Assignment 5  Privacy in Ubiquitous Network Societies

Thinking about our earlier discussions about communication rights (e.g., digital divide, right to communicate) and our recent discussion about privacy in ubiquitous network societies, answer the following. Use the reflection paper format we have used for previous assignments this semester.

1. What are some of the key characteristics of the emerging semantic Web and ubiquitous network societies that complicate personal privacy issues?

2. How are these developments not just technologies but artifacts/networks that shape social relations (e.g., privacy may be conceptualized as power or autonomy, identity)? What ethical issues arise due to surveillance in ubiquitous network societies? (e.g., Do certain groups experience discrimination as a result? Do these changes affect democratic participation?) Explain your thoughts in some detail.

3. A great deal of discussion frames privacy and security as opposing values. For example, it is claimed that we are safer if we allow governments and corporations to monitor all of our electronic communications. A related claim is, “if you don’t have anything illegal or shameful to hide, then you won’t resist electronic surveillance.” Is this necessarily so? How does framing the debate about privacy this way affect our choices?

4. Do you agree more with Mark Zuckerberg that the expectation of privacy is no longer a social norm or with Helen Nissenbaum’s claim that privacy must be viewed in social context? Either way, support your argument with examples from personal experience.

Reflection paper guidelines

Although I am not counting words, I would expect your reflection paper to be at least two full double-spaced pages. If it is less than that, be sure you have adequately addressed the questions posed. Use the following as a guideline.

- I discuss relevant sources in my paper (articles and class discussions directly related to the topic)
- I clearly state others’ viewpoints in my discussion
- I include examples from my own life and experience
- I present multiple viewpoints in my discussion of ethical issues
- I distinguish my own viewpoint in my discussion of ethical issues
- I use my own words and use quotes and/or citations when using others’ works

Asks students to reflect on a current, concrete, relevant ethical issue

Explicitly asks students to address ethical issues

Makes a connection of the inter-dependence of individual and community

Asks students to connect ethical issues or materials to personal values and experiences

Asks students to

- connect ethical issues or materials to personal values and experiences
- support ethical reasoning with relevant sources (e.g., articles)
- consider multiple perspectives (e.g., alternative frameworks)