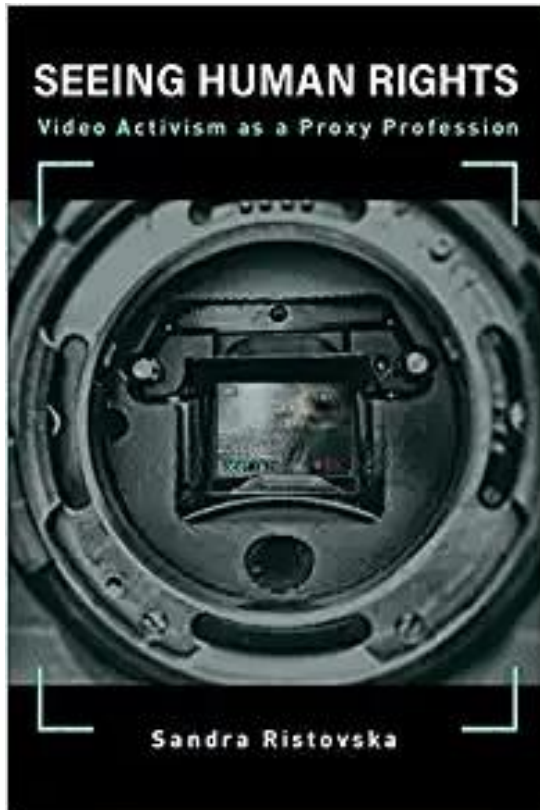


## Seeing Human Rights: Video Activism as a Proxy Profession

Book talk by **Sandra Ristovska**



As video becomes an important tool to expose injustice, *Seeing Human Rights* (MIT Press, 2021) examines how human rights organizations seek to professionalize video activism through video production, standards, and training. The result is a proxy profession that helps legitimize video's potential to serve distinct policy functions while brokering human rights voices in journalism, the law, and political advocacy. Spanning over seven years of research, the book is based on fieldwork, textual analysis of human rights videos and court trial transcripts, as well as interviews with 60 staffers at human rights organizations and attorneys at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Court. *Seeing Human Rights* argues that the proxy profession retains some of the flexibility of video activism as a critical voice against injustice while giving up on its imaginative scope as a cultural practice that sustains important human rights dialogue even in the face of institutional and legal stalemate.

**Sandra Ristovska** is Assistant Professor of Media Studies at the College of Media, Communication, and Information at the University of Colorado Boulder. Her research, informed by her experiences as a documentary filmmaker, focuses on the interplay between images and human rights, particularly in institutional and legal contexts. As a 2021 Mellon/ACLS Scholars and Society Fellow, she has held visiting fellowships with the Information Society Project at Yale Law, the Institute for the Study of Human Rights at Columbia University, and the Center for Media, Data, and Society at the Central European University.