Anonymization & Pseudonymization

We've covered pseudonymisation and anonymization earlier in the course, but it's important for us to discuss these more in-depth. We've previously covered it's nearly impossible to make your personal identity anonymous. We are registered and part of the system. We have social security numbers, we have birth certification, we pay taxes and have jobs. But this doesn't mean we can't hide or separate the non-necessities from ourselves. How do we do this?

I'll tell you right after this short message:

Promotional Spot

To recap, pseudonymization is the creation of an alias, or ghost identity. Pseudonyms are completely legal as long as you're not using them to defraud someone else. They allow you to sideload information to aliases not tied to you, which is useful when services or people are requesting information that doesn't necessarily need to be yours. We'll cover how to make them at the end of this lesson.

Anonymization involves making sure something you're doing is tied to no identity. The most common way of accomplishing this is by blending a group of people together, so no one user is unique. This is exactly what Tor does, it is built from the ground up to make you look like everyone else using it--assuming you use Tor properly. Doing casual research and tasks not involving an identity should be anonymized to avoid the data being tied to you.

To sum up how to use the two concepts...I would recommend you anonymize any traffic that doesn't require an account with Tor and other anonymization tools discussed throughout the course. If something requires an account, but you don't want it to be tied to your identity, pseudonyms are the way to go. The idea is to keep your pseudos and anonymous sessions completely separate from your true identity. Sounds easy enough, but how you do make a pseudonym?

Let's make one together with the master of pseudonyms: Roger the Alien. But before we do that...remember the one and only golden rule:

Your pseudonyms must not be tied to your personal identity.

Okay, first...we need to figure out what this pseudo is for. What information does he/she need to have, and how in-depth does it need to be. Your pseudo can be a

name and email, or it could be something *like this...* For this lesson, let's create a pseudonym for Roger with the basics.

Let's start with a name. Since this will function as a general-purpose pseudo that doesn't need to be a unique person, let's give it a degree of anonymity.

We'll pick a very common name to blend in, something like Brian Smith.

Now, Roger needs a form of communication, and this will vary depending on what service he's trying to access. If it's an online survey, he'll need an email. *If it's Facebook, maybe also a phone number. He needs to form a communication method that isn't tied to him. We've previously covered services in the course like tempmail, guerillamail, freephonenum, inumbr, burner, and shuffle.*

Up next, Roger needs an origin story. Is his pseudo Brian married? Does he have kids? Where did he grow up, how old is he? If Brian is only a digital pseudo, Roger can fake all of this easily. If Brian goes out into the real world though, some parts of Brian's story may need to match with Roger's story. He can't say Brian is 80 years old when Roger looks 25; people may have some trouble believing him.

If Roger wanted to go more in-depth, *he could give Brian his own shipping address using a PO box or Private Mailbox separate from his.* If Brian needs to make a payment, maybe for a VPN, it needs to be done in a way not tied to Roger, we covered how to do this earlier in the course.

And that's Brian Smith, one pseudo. *I would recommend creating multiple pseudos for different purposes. Maybe you have one for online surveys, one for spam, one for Jamba Juice, and one for craigslist--the sky's the limit! If you need help with creativity, fakenamegenerator is a great resource.* And before wrapping things up...remember the golden rule:

Your pseudonyms must not be tied to your personal identity.

Queue Outro Promos

And that's the lesson, it'll give you a lot of freedom with different ways you can sideload information that would otherwise be tied to your personal identity. I want to *thank Roger Smith for helping me out*, and I will see you in the next lesson: *shopping safely.* Thanks for watching.