

# Exploring human nature through the social web

July 1 2014

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The web grows larger and more social every day, allowing ordinary people to express themselves more publicly and permanently than ever before through blogs and social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, and Foursquare.

Sep Kamvar, LG Career Development Professor of Media Arts and Sciences and director of the Social Computing group at the MIT Media Lab, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has had more than a decade of experience studying social technology that has emerged from this tremendous growth in public human communication and self-expression on the web.

In a free public lecture organized as part of the Annual Meeting of the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM) in Chicago next week, Dr. Kamvar will discuss how this technological and accompanying cultural shift offers a great opportunity to study (and organize) people. "The Internet is bursting with people's documented expression and communication, pictures and videos, all linked to freely available information about their location, time of day, weather, and more," according to Kamvar. "Their words, pictures, and media create mosaics of humanity that provide great opportunities to explore aspects of human nature through the experiences of [ordinary people](#)."

View a video of Kamvar talking to SIAM about his upcoming community lecture at the SIAM Annual Meeting:

Kamvar will discuss how the changing web suggests new paradigms for search and discovery. By outlining recent projects that use web search to study human nature and vice versa, he will describe the underlying principles behind these projects, and elaborate on how they might inform future work in search, data mining, and social computing.

The I.E. Block Community Lecture is named in honor of the co-founder and former Managing Director of SIAM, I. Edward Block, to recognize his contributions to the growth of SIAM. The lecture, presented each year at the SIAM Annual Meeting, is intended to encourage public appreciation of the excitement and vitality of science. This year's lecture, titled "Search and Discovery in Human Networks," will be held Wednesday, July 9, from 6:15 to 7:15 PM at the Palmer House, and will be followed by a community reception. Free and open to the public, the presentation can be enjoyed by anyone with a high school math background—no advanced mathematical background is necessary. Come and discover how the changing web suggests new paradigms for the study of [human nature](#) and networks!

**More information:** I. E. Block Community Lecture: Search and Discovery in Human Networks

Featuring: Sep Kamvar Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA

Wednesday, July 9 6:15 PM - 7:15 PM

Grand Ballroom - 4th Floor Palmer House, Chicago, IL

Provided by Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics

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