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26. Consumer Privacy

In this chapter Velasquez talks about the company's moral duty to their consumers privacy. In this advanced technological age, we have the power to “collect, manipulate, and disseminate personal information about someone on an unprecedented scale.” This power has caused personal invasion on a massive scale as the potential to spread mistake and spread false information of their customers increases. Companies are able to obtain sensitive information from their consumers who want their service or product. For example, Midland Bank was able to collect information about the sex lives of the customers applying for insurance, while companies were able to collection political information as well. This information can be harmful to privacy of the customer as situations similar to the Medical Information Bureau (MIB) fiasco in 1902. The MIB provide insurance companies with information about the health of individuals applying for life insurance in order to detect fraudulent applications. The issues that arose was that the information that the MIB gets and provides is sometimes inaccurate, as one individual was reported to have AIDS and be gay and another person was reported to be an alcoholic. With this information given privately to the insurance company without the indualvalt knowledge they are able to deny the customer a service and give them no reason for it. All this information can negative damage a person's psychological privacy. What if the information was leaked? This in turn can negatively affect their physical privacy, since their inner lives can be revealed by their physical activities and expressions. This the protection of privacy is important as it protect individuals from cultures that can shame and encourage interference in orces private life thus determining how others see us. When thinking about how this affects you, imagine if all of your private information and activities were release to the public view?