How private is your privacy?

Karen Sollins MIT CSAIL April 21, 2016





The increasing thunder

- In the news
 - Snowden
 - Apple vs. the FBI
- In our civil society
 - Warren/Brandeis, The Right to Privacy, 1890
 - Increasing tension between rights to privacy and expectation (need?) for surveillance
- In industry
 - Claims of Facebook/Google/etc.
 - Rise of examples such as Duck-duck-go, Bitcoin, Yik-Yak, etc.



Data at the core

- Privacy is about data
 - Access to data
 - Use of data
- Privacy is not binary
- Privacy is context sensitive
- Future privacy interests dependent on exposures inherent in future uses of data

The Data Life Cycle & privacy approaches



Data collection

- Notice and consent
- Informed consent
- Data restriction
 - Algorithms such as k-anonymity, l-diversity, tcloseness
 - Differential privacy
- Data access controls
 - Data use agreement
 - Tagging
 - DRM style management
 - Authentication/authorization protocols
 - Standard encryption

- Data processing (incl. fusion) and analytical methods
 - Individual insights vs. aggregate population insights: querying approaches including personal/private data stores, secure multi-party computation, homomorphic encryption
 - Aggregate population insights: statistical methods such as differential privacy, and synthetic datasets vs. baysian statistics
- Data compliance and audit
 - Legal policy compliance: Legalease and Grok (from Microsoft)
 - User access logging
 - Accountable systems
- Data destruction
 - Deletion or encryption
 - Inremental forgetting of bits of encryption keys (Garfinkel)



The Data Stakeholders

- Data subject(s): primary and secondary
- Decision makers
- Data collectors
- Data curators
- Data analysts
- Data platform providers
- Policy enforcers
- Auditors

Interests of each group:

- Their own effectiveness
- Their integration with others interests

The challenge: risk vs. trust



- In the human (individual, societal, and commercial) arenas how do we compose the risks and willingness to trust into a unified decision-making opportunity.
- The question we are often left with is: Should we take the risk to privacy by trusting stakeholders to provide some definition and degree of "privacy".

n PrivSec

Looking forward in PrivSec

Talk series: Metrics for Privacy

- K-anonymity (Sweeney)
- L-diversity (Machanavajihala et al,)
- T-closeness (Li et al.)
- Differential privacy: ε (Dwork, Vadhan, etc.)
- Information theoretic approach to Privacy (Bezzi SAP Labs)
- Taxonomy for Information Privacy Metrics (Davarathna)
- Discussions with Facebook, Thomson-Reuters and seeking others (banking and other financial industries, healthcare, etc.)
- Observation: risk metrics used in a) defining algorithms or b) evaluation
- Objective: understand role of metrics of privacy and possible composability.

For further information



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