

## Critical Infrastructure Workshop

March 29th 2018,1-4pm, hosted by King's Digital Lab | King's College London  
Staple Inn Buildings South, Chancery Lane, 3rd Floor, London

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### Organizing group

James Smithies (King's College London)  
Alan Liu (UC Santa Barbara)  
Matthew K. Gold (CUNY Graduate Center)  
Arianna Ciula (King's College London)  
Jane Winters (SAS)  
Jonathan Gray (King's College London)

### Background

This is a follow-up event from

<https://www.kdl.kcl.ac.uk/events/infrastructure-symposium/> and  
<https://criticalinfrastructure.hcommons.org/>.

## Resources

- Collective Bibliography Taxonomy:  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1aD9VlvS7sKzCSJGSVPU2II3JMeIcOBEf4pSd0x0lw4g/edit>
- The stub of a Zotero group, created after the 2016 London symposium:  
[https://www.zotero.org/groups/704687/critical\\_infrastructure\\_collective](https://www.zotero.org/groups/704687/critical_infrastructure_collective).
  - [Zotero group bibliography on critical infrastructure studies](#) (in progress)
  - [Taxonomy \(tag structure\) for the Zotero bibliography](#) (in progress)
- Skype or Go To Meeting for distant participants.

## Purpose

To reset our efforts to build critical infrastructure studies, and decide on some concrete next steps (bibliography, books, websites, articles, events etc).

### **Decisions (comments welcome, or reply via our email thread):**

- The room will probably be limited to ~30 people. Should we invite specific people (perhaps starting with UK colleagues who attended the 2016 event), or open it to the public immediately via EventBrite? Or do we need a bigger space?
- What will be on the agenda (see below)?

## Agenda

1.00 - 1.10pm: Welcome (James Smithies & Alan Liu)

1.10 - 2.00pm: 8 minute talks about infrastructure from the organizing group, followed by an agenda-driven discussion.

2.00 - 4.00pm: Zotero bibliography & taxonomy *Agenda to be determined by organizing committee.*

## Attendee / Invite List

Notes:

- Andrew Prescott, Glasgow, is unavailable).
- Tim Hitchcock, Sussex, was the first London workshop but can't make the launch so probably isn't available. Might be worth an invite, though.
- Paul Spence, Simon Tanner, Mark Hedges, Mark Cote, Geoff Browell, Charlotte Rouche, and some of the KDL team were all at the first London workshop and would be great, but I'm a little concerned about having too many King's colleagues present so have bracketed them here for now :). Peter Stokes falls in that category too.
- Those of us in the UK will be able to fill the list easily, so don't feel you have to add names if none spring to mind Alan and Matt.
- I've included 3 early career researchers associated with KDL.
- Given how many I added off the top of my head (sorry!) I'm wondering if this is going to be invitation only, sans EventBrite.

## Notes

- Open-ended workshop
  - Organised on occasion of Alan Liu being in London for James's book launch
  - Agenda-setting
  - Outcomes - book anthology, website, network, Zotero group - everything on table at the moment
  - In order to have not too broad conversation
  - Agenda:
- Intros
  - [Going round table]
- Alan
  - Scoping
  - Three kinds of questions
    - Whether CIS holds together as a concept - all available for interrogation
    - Even before conceptual level - CIS - tactical opening towards new kinds of questions, cannot be asked in terms of dominant intellectual concepts
    - What can we think about through concept of infrastructure, and not through media
    - Even before tactical - what are natural boundaries, relationship with other fields of critical infrastructure studies
    - Whether holds together as other field or domain
    - Scoping exercise #1
      - digital humanities and CIS
      - What kind of cultural critical is uniquely appropriate and purposive for DH
      - Cannot be conducted otherwise than through DH methods
      - Answer I'm focusing on is critical study of infrastructure
      - Information technology infrastructure
      - Cyberinfrastructure
      - Critical study/practice
      - Cyberinfrastructure - evolve at lower/minimal levels of scale
      - Learning management, basic support (email, payroll) - climb into cloud. ETS systems. Originating in/for corporate sector.
      - Mukurtu. Stable protocols. Not like Wordpress CMS. Print goes back to Gutenberg.
      - Content Management System. Managerial system.

- Mukurtu. Aggregative pattern, content/identities, against modern digital capitalist enterprise.
- Google, Facebook, Apple.
- Respectful / critical commentary, just one instance of critical study of cyberinfrastructure.
- How DH can be not just neoliberal tools. Guide between different institutional paradigms.
- Information technology counter. Portfolio, cyberinfrastructure studies.
- Operational experience of culture.
- Raymond Williams - Large Technological Systems.
- Scoping exercise #2
  - What might be involved in critical infrastructure studies.
  - Critical infrastructure studies
- Bibliography
  - Zotero + Google Doc
  - Related fields - verge onto CIS - infrastructure studies
- Alan teaching course on CIS in fall.