Script:

The Three Sector of Privacy.

Privacy is a term that’s drastically changed over the past couple of years, and is a term that’s holding more and more significance as the spread of information has become facilitated by the rise of the internet. Privacy, at its core, is a simple term that expresses our desire and tendency to want to keep certain information private. However, it’s no longer simply limited to storing our privacy documents in a locked chest. As society and technology have gradually developed, the world has become more and more connected. Hence, I have broken privacy into three sectors: Corporations, Government, and Peers.

Sector 1: Corporations

Corporations play a major role in modern society. With online shopping now becoming a dominating sector of the market, companies are collecting more and more information about their customers. Take Amazon for example. Amazon collects a plethora of data from its customers, including some highly personal data like credit card numbers and addresses. As a result, much of one’s privacy becomes invested in the corporation. In the majority of the cases, corporations do a good job of keeping private information secure, however there are of course the occasional breaches in security. Take the massive Target breach in 2013 for example, Target’s internal database with all of it’s customer’s personal information was breached. An estimated 42 million people had their credit/debit card information stolen from them. Furthermore, much of this information that companies collect from their customers reveal much more than what is on the surface. In a New York Times article written by Charles Duhigg, it was revealed that a Target statistician had found patterns so strong in Target’s massive collection of customer data, that he could not only predict if a customer was pregnant, but also when the baby was due.

Sector 2: Government

The government is the ultimate overseer of information in the United States. Privacy is hugely controversial topic when it comes to government, as the balance between privacy and security comes to question. A major event that strongly demonstrates this balance was the Edward Snowden Wikileaks scandal. Snowden was a contractor for the US Federal Government, and upon finishing his work there, he released thousands of classified files to news reporting agencies. The files revealed that data was being collected of domestic and global surveillance; caused some fear in Americans of how private is the internet and is the US government spying on them. Particularly, the National Security Agency became highly scrutinized. One of the leaked documents revealed that the NSA was practicing “warrantless surveillance.” “Warrantless surveillance” allowed the NSA to monitor and digitally clone, without warrant, any communications in the United States. So phone calls, emails, text messages all fell within that category. Naturally, when this was leaked, it caused great outrage amongst the American people. This measure, however, was put in place under the presidency of George W. Bush, following the terrorist attacks of 9/11, in order to help with the war against terror. Thus, despite this order being highly beneficial towards the security of the nation, the American citizens were outraged by the huge breach in privacy. Ultimately, because of this, the “warrantless surveillance” was ended shortly after Wikileaks.

Sector 3: Peers

Peer privacy is the sector that we are probably the most connected to. With social media playing such a dominating role in modern society, people are more connected than ever. As a result, personal information is easier to access than ever. Forget someone’s birthday? Want to know where someone’s from? Well, most likely all that information will be one-click away on someone’s Facebook, or some other social media. The scariest part? All this information is to stay, or as the axiom goes, “Once on the web, always on the web.” This is something people are starting to realize. In a study done by the PewResearchCenter, 50% of people say they are worried about the amount of personal information about them online. This number is up from 33% which was surveyed in 2009. Moreover, a whopping 86% of people say they have taken steps to remove their digital footprints, which may include clearing their browser’s cache/cookies, encrypting emails, and using virtual networks to mask their IPs. It’s pretty clear that online privacy is a growing concern for many, and social media is not helping with this.

Ultimately, privacy is a term that’s constantly evolving as the diffusion of information becomes easier and stickier. It is these three sectors of corporations, government, and peer privacy constitute my dynamic definition privacy.