

# Understanding the Dark Web and its Implications for Policy

Friday May 18<sup>th</sup> | 8:30 AM- 5:15 PM

Virginia Tech's Executive Briefing Center, Arlington, VA

900 N Glebe Rd, Arlington, VA 22203

*“The message to criminals is: Don't think that you are safe because you're on the dark web. There are no corners of the Dark Web where you can hide.”*

*-Chris Thomas, FBI Special Agent involved in the AlphaBay takedown*

The anonymity of the Dark Web can be used for both noble and nefarious purposes, posing a clear challenge for policymakers. FBI takedowns of child abuse imagery sites such as Playpen help prevent harm to innumerable children worldwide, but also generate legal disputes within the US surrounding the scope and application of the Fourth Amendment. Dark Web illegal markets, such as Silk Road or AlphaBay, worsen the US opioid-addiction problem, but operate on the same hidden infrastructure as whistleblowing sites and benign Dark Web social media platforms. Cryptocurrencies act as an alternative source of money and store of value, even as they are used to complete trades for illegal goods and services.

How to deal with the negative excesses of the Dark Web and other anonymity-granting technologies without harming those who use these tools for benign activities is one of today's most pressing policy challenges. This conference gathers researchers, government officials, civil society activists and private industry experts to engage in constructive debate and dialogue. The conference will explore the topography and implications of Tor Hidden Services and debate the various ways in which online anonymity poses unique normative and policy challenges.

## Speakers Include

### **Nicolas Christin**

Carnegie Mellon University

**Indexing Illegal Markets**

### **Eric Nunes**

Arizona State University

**Malicious Hacker Markets on Tor**

### **Andrew Linder**

Skidmore College

**Interest in Tor and State-Level Crime**

### **Eric Jardine**

Virginia Tech

**Cryptocurrencies and Dark Web Markets**

### **Gareth Owenson**

College of Computing  
University of Portsmouth

**Indexing and the Dark Web – is it Reliable?**

### **James Hawdon**

Center for Peace Studies and  
Violence Prevention

**Online Extremism in the U.S**

## Sponsors



Register at <https://darkweb-implications.eventbrite.com>  
Registration is free. Space is limited.  
For questions, contact Dr. Eric Jardine at [ejardine@vt.edu](mailto:ejardine@vt.edu)