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Ctrl + Z: The Right To Be Forgotten



Synopsis

“This is going on your permanent record!” is a threat that has never held more weight than it does in the Internet Age, when information lasts indefinitely. The ability to make good on that threat is as democratized as posting a Tweet or making blog. Data about us is created, shared, collected, analyzed, and processed at an overwhelming scale. The damage caused can be severe, affecting relationships, employment, academic success, and any number of other opportunities—and it can also be long lasting. One possible solution to this threat? A digital right to be forgotten, which would in turn create a legal duty to delete, hide, or anonymize information at the request of another user. The highly controversial right has been criticized as a repugnant affront to principles of expression and access, as unworkable as a technical measure, and as effective as trying to put the cat back in the bag. Ctrl+Z breaks down the debate and provides guidance for a way forward. It argues that the existing perspectives are too limited, offering easy forgetting or none at all. By looking at new theories of privacy and organizing the many potential applications of the right, law and technology scholar Meg Leta Jones offers a set of nuanced choices. To help us choose, she provides a digital information life cycle, reflects on particular legal cultures, and analyzes international interoperability. In the end, the right to be forgotten can be innovative, liberating, and globally viable.

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Customer Reviews

Ctrl + Z provides a well researched and nuanced analysis of @BigPrivacy issues raised by the Right

To Be Forgotten in the context of balancing @BigPrivacy and Big Data promises for individuals and society as a whole. Ctrl + Z is destined to be an authoritative reference in this area. Key highlights follow:- The storage, aggregation, and processing of all this information is organized and analyzed to provide utility and efficiency. Together these technological advancements have contributed to incredible social shifts in the way information is created, shared, and understood, leaving overwhelming informational vulnerabilities.- Predictive analytics often fill in the blanks we leave in our data trails. These are not characteristics that are expressed or collected through our actions but holes in our digital dossiers that get filled on the basis of the characteristics of others like us.- Conversations like the one concerning the right to be forgotten do not put the brakes on new tools or progress or knowledge. They are an opportunity to be innovative about innovationâ€”to be critical and forward thinking. They allow us to embrace uncertainty and ready ourselves to make choices that support flourishingâ€”whatever that means. The enthusiasm for innovation should not be stifled by the protection of values like privacy and expression but animated to optimize man-machine systems to promote human flourishing. Innovation should be a question of how to have oneâ€™s cake and eat it too, or at least how to maximize social gains brought by new technologies and minimize any damages or exclusions.- Information stewardship should be supported by law but must also be socially and technically interoperable. We must all be stewards. Before you delete your next Facebook post, tweet, blog, comment, email, set of cookies, or chat, consider whether you are destroying history or exercising your power to participate in your digital identity.

I found this detailed account more suited to media lawyers and legislators, than to a general readership, which is why I am not rating it more highly, but I applaud the careful research and attention to detail. With private matters surfacing on the net decades after the incidents may have occurred, some people want information about them struck off the public record. But search engines never forget, do they? A teacher lost her contract after films of her as an exotic dancer decades previously surfaced, while a man took a court action regarding the fact that he was listed as a debtor after he had cleared the matter. The account looks at how laws had to catch up with life as the net and data storage evolved. While don't forget that data disks can be corrupted and the contents lost. I found some of the issues very interesting and others were like wading through legal treacle so your understanding of and need for various parts will colour your approach. I recommend The Smart Girl's Guide To Privacy by Violet Blue for those who want to know exactly how to protect themselves online from stalkers, con artists and sites that sell their data. I downloaded a copy from Net Galley for an unbiased review.

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