

Corso di
***Dinamiche dei Gruppi Virtuali e dei Social
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Topic 008

The Digital Privacy Paradox

Module 1

From the Psychological construct of Privacy to the Digital Privacy

Topic 008 -The Digital Privacy Paradox

Module 1 - From the Psychological construct of Privacy to the Digital Privacy

Prolegomena

Within the Human–Computer Interaction (HCI) literature, the assumption seems to be that people will avoid disclosing information to commercial web services (Metzger 2004) due to their privacy concerns (Jupiter Research 2002).

Experimental Results

An online survey stated that the three biggest consumer concerns in the area of online personal information security were:

- (I) companies trading personal data without permission,*
- (II) the consequences of insecure transactions,*
- (III) and theft of personal data (Harris Interactive 2002).*



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Prolegomena

Experimental Results

While concern about the privacy implications of new technology are nothing new (Home Office 1972), the development and linking of databases with biometrics, and the tension between the need for identification, protection of privacy and full participation in the e-society (Raab et al. 1996) makes an understanding of the relations between privacy and the disclosure and use of personal information critical.



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Prolegomena

Theoretical Key Concept

Privacy

There have been many attempts at definitions of privacy.

- In a legal context, privacy is largely synonymous with a 'right to be let alone' (Warren and Brandeis 1890).*
- Others have argued that privacy is only the right to prevent the disclosure of personal information.*
- Many researchers have referred to the difficulties involved in trying to produce a definition (e.g. Burgoon et al. 1989) and despite various attempts to create a synthesis of existing literature (e.g. Parent 1983; Schoeman 1984) a unified and simple account of privacy has yet to emerge.*



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Prolegomena

Despite there being no unitary concept of privacy it is clear that ***both individuals, and society, attach a level of importance to privacy.***



For example, Ingham states that '***man, we are repeatedly told is a social animal, and yet he constantly seeks to achieve a state of privacy***' (1978: 45).

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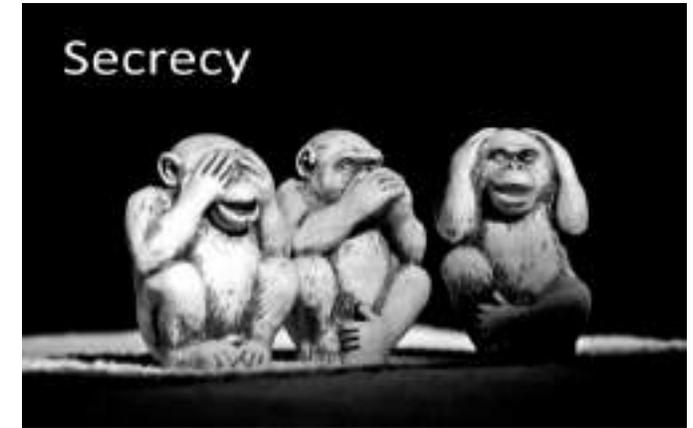
Westlin Model

Within psychological literature Westin's theories figure prominently in the major reviews of privacy in the 1970s.

Theoretical Key Concept

Privacy as Secrecy

Westin provides a link between secrecy and privacy and defines privacy as 'the claim of individuals, groups, or institutions to determine for themselves when, how and to what extent information about them is communicated to others' (1967).



Theoretical Key Concept

Privacy as Cognition

At the psychological level, Westin states that privacy provides opportunities for self-assessment and experimentation and therefore the development of individuality. Specifically, Westin (1967) proposes four main functions of privacy.

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Westlin Model

Westin (1967) proposes four main functions of privacy:

Theoretical Key Concept

1. **Personal autonomy** applies to the need for the development of individuality and the avoidance of manipulation by others;
2. **Emotional release** refers to the need for opportunities to relax and escape from the tensions of everyday life in order to support healthy functioning;
3. **Self-evaluation** is the application of individuality onto events and the integration of experience into meaningful patterns,
4. **Limited and protected communication** refers to both the sharing of personal information with trusted others and the setting of interpersonal boundaries.



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Altman Model

Altman (1975) incorporates both social and environmental psychology in understanding the nature of privacy.

Theoretical Key Concept

He defines privacy as

... **'the selective control of access to the self'**

and believes **privacy is achieved through the regulation of social interaction**, which can in turn provide us with feedback on our ability to deal with the world, and ultimately affect our definition of self.



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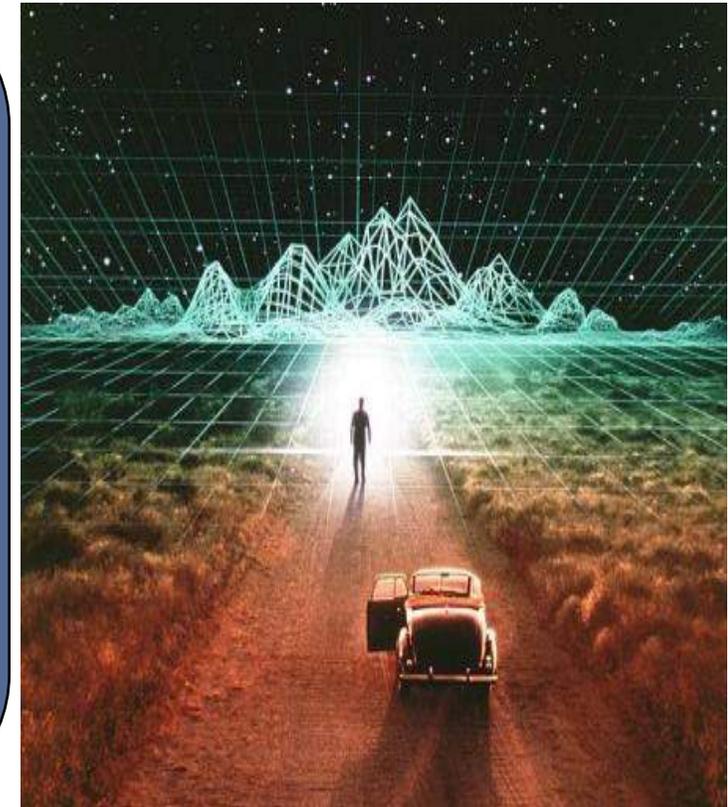
Burgoon Model

Since these earlier definitions, the highly complex nature of privacy has resulted in an alternative way of defining it – through its various dimensions.

Theoretical Key Concept

Burgoon et al. (1989) distinguish four dimensions of privacy and define it using these dimensions as 'the ability to control and limit physical, interactional, psychological and informational access to the self or one's group' (Burgoon et al. 1989: 132).

1. The physical dimension
2. The interactional dimension
3. The psychological dimension
4. The informational dimension



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Burgoon Model

Since these earlier definitions, the highly complex nature of privacy has resulted in an alternative way of defining it – through its various dimensions.

Theoretical Key Concept

The physical dimension

Physical privacy is the degree to which a person is physically accessible to others. This dimension is grounded within the human biological need for personal space. Examples of violations to physical privacy include: surveillance, entry into personal space and physical contact.



The interactional dimension

Theoretical Key Concept

Interactional (or social/communicational) privacy is an individual's ability and effort to control social contacts (Altman 1975). Burgoon et al. (1989) summarize the elements of this dimension as control of the participants of, the frequency of, the length of and the content of an interaction. Non-verbal examples of violations to social privacy include close conversational distance and public displays of affection. Verbal examples include violations of conversational norms (e.g. commenting on mood or appearance) and initiating unwanted conversation.

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Burgoon Model

Since these earlier definitions, the highly complex nature of privacy has resulted in an alternative way of defining it – through its various dimensions.

Theoretical Key Concept

The psychological dimension

Psychological privacy concerns the ability of human beings to control cognitive and affective inputs and outputs, to form values, and the right to determine with whom and under what circumstances thoughts will be shared or intimate information revealed. As such, psychological privacy can either develop or limit human growth. Examples of violations to psychological privacy include psychological assaults through name-calling and persuasion.



The informational dimension

Informational privacy relates to an individual's right to determine how, when, and to what extent information about the self will be released to another person (Westin 1967) or to an organization. According to Burgoon et al. (1989), this dimension is closely related to psychological privacy: however, the control differs from the individual self-disclosure associated with psychological privacy because it is partly governed by law/custom and as it often extends beyond personal control. Examples of violations to informational privacy include going through another person's mail and sharing personal information with others.

Theoretical Key Concept

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DeCew Model

DeCew (1997) also reflects the multidimensional nature of privacy in her definition: however, she distinguishes only three dimensions:

Theoretical Key Concept

The informational dimension

Informational privacy covers personal information such as finances, medical details and so on that an individual can decide who has access to and for what purposes. If disclosed, this information should be protected by any recipients of it. By protecting informational privacy individuals avoid invasions (or potential invasions) to their privacy.



The accessibility dimension

Theoretical Key Concept

Accessibility privacy refers to physical or sensory access to a person. It 'allows individuals to control decisions about who has physical access to their persons through sense perception, observation, or bodily contact' (DeCew 1997: 76-7).

Theoretical Key Concept

The expressive dimension

Expressive privacy 'protects a realm for expressing one's self-identity or personhood through speech or activity. It protects the ability to decide to continue or to modify ones behaviour when the activity in question helps define one-self as a person, shielded from interference, pressure and coercion from government or from other individuals' (DeCew 1997: 77). As such, internal control over self-expression and the ability to build interpersonal relationships improves, while external social control over lifestyle choices and so on are restricted (Schoeman 1992).

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Privacy and the Internet

There are a number of specific threats to online privacy. For example, the impact of 'ubiquitous' computing (Weiser 1988) means that we leave data footprints in many areas of our lives that were previously considered 'offline'. Sparck-Jones (2003) labels a number of specific properties of the information collected which have consequences for privacy:



(1) Permanence

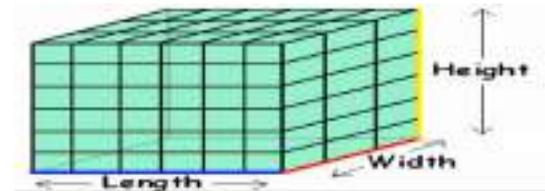
Theoretical Key Concept

Once recorded, information rarely disappears. As such, fine-grained, searchable, persistent data exists on individuals and there are sophisticated, cheap, data-mining devices can also be used to analyse this information;

(2) Volume

Theoretical Key Concept

The ease with which information is now recorded using technology results in huge data sets. Furthermore, storage is cheap, therefore large volumes of information sets can exist indefinitely;



(3) Invisibility

Theoretical Key Concept

All information collected seems to exist within an opaque system and so any information collected may not be 'visible' to whom it relates. Even if information collected is available to a person they may not be able to interpret it due to the use of incomprehensible coding;

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Privacy and the Internet



(4) Neutrality

Theoretical Key Concept

The ease with which information can be collected means that any qualifying information may be lost. So information may be absorbed regardless of its metadata. i.e. there are no distinctions between intimate, sensitive information and non-sensitive information;

Theoretical Key Concept

(5) Accessibility

There are a number of tools for accessing information meaning that any information collected can possibly be read by any number of people. The ease with which information can be copied, transferred, integrated and multiplied electronically further increases this accessibility;



(6) Assembly

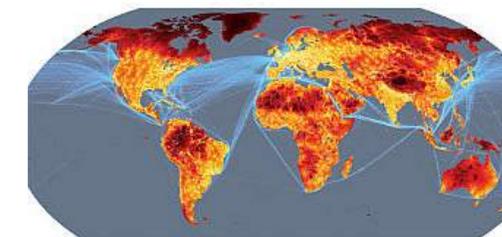
Theoretical Key Concept

There are many effective tools for searching for and assembling and reorganizing information from many quite separate sources;

Theoretical Key Concept

(7) Remoteness

Information collected is usually both physically and logically away from the users to whom it refers. However, this information can be accessed and used by people who the user does not know

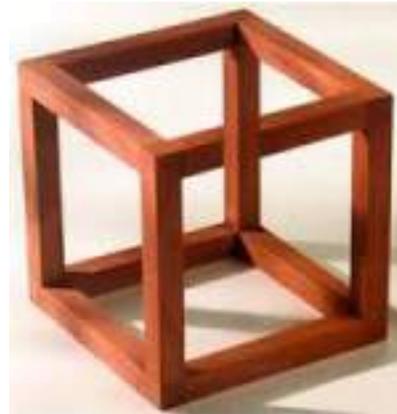


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The Privacy-Self Disclosure Paradox

Privacy is particularly important for understanding self-disclosure, since the relationship between privacy and self-disclosure is somewhat paradoxical.



Theoretical Key Concept

The Privacy Paradox

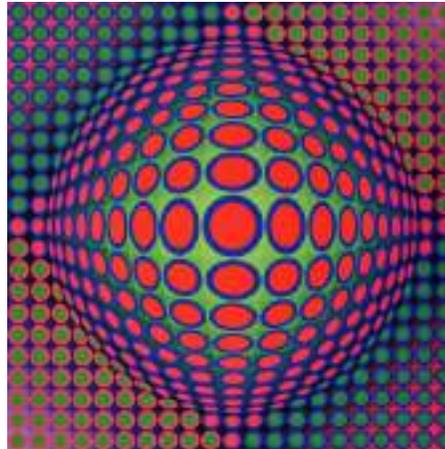
Privacy is a prerequisite for disclosure, and yet, the process of disclosure serves to reduce privacy.

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The Digital Privacy-Self Disclosure Paradox

The Internet may, in some instances, serve to solve this paradox – disclosure and intimacy can be achieved without concurrent increases in vulnerability or losses of privacy (see Ben-Ze'ev 2003).



Theoretical Key Concept

The Digital Privacy Paradox

But this introduces a further paradox – the Internet, and new media in general, have tended to erode privacy through, amongst others, the processes we outline above (e.g., Real Self Disclosure).

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Main Questions from the Module 008.1

Id	Question
008.1.1	Describe the multidimensional nature of the concept of Privacy.
008.1.2	What's the dichotomy proposed by Westlin composed by Privacy as Secrecy, and Privacy as Cognitive Need?
008.1.3	Westin (1967) proposes four main functions of privacy, what?
008.1.4	What's the definition of Privacy provided by Altman (1975)?
008.1.5	Burgoon et al. (1989) distinguish four dimensions of privacy, what?
008.1.6	What's the Burgoon's definition of Physical Privacy?
008.1.7	What's the Burgoon's definition of Interactional Privacy?
008.1.8	What's the Burgoon's definition of Psychological Privacy?
008.1.9	What's the Burgoon's definition of Informational Privacy?
008.1.10	DeCew (1997) also reflects the multidimensional nature of privacy in her definition: however, she distinguishes only three dimensions, what?

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Main Questions from the Module 008.1

Id	Question
008.1.11	Sparck-Jones (2003) labels a number of specific properties of the information collected which have consequences for privacy, what?
008.1.12	What states the Privacy Paradox?
008.1.13	What states the Digital Privacy Paradox?

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Main Questions from the Module 008.1

Id	Answers
008.1.1	Privacy - There have been many attempts at definitions of privacy. (I) In a legal context, privacy is largely synonymous with a 'right to be let alone' (Warren and Brandeis 1890). (II) Others have argued that privacy is only the right to prevent the disclosure of personal information. (III) Many researchers have referred to the difficulties involved in trying to produce a definition (e.g. Burgoon et al. 1989) and despite various attempts to create a synthesis of existing literature (e.g. Parent 1983; Schoeman 1984) a unified and simple account of privacy has yet to emerge.
008.1.2	Privacy as Secrecy - Westin provides a link between secrecy and privacy and defines privacy as 'the claim of individuals, groups, or institutions to determine for themselves when, how and to what extent information about them is communicated to others' (1967). Privacy as Cognition - At the psychological level, Westin states that privacy provides opportunities for self-assessment and experimentation and therefore the development of individuality. Specifically, Westin (1967) proposes four main functions of privacy.
008.1.3	Personal autonomy applies to the need for the development of individuality and the avoidance of manipulation by others; Emotional release refers to the need for opportunities to relax and escape from the tensions of everyday life in order to support healthy functioning; Self-evaluation is the application of individuality onto events and the integration of experience into meaningful patterns, Limited and protected communication refers to both the sharing of personal information with trusted others and the setting of interpersonal boundaries.
008.1.4	He defines privacy as ... 'the selective control of access to the self' and believes privacy is achieved through the regulation of social interaction, which can in turn provide us with feedback on our ability to deal with the world, and ultimately affect our definition of self.
008.1.5	Burgoon et al. (1989) distinguish four dimensions of privacy and define it using these dimensions as 'the ability to control and limit physical, interactional, psychological and informational access to the self or one's group' (Burgoon et al. 1989: 132). (1) The physical dimension, (2) The interactional dimension, (3) The psychological dimension, (4) The informational dimension

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Main Questions from the Module 008.1

Id	Answers
008.1.6	The physical dimension - Physical privacy is the degree to which a person is physically accessible to others. This dimension is grounded within the human biological need for personal space. Examples of violations to physical privacy include: surveillance, entry into personal space and physical contact.
008.1.7	The interactional dimension - Interactional (or social/communicational) privacy is an individual's ability and effort to control social contacts (Altman 1975). Burgoon et al. (1989) summarize the elements of this dimension as control of the participants of, the frequency of, the length of and the content of an interaction. Non-verbal examples of violations to social privacy include close conversational distance and public displays of affection. Verbal examples include violations of conversational norms (e.g. commenting on mood or appearance) and initiating unwanted conversation.
008.1.8	The psychological dimension - Psychological privacy concerns the ability of human beings to control cognitive and affective inputs and outputs, to form values, and the right to determine with whom and under what circumstances thoughts will be shared or intimate information revealed. As such, psychological privacy can either develop or limit human growth. Examples of violations to psychological privacy include psychological assaults through name-calling and persuasion.
008.1.9	The informational dimension - Informational privacy relates to an individual's right to determine how, when, and to what extent information about the self will be released to another person (Westin 1967) or to an organization. According to Burgoon et al. (1989), this dimension is closely related to psychological privacy: however, the control differs from the individual self-disclosure associated with psychological privacy because it is partly governed by law/custom and as it often extends beyond personal control. Examples of violations to informational privacy include going through another person's mail and sharing personal information with others.

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Main Questions from the Module 008.1

Id	Answers
008.1.10	<p>(I) The informational dimension - Informational privacy covers personal information such as finances, medical details and so on that an individual can decide who has access to and for what purposes. If disclosed, this information should be protected by any recipients of it. By protecting informational privacy individuals avoid invasions (or potential invasions) to their privacy. (II) The accessibility dimension Accessibility privacy refers to physical or sensory access to a person. It ‘allows individuals to control decisions about who has physical access to their persons through sense perception, observation, or bodily contact’ (DeCew 1997: 76–7). (III) The expressive dimension Expressive privacy ‘protects a realm for expressing one’s self-identity or personhood through speech or activity. It protects the ability to decide to continue or to modify ones behaviour when the activity in question helps define one-self as a person, shielded from interference, pressure and coercion from government or from other individuals’ (DeCew 1997: 77). As such, internal control over self-expression and the ability to build interpersonal relationships improves, while external social control over lifestyle choices and so on are restricted (Schoeman 1992).</p>
008.1.11	<p>(1) Permanence - Once recorded, information rarely disappears. As such, fine-grained, searchable, persistent data exists on individuals and there are sophisticated, cheap, data-mining devices can also be used to analyse this information; (2) Volume - The ease with which information is now recorded using technology results in huge data sets. Furthermore, storage is cheap, therefore large volumes of information sets can exist indefinitely; (3) Invisibility - All information collected seems to exist within an opaque system and so any information collected may not be ‘visible’ to whom it relates. Even if information collected is available to a person they may not be able to interpret it due to the use of incomprehensible coding; (4) Neutrality - The ease with which information can be collected means that any qualifying information may be lost. So information may be absorbed regardless of its metadata. i.e. there are no distinctions between intimate, sensitive information and non-sensitive information; (5) Accessibility - There are a number of tools for accessing information meaning that any information collected can possibly be read by any number of people. The ease with which information can be copied, transferred, integrated and multiplied electronically further increases this accessibility; (6) Assembly - There are many effective tools for searching for and assembling and reorganizing information from many quite separate sources; (7) Remoteness - Information collected is usually both physically and logically away from the users to whom it refers. However, this information can be accessed and used by people who the user does not know</p>

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Main Questions from the Module 008.1

Id	Answers
008.1.12	<p>The Privacy Paradox Privacy is a prerequisite for disclosure, and yet, the process of disclosure serves to reduce privacy.</p>
008.1.13	<p>The Internet may, in some instances, serve to solve this paradox – disclosure and intimacy can be achieved without concurrent increases in vulnerability or losses of privacy (see Ben-Ze'ev 2003). The Digital Privacy Paradox But this introduces a further paradox – the Internet, and new media in general, have tended to erode privacy through, amongst others, the processes we outline above (e.g., Real Self Disclosure).</p>