

We deserve internet privacy

by **Mhairi Finalyson**
Web Editor



The continuous and invasive breaches of privacy that corporate interests engage in are immoral and should be universally condemned by the internet-using population. Companies track where you have been and what you are searching, then profit off of your personal information. Consider a scenario in which a company tracks every shop you go to, every purchase you make, and every person you talk to. They might even scan the mail sent to your house and know the board games you play with your family. The very concept is terrifying. However, when the same scenario is translated to our online presence, we become apathetic toward this invasion of privacy.

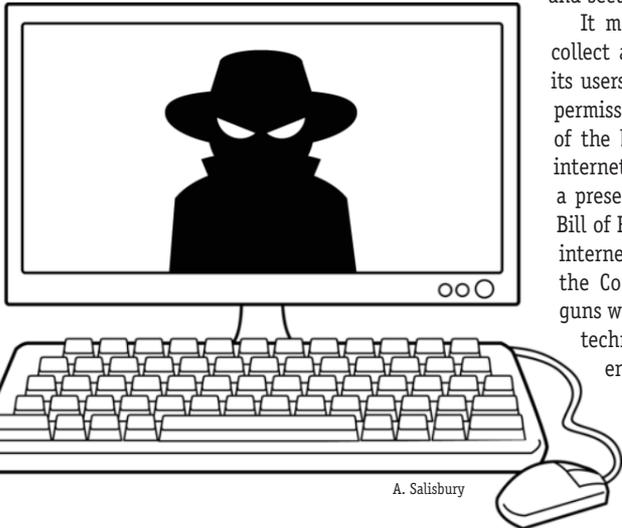
Google, Yahoo, and Bing all track searches, and retain important personal information, including individuals' names, addresses, telephone numbers, or any other information one enters. Both Yahoo and Google explicitly link your personal information to your internet searches, and the other information they collect. Companies have taken advantage of the ambiguity in privacy rights that came about with the meteoric rise of the internet to garner personal information on every user, and

track every possible detail. In this day and age, activities such as shopping, reading the newspaper, and talking to friends have been transferred to the medium of the internet. This transfer does not make any of those activities any less private, just because they are now conducted via a different process.

Targeted advertising as a general concept is not a problem. Advertising kids toys on the Disney Channel, and makeup in Teen Vogue makes sense. However, adverts targeted exactly towards me based on every website I've ever visited and every Buzzfeed article I have scrolled through at two o'clock in the morning scares me. It becomes less like smart marketing, and more like a company overstepping its boundaries, and invading my privacy, by using my personal activity to customize its advertisements.

In addition, the personal information that the companies store may not be safe. The documents Edward Snowden leaked two years ago revealed that the NSA hacked into Yahoo and Google data centers, allowing them access to email and documents without ever obtaining a warrant. The more recent Sony hack reveals how vulnerable information is to being obtained by outside sources, without the knowledge or consent of either the company or its users. If a company must hoard data on its users, it should at least be able to keep that information safe and secure.

It may be legal for companies to collect and store this information on its users, and we may even give them permission to do so, but this is a result of the belief that a presence on the internet is somehow less private than a presence in real life. Of course the Bill of Rights holds no protections for internet privacy, the vast majority of the Constitution was written when guns were some of the most advanced technology available. We live in an entirely different world, and we should not allow the limitations of laws written over two hundred years ago to define our right to internet privacy today.



A. Salisbury

Online privacy is overrated

by **Antonia Salisbury**
Opinion Editor



In this day and age, the internet is a major factor in all of our lives. As the world becomes increasingly influenced by the online universe, laws governing online practices become more

confusing to develop and enforce. Internet privacy is the most prominent of these concerns. Some may argue that more privacy equates to more freedom, but this isn't necessarily true. In an era where terrorism is prevalent and security is sought after in all aspects of life, privacy allows people to defy the law with ease. So, while there are many refutable arguments against this, I believe that there is no reason to resist interruptions to internet privacy.

First, I will explore the main component of my argument against extreme privacy which is that the degree to which your actions are private should be irrelevant to your day-to-day life, especially if you have nothing to hide. I can understand why privacy is essential to maintaining a healthy relationship with those in your immediate social sphere, but if a random tech intern at Yahoo knows that you like to search up nude photos of Mr. Bean at three o'clock in the afternoon and never meets you or confronts you about it, you'll be fine. This so-called "invasion of privacy" is being "committed" by a complete stranger who doesn't care at all about your weird fetishes and the strange amount of time you spend reading articles on Buzzfeed. So, as long as you're not planning a terrorist attack or doing something unfortunately illegal online, no one will ever confront you about it.

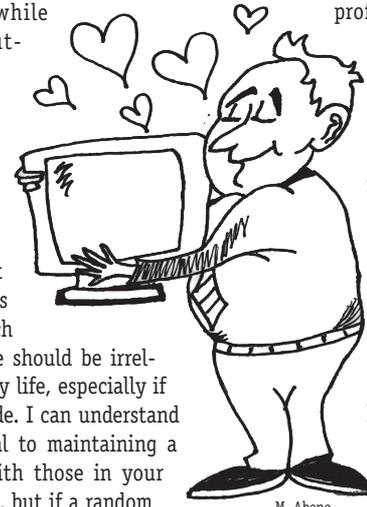
One of the main reasons why people oppose lenient internet privacy is because of targeted

marketing. Spreading the pervasive notion that targeted marketing is a deeply immoral practice, bloggers and writers call it a notorious, creepy, and objectionable breach of personal space. They claim that it takes advantage of the human subconscious and urges people to make purchases against their will. While I concede that the powers of advertising reach far beyond the influence that most people perceive them to have, I fail to see how targeting an audience is unethical. If anything is true about targeted advertising it is that it is a more efficient and less annoying way to know about products that interest you. Additionally, people are appalled by the fundamental principle of targeted advertising; the fact that internet companies sell your information

to advertising companies in order to make a profit. Though it may be unsettling to be involved in a transaction you're unaware of, I can assure you that most people would be infuriated if they found out that they all of a sudden had to pay for their social-media accounts. So, I would personally like to thank targeted advertising for keeping my online presence simple and free.

Constitutionality is the other main concern regarding internet privacy and the selling of "private" information. This claim does hold a certain degree of truth as it is mentioned in the Bill of Rights under Provisions Relating to the Right of Privacy and is technically covered by the 9th Amendment.

Unfortunately, nothing is explicitly stated on the issue of internet privacy, and, in addition to its lack of specificity, it only outlaws "unreasonable searches" that are not "supported by oath or affirmation." Every single person who owns a social media account has "affirmed" the right of that company to invade their privacy. When you check that little box that reads "I have read and agree to the terms of service" on the Terms and Services Agreement you are permitting that company to "invade" your privacy in the all the ways they warn you about before you finalize your membership.



M. Abene

Don't mock Bruce Jenner's alleged sex transformation

by **Sean Clark**
Culture Editor



As a result of several plastic surgeries and ridiculously judgemental tabloids, rumors of Bruce Jenner's imminent sex change have become a dominant story over the past few weeks. Whether or not Bruce Jenner is actually having a sex change, the way the situation is being treated is a direct reflection of America's ignorance and animosity towards transgender people.

Bruce Jenner's potential gender transition has been completely blown out of proportion. Media sources are targeting society's discomfort with gender dysphoria by treating Jenner as some sort of freak. Voyeuristic pictures of his "manicured" fingernails have been turned into news headlines. It is ridiculous that people are so shocked, horrified, and bewildered by Bruce Jenner's potential transition that he cannot even go outside without tabloids scrutinizing his "long" fingernails.

Comedian Russell Brand came to Bruce's aid by posting a nearly ten-

minute-long comedic rant on transphobic media sources.

In the video, Brand shows several clips of different celebrity gossip TV shows treating gender transition as a scandal. In one of the clips, a Hollyscoop anchor says, "Do you think Bruce Jenner wants to become a woman? Tweet us and let us know!" Brand sarcastically mocks this by saying, "Do you think Bruce Jenner should be allowed to express himself? Tweet us and let us know! Do you think that people should be judged and driven into a hole, perhaps even to suicide, let us know!"

The way Bruce Jenner is portrayed as a freak, just because he might be transitioning, sends a dangerous message to impressionable youth that you shouldn't even think about being transgender. Youth Suicide Prevention Program reports that 30 percent of all LBGTO teens and 50 percent of transgender teens attempt suicide at least once throughout high school. These tabloids are treating Bruce Jenner as the laughing stock of Holly-



courtesy wikipedia commons

wood, which encourages readers to engage in transphobic behavior. Our culture should not condone activity that makes people who are questioning their identity feel shameful.

It is truly a shame that we have come so far, and yet we still treat a man breaking gender stereotypes as a freak. We ostracize and bully him for changing his appearance in a way that suggests he could be transgender. Bruce Jenner is not a "freak" for expressing himself. According to GLAAD and NCAVP, 45 percent of reported hate murders were against transgender women. Transgender people are 28 percent more likely to experience violence than cisgendered people. Hate crimes against transgender people highlight the prejudice and disgusting stigma against transgenders that is so prevalent in American culture. So, even if you're "just joking," making fun of Bruce Jenner fuels the stigma against transgender people.

Teachers should be more sympathetic towards ill students

by **Sarah Sullivan**
Web Editor



In every nurse's office across the country there are signs that say, "if you're sick, stay home!" In theory, this is good advice: stay at home, get rest and feel better, and don't infect your classmates and friends at school. However, one walk around school makes it obvious that this advice goes completely unheeded. LGHS is a breeding ground for bacteria and airborne

diseases, and the flu outbreak in recent weeks is evidence of this.

These students who come to school sick raise the question of why so many disregard this advice. The answer is simple: in our competitive culture, school is more important than health. Missing a day of school means hours of classwork to make up for the time missed, plus the normal amount of homework given for each class. In addition, trying to do the homework and classwork without learning the lesson in class is difficult. Tests, quizzes, and labs also need to be made up after school or during tutorial. The strain resulting from even a single missed day is often not worth staying home to fix the stuffy noses, headaches, and slight fevers sick students endure while at school.

Unfortunately, this behavior causes an endless cycle of illnesses. If

one person comes to school sick, many others get sick as well. Something must be changed to stop this cycle. No matter how many times students are advised to stay home, they will always break this rule in favor of managing their schoolwork. Therefore, teachers must change their methods. Some teachers have already done so; for example, several instructors don't require students to make up minor quizzes and exercises. Teachers should also put lessons and notes on their websites so students can understand lessons at home, which allows more time than a single class for students to make up difficult and lengthy assignments and tests. Several teachers also expect homework given the day the student is sick to be due the next class, which

increases a student's stress levels, incentivizing the student not to miss school. While the extra time for late work may seem too lenient, it must be kept in mind that students are not skipping school to go out and have fun, but to stay at home in an attempt to recover from their illness.

Parents must also allow their kids to stay home from school when they feel sick. While I'm sure most parents don't intentionally send their kid to school sick just to make them miserable, the frequency of Ferris Bueller stunts is low enough that parents should let their child stay home to stop other kids from getting infected.

A change in teachers' policies and parents' trust in their kid will reduce the number of sick kids at school and therefore reduce the number of school illnesses. In order to prevent and reduce illnesses, these measures must be taken.



courtesy gradschooljourney