

DS 760

Week Six: Contrasting Views on Privacy

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Regarding Big Data:

I agree with the ideas that notions of causality, are increasingly giving way to correlation as we try to make sense of patterns, with quantifying and understanding the world and guarding against over reliance on data.

I also agree with the statement that, "the new thinking is that people are the sum of their social relationships, online interactions, and connections with content. To fully investigate an individual, analysts need to look at the widest possible penumbra of data that surrounds the person — not just whom they know, but whom those people know too, and so on."

My thoughts align with the statement that, "as storage costs plummet and algorithms improve, data-crunching techniques, once available only to spy agencies, research labs, and gigantic companies, are becoming democratized." There are many new services from companies that are living examples of this premise.

I disagree with fears that predictive systems will pass judgments of culpability based on individualized predictions of future behavior. I also don't care for the verbose and repetitious style of writing.

Regarding Computer Ethics:

Deborah Johnson's text, Computer Ethics, provokes dialog over many different scenarios. I feel as a society; we are principally ignorant of what data exists about our personas. I agree strongly with the points outlined on intellectual property, protecting trade secrecy, copyrights, and patents. Having authored open source utilities, I also agree with free software, and that is wrong to copy protected software.

I recall facilitating many ethical discussions at the United States Naval Academy. I remember distinctly the shift that takes place when someone's life is on the line (like the sea cave scenario). The conversations about surveillance tend to take on a different sense of urgency and head in a far different direction when you are talking about preventing acts of terrorism (rather than Lidl's workplace spying case).

Together, the two texts are complementary and provide strong examples for engaging dialog.