

The University Graduate School
NOMINATION OF RESEARCH COMMITTEE FOR THE PHD

Name of Student: **Eric T. Meyer** Univ. ID: _____

Department: **School of Library and Information Science** Birth Date: **January 18, 1966**

Major: **Information Science** Minor(s): **Educational Policy Studies**

Date of Qualifying Exam: **July 22, 2005** Date of Proposal Defense: **July 12, 2006**

Date of Enrollment in the University Graduate School: **Fall 1998**

Proposed Dissertation Title: **Socio-Technical Perspectives on Digital Photography: Scientific digital photography use by marine mammal researchers**

Dissertation Prospectus: Please attach a one-to two page summary of the proposed research. If the research involves human subjects, animals, biohazards, biosafety, or radiation, please also attach an approval from the appropriate committee.

Note: Your signature below indicates that you have read the attached prospectus and agree to serve, if appointed, on a committee to supervise this research.

NAME	SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT	UNIV ID
Howard Rosenbaum (Chair of Committee)	_____	School of Library and Information Science	_____
Noriko Hara	_____	School of Library and Information Science	_____
Pnina Shachaf	_____	School of Library and Information Science	_____
Barry Bull (Minor Representative)	_____	School of Education	_____

All committee members must be members of the University Graduate School Faculty and at least half must be full members.

I certify that I have examined the attached prospectus and that this committee is appropriate to supervise research in this area.

Signature/Departmental Chairperson _____ **Date** _____

Approval/Dean
University Graduate School _____ **Date** _____

*To be used only by students who have passed the qualifying examination and who have previously been admitted to candidacy.

Dissertation Prospectus

SOCIO-TECHNICAL PERSPECTIVES ON DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY **Scientific digital photography use by marine mammal researchers**

Eric T. Meyer (etmeyer@indiana.edu)

School of Library and Information Science, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN

Project Summary

This project studies the consequences of the computerization of photography for scientists, specifically marine mammal researchers. Our research applies Kling's Socio-Technical Interaction Network (STIN) framework, which analyzes socio-technical systems by integrating the social and technical to develop a more nuanced understanding of technology in society than is possible with alternative frameworks; the STIN framework extends Actor-Network Theory.

Digital photography is a recent, novel information technology that has been widely and rapidly adopted across a variety of domains. To understand the role of digital photography as a technology used in scientific work, this study will examine marine mammal researchers who use photo-identification as a tool for gathering, organizing and analyzing data. Many marine mammal researchers have recently switched from film to digital photography, and report anecdotally that this has fundamentally altered the ways in which they do their scientific work.

This project will involve approximately 40 semi-structured interviews, 6-8 site visits, and 3-4 periods of observation of marine mammal scientists in the field.

Intellectual Merits: The field of social informatics is a new interdisciplinary approach to the study of technology in society (Kling, 1999). The PI on this project worked closely with Rob Kling, the founder of social informatics in the United States, until his death in 2003. He has published in the area of social informatics and on the topic of digital photography. This particular research project is original because it examines how a new technology (digital photography) is being used in an understudied scientific field (marine mammal research), as well as tests and develops one of the central propositions of social informatics: that information and communication technologies (ICT) have important and sometimes unforeseen consequences in social settings, but that these outcomes are not determined by the technology and are a part of complex socio-technical networks.

Broader Impacts: The proposed research broadens the understanding of the relationship between new technologies and changes in social organization and behavior. Even though digital photography has become ubiquitous, very little systematic research has been done to understand the measurable consequences of this new technology. This study contributes to a broader research agenda aimed at understanding how other new technologies can be understood and theorized as they enter into routine use, which is a major research concern of social informatics. Also, by engaging the STIN framework, this research will help develop this relatively new model for understanding the role of technology in society. Alternatively, should the research discover that the STIN framework is inadequate to deal with the data in this study, it will suggest that the STIN framework should be either modified or abandoned in favor of other approaches. This research will also contribute to the literature on technological changes in scientific communication practices, which continues earlier research completed by the PI.

The results of this research will be disseminated as a completed dissertation which will be available on the internet, through publication of at least one journal article in a quality journal, and presentation of at least one conference paper to an information science audience and one conference paper to a marine mammal science audience. By disseminating this research to a marine mammal science audience, the hope is that the scientists can use the theory and data from this research to improve their practice of digital photography. In addition, the PI plans use this research as a base for a research agenda that will examine additional domains of digital photography beyond marine mammal scientists over the next several years.



**NOTICE OF APPROVAL
EXEMPT REVIEW**

**OFFICE OF THE
VICE PRESIDENT
FOR RESEARCH**

TO: Eric Meyer
School of Library & Information Science

DATE: April 27, 2006

FROM: Human Subjects Risk Compliance

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Genta'.

RE: Protocol entitled: Socio-Technical Perspectives on Digital Photography: Scientific Digital Photography use by Marine Mammal Researchers
Protocol #: 06-10893

Approval Date: April 27, 2006

The Human Subjects Committee (HSC) has reviewed and approved the research protocol referenced above as exempt; §46.101b, ¶#2. As the principal investigator of this study you assume the following reporting responsibilities:

AMENDMENTS: Investigators are required to report on the Study Amendment Form **ANY** changes to the research study (such as design, procedures, study information sheet/consent form, or subject population, including size). **Changes may not be initiated until HSC approval has been given.** The PDF interactive Study Amendment Form may be found at: <http://www.research.indiana.edu/rschcomp/pdf/amendpdf2.pdf>

AUDIT OR INSPECTION REPORTS: Investigators are required to provide to the HSC a copy of any audit or inspection reports of findings issued to them by regulatory agencies, cooperative research groups, contract research organizations, the sponsor, or the funding agency.

COMPLETION: Approximately one month after the date you indicated your study will end, we will send a notice to you at the address on your application, requesting information on the current status of your study. You are required to complete and return that form. If this is a student project and we don't hear from you, we will send a notice to your faculty advisor. If we do not receive any response we will consider the study as ended and change our files to show that. It is your responsibility to let the HSC office know of address changes and project date changes.

CONSENT FORMS: All subjects should be given a copy of the **stamped approved** consent form. You must retain signed consent documents for at least three years past completion of the research activity.

We suggest you keep this letter with your copy of the approved protocol. Please refer to the exact project title and protocol number in any future correspondence with our office. All correspondence must be typed.

Enclosures: Documentation of Review and Approval
Approved Consent Form- **stamped copy must be used**

Federal Wide Assurance #FWA00003544-IRB00000222
For additional FWA information, see the Web site at <http://www.iupui.edu/~resgrad/spon/fwa.htm>

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