

The Quantified Past as PIM: Remembering a Data-Driven Life

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We describe current work to investigate a ‘quantified past’ – the record created through a ‘data-driven life’ and long-term interaction with personal informatics. These represent an increasingly prevalent form of personal information, and present novel opportunities and challenges in the way that they represent the past.

We share two studies: one of **long-term users** of personal informatics systems; a second of **smart journaling** applications.

We describe **six characteristics** of a quantified past; question the role of **passive tracking** in keeping a journal; and consider **curation** across a range of media.

Provocations

How will people manage and interact with a growing ‘quantified past’?

What role does passive self-tracking play as a ‘technology of memory’?

How do we design for the curation of meaningful personal data?



Chris Elsdon is a 3rd year PhD student at Open Lab, Newcastle University. With a background in sociology, his research involves fieldwork and design anticipating the experience of living a ‘data-driven life’ – especially how data mediates remembering.

Keywords

Data Studies; Personal Informatics; Remembering; Quantified Self; Research-through-Design; Speculative Methods.

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