Towards a Global Network of Internet and Society Centers

A Symposium on

INTERNET-DRIVEN DEVELOPMENTS:
Structural Changes and Tipping Points

Cambridge, Massachusetts
December 6–8, 2012

Berkman
The Berkman Center for Internet & Society
at Harvard University

In collaboration with: the Alexander von Humboldt Institute for Internet & Society, the Centre for Internet and Society Bangalore, the Center for Technology & Society at the Fundação Getulio Vargas (FGV) Law School, KEIO University SFC, the MIT Media Lab and its Center for Civic Media, and the NEXA Center for Internet & Society at Politecnico di Torino.

Thank You

This symposium was organized with the generous support and partnership of the following organizations:

Welcome

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

On behalf of the Berkman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University and its international co-hosts, I am delighted to welcome you to our symposium on *Internet-Driven Developments: Structural Changes and Tipping Points,* which brings together representatives from research centers, selected guests, and collaborators from 5 continents and 22 countries. This symposium seeks to explore and discuss—from multiple perspectives and with a focus on use cases—the tectonic shifts in the information ecosystem promoted by the Internet and the primary forces and tipping points catalyzing them. Our hope is that this broad theme will enable us to uncover, explore, and build upon promising intersections across participants' diverse research interests, methodologies, and modes.

Beyond engaging substantive topics, this interactive and participatory symposium offers a unique opportunity to strengthen and expand the *international human networks* among scholars engaged in interdisciplinary research on Internet and society issues. Existing relationships already serve as the backbone for rich exchanges among participants. During this meeting and beyond, we hope to build upon and crystallize these ties into a *network of cooperation* that offers new connections while solidifying and expanding old ones, and in the process bridges disciplines, organizations, countries, and continents. To that end, the program features a mix of formats, including informal discussions, breakout sessions, participant-led gatherings, and other white spaces to facilitate conversations about future collaborations that both begin with and expand beyond the topic areas outlined in the agenda.

This gathering also serves as an inaugural event for a nascent *global network of interdisciplinary centers* with a focus on Internet and society, currently incubated by the Berkman Center for Internet & Society, the Alexander von Humboldt Institute for Internet & Society, the Centre for Internet and Society Bangalore, the Center for Technology & Society at the Fundação Getulio Vargas (FGV) Law School, KEIO University SFC, the MIT Media Lab, the MIT Center for Civic Media, and the NEXA Center for Internet & Society at Politecnico di Torino, which serve as the co-hosts of this symposium. Building upon collaborative efforts that have emerged over the past decade, the network will be developed from the bottom-up and is committed to the principles of openness and diversity. We hope that organizations from around the world may elect to participate in and contribute to the network over time, building upon existing and future collaborations with initial partners and collectively evolving its structure and practices. This symposium provides a first opportunity to discuss the idea and to envision possible future directions of the network among a larger group of friends and colleagues.

We are looking forward to fruitful discussions, and hope that this conversation will be only the first in a continuing dialogue.

Warm regards,

Urs Gasser
Executive Director, Berkman Center for Internet & Society, Harvard University

Overview
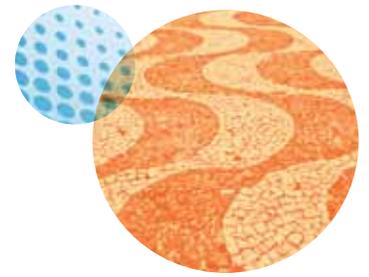
Internet-Driven Developments: Structural Changes and Tipping Points

GUIDING QUESTIONS

Starting with a collective mapping exercise, the thematic portion of our program focuses on identifying and exploring—from societal, economic, legal, and educational perspectives—some of the central **structural changes** (as opposed to hype, fads, spikes, etc.) promoted by the Internet and related technological advancements. What do we know about these tectonic shifts and where do knowledge gaps exist? How do these shifts compare to earlier changes facilitated by new technologies, and what lessons can we distill and apply from these comparisons? What further changes do we anticipate?

In discussing these structural changes, we will examine some of the primary **forces** that catalyze them—including the actions of individuals (such as users, citizens, and individual activists) and institutions (such as government, business, and civil society)—and consider instances in which certain technology-driven socioeconomic transformations have reached a **tipping point.** In what circumstances is the notion of tipping points a useful metaphor and conceptual frame, and when is it less applicable? As a research community that seeks to inform advocacy efforts, policymaking, civic discourse, and other special interests, how might these concepts infuse or drive our activities? Where might shared understandings and comparative research outputs, supported and generated by a global network of contributors, actively inform the public good, with applications to democratic practices and development, wealth distribution, health, energy efficiency, semiotic power, and other pressing international issues?

DEEP DIVES

After two foundational sessions during which we will approach the notion of structural changes and tipping points from a conceptual angle and explore the drivers and inhibitors behind them, we will focus on two use cases in order to begin to explore specific instances where tectonic shifts arguably have occurred:

Political participation: Various research efforts over the past decade have focused on whether—and if so, how—the Internet changes political participation, from new forms of electronic voting to broader questions regarding the relationship between online and offline activity, and potential changes in political discourse in the digitally networked public sphere. We will take stock of the current landscape, with a particular focus on recent elections and political movements around the globe; in the process, we will surface open questions and explore future research directions, including emerging tools and methodologies.

Production modes: Digital technologies in general and the Internet in particular have changed the ways in which goods are produced and services provided. Within this context, new modes of production—most prominently "peer-based" models—have emerged, accompanied by innovative organizational forms. How relevant are these shifts from economic, organizational, societal, business, and

creative perspectives? How has recent empirical research confirmed or challenged the theory of commons-based peer production? What conditions facilitate new modes of Internet-based production, and what are the benefits and challenges from a public policy perspective? What do interesting case studies, from collaborative online journalism to crowd-sourced fundraising, tell us about the direction of this trend?

KEY OBJECTIVES

Scoping the Substantive Terrain: use the proposed topics to facilitate information-sharing among participants regarding current and future projects, priority research areas, and innovative methods; identify mutual interests and develop concrete ideas for initial and continued institutional collaborations; and build a shared vocabulary and methods for collaboration among Internet and society centers around the globe, including existing and potential actors in the Global South.

Building the (Human and Conceptual) Network: beginning with ideas surfaced during the thematic discussions, explore how to translate lessons learned from the process of conducting interdisciplinary research into an international, impact-oriented, human, collaborative, and institutional network; identify ways in which such a network can best reflect, harness, and promote the participatory, distributed, and open nature of the Internet; explore initial structures for shared projects, exchange programs, and mechanisms for collaboration and governance; identify tools and practices for communication among teams, both across members of the network and to external audiences; consider opportunities to leverage our shared research findings towards serving the public interest by informing policy agendas, engaging in advocacy efforts, and educating government, private sector, civil society, and other actors.

MODE OF ENGAGEMENT

We are committed to leveraging the tremendous diversity of the participants to develop novel understandings—and approaches to reaching them. Such outcomes require actively embracing differences in geography, discipline, organizational structure, language, and culture, among many other facets. We must avoid or explain terms of art, make explicit and explore our assumptions, explain our methods, and otherwise take steps to maximize hospitality and genuine understanding while encouraging experimentation and innovative modes of collaboration. Because much of our work is interactive, it is essential that we are economical in our group discussions and remarks, leaving time for the important exchanges that will highlight diverse viewpoints and allow us to begin to address gaps in existing approaches.

In short, let us be clear, brief, and to the point. Let us listen closely and encourage new voices. Above all, let us enjoy this rare opportunity to gather and engage on issues we care about with this unique group of colleagues.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6ᵀᴴ

Location: Milstein East Rooms, Wasserstein Hall, Harvard Law School

9:30-1:30 **(OPTIONAL) CYBERSCHOLARS FORUM**

Interested participants are welcome to attend a half-day meeting of the Cyberscholars Working Group, which includes fellows from the Berkman Center for Internet & Society, Yale Information Society Project, MIT Media Lab, Center for Civic Media, and other institutions.

2:00 **REGISTRATION**

3:00 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

Urs Gasser, *Berkman Center for Internet & Society, United States*

3:15 **OPENING SESSION: COLLABORATIVE MAPPING EXERCISE**

Moderators: Colin Maclay & Caroline Nolan, *Berkman Center for Internet & Society, United States*

The opening session of the symposium will seek to map connection points and interfaces–thematically and otherwise–among participants, and to generate ideas for new issues, modes, and methods for collaboration that will be considered over the course of the meeting. This early convening will invite representatives to discuss the unique strengths of their institutions and consider ways that we can take advantage of coordinated efforts.

4:30 **BREAK**

5:00 **FOUNDATIONAL SESSION #1**

Tectonic Shifts: Understanding Structural Changes, Tipping Points, and their Effects on Systems

Input Statement: Herbert Burkert, *Research Center for Information Law, Switzerland*
Respondents: Mira Burri, *World Trade Institute, Switzerland*
Ronaldo Lemos, *Center for Technology & Society at the Fundação Getulio Vargas Law School, Brazil*
Moderator: Wolfgang Schulz, *Alexander von Humboldt Institute for Internet & Society, Germany*

Historical examples of significant structural change, and the events and conditions leading up to those dramatic shifts, will provoke an exploration of some of the central societal advancements catalyzed by technological innovation. As digital technologies increasingly intersect with and support (and in some cases divide and undermine) institutions, industries, and individuals, what cautionary tales does history reveal regarding how to study and engage important tipping points? What lessons can be ap-

plied to enable positive societal development? What transformations can truly be considered tipping points, and what examples are contested or uncertain? What structures are currently changing or ripe for change and where do we anticipate future shifts, transformations, and tipping points?

6:30   **INFLECTION POINT**
Urs Gasser, *Berkman Center for Internet & Society*

6:45   **RECEPTION**
Harvard Law School Pub, Wasserstein Hall (1st Floor)

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7ᵀᴴ
Location: Milstein East Rooms, Wasserstein Hall, Harvard Law School

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8:30   **LIGHT BREAKFAST AND COFFEE**

9:00   **WELCOME ADDRESS**
Dean Martha Minow, *Harvard Law School, United States*

OPENING REMARKS: IT AND GLOBAL JUSTICE
William (Terry) Fisher, *Berkman Center for Internet & Society, United States*

9:15   **FOUNDATIONAL SESSION #2**

Forces of Change: Data, Algorithms, and Intermediaries as Key Components of the Digital Ecosystem

Input Statement: Jonathan Zittrain, *Berkman Center for Internet & Society, United States*
Respondents: Raimondo Iemma, *NEXA Center for Internet & Society Politecnico di Torino, Italy*
Nishant Shah, *Bangalore Center for Internet & Society, India*
Moderator: Miriam Meckel, *MCM-HSG University of St. Gallen, Switzerland*

Applying social, economic, legal, and educational perspectives, this session will explore both drivers and inhibitors of current and future structural shifts in the digitally networked information ecosystem. Speakers will focus on three important factors: the power of "big data," the importance of algorithms, and the role of intermediaries. Beyond phenomenological stocktaking, participants will discuss the next generation of issues that may arise in the context of these factors of change and consider the need for collaboration—and potentially for intervention.

10:15   ## USE CASE #1

Political Participation: New Orders, Democracy, Governance, and Civic Engagement

Input Statement: Juan Carlos de Martin, *NEXA Center for Internet & Society Politecnico di Torino, Italy*
Respondents: Nagla Rizk, *American University in Cairo, Egypt*
María Elena Meneses, *Tec de Monterrey, Mexico*
Moderator: Alexander Trechsel, *European University Institute, Italy*

In an effort to identify open questions, emerging tools and methodologies, and future research directions to better understand the impact of new technologies and the Internet on political participation, this session will focus on salient examples from recent elections and political movements around the globe. Potential tipping points for discussion may include, for example, SOPA/PIPA and ACTA, the Arab Spring, and Kenya's 2008 post-election crisis, in addition to other major political events. These examples may also highlight the limits, challenges, and dangers of the new media environment.

11:15   ## BREAK

11:30   ## MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Semi-moderated sessions will take place around three axes of interest expressed by participants in advance of the meeting: projects, methods, and formats. Outputs from these sessions may inspire further conversations during the "unconference" portion of the afternoon, as well as inform next steps formulated at the meeting.

BREAKOUT 1: Projects
Present in 2-3 minute pitches existing and planned collaborative projects and outline specific ways to get involved.
Moderator: Thomas Schildhauer, *Alexander von Humboldt Institute for Internet & Society, Germany*
Location: Wasserstein Hall Room 2004

BREAKOUT 2: Methods
Discuss core methodological issues and developments in the Internet and society space.
Moderator: Catharina Maracke, *Keio University, Japan*
Location: Wasserstein Hall Room 2009

BREAKOUT 3: Formats
Share experiences regarding event formats, innovative modes of collaboration, and tools to facilitate (transnational) participation.
Moderator: Mayte Peters, *Alexander von Humboldt Institute for Internet & Society, Germany*
Location: Milstein East B Room

12:30　**WORKING LUNCH**

Location: Milstein East C Room

Operating in brainstorming mode, informal groups of participants will discuss central questions related to network formation, including thoughts on initial structure and activities, tools and modes for collaboration, key research interests, and any other issues and open questions. A light questionnaire will be distributed to guide group discussion, and participants will be invited to share key takeaways with other participants during Saturday's closing session and via a shared Google doc.

1:30　**USE CASE #2**

Production Modes: New Models for Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Location: Wasserstein Hall Room 2009
Input Statement: Jeanette Hoffman, *Alexander von Humboldt Institute for Internet & Society, Germany*
Respondents: Leyla Keser Berber, *Istanbul Bilgi University, Turkey*
Ang Peng Hwa, *Nanyang Technological University, Singapore*
Moderator: Roxanna Barrantes, *Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, Peru*

In order to explore key issues regarding the ways in which digital technologies and the Internet have influenced the production of goods and services, this session will focus on a number of emergent models as well as the economic, organizational, commercial, and creative forces that shape them. Case examples regarding market and industry shifts, institutional changes, and the impact of individuals may illustrate tipping points at which new models of production have fostered true innovation; additionally, they may reveal paths for what to expect in the future.

2:30　**PARTICIPANT-LED "UNCONFERENCE" SESSIONS**

Locations: Various rooms in Wasserstein Hall

Participants will lead discussions on a wide array of topics in self-organized sessions proposed in advance of or during the meeting. You can propose topics and view a list of discussions taking place here: http://bit.ly/SCTPbreakouts.

3:30　**BREAK**

4:00　**REFLECTIONS**

Location: Wasserstein Hall Room 2009
Moderator: Ethan Zuckerman, *Center for Civic Media at the MIT Media Lab, United States*

Participants will offer brief reflections and key takeaways from the meeting, focusing on the foundational themes of the symposium and the use cases. Contributions may include thoughts on thematic connection points, regional differences, emerging issues, common threads, and tensions of methods and/or mode.
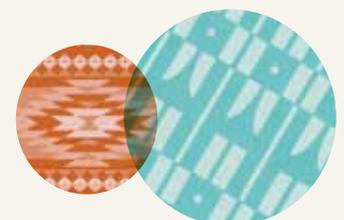
5:00   **FREE TIME**

6:00   **INFORMAL COCKTAIL CONVERSATIONS**
Location: Loeb House, 17 Quincy Street, Cambridge

Featuring live music from a jazz trio of students at the Berklee College of Music.

7:00   **DINNER**
Location: Loeb House, 17 Quincy Street, Cambridge

8:30   **AFTER PARTY AT THE LIBRARY TEST KITCHEN'S LABRARY**
Location: 92 Mount Auburn Street, Cambridge

The LABARY is a Harvard Library Experiment that exists as a forum for students, faculty, and others in the community and operates as a collaboration between the Harvard Library and Harvard Graduate School of Design.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8ᵀᴴ

8:30-10   **FOOD FOR THOUGHT BREAKFAST SESSIONS**
Location: Various Restaurants in Harvard Square, Cambridge
See: http://bit.ly/SCTPfoodforthought

Building upon inputs from and reflections on the symposium, participants will gather in small, self-selected groups to discuss and outline short-term opportunities for collaboration, including but not limited to existing or new research projects, shared events, and professional exchanges.

10:30   **ONWARD: DEVELOPING A PLAN FOR ACTION**
Location: Milstein East Rooms, Wasserstein Hall, Harvard Law School
Moderator: Wolfgang Schulz, *Alexander von Humboldt Institute for Internet & Society, Germany*

This final session will focus on developing a peer-produced innovation and collaboration agenda for the inaugural year of the network. Based on participant contributions and reflections from the meeting, this action-oriented discussion will aim to make progress on a substantive agenda and initial work plan for the network, and also invite thoughts on questions related to collaborative projects, shared tools and activities, the shape and evolving structure of the network, and other topics.

12:00   **CLOSING REMARKS**
Urs Gasser, *Berkman Center for Internet & Society*

MAP

WASSERSTEIN HALL

SHERATON COMMANDER HOTEL

LOEB HOUSE

LABRARY
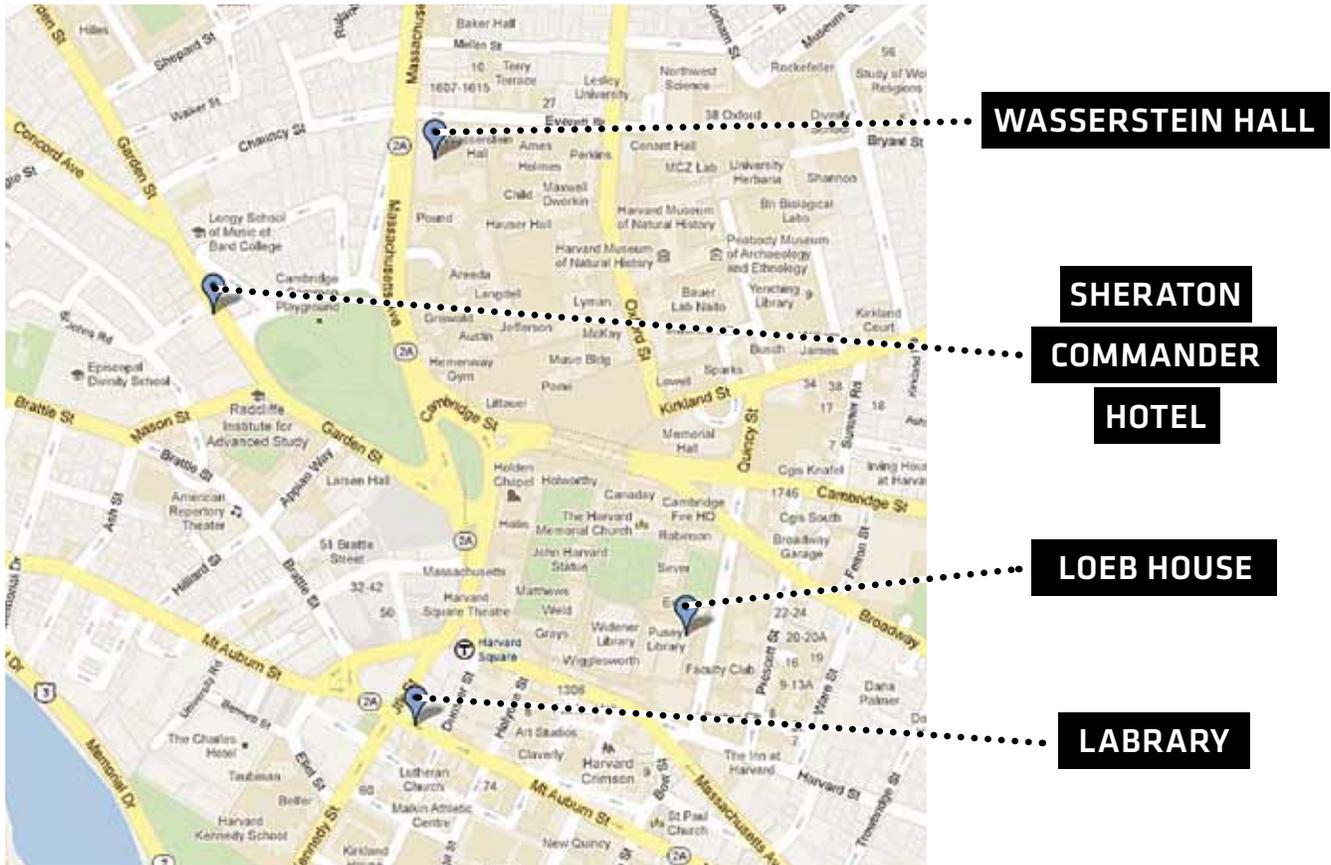
SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS

Ask questions via the Berkman Question Tool:

http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/questions/SCTPBerkman

HASHTAG

#SCTPBerkman

DECEMBER 7 AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Sign up for and propose breakout sessions for both the morning and afternoon breakout sessions:
http://bit.ly/SCTPbreakouts

DECEMBER 8 FOOD FOR THOUGHT BREAKFASTS

Sign up for and propose Food for Thought breakfasts:
http://bit.ly/SCTPfoodforthought
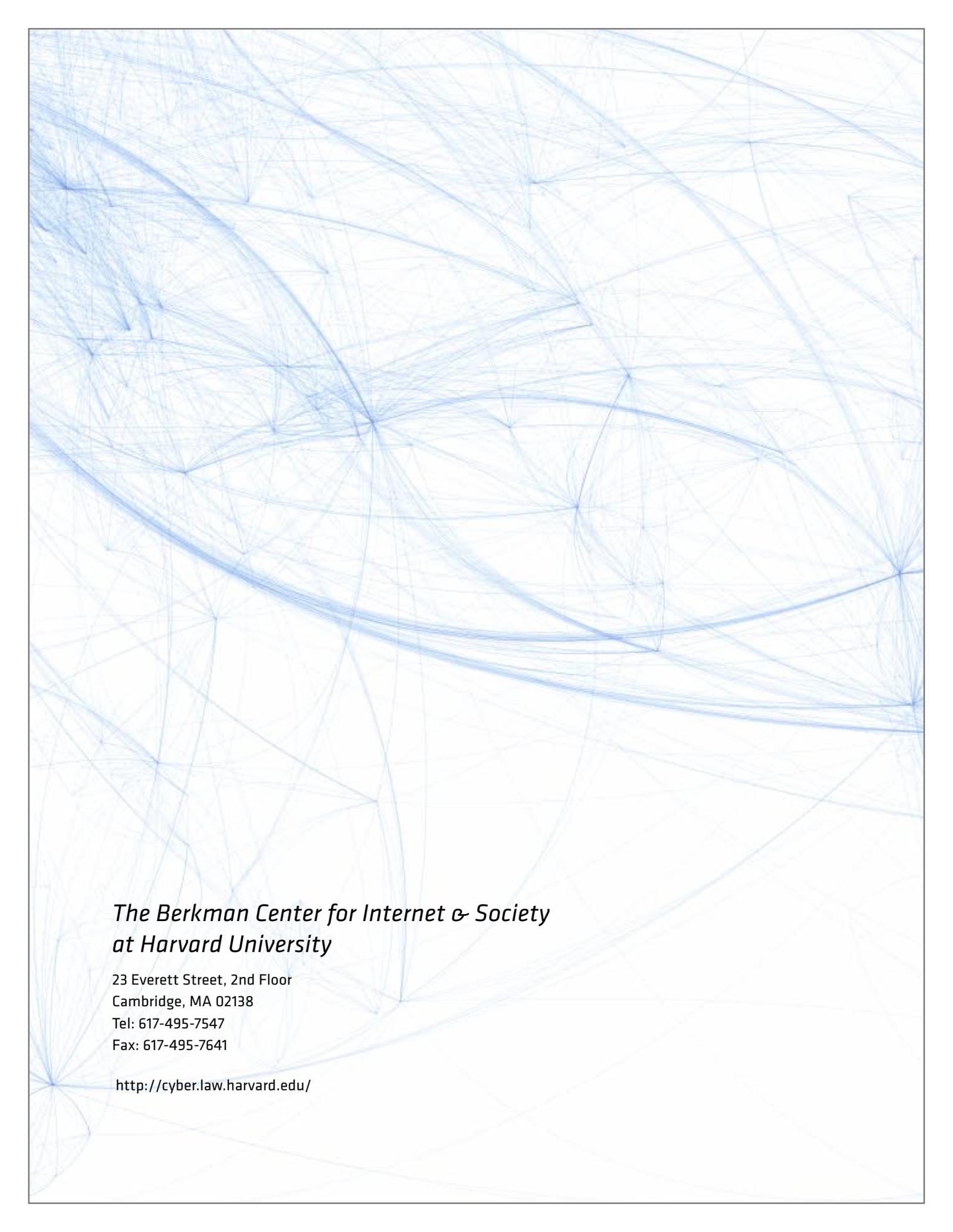
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