The University of Chicago Computer Science Department
PRESENTS:

"I Can See Clearly Now: Empowering People Through Internet Transparency"

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Abstract:
Is this an ad? Is it safe to visit this website? Am I being tracked? Am I getting a fair deal? Internet users face seemingly simple questions like these every time they connect to the Internet with increasingly significant consequences for inaccurate information. Yet, as the content people see online cannot always be taken at face value, questions like these are becoming more difficult to answer. I study, design, build, and evaluate technologies to help users answer these questions, by improving the "transparency" of the networks, applications, and networked devices used to get online. My research goal is to empower Internet users by providing them with accurate, clear, and real-time information about—and control over—Internet privacy, security, performance, and costs. By doing so, my work gives Internet users the power to make well-informed decisions, as well as the agency for protecting themselves against and holding others accountable for online malfeasance. My research also informs Internet policy by providing evidence of what kinds of transparency Internet users require and respond to. In this talk, I describe why Internet transparency is so important and how challenging it is to provide transparency to end-users. I present two Internet transparency projects for end-users. These projects include a system that helps users identify whether online content is an advertisement, and multiple systems for helping elementary school-age children learn about Internet safety and how to protect themselves online. I conclude with open questions for making the Internet more transparent for end-users.

Bio:
Marshini Chetty is a research scholar in the Department of Computer Science at Princeton University where she directs the Princeton Human-Computer Interaction Laboratory. She specializes in human-computer interaction, usable security, and ubiquitous computing. Marshini designs, implements, and evaluates technologies to help users manage different aspects of Internet use from privacy and security to performance, and costs. She often works in resource-constrained settings and uses her work to help inform Internet policy. She has a Ph.D. in Human-Centered Computing from Georgia Institute of Technology, USA and a Masters and Bachelors in Computer Science from University of Cape Town, South Africa. Prior to joining Princeton, Marshini was an assistant professor in the College of Information Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park. Her work has won best paper awards at CHI and CSCW and has been funded by the National Science Foundation, the National Security Agency, Intel, Microsoft, Facebook, and multiple Google Faculty Research Awards.

Wednesday, Febraury 13, 2019
3:00 pm
JCL 390
Host: Blase Ur