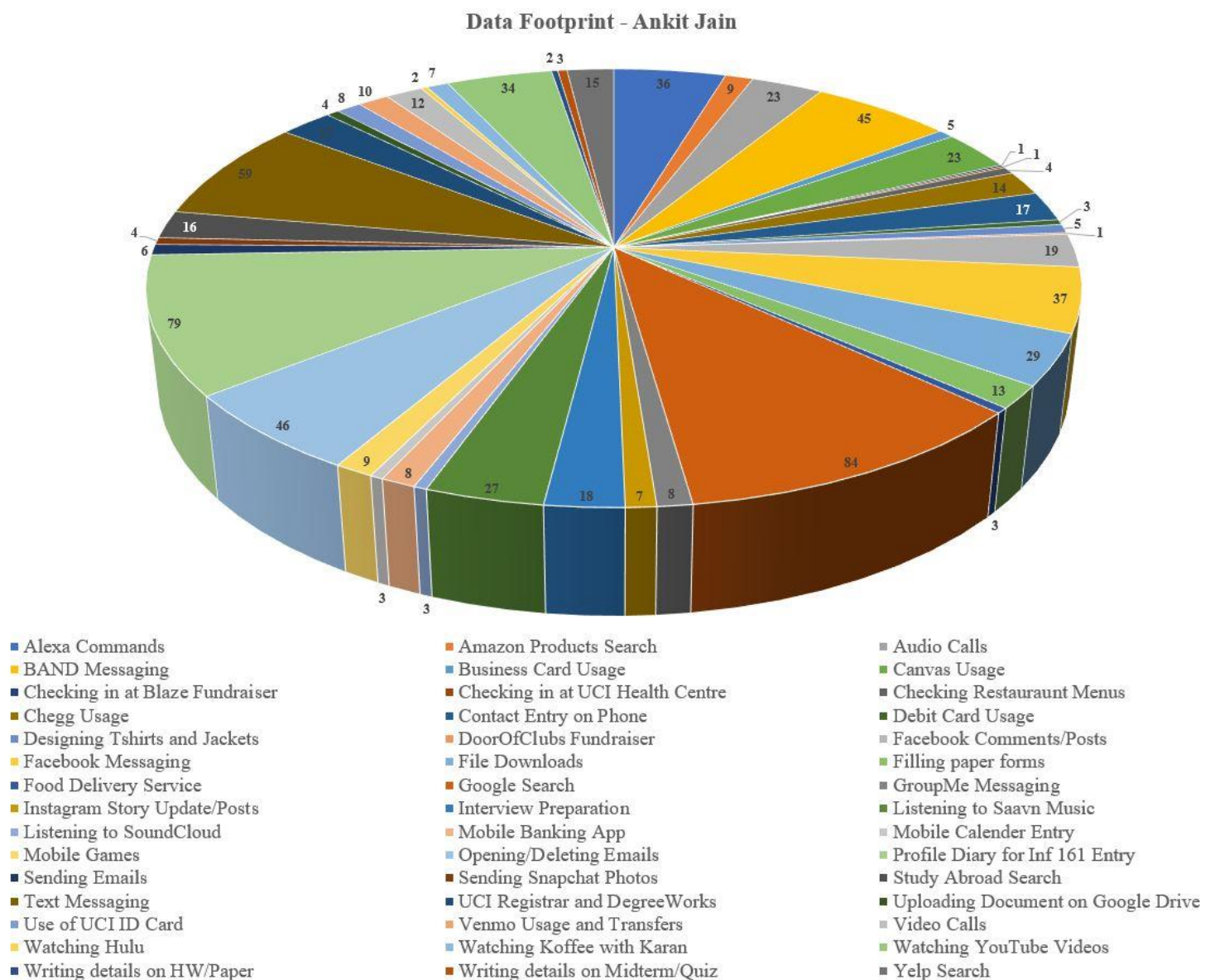Ankit Jain

Dr. Roderic N. Crooks
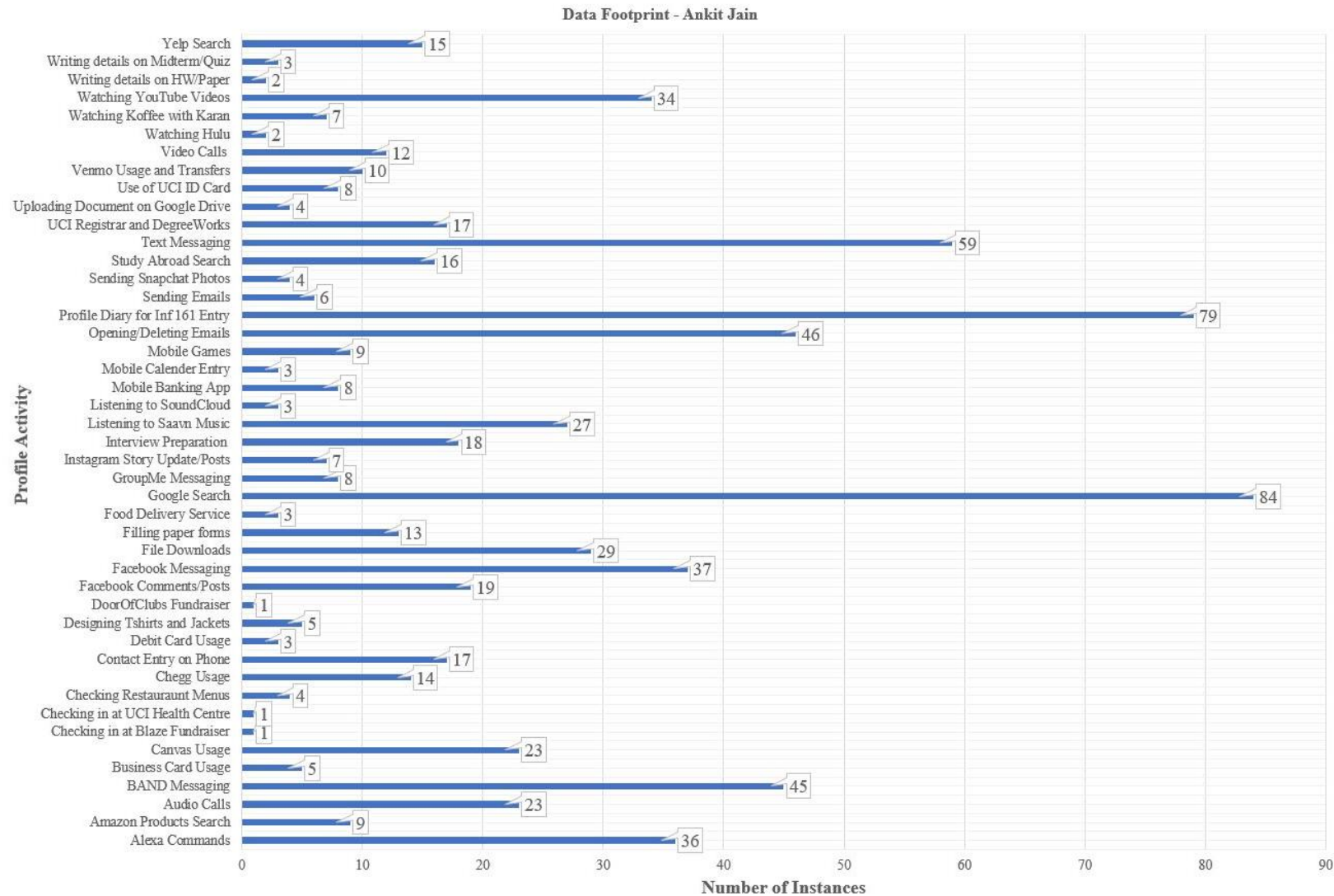
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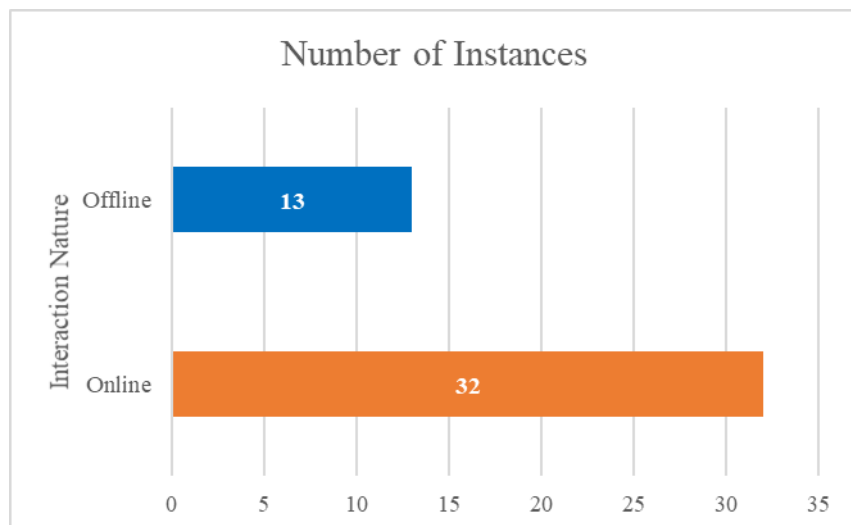
Personal Data Footprint Visualization

Figure: Pie Chart representing Ankit Jain's Data Footprint from 11/4 to 11/6

Data Footprint - Ankit Jain

Profile Activity	Number of Instances
Yelp Search	15
Writing details on Midterm/Quiz	3
Writing details on HW/Paper	2
Watching YouTube Videos	34
Watching Koffee with Karan	7
Watching Hulu	2
Video Calls	12
Venmo Usage and Transfers	10
Use of UCI ID Card	8
Uploading Document on Google Drive	4
UCI Registrar and DegreeWorks	17
Text Messaging	59
Study Abroad Search	16
Sending Snapchat Photos	4
Sending Emails	6
Profile Diary for Inf 161 Entry	79
Opening/Deleting Emails	46
Mobile Games	9
Mobile Calender Entry	3
Mobile Banking App	8
Listening to SoundCloud	3
Listening to Saavn Music	27
Interview Preparation	18
Instagram Story Update/Posts	7
GroupMe Messaging	8
Google Search	84
Food Delivery Service	3
Filling paper forms	13
File Downloads	29
Facebook Messaging	37
Facebook Comments/Posts	19
DoorOfClubs Fundraiser	1
Designing Tshirts and Jackets	5
Debit Card Usage	3
Contact Entry on Phone	17
Chegg Usage	14
Checking Restauraunt Menus	4
Checking in at UCI Health Centre	1
Checking in at Blaze Fundraiser	1
Canvas Usage	23
Business Card Usage	5
BAND Messaging	45
Audio Calls	23
Amazon Products Search	9
Alexa Commands	36

Figure: Column Chart representing Ankit Jain's Data Footprint from 11/4 to 11/6

Number of Instances

Interaction Nature	Number of Instances
Offline	13
Online	32

Figure: Bar Chart representing Ankit Jain's Data Footprint Interaction Mediums from 11/4 to 11/6

It's Personal

With the rise of technology, humans were exposed to a sea of resources and information through the internet. This sea of information lies along the beaches of several websites and knowledge bases, including social networking sites. With every move and decision, we make online through our likes, comments, searches on the internet, we leave behind footprints and marks which may be used to shape our future internet experiences. (Leber, Pg 1) From our personal likes and dislikes in terms of clothes and simply recommendations of movies and TV shows, our personal data potentially engraves an almost permanent footprint on the sands of the internet with crumbs we don't even remember dropping (Leber, Pg 1) This raises the question, is our personal data on the internet still personal?

Digital or Data Footprints are basically marks or signifiers of one's actions associated with the internet, such as a simple search on Google, a comment or like on Facebook and even a message to a loved one or friend. (Leber, Pg 1) Throughout the course of recording instances where I make use of my profile details such as name, birthday, age etc, both online and offline I understood that there are several instances where I normally unknowingly give some of my information away to receive a service. This can be seen most prominently with the number of Google searches I made from the period of November 4th to 6th. These searches alone make up almost 11% of the 779 instances recorded. During these instances, what I fail to realize is that these searches represent my state of mind and thinking at that moment, and I am basically sharing my thought process on the internet and these thoughts trace back to me because I am making use of my Google Account to employ services from Google. The crumbs of data that I leave behind on Facebook, Snapchat, email and other internet-based services forms a persona and profile of myself which includes my likes, dislikes, commonly used phrases, way of

communicating, cognitive and emotional intelligence, and more importantly helps frame an idea

of one's personality and reactions to different situations. From the pie chart and column chart, it

can easily be inferred that my Google Searches, Text Messages and Email Entries make up most

of the footprints I leave behind. I didn't realize I make use of several methods for messaging

such as GroupMe, Facebook, Mobile Phone, BAND and each of these traces represent my

reactions to different situations presented by people who we are interacting with. I believe that

companies such as Amazon and government agencies may have access to this amalgamation of

data of different people around the world. This data serves useful to them as it serves as a base in

terms of marketing, predictive analysis which basically serve as a medium to shape our lives in

ways to which we are naïve to. (Leber, Pg 1) From simple ads on Facebook to recommendations

on Netflix, I believe our personal data is aggregated to make informed decisions and predictions

about us. (Leber, Pg 1) This may serve useful in situations such as to avoid terrorist attacks or

negative in situations when we are trying to keep our pictures and messages to ourselves and this

serves as an invasion of privacy. A recent example of this would be when I told my friend on

Facebook about a recent purchase I made and which model of that purchase I was planning to

get, basically after 3 hours of that conversation both of us got advertisements of that same

product and same model. Through viewing more advertisements of the product, I am

subconsciously made more sure of my planned purchase and in a way manipulated to purchase it

earlier, but through a breach of my private space. There are several aspects of my lives and

instances of my profile implementation offline which often cannot be inferred from my online

activity, such as my in-person interactions or my thought process while tackling a math problem

on paper, or simply giving a hug to my mother. These instances basically form the emotional

portion of my personality which is often not fully assessed from my online activities and

interactions. I would prefer and aim to make my interactions occur offline as opposed to online mainly due to the fact that I am then in charge of what goes on and how it goes on, and there isn't any indirect manipulation by the web-based service.

Leber gives a good example of the how Target knew that a lady was pregnant even before she told her family or brought any baby products. (Leber, Pg 1) This shows how there is a significant breach of one's privacy over the internet with the traces we leave behind knowingly or unknowingly. Privacy is typically a way to shadow or protect our personal information from the eyes of other individuals (Torell, Pg 215) but Torell eloquently quotes David Lyon that in today's age privacy is now simply just the avoidance of surveillance. (Torell, Pg 213) In this era of technology, rather be liberated and being able to express ourselves openly via the medium of the internet, our right of freedom of expression and speech is violated. The idea of freedom of expression and speech on the internet is rather broad due to the variety of social media and web-based platforms which are offered (Shaughnessy, Pg 212). Internet allows individuals to maintain a level of anonymity and control over the information we enter, but we don't have any control over the terms and conditions specified by the web services, and we are expected to accept them as it is. There is no freedom or say from our side to protest and our right to freedom of speech and expression is curbed because we want to make use of the service offered by the web-based system. Even after basically accepting terms and conditions which we had no say in, these web services still manage to manipulate our lifestyle based on our searches, comments, messages etc. (Leber, Pg 1)

In recent past we learnt that Facebook, which was deemed a revolutionary idea especially upon its release, has their public data 'harvested' by outsiders and serves a major gold mine for advertisements. (Kirkpatrick, Pg 40) Due to the rather ambiguous nature of the business which

Facebook is constituted with and what is their continuous source of income (Kirkpatrick, Pg 40), basic democratic rights of speech and expression were put to at risk.

Privacy isn't about simply keeping one's information to themselves, it's about mutual respect. An individual chooses to keep a certain part of their lives private and to themselves with specific reasons, and it's simply disrespectful to violate that simple need of respect. Knowledge and Information serve as a form of currency of power, which simply means that more someone knows about us, the more power they have on us, our behavior, our likes, dislikes, emotions etc. We as humans make use of our personal data to make many decisions in our lives, and it serves a as tool of influence which if in wrong hands can lead to disastrous results. Leber mentions how the city authorities of New York made use of this amalgamation of personal data, commonly referred to as Big Data to understand and predict individuals who are the risk of homelessness and this serves as a positive notion but the information is extracted often without the knowledge of the individual, which goes against one of the very main principles of democracy – Freedom. (Leber, Pg 1) Individuals are meant to live in an aura of freedom under democracy, but rather live under an umbrella of surveillance which closes off a lot of opportunities under the rain. Relying on big data may also have a negative impact on the multinational companies and government agencies, due to the nature of data being incomplete and at times flawed, which may lead to biases and possibly fatal decisions for the firm. This rise of big data in our lives is leading us into a dystopian world where we lose our individual identities and remain as simple categories based on previously personal data. (Leber, Pg 1) A simple example of this could be of a dating application such as Coffee meets Bagel, where people are pushed towards meeting people of their own ethnicity even if they have no preference as such.

In today's data driven society, even though we can use them to solve problems and make analysis of different situations, the data is meant to be used to typically manipulate individuals into shaping their lives in certain ways. Democracy aimed to create a utopian society but violation of privacy through the medium of the internet is simply going against the very core values of freedom and equality. Data needs to be assessed and collected properly over the internet, and there needs to more transparency as to where the user's data is being used. If used appropriately, Big Data is nothing but all our personal data mixed together, it's basically us in virtual form. We decide the way we want to represent ourselves on the internet and it is important to understand how and where our profiles and personal data are used or sold.

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