

The Death of Personal Privacy



By Rob Pue

September 18, 2022

Recently, I was driving in a small town and stopped for a red light. As I waited, I noticed something was missing. Surveillance cameras. This town had no surveillance cameras at its intersections – something most of us have become accustomed to paying no attention to because today, those cameras seem to be everywhere. But a week later, I was in another small town, about the same size, but this town had some of the most modern, high-tech cameras I'd ever seen, and they were, indeed, everywhere.

I have some questions about those cameras. For instance, who's watching? Are these cameras monitored by someone? Are they recording video footage, taking still photographs, or what? I tried doing some research to find out, but found no answers to these questions.

This may seem like a trivial matter, but the bigger issue is that as American citizens, we really have no personal privacy anymore. Someone is always watching us, collecting information and data about us, and tracking our every move. You may think this is no big deal because after all, you're an upstanding citizen and have nothing to hide. But you'd be surprised how much data and information about you is continually being monitored, and stored. Just type your name or address into any internet search engine, and you may be surprised at what you find.

In today's world of high tech, virtually every entity you

interact with is collecting information on you. Of course, this has been going on for years, but things really ramped up in 2006 when a thing called "Facebook" was launched to the public. It was presented to us as a fun way to connect with family and friends, and make new friends online. Because it was so user-friendly, it grew quickly, especially with the advent of "smart phones" and other hand-held devices. Today, nearly 3 million people use Facebook daily, and many are addicted to it.

Initially, I had no interest at all in Facebook, but I was eventually lured in as well, when it became possible to have special pages for one's business, or in our case, the ministry of *Wisconsin Christian News*. And like so many others, I also had a personal page, where I posted photos of family events, holiday celebrations and activities we would do. And like everyone else, I was clueless, at first, as to the true intentions and purpose of Facebook. I believe it was never actually meant to be an innocent social media platform, but rather, very likely it was a construct of one of our government's three-letter agencies to harvest personal information on every user, who freely gave that information over via the Facebook app.

Think about it: if the government were to demand you supply them with pictures of all your kids, other family members, information and photos of your family vacation, places you traveled, and personal information they had no business knowing about, few would comply. But using Facebook as a fun form of online entertainment, people handed that information over willingly and proudly. How many moms took pictures of their little kids' first day of school, for example, and posted it on Facebook? By doing this, they not only made that information public knowledge, which was captured and archived forever by the Facebook machine, they also, unknowingly, showed potential child predators exactly what their children looked like and where they could be found on that first day of

school.

That's just one example. Soon Facebook also began offering another "fun" form of entertainment – quizzes. They'd develop a quiz called something like, "if you were an animal, what animal would you be?" You would answer a list of 10-12 questions and then Facebook would reveal that "you're a bear, because you're bold and outgoing." Or "you're a butterfly, because you love flowers and love to make people happy." Other quizzes tested your knowledge on subjects like history, math or problem solving. Others offered to reveal to you your ideal career, based on the answers you gave in the quiz.

Friends, it didn't take me long to understand that these were not just fun little games Facebook was offering. They were personality profiles. Most would never willingly give up such personal information by completing a personality profile on a site like Facebook. But disguised as a fun game, millions turned over their personal, private thoughts and ideas without knowing it. And all this data is now archived, along with countless photographs and videos and untold amounts of other personal information which is now stored in the Facebook "metaverse" forever.

How many of us read the fine print in the dozens of pages in the User Agreement when we signed up for Facebook? My guess is, almost nobody. We just scrolled down and clicked on "accept terms" and now all that personal information we willingly handed over is the property of Facebook.

Then, a few years ago, Facebook started to crack down on free speech. If you posted something they didn't agree with or like, you'd be banned – tossed into "Facebook jail" for 30 days or more, not allowed to use the site. Others were "shadow banned." This is where you THINK you're posting to a large group of people but almost no one is seeing your posts. That's what happened with our *Wisconsin Christian News* page. We had about 30,000 people following our Facebook page, but

I doubt if more than 20 were actually being allowed to see our posts, because they were Christian and conservative messages we were posting. I pulled the plug completely on Facebook a couple years ago, after becoming “fed up” with all the nonsense.

Amazon is another invasive corporation that’s spying on you all the time. Evan Greer, the director of a nonprofit Digital Rights Organization stated, *“People tend to think of Amazon as an online seller company, but really Amazon is a surveillance company. That is the core of its business model, and that’s what drives its monopoly power and profit.”* Amazon is designed to be extremely user-friendly. People can purchase just about anything with a few clicks of a button and have it delivered to their home in a day or two. But Amazon is much more than just a place to shop.

According to an article at AmericanMilitaryNews.com, *“Last year, an Amazon customer reportedly requested all of the data that the tech giant has collected on her through her home devices, including smart speakers like the Dot and Echo, and was stunned to see Amazon had compiled thousands of voice recordings, location data and more.”*

You may appreciate having *your own* video surveillance cameras to protect your home and property. Many use the “Ring” video doorbell – but that’s owned by Amazon and it’s providing the tech giant with more personal information about you than you realize. Not to mention those “Alexa” devices in millions of homes. “Alexa” is a wi-fi device that you keep in your home and is supposed to serve as a virtual assistant. Simply ask Alexa a question and you’ll get an audible spoken answer from this machine, after it searches the internet for information. You can also order things through Amazon by simply speaking the words now.

Most recently, Amazon acquired the iRobot company, maker of “Roomba” vacuum cleaners. These automated vacuum cleaners are

sold to customers as super-easy and convenient. They vacuum for you and learn to avoid obstacles in your home and they even automatically empty the collection bin, then return to their charging station, automatically.

But did you catch what I said there? They learn to avoid obstacles in your home. Sounds good, right? So they don't crash into your furniture or get stuck on the stairs. Here's the creepy part: these robot vacuums, now owned by Amazon, one of the most invasive personal data collection companies in the world, are also MAPPING the interior of your home and storing that information in their archives. So now, not only is Amazon listening to everything you say and do in your home through Alexa or any number of other online devices, they're also mapping the floor plan of your home. What could possibly go wrong?

And for those who don't know, Google is way more than an internet search engine. They own an astounding number of companies and have their hands in everything. Did you know they own the "Android" company – maker of "smart phones?" They also own Fitbit. So with your Fitbit watch, you may think you're just keeping track of your daily exercise, diet and personal health... but all that information goes directly to Google. I wonder who reviews your personal health information after that.

A few years ago, we installed an electronic thermostat called the "Nest" in our home. It was meant for convenience, of course, and allows us to control the temperature in our home remotely, through our smart phones. But recently, the Nest company was acquired by Google, and in order to continue to heat our home, we were forced to set up an account with Google. No big deal, right? Well, our thermostat has become increasingly "nosey." For example, each month we get an email detailing our energy usage. If you use less energy, you earn a "leaf" – but if you use more energy than the previous month, you lose "leaves." Forgive me if I sound paranoid, but this

sounds like the beginning of establishing our “social credit score” based on our energy usage, which could very well lead to forced compliance with the Green New Deal. And of course, the penalties for using more energy than the government approves of will be a lot greater than losing an imaginary “leaf.”

I would also caution everyone to stop using Gmail immediately, unless you’re ok with Google reading and storing your personal emails to build an even larger personal profile on you.

Of course, MANY very invasive new technologies are already integrated into all the flat screen TVs in peoples’ homes. Several years ago, we were warned that these TVs were not only listening to us, but also watching everything that goes on in our homes. Also available on the market are wi-fi wired refrigerators, washers and dryers and other household appliances – all collecting data and information, 24/7, and storing it – somewhere, for someone.

And if you use a “smart phone,” be aware, that it, too, is always listening, and often watching you through the built-in camera. Even if it’s turned off. In the “old days,” if you wanted privacy from your “nosey” phone, you could simply remove the battery. But that’s impossible with the new phones. To get that privacy now, you need to turn your phone off and put it inside a “faraday” bag, which blocks RFID transmission.

Friends, Big Tech is monitoring, harvesting and storing all of your personal information, every keystroke on your computer; every call you make, every photo you take – they’ll be watching you. We’ve witnessed the death of personal privacy in America, and nothing good can come from this.

Recently, we learned of the IRS hiring 87,000 new “special agents,” willing to carry firearms and use deadly force if “necessary.” Another rogue three-letter government agency

that's been weaponized by the Leftists. Last year, Biden's "American Rescue Plan" (sounds legit, right?) proposed that banks would be required to report to the IRS all personal transactions of \$600 or more. After a great deal of backlash, that amount was raised to \$10,000 or more. But it makes little difference, because this is an ANNUAL amount. In other words, anyone who holds a bank account with activity of \$10,000 or more per year will be flagged for reporting to the newly weaponized IRS. It's pretty hard to live on less than \$10,000 a year. So in other words, banks must report virtually everyone with an account to the IRS now. And some wonder why those 87,000 new agents will need to be armed and required to use deadly force. Our personal privacy has been dead and buried for a while now, and I believe we're in "warp speed" headed toward a "social credit score" society – just like they use in Biden's favorite country, China.

Audio CDs and text versions of this message are available when you call me at Wisconsin Christian News, (715) 486-8066. Or email Rob@WisconsinChristianNews.com. Ask for message number 371.

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