

Social Media Data Preservation in an API-driven World

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Abstract: In this platform presentation I will briefly discuss some problems and approaches to preserving social media data collected from Application Programming Interfaces (APIs). I will begin by discussing what APIs are and how they create a new set of challenges for archivists, research data managers, and archival researchers concerned with evidence, accountability, identity, and reproducibility. Then I will address what APIs mean for digital preservation by discussing some current examples of leading social media data archives models in the United States (including Social Feed Manager, DocNow tools, the Obama White House administration, and ISPCR). Throughout the talk I will discuss how I teach social media APIs in my courses at the UT iSchool incorporating these models for social media archiving by connecting them to ongoing preservation work of digital cultural memory.

About the Author:

Amelia Acker is an assistant professor in the School of Information at the University of Texas, Austin, where she researches data literacy, social media, and digital preservation infrastructures that support long-term cultural memory. Her course topics include archives, science & technology studies, mobile ICTs, and metadata standards. Currently, Acker is investigating emerging preservation tools and data stewardship practices in mobile and social platform development communities. Acker is also the researcher for the Software Preservation Network's "Fostering Communities of Practice" project, observing a cohort of libraries, museums, and archives design and implement software preservation and emulation programs.