/wsh08>). After a process of double-blind peer review, authors will be notified of accepted papers by May 15th. Full papers will be due by August 31st 2008. Please note that there is a maximum of 30 participants, and priority will be given to paper presenters. Paper presentations will consist of short presentations with opponents/discussants and roundtable-style discussions. Presenters are therefore also expected to act as opponents/discussants.

Participation in the conference is free, and coffee and lunch is included (yes, there is such a thing as a free lunch). Following the conference, papers will be considered for inclusion in an edited volume on Web Histories.

The conference takes place at the University of Aarhus, two days before the start of the AoIR 9.0 conference in Copenhagen (<http://conferences.aoir.org>). Aarhus is situated west of Copenhagen and is the second largest city in Denmark with a population of approximately 300,000. It is accessible by train or by air via the Aarhus or Billund airports. Read more about Aarhus and the university: <http://www.au.dk/en/why> and <http://www.au.dk/en/aarhus.htm>.

The Centre for Internet Research is located at the Institute of Information and Media Studies, and was established in September 2000 in order to promote research into the social and cultural implications and functions of the internet. Read more about the Centre:

<http://www.cfi.au.dk/en/about/profile>

Conference website: <http://www.cfi.au.dk/en/wsh08>.

The conference is sponsored by:

- 'The Knowledge Society', a joint research priority area at the Faculty of Humanities, University of Aarhus,
- the Institute of Information and Media Studies, University of Aarhus

- the Centre for Internet Research, University of Aarhus.

About the organisers:

Niels Brügger (PhD, MA) is Associate Professor at the Institute of Information and Media Studies, University of Aarhus, and co-founder of the Centre for Internet Research. His primary research interests are website history, web archiving, and the internet and media theory, and he recently started the research project "The history of www.dr.dk, 1996-2006" (read more at <http://imv.au.dk/~nb>).

Vidar Falkenberg (MSc) is a PhD fellow at the Institute of Information and Media Studies, University of Aarhus, and a member of the Centre for Internet Research. His research is on the development of online newspapers in Denmark (read more at <http://www.internetaviser.dk>).