Essay 1 Outline

Present:

Velis argues that mass surveillance is the current data economy fueled by mass surveillance that has significant societal costs, including increased inequality, threats to national security, and risks of misinformation and financial instability. The author is in favor of traditional business models like contextual advertising and subscription services as methods of revenue for companies that are heavily dependent on mass surveillance and personal data collection.

Object:

The proponents may claim that personal data would help companies like Amazon make personalized recommendations to their users. Another argument of the proponent's side could be that the data economy is highly profitable.

Reply:

In the process of accessing data for personal recommendations, personal data such as sexual orientation and political affiliations, might have been sent to hundreds of possible adviser's with the user's consent. Data in the hands of data broker's is extremely unsafe as it might end up with anybody and is subjected to the risk of data leak through unwanted circumstances like database hack. Profits to the data broker companies do not heavily contribute to the growth of the society as these companies employ only a few thousand people. The benefits of this data economy do not outweigh the costs.

Expand:

Micro-targeting through personalized ads is much less effective and accurate than it is represented and is way more expensive. Due to the opacity of the market, there is a lot of room for errors in valuation and click fraud. Forrester research estimated that, in 2016, 56% of all money spent on ads in the U.S was lost in fraud or unviewable ads. Experian, one of the largest Data Brokerage companies, just employed 16,000 people. This barely impacts the growth of the society. The 16,000 people who could definitely find jobs in other companies are definitely benefited but personal data of nearly 147 million US citizens was compromised in 2017 when Experian announced a cyber security breach.

Policy:

As veliz mentions the likeness of data being misused increases with sharing from one institution to another where it is further analyzed and aggregated. Therefore, I believe the government should enact something called a **No-Data-Sharing Regulation (NDSR)** policy that would prohibit the sharing, selling, or transferring of user data between companies without explicit, case-by-case consent from individuals. This policy may not entirely eliminate the problem, but its primary goal is to ensure that each external entity possesses only limited data about an individual—just enough to provide meaningful value to that person's life. By implementing this approach, no single organization would have comprehensive data covering all aspects of an individual's personal information. It would also weaken the power of data brokers, preventing companies from secretly building detailed consumer profiles without consent.