

RESEARCH ON TAP

# Toward Responsible AI: Privacy, Fairness, and Accountability

Wednesday, October 25, 2023

[bu.edu/research/events](https://bu.edu/research/events)



# Agenda

- Welcome Remarks
- Presentations
  - Stacey Dogan & Woody Hartzog
  - Christopher Robertson
  - Andy Sellars
  - Mark Crovella
  - Tesary Lin
  - Chris Chao Su
  - Adam Smith
  - Marshall Van Alstyne
- Closing Remarks



# Hariri Institute

CENTERS AND INITIATIVES



MOC Alliance



Software & Application  
Innovation Lab (SAIL)



Center for  
Computational  
Science



Red Hat  
Collaboratory



AI and Education  
Initiative



Center for Reliable  
Information Systems  
and Cyber Security



AI Research  
Initiative (AIR)



Boston Women's  
Workforce Council



Center for Information  
and Systems  
Engineering (CISE)



Digital Health  
Initiative

# Funding Opportunity: Focused Research Program

To support medium-large interdisciplinary teams, combining senior PI leadership and junior PI talents, helping them coalesce around an exciting emerging area, enabling societal impact, and preparing them for future large sponsored programs.

**Proposing a Focused Research Program is a two-stage process.**

Pre-proposals are due by 1/29/24. FRP Proposals are due 3/8/24.

Faculty interested in submitting a proposal are strongly encouraged to discuss their ideas with the Hariri Institute's Director, **Yannis Paschalidis**, [yannisp@bu.edu](mailto:yannisp@bu.edu).

# Hariri Institute for Computing Faculty Affiliate Program

The Hariri Institute for Computing community consists of **380+ Faculty Affiliates** from 66 departments, across 13 Boston University Schools and Colleges. The **program is open to all BU faculty members pursuing research projects, or leading teaching or training initiatives in computing and/or computational science & engineering.**

Benefits Including:

- Opportunities to network and collaborate across and beyond Boston University with academic, industry, and government researchers.
- Promote noteworthy achievements through Institute portals and social media.
- Pre/post-award grant administration.
- Access to Institute hybrid meeting and event spaces.

**How to apply?**

- Fill out an application: <https://www.bu.edu/hic/2019-hariri-affiliate-program-application/>

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Hariri Institute for Computing, Boston University



## What's Happening With Responsible AI at BU?



Stacey Dogan  
Woodrow Hartzog





**CDS Views & Voices**

**Comments on  
AI Accountability:  
Harnessing BU's  
Interdisciplinary Community**

**Stacey Dogan**

Professor of Law  
BU School of Law

BU Computing & Data Sciences





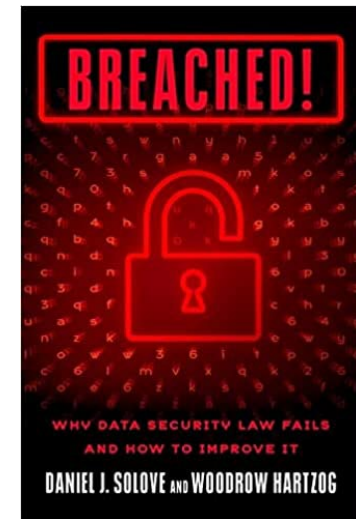
# Woodrow Hartzog

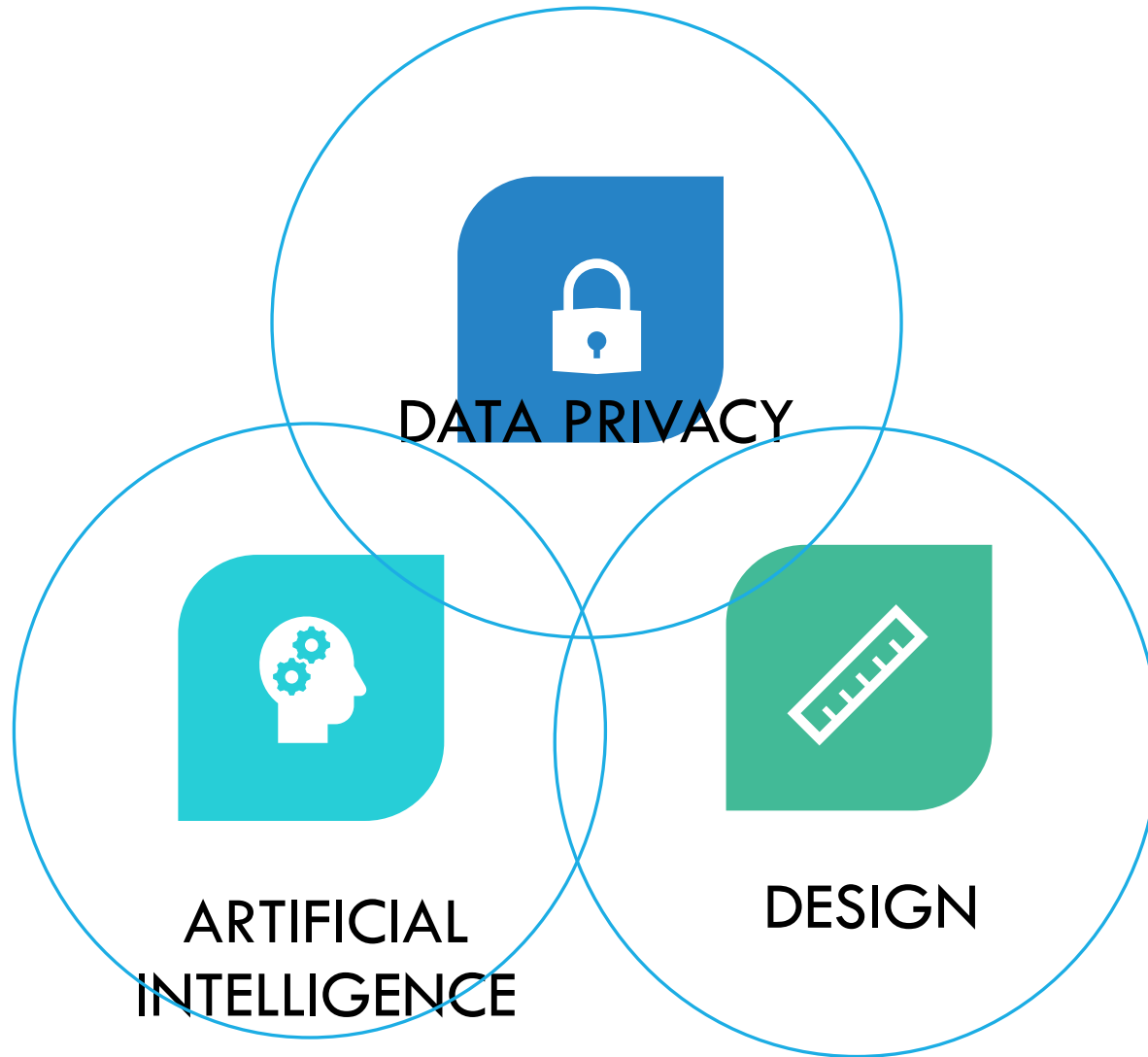


**Professor of Law**

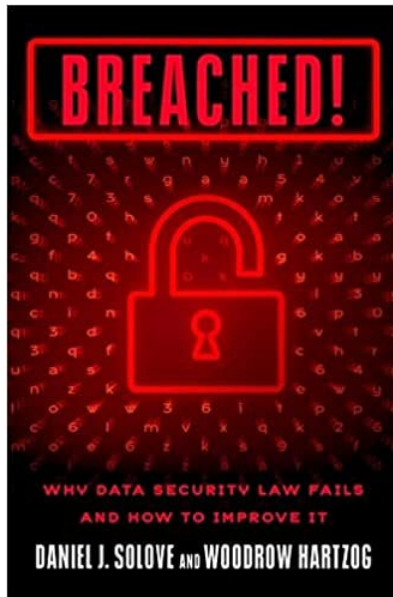
**Boston University School of Law**

- Law
- Robotics and artificial intelligence
- Privacy





# Privacy (Trust, Obscurity & Design)



# Artificial Intelligence



## THE APPEAL

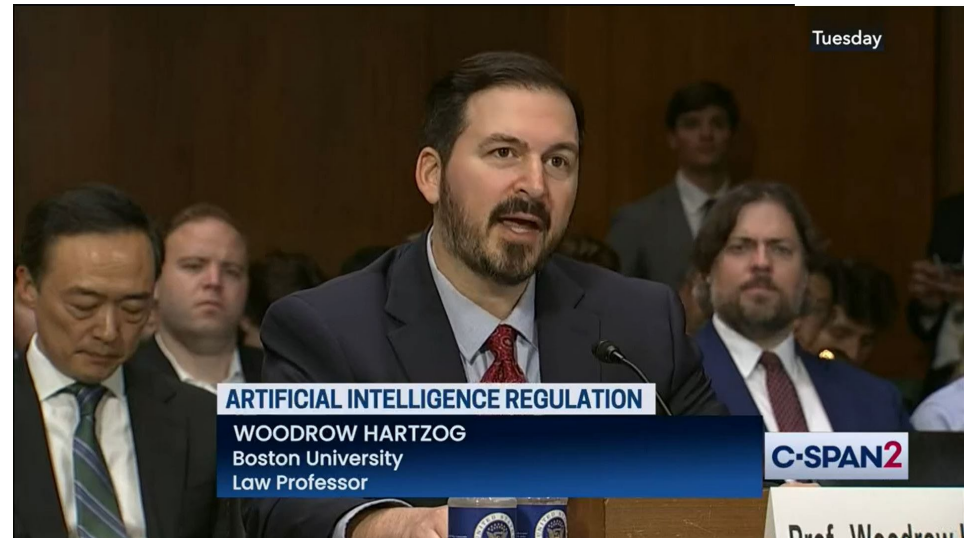
POLICING | August 4, 2020

### The Case for Banning Law Enforcement From Using Facial Recognition Technology

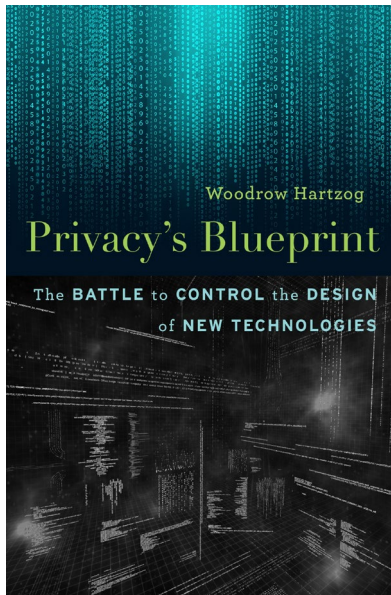
Evan Selinger & Woodrow Hartzog

#### Executive Summary

Police use of facial recognition technology has become routine in the United States, posing grave risks to privacy and civil liberties, especially for people of color. Despite its ubiquity, there is no comprehensive regulation of the technology and its use by law enforcement.



# Design



# TRUST



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## Taking Trust Seriously in Privacy Law

*19 Stanford Technology Law Review 431 (2016)*

42 Pages • Posted: 5 Sep 2015 • Last revised: 3 Mar 2017

[Neil M. Richards](#)

Washington University School of Law; Yale Information Society Project; Stanford Center for Internet and Society

[Woodrow Hartzog](#)

Northeastern University School of Law and Khoury College of Computer Sciences; Center for Law, Information and Creativity (CLIC); Stanford Law School Center for Internet and Society

Date Written: September 3, 2015

### Abstract

Trust is beautiful. The willingness to accept vulnerability to the actions of others is the essential ingredient for friendship, commerce, transportation, and virtually every other activity that involves other people. It allows us to build things, and it allows us to grow. Trust is everywhere, but particularly at the core of the information relationships that have come to characterize our modern, digital lives. Relationships between people and their ISPs, social networks, and hired professionals are typically understood in terms of privacy. But the way we have talked about privacy has a pessimism problem – privacy is conceptualized in negative terms, which leads us to mistakenly look for “creepy” new practices, focus excessively on harms from invasions of privacy, and place too much weight on the ability of individuals to opt out of harmful or offensive data practices.

# LOYALTY



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## A Duty of Loyalty for Privacy Law

*99 Washington University Law Review (forthcoming 2021)*

73 Pages • Posted: 5 Sep 2020 • Last revised: 8 Mar 2021

[Neil M. Richards](#)

Washington University School of Law; Yale Information Society Project; Stanford Center for Internet and Society

[Woodrow Hartzog](#)

Northeastern University School of Law and Khoury College of Computer Sciences; Center for Law, Innovation and Creativity (CLIC); Stanford Law School Center for Internet and Society

Date Written: July 3, 2020

### Abstract

Data privacy law fails to stop companies from engaging in self-serving, opportunistic behavior at the expense of those who trust them with their data. This is a problem. Modern tech companies are so entrenched in our lives and have so much control over what we see and click that the self-dealing exploitation of people has now become a major element of the Internet's business model.

Academics and policymakers have recently proposed a possible solution: require those entrusted with peoples' data and online experiences to be loyal to those who trust them. But critics and companies have concerns about a duty of loyalty. What, exactly, would such a duty of loyalty require? What are the goals and limits of such a duty? Should loyalty mean obedience or a pledge to make decisions in peoples' best interests? What



## A Proposed Duty of Loyalty

Trusted parties may not process personal data or design information technologies in a way that substantially conflicts with the best interests of a person with respect to—

(1) the experience of the person when using a platform owned or controlled by the trusted party;

or

(2) the personal data of the person



# Loyal Personalization

You got this ad because you're a newlywed pilates instructor and you're cartoon crazy.

This ad used your location to see you're in La Jolla.

You're into parenting blogs and thinking about LGBTQ adoption.



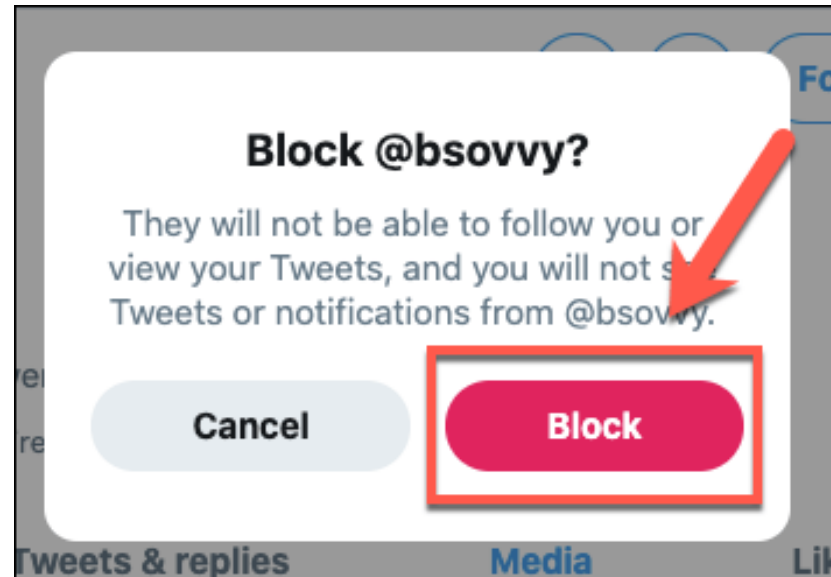
# Loyal Gatekeeping



# Loyal Influencing

	<b>50% OFF 3 Months</b>
<b>Pro Monthly</b> <del>£11.99/mo</del> <i>£143.88 billed annually</i>	<b>Pro Monthly Plan + Discount</b> <b>£6.0/mo</b> <i>£101.92 billed annually / per license</i> <b>Save £ 17.99 per license</b>
<a href="#">No, I don't like savings</a>	<a href="#">Yes, Take Offer</a>

# Loyal Mediation



## Conclusion

While loyalty is only one piece of the puzzle of making the best of our information revolution, it can be the key piece that makes all of the others work.

## Robophobia in Medicine

# Christopher Robertson

School of Law

co-authored work, funded by NIH 3R25HL126140-05S1

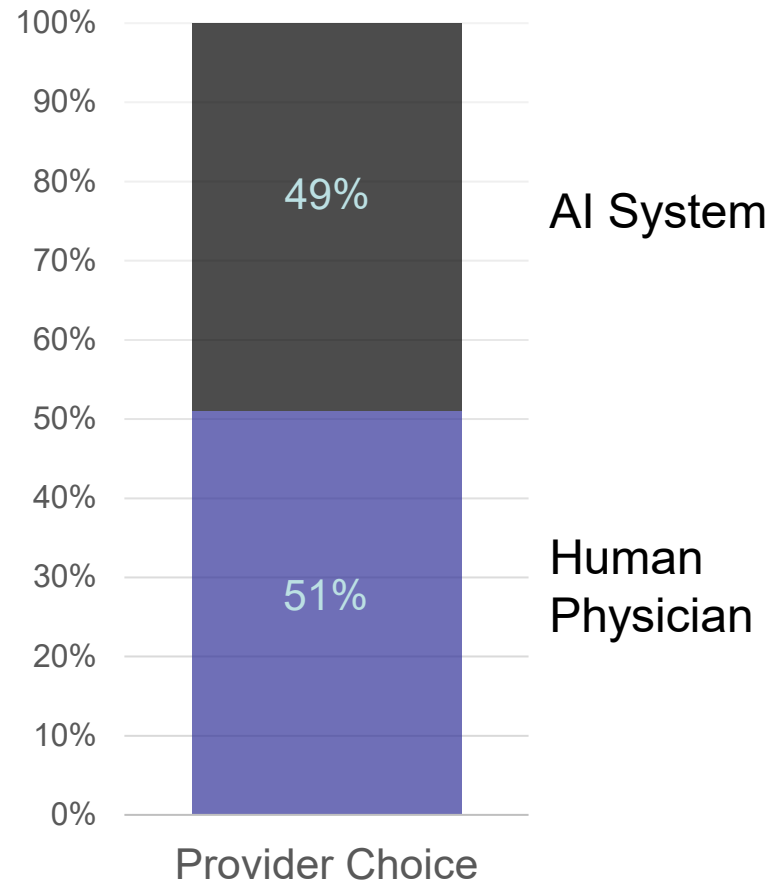


## What if you had a deadly disease ...

to get a specific diagnosis and a treatment plan, would you choose:

- a specialist human physician or
- a specialized AI-system?

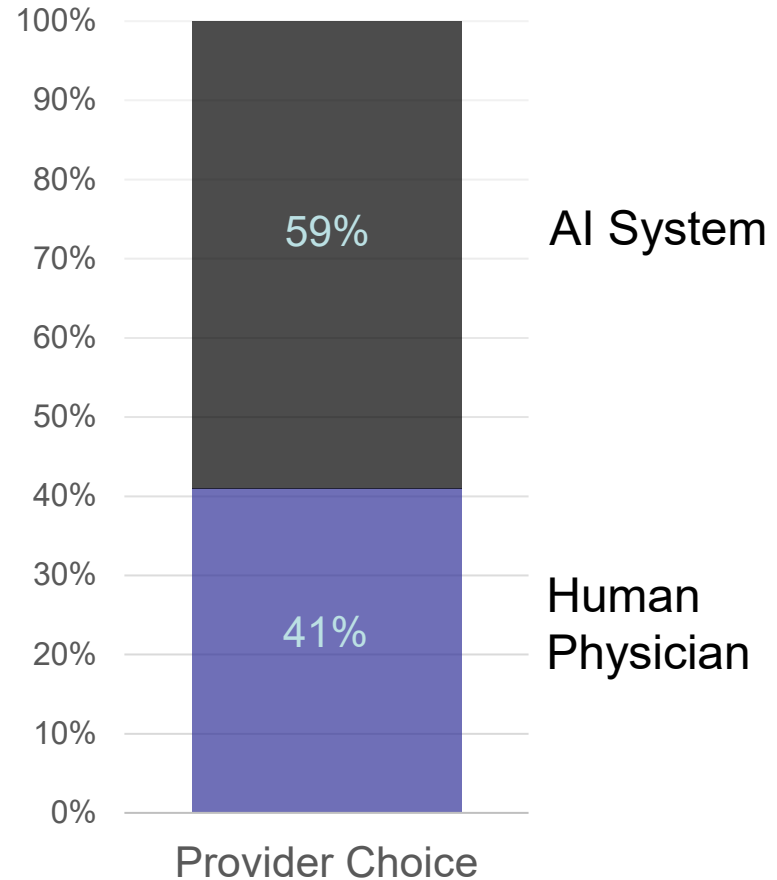
Your insurance covers either one.



n = 2675, nationally representative sample, MOE +/- 3%

## What if you had a deadly disease ...

“Your doctor tells you that, based on scientific studies in leading journals, **the AI system is proven more accurate** at diagnoses compared to even specialist human physicians.”

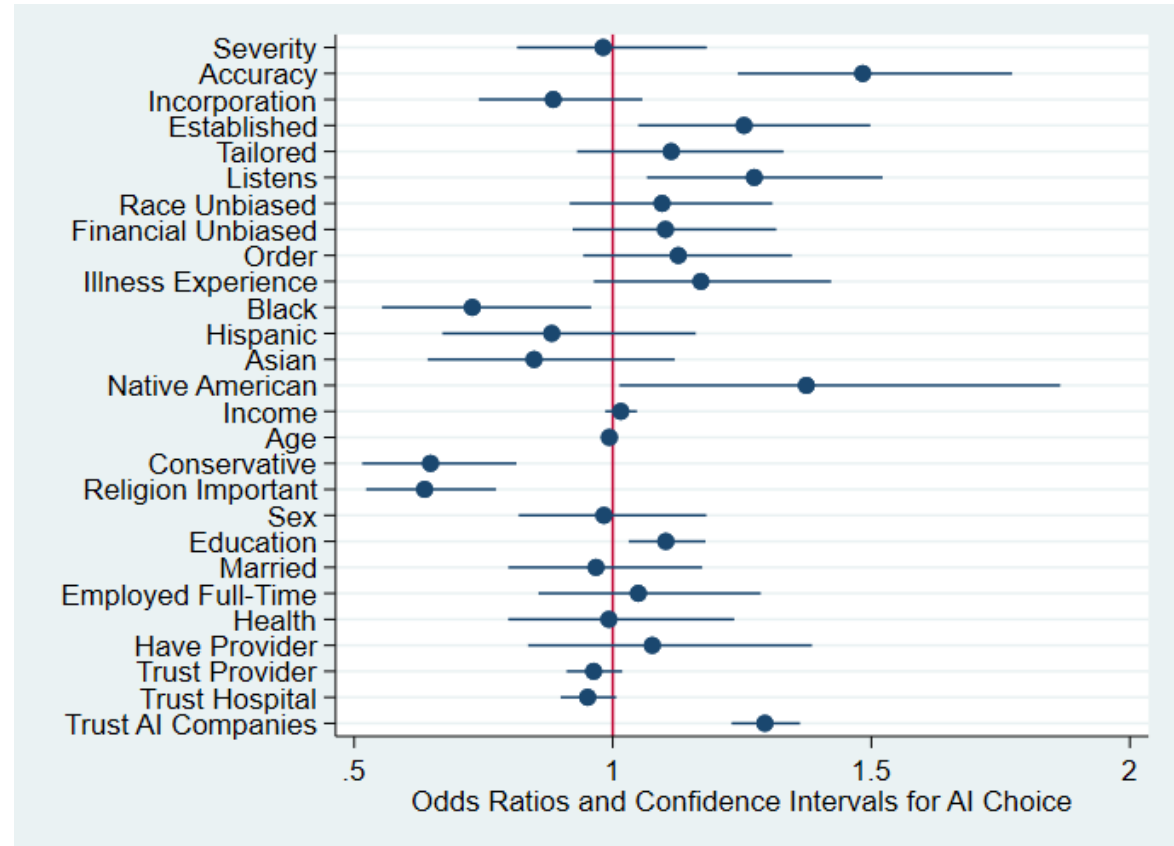


n = 2675, nationally representative sample, MOE +/- 3%



## AI Aversion is...

- **A health risk.**
- **Robust.**
- **Especially strong for conservative, religious, older, and Black Americans.**

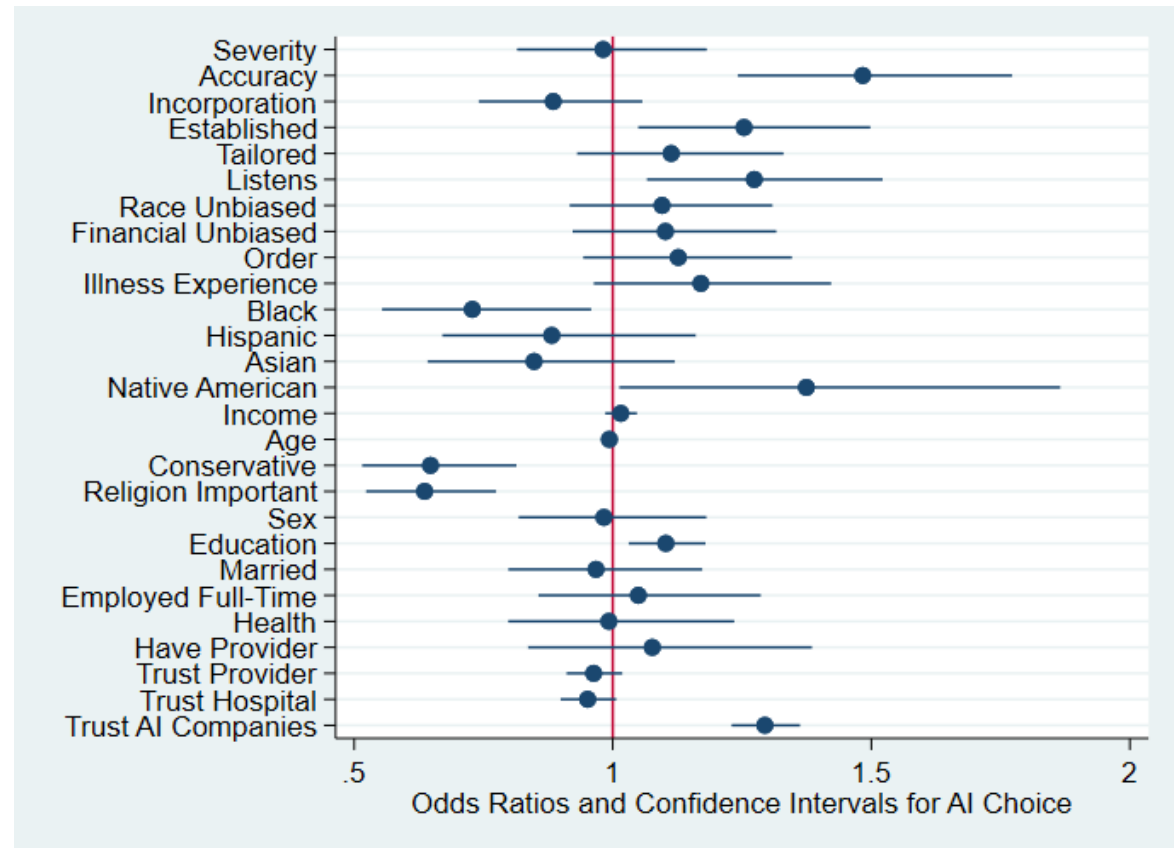


n = 2675

## AI Aversion can be mitigated by...

- Education.
- Nudges.
- A listening user-experience.
- Public trust in AI companies.

**But many patients will still decline AI, if given the choice.**



n = 2675

# **Independent Research as a Necessary Input to Software Accountability**

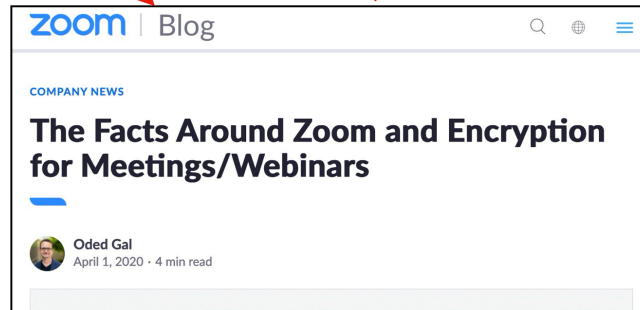
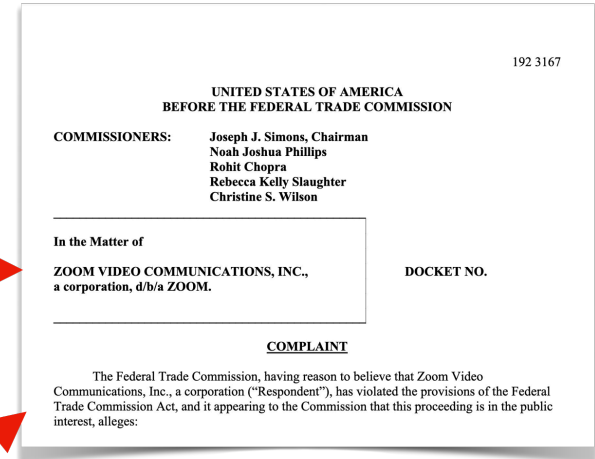
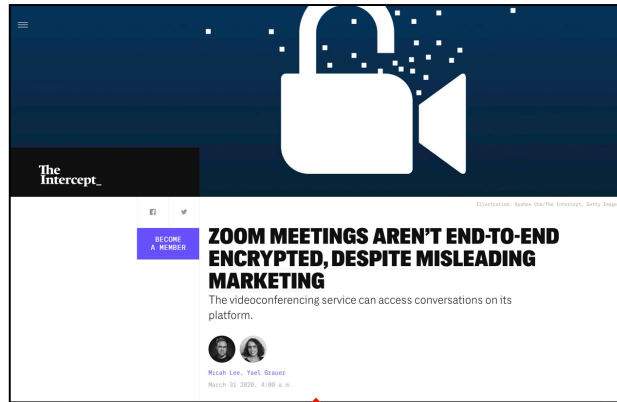
# Andy Sellars

Clinical Associate Professor  
Executive Director, BU/MIT Student Innovations Law Clinic  
School of Law





"We use end-to-end encryption"



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- attempt to do any of these things), including security-related features or features that (a) prevent or restrict the copying or other use of Content or (b) limit the use of the Service or Content;
- 3. access the Service using any automated means (such as robots, botnets or scrapers) except (a) in the case of public search engines, in accordance with YouTube's robots.txt file; or (b) with YouTube's prior written permission;
- 4. collect or harvest any information that might identify a person (for example, usernames or faces),

discretion;

- use automated scripts to collect information from or otherwise interact with the Services;
- impersonate any person or entity, or falsely s

Meta

## Research Cannot Be the Justification for Compromising People's Privacy

August 3, 2021  
By Mike Clark, Product Management Director

For months, we've attempted to work with New York University to provide three of their researchers the precise access they've asked for in a privacy protected way. Today, we disabled the accounts, apps, Pages and platform access associated with NYU's Ad Observatory Project and



Boston University Office of Research

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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

<p>X CORP., a Nevada corporation,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Plaintiff,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">v.</p> <p>CENTER FOR COUNTERING DIGITAL HATE, INC., a Washington, D.C. non-profit corporation; CENTER FOR COUNTERING DIGITAL HATE LTD., a British non-profit organization; STICHTING EUROPEAN CLIMATE FOUNDATION; and DOES 1 through 50, inclusive,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Defendants.</p>	<p>Case No. 3:23-cv-03836-LB</p> <p><b>AMENDED COMPLAINT FOR:</b></p> <p><b>(1) BREACH OF CONTRACT</b></p> <p><b>(2) VIOLATION OF THE COMPUTER FRAUD AND ABUSE ACT</b></p> <p><b>(3) INTENTIONAL INTERFERENCE WITH CONTRACTUAL RELATIONS; AND</b></p> <p><b>(4) INDUCING BREACH OF CONTRACT</b></p> <p><b><u>DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL</u></b></p>
---	--

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION,  
Plaintiff,

v.

ROCA LABS, INC., a Corporation, Roca Labs Nutraceutical USA, Inc., a Corporation, Don Juravin, Individually, Don Juravin, as an Officer of Roca Labs, Inc. and Roca Labs Nutraceutical USA, Inc. Must Cure Obesity, Co and Juravin, Inc., George C. Whiting, Individually, George C. Whiting, as an Officer of Roca Labs, Inc. and Roca Labs Nutraceutical USA, Inc. and Zero Calorie Labs, Inc., Must Cure Obesity, Co., a Corporation, Juravin, Incorporated, a Corporation, and Zero Calorie Labs, Inc., a Corporation, Defendants.

Case No: 8:15-cv-2231-T-35TBM

United States District Court,  
M.D. Florida,  
Tampa Division.

Signed 09/14/2018

## 15 U.S. Code § 45b - Consumer review protection

[U.S. Code](#) [Notes](#)

[prev](#) | [next](#)

### (a) DEFINITIONS

In this section:

#### (1) COMMISSION

The term "[Commission](#)" means the Federal Trade Commission.

### (b) INVALIDITY OF CONTRACTS THAT IMPEDE CONSUMER REVIEWS

#### (1) IN GENERAL

Except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3), a provision of a [form contract](#) is void from the inception of such contract if such provision—

(A) prohibits or restricts the ability of an individual who is a party to the [form contract](#) to engage in a [covered communication](#);

(B) imposes a penalty or fee against an individual who is a party to the [form contract](#) for engaging in a [covered communication](#); or

(C) transfers or requires an individual who is a party to the [form contract](#) to transfer to any person any intellectual property rights in review or feedback content, with the exception of a non-exclusive license to use the content, that the individual may have in any otherwise lawful [covered communication](#) about such person or the goods or services provided by such person.



## **We Need to Audit Algorithms**

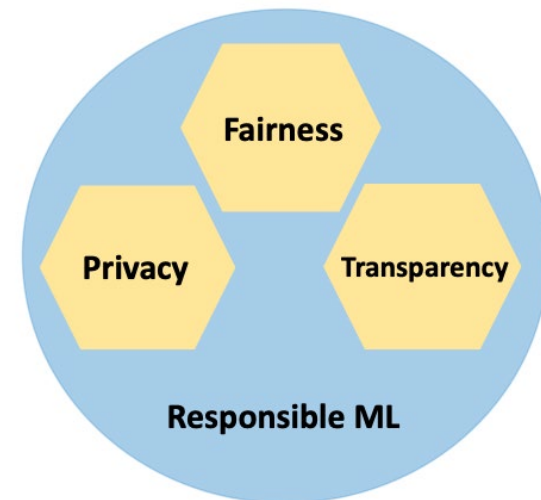
# Mark Crovella

Professor, CAS Computer Science  
Professor, Faculty of Computing and Data Sciences  
Chair of Academic Affairs, CDS



# The Need for Algorithmic Audits

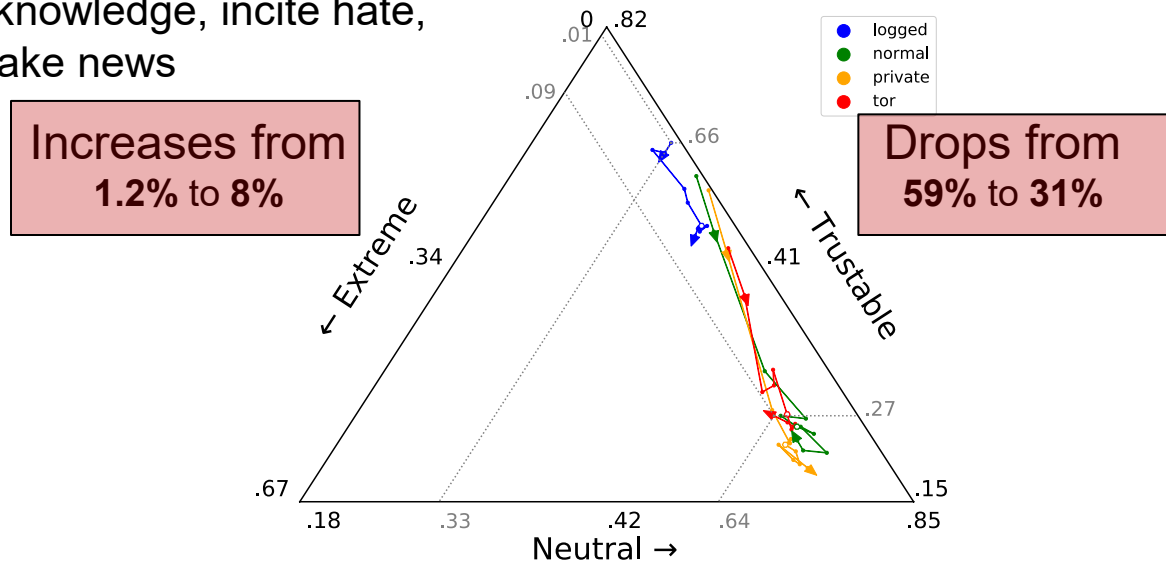
- Machine learning algorithms are increasingly used in ways that affect individual lives and have social impacts
- COMPAS used by US courts to assess likelihood of a defendant becoming a recidivist
- Algorithms can inherit biases from training data, or from the goals designed in
- Modern machine learning algorithms are not **transparent** – we cannot easily understand why they make the decisions they do
- Hence:
  - We must “audit” algorithms
  - Usually, we do this from the **outside**
- We are engaged in efforts to
  - Perform audits
  - Design auditing algorithms
- To improve the social impacts of machine learning





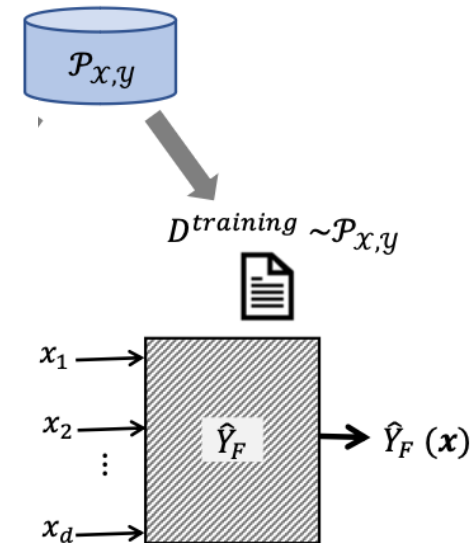
# Behavioral Auditing: YouTube's Garden Path

- Each video watched on YouTube comes with a set of recommendations to be viewed next
- Where do these recommendations lead?
- In general, to more extreme and less trustworthy content
- Extreme channels deny established knowledge, incite hate, or promote fake news
- Most of the change occurs within 5 "clicks"
- Biggest surprise: users with strong privacy settings (anonymous browsing) see much greater effect!



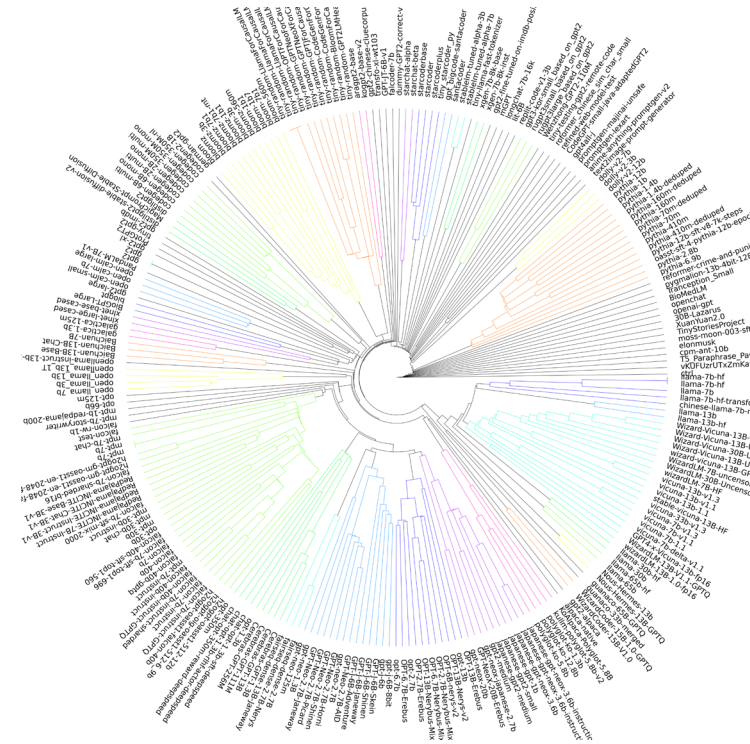
## Data Usage Auditing: *Data Minimization*

- Machine Learning models are data-hungry!
  - But what is “need-to-know” for an algorithm?
  - Should you need to disclose highly personal information to obtain a bank loan?
  - How can we define and detect this sort of privacy violation?
  - GDPR: “Personal data shall be ... limited to what is necessary ... to the purposes for which they are processed”
  - We operationalize this concept in terms of a particular kind of audit
  - We ask whether the system’s decision is affected by the value of each input
- We define an auditing algorithm to efficiently detect when data is *not needed* by the algorithm making a decision



# Auditing Language Models: Beyond the Benchmarks

- Large Language Models like ChatGPT are poised to dramatically change the way we work and learn
- ChatGPT reached 100 million users just two months after its launch
- LLMs are and will become highly specialized and numerous
- Currently there are more than 300,000 LLMs on HuggingFace
- Current methods for evaluating LLMs focus on accuracy on benchmarks
- Psychometrics: methods for evaluating both tests and test-takers simultaneously
- Our goal: better tools for determining the nature of any given LLM and its fitness to purpose



Evolutionary Tree of LLMs  
Source <https://arxiv.org/abs/2307.09793>

# Choice Architecture, Privacy Valuations, and Selection Bias in Consumer Data

# Tesary Lin

Assistant Professor, Questrom

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Biased sample → Biased algorithms → Biased decisions

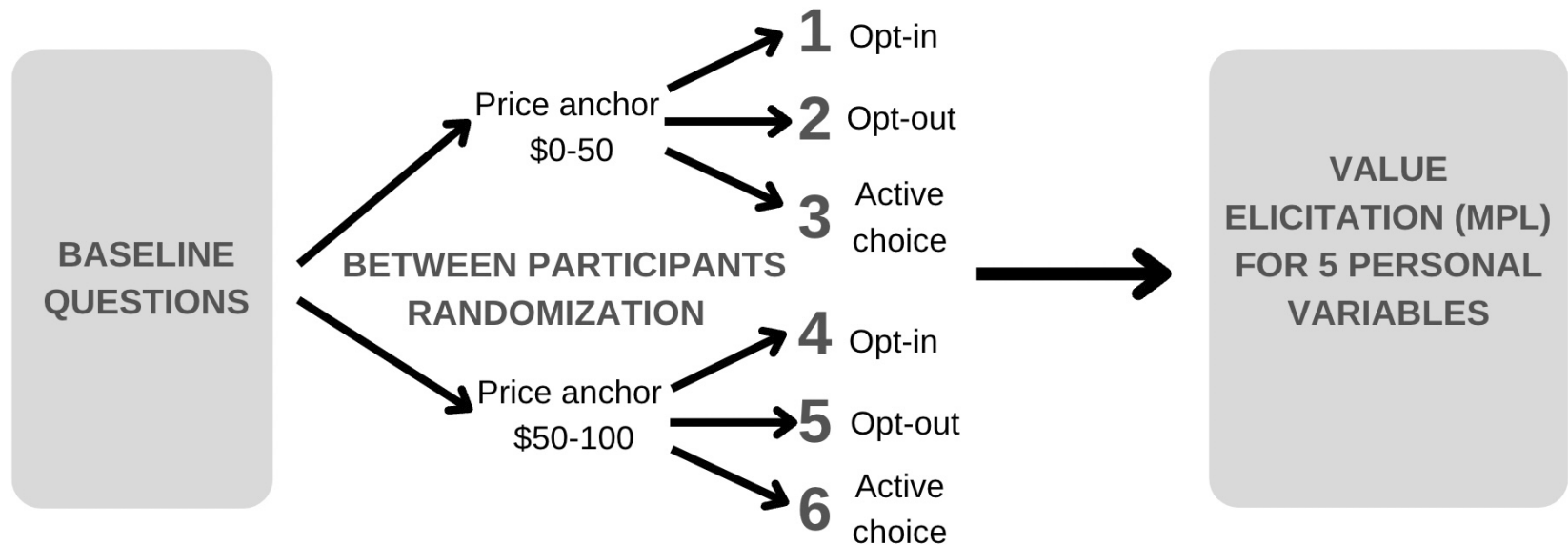
CookiePro  
by OneTrust

Products > Consent Rate Optimization

## Consent Rate Optimization

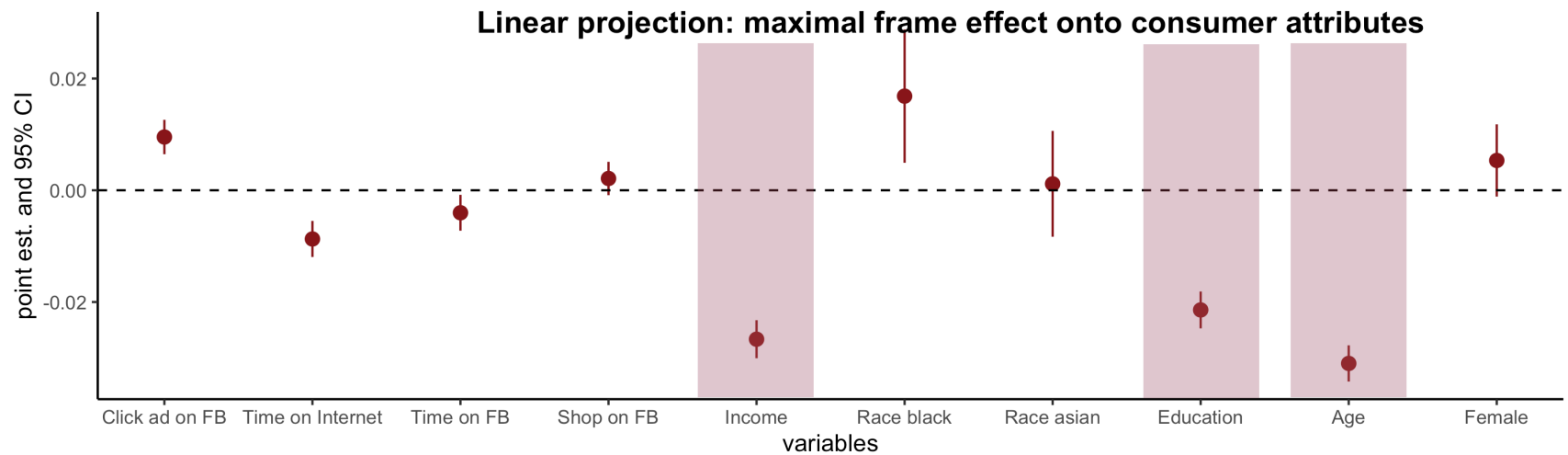
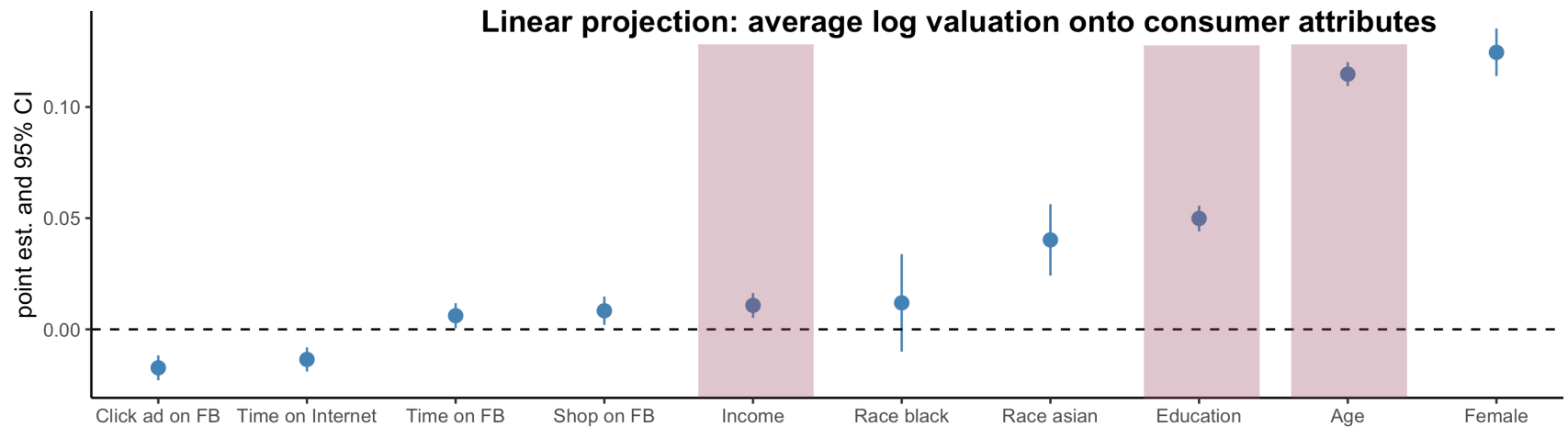


How does choice architecture affect sample bias?  
---We run an experiment to measure its causal effects

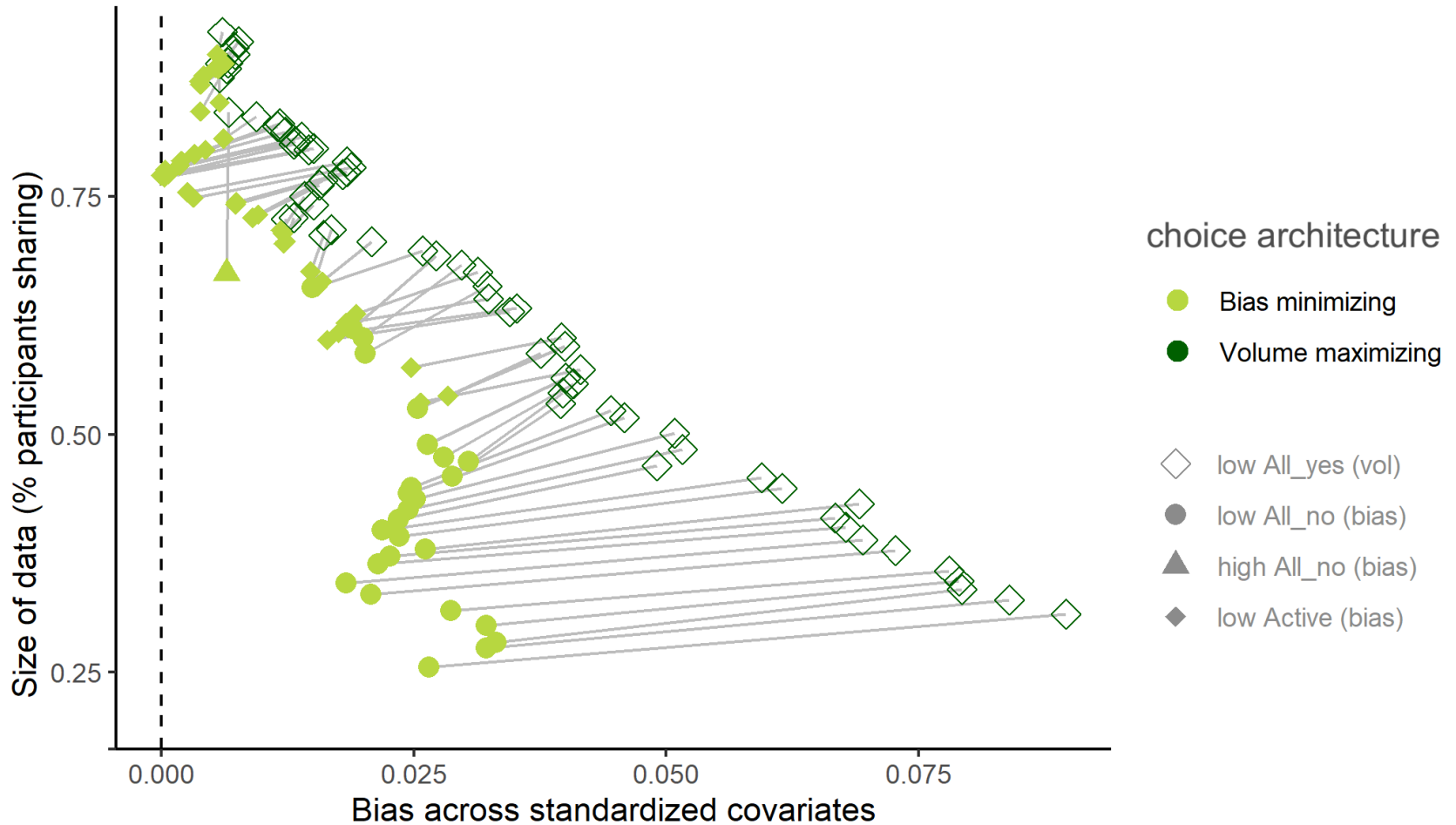


5k participants; willingness-to-accept to share FB data with advertisers

# Younger, Poorer, Less Educated consumers value privacy less & are more easily nudged by choice architecture



Choice architecture that maximizes sample volume → potential for a more biased sample





# Shifting Platform Values in Community Guidelines: The Evolution of Governance Frameworks

## Chris Chao Su

Assistant Professor of Emerging Media Studies  
College of Communication + Computing & Data Science



# Community Guidelines as *Discursive Performance* and *Governance Frameworks*

## Community Guidelines

Safety

Oct 22, 2020

### Adding clarity to content removals

TikTok's and wel

News

Dec 15, 2020

### Refreshing our policies to support community well-being

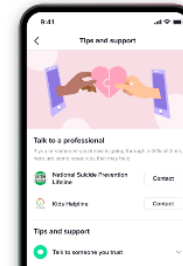
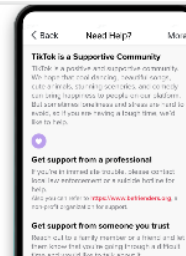
By Cor  
annour

Safety

Feb 8, 2022

### Strengthening our policies to promote safety, security, and well-being on TikTok

By Cormac Keenan, Head of Trust and Safety Today we're announcing updates to our Community Guidelines to further support the well-being...



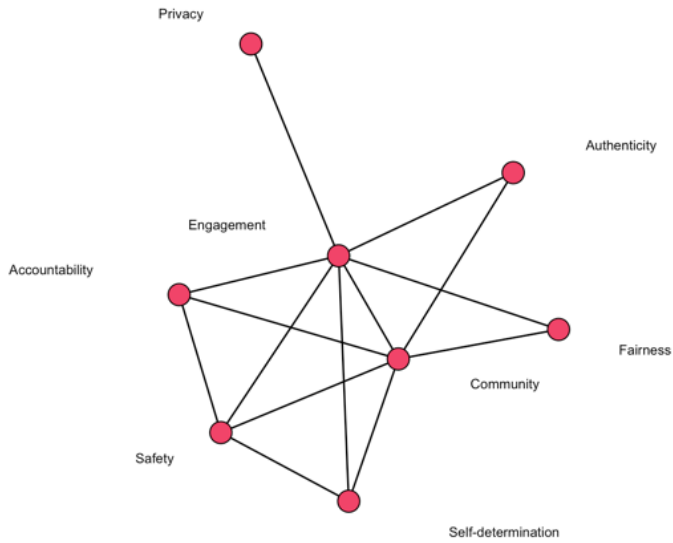
# Platform Values

- Values as the **ideals** expressed by a particular social entity, which may guide *subsequent actions and judgments* (Hallinan et al. 2022)
- Articulating the ideals about “how people **should** express themselves and interact with others” (Scharlach et al., 2023).
- Values as objects and principles

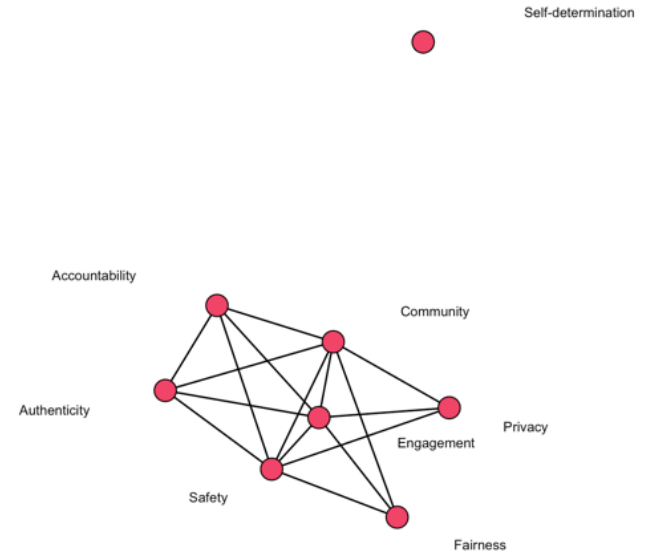
Platform Value Code	Operational Definition	Examples
Engagement	Whether TikTok allows or prohibits interactivity and participation through TikTok for certain outcomes	“TikTok is a place for your creativity and expression.”
Authenticity	Whether TikTok allows or prohibits “truthful” communication that reflects oneself, users, products, statements, and/or culture	“Content or behavior that is spammy, fake, or misleading will be removed.”
Community	The valuation and devaluation of certain social group based on common forms of life or practice	“Our policies and guidelines exist to foster trust, respect, and a positive environment for everyone in this community.”
Privacy	Whether TikTok allows or prohibits users from doing to control personal information	“DO NOT disclose others’ personally identifiable information, such as address, phone number, email address, ID number, and credit card number.”
Safety	Whether TikTok allows or prohibits users from posting to preserve the well-being of users, the platform community, and/or organizations	“DO NOT deliberately degrade, humiliate, defame, or bully other people, nor encourage other users to do so.”
Accountability	Whether there is a mechanism for the platform or users to hold the platform accountable	“If you see content that you believe violates any of the Community Guidelines, please report it so we can review and take appropriate action.”
Fairness	Whether there is a mechanism for the platform or users to do to ensure the impartial treatment of individuals and/or behaviors	“Attacks on protected groups: We define hate speech as content that does or intends to attack, threaten, incite violence against, or dehumanize an individual or a group of individuals on the basis of protected attributes.”
Self-determination	Whether TikTok allows or prohibits users to make decisions about the technical structure they will be impacted by (e.g., opt-in/opt-out)	“To minimize the potentially negative impact of graphic content, we may first include safety measures such as an “opt-in” screen or warning.”
No value	The sentence does not contain any values	“If you have further concerns, please contact <a href="mailto:privacy@tiktok.com">privacy@tiktok.com</a> ”



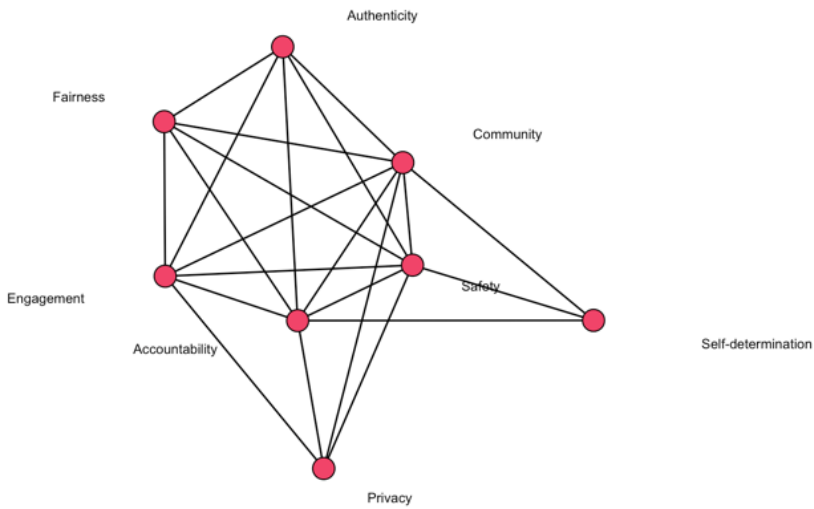
December 10, 2018



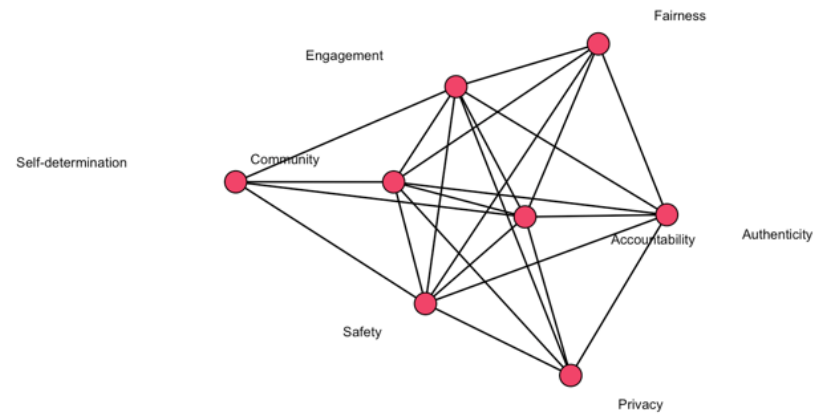
January 8, 2020

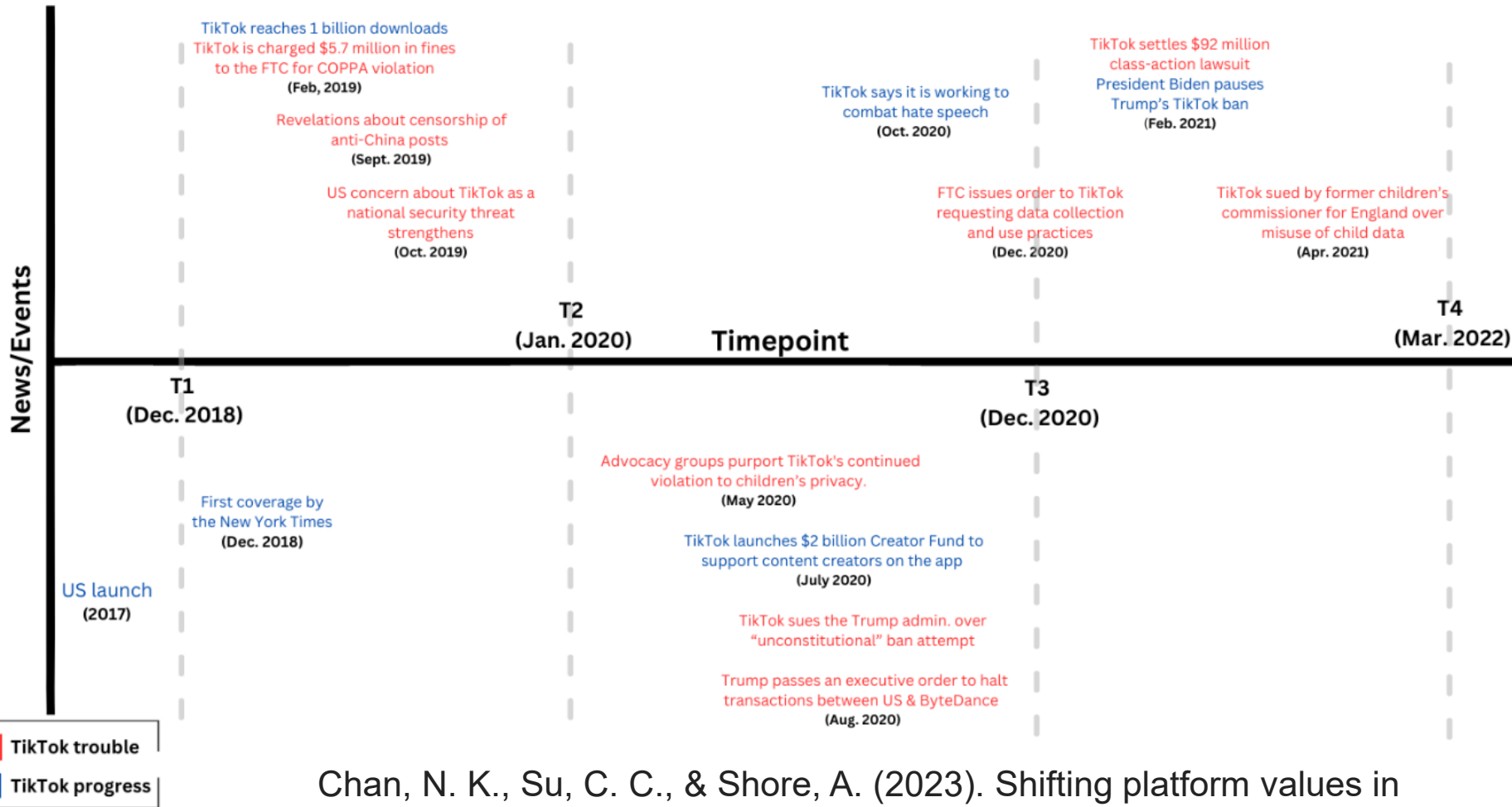


December 15, 2020



March 7, 2022





Chan, N. K., Su, C. C., & Shore, A. (2023). Shifting platform values in community guidelines: Examining the evolution of TikTok's governance frameworks. *New Media & Society*.

## Pinning Down “Privacy”

# Adam Smith

Professor

Computer Science, CAS

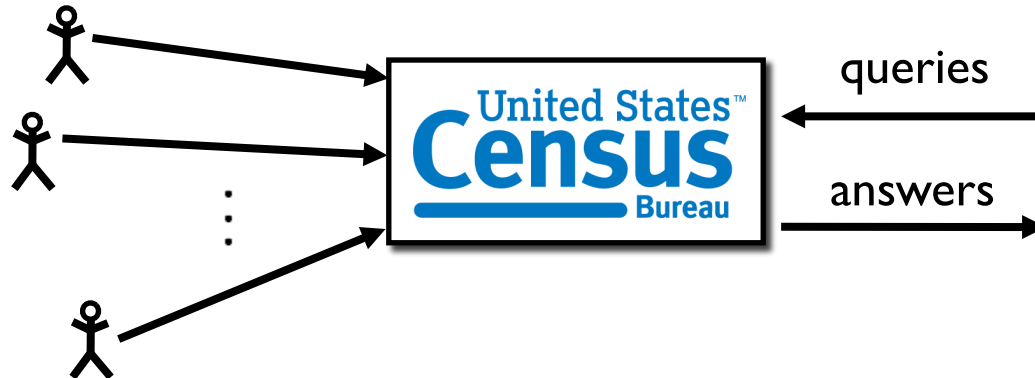
Electrical and Computer Engineering, CoE

Faculty of Computing and Data Sciences



# *Privacy in Statistical Databases*

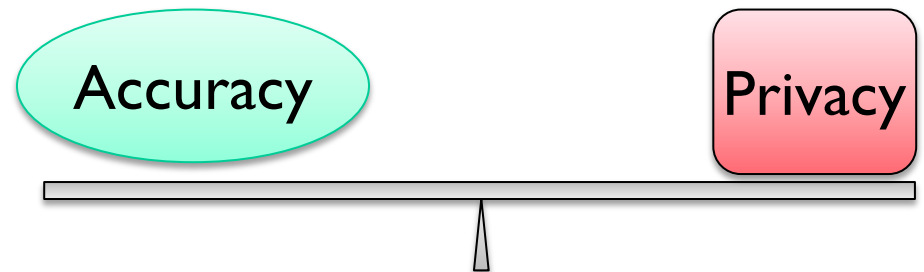
Individuals



Researchers

Large collections of personal information

- census data
- medical/public health
- social networks
- Education



My research: **Rigorous foundations and analysis**

# *First attempt: Remove obvious identifiers*

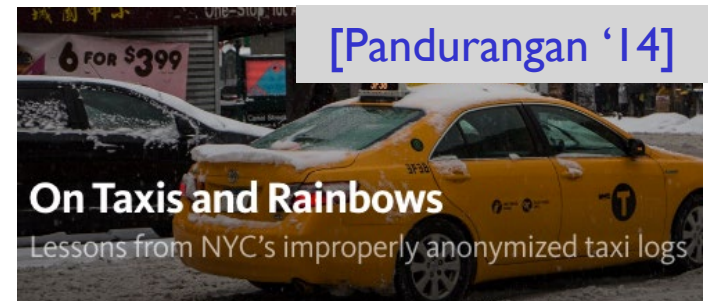


“AI recognizes blurred faces”  
[McPherson Shokri Shmatikov '16]



[Gymrek McGuire Golan Halperin Erlich '13]

- Everything is an identifier
- Potential attackers have other information
- “Anonymization” schemes are regularly broken

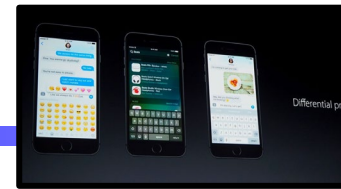


**On Taxis and Rainbows**  
Lessons from NYC's improperly anonymized taxi logs



# Rigorous Approaches to Privacy

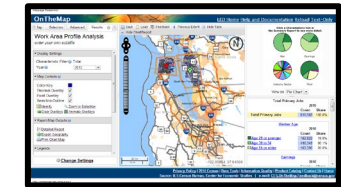
- **Definitions**
  - Pinning down “privacy”
- **Algorithms:** what can we compute privately?
  - Fundamental techniques
  - Specific applications
- **Attacks:** “Cryptanalysis” for data privacy
  - Impossibility results
- **Implications for other areas**



Apple



Google



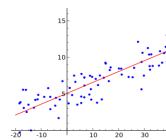
US Census



Algorithms



Crypto,  
security



Statistics,  
learning



Game theory,  
economics

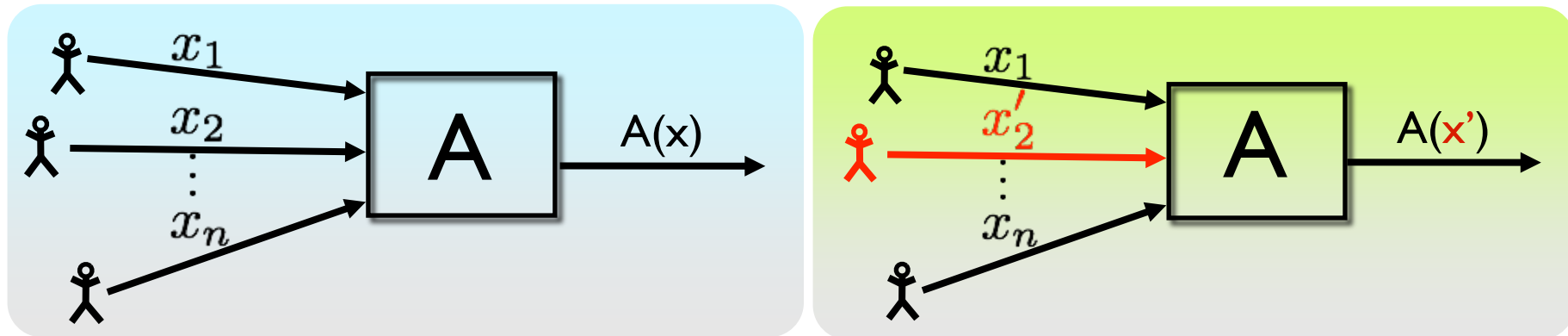


Programming  
languages



Law,  
policy

# Differential Privacy [Dwork, McSherry, Nissim, S.]



- A thought experiment
  - Change one person's data (or remove them)
  - Will the probabilities of various outputs change much?

- **Differential privacy implies:**

No matter what you know ahead of time,

You learn (almost) the same things about me  
whether or not my data are used

## The Social Efficiency of Fairness

# Marshall Van Alstyne

Allen & Kelli Questrom Professor of IS  
Questrom School of Business





# GenAI

Sara Silverman  
John Grisham  
Authors' Guild  
Writer's Guild

vs

Stability AI  
Meta  
Midjourney  
Open AI

- © *Infringement*
- *Unjust enrichment*
- *Unfair competition*

NY Times  
Reddit  
StackOverflow  
Twitter ...

*All close their APIs*

# Problem



## Defendants Win

- X Destroy Livelihoods
- X Stop Sharing, Close Access

## Plaintiffs Win

- X Shut down tech innovation
- X How negotiate with 10M © owners?!?

# Solution

Permissionless Innovation + Fair Compensation  
(Shapley Formula : Nobel 2012)

$$\phi_i(v) = \frac{1}{|N|} \sum_{S \subseteq N \setminus \{i\}} \binom{|N| - 1}{|S|}^{-1} (v(S \cup \{i\}) - v(S))$$

You get your share of value for *any* set of assets to which you add value

# Formal Proof

1. Fairness increases the rate of innovation.
  - Sources are more willing to share data.
  - Welfare improves both in the absolute sense of enabling new projects and in the relative sense of reordering the social sort order of which projects agents undertake.
2. Fairness (liability) rather than property rules can be more conducive to innovation based on information reuse and recombination.

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- “*Social Efficiency of Fairness*” on [ssrn.com](#)
  - Working with Industrial Firms to build the markets

# THANK YOU!





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# UPCOMING EVENTS

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Learn more & RSVP: [bu.edu/research/events](https://bu.edu/research/events)

Topic ideas & feedback: [bu.edu/research/topic-ideas](https://bu.edu/research/topic-ideas)

## RESEARCH ON TAP

Measuring Corporate Impacts on  
the Environment & Society  
November 13, 2023 | 4-6 pm

Health Data Science  
November 29, 2023 | 4-6 pm

## RESEARCH HOW-TO

What the X? How to Make the Most of  
Social Media to Promote your  
Research in 2023  
October 26, 2023 | 12-1:30 pm

Meet the Alzheimer's Association  
November 8, 2023 | 12-1 pm

