

# CS 3001-C: Computing, Society, and Professionalism

Munmun De Choudhury | Associate Professor | School of Interactive Computing

Week 6: Privacy II  
February 16, 2022



# Perspectives on Privacy



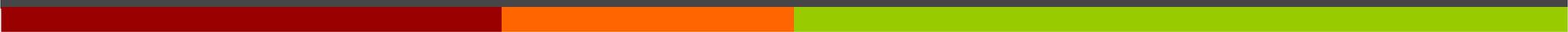
Today's Class – why violation of  
privacy is an ethical challenge



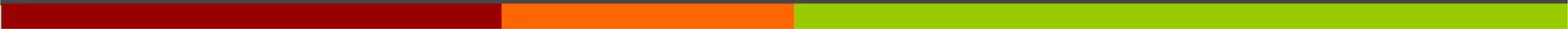
# Information Disclosures

# Rewards or Loyalty Programs

# Body Scanners



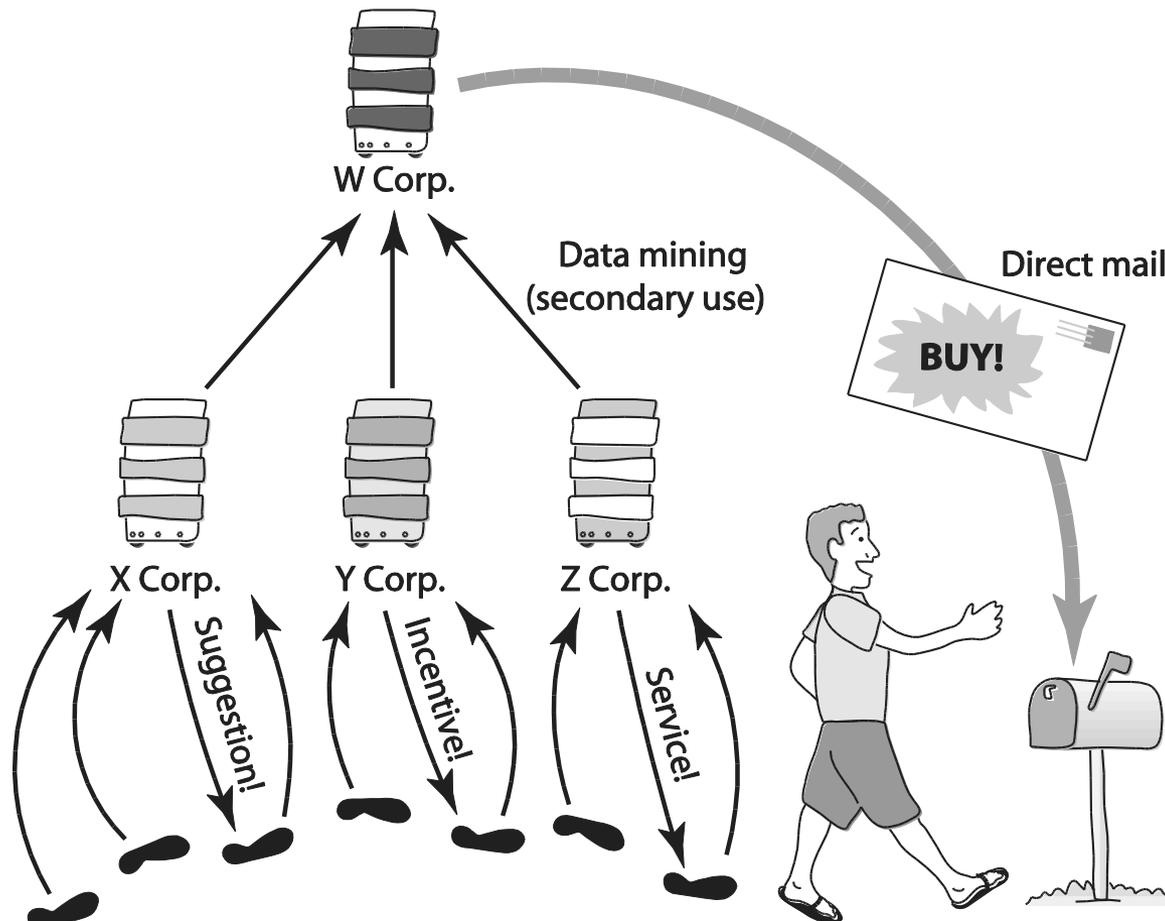
# Implanted Chips





# AI/Machine Learning

# Secondary Uses of Information





How is secondary information  
used? Some examples...



# Google's Personalized Search



# Collaborative Filtering



# Microtargeting



# Credit Reports

How Target Figured Out A Teen Girl Was Pregnant Before Her Father Did

# Class Discussion

- If you voluntarily have your body scanned at a departmental store, who should own that information: you or the store?
- Should the store have the right to sell your body measurements to other business?



# Sharing of Anonymized Datasets

POLICY —

# “Anonymized” data really isn’t—and here’s why not

Companies continue to store and sometimes release vast databases of " ...

NATE ANDERSON - 9/8/2009, 7:25 AM



The Massachusetts Group Insurance Commission had a bright idea back in the mid-1990s—it decided to release "anonymized" data on state employees that showed every single hospital visit. The goal was to help researchers, and the state spent time removing all obvious identifiers such as name, address, and Social Security number. But a graduate student in computer science saw a chance to make a point about the limits of anonymization.

Latanya Sweeney requested a copy of the data and went to work on her "reidentification" quest. It didn't prove difficult. Law professor Paul Ohm describes Sweeney's work:

“

At the time GIC released the data, William Weld, then Governor of Massachusetts, assured the public that GIC had protected patient privacy by deleting identifiers. In

# Netflix Prize

# AOL Search Dataset





Almost all information can be “personal”  
when combined with enough other  
relevant bits of data



# Privacy from the Individual Perspective (Acquisti et al 2015)

What should the individual be doing?

# Individualistic Approach – privacy is a private good

- Trust people's ability to make self-interested decisions
  - The “Get over it” brigade
  - Zuckerbollocks – privacy is a private good (O'Hara 2013)

# Individualistic Approach – privacy is a private good

- With respect to the individualistic approach, scholars question people's ability to manage privacy amid increasingly complex trade-offs



Are individuals up to the challenge  
of navigating privacy in the  
information age?

# Privacy as a public good?

- Even when the individual would rather be transparent and open to scrutiny, exposure will affect others.
- Accountability
- Security
- Trading data and market efficiency
- Chilling effects

# EU's "Right to be Forgotten"

- Also known as the "right to erasure", the rule gives EU citizens the power to demand data about them be deleted.

← → ↻ 🔒 [newyorker.com/magazine/2014/09/29/solace-oblivion](http://newyorker.com/magazine/2014/09/29/solace-oblivion)

Subscribe for \$4 a month.

THE  
NEW YORKER

ANNALS OF LAW SEPTEMBER 29, 2014 ISSUE

## THE SOLACE OF OBLIVION

*In Europe, the right to be forgotten trumps the Internet.*



By Jeffrey Toobin

September 22, 2014

# EU's "Right to be Forgotten"

- Google had argued that the obligation could be abused by authoritarian governments trying to cover up human rights abuses were it to be applied outside of Europe.

 [bbc.com/news/technology-49808208](https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-49808208)

## Technology

# Google wins landmark right to be forgotten case

By Leo Kelion  
Technology desk editor

 24 September 2019



 Share

# Privacy as a public good

- Need to balance the interests of the subjects of data against the power of commercial entities and governments holding that data