

Title: Deciding Where to Live: Information Studies on Where to Live in America, A Discussion

Organizers: Melissa G. Ocepek, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign

Key Participants: Philip Doty, University of Texas at Austin; Jamillah R. Gabriel, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign; David Hopping, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign; Carol F. Landry; Judith Pintar, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign; Steve Sawyer, Syracuse University

Abstract: Deciding where to live in a country or city and whether to rent or buy are just the tip of the iceberg in terms of the informational issues around deciding where to live. These decisions involve a dynamic assortment of people, information sources, behaviors, and problems. In this session we demonstrate the benefits of bringing a variety of library and information science (LIS) scholars together to explore an everyday information topic and show how different perspective highlight the complexity of the everyday. Each speaker will present their approach to the question of where to live from varying perspectives including privacy, surveillance, race and information, intergenerational community informatics, popular cultural information sources, information behavior, social informatics, information work, collective memory-making, and storytelling. This panel brings together several of the authors involved in the forthcoming edited volume, *Deciding Where to Live: Information Studies on Where to Live in America*.

Description:

Purpose and Intended Audience: This session will appeal to a range of iConference attendees because it will exemplify the variety of research perspectives and approaches that can be used to explore everyday information. Each speaker will present their approach to the question of where to live, to include privacy, surveillance, race and information, intergenerational community informatics, popular cultural information sources, information behavior, social informatics, information work, collective memory-making, and storytelling. As our panel includes scholars from student to full professors, we hope to appeal to all types of attendees. We hope to inspire other scholars to bring different perspectives together to explore other phenomenon.

Proposed activities including agenda, ramp-up (development), and follow-through: The session will open with a 5-minute introduction from the moderator/organizer presenting the goals of the session, format, and introducing the speakers. Then each speaker will present for 4-minutes about their specific approach to addressing the information issues surrounding where to live. Each speaker will briefly describe the literature and area of LIS they drew from as well as what that perspective brings to an exploration of everyday information. The talks will be followed by a brief Q&A. The final 20 minutes of the session will include a moderated discussion of the benefits and challenges of bringing such a variety of LIS scholars together to explore an information question and a short Q&A with the audience.

Panelists:

Melissa G. Ocepek will moderate and speak about how her work on exploring how the 2007 Housing Crisis affected home and garden sources of information in the popular culture including HGTV programs and home and garden magazines. Here analysis highlights how media created

to help many people escape the uncertainty of the outside world and focus on their homes were impacted by one of the worst housing crises in American history.

Philip Doty will discuss some important implications of “smart home” technologies for privacy and surveillance, including the integration of home security systems with voice-activated digital assistants and other “smart” technologies. The presentation will combine insights from privacy and surveillance theories and results of empirical studies of “smart home” inhabitants with studies of the history of the mechanized home, gender-sensitive studies of that home, and information policy. These all provide insight into how “smart home” technologies influence the potential for choosing where and how to live.

Jamillah R. Gabriel will discuss the unique issues facing African Americans when determining a place to live from an historical perspective. Her examination highlights the information search strategies and sources used by this particular population, with special attention paid to ranking lists that suggest best and worst places for African Americans to live. This study provides insight into how race is an important factor with long-lasting impact on information behavior.

David Hopping will explore the implicit information architectures of a new kind of retirement community, designed to support successful aging through robust social engagement that addresses acute social needs. Such architectures implement replicable design patterns and boundary objects in flexible ways that can mitigate the cognitive and emotional burdens entailed, making it make sense to take on audacious later-life ventures demanding personal risk and transformative effort. These architectures may make possible a new departure in housing policy that focuses on "super-optimal" frameworks for supportive housing and aging-in-community.

Carol F. Landry will discuss how emotion and time pressure influenced the information behavior of high stakes decision makers within the homebuying domain. These deciders included homebuyers and homebuying stakeholders such as lenders, real estate agents and escrow agents. Analysis of Landry's inquiry revealed that "information use" induced deciders' emotions and created a sense of time urgency, whereas "non-information use" behaviors were propelled by their feelings and perception of time pressure. Furthermore, findings revealed the emergent themes of "of information use by proxy" and the alteration of one's usual information behavior as a consequence of emotion and time pressure.

Judith Pinter will address the issue of *where we are allowed* to live, by looking at homeowners in context of racially biased real estate practices in the United States in 20th century. The federal Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) hired 30,000 people to collect the qualitative and quantitative data that became the redlined maps of major population centers across the U.S.. Using the case of the city of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and its extreme and persistent racial segregation, she approaches redlined maps as knowledge generating artifacts where understandings about race are not only collected, but also generated and then reproduced through storytelling. It is not enough to understand how redlined data affected loan choices and home owning options; it is necessary to uncover how language -- stories -- can weaponize data to shape the world, and how revealing the nature of those stories pushes back.

Steve Sawyer will emphasize the concepts of computerization, using the changes in real estate agent's working context, working arrangements, their uses of information and communication technologies; and, the shift in their role from information custodians to information brokers. As part of this he will explore the concept of digital assemblages, the ways in which markets adapt to information, and the importance of information intermediation.

Relevance to the Conference/Significance to the Field: Everyday information provides many opportunities to bring together a variety of LIS scholars to explore a shared phenomenon of interest. This amalgamation of scholarship both highlights the unique attributes of each sub-field while also emphasizing the beauty and complexity of our information world. The approach taken by the organizer and speakers should inspire other novel collaborations to explore information in new ways.

Virtual Technologies: This virtual interactive session will be presented via Zoom. The presenters will pre-record their talks and the moderator will moderate questions and discussions throughout the session using the chat and virtual hand-raising for calling on audience members who wish to use the mic. We will also keep notes and share questions via a shareable Google Doc to allow audience members to easily follow along and create a record of the session.

Duration: One 90-minute session