

Project 2 Questions

- *Dutch scholar Mark Bovens describes accountability, in essence, as the following: when someone is given responsibility or task, they **transparently** explain and justify their conduct to a **forum** that judges it against **standards**. **Consequences**, positive or negative, may follow based on the judgment.*

Do you think this current system provides adequate accountability around short-term rentals in San Francisco? In your response, describe why you believe the system is adequate or inadequate, using Bovens definition. If you believe the system is inadequate, discuss a possible change in actions required of at least one stakeholder (the San Francisco Planning Office (SFPO), Airbnb hosts/listers, or the developers at Airbnb.com) to improve accountability in this system.

- a. This current system is adequate in providing accountability in short-term rentals in San Francisco. Going off of Bovens definition he states the responsibility given to someone should result in the transparency of their actions to conduct the task and base the conduct against the given standards to follow through with judgment no matter the consequences. It is adequate as the responsibilities are set for the stakeholders. For example, Listers have to register with the San Francisco Planning office, and Airbnb must validate the policy numbers. For transparency Listers have to publicly display their license number and allow third parties to be able to register complaints towards Listers holding them accountable. These few factors show that this system does provide sufficient accountability around short-term rentals in San Francisco.
- *So far we've discussed three key stakeholders that play a role in regulating Airbnb listings in San Francisco: the San Francisco Planning Office (SFPO), Airbnb hosts/listers, and Airbnb developers. For this question, identify one additional stakeholder that is impacted by or could help improve the regulation of short-term Airbnb rentals in San Francisco. Using Bovens' description of accountability, explain what specific actions or changes in behavior you think this group could implement to improve the accountability and regulation of Airbnb listings in the city.*
- b. An additional stakeholder that is impacted would be the community groups in which these short-term rentals are located in San Francisco. These community groups could help regulate the rentals by keeping an eye on them and being willing to report them if they see something wrong is going on. They can advocate for stricter regulations and keep track of the effect these short-term rentals have on the community. The community

group would also implement transparency by sharing information they gather from these rentals publicly. They can also report issues directly to the San Francisco Planning office. Making sure that the Airbnb listings in the city are doing their task in a correct manner that does not end up negatively affecting the community in which they are found.

- *As discussed in the introduction, the legality of web scraping is still uncertain in the US. Skim through the [Legal Issues section of Web Scraping in the US on Wikipedia](#) and [this article about the legal issues with the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act](#), and describe at least one factor you believe is important to consider when discussing the legality of web scraping and why.*

c. I think it is important to consider trespass to chattel, which is used to defend against those who interfere with another person's personal property. This is important because those who are unauthorized are scraping data and condoning to trespassing actions which one could be punished for. But deciding who is committing crimes and should be punished is tricky in these scenarios because of laws being not specific enough, leaving room for loop holes. It is important to discuss the legality of web scraping because everyone's rights and privacy should be respected and defended.

- *Scraping public data does not always lead to positive results for society. For example, look to [Facebook–Cambridge Analytica data scandal - Wikipedia](#) or [Clearview AI - Wikipedia](#). While web scraping is important for accountability and open access to information, we must also consider issues of privacy as well. Many argue that using someone's personal data without their consent (even if publicly provided) is unethical. Web scraping requires thoughtful intervention. Develop at least two guidelines you think are important to consider when deciding whether to do web scraping. According to Bovens' definition of accountability, describe how these guidelines should be enforced and by whom.*

d. The first guideline should be before scraping happens the owner of the data must consent to the web scraping. This can happen by explicitly stating the agreement. These guidelines should be enforced by the website operators and developers. The scrapers should be transparent to the data owners and make sure they are explaining their purposes and if they do something other than what was agreed to they are held accountable with fines or bans.

The second guideline is ensuring privacy even if the data is public the data owner is anonymous. This would have to be enforced by developers along with legislators to ensure privacy of the users being involved. Filters should be put in place by developers so that sensitive information is not put out. There should also be legal frameworks that have specific limits of how much of a person's information can be used and taken. Scrapers should additionally be regularly reporting their collections with legislators to ensure the frameworks are being followed.

