

Media, Arts, Archives 2013-2017

Ed. Magdalena Taube and Krystian Woznicki

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A FIELD GUIDE TO THE SNOWDEN FILES is the first book to critically engage with artists responding to the NSA-files leaked by whistleblower Edward Snowden. Considering the most relevant contexts in which the files have 'surfaced' (including media and archives), it reflects on how artists are deploying the files as raw material.

Contributors include Zeljko Blace, Andrew Clement, Colnate Group, Naomi Colvin, Simon Denny, Corinna Haas, Christoph Hochhäusler, Evan Light, Geert Lovink, M.C. McGrath, Henrik Moltke, Deborah Natsios, Julian Oliver, Trevor Paglen, Laura Poitras, Norman Posselt, SAZAE bot, Stefan Tiron, University of the Phoenix, Andi Weiland, Maria Xynou and John Young.

The book looks at the various civil society actors who have been appropriating the historic leak and orders their responses according to contexts in which the Snowden documents have been published: media, art and archives. The different approaches share the common goal of rendering the documents accessible – to both present and future audiences. Reaching out to the general public, they have also tasked themselves with reflecting on the complex political, social and technological realities that the Snowden documents have helped to uncover.

The Snowden disclosures have triggered debates on democracy, civil rights, the internet and intelligence agencies all around the world. These debates have led to a number of political changes, including negative ones: e.g., consolidating the delusion of cyber-security. Meanwhile, the documents that triggered the debates remain arcane for the general public, as well as for many experts. And it is not ensured that the documents will be preserved for posterity or for those writing our history.

The book takes this problem as its starting point and situates the historic leak in the context of civic appropriation. Foregrounded are artists who test the files as material and, by creating works, transform them into commons.

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You can buy the book here: http://diamondpaper.de/title_26