Call for Papers: Special Issue of *First Monday* on "HIV/AIDS and Digital Media"

Special editors: Marika Cifor and Cait McKinney

From the prominence of epidemiological "virus" and "bug" metaphors in describing computer networks at risk to contemporary understandings of health data in viral-load management and virality in social media, the histories of HIV and AIDS and the Internet have long been meaningfully and messily entangled. This special issue of *First Monday* uncovers and examines these linkages, both historical and contemporary, literal and figurative.

AIDS and the Internet grew up together. However, the linkages that inhere in their conjoined histories and presents have been neglected in scholarship. HIV circulated through social and sexual networks in the 1960s and 1970s, though it was not until 1981 that the U.S. medical community identified clusters of "homosexual men" diagnosed with previously rare opportunistic infections. A toxic mixture of paranoia and scientific ignorance about the retrovirus' cause and means of infection created a widespread panic about AIDS in the United States. Politicians and the media amplified these characteristics, leading to widespread discrimination, stigma, violence, and inaction, and the rise of an ongoing and global pandemic. Over the same decades research funded by the U.S. federal government developed the earliest robust communication with computer networks and led to the development of interconnection between regional academic and military networks. The rise of hobbyist networks in the 1980s, followed by commercial networks in the 1990s supported pervasive commercialization and the incorporation of the Internet's services and technologies into nearly every aspect of life. This special issue seeks to more deeply investigate the shared temporalities of emergence between AIDS and computer networks, following their entanglements into contemporary digital cultures.

Since the 1980s, AIDS activists have taken digital technologies into their own hands, building powerful, pleasurable, far-ranging, life-sustaining, and politically meaningful platforms, spaces, and networks. Simultaneously, such digital technologies and platforms produce, reproduce, and reify deadly AIDSphobia and spread misinformation, discrimination, and violence. Serostatus disclosure cultures in hookup and dating apps, or the development of biometric data-collection tools in global regions with limited network access are two examples. Now, well into the fourth decade of the epidemic and the popular Internet, the histories and genealogies of their conjoined development both constrain and generate who and what is recognized and remembered, what is and is not known about HIV as an illness, political crisis, and cultural formation, and what kinds of futures can be imagined and built for those most urgently affected.

We seek submissions from a broad array of disciplines and perspectives representing a diverse collection of topics and geographical positionings including, but not limited to:
- The role of computing in AIDS activism and social movement building online
- Bugs, viruses, and other HIV metaphors and analogies in technocultures
- AIDS art and digital tools for cultural production
- HIV+ online dating, serostatus disclosure, and social networking

- AIDS memory and memorialization practices on social media
- The relationship between network imaginaries and HIV/AIDS
- Gendered and racialized HIV stigma and AIDSphobic violence in digital spaces
- The implications of the AIDS epidemic for early internet histories and infrastructures, especially outside the U.S. context
- Digital AIDS archives, histories, and curatorial practices
- Sharing HIV/AIDS information and conducting education using digital platforms
- HIV/AIDS data bodies, vulnerability, and models of individual responsibility
- The role of the Internet in the surveillance and criminalization of HIV-positive persons

First Monday is a peer-reviewed, open-access journal focused on internet studies. More information about *First Monday* is available at http://firstmonday.org.

Timeline:

- Extended Abstracts Due: April 15, 2019
- Feedback from Editors: May 15, 2019
- Full Submissions Due: September 15, 2019
- Peer Review Feedback: December 1, 2019
- Final Submissions Due: January 15, 2020
- Approval of Copyedits Due: March 1, 2020
- Issue Appears: May 2020

Logistics:

We invite interested contributors to **submit abstracts of approx 500 words outlining potential contributions by April 15, 2019** via email to mcifor@iu.edu and cait.mckinney@csun.edu. We welcome queries about the issue from potential contributors and will respond to proposals by May 15, 2019. Full manuscripts will be due September 15, 2019 and we anticipate the issue will appear in *First Monday* in Spring, 2020.

Editors:
Marika Cifor, Assistant Professor of Information and Library Science, Indiana University Bloomington (mcifor@iu.edu)

Cait McKinney, Assistant Professor of Communication Studies, California State University, Northridge (cait.mckinney@csun.edu)