Falé Do

Professor Santo Romano

DART 449 The Language of the Web

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<center>Reflection on "Databuse: Digital Privacy and the Mosaic" from *Brookings*</center>

"We tend to discuss policy issues concerning control over our mosaics in the language of

privacy for the simple reason that privacy represents the closest value liberalism has yet

articulated to the one we instinctively wish in this context both to protect and to balance against

other goods—goods such as commerce, security, and the free exchange of information." Clearly,

this article discusses privacy, particularly how the notion and concept of privacy have been

misshaped as surveillance was digitally omnipresent. As we are being surveilled by

governments, big technology companies and/or surveillance companies, our privacy is constantly

being abused as they are being collected to earn money (referring to the previous reflection of

The Social Dilemma), or it can be abused if our mosaic was being misused. By mosaic, I meant

to refer to " a [data] mosaic—an ever-widening array of digital fingerprints reflecting nearly all

of life's many aspects. Our mosaics record our transactions, our media consumption, our

locations and travel, our communications, and our relationships. They are, quite simply, a

detailed portrait of our lives," and so "[t]he databuse conception of the user's equity in the

mosaic is more modest than privacy. It doesn't ask to be "let alone." It asks, rather, for a certain

protection against tangible harms as a result of a user's having entrusted elements of his or her

mosaic to a third party."

From my understanding, everything we do online is not private despite the fact that there

are laws to protect our privacy, namely privacy is not applied in a manner that we normally

understood about it as it has changed with the virtual and digital times. So in exchange for free

access to the Internet, we give them our data mosaic by surfing through the Internet freely, assuming that our privacy and rights are protected. Another thing being discussed in this article is that a lot of misinformation is being spread out due to the misuse of data and the rise of data abuse. For example, our smartphones tracked our search histories or listened to our conversations despite being in the other room. That said, this leads to a conflict between Facebook and other companies like Google and Apple because they started to implement policies allowing users to block the use of data, which in return hurts the data-collecting business of Facebook. However, Google, Apple and similar companies do the same thing, meaning that they are also (ironically) in the data-collecting business. All in all, the acquisition of data is done "illegally" as in our data are being collected without our permission and that is not okay. Yet, even though these companies made improvements by inventing policies to protect our data by asking our permission before taking our data, we are still forced to give our data because we cannot proceed to read certain articles without accepting the website's policies (cookies) or to surf through them without disabling advertising pop-ups, for instance.

Despite all the negative discussions on surveillance and privacy via data collection, not everything on the Internet is bad. In Marc Lamont Hill's article, data collection can help change history by supporting movements and manifestations, especially in the U.S. For example, Twitter's hashtags like "#HandsUpDontShoot, #MichaelBrown, #Ferguson" helped build a resistance to defend Black communities' rights and helped bring to life a response that was beneficial for these communities via Black Twitter. Another thing being discussed is that the message "I am being surveilled (specifically by police officers and the government)" was being passed around. This is a discussion about "digital counter-publics [reorganizing] relations of surveillance [by contesting] the erasure of marginalized groups within the Black communities."

Bibliography

Hill, Marc Lamont. "'Thank You, Black Twitter': State Violence, Digital Counterpublics, and Pedagogies of Resistance," Vol. 53(2), Urban Education, 2018, pp. 286–302, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0042085917747124. Accessed 20 Feb. 2022.

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