Tami Sutcliffe

Interdisciplinary Information Science PhD Candidate
College of Information Department of Library and Information Sciences

will defend the proposal

The Iconology of Pinterest

Professional image curators are trained to use standardized vocabularies when providing institutional collection control and access. Curatorial language standards rooted in naming conventions have traditionally been considered critical to efficient archiving and retrieval in most large institutional image collections.

As non-institutional digital image collections expand into social media, independent non-professional image curators are emerging, apparently constructing alternative naming conventions to suit their needs in a social collecting environment.

This project considers how independent user-curators may be developing particular sense-making behaviors as they actively contribute names to large, unstructured social image collections.

In order to capture and explore this evolving language adaptation, Pinterest names will be analyzed using a matrix composed of Panofsky's three strata of subject matter, Rosch's levels of categorical abstraction and Shatford Layne's image attributes. It is expected that Panofsky/Rosch/ Shatford Layne matrix will provide a method to isolate concepts being represented, particularly within the semiotics of the extended word play involved within Pinterest naming, without requiring intensive content analysis of the images themselves.

Analyzing Pinterest image names may illuminate previously unnoticed behaviors by independent user-curators as they create shared collections. Exploring the various language choices which user-curators select as they apply this new curating vocabulary could reveal some underlying user needs which may not have been apparent in traditionally curated collections restricted to traditional naming conventions.

Committee Members:
Dr. Brian O'Connor, Chair
Dr. Linda Schamber
Dr. Shawne Miksa

Friday, May 23, 2014
11:00am

LIS Faculty Conference Room E298N

UNT Discovery Park

College of Information, LIS Department

For electronic copy of this proposal, please contact IIS PhD Program Office
(E297C, CI-IISPhD@unt.edu).