Facebook Code
SNS Platform Affordances and Privacy

Prof. A. A. Adams

Centre for
Business Information
Ethics

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UNIVERSITY

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Overview

- **Cognitive Dissonance and Related Psychology**

- **Code as Law Protocol as Architecture**

- **Mixi and Facebook Changing Names**

- **Platform Provider Incentives**

- **User Incentives**

- **Privacy by Design**

- **Privacy by Default**

Cognitive Dissonance and Related Psychology

- Cognitive Dissonance:
  One's mental model of the world and the input from one's senses disagree;
  Result: psychological pain

- Post-choice Bias:
  After making a choice (particularly one with some negative consequences) the decision-maker rationalises their preferences to fit the choice

- Group-think and Peer Effects:
  Even where there are no extrinsic benefits to a particular type of behaviour, people follow the *norms* of their peer group

Code as Law
(Protocol as Architecture)

- Lessig and Galloway: How we use computers and communications technology is limited and constrained by their protocols

- General purpose computing to some extent allows a free market

- Networked services are much more constrained to users (Facebook is closer to AOL than the Web)

- Most users don't read terms and conditions and don't understand computer's backend capabilities

Mixi and Facebook
Changing Names and Japanese SNS

- Mixi was the dominant SNS in Japan until 2012, now overtaken by Facebook

- Mixi was by T&Cs, norms and protocol a pseudonymous site

- Other Japanese sites were actually anonymous, such as ni-chaneru

- Facebook has always had a so-called "Real Name" policy

- Interviews in 2009 in Japan indicated that users of Mixi preferred pseudonyms

- Group discussions in 2012 in Japan indicated that users of Facebook appreciated the benefits of Real Names spell-

Platform Provider Incentives

- If you're not paying for the service, you're the product being sold

- Facebook is jealous of their database and refuse to allow Google access (unlike, for example, academic publishers)

- Facebook is the portal to the World (Wide Web) for many

- Advertising revenue, app revenue, referrer revenue, marketing data revenue

- Facebook wants you to be (mostly) open

User Incentives

- He who dies with the most ~~toys~~ *friends* wins

- More information provides more feeling of connection

- Facebook filters friends' views so that users don't gain the visibility they think they do

- Filtering is necessary to prevent information overload

- Privacy, like reputation, is hard to maintain and, once lost, may never be re-achieved

Privacy by Design

- Minimise data collection

- Data Processing for a purpose, and only that purpose

- Consent trumps limitations

- Network effects trump informed consent (no service, no life)

- Changing defaults: new settings always to the platform operators benefit

- Privacy is hard to provide an interface for

Privacy by Default

- Default to closed, not open views

- Better presentation of privacy selections

- Take-back options enforced by law (Google must clear cached items; Wayback machine?)

- Positive acceptance of tagging only?

- Users are not their own enemy:
  user education is not the primary solution;
  economics, regulation, competition, new norms, new protocols