

LACHLAN KERMODE

BORN: 17 November 1994, Wellington, New Zealand
LANGUAGES: English (mother tongue), Italian (proficient), Latin

PERSONAL WEBSITE: lachlankermode.com
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EDUCATION

- (CURRENT) PhD in MODERN CULTURE AND MEDIA, **Brown University**.
Dissertation: "Modernity's wager: Marx and the critique of mathematics",
Chair: Joan COPJEC; Committee: Holly CASE, Peter SZENDY, Suresh VENKATASUBRAMANIAN
- 05.2025 ScM in COMPUTER SCIENCE, **Brown University**.
Distributed and ML systems, Advised: Ugur CETINTEML
- 04.2023 M.A. in MODERN CULTURE AND MEDIA, **Brown University**.
- 05.2018 AB in COMPUTER SCIENCE, **Princeton University**.
Coursework includes 5+ upper level seminars in critical theory, media theory and performance theory.
Thesis: "Towards critical computing: a template for animated documentary," Advised: Arvind NARAYANAN

PUBLICATIONS

- 2026 The machine that therefore I am
TBA, forthcoming.
- 2026 The cybernetic conjecture
TBA, forthcoming.
- 2024 Is it stupid to think information wants to be free?
IWM Post 133.
<https://www.iwm.at/publication/iwmpost-article/is-it-stupid-to-think-information-wants-to-be-free>
- 2021 Detecting tear gas canisters with limited training data. (Contributing author.)
WACV 2022, Main Conference, Object Detection and Recognition.
- 2019 Objects of violence: synthetic data for practical ML in human rights investigations. (First author.)
NEURIPS 2019, AI for Social Good Workshop, Producing Good Outcomes.
<https://arxiv.org/abs/2004.01030>

TEACHING

FALL 2024	MCM 0903e: Capitalism and Computers in the Era of A.I.	Brown University
SPRING 2023	CSCI 1951I: Computer Science for Social Change	Brown University
09.2022	Socially Responsible Computing (1 week intensive)	Brown University
FALL 2023	(TA) CSCI 1270: Database Management Systems	Brown University
FALL 2023	(TA) MCM 0150: Theories of Modern Culture and Media	Brown University
FALL 2022	(TA) MCM 0230: Digital Media	Brown University
FALL 2020	(Guest lecture) Practical Introduction to DL with FastAI	Brown University
06.2024-	Math(s), Philosophy, and History reading group	Cogut Institute for the Humanities
09.2021-01.2023	A.R.G. Critical Reading Group	Computer Science, Brown University

LECTURES | PAPERS

07.05.2025	"The machine that therefore I am"	University of Dundee Student Colloquium
13.03.2025	"Is there a theory of the subject in Marx?"	LACK V, Ohio
17.05.2024	"Love's First Site" (respondent: Amanda HOLMES)	IWM Spring Fellows Conference
05.12.2023	"The Automatic Subject"	American Academy in Berlin
17.03.2023	"Men Dressed as Ghosts"	MCM Graduate Colloquium
13.10.2022	"Political Economies of the Cloud"	GRiSTS 2022
27.05.2022	3-D in public (poster)	Toronto Geometry Colloquium (v).
19.06.2021	Slow Boil 'Relations' seminar	Artspace Aotearoa
11.05.2021	Augmented Authorship	Lucerne University of Applied Sciences (v)
24.09.2019	AI and Human Rights	Sigrid Rausing Trust
16.09.2019	Citizen Forensics workshop	School of Machines
31.08.2019	Spatial Research Practice Roundtable	Flaneur Festival at HKW
23.07.2019	Machine Learning in Forensic Investigations	United Nations / ATI conference
17.07.2019	Machine Learning and Synthetic Data	Goldsmiths University
2019	Programming for open-source architects	Architectural Association
04.07.2019	On Algorithmic Vision	Birkbeck's Critical Theory Summer School
19.06.2019	Computer Visions	Princeton-Weimar Summer School
21.03.2019	Using Synthetic Data	ElementAI
10.10.2018	Machine Learning in Counter Forensics (guest lecturer)	Princeton University
03.11.2018	Lessons in Counter Forensics: Interpretation	Turner Prize seminars at Tate Britain

SELECTED SOFTWARE | PROJECTS

I was either the lead or a major contributing developer on all of the projects listed below. For more, see my social coding profiles:

- Github: <https://github.com/breezykerm>
- Gitlab: <https://gitlab.com/breezykerm>
- Forensic Architecture: <https://forensic-architecture.org/about/team/member/lachie-kermode>

02.2023	Antarctic Resolution	https://antarctic-resolution.org/
2019	Timemap	https://github.com/forensic-architecture/timemap
2020	Mtriage	https://github.com/forensic-architecture/mtriage
17.11.2020	The Beirut Port Explosion	https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/beirut-port-explosion
28.10.2020	Brutality at BLM Protests	https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/police-brutality-at-the-black-lives-matter-protests
19.08.2019	The Battle of Ilovaisk	https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/the-battle-of-ilovaisk
21.03.2018	The Grenfell Tower Fire	https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/the-grenfell-tower-fire

WORKSHOPS AND SERVICE

05.2025	PLISS summer school	Programming languages implementation intensive in Bertinoro, Italy.
06.2022-2024	AI Reading Group	Brown University faculty across the sciences/arts, monthly.
06-08.2023	BICAR Summer Intensive	WORKING THROUGH, 7 participants with Rohit Goel.
17.03.2023	MCM Graduate Colloquium	Co-organizer. Presented: "Men Dressed as Ghosts".
09.2022-23	GSC representative for MCM	Department representative, meetings monthly.
07.2022	"Simultaneity" Sommerfrische	Convened by Holly Case. 1-week retreat in Poland.

AWARDS, HONOURS, FELLOWSHIPS

2024	Digital Humanism Fellow	IWM, Vienna
09.2018	Top 5 (of 125+) 'Hive'	HACKZURICH 2018
09.2017	Top 25 (of 125+) 'Midnight Grain to Georgia'	HACKZURICH 2017
06.2017	Undergraduate Research Fellow	PIIRS, Berlin
2016-19	Advisory Board	Paideia Institute for Humanistic Study
12.2015	1st Place 'ClaireCutApp'	Burda Hackday, Munich
10.2015	Dropbox API Prize 'Stitch'	HackZurich 2015
09.2015	1st Place 'Pocketbadge'	Bic Lazio TalenTime Hackathon, Rome
12.2012	Ian Turner Cup for Best All Rounder	Auckland Grammar School
12.2012	H.O Ingram Prize for Senior Latin	Auckland Grammar School
02.2012	Senior Prefect (1 of 5)	Auckland Grammar School
10.2012	1st Place	Auckland University Latin Speaking Competition

POSITIONS

06.2024-	Lead Software Researcher - LIMINAL <i>Bologna, Italy</i> Conceptualising, designing, and developing software for human rights investigations in the Central Mediterranean, Northern Africa, and Europe.
06-09.2022-2023	Research Assistant - UGUR CETINTEMEL <i>Remote</i> Developing and systematizing ethics curriculum for Brown undergraduate Computer Science program, 2022. Auto-scaling mechanisms in Apache Flink and Kubernetes using Reinforcement Learning, 2023.
09.2021-2022	Volunteer Research Engineer - SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYSIS TOOLKIT [SMAT] <i>Remote</i> Full stack development and MLOPs engineering for the SMAT website and associated tooling.
09.2021-2023	Graduate Advisor - BROWN UNIVERSITY - RESPONSIBLE COMPUTING INITIATIVE <i>Providence RI, U.S.A</i> Advising undergraduate teaching assistants in the computer science department in their work reforming the curriculum to give greater attention to ethical issues in the field. Also running a bi-weekly reading group in the computer science department open to all University affiliates.
02.2021-09.2021	Senior Software Engineer - HALTER <i>Auckland, NZ</i> Specialising as a machine learning engineer, architected and built a feature store to compute real-time uplinks from IoT devices using Kinesis streams and Apache Flink on AWS. Contributed to microservices in Java, Node and Python (SNS/SQS, DynamoDB, and PostgreSQL), and infrastructure with Terraform and Concourse CI.
06.2018-02.2021	Advanced Software Researcher - FORENSIC ARCHITECTURE <i>London, UK</i> Directed engineering for several full stack platforms and machine learning workflows. Also sat on our data management committee for digital security, and offered expertise across investigations. See forensic-architecture.org/subdomain/oss for related publications, and github.com/forensic-architecture for the open source software I developed during this experience.
04.2020-01.2021	Developer at The Syllabus - THE SYLLABUS <i>Berlin, Germany</i> Designed and developed the frontend for two websites in Vue: the-syllabus.com and cabinet.the-syllabus.com (by subscription only). User-based authentication, account management (reset and deletion), payment via Stripe, and a page-display algorithm to simulate A4 pages on the web. In 2020 these websites were used by some 20,000 users.
11.2019-03.2020	Visiting Research Fellow - UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND, DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE <i>Auckland, New Zealand</i> Conceptualising and undertaking an investigation to recenter Muslim and Maori communities in New Zealand by documenting how a racialised figuration of 'the terrorist' persists in the wake of the Christchurch mosque shootings in March 2019. In partnership with Forensic Architecture.
01.2019-01.2021	Full stack engineer - MERANTIX <i>Berlin, Germany [remote]</i> I develop tooling for deep learning workflows on a part time basis for Merantix ventures. Working mainly in Python and the Jupyter notebook stack, we aim https://www.overleaf.com/project/563a21fa2a2d7d4a123ba0ed to augment tooling in industry DL. Technologies include Kubernetes, GCP, Tensorflow, Jupyter notebooks, Svelte, Vue, and React.
08.2016-03.2017	CTO and co-founder - DIRECT DRINKS <i>Wellington, NZ [remote]</i> We provide a direct sales channels between large corporate suppliers and small resellers in the FMCG industry, disrupting a pipeline that is currently dominated by mid-tier redistributors. As CTO, I developed from scratch an end-to-end platform for web, mobile, and tablet.
06.2015-02.2016	Digital Humanities Fellow - PAIDEIA INSTITUTE <i>Rome, Italy</i> After an internship developing an iOS application in 2015, I became the inaugural Digital Humanities Fellowship, taking a year off from Princeton to head digital operations from the office in Rome. I learned Italian, renovated Paideia's website, wrote web crawlers for research and development, developed two iOS applications, and improved internal operations at the institute with Google Scripts, Python, and general technical suggestions. Since the fellowship concluded, I have sat on the institute's advisory board.

EXHIBITIONS

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| 09.2023-06.2024 | Surveillance: From Vision to Data - HARVARD COLLECTION OF SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS
<i>Boston, USA</i>
This timely exhibit considers surveillance beyond the realm of cameras and their watchers, exposing the profound influence of data. Contributed an original video on loop that introduced mtriage , a software I developed to scrape public domain data. |
| 10.2021-01.2022 | The Moral Drift - TAURANGA ART GALLERY
<i>Tauranga, New Zealand</i>
In collaboration with Fraser Crichton and Malcolm Richards, this exhibition offers a partial history of Aotearoa's state care system, uncovering a legacy of abuse and the resiliency of the survivors who continue to seek justice today. My contribution was primarily conceptual and advisory. |
| 05-09.2021 | Slow Boil - ARTSPACE AOTEAROA
<i>Auckland, New Zealand</i>
In collaboration with kaupapa Māori community group and kai security advocates Boil Up Crew, as well as a group of contributing practitioners spanning architecture, community advocacy, design, food sovereignty, software and the visual arts. Explored the relationship between the mahi ngā -kai/kai rituals, and tūwahi/notions of space, mana motuhake/sovereignty, and mapping. Works were collectively produced and installed over the course of the exhibition, alongside existing investigative works by Forensic Architecture. |
| 02.06.2020 | Violent Legalities - ADAM ART GALLERY
<i>Wellington, New Zealand</i>
This project cartographically chronologises three separate projects. Each aims to spatialise relationships between legislative activity and occurrences of violence to inspect enduring trends between settler-colonial law-making processes and state policies in Aotearoa/New Zealand. |
| 20.02.2020 | Model Zoo in Uncanny Valley: Being human in the age of AI - DE YOUNG MUSEUM
<i>San Francisco, USA</i>
This exhibition presented the research project I steered at Forensic Architecture in computer vision and synthetic data. Accompanying technical details are available at https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/detecting-tear-gas . |
| 13.05.2019 | Triple Chaser in Whitney Biennial 2019 - WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART
<i>New York, USA</i>
Forensic Architecture's invited contribution, I worked with filmmaker Laura Poitras and Praxis Films to steer the project from a machine learning perspective. Accompanying technical details are available at https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/cv-in-triple-chaser . |
| 13.05.2019 | Destruction and Return in Al-Araqib in Turner Prize nomination 2018 - TATE BRITAIN
<i>London, UK</i>
An exhibition produced for Forensic Architecture's nomination for the 2018 Turner Prize, and my first investigation with the research group, I helped develop an interactive platform displaying more than 30Gb of point clouds and other citizen-mapped data in the Negev/Naqab desert. |
| 03.2019 | Talking Popcorn's First Last Words with Nina Katchadourian - FRIDMAN GALLERY
<i>New York, USA</i>
Sixteen people from a wide variety of fields and areas of expertise were asked to address Talking Popcorn's last words from their particular disciplinary perspectives. The soundtrack played in a room with the burned, damaged carcass of the first machine standing on a black plinth upon which was written the machine's final pronouncement. |