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We're giving up our privacy in hopes of controlling it

Earlier this week, I wrote about Mark Zuckerberg's [proclaiming an end of the age of privacy](#). (Though in actuality, Zuckerberg just said social norms are changing and ReadWriteWeb's Marshall Kirkpatrick interpreted that to say the [age of privacy is over](#).)

This is an interesting response [post](#) by Julian Sanchez of the Cato Institute (and [True/Slant](#)), particularly this:

It's easy to look at all the information that comes up in a simple Google search for someone's name and conclude that privacy is dead. But I think it's at least as significant that the crucial first page of results is likely to consist of information that the individuals themselves have chosen to make public: Blogs, Facebook or MySpace profiles, Twitter accounts, Last.fm pages, YouTube channels. A similar inquiry a generation ago surely would have

been much more laborious and less fruitful, but it also would have consisted to a far greater extent of what others had to say about the target: gossip first and foremost, but perhaps also press mentions, official records, and so on. It's not that such information is now less accessible, but for the average person, it's pushed to the margin by what we've chosen to disclose. That's not an unmixed blessing—some may feel as though this merely traps them in a kind of openness arms race—but neither is it the privacy death-spiral a purely quantitative analysis might suggest.

via [No Privacy Please, We're Millennials](#) | [Cato @ Liberty](#).

If someone writes things about you in the New York Times that you don't like, for example, you can respond.

Protecting your privacy, especially in the digital world, is rooted in controlling your own narrative. So if you want to protect your privacy, you should keep your Facebook account.

The leveling effect of the Internet is a beautiful thing. It may be killing old media, but it empowers everyone else, as we all get to have voices in the public forum. If someone writes things about you in the New York Times that you don't like, for example, [you can respond](#).

But search result priority matters. You want your voice to appear on your first page of Google results. Protecting your privacy, especially in the digital world, is rooted in controlling your own narrative. So if you want to protect your privacy, you should keep that Facebook account, because search engines rank it high, so it's a powerful weapon in that openness arms race.

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Anonymous Facebook employee dishes the

privacy dirt



Image by Getty Images via Daylife

The Rumpus gives us an inside peek into Facebook. Check out [this interview with an anonymous Facebook employee](#). Here are the juicy privacy bits:

The Rumpus: On your servers, do you save everything ever entered into Facebook at any time, whether or not it's been deleted, untagged, and so forth?

Facebook Employee: That is essentially correct at this moment. The only reason we're changing that is for performance reasons. When you make any sort of interaction on Facebook — upload a photo, click on somebody's profile, update your status, change your profile information —

Rumpus: When you say "click on somebody's profile," you mean you save our viewing history?

Employee: That's right. How do you think we know who your best friends are? But that's public knowledge; we've explicitly stated that we record that. If you look in your type-ahead search, and you press "A," or just one letter, a list of your best friends shows up. It's no longer organized alphabetically, but by the person you interact with most, your "best friends," or at least those whom we have concluded you are best friends with.

via [Conversations About The Internet #5: Anonymous Facebook Employee – The Rumpus.net](#).

I kind of assumed that was the case. More disturbing stuff that I assumed was happening after the jump.

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An EPIC discovery: Full body scanner images not as private as TSA claimed



Image by AFP/Getty Images via Daylife

After the Christmas airplane bomb scare, [full-body scanners](#) have been getting lots of attention as a way to make plane travel safer. The “see-through-your-clothes machines” use X-ray technology to create a whole body image of your body, and see any bombs that might be stashed in a very private location.

Many privacy advocates are opposed to TSA personnel getting to see us virtually stripped down. But not everyone is opposed. Here at True/Slant, Conor Friedersdorf and I have both endorsed the scanners. I explain [here](#) that I prefer it to a body cavity search. And Conor writes why he “[doesn't mind if TSA employees see an outline of his penis.](#)”

The TSA has defended the scanners, promoting their built-in [privacy protection measures](#) including blurring of faces and making it impossible for the machines to store or send the images.

But the [Electronic Privacy Information Center](#) [EPIC] has obtained

documents from the Dept. of Homeland Security via a FOIA request that suggest the TSA wasn't being transparent about what the machines can do. It's possible that the images could wind up on an iPhone near you, thanks to Ethernet connections and USB storage capabilities.

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Zuckerberg's right: Young people don't care (as much) about privacy



Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg laughs in the face of privacy

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg proclaimed Friday in an [interview](#) with Techcrunch founder Mike Arrington that [the age of privacy is over](#).

“People have really gotten comfortable not only sharing more information and different kinds, but more openly and with more people. That social norm is just something that has evolved over time.”

-Mark Zuckerberg via [Mike Arrington interrogates Mark Zuckerberg](#).

(When it comes to “sharing more openly,” Zuckerberg personally has a mixed record. He accidentally exposed his photos and events when Facebook recently changed its privacy settings. I questioned him last month through a

Facebook spokesperson and via a Facebook message about that mistake, and he has not responded.)

Marshall Kirkpatrick at ReadWriteWeb is skeptical of Zuckerberg's claims:

This is a radical change from the way that Zuckerberg pounded on the importance of user privacy for years. That your information would only be visible to the people you accept as friends was fundamental to the DNA of the social network that hundreds of millions of people have joined over these past few years. Privacy control, he told me less than 2 years ago, is “the vector around which Facebook operates.”

I don't buy Zuckerberg's argument that Facebook is now only reflecting the changes that society is undergoing. I think Facebook itself is a major agent of social change and by acting otherwise Zuckerberg is being arrogant and condescending....

This major reversal, backed-up by superficial explanations, makes me wonder if Facebook's changing philosophies about privacy are just convenient stories to tell while the company shifts its strategy to exert control over the future of the web.

via [Facebook's Zuckerberg Says The Age of Privacy is Over](#).

But Zuckerberg is actually right about social norms changing. A recent [Pew survey](#) on “the comparative opinions of Millennials (18 to 29 age group) vs. older age groups” supports his claim.

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Sibling revenge in the era of Facebook

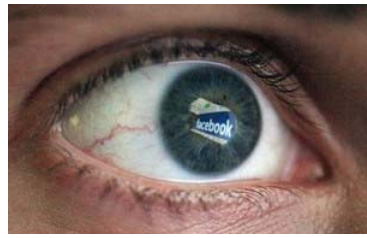


Image by Getty Images via Daylife

When I was a wee lass, I liked to torment my two younger sisters. And they tormented me.

As the eldest (and strongest), I tended to win physical fights, meaning my sisters had to be more creative. A sister who shall not be named once hid cat poop under my pillow. I may in turn have dunked her toothbrush in the toilet. She may have then read my diary and tore pages from it in which I gushed about my middle school crush, Mikey. I lived in fear of her slipping those pages into his locker at school. I may have read her journal as well for blackmail material, just in case.

That's all pretty bad, but this is *so* much worse (from Sojones via Colin):
[Revenge, Facebook Style: Brother 1, Sister 0.](#)

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