

Ada Lerner, Ph.D.

Pronouns: she/her or they/them

Assistant Professor of Computer Science (starting Fall '23)

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RESEARCH SUMMARY

I am a usable security and privacy researcher. I use a variety of computer science and interdisciplinary methods to understand and support the computer security and privacy needs of all people.

EDUCATION

University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, USA

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.), Computer Science and Engineering Jun 2017

Master of Science (M.S.), Computer Science and Engineering Jan 2014

Amherst College, Amherst, Massachusetts, USA

Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Computer Science Dec 2009

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts, USA

Khoury Research Fellow (Assistant Professor starting Fall 2023) Jul 2022 – Present

Wellesley College, Wellesley, Massachusetts, USA

Assistant Professor Jul 2017 – Jun 2022

University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, USA

Research Assistant, Security & Privacy Research Lab Jun 2012 – Jun 2017

De Novo Group, Berkeley, California, USA

Lead Developer and Researcher Mar 2014 – Jan 2015

University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, USA

Research Assistant, Networks and Mobile Systems Lab Sep 2011 – Jun 2012

Amherst College, Amherst, Massachusetts, USA

Research Assistant Sep 2009 – Dec 2009, Sep 2007 – Dec 2007

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Wellesley College, Computer Science Department

Instructor, CS 111 (Computer Programming and Problem Solving) F'18, F'19, F'20, S'21

Instructor, CS 230 (Data Structures) F'17, S'18, S'19, S'20

Instructor, CS 342 (Computer Security and Privacy) S'18, F'18, S'19, F'20

University of Washington, Paul G. Allen School of Computer Science and Engineering

Primary Instructor, CSE 484 (Computer Security and Privacy) Fall 2016

Guest Lecturer, CSE 484 (Computer Security and Privacy) Nov 2015

Teaching Assistant, CSE 484 (Computer Security and Privacy) Fall 2013

Teaching Assistant, CSE 451 (Operating Systems) Fall 2012

REFEREED

**Asterisks denote undergraduate student advisee authors.*

PUBLICATIONS

🔗 “How Well Do My Results Generalize Now? The External Validity of Online Privacy and Security Surveys” Jenny Tang*, Eleanor Birrell, [Ada Lerner](#). Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security (SOUPS), Boston, Massachusetts, Aug 2022.

🔗 “Defining Privacy: How Users Interpret Technical Terms in Privacy Policies” Jenny Tang*, Hannah Shoemaker, [Ada Lerner](#), Eleanor Birrell. Proceedings on Privacy Enhancing Technologies Symposium (PETS), The Internet, Jul 2021. Acceptance rate 17% .

🔗 “Privacy and Activism in the Transgender Community” [Ada Lerner](#), Roberto Hoyle, Helen He, Anna Kawakami*, and Silvia Zeamer*. ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems 2020, Apr 2020. Acceptance rate 24.3%.

🔗 “Computer Security and Privacy for Refugees in the United States” Lucy Simko, [Ada Lerner](#), Samia Ibtasam, Franziska Roesner, and Tadayoshi Kohno. IEEE Symposium on Security and Privacy 2018, May 2018. Acceptance rate 14%.

- ☞ “Toward Understanding the Privacy Needs of Marginalized Populations” [Ada Lerner](#), Roberto Hoyle. In “Moving Beyond a ‘One-Size Fits All’ Approach: Exploring Individual Differences in Privacy”, Workshop at ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, 2018. Apr 2018. Acceptance rate unknown.
- ☞ “Rewriting History: Changing the Archived Web from the Present” [Ada Lerner](#), Franziska Roesner, and Tadayoshi Kohno. ACM Conference on Computer and Communications Security (CCS) Nov 2017. Acceptance rate 18%.
- ☞ “Confidante: Usable Encrypted Email - A Case Study With Lawyers and Journalists.” [Ada Lerner](#), Eric Zeng, and Franziska Roesner. 2nd IEEE European Symposium on Security and Privacy (EuroS&P). Apr 2017. Acceptance rate 19.6%.
- ☞ “Internet Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Trackers: An Archaeological Study of Web Tracking from 1996 to 2016.” [Ada Lerner](#), Anna Kornfeld Simpson, Tadayoshi Kohno, and Franziska Roesner. 25th USENIX Security Symposium, Aug 2016. Acceptance rate 15.6%.
- ☞ “Analyzing the Use of Quick Response Codes in the Wild.” [Ada Lerner](#), Alisha Saxena, Kirk Ouimet, Ben Turley, Anthony Vance, Tadayoshi Kohno, Franziska Roesner. 13th International Conference on Mobile Systems, Applications, and Services (MobiSys), May 2015. Acceptance rate 13%.
- ☞ “Cryptographic Currencies from a Tech-Policy Perspective: Policy Issues and Technical Directions.” Emily McReynolds, [Ada Lerner](#), Will Scott, Franziska Roesner, and Tadayoshi Kohno. 2nd Workshop on Bitcoin Research, Jan 2015. Acceptance rate unknown.
- ☞ “Control-Alt-Hack: The Design and Evaluation of a Card Game for Computer Security Awareness and Education.” Tamara Denning, [Ada Lerner](#), Adam Shostack, and Tadayoshi Kohno. In Proceedings of ACM Conference on Computer and Communications Security (CCS ’13) Nov 2013. Acceptance rate 20%.

**TECHNICAL
REPORTS &
NON-REFEREED
PUBLICATIONS**

- “The Buffet Overflow Café”, IEEE Security & Privacy, July-Aug. 2022, pp. 4-7, vol. 20. Tadayoshi Kohno, Camille Cobb, [Ada Lerner](#), Michelle Lin, Adam Shostack. Jul 2022
- “Excavating Web Trackers Using Web Archaeology”, ;login: The USENIX Magazine, Winter 2016, Vol. 41, No. 4. [Ada Lerner](#), Anna Kornfeld-Simpson, Tadayoshi Kohno, Franziska Roesner. Dec 2016.
- “Rangzen: Anonymously Getting The Word Out In a Blackout.” [Ada Lerner](#), Giulia Fanti, Yahel Ben-David, Barath Raghavan. Dec 2016.

**GRANTS/
FUNDING
RECEIVED**

- “CRII: SaTC: RUI: Understanding and Addressing the Security and Privacy Needs of At-Risk Populations” (Amount: \$175,000) National Science Foundation Apr 2020
- Faculty Research Award “Tech-Policy Implications of Mental Models of Security and Privacy.” (Amount: \$3,000) Wellesley College Nov 2019
- “Narrowing Participation and Achievement Gaps in Computer Science through Engagement with Authentic Problems and Real-World Data.” (Amount: \$4,000) Wellesley College’s Mellon Grant for Evidence-Based Teaching Innovations Dec 2019
- Faculty Research Award “Paying for Privacy: Measurements and Mental Models of Mobile Tracking.” (Amount: \$3,000) Wellesley College Nov 2018
- Sophomore Early Research Program (Amount: \$2,100) Wellesley College Sep 2018 – May 2019
- Faculty Research Award “Understanding the Security and Privacy Needs of Queer People” (Amount: \$3,000) Wellesley College Oct 2017

Student Travel Grant Recipient (Amount: \$1,000) Aug 2016
USENIX Security 2016

**RESEARCH
MENTORSHIP**

Jenny Tang
Post-baccalaureate Research Fellow Aug 2021 – Jul 2022
Thesis Advisee Aug 2020 – May 2021
Student Research Assistant Jun 2018 – May 2021

Angel Ding
Student Research Assistant Aug 2021 – Present

Leah Teffera
Student Research Assistant Jun 2019 – Present

Silvia Zeamer
Thesis Advisee Aug 2020 – May 2021
Student Research Assistant Jun 2018 – May 2021

Annabel Rothschild
Thesis Advisee Aug 2019 – May 2020

Nicole Gates
Student Research Assistant Aug 2018 – May 2020

Raine Tenerelli
Student Research Assistant Aug 2018 – May 2020

Mehk Khandelwal
Student Research Assistant Jun 2019 – May 2020

Anna Kawakami
Summer Student Research Assistant Jun 2018 – Aug 2018

Chuyue Xiao
Summer Student Research Assistant Jun 2018 – Aug 2018

**CONFERENCE
TALKS**

“Rewriting History: Changing the Archived Web from the Present.” ACM Conference on Computer and Communications Security (CCS), Nov 2017.

“Internet Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Trackers: An Archaeological Study of Web Tracking from 1996 to 2016.” 25th USENIX Security Symposium, Aug 2016.

“Analyzing the Use of Quick Response Codes in the Wild.” 13th International Conference on Mobile Systems, Applications, and Services (MobiSys). May 2015.

**INVITED TALKS
& WORKSHOP
PARTICIPATION**

Invited Panelist, Panel on “Mentoring Students”, MIT EECS Rising Stars 2021. Oct 2021
Digital panel.

Invited Panelist, Panel on “Trust in Web Archives”, International Internet Preservation Consortium (IIPC) Web Archiving Conference 2021 (WAC’21). Digital panel. Jun 2021

Invited Panelist, Panel on “Research at non-R1 Institutions”, NSF SaTC Town Hall. Digital panel. May 2021

Invited Panelist, Panel on “Diversity & Inclusion in the Cybersecurity Research Community”, Annual Computer Security Applications Conference (ACSAC). Digital panel. Dec 2020

Invited Panelist, Panel on Understanding Inclusive Privacy and Security, Northumbria University Newcastle. Digital panel. Dec 2020

Invited Collaborative Research Panelist, Public Scholarship and Online Harassment Project, Royal Roads University, Victoria, BC, Canada Nov 2020 – Present

Workshop Leader, Workshop on Inclusive Privacy and Security (WIPS) 2020 at Sixteenth Symposium On Usable Privacy and Security (SOUPS). Aug 2020

Workshop Leader, Workshop on Inclusive Privacy and Security (WIPS) 2019 at Fifteenth Symposium On Usable Privacy and Security (SOUPS), Montreal, Canada. Aug 2019

Invited Workshop Participant, “Coordinating the Future Agenda at the Intersection of Law and Technology”, University of Florida Levin College of Law, Gainesville, FL. Oct 2018

Workshop Participant, “Workshop on Inclusive Privacy and Security” (WIPS) at Fourteenth Symposium On Usable Privacy and Security (SOUPS), Baltimore, MD. Aug 2018

Invited Workshop Participant: “Moving Beyond a ‘One-Size Fits All’ Approach: Exploring Individual Differences in Privacy”, at CHI 2018, Montreal, Quebec, Canada. Apr 2018

Panelist and Panel Moderator, Integrity and Compromise Panel, National Forum on Ethics & Archiving the Web. New York, NY. Mar 2018

Invited Talk, “Measurements, User Studies, and New Systems, Oh My!” Northeastern University College of Computer and Information Science, Boston, MA. Nov 2017

**PROFESSIONAL
SERVICE/
DEVELOPMENT**

EXTERNAL

PC Member, USENIX Security 2022 Jul 2021 – Present

PC Member, USENIX Enigma 2022 Aug 2021

PC Member, USENIX Enigma 2021 Aug 2020

Invited PC Member, Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security (SOUPS) 2020 (Due to pandemic, I was unable to participate) Feb 2020

PC Member, AsiaUSEC20: 1st Asia USEC - Workshop on Usable Security Dec 2019

PC Member, USENIX Enigma 2020 Aug 2019

Reviewer, ACM Transactions on Privacy and Security Mar 2019 – Present

Participant in 7-day full-time “Change Agent” training funded by HHMI Inclusive Excellence grant to Wellesley College Jan 2019

PC Member, “Workshop on Usable Security 2019” (USEC 2019) Dec 2018

Reviewer, ACM Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI 2019) Nov 2018

PC Member, “Workshop on Privacy in the Electronic Society 2018” (WPES 2018) Jul 2018

Reviewer, ACM Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI 2018) Nov 2017

PC Member, Security and Privacy Research Track of the 26th World Wide Web Conference (WWW 2017) Oct 2016

Participant, Strengthening STEM through Diversity Workshop Oct 2016

Reviewer, ACM Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI 2016) Nov 2015

INTERNAL

Wellesley College Diversity Coalition Mar 2019 – May 2021

Wellesley College Advisory Committee on Minority Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention Oct 2018 – May 2021

Wellesley College CS Department Curriculum Committee Oct 2019 – May 2020

Co-Chair, Wellesley College CS Department Diversity and Inclusion Committee Oct 2017 – Jun 2019

UW CSE Diversity Committee Nov 2016 – Jun 2017

Panelist, UW CSE New Graduate Student Orientation Sep 2016

Activity Leader, UW CSE Computing Open House for Middle/High School Students Dec 2015