



CIVIC LIFE
IN THE
CYBER AGE
OCTOBER 22, 2016 | BELO CENTER FOR NEW MEDIA

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
Moody College of Communication



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
The ANNETTE STRAUSS INSTITUTE
FOR CIVIC LIFE

#CLCA16

CONFERENCE AGENDA OVERVIEW

8:15 am – 9:00 am	<i>Registration and Breakfast</i>
9:00 am – 9:10 am	WELCOME FROM THE ANNETTE STRAUSS INSTITUTE FOR CIVIC LIFE
9:10 am – 10:00 am	THE TRUTH ABOUT CHANGING THE WORLD
10:00 am – 10:45 am	THE NEW POWER OF CIVIC LIFE
10:45 am – 11:00 am	<i>Break</i>
11:00 am – 12:30 pm	ZOOMING IN: HOW IS DIGITAL MEDIA TRANSFORMING CIVIC LIFE?
12:30 pm – 1:05 pm	<i>Lunch</i>
1:15 pm – 1:45 pm	CIVIC TECH: TAKE A SEAT AT THE TABLE
1:45 pm – 2:30 pm	CONTEMPORARY CIVICS: WHO IS THE CIVIC INNOVATOR OF TODAY?
2:30 pm – 3:15 pm	TECH TAKE-AWAYS FROM THE 2016 ELECTION
3:15 pm – 3:30 pm	CLOSING REMARKS & EVALUATION
3:30 pm – until...	NETWORKING PARTY & BUDGET GAME SHOWCASE

DON'T FORGET ABOUT THE AFTER-PARTY!

Join us to network and share delicious
(FREE!) appetizers. All ages welcome!

3:45 pm - 5:00 pm

Glasshouse Policy and the Austin Monitor will be hosting
our after-party at **Space 24 Twenty**
(2420 Guadalupe St, Austin, TX 78705 – right near the
parking garage!)

During the after-party, they will be sharing their budget
tool, an interactive platform which gives the user City
Council's responsibility of designing the city's budget.

Come play and hang with us!

SPEAKERS, MODERATORS AND PROGRAM DETAILS
(in order of appearance)

Welcome from the Annette Strauss Institute

9:00 am



Susan Nold is the Director of The Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life at The University of Texas at Austin. Before being named Director in September 2015, Nold worked as General Counsel to Texas Senator Kirk Watson and as a Staff Attorney for the Texas Sunset Advisory Commission. Prior to working in the Texas Capitol, Susan practiced law as a Litigation Associate at Bracewell & Giuliani, volunteered as a Congressional Affairs Liaison for a presidential campaign, worked in development for a political committee in Washington, D.C. and was a White House intern. Nold has worked effectively with people of all political persuasions and she profoundly believes in the need to get all Texans involved in civic lives of their communities. Nold earned her bachelor's degree in political science from Southern Methodist University in 1999 and her law degree from The University of Texas School of Law in 2004.

THE TRUTH ABOUT CHANGING THE WORLD

9:10 am – 9:55 am

The myth-busting, totally honest yet inspiring realities about doing social good and civic engagement work as a millennial in a digital world.



Erica Williams is an award-winning content creator, educator, host and social critic. Her work is focused on helping a diverse, non-conformist generation of dreamers thrive - one important conversation at a time. As a contributor to TIME Magazine, Creative Director at Upworthy.com, the fastest growing digital media company of all time, and a highly sought after TV commentator, speaker and

trainer, Erica reaches an audience of nearly 30 million people a month by creating smart, meaningful content that seamlessly connects personal growth, pop culture and politics

Previously, Erica spent nearly a decade in Washington's "power circles" building Millennial engagement and demographically focused policy programs at the nation's leading progressive think tank, Center for American Progress, and Citizen Engagement Lab, a first of its kind digital accelerator for social change. With an emphasis on youth culture, diversity and human and civil rights, Erica advised everyone from the White House and Rock the Vote to Fortune 500 companies like Coca Cola and was named one of Politico's Top 50 Politicos to Watch, NAACP's 40 Under 40, a World Economic Forum Global Shaper and an Aspen Institute Ideas Fellow for her work.



As Executive Director of [92nd Street Y](#), **Henry Timms** creates programs and movements that foster learning, civic responsibility, culture and innovation, both in New York City and around the world. He is the founder of [#GivingTuesday](#), a global philanthropic movement that was awarded a Cannes Lion at the International Festival of Creativity; a PRWeek Global Award for Nonprofit Campaign of the Year; and the inaugural UJA-Federation Riklis Prize in Agency Entrepreneurship.

Henry's work has been profiled in publications like the Harvard Business Review, and his most recent thinking with Jeremy Heimans on "new power" was featured as the Big Idea in HBR and by CNN as one of the ten top ideas to change the world in 2015. Henry is a Practitioner-in-Residence at the Stanford University Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society, a faculty member of the GovLab Academy and a member of the World Economic Forum's Network of Global Agenda Councils. In addition to being listed on The Nonprofit Times Power & Influence Top 50 for the past three years, Henry was named the NonProfit Times Influencer of the Year in 2014. Henry was also honored as one of Crain's New York Business 40 under 40.

THE NEW POWER OF CIVIC LIFE

Henry Timms

10:00 am - 10:45 am

The concept of “new power” has been named by CNN as one of 10 Ideas that can Change the World. Originally laid out as the Big Idea in Harvard Business Review and subsequent TED talk, new power offers a frame to understand the distributed and participatory models that are rising in business, life and society. It contrasts new power with the values and models of the “old power” world - based on the top-down, traditional and command-mindset - and suggests that the battle and the balancing between old and new power will be a defining feature of our lives in the coming years. New power lays out a practical framework for understanding how power is shifting: who has it, how it is shared, and where it is heading.



Ben Armstrong is a Graduate Research Fellow at MIT's GOV/LAB where his work focuses on how technology shapes civic participation in U.S. cities. His other research explores the political underpinnings of economic growth in cities and the regulation of new products like Uber. Previously, Ben worked at Google Inc. and interned at the White House.

**ZOOMING IN: HOW IS DIGITAL MEDIA
TRANSFORMING CIVIC LIFE?**

“Engagement on the Cheap:
The Quality of Online Civic Participation”

Presented by: Ben Armstrong

11:00 am – 11:15 am

Governments have embraced online tools that allow citizens to participate in government from their phones and computers. The cost of civic participation is low, but it’s unclear how useful or relevant online feedback is for government. Researchers at MIT GOV/LAB have compared online and in-person civic participation in an attempt to understand the benefits and challenges of each.



Mary Angela Bock is an assistant professor in the University of Texas at Austin School of Journalism. She is a former journalist turned academic with an interest in the sociology of photographic practice, the relationship between words and images, and digital media. She is particularly concerned with matters of truth and authenticity in the process of image production and her most recent research has examined the way citizen videos are changing the public conversation about police policy in the U.S. Her previous career spanned more than 20 years in television news, with stints as a newspaper reporter, a radio journalist, and public relations writer. Her research has appeared in publications such as the *Journal of Communication*, *Journalism Practice* and *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*. Her most recent book project, *Visual Communication Theory and Research*, was co-authored with Shahira Fahmy and Wayne Wanta. Her 2012 book, *Video Journalism: Beyond the One Man Band* studied the relationship between solo multi-media practice and news narrative. Bock is an active member of the National Press Photographers Association, the International Communication Association (ICA), the National Communication Association and the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC).

**ZOOMING IN: HOW IS DIGITAL MEDIA
TRANSFORMING CIVIC LIFE?**

“We are All Gatekeepers Now”

Presented by: Dr. Mary Angela Bock

11:15 am – 11:30 am

The digital media environment makes it possible for anyone to reach a worldwide audience for better or for worse. The information glut can also be overwhelming and unpleasant – it's hard to know who can be trusted. As we grow into this new way of communicating, it's possible for anyone to make a positive difference, as a consumer, an occasional contributor, or even as a citizen journalist.



Chris Wells is Associate Professor in the School of Journalism & Mass Communication at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Wells' interests center on how citizens become informed and engaged through digital media, the civic identity and communication preferences of youth and young adults, problems of misinformation and biased information processing, and how social media datasets can inform our understanding of political activism. His work has appeared in *Journal of Communication*, *Political Communication*, *New Media & Society*, and other journals, and he is the author of *The Civic Organization and the Digital Citizen: Communicating Engagement in a Networked Age*, published by Oxford University Press in 2015.

**ZOOMING IN: HOW IS DIGITAL MEDIA
TRANSFORMING CIVIC LIFE?**

“Digital Citizens, Civic Organizations
and the Network Society”

Presented by: Dr. Chris Wells

11:30 am – 11:45 am

The practice of citizenship has changed in response to social and technological changes. Today, citizens connect with media and politics in an ever-increasing variety of ways, including especially through digital communication. At the same time, however, much of the substance of politics still plays out in bureaucratic processes controlled or at least mediated by institutionalized actors. This can create a disconnect, as many citizens, and especially young ones, find politics to be distant and opaque. How can we imagine new and better ways to connect young citizens to decisions that impact their lives?



Ben Kirshner is an Associate Professor in the School of Education at CU Boulder and Faculty Director for CU Engage: Center for Community-Based Learning and Research. Through his new work with CU Engage Kirshner seeks to develop and sustain university-community partnerships that leverage the resources of the university to address persistent public challenges. Kirshner's research examines community-based youth organizing, youth participatory action research, and new forms of digital media as contexts for learning, development, and social change. As Advisor to the MacArthur Foundation's Connected Learning Research Network, Kirshner led a participatory action research project with young people that inquired about how young people leverage their skills and interests for sustained work in the creative economy. Kirshner received Best Authored Book from the Society for Research on Adolescence for his 2015 publication, *Youth Activism in an Era of Education Inequality* (NYU Press).

ZOOMING IN: HOW IS DIGITAL MEDIA TRANSFORMING CIVIC LIFE?

“New Media, Old Organizing”

Presented by: Dr. Ben Kirshner

11:45 am – 12:00 pm

When we talk about the intersection of new digital media and political action, we need to do a better job of understanding hybrid spaces that mix face-to-face organizing with the new capacities available through digital tools. What are the features of learning ecologies that enable people to come together, imagine a better world, and build collective power to realize their vision? Community organizing, for example, offers a methodology for building relationships that enable people to gain power in numbers. New forms of digital media offer means to enhance or strengthen work, but they are not an end in themselves. For Dr. Kirshner’s remarks he will draw on data from an international study of youth organizing in Ireland, Northern Ireland, South Africa, and the United States.



S. Craig Watkins studies young people's social and digital media behaviors. He is a Professor at the University of Texas, Austin, in the Moody College of Communication. He received his PhD from the University of Michigan.

Craig is the author of three books. His most recent work, *The Young and the*

Digital: What the Migration to Social Network Sites, Games, and Anytime, Anywhere Media Means for Our Future (Beacon 2009), explores young people's dynamic engagement with social media, games, mobile phones, and platforms like Facebook. His forthcoming books, *The Digital Edge* (2017) and *Rethinking the Innovation Economy* (2017) explore some of the key shifts in technology, innovation, and the future of work.

Craig is a member of the MacArthur Foundation's Connected Learning Research Network. In concert with that project he is working on two fronts. First, he is collaborating with a team of graduate student researchers, designers, and filmmakers to explore how millennials are transforming work, innovation, and civic life. His second initiative is aligning with several partners including The Moody College of Communication, The University of Texas, KLRU-TV, and designers to prototype a social studio that develops design challenges that encourage young people to get involved in real world problem-solving and media production.

PANEL DISCUSSION:

**ZOOMING IN: HOW IS DIGITAL MEDIA TRANSFORMING CIVIC
LIFE?**

12:00 pm – 12:30 pm

Ben Armstrong

Graduate Research Fellow, MIT GOV/LAB

Dr. Ben Kirshner

Associate Professor, University of Colorado at Boulder

Dr. Mary Angela Bock

Assistant Professor, The University of Texas at Austin

Dr. Chris Wells

Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Moderator: Dr. S. Craig Watkins

Professor, The University of Texas at Austin



Kacie Lyn Kocher has worked in six countries to improve access to resources through technology, economic development and community building. While living in Turkey she worked as a strategist and telecoms ICT analyst for Turk Telekom, serving over 40 million Turkish residents. This work informed her MSc on internet infrastructure at the London School of Economics. In addition, Kacie founded and served as the Executive Director of Canimiz Sokakta, a Turkish NGO which marshals Hollaback's crowdsourcing platform to address gender-based violence. Profiled as one of Istanbul's leading women for Women's History Month by Time Out in 2012, she created Turkey's first campus safety program at eight universities which included bilingual curricula and events on issues of street harassment, workplace discrimination, and unique challenges for young women and LGBTQ individuals. Kacie continued her career in civic engagement as a corporate strategist and operations manager at Accela and PublicStuff, two leading companies offering 311 software to over 150 cities across the nation. As an independent consultant, Kacie has advised startups and NGOs in the US, UK, France, and Turkey. Kacie graduated with honors from Wellesley College focusing on comparative economic development in the Middle East and India. Find her [@kacielynkocher](https://www.instagram.com/kacielynkocher).

CIVIC TECH: TAKE A SEAT AT THE TABLE

Presented by: Kacie Lyn Kocher

1:15 pm – 1:45 pm

Civic Tech is #trending in terms of increasing media coverage, funding, and policy pushes for government openness and transparency. Is it just a buzzword, a budding field, or something different altogether? Kacie Lyn Kocher, the Director of Organizational Design at Civic Hall Labs, takes a deep dive into civic tech as a contested and amorphous term, yet a growing community of practice. She then discusses the challenges faced by institutions, activists, municipalities, and technologists alike in advancing the use of technology for the public good. What's at risk? The failure to define, measure, and mature civic tech norms, efforts, tools, and understanding has deep repercussions on our public lives and tools and programs we build for them. It's our responsibility to collectively concretize civic tech to reflect our values and selves, in order to craft a new connected civics for the 21st century.

CONTEMPORARY CIVICS:

WHO IS THE CIVIC INNOVATOR OF TODAY?

1:45 pm – 2:30 pm

Dr. S. Craig Watkins

*Professor, The University of Texas at Austin and Doing
Innovation Labs*

Michael Kanin

Publisher, The Austin Monitor

Robert Friedman

Portfolio Strategist, Mozilla HIVE Austin

Moderator: Kacie Lyn Kocher

*Director of Organizational Design & Stakeholder Engagement,
Civic Hall Labs*

At the intersection of emerging technology, lasting institutions, and new modes of learning and building, these practitioners discuss these key questions: Who can be a civic innovator? and What are the conditions they need to thrive? Through exploring themes of inclusion, space, and participation, the discussion will create a framework by which to understand civic innovation and discuss tangible examples to illuminate ways we can all participate.



Mike Kanin is the President and CEO of the Capital of Texas Media Foundation, and the Publisher of the *Austin Monitor*. He has extensive media experience, including many years of freelance reporting. His work has appeared in the *Washington City Paper*, the *Washington Post's Express*, the *Boston Herald*, *Boston's Weekly Dig*, the *Austin Chronicle*, and the *Texas*

Observer. He founded the Capital of Texas Media Foundation in 2013.

You can email him at michael.kanin@cotmf.org.

Robert Friedman works to advance the promise of the Internet for learning by supporting and connecting educators and technologists to collaboratively co-create innovative solutions to shared problems of practice and to leverage the Open Web. Robert is the founding Portfolio Strategist for Hive Austin, the newest member of Mozilla's global family of urban learning networks; he is here to support Austin EdTech innovators with a grant opportunity from the NSF Gigabit Community Fund at Mozilla. A very recent arrival to Austin, Robert hails from Chicago where he cultivated his practice at Hive Chicago and before then, as an educational designer and manager at the Adler Planetarium. Robert also holds a Ph.D. in Astrophysics from his past life as a research scientist.



TECH TAKE-AWAYS FROM THE 2016 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

2:30 pm – 3:15 pm

Kathryn Peters
Co-founder & COO, Democracy Works

Amy Cohen
Co-founder, Center for Election Innovation and Research

Moderator: Maegan Stephens, Ph.D
Executive Communication Coach, Quantified Communications

This election cycle will leave many people wondering, "so what happens next?" With their backgrounds in public policy, research, and elections, Kathryn and Amy will discuss the technological changes and challenges we will (and won't) see following the 2016 election. They will also provide suggestions for how we can serve as ambassadors for these changes.



Amy Cohen is the Director of Operations and Co-Founder of the Center for Election Innovation & Research. Previously, she was an officer with the elections program at the Pew Charitable Trusts where she managed the Voting Information Project (VIP). She oversaw the technical assistance provided to states to standardize and publish their election data and worked with Google

and other technology partners to make information available online. Under her leadership, VIP provided data for 63 elections on 24 individual election days in 2016 alone resulting in millions of look-ups of VIP data, more elections than ever before, and an additional 50 elections on 20 individual election days in 2015.

Additionally, Amy strengthened and built new relationships with technology and corporate partners including Facebook, MTV, Starbucks, and Snapchat, among others, to ensure that users of diverse websites and services could access their election information through VIP. She also advanced relationships with advocacy organizations, media organizations, and political consulting companies on both sides of the aisle.

Prior to joining Pew, Amy was a Washington, DC-based analyst for two global strategic communications firms, conducting surveys and developing strategy for clients ranging from presidential and US Senate campaigns, to third-party groups, non-profit organizations, and foundations.



Kathryn Peters is a co-founder of Democracy Works, an organization that brings the awesomeness of the Internet to the process of voting. Her belief in better democracy has taken her from campaign organizing in rural Missouri to a Master's in Public Policy at the Kennedy School of Government to political rights monitoring with the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission. Kathryn's previous

experience in civic and government technology includes work for the United Nations Department of Safety and Security and the National Democratic Institute. She has been honored as one of *Forbes* magazine's "30 Under 30" in the field of law and policy, and as a "Champion of Democracy" by the National Priorities Project.

Maegan Stephens (Ph.D, UT-Austin) is an Executive Communication Coach at Quantified Communications, where she uses the latest research in communication science to help Fortune 100 leaders, TED speakers, and government officials develop and deliver their key messages. Her work has been featured in such publications as *Journal of Information Technology and Politics*, *ABC News*, and *Bloomberg*. Maegan is also a lecturer in the McCombs School of Business at The University of Texas at Austin.

