

THE ETHICS OF STUDYING GEOCITIES

The screenshot shows the GeoCities homepage. At the top, there's a purple banner with the text "MICROSOFT VISUAL INTERDEV" and a link "Click here for free beta of Microsoft Visual Interdev". On the left, there's a large stylized 'G' logo with geometric shapes. Below it, text reads: "Our communities are home to the most popular collection of FREE HOME PAGES & E-MAIL on the web. Please join or visit one of our 29 neighborhoods today." In the center, there's a collage of neighborhood icons including "BRAZIL", "PARIS", "HEARTLAND", "ATHENS", and "TIMES SQUARE". To the right, a red sidebar titled "YOUR HOME ON THE WEB" lists links: "ENTER HERE", "INFORMATION", "NEIGHBORHOODS", "WHAT'S NEW", "WHAT'S COOL", and "WHAT IS GEOCITIES?". At the bottom, there's a decorative footer with colorful stylized figures and links for "Free Home Pages & Free Member Email" and "Advertiser Information".

Ian Milligan
Associate Professor of History
@ianmilligan1



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WATERLOO

Google Drive HistD GitHub AWS Lib Weather RSS LEARN CHE-F FT WALK Globe Concur Internet-History SRT syzygy.ca

GeoCities Features Cool Die Deutschkulturseite Philadelphia City Hall - Will Penn's Homepage

<http://www.geocities.com:80/Athens/Delphi/2115/> Go DEC JAN OCT
91 captures 17 Jan 1999 - 18 Oct 2016 1998 28 1999 2000 About this capture

Welcome to Will Penn's Homepage.
This is where you will find everything you ever wanted to know about Philadelphia's City Hall
(and then some!)
This Historic Landmark is quite unique and one of Philadelphia's Architectural treasures.



If your browser supports frames just click on the building - otherwise enter [here](#)

If you are using NETSCAPE or IE 4.0 or better you can avoid annoying POP-UPS by turning your Java Script OFF!

Glad to meet you visitor # [? Thanks for dropping in.](#)
If you enjoyed your visit, please take a moment to [Vote for this Site](#) and [Sign the Guestbook](#)
Your feedback is very important and always appreciated.

A-List material
THE BEST OF GEOCITIES

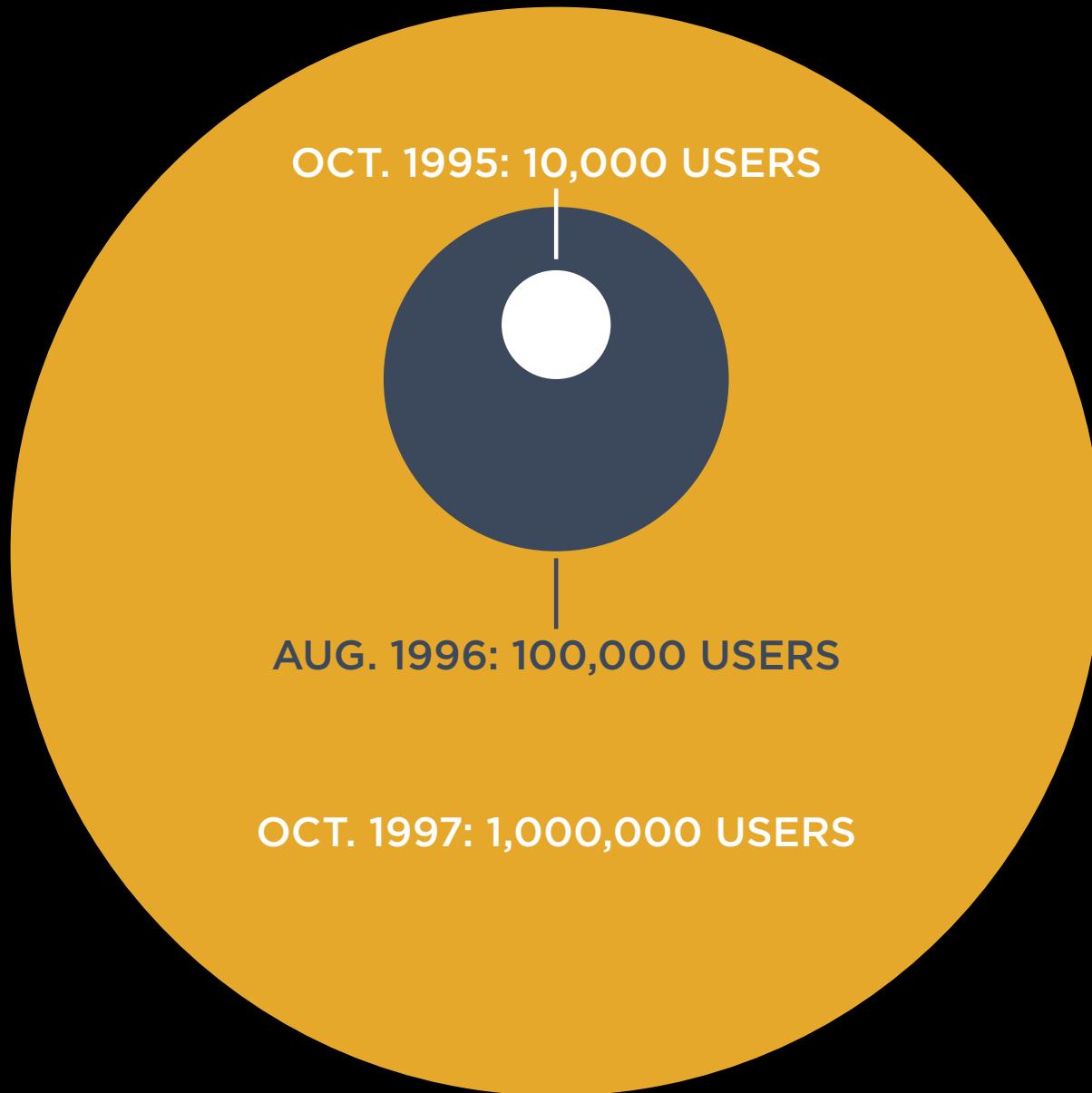
SELECTED SITE AWARDS

FAMILY-FRIENDLY SITE™

Meets Criteria at www.virtucity.com/family.html

GEOCITIES.COM

BY 2009, SEVEN MILLION USERS CREATED
186 MILLION PAGES ON GEOCITIES



Welcome to GeoCities Home Page

https://web.archive.org/web/20180303000000/http://www4.geocities.com:80/

299,786 captures
22 Oct 1996 - 3 Mar 2018

OCT DEC FEB
1995 21 1996 1998

Develop dynamic websites
CLICK HERE FOR A FREE DOWNLOAD
Microsoft® Visual InterDev
[Click here for free beta of Microsoft Visual Interdev](#)

SiteBuilder

GEOCITIES

OUR CITIES: PARIS, HEARTLAND, ATHENS, TIMES SQUARE

YOUR HOME ON THE WEB

- ENTER HERE
- INFORMATION
- NEIGHBORHOODS
- WHAT'S NEW
- WHAT'S COOL
- WHAT IS GEOCITIES?

* [Free Home Pages & Free Member Email](#) [Advertiser Information](#)

[GeoCities Daily Audio Update](#) -- Sponsored by [IBM VoiceType Simply Speaking](#)

Today's Cool Homestead
[Yosemite4273](#)
Sunsets, coastal seagulls and flowers are part of the photographic fare at inetd's homepage.

[GeoCities News of the Day - 12/20/96](#)

GEOCITIES LIVE CHRISTMAS TREE!

WE CAN VISIT IT TODAY

• Web Hosting by Yahoo | Reliabl X +

https://smallbusiness.yahoo.com/webhosting?source=geocities

YAHOO!
SMALL BUSINESS

Websites Ecommerce Web Hosting Local Marketing Domains Business Mail More Access your account

Flexible hosting for your professional website

Easy-to-use tools, included business mail accounts, and search ad credits help you succeed.

Domain Overview
Domain Choices

cinefex

Need help ordering? 1-866-781-9246 (Mon-Fri, 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM PT)

BASIC PLAN
Ideal for small personal sites

\$3.75 /mo. ?

Sign up

Compare plans »

ADVANCED PLAN
Ideal for business sites POPULAR

\$5.99 /mo. ?

Sign up

Compare plans »

PREMIER PLAN
Ideal for heavy traffic sites

\$8.99 /mo. ?

Sign up

Compare plans »

(THANK GOODNESS, BECAUSE
IT'S NOT ON THE LIVE WEB)



BUT HOW TO ETHICALLY NAVIGATE
THE RECORDS OF SEVEN MILLION
PEOPLE?



[HTTPS://WWW.FLICKR.COM/PHOTOS/44684173@N00/4695734802](https://www.flickr.com/photos/44684173@N00/4695734802)

WAYBACK MACHINE = PRIVACY BY OBSCURITY?

The screenshot shows a web browser window for the Wayback Machine. The address bar displays https://web.archive.org/web/*/geocities. The main content area shows search results for the query "geocities".

INTERNET ARCHIVE Explore more than 313 billion web pages saved over time

WayBack Machine

geocities

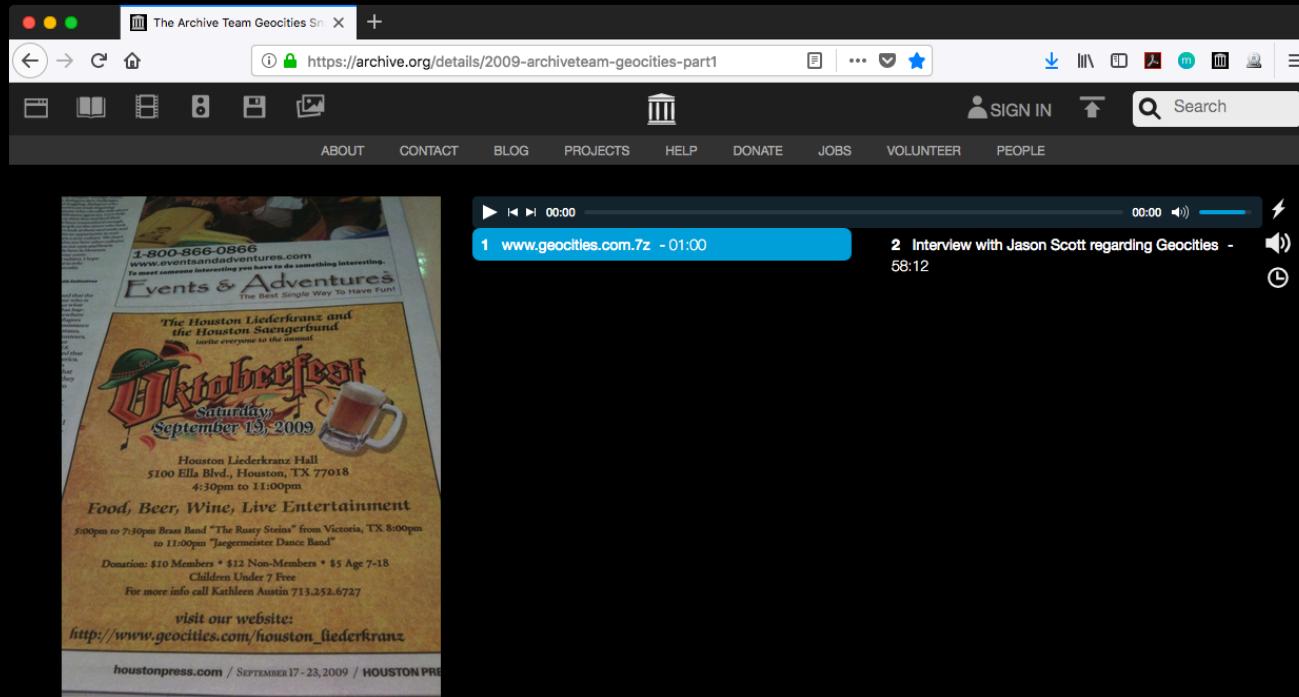
www.geocities.com
www geocities com
37,396,952 43,239,279 721,042 17,662
197,839,055 web captures from 1996 to 2017

geocities.yahoo.com
yahoo geocities
318,408 4,415 2 1
918,824 web captures from 1999 to 2014

yahoo-geocities-anime-rpgs.anime-cartoon-hentai-sex-movies.com
yahoo geocities anime rpgs
104 0 0 0
160 web captures from 2004 to 2005

www.geopages.com
geocities
14,153 50 0 8
24,108 web captures from 1998 to 2016

us.geocities.yahoo.com



The Archive Team Geocities Snapshot (Part 1 of 8)

Publication date 2009-10
Contributor Archive Team

This is a collection of Geocities data downloaded by a bunch of people who call themselves ARCHIVE TEAM, who began scraping the Yahoo! Geocities site during a six month period in 2009, before Yahoo! shut down geocities.com on October 26th, 2009. This collection is compressed in a UNIX filesystem with both 7zip archives and tape archives (gtar).

This collection was put together by nearly 100 folks assembling at the news of the death of Geocities, a website that allowed free hosting of web pages from roughly 1994 (in beta) to 2009. In 1999, it was purchased by Yahoo! for three billion dollars. We're not kidding here: billion with a b.

★ ↗ ⚑

3,684 Views

DOWNLOAD OPTIONS

ADVANCED AUDIO CODING	19 files
GZIP	2 files
JPEG	2 files

WARCS OR TORRENT =
IT'S ALL THERE

SO WHAT TO DO?



LEGAL != ETHICAL

FINDING INDIVIDUALS FOR OPT-IN INFORMED CONSENT?

16 Captures
11 Oct 1999 - 28 Oct 2009

X / GEOFRIES ATHENS RANK MY SITE PAGES LIKE MINE TAKE A TOUR SEARCH MY GUESTBOOK SEND THIS PAGE CHAT FORUMS About this capture

Tell me where is fancy bred,
Or in the heart or in the head?
~~William Shakespeare

Original Prose and Poetry Writings

Required Booklist Reading List

The Anathian Award Win

See who's Won Winners

Contributions from Others Gallery

Visit other Places Links

Rings of Joy Webstrings

Starving Authors: Ring for Writers Join

Philosophy Thoughts and Ideas

Quotes Thoughts to Ponder

Friendship Special Kind of Love

Dreams Receive a License

Adopt A Feathered Friend

Awards Gifts from Kind People

Author Who is Ana?

Hut Libs
Suspiciously Similar to Mad Libs

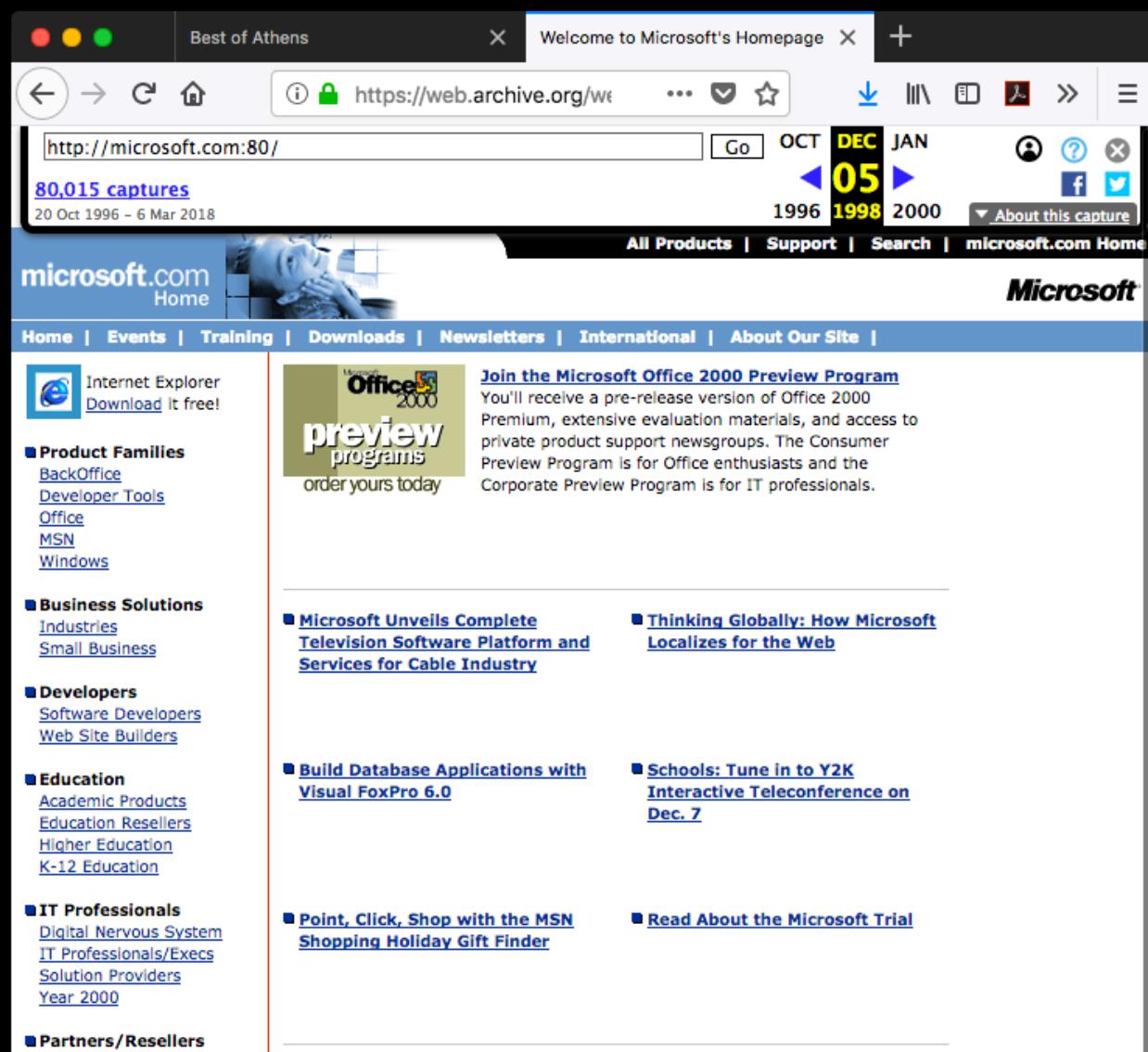
S ign G uestbook

Click Here to Send an Internet Greeting!
Enter Card ID Number to Pickup

Your Greeting Card: GO

Bravenet.com

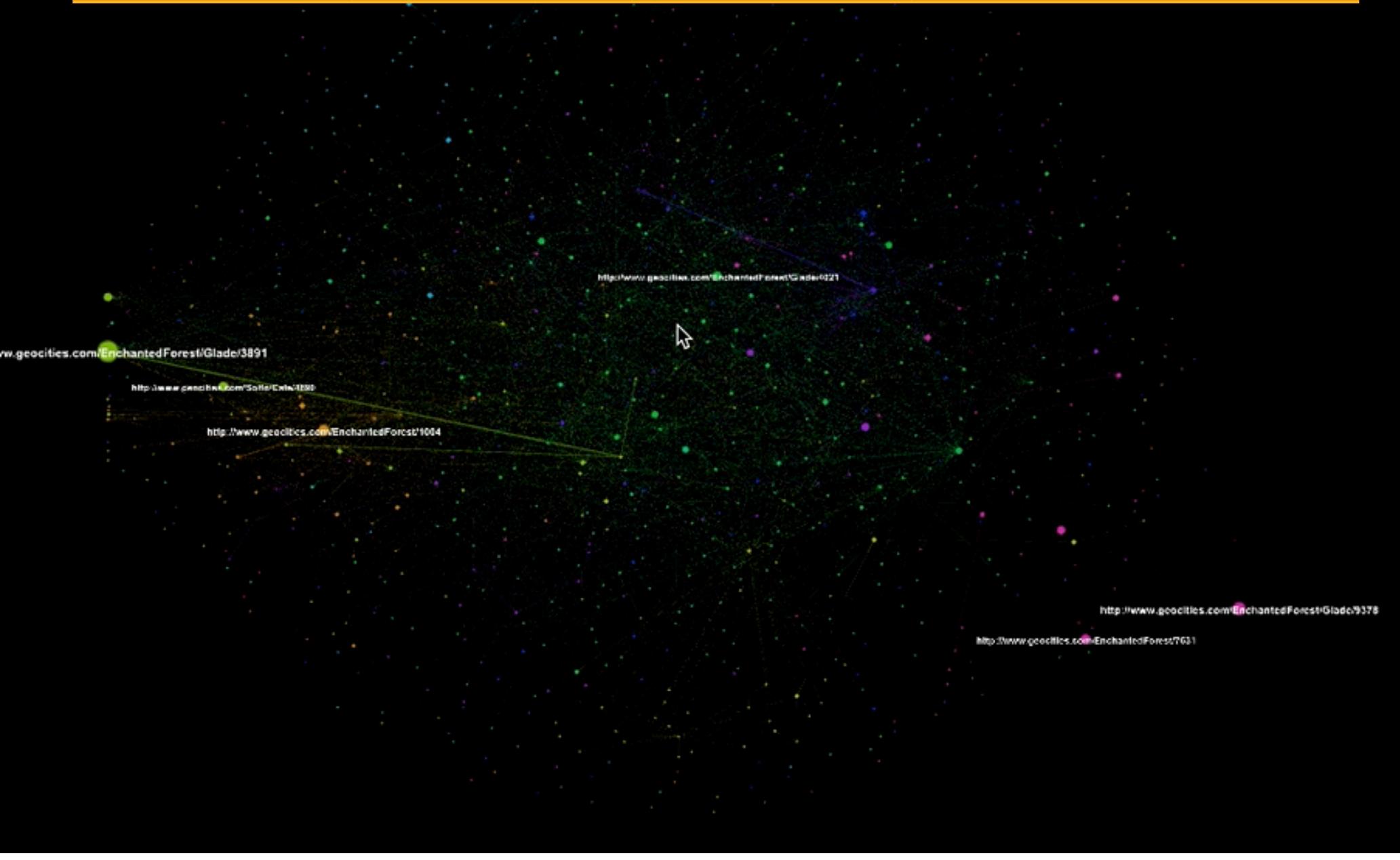
LEAVING PEOPLE OUT DOESN'T FEEL ETHICAL EITHER



SOME CONSIDERATIONS

- **Distant reading vs. close reading**
 - Can't read 186 million pages – maybe that's an advantage?
- **Expectation of Privacy**
 - Inbound links? How would people find the site?
 - Publicly-travelled guestbook?

PAGERANK IN GEOCITIES





INDIVIDUAL RESEARCHERS
AND RISK ASSESSMENTS?

The background of the image shows a dense array of server racks in a data center. The racks are black with gold-colored horizontal bars and red indicator lights. Some of the racks have white labels with the word "INTERNET" and "AD" printed on them. The perspective is looking down at the racks.

**WE HAVE POWER BECAUSE WE CAN
ACCESS THE BLOGS, RUMINATIONS,
AND PERSONAL MOMENTS OF
LITERALLY MILLIONS OF PEOPLE
THAT WOULD NEVER BEFORE HAVE
BEEN ACCESSED – BUT WE NEED TO
USE THIS POWER RESPONSIBLY.**

The screenshot shows the homepage of Geocities. At the top, there's a red banner with the word "GEOCITIES" in white. Below the banner is a collage of various city-themed images, including "AREA 51", "PARIS", "HEARTLAND", and "ATHENS". To the left, there's a sidebar with text about free home pages and email. On the right, there's a sidebar with links for "YOUR HOME ON THE WEB".

Our communities are home to the most popular collection of FREE HOME PAGES & E-MAIL on the web. Please join or visit one of our 29 neighborhoods today.

GEOCITIES

- ENTER HERE
- INFORMATION
- NEIGHBORHOODS
- WHAT'S NEW
- WHAT'S COOL
- WHAT IS GEOCITIES?

THANKS SO MUCH!
I LOOK FORWARD TO LEARNING
FROM YOU ALL

Ian Milligan
Associate Professor of History
@ianmilligan1

