



VICEROY NORTHWEST INSTITUTE FOR CYBERSECURITY EDUCATION AND RESEARCH



CySER Virtual Seminar

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Murrow College of Communication, WSU

The Darkening Tide of Digital Repression and the Risks of Journalistic Reluctance

Oct. 9, 2023, 3:10 – 4PM Pacific

Team Link: [Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 298 209 176 759 | Passcode: Mvrct2

Call in (audio only) +1 509-498-6399 | Phone Conference ID: 818 662 925#

Abstract:

This seminar examines why journalists often fail to take the necessary information security steps to better protect themselves, their sources, and their stories, despite ongoing threats to journalism. From mass surveillance and intrusive spyware technologies to hacking, political intimidation, and legal challenges, these threats coalesce to impact journalism and endanger public service news. This deteriorating information ecosystem contributes to the repression of journalists and their sources, chilling freedom of expression and the ability of journalists to carry out their roles in a democratic society.

Using concepts from new institutionalism and the institutional logics perspective, this lecture maps out the hostile environment facing journalists and scrutinizes journalistic responses to these threats and attacks. Drawing on empirical research with journalists and technologists, the lecture situates journalists' resistance to information security technologies as a challenge to what journalism is and could be amidst an increasingly deteriorating information environment. The lecture will reveal how this resistance parallels an intransigence and subsequent fragility facing democratic institutions more broadly, posing a threat to the modern liberal democratic project.

Bio:

Jennifer R. Henrichsen is an Assistant Professor at the Edward R. Murrow College of Communication at Washington State University. She is also an Affiliated Fellow at the Information Society Project at Yale Law School. She received her Ph.D. from the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania. Henrichsen's research examines how adversaries exploit weaknesses in the spread of information across organizations and institutions to contaminate the information ecosystem and to erode trust in knowledge systems. Specifically, she assesses how these and other challenges – from state and corporate surveillance to physical and digital attacks against the media – are creating an epistemic crisis for journalism. Henrichsen has published 20 peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and reports and has received numerous fellowships, including from Yale, Columbia, and the University of Fribourg.



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