UPDATING TO REMAIN THE SAME
HABITUAL NEW MEDIA

WENDY CHUN
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Theorist Wendy Chun, whose work melds systems design engineering and English literature, will discuss her forthcoming book Updating to Remain the Same: Habitual New Media (MIT Press). Chun argues that our technologies matter most not when they are new but when they have become obsolete—when they have moved from the bleeding edge to the realm of the everyday, when our use of them has become habitual. Habits are automatic—they “remain by disappearing from consciousness”—but also voluntary and even creative: we are constantly encouraged to seek better habits, better patterns. Habits make us like our peers, demarcating social class; they are also deeply personal. Chun explores how the slow, “creepy” accretion of habits—both conscious and unconscious—relate to distinctions between public and private, memory and storage, individual actions and social systems.