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Those Who Do Not Move

We are in what some would say the stone age of the internet. For the last 6,000 years we as humans have developed social constructs that have been practiced, experimented, and established continually since then. Human civilization and social change in the past have taken hundreds of years to develop. In those hundreds of years of development, there is a larger window of error control unlike the rapid growth of the internet. The internet being so readily available to almost all seven billion people on this planet at the same time is bar none the greatest sociological experiment that we are forced to participate in. Facebook, Instagram, Linked-In, are modern day cave paintings. The internet doesn’t know what it is yet; neither dose its privacy.

We are all familiar with the saying “Have nothing to hide, have nothing to fear.” We do know that the National Security Agency (NSA) doesn’t have a need to target John “Nobody” Doe but rather terrorist organizations, pedophiles, drug dealers, and other so called “bad people”. Ironically, some might even categorize the organization of Wikileaks as a terrorist organization. Wikileaks creates a level of transparency in a very secretive agency where they themselves create transparency in the public. You or I have no real understanding of the complexities of the tensions that span generations between Russia, USA, North Korea, Syria, and many more. Therefore, having sensitive information leaked by WikiLeaks could have profoundly large snowballing effect that could result in massive consequences. Many dictators rule with an iron fist and demand respect. However, if it became known that the USA dose not find that dictator a significant threat then as a show of power that dictator might have to make a violent statement to be respected. We as Americans place faith in our government to run the country to our best interests. If the safety that we rely on the government to provide calls for monitoring potential threats, then there should be no issue with some transparency across the internet. In a quote from Gen. Keith B. Alexander, the head of the National Security Agency, said that American surveillance had helped prevent “potential terrorist events over 50 times since 9/11,” including at least 10 “homeland-based threats.” But he said that a vast majority of the others must remain secret. [Savage] From just this information it is clearly in the best interest of the American people to move forward with what the NSA is doing.

Having browsing history bought and sold to other commercial company’s only makes fast and easier exchanges of goods and services which then in turn stimulate the economy. Amazon throwing bombs at major retail stores as it continues to accelerate its growth. They do this by having a perfectly tailored algorithm that predicts what you need at any given time. Imagine walking into Walmart and having everything you are shopping for within the first ten feet of the door. Amazon dose this by gathering browsing data and slapping it on its (your) homepage. It could then turn around and sell that data to other companies thus turning profit on its own profit. Thus, creating efficiency and streamlining consumerism which we know is what props up the USA’s economy. [Williamson] Gathering of data is harmless and only makes for easier exchange of goods and services.

The laissez faire stance on privacy is much more about letting internet privacy run its course because unless you’re a “bad person” you really have nothing to worry about. However, the counter argument to internet privacy shows that, that attitude can be extremely dangerous. We are inherently social creatures and we are susceptible to mistakes and overshares. Oversharing could always result in danger such as posting your address, letting bank account information out, or any number of situations that we as social humans mistakenly share. However, what about the things we don’t share? What about the things we keep to ourselves and are careful about not sharing. Most of us will do research or find information online and even though we might not want it to be public it becomes just that. The search engines, web browsers, websites, and everything in between we use daily collect personal data then tailor advertisements. Internet privacy doesn’t care what your think is private.

It is easy to say having data constantly collected on your preferences and being sold or shared among other large corporations makes shopping easier and your life better. However, having this information collected is in serious violation or our privacy. Imagen a stranger walking into a home and writing down all movies in the house, then selling that information to another stranger. Now that the information is in the hands of the other stranger, they could choose to do whatever they want will that information. How about if a stranger went into the fridge, garbage, bedroom, or medicine cabinet? If a doctor lets information of what could be in a person medicine cabinet, they will immediately lose their medical license and never be allowed to treat people professionally ever again. There are any number of private or embarrassing medical conditions, media prefaces, products, or foods that we keep to ourselves and rely on our understanding of privacy to protect us. So why do we let Facebook announce these things to the world? [Hackman]

The [scandal broke in early June 2013](http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/jun/06/nsa-phone-records-verizon-court-order) when the Guardian newspaper reported that the US National Security Agency was collecting the telephone records of tens of millions of Americans. [Greenwald] It had always been assumed that the NSA is monitoring “bad people” but never to this scale. This news was frightening mainly because all American students are required to read a book titled 1984. Which in hindsight is less of a novel and more of a warning. The statement of “Nothing to hide, nothing to fear.” Falls apart when you don’t know what needs to be hidden. Tens of millions of Americans are being watched under the camouflage of “We are looking for bad people” but now the question becomes what categorizes a “bad person”. Can we be certain that some of these “bad people” are not just terrorist or pedophiles but are actually whistle blowers like Edward Snowden trying to unearth government corruption. Every major change in political power is derived from exposing corruption, which in turn has almost always been met with violent political force. Revolutionary and Civil war are not unknown terms in the USA but in fact terms that have been used in the building of the United States as we know it. By monitoring the very people that the government is set to protect, it creates a prison of complacency. The kind of complacency we expect our prison system to have; “Don’t act up.” attitude. Try and rise against an oppressor that could watch your every move renders the action impossible.

In early 2015 a story broke loose about Samsung TVs that have a setting where the smart televition can be controlled by voice commands rather then a remote. That in inteslf deverves a nod to the technological advancements we are making, however the real issue is that the smart televitions from Samsung are always listening and brocasting the requests over the intenet. [Schneier] The further and further we move into the futer the more and more we become suseptable to our privacy being violated. Many homes now have one if not more of these types of devises like Amazon Alexa, Google Home, Xbox One, Playstation 4, Samsung Smart Tv, Iphone, Telescreen, Android, new cars running on bluetooth, or any version of laptop with a mic. Imagine if Adolf Hitler’s SS had the ablilty to eavesdrop on every home at any givin time with consumer goods that are openly welcomed into the homelife. I understand that bringing up something as extream as the Holocuost is quite a leap but its important to remember that the holocuost had only ended less then seventy years ago. It is not unreasonable to think that in the next few years oppressive dictators might use new technoledgy to place the people under constant opresstion.

# There are two main reasons why we as people are entitled to privacy. One being the people who seek privacy must then be considered “bad people” on the same level as pedophiles or terrorists. Not people who want change from tyranny or exposing corruption. We as people need to have check and balances on everything that has power otherwise we can see time and time again how people in power abuse it. [Webley] Two being only people who challenge power have something to fear. Only the complacent are safe even from a tyrannical government. It leaves on uneasy feeling knowing that the United States government is arguably one of the most powerful organizations in human existence can watch your every move if they so choose. If the US Government decides that we are no longer allowed to surf the dark web, then you can kiss that goodbye. If the government wants more money to run the NSA, then you get to pay more in taxes. If the government wants to restrict your internet access they will. If the government wants people to stop slandering the government, they can stop you. If the government wants to control what you say or do, they can. By not standing up to our right of privacy we in turn allow the corruption of the government to take over. [Glenn]

# We are at a critical point in history where people are freely posting information about ourselves while having the potential to lose that freedom all together. Weather the option is “Nothing to hide, nothing to fear.” or we must stop all government surveillance, we run into very different outcomes. I for one prefer to error on the side of caution and make my online privacy last as long as possible. If the government is concerned with protecting US citizens and makes the case that they need to monitor the very citizens it is set to protect, then maybe it is time to find another solution to protection. We are in what some would say is the stone age of the internet. The next hundred years are going to be interesting to say the least. [Those who do not move, do not notice their chains. - Rosa Luxemburg](https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/rosa_luxemburg_173187).

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