

## Chapter 3: Networking

## 3.4 Text Messaging

# Transforming Lives in Developing Countries

- M-PESA in Kenya
  - Save money
  - Pay bills
  - Transfer funds
- Communicate information about crop prices
- Protect against counterfeit medicine

# Twitter

- Web-based social networking service
- More than 200 million users
- Blogging tool
- Business promotion
- Role in Arab Spring uprisings debated
  - (+) Social networks lead to politicization
  - (-) Ties in social networks too weak for high-risk activism

## 3.5 Censorship

# Forms of Direct Censorship

- Government monopolization
- Prepublication review
- Licensing and registration

# Forms of Direct Censorship

- **Government monopolization**

In the former Soviet Union, for example, the government owned all the television stations, radio stations, and newspapers. Private organizations could not even own a photocopy machine. Government monopolization is an effective way to suppress the flow of information. Modern computer and communication technology makes government monopolization much more difficult than in the past.

# Forms of Direct Censorship

- **Prepublication review**

This form of censorship is essential for material the government wishes to keep secret, such as information about its nuclear weapons program. Most governments have laws restricting the publication of information that would harm national security. In addition, autocratic governments typically block publication of material deemed injurious to the reputations of their rulers.



# Forms of Direct Censorship

- **Licensing and registration**
- This form of censorship is typically used to control media with limited bandwidth. For example, there are a limited number of radio and television stations that can be accommodated on the electromagnetic spectrum. Hence a radio or television station must obtain a license to broadcast at a particular frequency. Licensing invites censorship.

# Self-censorship

- Most common form of censorship
- Group decides for itself not to publish
  - For example, after US-led forces toppled the regime of Saddam Hussein in April 2003, CNN's chief news executive, Eason Jordan, admitted that CNN had suppressed negative information about the actions of the Iraqi government for more than a decade in order to keep CNN's Baghdad bureau open and protect Iraqi employees of CNN

# Self-censorship

- Reasons
  - Avoid subsequent persecution
  - Maintain good relations with government officials (sources of information)
- Ratings systems created to advise potential audience
  - Movies, TVs, CDs, video games
  - **Not** the Web

# Challenges Posed by the Internet

- Five characteristics of the Internet make censorship more difficult:
  - Many-to-many communications
  - Dynamic connections
  - Huge numbers of Web sites
  - Extends beyond national borders, laws
  - Hard to distinguish between minors and adults

# Governmental Filtering and Surveillance

- Cuba, North Korea: Internet virtually inaccessible
- Saudi Arabia: centralized control center
- People's Republic of China:
  - Blocks Internet access at times of social unrest
  - Has “one of most sophisticated filtering systems in the world”
- Germany: Forbids access to neo-Nazi sites
- United States: Have been repeated efforts to limit access of minors to pornography

# Ethical Perspectives on Censorship

- Kant opposed censorship
  - Enlightenment thinker
  - “Have courage to use your own reason”
- Mill opposed censorship
  - No one is infallible
  - Any opinion may contain a kernel of truth
  - Truth revealed in class of ideas
  - Ideas resulting from discourse are more influential

# Mill's Principle of Harm

“The only ground on which intervention is justified is to prevent harm to others; the individual's own good is not a sufficient condition.”

## **3.6 Freedom of Expression**



# Freedom of Expression: History

- *De Scandalis Magnatum* (England, 1275)
- Court of Star Chamber
- 18<sup>th</sup> century
  - No prior restraints on publication
  - People could be punished for sedition or libel
- American states adopted bills of rights including freedom of expression
- Freedom of expression in 1<sup>st</sup> amendment to U.S. Constitution

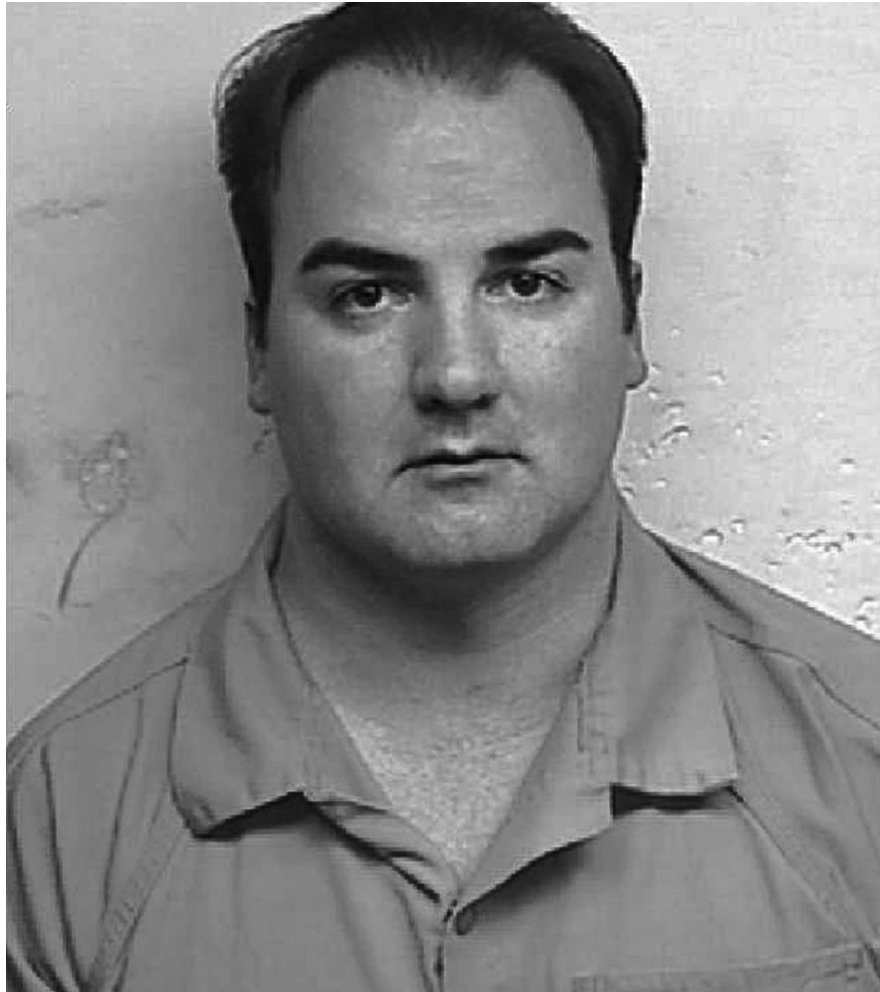
# 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment to U.S. Constitution

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

# Freedom of Expression Not an Absolute Right

- 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment covers political and nonpolitical speech
- Right to freedom of expression must be balanced against the public good
- Various restrictions on freedom of expression exist

# Jeremy Jaynes



AP Photo/Loudoun County Sheriff's office

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# ***FCC v. Pacifica Foundation et al.***

- George Carlin records “Filthy Words”
- WBAI in New York airs “Filthy Words” (1973)
- FCC issues declaratory order to Pacifica
- Pacifica sues
- U.S. Supreme Court ruled FCC did not violate 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment (5-4 decision)
  - Broadcast media “uniquely pervasive”
  - Broadcasting uniquely accessible to children

# Case Study: Kate's Blog

- Kate: Maintains a popular “life on campus” blog
- Jerry: Another student; active in Whig Party
- At private birthday party, someone gives Jerry a Tory Party T-shirt as a gag, and Jerry puts it on
- Kate uses cell phone to take picture of Jerry when he isn't looking, posts it on her blog
- Story read by many people on and off campus
- Jerry confronts Kate and demands she remove photo; she complies, and they remain friends
- Kate's blog and Jerry both become more popular

# Kantian Analysis

- Kate uploaded Jerry's photo to her blog without asking his permission
- She treated him as a means to her end of increasing the readership of her Web site
- Her action was wrong

# Social Contract Theory Analysis

- Birthday party held in apartment of one of Jerry's friends
- Jerry had a reasonable expectation of privacy
- Kate violated Jerry's right to privacy
- Kate's action was wrong



# Act Utilitarian Analysis

- Benefits
  - Popularity of Kate's blog increased (definitely)
  - Jerry become more popular on campus (definitely)
- Harms
  - Jerry's anger at Kate (only temporary)
  - Photo could discredit Jerry at some point in future (unlikely)
- Benefits greater than harms, so Kate did a good thing