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News from the Information Society Project at Yale Law School

Information Society Project Newsletter -- Summer 2007

Projects

Michael Seringhaus is putting together a cross-disciplinary working group to develop standards for the Structured Digital Abstract, a machine-readable snapshot for research articles in the biological sciences that will act as a gateway to database access and data mining. The working group plans to involve authors in the creation of this digital abstract, integrate its production with the peer-review and publication process, and implement a pilot project in one or more journals within the next year. With scientific literature growing at a startling rate -- it would take a person 5 years to read the literature produced in a 24-hour period, making it very challenging to stay current, even in narrow fields -- the SDA will help integrate this mass of published scientific knowledge with scientific databases, making it searchable and easily accessible worldwide.

Shay David is developing a new, community-oriented website for the ISP, which will include forums, publications, wikis, and the LawMeme blog. Contact Shay if you are interested in reviewing early versions of the site.

Laura Forlano, working in partnership with the Open Source Wireless Coalition, a network of community wireless groups around the world, helped to draft a 20-page response to a request for information for an open source wireless network from Open Air Boston in June.

Meetings, Events and Conferences

Laura DeNardis guest lectured at the School of Information Studies at Syracuse University ("IPv6: Politics of the Next Generation Internet") and Virginia Tech ("Interoperability, Institutions, and Global IT Politics") and presented a paper, "A Development Agenda for Open Standards", at the Technology, Globalization and Development conference in St. Louis, MO in April.

Laura Forlano organized a panel, "Shaping a Research Agenda for Community Wireless Networks," on which **Eddan Katz** was a panelist, at the International Summit for Community Wireless Networks, at Loyola College in Columbia, MD, where she also participated in a workshop held by the COMMONS Project. She presented "Anytime? Anywhere?: Exploring the Social and Digital Ecologies of WiFi Hotspots" at the International Communications Association's Mobile Communication Pre-conference in San Francisco, CA and "Measurement at the Edges: A Survey of WiFi Hotspots in New York" at the Ultrabroadband and the Personal Media Cloud conference at the Columbia Institute for Tele-Information at Columbia Business School. She has also presented her dissertation research at

Microsoft Research, Ricoh Innovations, Inc. and Parsons The New School for Design in recent months.

Sarah Faulkner is in Ethiopia attending stakeholder meetings about traditional knowledge and genetic resources and developing a country study on Access to Knowledge.

Christopher Mason, Michael Seringhaus, Katherine McDaniel, Leah Belsky and other Yale affiliates hosted a two-day conference, “Comparative Legislative Analysis for Intellectual Property and Biologics,” in Washington, DC in early June. The conference was attended by all congressional staff from the Senate and House drafting the legislation on patent reform and biologics (genes and tissues) as well as the Patent Reform Act of 2007. Also in attendance were members from the National Academy of Sciences, the ACLU, the Public Patent Foundation, and various legal and medical scholars from around the country.

Katherine McDaniel attended the iCommons Summit in Dubrovnik, Croatia from June 15-17, where she participated in the iCommons iCurriculum ISummit Open Education Track. She also attended a meeting of the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights (SCCR) under the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) from June 18-22, where she delivered a formal statement on behalf of the ISP before the Standing Committee. At the meeting, the ISP distributed a working paper, “The Digital Education and Information Policy Initiative: Towards the Development of Effective Exceptions to and Limitations on Copyright in the Realm of Digital Education”.

Hong Xue attended the 26th International Association for the Advancement of Teaching and Research in Intellectual Property (ATRIP) Congress took in Buenos Aires from July 16-18. The Congress (<http://www.atribuenosaires.com.ar/ing/programa.asp>) attracted more than 300 hundred IP professors and researchers from all five continents.

Publications

Information Technology in Theory by **Laura DeNardis** and Pelin Aksoy will be published by Thomson Course Technology in Fall 2007. She wrote a chapter, “A History of Internet Security” in *The Handbook of the History of Information Security* edited by Karl de Leeuw, which is to be published this month.

Laura Forlano’s dissertation research on WiFi hotspots was featured in the Works in Progress section of *IEEE Pervasive Computing* (July - September 2007). She authored a report, “Conversations on Media, Technology, Society & Culture: Media and Communications at a Crossroads ~ The Role of Scholarship for Media Reform and Justice,” published by the Ford Foundation in Spring 2007.

Christopher Mason is writing a white paper, “Capital of Life”, on genomic rights and the intersection of intellectual property, biologics, and policy. More than 20% of human genes have already been patented, and there is no sign of abatement in the future. The impact of these patent protections has been relatively small, but certain cases provide

dangerous precedent (like the breast cancer gene, BRCA1). The paper find that dangers from these patent restrictions are likely to endanger the promise of personalized medicine (genomic medicine) and the efficacy for diagnosis of diseases. In tandem with this examination of the issues surrounding genomic rights in the U.S., **Michael Seringhaus** is completing an international legal comparison for the U.S. standards and legal precedents, to aide in future discussion and in guiding policy decisions worldwide.

Announcements

Hong Xue was re-elected as one of nine members of International Association for the Advancement of Teaching and Research in Intellectual Property's (ATRIP) Executive Committee; she is the only member from Asia.

Laura Forlano received a summer grant from the NET Institute at the New York University Stern School of Business for comparative analysis of a survey of WiFi hotspots that she conducted in New York, Montreal and Budapest in partnership with local community wireless groups from October 2006 – April 2007. She has been elected to the New York City Computer Human Interaction (NYCCHI) Association Board of Directors for a two-year term.

Upcoming Events

NYU Law School's Information Law Institute is hosting a talk by Ronaldo Lemos, Fundação Getulio (Vargas Law School) on September 20 from 4:30p.m. - 6:30p.m. For more information: <http://www.law.nyu.edu/ili/colloquia/index.html>.

The ISP will host a symposium, “Reputation Economies in Cyberspace and Beyond”, from December 7-8. Reputation, which plays a key role in almost any economic or social system, is a fundamental aspect of any cyber-community that is not yet well understood. Because traditional modes of accreditation and prior acquaintance with participants usually do not apply to online communities, in recent years we have witnessed the development of alternative models for reputation management including ratings, stars, points, karma and others. These new models, which apply to people, goods, and services, challenge our accepted notions of identity, social capital, accreditation, expertise, and risk as they shift the reliance of reputation systems away from traditional social networks, educational backgrounds and institutional affiliations and towards the wisdom of the crowd. This shift, in turn, entails dramatic changes to information privacy, quality, ownership and the ability of groups and individuals to affect them. The symposium will seek to explore these themes, and their meaning to democracy. The symposium will bring together leading scholars from industry, academia and government to discuss the role of reputation in cyberspace and beyond. Proposed panels include: Making your Name Online!, Privacy and Reputational Protection. Reputational Quality and Information Quality, and Ownership or Cyber-reputation.