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Week-7 Lab Assignment - Consolidated Assignments

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Week-1 Lab Assignment - Safe Assign

The Watergate scandal was a collection of connected political scandals that occurred during the presidency of Richard M. Nixon in the United States. The controversy comprised the June 17, 1972, break-in at the Democratic National Committee (DNC) building in the Watergate complex in Washington, D.C., and the ensuing cover-up by individuals connected to or employed by the White House, as well as by Nixon.

Five intruders were taken into custody by the police; they were later identified as Virgilio Gonzalez, Bernard Barker, James McCord, Eugenio Martinez, and Frank Sturgis. They were accused of attempting to break in and intercepting calls and other communications.

Federal investigations into the break-in and journalism work by Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward of the Washington Post were used to reveal the White House's participation. It was later revealed that Woodward and Bernstein were tipped off by CIA agent Mark Felt.

President Nixon's re-election committee, the Committee to Reelect the President (CRP), was behind the incident. They commissioned Howard Hunt and G. Gordon Liddy to prepare the event. Interestingly, Hunt was a former CIA and Liddy was a former FBI agent!

The whitehouse subsequently attempted to obstruct the investigations, used the CIA to hinder the FBI and also paid hush money to one or more of the conspirators.

Interestingly, Nixon won in 1973 elections, even as the investigation was in progress. A senate committee was formed to investigate the happenings. After a series of attempted obstructions by the president himself, the committee concluded President Nixon could be impeached. Nixon resigned without waiting for the proceedings, however, the next President Gerald Ford pardoned him for any wrongdoings and he was not prosecuted.

This was a watershed moment in American history, with the until then high trust society divided and losing trust on their premium investigative agencies CIA and FBI as well as the Federal executive. It also was the precursor to the suffixing of ‘-Gate’ to any scandal that came up in the subsequent years/decades, thus enriching the English language!

### **References:**

Perlstein, R. (2022) Watergate scandal in United States History, Britannica

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Watergate-Scandal>

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Week-2 Assignment - Article Review

This article was published in the news section of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. This is an update about one of their lab projects on Dark Web. MIT is a premier educational institute that is reputable and publishes high quality scientific research. This article is not a peer reviewed academic article but a generic update for the general audience on their portal.

The project is by the Lincoln Laboratory in MIT and it is a software working on both surface and dark webs to identify the participants of illegal marketplaces operating on the dark web. The challenge of identifying the real-world people behind the users who post on these sites is immense due to the short lifespan of these marketplaces and the fly by night nature of their operations. The software leverages the connections that sellers and buyers maintain across multiple layers of the web and automates the persona-linking process by training machine learning algorithms to compute the similarity between users on different forums.

The article is written in a clear and concise manner, making it easy to read and understand. The language is simple and straightforward, without too much technical jargon and long sentences. The information presented is relevant and credible, but it would be useful to include more references or sources to support the claims made. Additionally, the use of headings and subheadings would help to break up the text and make it easier to navigate. The presentation was excellent and holds the reader's attention.

From a content point of view, I would have liked the article to address some of the critical questions that are inevitably going to be asked, like concerns about privacy and the risk of false positives. The article claims they have achieved 95% accuracy but does not mention the methodology and sample size of their study.

This article is a great primer on the work in progress on uncovering the secrets of the dark web.



### **References:**

Lincoln Laboratory, K. F. (2019, May 13). Artificial intelligence shines light on the dark web. MIT News | Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Retrieved February 4, 2023, from <https://news.mit.edu/2019/lincoln-laboratory-artificial-intelligence-helping-investigators-fight-dark-web-crime-0513>

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Week-3 Assignment - Annotated Bibliography - Dark Web

Gehl, R. W. (2021). Dark web advertising: the dark magic system on Tor hidden service search engines. *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, 35(5), 667–678.  
<https://doi-org.nec.gmilcs.org/10.1080/10304312.2021.1983251>

This paper I found on NEC Libraries and it attracted my attention as it studies advertising on the Dark Web. Now if the Dark Web is hidden why would anyone spend money to advertise on it? Thus I am adding this to my sources for my final research paper. The paper makes a case that advertising on the Dark Web is a "dark magic system," drawing on Raymond Williams' idea of the "magic system." The article initially explains the term "Dark Web" before examining more than 300 banner ads that may be seen on search engines that use the Tor onion service. The paper explores the connections that advertising draws between values and the products they promote. There is also a discussion on the ethical and legal implications of the dark magic system.

Michael Chertoff (2017) A public policy perspective of the Dark Web, *Journal of Cyber Policy*, 2:1, 26-38, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23738871.2017.1298643>

This article I found on the Internet, and published by Taylor and Francis Online is a reputable academic publisher that provides access to peer-reviewed journals, books, and other scholarly content. I added this to my research sources because of the implications on public policy of The Dark Web is an intriguing subject and I have followed both sides of the debate for some time now. This essay examines two distinct policy areas: considering (1) how best to regulate the Dark Web and (2) researching the best and most practical ways for the government to step in. This is an area I want to dwell further on and see how we can make best use of online anonymity at the same time stay within legal and compliance regulations.

Weber, J., & Kruisbergen, E. W. (2019). Criminal markets: the dark web, money laundering and counterstrategies - An overview of the 10th Research Conference on Organized Crime. *Trends in Organized Crime*, 22(3), 346–356. <https://doi-org.nec.gmilcs.org/10.1007/s12117-019-09365-8>

This article is an abstract from the 10th Research Conference on Organized Crime that took place in The Hague in 2018 October. This theme of the conference was Criminal Markets: The Dark Web, Money Laundering and Counterstrategies. Researchers, practitioners and policy makers gathered to discuss research results, trends and policy issues. This article looks into recent developments on the topics mentioned and gives an overview of the conference. The article focuses on the different speakers in the conference and how they touched upon the various dimensions of market places and potential criminal activities on the Dark Web. The intrigue and the mystery of the Dark Web is something I wanted to research on and this article provides a perspective on the so many unknowns in this area. Hence I am adding this to my sources for further research and final presentation.

**Final Paper Outline: Dark Web**

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**Outline:**

- Introduction
  - Brief explanation of the dark web and its features
  - Overview of dark web marketplaces, advertising, and funding
  - Explanation of the importance of the topic and the need for regulation
- Dark Web Marketplaces:
  - Explanation of how dark web marketplaces work
  - Discussion of the types of products and services sold on these marketplaces
  - Explanation of the challenges associated with regulating these marketplaces
- Dark Web Advertising:
  - Explanation of the types of advertising on the dark web
  - Discussion of the challenges associated with regulating dark web advertising
  - Explanation of the risks associated with illegal advertising on the dark web
- Dark Web Funding:
  - Explanation of how funding works on the dark web
  - Discussion of the types of illegal activities funded on the dark web
  - Explanation of the challenges associated with tracking and regulating dark web funding
- Need for Regulation:
  - Discussion of the importance of regulating the dark web

- Explanation of the risks associated with unregulated dark web marketplaces, advertising, and funding
  - Overview of potential regulatory solutions
  - Call-to-action: We should all appreciate fall for what it has to offer us.
- Conclusion
- Summary of the key points discussed in the paper
  - Final thoughts on the need for regulation on the dark web
  - Call to action for policymakers and law enforcement to take action

**Research Paper Final: Darkweb, Regulation and More**

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## **Introduction:**

The Dark Web is a term used to refer to a subset of the internet that is not indexed by standard search engines and is intentionally hidden. While the Dark Web has been used for legal purposes, it has also been associated with various illegal activities, including drug trafficking, human trafficking, and the sale of stolen personal information. Effective regulation of the Dark Web is necessary to curb illegal activities and ensure the safety of users, but it must also strike a balance that allows for individual exploration and discovery without infringing on privacy rights or stifling innovation. This paper will explore the challenges associated with regulating the Dark Web, with a focus on marketplaces, advertising, and funding.

## **Dark Web Marketplaces:**

Dark web marketplaces are online platforms that allow users to buy and sell goods and services anonymously, often using cryptocurrencies as payment. The types of products sold on these marketplaces range from illegal drugs, firearms, and counterfeit documents to hacking tools and stolen data. While some of the items sold on dark web marketplaces may be legal in certain countries, they are considered illegal in most jurisdictions.

The challenges associated with regulating these marketplaces are numerous. Firstly, the anonymity provided by the dark web makes it difficult to identify the buyers and sellers involved in transactions. Additionally, the use of cryptocurrencies further obscures the identity of these individuals, making it difficult to trace financial transactions. Secondly, dark web marketplaces are decentralized, meaning that they are not controlled by a single entity or organization. This decentralized structure makes it difficult for law enforcement agencies to take down these marketplaces. Thirdly, the constant evolution of technology means that new marketplaces and ways of conducting illegal activities are constantly emerging, making it difficult for regulators to keep up.

**Dark Web Advertising:**

Advertising on the dark web is a significant source of revenue for many illegal activities. The types of advertising on the dark web include banner ads, sponsored posts, and pop-up ads. These advertisements may promote illegal goods and services or legitimate products that are being sold illegally, such as counterfeit items.

Regulating dark web advertising is challenging due to the anonymity provided by the dark web. Advertisers can use anonymous accounts and cryptocurrency payments to avoid detection. Additionally, the lack of transparency and regulation of the dark web means that there are no clear guidelines for what is considered legal or illegal in terms of advertising.

The risks associated with illegal advertising on the dark web are significant. Illegal advertisements can promote dangerous or harmful products or services, leading to harm to individuals or society at large. These ads can also undermine legitimate businesses and create an uneven playing field for companies that follow the rules.

Overall, effective regulation of the dark web is necessary to curb illegal activities and ensure the safety of users. However, it must also strike a balance that allows for individual exploration and discovery without infringing on privacy rights or stifling innovation.

**Dark Web Funding:**

Dark web funding is typically done through cash or cryptocurrencies, which are designed to be anonymous and difficult to trace. The use of cryptocurrencies makes it difficult for law enforcement agencies to track the flow of money, making it challenging to prevent illegal activities funded through the dark web. Various illegal activities, such as drug trafficking and human

trafficking, are funded through the dark web. Regulating dark web funding is a challenging task, and finding practical ways to track and regulate cryptocurrency transactions is a complex issue that requires collaboration between law enforcement and the private sector.

### **Need for Regulation:**

Regulating the Dark Web is essential to protect users and prevent illegal activities. The risks associated with unregulated dark web marketplaces, advertising, and funding are significant, and the potential harm to society cannot be overstated. Potential regulatory solutions include increasing law enforcement efforts, improving cooperation with the private sector, and developing technologies to track dark web activities. However, any regulatory solution must also strike a balance that allows for individual exploration and discovery without infringing on privacy rights or stifling innovation.

### **Conclusion:**

The dark web is a complex and often dangerous place, but it is also a platform for individual exploration and discovery. However, the ease with which illegal activities can be conducted on the dark web presents a clear and present danger to the safety of users and the wider public. Effective regulation of the dark web is therefore necessary to curb these illegal activities and ensure the safety of users, but it must also strike a balance that allows for individual exploration and discovery without infringing on privacy rights or stifling innovation.

Regulating the dark web will not be an easy task, but it is one that must be taken seriously. The challenges associated with regulating dark web marketplaces, advertising, and funding are complex and will require a multi-pronged approach. However, there are potential solutions that could help address these challenges.

One possible solution is increased collaboration between law enforcement agencies and tech companies. This could involve the development of new technologies that make it easier to track illegal activities on the dark web and the provision of information by tech companies to law enforcement agencies that helps them identify and prosecute those involved in illegal activities.

Another solution is to create a regulatory framework that takes into account the unique features of the dark web. This could involve the creation of a regulatory body specifically tasked with regulating the dark web, as well as the development of new laws and regulations that address the challenges associated with dark web marketplaces, advertising, and funding.

## References:

- Bhattacharya, D (2021) The Dark Web and Regulatory Challenges | Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses. (2021, July 23). The Dark Web and Regulatory Challenges | Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses. <https://idsa.in/issuebrief/the-dark-web-and-regulatory-challenges-dbhattacharya-230721>
- Lincoln Laboratory, K. F. (2019, May 13). Artificial intelligence shines light on the dark web. MIT News | Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Retrieved February 4, 2023, from <https://news.mit.edu/2019/lincoln-laboratory-artificial-intelligence-helping-investigators-figure-dark-web-crime-0513>
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- Weber, J., & Kruisbergen, E. W. (2019). Criminal markets: the dark web, money laundering and counterstrategies - An overview of the 10th Research Conference on Organized Crime. Trends in Organized Crime, 22(3), 346–356. <https://doi-org.nec.gmilcs.org/10.1007/s12117-019-09365-8>