

Current Forum: Privacy and Free Speech Online Forum

**Date:** Mon Oct 15 2001 9:27 am

**Author:** Reiss, Donna <dreiss@tcc.vccs.edu>

**Subject:** Forum Guidelines Privacy and Free Speech Online

Greetings,

By the date and time on your Course Schedule Overview, Reply to the messages for the topic for your Group. Please review the general Discussion Board and Groups in Blackboard Guidelines and check BB Groups for your **updated Group membership** (email me if you are not listed in a group or if you are listed in more than one). I recommend composing your Forum messages in a word processor and saving them as files on your computer so that you can then edit them for content and style, count the words, and copy -paste them into the Discussion Board message box. Use the Preview feature to be sure your message reads as you wish before you Submit.

Donna Reiss tcreisd@tc.cc.va.us

**Message 1:** Write a 200-250-word letter addressed to your classmates (for example, "Dear Classmates") in which you write about the topic specified in the Thread for your Group according to these Forum Guidelines.

- **Read** through the messages already posted for your group to be sure yours does not simply repeat what a classmate already has said.
- Be sure your message **develops** the designated topic, **expresses** your ideas clearly, and **includes** specific details and examples.
- If you wish, **end** with a specific question or request clarification or another perspective on a specific point.
- Remember to **sign** your letter.

**Message 2:** After the submission date and time for Message 1 and no later than the deadline for submitting Message 2, read the Message 1 postings from all members of your Group.

- **Reply** to one of those letters, selecting one that has not yet received a Reply. If every letter has received a Reply, select one that has received no more than two replies (and so on).
- To clarify to whom you are writing (but use the person's name, not Pat Smart):
  - **delete** the current subject and change the Subject line to **To Pat Smart** and
  - **address** the letter to the recipient, for example, "Dear Pat Smart" or "Hi Pat"
- Write a 150-250-word **letter** that clearly and concisely **identifies the issue** expressed in your classmate's letter and
  - **develops a response** to your classmate in one or more of these ways:
    - **expands** with additional explanation and examples
    - **extends** with additional topics or approaches
    - **answers** the question asked
    - **offers** a new perspective or an alternative point of view
- Remember to **sign** your letter.

**Additional Messages:** You are welcome to continue the conversation with your classmates and groupmates beyond the required messages. To distinguish these additional messages from the required messages, please use a subject line **different from** those assigned.

Forum Guidelines Privacy and Free S...	Reiss, Donna	Mon Oct 15 2001 9:27 am
[-] Group 1 "Info 'Snooper-Highway'" b...	Reiss, Donna	Mon Oct 15 2001 9:28 am
[-] <a href="#">Re: Group 1 'Info 'Snooper-Highw...</a>	<a href="#">Snider, Carey L.</a>	<b>Mon Oct 15 2001 8:34 pm</b>
<a href="#">To Carey Snider</a>	<a href="#">McGee, Charles</a>	<b>Thu Oct 18 2001 9:41 pm</b>
[-] <a href="#">"Info 'Snooper-Highway'" by Pet...</a>	<a href="#">McGee, Charles</a>	<b>Mon Oct 15 2001 8:53 pm</b>
<a href="#">To Charles McGee</a>	<a href="#">Voss, Catherina</a>	<b>Tue Oct 16 2001 11:45 am</b>
<a href="#">Re: Group 1 'Info 'Snooper-Highw...</a>	<a href="#">Hguyen, Khoa</a>	<b>Tue Oct 16 2001 8:12 am</b>
[-] <a href="#">Re: Group 1 'Info 'Snooper-Highw...</a>	<a href="#">Voss, Catherina</a>	<b>Tue Oct 16 2001 11:19 am</b>
<a href="#">To Catherina Voss</a>	<a href="#">Snider, Carey L.</a>	<b>Thu Oct 18 2001 7:32 pm</b>
[-] <a href="#">Re: Group 1 'Info 'Snooper-Highw...</a>	<a href="#">Dow, Kimberly</a>	<b>Wed Oct 17 2001 9:30 pm</b>
<a href="#">To Kimberly Dow</a>	<a href="#">Hguyen, Khoa</a>	<b>Thu Oct 18 2001 5:25 pm</b>
<a href="#">To Kimberly Dow</a>	<a href="#">Cason, Danielle</a>	<b>Thu Oct 18 2001 8:11 pm</b>
<a href="#">To Kimberly Dow</a>	<a href="#">Cason, Danielle</a>	<b>Thu Oct 18 2001 8:13 pm</b>
[-] Group 2 "Free Speech on the Interne...	Reiss, Donna	Mon Oct 15 2001 9:29 am
[-] <a href="#">Re: Group 2 'Free Speech on the ...</a>	<a href="#">Stewart, Colleen Marie</a>	<b>Tue Oct 16 2001 8:43 pm</b>
[-] <a href="#">To Colleen</a>	<a href="#">Dow, Kimberly</a>	<b>Sat Oct 20 2001 8:14 am</b>
<a href="#">Re: To Colleen</a>	<a href="#">Stewart, Colleen Marie</a>	<b>Sat Oct 20 2001 3:06 pm</b>
[-] <a href="#">Re: Group 2 'Free Speech on the ...</a>	<a href="#">Dow, Kimberly</a>	<b>Wed Oct 17 2001 9:29 pm</b>
<a href="#">to Kimberly Dow</a>	<a href="#">Tracy, Elizabeth</a>	<b>Thu Oct 18 2001 12:55 pm</b>
<a href="#">Re: Group 2 'Free Speech on the ...</a>	<a href="#">Tracy, Elizabeth</a>	<b>Thu Oct 18 2001 12:47 pm</b>
[-] <a href="#">Re: Group 2 'Free Speech on the ...</a>	<a href="#">Cason, Danielle</a>	<b>Thu Oct 18 2001 4:08 pm</b>
<a href="#">Reply to Danielle</a>	<a href="#">Stewart, Colleen Marie</a>	<b>Fri Oct 19 2001 7:46 pm</b>
<a href="#">to Danielle Cason</a>	<a href="#">Hguyen, Khoa</a>	<b>Sun Oct 21 2001 12:15 pm</b>
<a href="#">Re: Group 2 'Free Speech on the ...</a>	<a href="#">Hguyen, Khoa</a>	<b>Sun Oct 21 2001 11:55 am</b>
[-] Group 3 "The First Amendment Is Und...	Reiss, Donna	Mon Oct 15 2001 9:30 am
[-] <a href="#">Re: Group 3 'The First Amendment...</a>	<a href="#">Christopher, Duane</a>	<b>Tue Oct 16 2001 12:21 am</b>
<a href="#">Re: Christopher, Duane</a>	<a href="#">Parker, Sharon</a>	<b>Sat Oct 20 2001 1:43 am</b>
[-] <a href="#">Re: Group 3 'The First Amendment...</a>	<a href="#">Dix, Joe</a>	<b>Tue Oct 16 2001 3:40 pm</b>
<a href="#">To Joe Dix</a>	<a href="#">Wagner, Al</a>	<b>Wed Oct 17 2001 1:23 pm</b>
[-] <a href="#">Re: Group 3 'The First Amendment...</a>	<a href="#">Wagner, Al</a>	<b>Tue Oct 16 2001 9:09 pm</b>
<a href="#">To Al Wagner</a>	<a href="#">Dix, Joe</a>	<b>Wed Oct 17 2001 10:01 pm</b>
[-] <a href="#">Re: Group 3 'The First Amendment...</a>	<a href="#">Sykes, Marlene</a>	<b>Wed Oct 17 2001 2:21 pm</b>
<a href="#">Re: Marlene Sykes</a>	<a href="#">Christopher, Duane</a>	<b>Wed Oct 17 2001 6:05 pm</b>
[-] <a href="#">Group 3 'The First Amendment Is ...</a>	<a href="#">Parker, Sharon</a>	<b>Thu Oct 18 2001 12:25 am</b>
<a href="#">Re: Sharon Parker</a>	<a href="#">Sykes, Marlene</a>	<b>Fri Oct 19 2001 7:11 am</b>

**Current Forum:** Privacy and Free Speech Online Forum

**Date:** Mon Oct 15 2001 9:28 am

**Author:** Reiss, Donna <dreiss@tcc.vccs.edu>

**Subject:** Group 1 "Info 'Snooper-Highway'" by Peter McGrath

Please begin by reading the Forum Guidelines and checking updated BB Groups listings. Write a 1-3-sentence summary of the article in which you identify the author's main point and key supporting points. How is this issue relevant today? Based on your own observations and experience, provide specific examples and your own reflections on the issue.

Fellow Group Members,

I feel as though Mr. McGrath is simply trying to convey to us the importance of the footprints that we do leave behind on our daily treks across the Internet. The way that we put out personal information considered harmless when answering questionnaires actually tells someone interested in our actions a considerable amount about ourselves.

This is especially true in the world in which we now find ourselves living in. The old adage "Loose lips sink ships" has never been more accurate. Think about all the things we say to each other in carefree emails to family and co-workers. What we consider harmless and of no importance is just that one small thread of information that is needed for the final stitch. I have never been completely at ease with using email for work related items unless it has been on a secure secret machine. This is still only going to slow a really experienced hacker down. If they want the information bad enough they will find a way to access it. To keep myself at ease I follow two simple rules when using email and the Internet. First, I never say anything in an email that I wouldn't say in public and I save important issues for face to face communication. Second, I don't worry about my footsteps that are left behind because I do not go any where or do anything that I wouldn't do in front of my friends and family. The Internet is a wonderful tool if used accordingly and affords us too much information not to be utilized.

Carey

\*

Hi Carey

In contrast to your interpretation, I picked up a strong sense of paranoia in Mr. McGrath's message. His message over-emphasizes the negative and totally ignores the positive. It's as if he's saying "Big brother is watching and there's nothing you can do to stop him, except to avoid using the Internet."

I would like to point out that most personal information gathered about Internet users benefits the individual user as well as the Internet businesses collecting the data. For example, I like the idea that when I access Amazon.com's website, they've collected data on my reading habits and provide a list of new titles consistent with my reading tastes. This feature often saves me a lot of time, which is very important to me. By efficiently directing me to titles that I likely have an interest, Amazon helps me while meeting their own business needs. What could be better than that?

I would be one of the first to caution of the many security and personal privacy perils that exist on the Internet and through electronic transactions and communications. The Internet has dangers like any other society. In this case it's a new and evolving society that is mostly self-governed, but there are "best practices." The key to survival the internet is to learn those "best practices" and consistently use them. We must not let the fear of the negative minimize or eliminate the positive and rewarding potential that the Internet has to offer.

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Hi Virtual Classmates,

Based on examples of computer use and misuse, Info "Snooper-Highway" sends the message that the use of computer technology and the Internet can only result in invasions of privacy and misuse of personal information. This article seems to discourage the use of computers and the Internet as evil technologies that will be the downfall of society.

It's true that maintaining personal information privacy on the Internet and in general has never been more difficult than it is today. Websites, computer programs, viruses, and other technologies can collect and transmit all sorts of information about you and your habits, without your knowledge. The pace of technology makes it impossible to completely protect your personal information from invasion. But this same technology, coupled with some basic education, can greatly increase your ability to safeguard your personal information. First, learn what your rights are concerning privacy of information on and off the Internet. There are now laws governing the collection and use of personal information over the Internet. Learn what the risks are and what you can do to reduce them. Before you provide any company with personal information, find out what their privacy policy is. If they don't have one, any personal info may be up for grabs. Then become familiar with and use technologies designed to monitor and protect your Internet privacy.

Invasion of privacy is a very serious problem. But with the proper precautions, the use of the Info "Super-Highway" can be both beneficial and enjoyable to society.

Charles

\*

Hello Charles,

I enjoyed your letter to the class about people becoming aware of what they put onto the Internet is being watched. I agree that with the appropriate safety measures, we can all take pleasure in using the Internet. Using this article really opened my eyes to what anyone could gather for information about me. It can be scary!

What about newsletters we receive in the mail with our name on them? Can these letters come from information that we have sent out to various companies, or lists that the companies pay for to the phone company? The answer is yes. I know that allot of internet users don't realize when they fill out these questionnaires that they are really giving permission for that information to be published into various companies to promote products and such. Think about when we get phone calls to solicit for a product that we just aren't interested in. How did they get our phone number? The database for this information can be collected from our permission also. Our permission is coming from something we may have filled out a year ago, but it is still actively out there.

Using proper precautions is the key to enjoying yourself when entering the web. I really enjoyed your information to help us out with being safe on the Internet.

Thanks Charles,

Catherina

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Dear Classmates,

Privacy over the Internet had been a concern for many years. How can the government regulate something that is accessible to millions to people all the time? And how could anyone protect himself or herself from the information "snooper-highway"? These are the main points and the questions raised by Peter McGrath in his article. With the Internet rapidly becoming one of the greatest sources for commerce, many companies are constantly competing each other in finding valuable information about their consumer. They collect information by offering you special trials and offerings in which you have to answer a few questions about your family income, hobbies, occupations, etc. Then, this information is sold to various companies in order for them to accurately target their merchandise. This issue to relevant to today's society is because many people are concerned with loosing their privacy and that too much of their personal lives are expose to others. One time when I was searching to find an e-mail address of a friend of mine through the AOL server, I came across a link that instantly grabbed my attention. The link lead to a website that contained tons of in-dept information about other people, such as home telephone number, addresses, work place. These were just examples of what the program that they were trying to sell is capable of doing. When reading more about it, the program is somehow closely interacted with the DMV database, that is how they get most of their information about a person. Furthermore, they are linked to some of the corporations that collect data about people surfing the net. Therefore, by just providing a first and last name of a specific person, you would get a listing of the people in the area you seek that met the reference. Scary stuff huh? Technology could be a fascinating thing to one person, but it could be a nightmare for another. In my opinion, one of the ways to prevent ourselves from being caught in this information "snooper-highway" is to avoid filling out forms from commercialize sites. These information are given to these people voluntary, so why make it even more easier for them to probe into our privacy?

Khoa

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Dear Classmates,

Peter McGrath's article "Info 'Snooper-Highway,'" informs the public that their once private business can be seen by anyone with a computer. We should keep in mind the Internet is a powerful tool. So powerful that it can be dangerous if we are not careful. On page 283, the paragraph on Intimate details shares facts of what is being read and seen through our computers while online. With every word or number, we leave a "footprint" of information that can be accessed by all.

A true story: My friend in California placed her first name on a job finding site for attorneys only. Later on in the week, she received a friendly e-mail with a male using her last name and knew her e-mail, which was not given out. The following week, she got onto an elevator at her job and there was this guy who fit the description in her letter. This man had somehow found out where she worked, got her e-mail address and knew her last name from the Internet. The police did get involved but the man has not been heard from or seen since.

I became very aware of what I placed with agencies since this happened a month ago. You never know who can see these personal details until it could become dangerous. My advice to all of you out there is this: Know that when you loose your privacy, it is because you have invited someone to share this information.

Thank you,

Catherina

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Dear Catherina,

That is truly a story that will make you gun shy about entering anything into the Internet information highway as it were. I can only imagine how scared and angry your friend must have felt after exiting that elevator. What a total violation of one's privacy. I hope they (the police) can catch this perpetrator so that he can't do this vile act in the future.

I couldn't agree with your statement more, "Know that when you loose your privacy, it is because you have invited someone to share this information." In the modern technological world in which we live too many people are quick and eager to enjoy the benefits given to us by the Internet without fully thinking out what the repercussions might or could be. We just have to be aware of the security measures that sites visited on the web have in place for our personal protection. It is very scary to know what you can find out about anything or anybody on the Internet. You have a terrific day and "surf" safely.

Carey

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Dear Classmates,

McGrath's article explains that a great number of people in today's society rely on computers and e-mail. However, the majority of these people probably do not realize the absolute lack of privacy computers afford us. "Every keystroke can be monitored. And the computers never forget." These two sentences depict the BIG BROTHER scenario in my mind. It truly is a frightening idea. This article actually enlightened me a great deal. I was a firm believer that once an e-mail was deleted it was gone-unretrievable. Of course, after reading this article I realize that is false. It is hard to fathom strangers lurking on the Internet reading our personal e-mails or tracing our surfing habits. Thanks to McGrath, gone are the days that I would key my credit card into [www.BarnesandNoble.com](http://www.BarnesandNoble.com) to order books. It made me a little nervous to put my account number in the computer before reading this article, but now I am more than aware that anyone can get my number and use it freely.

Since signing up with MSN as my Internet provider I have noticed that I now receive tons of junk e-mail advertising merchandise or services pertaining to web sites that I recently visited. This is an example of people monitoring my habits and interests. The Internet and e-mail are extremely convenient, but we all must be enlightened as to how vulnerable we truly are while surfing the web.

Kim

\*

Dear Kimberly,

I too share your experience with all the junk mail and annoying e-mail from some companies that I've never heard of. I just like to add that there are lots of sites out there that are aware of our fear or lack of privacy when we enter our credit cards numbers or confidential information about ourselves, so they've installed many security programs to ensure our trust. However, there are also many programs out there that people could just download to crack down these so call security devices. If you are interested in learning more about website privacy and security, go to [www.hotbot.com](http://www.hotbot.com) and look up [wwwhack](http://wwwhack.com) to check out all the links that they have under this issue.

After finding out all about the many ways other people could look up your personal information such as passwords or credit card numbers, I too think twice about buying things online. Sure the convenience is there as well as selections, but the risks of having someone else having your credit card number is all too great.

Khoa

Dear Kimberly

The last comment you made about the Internet not really being private grabbed my attention. How spooky. I also have written many private things to friends. And what about being things on the Internet? If you can see emails what about credit card numbers? A lot of our life's information is floating out there.

I think we should all be aware of this I think AOL and all theses Internet companies should disclose this information when you sign on.

But all the bad things I could say about the Internet there are twice as many good thing I can say.

Bulleting boards, web sites, I think they should all be protected by the freedom of speech laws just as they are not harmful to another human being. And I also agree on your sentence about how people should have enough commonsense and intelligence to be decent.

But when have human beings been decent to each other look at all the stupidity going on in our world.

Danielle