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Privacy

In our Nation today, personal privacy has become a hot topic. In today's world such things as the internet and new technology is a problem for concern. Is it right for internet companies to track our every movement? Is it right that wherever we go we are being watched by several cameras at a time? Are today's youth sharing too much information on such things as Face-book or MySpace? Is it right for an airport security guard to search our bags, and our persons? Does the Fourth Amendment not matter anymore? It seems like "privacy is something that we must sacrifice in order to participate in today's world." (Goshgarian 56)

In David Plotz's "Privacy Is Overrated," he begins by telling us everything about him. From where he lives, to what he drives. Then he goes on to tell us that the James Mintz group an investigation firm learned all of this about him in a few hours with the computer, and if they spent a bit more time they would have discovered his Social Security number. Further, he states that surveillance cameras watch him in the mall, public streets, and even his own personal computer is spying on him. He refers to things called "cookies," which track your movements on the internet and which identify what type of websites you like to view. He discusses the Defense Department's office of Total Information Awareness plans to collect information about Americans from what we buy to where we go on vacations. Leading up to a horror story about a stalker who bought an address from a web broker, then this stalker tracked down the girl and murdered her. Plotz points out that people only care about their own selves, but not anybody else. He gives the following example; a friend of his just had a baby, soon after via mail they were getting infant formula, this is great example of egocentric fallacy. Where someone knows something about you, they care. Same with the companies, but they don't really care all you are

a wallet. In his closing remarks he talks about small town America, and how everybody knew what you have done; finishing with the internet and how it is creating something called real privacy. "Real privacy is what allows us to share hopes, dreams, safely expose faults and still be loved." (Plotz 63) He believes that the internet is the best way to share feelings, have a sense of belonging; moreover, he claims, "To be less private sometimes is to have more privacy. To be less private is to be more ourselves." (Plotz 63)

In the second text, "Invading Our Own Privacy" by David Schimke, the author begins by telling us about a newly hired editor about to take the helm of City Pages. Staffers at Minneapolis weekly, had never met their new leader, but sure did know a great deal about him from his MySpace page. Next he speaks of a woman who was charged for drunk driving and vehicular manslaughter, she received 64 months in prison. She showed deep remorse in court. After the accident this woman posted pictures on her MySpace page, which showed her drinking with friends, and wearing attire with tequila logos on it. Was she really remorseful? In both cases, one was comical, the other life-altering. These examples show us a culture trend not knowing the consequences. Later, in the essay, Schimke talks about the different technologies. Surveillance cameras, cell phones that track our physical movement; but also "cookies" that track what we do on the internet. With these new technologies we as a society are more susceptible, especially the young people. Then, he goes on to state that the internet is the first true generation gap in nearly 50 years. Furthermore, he tells us that today's youth want to be celebrities rather than have wealth and or achievement. The young people of today are heavily engaged in identity exploration. In closing he says he doesn't think that the youth know about the long-term consequences of surveillance culture. He thinks that it is the responsibility of our educators to teach the value of privacy. Most profoundly, his last sentence says "If you are not comfortable with shouting your comments from a street corner, you probably shouldn't convey them via electronic print." (Schimke 67)

These texts are both alike and talk about the same issue at hand which is privacy, but they both come at you with their own take on privacy. They both talk about how the internet is used, but one tells us how a firm found his information, and the other how MySpace is used to find information about people. Plotz talks about how an investigation firm found out basically everything about him in a matter of hours. He says "If you spent a bit more time, you would have discovered my Social Security numbers, and how much I paid for the house bill." (Plotz 59) In the other he talks about MySpace and how that it was used to also abuse our privacy and how people that don't even know you can find out so much about you in a matter of minutes. As they both go on in their essays, David Plotz talks about the Total Information Awareness, and how they plan to gather large amounts of information about Americans. Many say it is supposed to help with terrorism; luckily it has been denounced and is trying to be stopped. Then, in the other essay, "Invading our Own Privacy," Schimke starts to talk about the younger people and how they don't think that technology is going to hurt them. Nussbaum, in the essay, goes on to say "in essence, every young person in America has become, in a literal sense, a public figure" (qtd. in Schimke 66). They are enjoying the new technologies and love the attention. As they both go Plotz talks about many different things from web brokers to people who care only about themselves, and not anybody else. Schimke finishes his out mainly talking about the young people. He goes on to say "I don't think kids understand the long-term of surveillance culture."(Montgomery) It is up to our educators to teach them the value of privacy. Plotz ends talking about small town America and how there was no privacy in them. Then he takes a twist on things he talks about real privacy. The internet has allowed this for us by connecting with people, and to have a sense of belonging. He is saying that privacy is overrated and in the other he blames us and its our own fault.

Both authors end on very good notes. Both talk about all these technologies and how they influence our lives and how they invade our privacy. Plotz talks about a thing called real privacy and the internet helps us with sharing our hopes our dreams, and our faults, but there

has never been a better time for “real” privacy. I really like how Plotz closes. “By revealing our humanity, with all in chat rooms or e-mail we gain a much greater privacy: intimacy with others, a sense of belonging. (Plotz 65) In both, they talked about technologies and how they are used. Yes, there are some bad things such as online brokers, too many surveillance cameras, and people sharing too much information about themselves on *MySpace* or others, but really there has never been such a greater time to really express who we are through these technologies.

Work Cited

Goshgarian, Gary, ed. *What Matters in America*. New York: Longman, 2010.

Plotz, David. "Privacy Is Overrated." Goshgarian 58-63.

Schimke, David. "Invading Our Own Privacy." Goshgarian 64-67.