

# Nick Seaver

## Curriculum Vitae

*updated 4/4/16*

Assistant Professor  
Department of Anthropology  
Tufts University

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5 The Green  
Medford, MA 02155  
nick.seaver@tufts.edu

### EDUCATION

- |      |                                 |   |
|------|---------------------------------|---|
| 2015 | PhD, Sociocultural Anthropology | University of California, Irvine<br><i>Graduate Specialization in Anthropologies of Medicine, Science, and Technology</i> |
| 2013 | MA, Sociocultural Anthropology  | University of California, Irvine  |
| 2010 | SM, Comparative Media Studies   | Massachusetts Institute of Technology   |
| 2008 | Coursework in bookbinding       | North Bennet Street School, Boston, MA  |
| 2007 | BA, Literature                  | Yale University<br><i>cum laude, distinction in major</i>   |

### ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

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| 2016– | Assistant Professor, Anthropology | Tufts University |
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### PUBLICATIONS

#### Peer-reviewed Articles & Book Chapters

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| n.d. | Designing Taste: Recommendation Systems, Means of Dissemination, Modes of Consumption. With Kariann Goldschmitt. In <i>Cambridge Companion to Music and Digital Culture</i> , eds. Nicholas Cook, Monique Ingalls, David Trippett, and Peter Webb. Invited, reviewed, in revision. |
| 2015 | The nice thing about context is that everyone has it. <i>Media, Culture, and Society</i> 37(7): 1101–1109.   |
| 2015 | Bastard Algebra. In <i>Data, Now Bigger &amp; Better!</i> , eds. Bill Maurer and Tom Boellstorff. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press.   |
| 2011 | ‘This is Not a Copy’: Mechanical Fidelity and the Re-enacting Piano. <i>The Sense of Sound</i> , eds. Rey Chow and James A. Steintrager. Special issue of <i>differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies</i> 22(2–3): 54–73.   |

## **Other Publications**

- 2015 Working with Algorithms: Plans and Mess. In *Serial Nature*, ed. Kai Franz. Stuttgart: Edition Solitude.
- 2013 Commentary on “Toward an Anthropology of Computer-Mediated, Algorithmic Forms of Sociality” (Eitan Wilf, author). With Tom Boellstorff. *Current Anthropology* 54(6): 735–736.
- 2012 Algorithmic Recommendations and Synaptic Functions. *Limn* 2, “Crowds and Clouds.” <http://limn.it/algorithmic-recommendations-and-synaptic-functions/>
- 2012 Crowds and Clouds. *Limn* 2. Co-edited with Christopher Kelty and Lilly Irani.
- 2010 *Our Space: Being a Responsible Citizen of the Digital World*. MacArthur Foundation Digital Media and Learning Ethics Casebook. With Howard Gardner, Henry Jenkins, et al. Digital Media and Learning. [http://dmlcentral.net/sites/dmlcentral/files/resource\\_files/Our\\_Space\\_full\\_casebook\\_compressed.pdf](http://dmlcentral.net/sites/dmlcentral/files/resource_files/Our_Space_full_casebook_compressed.pdf)
- 2009 Let the Ideas Flow. *Threshold: Exploring the Future of Education*, Spring 2009: 30–32. With Lana Swartz.
- 2009 Mapping in a Participatory Culture: Teachers’ Strategy Guide. Project New Media Literacies. With Lana Swartz. Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

## **GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS**

### **Fieldwork Grants**

- 2013 Wenner-Gren Foundation, Dissertation Fieldwork Grant 8797
- 2013 National Science Foundation, Cultural Anthropology Program, Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant 1323834

### **Other Grants and Fellowships**

- 2016 Tufts University, Neubauer Faculty Fellow
- 2013 Intel Science and Technology Center for Social Computing, Summer Grant
- 2012 UC Irvine Department of Anthropology, Summer Research Fellowship
- 2011 UC Irvine Department of Anthropology, Summer Research Fellowship
- 2010 UC Irvine School of Social Sciences, Social Science Merit Fellowship
- 2010 MIT Comparative Media Studies Travel Grant, Howe Collection of Musical Instrument Literature

## INVITED TALKS

- (2016) The Social Life of Music Recommenders. Algorithm Summer School, Linköping University, Sweden. July 4–8.
- (2016) What do people do all day? Comparative Media Studies Colloquium Series, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Cambridge, MA. April 14.
- 2016 What do people do all day? Center for Professional & Applied Ethics. University of North Carolina, Charlotte. March 22.
- 2015 Algorithms: Human Influence on the World of Data. Lewis College Roundtable, panelist. Illinois Institute of Technology. Chicago, IL. October 29.
- 2015 Interpretability: Learning to Listen to Algorithms. Algorithms as Devices of Power and Valuation Workshop, Linköping University. Dalarö, Sweden. May 10–12.
- 2015 Captivating Algorithms: Recommender Systems as Traps. Data & Society Research Institute. New York City, NY. April 16.
- 2014 Traps: Data Work and the Anthropology of Technology. New Forms of Data Work. Intel Corporation. Hillsboro, OR. March 10.
- 2013 What are listeners like? Music, Digitisation, Mediation: Towards Interdisciplinary Music Studies Conference. Oxford University, UK. July 11–13.
- 2013 Engineers are People. 'Data Society' Workshop: Lightning Talks. Intel Labs University Collaboration Symposium. San Francisco, CA. June 25–26.
- 2012 Anthropology and Algorithms. Clouds and Crowds Roundtable. University of Southern California. Los Angeles, CA. November 7.

## CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

### Panels organized

- 2015 Co-chair, with Jennifer Carlson. "STS and Anthropology: Reflections on 25 Years of Entanglement." General Anthropology Division, American Anthropological Association. Denver, CO. November 17–22.
- 2015 Co-organizer, with Elizabeth Rodwell. "Anthropologies of Data." Society for Cultural Anthropology, American Anthropological Association. Denver, CO. November 17–22.
- 2014 Co-organizer and chair, with Madeleine Elish. "Studying With: Relation and Method in the Technoscientific Field." Society for Cultural Anthropology, American Anthropological Association. Washington, D.C. December 2–7.

- 2012 Co-organizer, with Beth Reddy and Chima Anyadike-Danes. "Tarde Doing Work: Ethnographic Engagements With a Recently Revived Ancestor." American Anthropological Association. San Francisco, CA. November 13–18.
- 2011 Chair and co-organizer, with Marcel LaFlamme. "Anthropologies of the Automatic." Society for Cultural Anthropology, American Anthropological Association. Montreal, Canada. November 15–20.
- 2011 Chair and co-organizer, with Beth Reddy. "Time Machines." Society for Social Studies of Science. Cleveland, OH.

**Papers presented**

- (2016) Captivating Algorithms: Recommender Systems as Traps. European Anthropological Association. Milan, Italy. July 20–23.
- (2016) How do neural networks think? Society for Cultural Anthropology. Ithaca, NY. May 13–14.
- (2016) The Return of the Gift. Theorizing the Web. New York City, NY. April 15–16.
- 2016 Programmers and Park Rangers: Craft Visions in the Age of the Algorithm. American Ethnological Society. Washington, D.C. March 31–April 2.
- 2015 Navigating Digital Data. American Anthropological Association. Denver, CO. November 17–22.
- 2015 Parks and Recommendation: Spatial Imaginaries in Algorithmic Systems. Association of Internet Researchers. Phoenix, AZ. October 21–24.
- 2015 Traps: Algorithms and the Anthropology of Technology. Theorizing the Web. New York City, NY. April 17–18.
- 2014 Ethnographic Algorithms and the Kinship of Method. American Anthropological Association. Washington, D.C. December 2–7.
- 2014 Hucksters of the Symbol. Social Science History Association. Toronto, Canada. November 6–9.
- 2014 Bastard Algebra: Notes on the Kinship of Method. Contours of Algorithmic Life. Davis, CA. May 15–16.
- 2013 What Should an Anthropology of Algorithms Do? American Anthropological Association. Chicago, IL. November 20–24.
- 2013 Big Data in Action: Inclusion and Negotiation in Algorithmic Music Recommendation. Society for Social Studies of Science. San Diego, CA. October 9–12.
- 2013 Knowing Algorithms. Media in Transition 8. Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Cambridge, MA. May 3–5.

- 2013 Anthropology and Algorithms. Inventive Methods: Transmissions and Entanglements. UC Irvine. April 8.
- 2012 Every Sensation Is Only a Number: Tardean Statistics, Computer Audition, and Big Data. American Anthropological Association. San Francisco, CA. November 13–18.
- 2012 Hearing Taste: Computer Audition and Automatic Recommendation. Society for Social Studies of Science. Copenhagen, Denmark. October 17–20.
- 2011 Computational Tastemaking: Music Discovery, Massive Datasets, and Automatic Culture. American Anthropological Association. Montreal, Canada. November 15–20.
- 2011 ‘We make data’: Materiality, Liveness, and Pianistic Reproduction. Society for Social Studies of Science. Cleveland, OH. November 2–5.
- 2009 Think Tank: The Unconference Model. New Media Literacies ’09: Learning in a Participatory Culture. Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Cambridge, MA. May 2.
- 2009 Mapping in a Participatory Culture: Simulation and Boundaries. New Media Literacies ’09: Learning in a Participatory Culture. Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Cambridge, MA. May 2.
- 2009 Physical Practice: The Artifacts of Noise Art. Media in Transition 6. Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Cambridge, MA. April 24–26.

## **RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

- 2015 PhD Intern. Microsoft Research Social Media Collective. Cambridge, MA.
- 2012–15 Graduate Student Researcher. Intel Science and Technology Center for Social Computing. UC Irvine.
- 2011–12 Graduate Student Researcher. Institute for Money, Technology, and Financial Inclusion. UC Irvine.
- 2009–10 Research Assistant. HyperStudio Lab for the Digital Humanities. MIT.
- 2008–09 Research Assistant. Project New Media Literacies. MIT.

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

### **Tufts University**

- Cultures of Computing (Fall 2016)
- History of Anthropological Thought (Fall 2016)
- Introduction to the Anthropology of Science and Technology (Spring 2016)

## **University of California, Irvine**

Latour: Metaphysics and Ecopolitics. Graduate seminar, co-taught with Bill Maurer and Beth Reddy. Instructor of Record. (Spring 2012)

Music and Human Migration. Teaching assistant for Robert Garfias. (Spring 2011)

Introduction to Sociocultural Anthropology. Teaching assistant for Jim Egan. (Fall 2010)

## **Massachusetts Institute of Technology**

Experimental Music. MIT High School Studies Program. (Summer 2010)

Anthropology of Sound. Teaching assistant for Stefan Helmreich. (Fall 2009)

Sound in the 20th Century. MIT High School Studies Program. (Summer 2009)

## **SERVICE**

2014– Co-chair. Committee for the Anthropology of Science, Technology, and Computing. American Anthropological Association, General Anthropology Division.

2016 Peer reviewer. *Theory, Culture & Society*.

2016 Peer reviewer. *New Media & Society*.

2015 Peer reviewer. *Journal of Cultural Economy*.

2014 Peer reviewer. *Gastronomica*.

2014 Peer reviewer. *Science as Culture*.

2014 Peer reviewer. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*.

2013–14 Associate editor. The Committee on the Anthropology of Science, Technology, and Computing Blog. <http://blog.castac.org>.

2013–14 Curriculum analyst. UCI Anthropology Undergraduate Committee.

2012 Co-organizer, with Beth Reddy. Dominique Boullier on the 'Habitele.' Colloquium lecture sponsored by the Critical Theory Consortium.

2012 Co-organizer, with Beth Reddy and Chima Anyadike-Danes. Gabriel Tarde Graduate and Faculty Reading Group.

2011 Co-organizer, with Beth Reddy and Bill Maurer. Sideways: a conversation about anthropology and science and technology studies today. Sponsored by the Institute for Money, Technology, and Financial Inclusion and Digital/Cultural/Mobile. UC Irvine.

## OTHER WRITING

- 2015 Critical Algorithm Studies: A Reading List. With Tarleton Gillespie. Social Media Collective, Microsoft Research. <http://socialmediacollective.org/reading-lists/critical-algorithm-studies/>
- 2014 Computers and Sociocultural Anthropology. Blog series for *Savage Minds*. <http://savageminds.org/2014/05/19/computers-and-sociocultural-anthropology/>
- 2014 Studying Up: The Ethnography of Technologists. *Ethnography Matters*. <http://ethnographymatters.net/blog/2014/03/10/studying-up/>
- 2014 On Reverse Engineering: Looking for the Cultural Work of Engineers. *Anthropology and Algorithms*. Medium. <https://medium.com/anthropology-and-algorithms/on-reverse-engineering-d9f5bae87812>
- 2014 The Lost Wanderers: Technology and the Auxiliary Motive. *Anthropology and Algorithms*. Medium. <https://medium.com/anthropology-and-algorithms/the-lost-wanderers-866b60a297ee>
- 2010 Old Media: Interactivity and Mechanical Music. *Comparative Media Studies Blog*. <http://cmsw.mit.edu/nick-seaver-interactivity-and-mechanical-music/>

## AFFILIATIONS

American Anthropological Association: Society for Cultural Anthropology, Society for the Anthropology of Work, General Anthropology Division, Committee on the Anthropology of Science, Technology, and Computing, Digital Anthropology Interest Group, Music and Sound Interest Group

European Association of Social Anthropologists

Society for Social Studies of Science

## REFERENCES

Available on request.