

***Databuse: digital privacy and the mosaic* (2011), Benjamin Wittes**

Benjamin Wittes is putting forward in his article the fact that since the emergence of the use of technologies, some new definitions, values, issues have grown up. He talks about new concepts that has surely an impact of how privacy is considered and controlled. Indeed, we have entered in a world where traditional ways of protection (using laws) is today ineffective: people need to rely on something that will go “beyond policy questions of constitutional protection”. Benjamin Wittes argues the fact that the concept of privacy is still valuable, but misses some precision of definition, since it touches much more contexts and matters than before technology existed. Technology has an impact on the relevant knowledge of what to protect and how. A lot of different concerns and threats are now actual but linked to privacy, indeed law is not relevant anymore in this field since privacy became more difficult to define. Something Benjamin Wittes calls a “third party” is inevitable in order to protect a population having contact with technology and therefore creating its identity by building a digital “mosaic” of data (directly linked to the person’s activity). The concept that seems relevant for the author of the article is to change the way we consider protection: it should be a protection of negative rights rather than of positive rights of user privacy. It should consider privacy in the context of actions done in public, therefore it should imply the creation of a new government of surveillance in technologies.

***I’m Being Followed: How Google – and 104 Other Companies – Are Tracking Me on the Web* (2012), Alexis Madrigal**

When we are surfing on the net, according to Alexis Madrigal it means we are part of an “advertising ecosystem that supports free online content”, the data we produce is gathered by a lot of companies whose objective is to capture our identity, our “digital self” in order to have targets for advertisement, therefore in order to make money. In most cases, it is true that people are creating their digital identity unconsciously: it is interesting to ask ourselves if this collection of data about us without our consent is against cultural values and privacy. The issue that the author of the article puts forward is that the emergence of the online advertising industry that went along with changing technologies and has created a new field of issue dealing with the use of data (which is described in the other article by “databuse”). This problem can’t be resolved by regulation; some people demonstrate that the gathering of people’s data is not always for a financial and manipulating goal linked to ads, but can be also collected for “operational reasons”. If some people ask for an interruption of their data, they will probably see that some are still used by companies: it shows that we actually do not have any entire right to decide if we agree to be tracked or not. Some norms have been applied which impose new principles for the collection, use, transfer of digital information which is effective, but this article shows the ambiguity of norms to respect for personal identities, since we have two ways of identification: physical and digital. They are different so they need different regulations of their use for people not to abuse or disrespect it, which is still something unfixed and malleable.