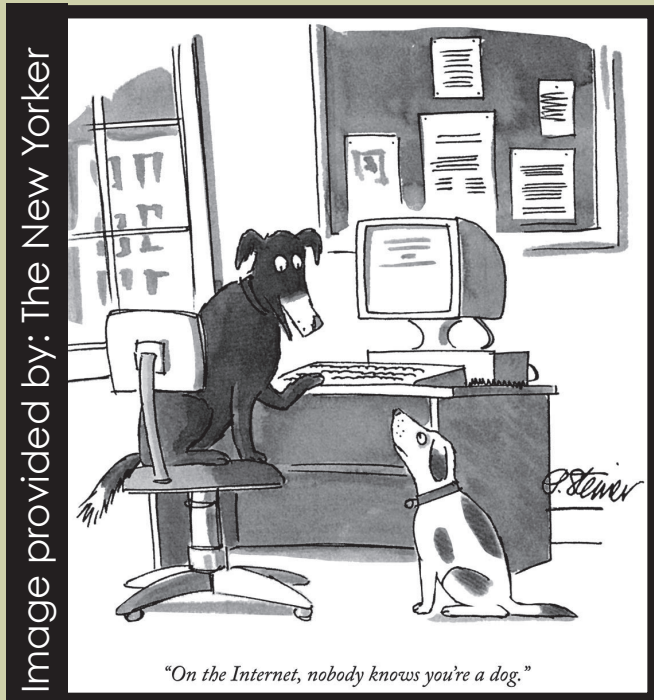


Revealing John Doe: The Origins and Culture of Anonymous Speech in U.S. Law



Victoria Ekstrand

Tuesday, November 10th at 1:00
Room 207 (Mylander) BTSU

Is there a disjunction between how the law recognizes anonymous speech and how the public perceives it?

Professor Ekstrand's talk provides a discussion of anonymous speech in U.S. historical and cultural traditions. Central to her talk is the examination of arguments by parties that have appeared before courts to defend its protection, while also drawing on interviews with those who have used anonymous speech in these cases to advance some political or social cause.

While case decisions will be important to this discussion, Ekstrand suggests the more compelling study is found in the legal record - namely the briefs, the testimony and interviews with the parties involved - as an ethnographic lens. Specifically, she will be looking at two Ohio cases: *McIntyre v. Ohio Elections Commission* (1995) and *Watchtower Bible v. Village of Stratton* (2002). Her discussion of these two cases and their implications for the on-going debate on anonymous speech will be located within the history and development of cultural perceptions of anonymous speech in American life - and the ultimate effect of those beliefs on the law.

Victoria Smith Ekstrand is Associate Professor of Journalism at BGSU. Her teaching and research interests include digital piracy and news piracy, particularly in terms of the cultural, historical, and legal foundations for the ownership of communication and creative work. She has published in *Communication Law and Policy*, and *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*. For nine years she served as the New York, N.Y., Director of Corporate Communications for the Associated Press. Currently a Fellow at ICS, she is at work on a book-length study of the history, culture, and law of anonymous speech in the United States.

