

Assignment 3: Privacy

Your paper must be submitted as a pdf, MS word or rich text document.

1. Much Ado About Leaking

You have recently been hired as a developer by the Ultimate Totally Secure Chat (UTSC) app. It's a small team of developers, but a very fast growing app, and you're in on the ground floor with what you think could be the next big social media app. Your job doesn't have anything to do with security, but in your role as a developer you come across a security vulnerability that could theoretically allow malicious actors to access all messages, files, photos and videos shared by your users.

You immediately bring your concerns to the lead developers/founders/owners: Zark Muckerberg and Beff Jezos. The following conversation ensues:

Zark: We can't tell anyone about this. Don't let anyone know about it, we'll patch the security vulnerability ASAP and no one needs to be any the wiser.

Beff: No way. We need to come clean right away. Our data shows that not all of our users install updates right away, so even if we get a patch out immediately, our users may be vulnerable for a long time if we don't warn them.

Zark: Making it public will just tell the hackers that we've got a vulnerability they can exploit. We haven't had any problems so far, but that's mostly because we're new and small enough to not attract attention. If we tell the world that all our data is vulnerable, we're just asking to be hacked.

Beff: But if our users find out we knew about a vulnerability and didn't tell them, we'll be done for, we might as well close up shop.

Zark: If we make a public announcement that all our users' data is vulnerable, we won't be much better off.

You're the third person in the room, so they both look to you for your input to help them resolve this stalemate. What do you do? Who do you side with? What advice do you give? Who are the stakeholders? And how do you weigh their various concerns?

In 500-700 words, give your response to Zark and Beff. Make sure to think about the issues we've discussed in class such as ethics and privacy. Since this is just a conversation, you can write informally and either address Zark and Beff directly, or write it in more of a journalistic ("I would do this") style.

2. C-51: The end of privacy in Canada, or an overdue defence against terrorism

In 2015, The Canadian federal government passed bill C-51: “Anti-terrorism Act, 2015”. The act is focused around national security, but have major impacts on government surveillance and privacy. Your job is to provide a **well researched** and fact-based argument of 700-900 words in favour of or against the following statement:

The powers afforded to the federal government by bill C51 are reasonable and necessary given national security concerns, and do not constitute a violation of privacy of Canadian citizens.

Whichever side of the argument you are taking, you will want to start by researching what is in bill C51. You can find the full bill at:

<https://www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/41-2/bill/C-51/royal-assent>

but you won't be expected to read the whole thing. Many summaries exist online. The difficult thing will be to find non-biased summaries.

Once you've found non-biased summaries, you'll want to actively search out biased sources for arguments for or against the bill. Be careful not to only research one side. It's important to know the points the other side is making so you know what to refute.

Bill C51 is expansive and touches on many aspects of Canadian law. Here we are only interested in privacy issues. Particularly those related to information technology. So focus your attention on those provisions and effects.