Chapter 7
Fifteen Minutes of Privacy: Privacy, Sociality, and Publicity on Social Network Sites

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7.1 Introduction

In celebration of a burgeoning celebrity pop culture, Andy Warhol famously proclaimed that in the future, everyone would be famous for 15 minutes. Almost half a century later, being public online has become so easy that one wonders how, in the future, one may be truly private for 15 minutes. Both statements reflect the distance that separates the self from privacy, publicity, and that which lies in between: sociality.

In contemporary democracies, privacy is recognized as a basic human right – the "right to be let alone," as defined by the landmark Warren and Brandeis (1890, p. 195) *Harvard Law Review* article. Allegedly, Warren was inspired to write this article following the intrusive news coverage of his wife's society parties and reached a breaking point after the invasive press coverage of his daughter's private wedding party. Given the prevalence of media platforms that could so easily render a *private* event *public*, Warren and Brandeis (1890) saw it necessary to assert the right to privacy, or, in their words, "the right to an inviolate personality" (p. 211). In modern societies, this distance between public and private continues to dwindle, as contemporary media further blur the lines separating private from public. Social media in particular enable individuals to connect with multiple audiences on online social planes that are neither conventionally public nor entirely private. In the publicly private and privately public era of social media, friends or their acquaintances, not the press, would have tagged photographs of Ms. Warren's guests, making them publicly accessible to outside networks and third parties.

The question of privacy in a digital era, and in particular, in the Social Web realm, resurfaces as the structural affordances of networked spaces remediate the texture of publicity, sociality, and privacy. People digitally record and archive their

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performances of self, enacted via social media. The self (and others) can further edit, duplicate, and remix these performances, which, accessible via a variety of search protocols, reach a variety of networked audiences and publics. boyd (2010a) theorizes these properties as the four affordances of networked publics: persistence, replicability, scalability, and searchability. The self traverses from privacy to publicity and back by cultivating a variety of social behaviors or performances. These affordances complicate the circumstances under which the self may do so, and are augmented in architectures that emphasize sharing information by default (Papacharissi 2010; Raynes-Goldie 2010). The challenge for individuals is to manage the persistence, replicability, scalability, and searchability of their performances fluently in environments that prompt (and in some instances reward) sharing.

Shareability, then, presents a fifth affordance of networked digital spaces, as it constitutes an architectural feature of networked structures that encourages sharing over withholding information. What renders networks lively is the flow of information between individual network nodes. Without information flowing between individuals, the network becomes a static, asocial environment (Papacharissi 2009). Stutzman (2006) has referred to this attribute as the inherent sociality of social network communities and has explained that it accounts for the high level of disclosure of personal information online. In order to stay social, but also manage private and public information fluently, individuals must make critical decisions about how to share information in networked environments that thrive on sharing. This chapter examines the conditions that complicate private performances of the self in the context of the Social Web. We use the term private performance because it becomes necessary for the self to adopt behaviors that will semantically (meaning) and syntactically (code) communicate and guarantee privacy. We suggest that an advanced form of digital literacy can enable individuals to *redact* performances of the self online so as to navigate public and private boundaries fluently.

7.2 Privacy on Social Network Sites

Social network sites (SNSs) are abundant in number, diverse in aim and culture, and far-reaching in scope, penetrating the depths and traversing the global expanse of the Internet (boyd and Ellison 2007). SNSs not only account for a great portion of our online activities (Albrechtslund 2008), but the technologies that enable them converge online and offline aspects of our identity (Schneider and Zimmer 2006). In an attempt to distinguish social network sites from other forms of computer-mediated communication (CMC), boyd and Ellison (2007) argued that despite the interchangeable use of the terms social network*ing* site and social network sites, the two terms place emphasis on different activities. Networking highlights the forging of *new* relationships, an idea that is neither accurate for most SNSs nor a differentiating characteristic from other CMC (boyd and Ellison 2007). The argument for this distinction has not been without debate. Understanding social

networking sites to be a subset of social network sites, some scholars, like Beer (2008), question the usefulness of drawing such a fine line and criticize the terminological movement toward breadth rather than pointed classification.

Still, the distinction is useful for understanding how individuals perceive their own privacy with regard to the networked platforms they inhabit and the publics they wish to network with, and this analysis pertains to *social network sites*. As boyd (2006) notes, the norm for early adopters of Friendster did not comply with the expectation that they would simply link to their offline friends. Not until this practice became challenging for privacy did users handle their information and friend selection more cautiously. Whether maintaining offline relationships or initiating new ones, the wide range of web services that fall under the heading of "social network site" at their core present the opportunity for individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. (boyd and Ellison 2007 p. 211). This chapter will observe this definition in discussing privacy and the self in the context of social network sites.

SNSs have integrated aspects of these features into their architecture in a variety of ways since the launch of the first SNS, Six Degrees.com, in 1997. Friendster presented these features in a way that propelled its popularity in 2002, and some of the most successful features of it were expanded and folded into the design of MySpace, followed by the subsequent launch of Facebook. Each reiteration of these SNSs presented a series of different features, but their defining attribute remains the visible profile displaying social connections embedded in a system centered around people rather than interests (boyd and Ellison 2007). From the frame of their architecture to the daily practices, SNSs are centered on sharing with a penchant for more rather than less (Raynes-Goldie 2010). The SNS profiling structure capitalizes on identifying information (e.g., hometown, date of birth), access information (e.g., location), and expressive information (e.g., status updates and comments) (see DeCew 1997).

The volume, range, and method of sharing personal information across a variety of publics and audiences on SNSs pose an issue of growing concern for users. The persistence, replicability, scalability, and searchability of personal data deposited as individuals forge social connections present privacy challenges. Individuals gradually realize that the physical barriers that enable privacy offline are not inherent aspects of online-networked architectures. The impact of maintaining privacy without the aid of physical barriers is further augmented as SNSs cultivate practices that prompt users to be more public with their information by default. While it is possible for users to edit these settings, the code that belies the structure of the network makes it easier to share than to hide information. For Facebook, progressive updates of profiles are accompanied with revised privacy settings that users must monitor, adjust, and master. As a result, Privacy International has placed Facebook in the second lowest category, that of presenting "substantial and comprehensive privacy threats." Only Google, also infamous for its privacy violations, ranks lower (Debatin et al. 2009). With 500 million plus active users on Facebook

alone, half of whom log in many times on any given day (Facebook 2011), the impact of SNSs on privacy, sociality, and publicity is irrefutable, spilling over into offline privacy, too. As Schneider and Zimmer (2006) posit, "Online and off, the digitization of identity mediates our sense of self, social interactions, movements through space, and access to goods and services" (p. 1). The sharing of private information online frequently carries consequences for privacy offline, in a manner that negates the online/offline dichotomy.

The lack of a coherent regulatory framework for privacy protection in the US permits digital traces of consumer behavior that remain on partner and third party sites that users visit, like, or share, to be further exploited. The global nature of communication in networked environments would also challenge the application of nationally oriented regulation. Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg has argued that these changes make it easier for users to share information across the social web (Sutter 2010). By contrast, activist groups such as the Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC) claim that Facebook frequently pulls a "privacy bait and switch," getting users to provide personal information under one set of privacy terms, then modifying their privacy policies (Chittal 2010, p. 6). The pattern that emerges is that following protests mounted by users and activists, Facebook will take steps to amend privacy settings and make them more accessible and manageable for their members, only to spark further uproar with subsequent site updates. Despite compromises on both sides, this cycle progressively weighs against the consumer, creating a protocol that positions sharing as default and privacy as afterthought.

The (d)evolution of privacy guidelines maps a digital path to sociality taken at the expense of privacy. This is not new: sociality has always required some (voluntary) abandonment of privacy. In order to become social, we must give up some of our private time and space so as to share it with others. The balance between privacy and sociality has always existed; and when attained, it permits individuals to pursue rewarding social lives. Many users find the tug-and-pull between privacy and sociality upsetting now that it takes place on a social plane that digitally records, archives, and tracks social behaviors by default.

The privacy question, in its present form, is an urban problem of modernity. Individuals living in rural communities were preoccupied with privacy, but in ways and for reasons different from ours. In a world where communal practices were emphasized, the desire to be private was frequently associated with the need to hide, and gossip was perceived as a means of expressing solidarity (Norris 2001). Modern and urban life charged individuals with the responsibility of managing their sociality, and their privacy, in unknown and urban territory. Urban environments present a certain measure of distance (Simmel 1971), which might suggest autonomy in defining private boundaries, but with autonomy comes responsibility to delineate and protect private boundaries. Yet, individuals maintain social relationships in both urban and agrarian settings, and in doing so, they gradually confide private information to attain personal closeness with valued others. An optimal balance between disclosure and privacy can be beneficial for the individual's personal approach to sociality. Problems arise when an individual's

right to make decisions about their own path to privacy, sociality, and publicity is compromised.

Here, we must emphasize that privacy, defined as the right be let alone, must not be confused with a desire to be left alone. Private individuals are not socially reclusive individuals. We define privacy as control over information about oneself (Taraszow et al. 2010). Thus, we follow Westin's (1967) definition that views privacy as control over the circumstances under which information is shared: "Privacy is the claim of individuals, groups, or institutions to determine for themselves when, how, and to what extent information about them is communicated to others" (Westin 1967, p. 7). This definition is aligned with others who have similarly defined privacy as personal information that an individual does not desire to share with a general public (Hodge 2006; Etzioni 1997; Kaplin and Lee 1997; Richards 2007; Timm and Duven 2008). Privacy thus guarantees decision making autonomy for the self, in environments both digital and non-digital. The following passages will focus on three key aspects of this autonomy: privacy and the self, privacy and the formation of social relationships, and privacy and democracy. We view these three aspects as representative of activity on SNSs and reflective of the underlying utility of privacy.

7.3   Privacy and the Self: Autonomy in Performances of Identity

We rarely fight for privacy simply for its own sake; we fight for its underlying values. Autonomy is central to most understandings of privacy (Hildebrandt 2006). Warren and Brandeis' (1890, p. 195) classic call for the "right to be let alone," the catalyst of privacy law in the United States, is built on the notion of autonomy, or our ability to pursue our own path without impediment or external influence. Privacy is often conceptually reduced to control over our information, and thus placed into a narrative that associates technological progress with the loss of control over personal information (Austin 2010). Therefore, the ability to share more information is perceived as evolutionary and contradictory to the practice of controlling personal information. And yet, what is problematic is not the practice of sharing, nor is control over what is shared synonymous with a lack of sharing.

Facebook's "News Feed" controversy in 2006 perfectly illustrates this paradox (as described in boyd and Hargittai 2010; Debatin et al. 2009; Thompson 2008). The feature broadcasts Friends' actions from profile changes to application-specific activities. Although such information had always been present and accessible, the News Feed highlighted even the most trivial updates, making them immediately visible, unfiltered, and like all information placed on SNSs, persistent, searchable, and replicable (Albrechtslund 2008). Such a change is consistent with the difference between issuing someone a visitor's pass and sending out an invitation for viewing one's information. Perceived as a violation of information control, the News Feed produced significant backlash. Ten thousand people joined a protest group by noon of the launch day; the next day that number rose to 284,000, and it

would eventually gain as many as 700,000 members (boyd and Hargittai 2010; Thompson 2008). While the predictions for Facebook's future were grim, as Thompson (2008) reports, "Users' worries about privacy seemed to vanish within days, boiled away by their excitement at being so much more connected to their friends" (p. 8). Sociality prevailed at the expense of privacy, and in fact, Facebook subsequently experienced a massive growth spurt.

The norm that develops dictates that Facebook actively stretch our comfort zones until our social norms catch up with technological progress (Thompson 2008). As a result, technological architectures cultivate a newer paradigm for sociality, one that equates disclosure with being social (Zhang et al. 2010). While individuals have always formed social relationships through disclosure, they typically develop hierarchies of social relations on the basis of what is shared, how, and with whom. In fact, learning how to share is a central process of being socialized into society, as it enables relationships and presentations of the self.

Privacy and control are central issues in performances of the self in various online contexts, which can also be understood as a form of portraiture (Donath et al. 2010). Some have argued that SNSs provide a window to our most private and deeply felt aspects of self, often trivializing the information as they "broadly [cast] the private onto scattered planes of the public" (van Manen 2010, p. 1024). While both academic and public discourses commonly conflate secrecy and privacy, the distinction is important because the violation is not that the information is shared but rather with whom. Secrecy (a concern for what is known) refers to the intentional concealment of information. While secrecy often entails something private, privacy does not refer to an unwillingness to share information but rather the need to control who may know the most intimate aspects of self (Ben-Ze'ev 2003; Bok 1989). Furthermore, it concerns who partakes in our construction of identity.

Identity is something unique to the individual, yet constructing an identity does not take place in isolation nor is it a solitary activity. Privacy allows us the freedom to "[develop] our interests and personalities in a way that is not always compatible with social norms" (Ben-Ze'ev 2003, p. 462; Austin 2010; Poullet 2009). Although claimed as exclusively and uniquely ours, identity is fundamentally social, and the sense of self is developed through the collaborative, collective experiences of our social interactions (Mead 1934). The construction and performance of digital identity is similarly intertwined within a web of complex offline and online social connections (Austin 2010; Baym 2010; Buckingham 2008; Mallan and Giardina 2009; Marwick and boyd 2010). Mallan and Giardina (2009) use the term "Wikidentity" to capture the highly collaborative nature of forming these digital identities. Utopian rhetoric frequently presumes SNSs to be digital places "where one can 'type oneself into being'" (boyd and Ellison 2007, p. 211). However, SNSs are connected, intertwined, and embedded in our offline social spaces, and as a result, the digital self is often met with similar constraints to the offline self (Albrechtslund 2008; boyd 2006).

The networked structure of SNSs affords numerous opportunities for social connection and expression, but with this freedom comes the responsibility of producing a performance of the self that makes sense to multiple audiences and

publics without compromising our sense of who we truly are (Papacharissi 2010). Whereas conventions of interaction in the offline world permit us to produce and customize performances to specific social situations and groups, the architecture of SNSs does not reproduce these distinctions, resulting in what Marwick and boyd (2010) have termed "context collapse" (p. 9). Individuals develop several strategies in order to retain the autonomy of their identity online. Some take to self-censorship, imagining their audience to be the most sensitive members, and thus editing their performances. Following the logic of network television, individuals find themselves performing for the lowest common denominator so as to produce a performance that will comply with the expectations of the broadest possible audience. Others become well versed in producing polysemic performances, presentations of the self that contain layers of meaning, signifying different impressions to various audiences. Livingstone (2008) has described how teenagers gauge opportunity against risk as they navigate publicly private and privately public boundaries in search of intimacy, privacy, and self-expression. boyd (2010b) has written about social steganography; the process of hiding in plain sight, by creating a message that signifies different meanings for different audiences. Tufekci (2008) has explained that college students employ various strategies of disclosure and withdrawal to engage in virtual identity hide-and-seek online. Lewis et al. (2008) suggested that personal strategies for privacy are characterized by a unique set of cultural preferences, thus presenting a matter of a "taste for privacy" (p. 79).

Online platforms such as Facebook periodically develop technological workarounds that enable Friends to be divided into separate lists (presumably by social circle) and allow individuals to control who views individual status updates. However, other aspects of the architecture remain open to indiscriminate information sharing, forcing individuals to militate toward a forced self-surveillance (Albrechtslund 2008). More importantly, they require the development and learning of strategies for socializing online. This skill, not yet conveyed through our formal and informal channels of socialization, is for the most part self-taught and remains the primary way for attempting to maintain the autonomy of the self on social network sites.

7.4 Privacy and Social Relationships: Autonomy in Defining Sociality

Privacy is fundamentally relational, as it is concerned with the self (formed through autonomy) and its relationship to the social environment of other selves (Hildebrandt 2006). Just as we write our self into being on SNS, we "write [our] community into being" (boyd 2006, p. 69). Privacy enables the existence of relationship and community. If we share all of ourselves with everyone, that sharing loses all meaning and value. Selectivity permits sharing to become singular and meaningful. Privacy enables the development of significant social bonds with others, and the maintenance of ties weak and strong.

A marker of personal relationships is intimacy. The most pronounced difference between digital intimacy and proximal intimacy is that of distance and its mediated form. It seems that digital intimacy can be equated to the apparent oxymoron of distant intimacy, a phenomenon made possible because of technology's ability in turn to shrink that distance and fill it with the intimacy of the written word (van Manen 2010). Ambient awareness also plays a role in establishing digital intimacy. The constant contact SNSs provide works in a similar fashion to physical proximity in that individuals are able to detect moods through the incessant feed of updates. These updates give one a sense of constant presence, and despite the mundane nature of the individual posts, they work toward building an intricate image of the individual (Thompson 2008; van Manen 2010). In 1998, anthropologist Robin Dunbar posited that there is a threshold to the number of social bonds any one human can have (roughly 150); however, technology has amplified that threshold leading Dunbar to nearly double his original estimates. While the circle of intimates experiences little increase (though technology enables them to become richer), SNSs enable a dramatic expansion of one's sociality with weak ties (Thompson 2008). The level of self-disclosure and self-reflection that comes with SNS activities work not only toward digital intimacy with others, but as "a kind of reflexive sphere of intimacy," as we gain a better sense of our self (van Manen 2010, p. 1028; Thompson 2008).

This reflexive sphere is articulated around the nexus of relationships on one's online profile, termed *Friends*. With SNSs, the notion of friendship, both on and offline, and the term *friend* take on new meaning (Beer 2008; boyd 2006; boyd and Ellison 2007; Debatin et al. 2009). Friendship, as a cultural construct, can differ accordingly; however, the general understanding of friendship usually points to the voluntary nature of the relationship, the existence of mutual liking or affection, and the emotional and practical support that this relationship usually entails. Friendship transcends the restrictive boundaries of professional relationships and may not share the intense mutual responsibility of family. The boundaries of Friends and the motivations for Friending vary widely and remain inconsistent. Friendship has always held some performative element but SNSs have amplified its reach as any number of relational types may now rest under this heading (boyd 2006). The same context collapse that complicates our autonomy can also set hurdles as we manage our relationships. For example, the collapse of personal and professional contexts can lead to one's boss accessing and being offended by an inside joke known only among your close friends. Privacy controls become a way of managing one's audience (boyd and Hargittai 2010). However, when those controls are unsatisfactory the task can be complex and difficult to achieve. Despite the clamor for easier and more manageable privacy controls, SNS technology retains loopholes (Raynes-Goldie 2010). For instance, a friend may comment on one's photo album, thereby granting her friends access to the entire album because the comment is considered noteworthy news on her unfiltered newsfeed. One's right to be let alone is thus dependent upon the definition others hold of privacy and the settings they deem acceptable. People of course encounter similar issues with conflicting conceptions of privacy in offline architectures as well; however, the discrepancies

are amplified in SNSs given one's performance is then crowdsourced to one's network of friends.

Interestingly enough, digital intimacy achieved on SNSs frequently becomes a question of autonomy surrendered, but also, autonomy feigned, through controls that suggest greater autonomy than we actually possess. Because the architecture fails to define the context of the space for us, the scope of this public and the expected social boundaries are defined by the breadth and depth of one's Friend list (boyd 2006). As Marwick and boyd (2010) argue, "We may understand that the Twitter or Facebook audience is potentially limitless, but we often act as if it were bounded" either through an imagined audience or ideal reader (writing for oneself) that we use to deal with context collapse (p. 3). Public and private boundaries are blurred as are our perceptions of them. Privacy settings, even when monitored and customized, still serve the purpose of negotiated privacy within the terms that the social network site has defined. The individual, in this case, is only able to attain a compromised or prescribed autonomy defined by the site's architecture. Through privacy settings that have been predetermined, the individual is confined to a few options that s/he has played little or no part in shaping.

We must return to the affordance of shareability, an attribute of social network sites that encourages a culture of sharing, to appreciate the individual preparation that privacy requires on social network sites. Younger users of Facebook acknowledge the privacy risk associated with Facebook use but confess to an inability to react either because they do not possess the necessary technology knowhow to manage privacy settings, or because they worry about the social cost of a reduced presence online (Papacharissi and Mendelson 2010). Within an environment that equates sociality with sharing and differential sharing is typically an afterthought, privacy is bound to be a concern.

Modifications that permit differential sharing across groups of friends are typically introduced with the goal of enhancing sharing but not of guaranteeing privacy. Many become disillusioned with the possibility of an SNS-based identity, viewing it as "a false choice, a sociotechnical scenario devoid of agency" rather than a well-reasoned decision (Bigge 2006, p. 42). However, teens who make avid use of SNSs express acute concern over privacy issues and develop strategies for privacy that are congruent with their skill level, gender, age, and mobility narratives (boyd and Hargittai 2010; Li and Chen 2010; Patchin and Hinduja 2010). Nevertheless, discrepancies persist between how users understand privacy, how they think they are protecting themselves, and how they are actually able to establish privacy online (Acquisti and Gross 2006). Especially for younger adults, attaining balance between privacy and sociality presents a central part of identity play and formation. In environments that encourage sharing over privacy by default, dissonance between learned social behaviors for sociality and privacy can develop easily. Individuals will frequently simply transfer behaviors to the SNS context, neglecting to make adjustments that we typically make when moving from one social context (a bar) to another (a classroom). Indeed, it is this translation of sociocultural norms across contexts that results in a subsequent loss or change in meaning (Lasén and Gómez-Cruz 2009; Winseck 2002). SNSs encourage such forgetfulness by inviting

users to share upon entering, much like a movie theater invites viewers to be quiet, and a loud bar requires guests to speak more loudly to friends. In this way, networked social environments make it challenging for individuals to be private in spaces that were designed for sharing, not privacy.

7.5 Private Information Commodified, Privacy a Luxury Commodity

The balance between privacy, sociality, and publicity takes on new meaning as Internet-based platforms, like social network sites, afford sociality and publicity at the expense of personal autonomy in determining privacy. All web-accessible platforms offer services, mostly of a social nature, in exchange for personal information. In turn, these services transform personal information of a private nature into currency. However, regarding information as an economic good contains unique properties that complicate its treatment as a commodity. Firstly, unlike other commodities, information remains with its owner, even when traded or sold. Secondly, the value of information is frequently established subjectively; information of value to some may be irrelevant to others. Thirdly, information can never be fully consumed in the manner other goods and services are used up or depleted. These attributes complicate the trading of information in economic markets, causing problems that range from minor hiccups to major problems in the trading system. They also render privacy, viewed as control over information shared about oneself, a complex problem to manage (Huey 2010).

Information traded in bits via online networked platforms possesses these attributes. In addition, it is characterized by the affordances of persistence, replicability, scalability, and searchability, all of which further augment and complicate the unique properties of information as an economic good. Personal information of a private nature adds further complications to the process, because not all personal information is potentially private. Personal information attains a private nature depending on how individuals subjectively define their unique approach to privacy, sociality, and publicity. Online networked platforms that accept personal information in exchange for access to social services engage in an information trade that frequently does not specify how the individual retains the autonomy to determine privacy, sociality and publicity. Thus, it is not just the personal information that is traded, but also the right to privacy in return for a formula of sociality and publicity presented by the social network site.

Byte by byte, our personal information is exchanged as currency to gain digital access to our own friends. In this manner, personal information is commercialized into the public realm, with little input from the individual in the process. We have explained that individuals develop strategies for managing this relationship, and that social network sites frequently adjust privacy/sociality/publicity settings in response to user reactions. Hence this is not a problem that is irresolvable.

What we try to establish, however, is that it emanates from a premise that commodifies personal information. As personal information is traded in, privacy gradually attains the characteristics of a luxury commodity, in that (a) it becomes a good inaccessible to most, (b) it is disproportionately costly to the average individual's ability to acquire and retain it, and (c) it becomes inversely associated with social benefits, in that the social cost of not forsaking parts of one's privacy in exchange for information goods and services (e.g., free e-mail account, online social networking) places one at a social disadvantage. Luxury goods not only possess a price point beyond the average person's reach, they also connote social status and advantage.

But what renders privacy a luxury commodity is that obtaining it implies a level of computer literacy that is inaccessible to most, and typically associated with higher income and education levels, and certain ethnic groups, in ways that mirror dominant socio-demographic inequalities (Hargittai 2008). As a luxury commodity, the right to privacy, afforded to those fortunate enough to be Internet-literate, becomes a social stratifier; it divides users into classes of haves and have-nots, thus creating a *privacy* divide. This privacy divide is further enlarged by the high income elasticity of demand that luxury goods possess: as people become wealthier, they are able to buy more of a luxury good or higher classes of luxury goods and services. Privacy as a luxury commodity possesses similar elasticity; as people become more and more literate, they will be able to afford greater access to privacy. The goal for regulation is to effectively turn privacy into a normal good – a good that everyone may afford, or even better, a public good. A regulatory solution to the privacy divide must address market factors that render privacy a luxury commodity.

The current state of privacy law in the US mirrors that of the general US regulatory mentality, which is biased toward letting the market self-regulate. Unlike most European countries, there are few laws concerning privacy, and they pertain to the government's use of personal information. The most recent and notable of these are the Financial Modernization Act (Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act of 1999), and the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (1998) (COPPA). The former specifies that financial institutions must inform customers about their privacy practices, but provides limited control to consumers regarding the use and distribution of personal data. Recently, President Obama and several leading economists criticized the act as prompting subsequent deregulation and leading to the 2007 subprime mortgage financial crisis. Under the Act, individuals are granted some privacy protection but must still proactively make certain that their personal information is not made available to third parties. Children understandably receive greater protection under COPPA, which lays out specific regulations for companies targeting individuals under the age of 13 online. Aside from COPPA, regulatory policy in the US is founded upon the assumption that web operators disclose, but do not adjust or restrict information gathering and distribution practices. Privacy statements are descriptive and explanatory of privacy practices but are not inherently protective of privacy. Such privacy practice disclosures tend to be employed more as legal safeguards for companies and less as guarantees of the safety of personal data (Fernback and Papacharissi 2007).

A regulatory framework must define, protect, and educate about "the right to an inviolate personality" online (Warren and Brandeis 1890, p. 211). Doing so can ensure that individuals retain the right to determine for themselves what this balance between publicity, sociality, and privacy should be. Each individual seeks and is satisfied with a different balance. Regulation can help individuals retain decision-making autonomy in online environments. At the same time, a regulatory framework would require global cooperation in defining privacy in the digital era, which would necessitate the reconciliation of different sociocultural norms and political-economic hierarchies to guarantee individual autonomy over personal information (Flint 2009). Some suggest moving from ego-centered to decentralized, link-driven networks as a workaround, but that would only render a partial solution to the problem (Cutillo et al. 2009). Building safety considerations into the design of social network sites is also an important aspect of managing their potential for inviting and rewarding disclosure of personal information (Livingstone and Brake 2010).

Ultimately, because online environments work glocally, educating the public about the "right to be let alone" (Warren and Brandeis 1890, p. 195) online is an important part of crafting a regulatory solution that ensures privacy becomes a public good for global users. Education, in the form of technological literacy, can then help individuals practice this autonomy fluently in digital environments. As individuals use platforms that blur private and public, it is essential that they retain the right to specify boundaries when necessary. Networked environments that thrive on shareability present both opportunities for the self and challenges for performative autonomy online. Individuals are required to become more conscious editors of their own behavior online. Editorial skills, and the ability to redact, previously associated with specific professions only, become the property of individual citizens and part of a survival toolkit online (Hartley 2000). The idea is not entirely new for socially motivated beings. We frequently edit our social behavior and the information we share with others as we interact with a variety of audiences: friends, work colleagues, acquaintances, and strangers. We even have phrases, norms and acronyms that signal to others when too much information has been shared in an inappropriate context.

The process of self-presentation on social network sites involves both the production of performances and simultaneous or subsequent editing of these performances. Redaction enables the bringing together and editing of identity traces to form and frame a coherent performance. Self-editing has always been a part of how we present the self to others, but online platforms frequently prompt self-sharing by default without permitting self-editing. The kind of literacy that supports performative fluency online rests upon one's own acumen for redaction. Structured around the tendency to delete, or otherwise edit aspects of one's identity, *redactional acumen* enables individuals to present a coherent and polysemic performance of the self that makes sense to multiple publics without compromising one's authentic sense of self. It is this sort of editorial acumen that individuals must find a way to apply to online environments. And it is this editorial acumen that will help individuals to not just attain 15 minutes of privacy online, but also perform their identities autonomously in the digital era.

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