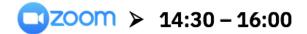


The Socio-Legal Studies 2020-2021 Speaker Series Presents

Natasha Tusikov

Precarious Ownership of the Internet of Things in the Age of Data

Monday, October 05, 2020



The growth of the Internet of Things (IoT)—Internet-connected software embedded within physical products—has the potential to shift fundamentally traditional conceptions of ownership and the ways people can access, use, and control information. Drawing upon a knowledge regulation framework based on critical data studies, this paper argues that the IoT industry exemplifies the central role that knowledge governance now plays in the global political economy. Companies that own the knowledge integral to the IoT's functionality (the software) control that knowledge through intellectual property laws, especially copyright, and the ubiquitous surveillance of their customers.

The paper examines a new regulatory phenomenon ("bricking") in which manufacturers remotely disable a product's functionality and argues that these companies are creating private regulatory programs through copyright law and contractual licensing agreements that grant copyright owners latitude to impose rules governing IoT goods, even after purchase.



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