Digital Death

A fresh start on the internet

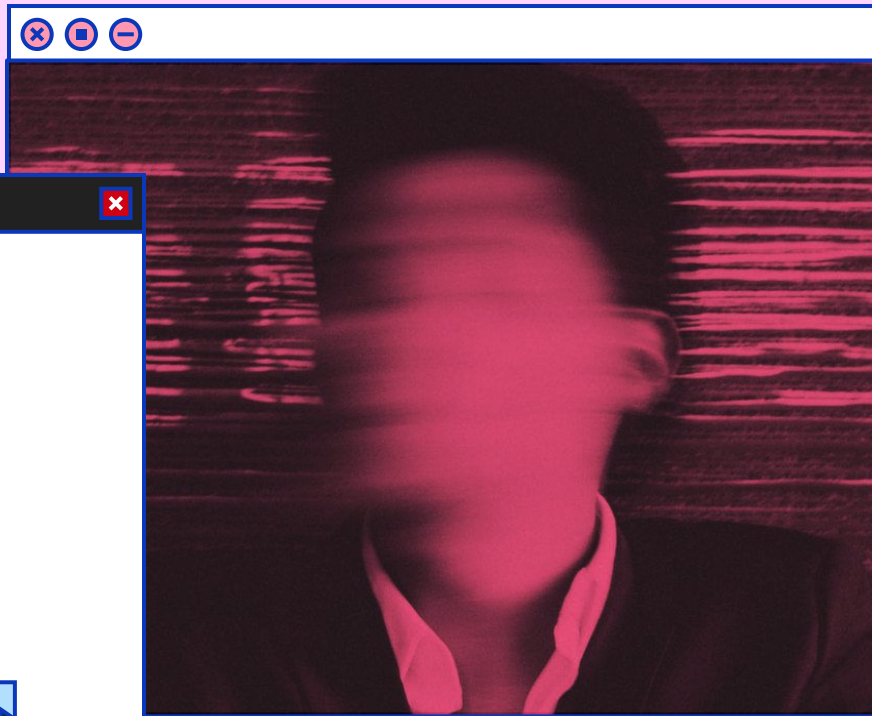T. Conklin

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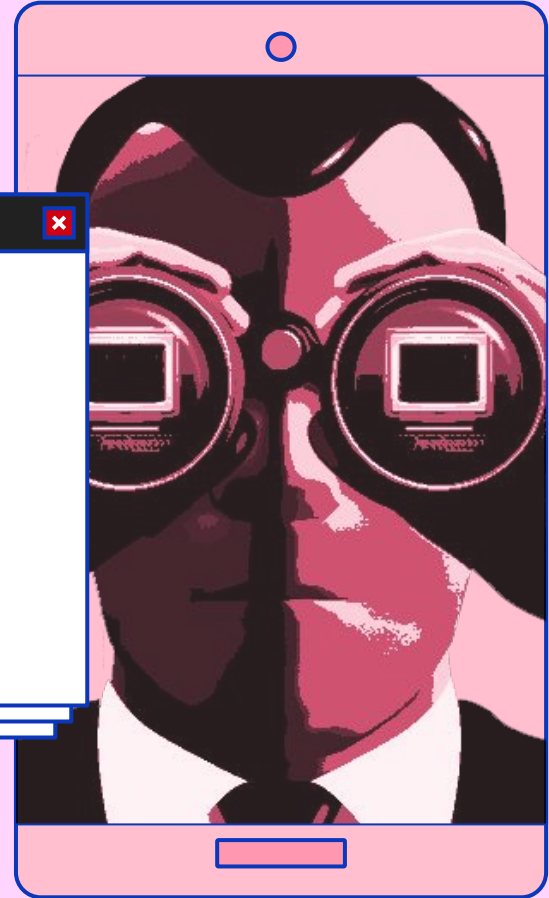
04 Timeline

Abstract Summarized

Data brokers own everything about us and everyone we have ever known and loved. I want to take it back. Have you ever wished for a fresh start? This is the capstone where I show how I and you too can create one yourself.

PRIMARY SOURCES

- Daniel J. Solove (2008). *Understanding Privacy*.
- Michael Bazzell (2021). *Extreme Privacy What It Takes To Disappear Third Edition*.
- Jaron Lanier (2018). *Ten Arguments For Deleting Your Social Media Accounts Right Now* .
- Congress (1974). *THE PRIVACY ACT OF 1974* .
- Julia Angwin (2014). *Dragnet Nation*.
- Bruce Schneier (2015). *Data and Goliath*.
- Edward Snowden (2019). *Permanent Record*.
- Carissa Veliz (2021). *Privacy is Power*.
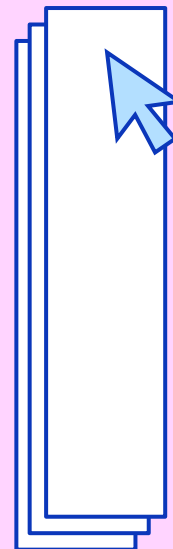
ANALYSIS Pt.1

- *Understanding Privacy*
  - This book is about fundamentally understanding privacy from it's history and really defining what privacy should be today.
- *Extreme Privacy What It Takes To Disappear Third Edition*
  - This book is a guide on how to use OSINT (Open source intelligence) tools and the methods they use to collect data on us to help find and secure our own data.
- *Ten Arguments For Deleting Your Social Media Accounts Right Now*
  - This book has a click baity title but I believe it is just irony from the author. The book speaks about our loss of freedom on the internet and why we should delete our accounts.
- *THE PRIVACY ACT OF 1974.*
  - This is one of the backbones of us still having ownership of our data. People reference this when they ask for their data to be deleted and sent back to them from data brokers.
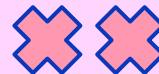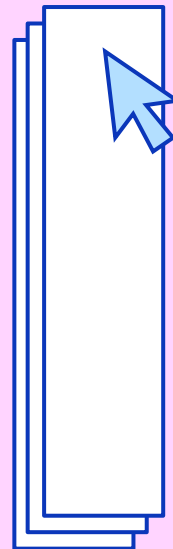
ANALYSIS Pt.2

- *Dragnet Nation*
  - This book is very popular and follows this woman on her journey to gain some semblance of privacy online in the dragnet we have today.
- *Data and Goliath*
  - This book is by one of the leading cybersecurity professionals. It is interesting that even in 2015 cyber professionals could see how data collection would go rampant.
- *Permanent Record*
  - This is the book written by Snowden himself in 2019 speaking about his life, but most importantly how the patriot act and NSA collected data on it's own citizens. This was a major cornerstone in privacy awareness.
- *Privacy is Power*.
  - This is a fairly new book ,but I know Carissa Veliz is a professor in philosophy in ethics and AI. She is very reputable on the topic.
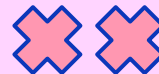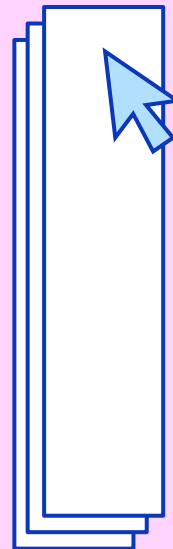
Capstone Progress Pt.1

Part 0: Where do we even start?

What data creates a person online?

Foundational

- Full Name
- Username
- Email
- Phone number

Data Stores

- The Big Dogs
  - Facebook(Meta) / Instagram
  - Amazon
  - Twitter
  - Microsoft
  - Apple
- Other's to Consider
  - LinkedIn
  - Snapchat
  - Tumblr
- Online Community
  - Reddit
  - Imgur
  - Tiktok
  - Dating Sites / Apps
  - Discord
  - Ebay
- Documents
  - Images
  - Videos
- Technical
  - Domain Names
  - IP Address'

What devices do we use to create the data?

- Computer(s)
  - Desktop
  - Laptop
- Smartphone
  - Z-Fold

Part 1: Data to Consider

Data Classification

PII - Personally Identifiable Information

" "Information which can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as their name, social security number, biometric records, etc. alone, or when combined with other personal or identifying information which is linked or linkable to a specific individual, such as date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, etc."

- PII like names, phone numbers, or other information that may be widely publicly available, is not usually considered sensitive (though could be in certain contexts), whereas PII like social security numbers, alien registration numbers, or driver's license numbers would always be sensitive.

PI - Personal Information

- IP addresses
- employee record information
- location information
- photographs
- racial or ethnic origin
- political affiliations or opinions
- religious or philosophical beliefs
- trade union membership
- sexual orientation
- criminal record
- health or genetic information
- some biometric information

SPI — Sensitive Personal Information

Sensitive Personal Information (SPI) under the upcoming California Privacy Rights Act (CPRA) is a new defined term covering data that is related to but does not directly identify an individual —and may cause harm if it's made public. SPI includes personal information that reveals

- A consumer's social security, driver's license, state identification card, or passport number
- Account log-in, financial account, debit card, or credit card numbers in combination with any required security or access code
- Password, or credentials allowing access to an account
- Precise geolocation
- Racial or ethnic origin, religious or philosophical beliefs, or union membership
- The contents of a consumer's mail, email, and text messages — unless the business is the intended recipient of the communication
- Genetic data, including
  - The processing of biometric information for the purpose of uniquely identifying a consumer;
  - Personal information collected and analyzed concerning a consumer's health; or
  - Personal information collected and analyzed concerning a consumer's sex life or sexual orientation

Part 2: Organizing and Prioritizing

📧 **Email** ⭐ ⭐ ⭐

Google

Deleting a Google Account

- What they delete?
  - You'll lose all the data and content in that account, like *emails, files, calendars, and photos.*
  - You won't be able to use Google services where you sign in with that account, like Gmail, Drive, Calendar, or Play.
  - You'll lose access to subscriptions and content you bought with that account on YouTube or Google Play, like apps, movies, games, music, and TV shows.

🔒 Secure Alternative, Having a google account is a near necessity in this day and age. For anything you want to keep secure consider a ProtonMail account.

👤 **Full Name** ⭐ ⭐ ⭐

Personal Data Removal Workbook

- Use this website's resource and fill it out yourself using a secure email. This is a list of the top data brokers and you simply need to email each one and request your data removed.

☁ **Cloud Storage** ⭐ ⭐

- Google Drive
- ICloud
- OneDrive
- Dropbox

👤 **Usernames** ⭐

1: Computers

2: Phone

SCHEDULE Pt.1

	January	February✅	March	April	May
Required		Prime Sources	Ch.2 Draft	Ch.3 Draft	
Project		Ch.1 Draft	Progress		
Read Source		Bazzell	Solove	Schneier	

	June	July	August	September	October
Core					
Read Source		Angwin	Snowden	Veliz	

Further Progress

Resources

tconklin-champlain edited this page 20 days ago · 5 revisions

Resource Links

	Citation
1	Daniel J. Solove (2008).Understanding Privacy.
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9	Data Privacy

🔒 Design Project 1

⊞ View 1 ▾   + New view

⥢ Filter by keyword or by field

Todo 3

◯ Draft
Quick Links to Guides on Deleting Major Social Media Accounts

◯ Draft
Quick Links to Guides on Deleting Major Online Community Accounts

◯ Draft
Create a tutorial on following the Personal Data Removal Workbook

In Progress 0

Done 1

◯ Draft
Week 1 Topic Selection

Further Progress Cont.

Abstract

We are owned without even knowing it. Data brokers and the internet itself holds more information about you then you could ever imagine and I want to fix that. I have spent time doing a large audit of all my data finding exactly where and what certain accounts are connected to and have requested each databroker who owned the information to delete it and not retain any leftover information. I do not need my past to define my digital future so this project is built from the ground up for personal reasons but I believe it can help anyone do the same. Together we will scrub our data trail to allow for as fresh a start as someone can on the internet.

Chapter 1

There is no more privacy in this day and age. I have been cataloged my entire life, and so have you. Our names, addresses, mothers' names and even information like our favorite restaurants are all stored in servers around the globe. I prefer random strangers and businesses not having my info at the press of a button, so I am attempting to change that. I will erase as much as I can about myself on the internet through open-source information gathering targeted at myself and slowly securing that data for my storage.

I have organized my capstone into multiple parts. The first part, named Part 0: is to figure out what essential information I want to secure by the end of this. Things like locking down and obfuscating my usernames, emails, and phone numbers. Along with this, I will list out what places to consider as large data stores. Places like Facebook, Amazon, and Twitter. Large companies that make it difficult to delete data, even Apple and Microsoft accounts, hold plenty of information. After the big days, I will start fanning out and checking websites like LinkedIn, Snapchat, Tumblr, and online communities like Reddit, Tiktok, Discord. Essentially any place with crucial information about me. Finally, I will look through the cloud storage I signed up for and my desktop for images and videos about me. If I find anything else like domains in my name or IPs that could link to me, I will attempt to secure that. This will all be repeated for each device I own, like my phone, laptop, and desktop.

Next is using that information and prioritizing what to consider. I will go through any info I find and classify it through a standard used for PII (Personally Identifiable Information). I will create a document that helps me keep track of where to go and delete critical accounts, like a tutorial on quickly deleting a Facebook account instead of just deactivating it. I will use a three or five-star system to rate the importance of the data that I delete or request a deletion for. This will be accomplished by reading and following certain books I have added to my resources list. Books like "Extreme Privacy" by M.Bazzell will help a lot in this regard. It even has a helpful data deletion sheet to contact the most prominent data brokers and request that your information is deleted.

In conjunction with this plan, I will be reading various pieces of literature, scholarly journals, and historical context on this subject of privacy.

The real reason for this project is selfish and somewhat paranoid. I do not particularly appreciate having my information just freely floating out there. From my experience in recon penetration testing and human hacking in general, a little information goes a long way. It becomes a domino effect ending with a filled dossier about you by some stranger who knows how to google dork. The future also is bleak in terms of losing privacy to surveillance every day. While countries worldwide are dealing with police states and corruption from those who abuse the data they collect, America seems excellent in comparison but often in the past, we follow the leader if it makes a profit, and information is VERY profitable. Advertising is one aspect where we are all spied on but do not seem to care because it makes the advertisements better. This is something others should be hesitant about in the future, significantly as technology expands its capabilities.

Chapter 2

The majority of this capstone is founded on critical works of literature in the field of privacy. They are all listed at the end of the paper in the worlds cited section for further review, but I will go into detail on how they pertain to the capstone in this chapter. To start off I will begin with the book that goes into the real span of the scope this project has, and its impact on people. Understanding Privacy by Daniel J Solove goes into the concept of privacy from its etymological insemination to its modern day meaning. They use the book as a way to show that most people, even experts cannot define what privacy really is and the difficulties that come with that fact.

The next resource I am using is Extreme Privacy What It Takes To Disappear Third Edition This is a massive manual written by an expert in the field of extreme privacy. Micheal Bazzell has always lived by never suggesting something he has not done himself. He has gone so far into privacy that on a recent podcast he runs he explained when he was younger he sent in a fake obituary for one of his sudonames that connected back to him so he was actually written as deceased on his tax return. Aside from that show of extreme privacy gone awry he shows in the book how to live life without ever giving away vital information. Mostly through burner numbers and nomadic living laws. The specific section I am using is the online sections from installing Graphene OS on a google pixel to securing your social media accounts. The book is going to be a great resource for all of his successes and failures in the attempts to make his life and the life of his clients more private.

After this we reach a more law and historical document The Privacy Act Of 1974, essentially this law has been the backbone of most privacy debates. The act is mainly used when people need to prove to data brokers that they own their data in multiple ways. Sometimes it gets disputed as is the gray nature that comes with requesting your data residing on someone else's computers. The act has been overwritten in many ways from the patriot act to others. Privacy law debates often contradict each other in terms of what real privacy is, is it being just left alone? Or is it about self ownership over parts of your life? Along with this I am using a companion source Privacy is Power, A book written by Carissa Veliz, a professor in philosophy that goes into the ethical concerns with privacy and how privacy however it is defined is a necessary human right regardless of country, creed, or class.

Continuing on in less global ways I have included the book Ten Arguments for Deleting Your Social Media Accounts Right Now, This book written by Jaron Lanier is a simple introduction to the ways large corporations own our data and how there are valid reasons to just delete social media accounts all together not even just the fact that they harbor most our data. There are potentially moral arguments to be made on this front. The author has had a few ted talks on the topic and even was one of the main creators of VR technology. To which Meta has now been attempting to use to get a lot more access into peoples homes, and personal lives.

On the topic of small families personal lives comes another resource I am using named Dragnet Nation, A book written by a mom with little technical knowledge who attempts to find some semblance of privacy in her day to day life but as she digs she keeps finding more and more and more ways everything around us is requesting information and data. The dragnet she refers to is a word used for an old fishing technique where you cast a river wide net that catches any fish dragged in the stream. Nowadays this refers to systematic searches either be manual or algorithmically created to categorize people into nothing more than spreadsheets of information.

Speaking of this data we continue on to my last few books, Data and Goliath, an old book technically for 2022 but even in 2015 we see the same trends happening now. The author and host of a very popular cyber security blog Bruce Schneier wrote this to address the looming problem that was these major cyber companies hosting websites where we have given them essentially everything and anything about us and our personal lives. He continues through every which way we are tracked and recorded to show people the importance of security in tandem with privacy.

And of all the privacy advocates I could think of to end with, one always came to mind first: Edward Snowden. I am using his book primarily the later parts about his trouble with leaving the US and getting stuck in Russia. As well as the overall impact that came with the patriot act and his involvement in helping create the spying happening inside our own country. His book is named Permanent Record which is an apt name for what has happened to most citizens. We all have records and most data we

Questions ?