

M. C. ELISH

Data & Society Research Institute
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EDUCATION

- 2017 **Columbia University**
Ph.D. in Sociocultural Anthropology
Dissertation: *24/7: Drone Operations and the Distributed Labor of War*
Committee: Nadia Abu El-Haj, Elizabeth Povinelli, Cassie Fennell, Matt Jones, Lucy Suchman
- 2010 **Massachusetts Institute of Technology**
M.S. in Comparative Media Studies
Thesis: *The Evolution of Intimacy: Advertising Personal Computers in the 1980s*
Committee: William Uricchio, Nick Montfort, Henry Jenkins
- 2006 **Columbia University**
B.A. in Art History
Honors thesis: *Mediating Media: The Art of Adrian Piper*
Advisor: Rosalyn Deutsche

PROFESSIONAL RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Researcher, *Intelligence & Autonomy Initiative Data & Society, NY* (Oct 2014-present)

Lead researcher and project manager for multi-year MacArthur Foundation funded research project examining legal and policy implications of intelligent systems in the US. Research activities include interviewing and data synthesis and historical case studies and will result in white papers and suggested policy guidelines.

Research and writing lead, *AI Now: OSTP White House Workshop on the Social and Economic Implications of AI, NY* (Jun-July 2016)

Lead author and research on Labor and AI, and Health and AI primers produced for experts workshop at NYU and as a publicly available resource to provide thorough overviews of the opportunities and issues posed by the introduction of AI across AI Now's four focus areas: Labor, Health, Inequality and Ethics.

Research consultant (freelance) (May 2014 – Oct 2014)

Clients included: Samsung Research and Stem Healthcare. Conducted onsite interviews, organized and implemented user testing and data collection, synthesized data and generated consumer insights for future product development in IOT and healthcare domains.

Project manager, *Patten Studio NY* (Sept 2010 – Aug 2013)

Supervised small team of engineers and designers in the development and production of digital interactive media installations for retail and corporate environments. Managed press and client relations.

UX design research intern, *Yahoo! Innovation Research Group Sunnyvale, CA* (June 2011 – Aug 2011)

Designed and conducted rapid ethnographic study of customization in home computer use. Led workshops to analyze and convey insights from field research to designers from multiple Yahoo! verticals.

PUBLICATIONS

Books

- [1] Elish, M.C. and Hwang, Tim. (2016). *An AI Pattern Language*. Data & Society Research Institute. Available online: <http://autonomy.datasociety.net/patternlanguage/>

Academic Journal Articles

- [1] Elish, M.C. (2017). "Factoring control: A history of U.S. Air Force Drone Operations." *Science, Technology and Human Values* 42(6): 1100-1131. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0162243917731523>
- [2] Elish, M.C. and danah boyd. (2017). "Situating Methods in the Magic of Big Data and AI." *Communication Monographs Special Issue on Advances in Methods and Statistics*: 1-24. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03637751.2017.1375130>

Reports, Primers, and White Papers

- [1] Crawford, Kate, Meredith Whittaker, M.C. Elish, Solon Barocas, Aaron Plasek, and Kadija Ferryman. (2016) "The AI Now Report: A summary of the AI Now public symposium, hosted by the White House and New York University's Information Law Institute, July 7th, 2016." https://artificialintelligencenow.com/media/documents/AINowSummaryReport_3_RpmwKHu.pdf
- [2] Elish, M.C., Meredith Whittaker, Kate Crawford. (2016) "AI Now Workshop Primer: Labor and AI." https://artificialintelligencenow.com/media/documents/AI_NOW_LABOR_PRIMER.pdf
- [3] Elish, M.C., Kadija Ferryman, Meredith Whittaker, Kate Crawford, Aaron Plasek. (2016) "AI Now Workshop Primer: Health and AI." https://artificialintelligencenow.com/media/documents/AI_NOW_HEALTH_PRIMER.pdf
- [4] Plasek, Aaron, Kate Crawford, Meredith Whittaker, M.C. Elish. (2016) "AI Now Workshop Primer: Ethics and AI." https://artificialintelligencenow.com/media/documents/AI_NOW_ETHICS_PRIMER_T1yYKVR.pdf
- [5] Elish, M.C. (2016) Moral Crumple Zones: Cautionary Tales in Human-Robot Interaction. Data & Society Working Paper. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2757236
- [6] Elish, M.C. and Tim Hwang. (2015) Praise the Machine! Punish the Human! The Contradictory History of Accountability in Automated Aviation. Data & Society Working Paper. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2720477

Selected Essays and Public Writing

- [1] Elish, M.C. (2016) "Letting Autopilot Off the Hook." *Slate.com* Jun 16. http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/future_tense/2016/06/why_do_blame_humans_when_automation_fails.html
- [2] Elish, M.C. (2016) "Algorithms and the Future of Work." *Slate.com* Feb 22. http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/future_tense/2016/02/algorithms_can_make_good_co_workers.html
- [3] Woolley, Sam, danah boyd, Meredith Broussard, M.C. Elish, Lainna Fader, Tim Hwang, Alexis Lloyd, Gilad Lotan, Luis Daniel Palacios, Allison Parrish, Gilad Rosner, Saiph Savage, and Samantha Shorey. (2016) "How to Think About Bots." *Vice.com* http://motherboard.vice.com/read/how-to-think-about-bots?utm_source=mbtwitteruk

- [4] Hwang, Tim and M.C. Elish. (2015) "The Mirage of the Marketplace." *Slate.com* July 27. http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/future_tense/2015/07/uber_s_algorithm_and_the_mirage_of_the_marketplace.html
- [5] Elish, M.C. and Tim Hwang. (2015) "Moral Crumple Zones: Is keeping a human in the loop the right answer?" *Quartz* July 25. <http://qz.com/461905/when-your-self-driving-car-crashes-you-could-still-be-the-one-who-gets-sued/>
- [6] Hwang, Tim and M.C. Elish. (2015) "Might Intelligent Machines One Day Convince Us It's Time to Die?" *Vice.com* May 27. <http://motherboard.vice.com/read/might-intelligent-machines-one-day-convince-us-its-time-to-die>
- [7] Elish, M.C. (2013) "Popular (Mis)Conceptions & the Perpetual Rise of the Machines." *CASTAC [Committee on the Anthropology of Science, Technology and Computing] Blog* (Invited post) 12 March. <http://blog.castac.org/2013/03/popular-misconceptions-the-perpetual-rise-of-the-machines/>
- [8] Elish, M.C. (2009) "Representing Labor: Ten Thousand Cents and Amazon's Mechanical Turk." *Furtherfield.org London, UK*: http://www.furtherfield.org/displayreview.php?review_id=376

Academic Conference Presentations

- [1] The Promises of AI: When the Future Never Comes, presented at the Society for the Social Studies of Science (4S) Annual Meeting, Barcelona, Spain, Sept 2, 2016.
- [2] Moral Crumple Zones: Cautionary Tales in Human-Robot Interaction, presented at WeRobot: Conference on Legal and Policy Issues Relating to Robotics, University of Miami, Florida. Apr 1, 2016
- [3] Factoring Control: A History of Distributed Warfare, presented at the Society for the Social Studies of Science (4S) Annual Meeting, Denver, CO, Nov 13, 2016.
- [4] Factoring Control: A History of Remote-Split Operations, presented at Drone War Symposium, Bloomington, IN. July 12, 2014.
- [5] Value, Debt and Gratitude: Reflections on Fieldwork within the Domains of Industry and Military Robotics, presented on panel: Studying With: Relation and Method in the Technoscientific Field. Co-organizer and presenter. Annual meeting of American Anthropological Association (AAA), Washington, DC. 2014.
- [6] Drone Cultures: War, Work and Responsibility in the Age of Unmanned Systems, presented at the Doctoral Research Consortium, Ethnographic Praxis in Industry Conference (EPIC-AAA). New York, NY. 2014.
- [7] Arendt and Agency, Invited presentation for Foundations of Social Agency Conference. Max Planck Institute Nijmegen, The Netherlands. Apr, 14-17 2014.
- [8] User Interface as Moral Buffer, presented on panel: Attentional Economies of War. Respondents: Joseph Masco and Ken MacLeish. Annual meeting of American Anthropological Association (AAA), San Francisco, CA. 2012.
- [9] Demos as a Departure Point for Ethnographic Praxis, presented at Graduate Research Consortium. Ethnographic Praxis in Industry Conference (EPIC-AAA). Boulder, CO. 2011.
- [10] Specters of Personhood and Agency in Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) Systems, presented on panel: Anthropologies of the Automatic. Respondents: Lucy Suchmann, Caitlin Zaloom Annual meeting of American Anthropological Association (AAA). Montreal, Canada. 2011.
- [11] Responsible Storytelling: Communicating Robotics Research in Video Demos, presented at Conference on Tangible and Embedded Interaction (TEI). ACM Press, 25-28. 2011.
- [12] Collaborative Innovation: The Politics of Alternative Organization Structures, presented at Medialab-Prado, Madrid, Spain. 2010.
- [13] Re-Imagining the Archive: A Case Study of MIT's Center for Advanced Visual Studies and Visual Arts Program, white paper for HyperStudio: MIT's Lab for Digital Humanities, Cambridge, MA. 2010.

- [14] Acts of Translations: Digital Humanities and the Archive Interface, co-written and co-presented with Whitney Trettein. Media in Transition 6 Conference, MIT, Cambridge, MA. 2009.

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS & AWARDS

Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation Dissertation Fellowship (2016)
Scheldon Scheps Memorial Fellowship, Columbia University (2016)
National Science Foundation (NSF) Dissertation Research Improvement Grant (2013 - declined)
Wenner-Gren Dissertation Fieldwork Grant (2013)
Horowitz Foundation for Social Policy Research Grant (2013)
Horowitz Foundation Trustees Special Award (2013 - Award for most outstanding project submitted for 2013 award year)
Columbia University Faculty Fellow (2010-2012 Full tuition and stipend)
Columbia University Summer Research Grant (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014)
HASTAC Scholar (2009-2010 Student scholar from MIT to the Humanities, Arts, Science and Technology Advanced Collaboratory)
MIT Graduate Fellowship and Research Appointment (2008-2010 Full tuition and stipend)
MIT Anthony Sun Fellowship (2009 - MIT International Science and Technology Initiatives (MISTI) fellowship for summer international research)

RECENT INVITED TALKS/PANELS

Don't Call AI Magic. *Facets Conference*, Goethe Institute, New York, NY. Oct 28, 2017.
There's No Such Thing as Autonomy. *Reconfiguring Reality Conference: Toward an Internet of Actions*. Institute for the Future, Palo Alto, CA. Oct 20-12, 2017.
The Imperative of Interdisciplinarity in Data Science. Presentation to National Academies of Science, Engineering & Medicine as part of their "Envisioning Data Science Seminar: Data Science Undergraduate Education" program (webinar series). Oct 1, 2017.
Planning for the Social Impacts of AI. *O'Reilly Artificial Intelligence Conference*, June, 28, 2017, New York, NY.
An AI Pattern Language talk. Berkman Klein Center, Harvard Law School, Cambridge, MA. May 15, 2017.
Artificial Intelligence, Privacy and Ethics panel. *International Association of Privacy Professionals (IAPP) Global Privacy Summit*. Washington, DC. Apr 19, 2017.
Do Drones Have Politics? (respondent) *WeRobot*. Yale Law School, New Haven, CT. Apr 1, 2017.
Human-System Integration: Reframing Ethics & AI talk. *AI in Asia*. Korea University Law School, Seoul, South Korea, Dec 16, 2016/
AI Challenges for Good talk. *Civic Hall*, New York, NY. Oct 21, 2016.
Deciding with Data: How Society Can Use Algorithms to Make Better Choices panel, *Center for Data Innovation*, Washington, DC. Nov 17, 2015.
Artificial Intelligence and the Bleeding Edge of Interaction Design panel. *DxBoston*, Boston, MA. Sept 18, 2015.

RECENT WORKSHOP PARTICIPATION

Gender-based Violence and Safety in IT Design: Ethics Workshop. *Center for Information Technology Policy*. Princeton University, Princeton, NJ. April 12, 2017.

DARPA Workshop on Ethical and Privacy Issues in Social-Behavioral Research. *RAND*. Arlington, VA. Dec 12, 2016.

Simply Secure Annual Summit. *Simply Secure*. Berlin, Germany. Nov 10, 2016.

AI Now Experts Workshop, *AI Now*, New York, NY July 7, 2016.

Knight News Challenge on Data finalist reviewers meeting. *Knight Foundation*, Miami, FL. Nov 5, 2015.

TEACHING

“Interpretations of Culture: Introduction to Socio-cultural Anthropology” *Teaching Assistant* (Fall 2012) Columbia University

“Culture through Film and Media” *Teaching Assistant* (Spring 2012; Spring 2013) Columbia University

“Introduction to Ethnographic Film” *Teaching Assistant* (Fall 2011) Columbia University

SERVICE & ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

Case Worker – SAF--Service to Armed Forces), American Red Cross, Eastern Massachusetts Office & Central New York Office (2014-2016).

Lead Teaching Fellow- Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, Columbia University (2014-2015)

Technology and Information Coordinator – Graduate Student Advisory Council Department of Anthropology, Columbia University (2011-2014)

Conference Co-Chair – *Visual Epistemologies and the Digital Humanities Conference*, MIT (2010)

NATURAL LANGUAGES

Spanish (intermediate speaking and reading), French (intermediate speaking and reading)