Biography
Jake Goldenfein is a law and technology scholar interested in the emerging structures of governance in computational society. He completed a PhD at Melbourne Law School (University of Melbourne) and has been a lecturer at Swinburne Law School since 2016. His research addresses: surveillance, automation and identity; law in cyber-physical systems; platform law and governance; the role of standards in law-making; distributed ledgers and intellectual property; media history and theory; and legal theory in the context of mega-computation. His upcoming book Monitoring Laws: Surveillance, Automation and Information Law will be published by Cambridge University Press in 2019.

Abstract
Google Scholar has become an important piece of academic infrastructure. Not only is it used in searching for academic publications, but its bibliometric system has become critical in the evaluation of scholars for hiring and funding. Its success stems from the fact that Google Scholar appears to organize scholarly information better than scholars have managed to do themselves, and its usability is dramatically better than other academic search and bibliometric services. There have been numerous studies of Google Scholar that explore how the technology actually works (i.e. how it determines academic ‘relevance’ or ‘scholarliness’); what types of work, repositories, and authors it privileges or marginalizes; how comprehensive its citations are; and the different ways bibliometrics systems have been taken up by researchers and for the evaluation of publications, scholars, journals, and universities. However, we take a different approach and analyze the political and ethical dimensions of infrastructural shift into a corporate platform operating on the basis of different commercial logics, with limited transparency or accountability. Search engine accountability has been a topic of sustained research for some time, but we are less interested in questions of bias or discrimination, and more interested in questions of how the centrality of Google Scholar affects the context of academic publishing, search and evaluation, as well as how it disrupts the academic field more broadly.

Date
Thurs 05 Sep

Time
12.30pm - 1.45pm

Venue
Room 131 | Tata Innovation Center
Cornell Tech | Roosevelt Island

Speaker
Jake Goldenfein
Digital Life Initiative | Cornell Tech

Title
Private Companies and Scholarly Infrastructure –
The Question of Google Scholar

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