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Reflection

The topics that I found most interesting to write about and research were the topics that were related to privacy and security. I am focusing specifically on the cybersecurity side of computer science, meaning that I already have some knowledge about these topics and was able to research them further through the writing assignments.

In the topic of privacy, I was especially intrigued by the idea of privacy with social media. More specifically, the vast amount of information that these companies are able to pull from their users. I choose this topic, because I feel that there is a severe lack of understanding of how information sharing works with social media specifically, but also other areas of technology. I feel that it is imperative that people understand what information these companies have access to before signing up for them and agreeing to the Terms and Services. My view on how to better educate people has not changed much. I think that it starts by instilling a proactive attitude in children to truly understand what they are getting into and not mindlessly accepting things.   
  
 On the other hand, preventing the side effects of large-scale information gathering is more of a governmental/institution issue. This can be seen with the semi-recent action of Clemson to prohibit the use of TikTok while connected to Clemson’s wi-fi. The security concern that came with TikTok pushed Clemson to prohibit it for the protection of Clemon’s servers and anyone connected to them. This can be seen on a larger scale, with several countries banning the use of TikTok. This decision has been looming in the US as of recently. My personal opinion of government and institution involvement of protecting the privacy of citizens and students has slightly changed throughout this class. For most things, I tend to lean on extremely limited government involvement in any matter. However, I believe strongly that the reason for government is to protect the citizens that are under it. The idea of a social contract is built between the citizens and the government in the US. The government, in this social contract, has the purpose of protecting the citizens from outside threats. Unfortunately, social media has been somewhat of a looming threat to the technological privacy and security recently, specifically with TikTok. There has been strong speculation whether the Chinese government is using TikTok to be able to “spy” on the American people. While this is generally overexaggerated, there is still a potential threat to security and privacy with TikTok.   
  
 I also found the week about security to be interesting. More specifically, I found the sheer amount of security threats in common, household items to be both interesting and concerning. Computer and Network Security is the topic that I choose for my signature writing assignment because of how much I am intrigued by it. In the signature writing assignment, I discussed how vacuum robots can be used to spy on people in their homes. I find it concerning that this is a potential for all “smart” appliances and conveniences. However, I also see opportunity in it. I have a desire to become a penetration tester, meaning that I would be hired by companies to find vulnerabilities in their systems and fix them. The potential vulnerabilities across these common items allows for ethical hackers to be able to have a legal outlet for hacking. This is an interesting cycle, as more ethical hackers will not only be able to counteract and prevent illegal hackers but will limit the number of illegal hackers by focusing attention elsewhere. Creating more jobs in ethical hacking allow for people to find legal ways to support and provide for their families.

Overall, my opinion on the topic has stayed fairly consistent. I think that ethics as a whole (but in technology in this instance) is immensely important and not discussed enough. I think that having an ethical perspective while growing and improving technology as a society is one of the factors that differentiates humans from other animals. The ability to distinguish if something is right or wrong is a distinctly human trait. It is also what helps keep humanity somewhat civilized. It is imperative that humanity does not lose ethics.