

Data & Privacy

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Who is watching you?

The big question is explored in Julia Angwin's "Dragnet Nation" speaking directly on the issue of data surveillance and our concerning ignorance to it. We live in an era where enormous amounts of data and personal information can be collected with little to no effort and most importantly, no permission. As time goes on, these "Dragnets", as they call them, are burrowing deeper and deeper into our private devices and accounts. It is considerably only a matter of time that true privacy becomes non-existent in this technology dependent world.

<http://juliaangwin.com/books/>

When does it become unacceptable?

Although we'd love to leave these concerns as just new theories in the media that will slowly fizzle away, they are unfortunately already real. You, your friends, and everyone around you is experiencing it, whether it is talked about or not.

Starting several years ago, it was always somewhat normal to find ads pop up on our social media pages that had to do with something we had been looking up in the prior hours or days. Although slightly alarming for some, most people didn't feel as though their privacy was being fully invaded in this way because they were making public searches online.

Fast forward a few more years.....

Coincidence? I don't think so.....

Search history advertisements slowly became more and more frequent and specific, until eventually, it wasn't just search history anymore.

Content that has to do with things we talk about in private text messaging conversations will pop up on our personal instagram feeds. Even things we talk about out loud and in person, having nothing to do with our phones, will then be projected through advertising and content later that day.

At first it was so out of the ordinary that people believed it was mere coincidence, until there became no other explanation than we were being watched, listened to, and tracked every minute of the day through our private devices.

FISA Surveillance Laws & Loop Holes

Intelligence agencies like the FBI have been given permission to tap into data from frequently used online companies without a warrant. This change in law was primarily intended to monitor potential terrorism and to more accurately screen immigrants entering the country, but naturally, they were given the access to monitor everyone else in the country as well. Not to mention, the Facebook data scandal this year.

This means things like emails, chats, texts and possibly even phone conversations can now be monitored without permission from the phone user. There is so much gray area on what exact data is being watched or not, people can't trust that anything they do involving their personal technology is completely private. This is a reason why people began to cover the cameras on their devices. There are now major concerns about freedom of speech and democracy being threatened.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/28/us/politics/immigrants-social-media-trump.html>

<http://fortune.com/2018/01/18/president-trump-set-to-sign-fisa-surveillance-law-what-that-means-for-you/>

“Tapped” Short Film

I wanted to create an accurate representation of the emotions someone feels when they figure out they're being watched through their personal device and social media. Everyone is oddly so trustworthy in their phones and their technology, that when they realize it could be something used against them or something that could endanger their privacy, it's a shock, and panic immediately sets in. I wanted the environment in the film to be unidentifiable, only lit by the glow of a screen. As the film progresses, the anxiety begins to rise. I wanted the viewer to feel what the actor was emoting. The audio is very important to the anxiety crescendo as well. The viewer should feel as though they are experiencing everything about the exact moment someone has figured out that their full privacy may no longer exist in this world of tech.



<https://vimeo.com/282663984>

Equipment & Moving Forward

I worked with a Moza AirCross Gimbal for this film, an electronic type of camera stabilizer I had never used before. It allowed me to create specific camera movements that matched the collective idea I was trying to bring to life. It added more professional and steady motion for panning and close ups. But most importantly, it allowed so much room for experimental angles and movement that I wouldn't have been able to create otherwise.

I can't wait to take what I've researched and created this summer and push it further in my film and animation classes starting in the fall! I plan on seeing how far I can take this research and represent it through more short films. I'm also looking forward to testing new editing softwares for my film professors and seeing how these programs can extend my skills in videography!