



Participant Package

Hey Alex: Where Does My Data Go?

Data Privacy and Surveillance Capitalism

**Continuing Education
(Glendon Campus)**

Running Time: 1 hour 15 minutes



Introduction

Workshop Description

Hey Alex: Where Does My Data Go?

The objective of this interactive workshop is to help you be more knowledgeable about surveillance capitalism, online privacy, and data collection while gaining access to resources, tools, and alternative applications that will make your online experience safer. More specifically, you will explore your personal social media settings and review a glimpse of the information collected on you. At the end, you will take home a guide complete with activists, organizations, books, and more if you wish to explore this topic further.

This workshop is available in both English and French to provide students with an opportunity to learn about online privacy while reinforcing their learning.

Running Time: 1 hour 15 minutes

About the Authors of This Workshop

This workshop was created by Alison Harvey, Assistant Professor and Coordinator of the Communications program at Glendon College, York University. Her research and teaching focuses on issues of inclusivity and accessibility in digital culture, with an emphasis on gender and labour in digital games.

York's Experiential Education

This workshop was developed by Carmina Ioia, a 5th year Communications and French studies student. Workshop inspiration came from screening the docudrama film, *The Social Dilemma*, and later on learning about surveillance capitalism in subsequent communications courses.

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✘ Objective

HEY ALEX: WHERE DOES MY DATA GO?
Workshop Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe surveillance capitalism and data privacy• Differentiate between smart and manual devices• Recognize why applications, tools, and services are free• Explore the “backend” of social media (ad, privacy, security settings)• Identify which settings to switch off in order to create a safer online experience• Identify alternative websites whose business models are centred around user privacy
Materials Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Phone, laptop, or tablet with access to the internet• Crayons, markers, and paper
Running Time: 1 hour 15 minutes

✘ Agenda

TIME	ACTIVITY
5 mins	Presentations and introduction
15 mins	Activity 1 – Kahoot: Getting Acquainted With Surveillance Capitalism
15 mins	Activity 2 – Mentimeter: If You’re Not Paying For The Product, You Are The Product
25 mins	Activity 3 – Algorithmic Autobiographies: Get to Know Your AI Self
10 mins	Activity 4: Is There a Better Future in Sight?
5 mins	Conclusion
Running Time: 1 hour 15 minutes	

Workshop Outline

PRESENTATIONS AND INTRODUCTION: 5 minutes

- The facilitation team will present themselves and go over the day's agenda and learning objectives.

ACTIVITY 1 – KAHOOT: GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH SURVEILLANCE: 15 minutes

- **Objective:** Evaluate how much you already know about online data collection and privacy, while also introducing some key concepts.
- **Description:** Facilitator will guide you through an interactive quiz to gauge your initial level of understanding and introduce you to the concepts of surveillance capitalism, data privacy, and smart devices.

ACTIVITY 2 – MENTIMETER: IF YOU'RE NOT PAYING FOR THE PRODUCT, YOU ARE THE PRODUCT: 15 minutes

- **Objective:** Define surveillance capitalism and discuss the extent to which most people use products that collect private data.
- **Description:** After watching a short video about the specifics of surveillance capitalism, you will take a moment to reflect on the ideas presented, which will be followed by a brainstorming session of tools, applications, websites, and services that are free to use. The facilitator will then reinforce why these tools are free to use (in reality, nothing is free!), and the potential consequences of this cycle.

ACTIVITY 3 – ALGORITHMIC AUTOBIOGRAPHIES: GET TO KNOW YOUR AI SELF: 25 minutes

- **Objective:** Explore the 'backend' of social media (settings, privacy, etc.), locate where ad preferences are on Google, Instagram, and Facebook accounts.
- **Description:** The facilitator will explain how to access your ad settings on Google, Facebook, and Instagram. After choosing which platform you wish to access, you will draw a representation of your ad settings (example will be shown to help generate ideas).

ACTIVITY 4: IS THERE A BETTER FUTURE IN SIGHT?: 10 minutes

- **Objective:** Identify alternative websites and platforms to mainstream, free platforms, to be able to change ad/privacy settings to have a safer online experience.
- **Description:** Facilitator will provide an optimistic future – as this is indeed possible – through alternative websites, applications, and services to mainstream ones and provide you with a comprehensive handout, should you wish to explore this topic further.

CONCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION SURVEY: 5 minutes

You will have the opportunity to share any final reflections or questions and the facilitator will invite you to complete a participation survey to help improve the workshop.

+ APPENDIX 1: Accessing Your Online Data

Here you will find instructions on how to access the data that has been collected about you on different online platforms.

Accessing Google ad interests (laptop or tablet):

1. Participants must log into their Google account, either through Gmail, Google Drive, etc.
2. Click on the profile circle at the top right corner of the screen (the circle is either a profile picture or letter of user's first name)
3. Click "Manage your Google Account"
4. On the left-hand side, there should be a handful of tabs. Click on "Data and Privacy"
5. Scroll down to Ad Settings
6. Click Ad Personalization (switch should most likely be on for participants)

Accessing Facebook ad interests (laptop or tablet):

1. Participant must log into their Facebook account
2. Click on down arrow near notifications bell on upper-right hand corner
3. Click "Settings & Privacy", then "Settings"
4. Scroll down and click on "Ads"
5. Click on "Ad Settings"
6. Click on "Categories used to reach you"
7. Click on "Interest categories", then "See all interests"
8. Go back and click on "Other categories"

Accessing Instagram ad interests (laptop or tablet):

1. Participants must log into their Instagram account
2. Click on "Settings"
3. Click on "Privacy and Security" on left-hand side of screen
4. Scroll down to "Ads" with the sub-heading "Ad-interests"
5. Click "View all"

Accessing Instagram ad interests (smartphone):

1. Log in to Instagram and go to your profile page
2. Click the 3 horizontal lines at the top right-hand corner of screen
3. Click "Settings"
4. Click "Ads"
5. Click "Ad-interests" and scroll through to views

III Recommended Resources & Readings

People and institutions to follow:

- **Shoshana Zuboff:** author, Harvard professor, social psychologist+, has written extensively (books, newspapers, blogs, etc.) about surveillance capitalism. She has many digestible videos available online.
- **Carole Cadwalladr:** journalist for The Guardian who covered the Cambridge Analytica scandal extensively. She doesn't uniquely cover surveillance capitalism but is overall a great journalist to keep up with.
- **Timnit Gebru:** computer scientist working on algorithmic bias and data mining. Diversity in technology advocate, co-founder of Black in AI.
- **Sara Grimes:** assistant professor at University of Toronto researching children's new media and literature. She explores children's evolving relationship with digital media culture and technologies.
- **Tristan Harris:** former Google design ethicist turned technology ethicist. Co-founder of Center for Humane Technology.
- **Aza Raskin:** writer, entrepreneur, inventor, interface designer. Co-founder of Center for Humane Technology and The Earth Species Project.
- **Jaron Lanier:** computer scientist, visual artist, technologist+, writes extensively on high-technology business, the social impact of technology, Internet politics, and the future of humanism.
- **Roger McNamee:** author, musician, investor, businessman+, criticizes Facebook's impact on US democracy and wrote a book on the topic.
- **Guillaume Chaslot:** ex-Google employee, expert in AI and data science, founder of AlgoTransparency.
- **Frances Haugen:** data engineer and scientist, Facebook whistleblower, advocate for accountability and transparency in social media.
- **Cathy O'Neil:** mathematician, data scientist, author. She has given numerous Ted Talks and authored books about data science.
- **Renee DiResta:** researches the spread of mis/disinformation across social networks and assists policymakers in understanding and responding to this problem.

- **Joy Buolamwini:** poet of code who uses art and research to illuminate the social implications of artificial intelligence. Founder of the Algorithmic Justice League.
- **Safiya Umoja Noble:** professor at UCLA, author, co-founder and director of the UCLA Center for Critical Internet Inquiry.
- **Center for Humane Technology:** explore “Resources” and “Course” tabs.
- **Digital Democracy Project:** joint initiative led by the Public Policy Forum and McGill University, 8 articles on data governance and democracy within the Canadian context
- **Free Press:** nonpartisan organization fighting for the right to connect and communicate
- **MediaSmarts:** Canada’s centre for digital and media literacy. Great daily, weekly, and monthly newsletters.
- **Algorithmic Justice League:** “Racial justice requires algorithmic justice”

Movies, podcasts, YouTube videos+:

- *The Social Dilemma* (Netflix)
- *I Am Gen Z* (not available in Canada)
- <https://mubi.com/lists/social-media-studies>
- *Your Undivided Attention* (anywhere you listen to podcasts)
- *Algorithms Don’t Predict the Future, They Cause the Future* (YouTube)
- *Disparaître sous les radars des algorithmes* (YouTube) – can turn on English subtitles

Application alternatives:

- Visit the *Alternative App Centre* for your browsers, browser extensions/add-ons, search engines, chats, calls and messaging, email, video conferencing, maps, and password managers:
<https://datadetoxkit.org/en/alternative-app-centre>
- Facebook: *Mobilizon* (geared more towards event organization)
- Twitter: *Mastodon*
- YouTube: *PeerTube*
- Instagram: *PixelFed*
- Streaming services: *Funkwhale*
- Go to: <https://datadetoxkit.org/en/workshops> and download “Declutter your phone with an app cleanse”. Open the Supplementary Worksheet for a list of questions to ask yourself before downloading any app. You can also explore the lesson outline and lesson slides if you need clarification.

Books:

- *System Error: Where Big Tech Went Wrong and How we can Reboot* by Rob Reich, Mehran Sahami, Jeremy M. Weinstein
- *The Age Of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight For A Human Future At The New Frontier Of Power* by Shoshana Zuboff
- *Digital Playgrounds* by Sara Grimes
- *Privacy is Power* by Carissa Véliz
- *Cyber Privacy* by April Falcon Doss
- *Power to the Public* by Tara Dawson McGuinness and Hana Shank
- *A Citizen's Guide to Artificial Intelligence* by John Zerilli
- *Bodies as Evidence: Security, Knowledge and Power* by Mark Maguire, Ursula Rao, Nils Zurawski
- *Algorithms of Oppression: How search engines reinforce racism* by Safiya Umoja Noble
- *Indigenous self-determination and data governance in the Canadian policy context* by Robyn K. Rowe, Julie R. Bull, Jennifer D. Walker

Questions to explore:

- Does knowing more inevitably mean being protected against data collection?
- What are more problems behind shaping online experiences?
- Is online manipulation always a bad thing?
- Have you ever had an experience where you've known your data was collected? (ex. targeted ads)
- How can children be harmed in online data collection? Are they immune from online data collection?

Secure your email:

- <https://www.spreadprivacy.com/introducing-email-protection-beta/> (waitlist)
- <https://www.fastmail.com/>

How to make your iPhone more secure via settings:

- <https://www.igeeksblog.com/how-to-change-iphone-privacy-security-settings/>
- <https://www.howtogeek.com/424624/how-to-check-and-tighten-all-your-iphones-privacy-settings/>
- <https://datadetoxkit.org/en/privacy>

How to make your Android more secure via settings:

- <https://anonymania.com/android-privacy-security-settings/>
- <https://www.zdnet.com/article/privacy-settings-how-to-secure-your-iphone-and-android-device/>
- <https://privacy.kaspersky.com/articles/tiktok-android-tight/>
- <https://datadetoxkit.org/en/privacy>

Ad blockers for Firefox:

- *Adblocker ultimate*
- *Ghostery* – privacy ad blocker
- *Webmail Ad Blocker* (for email)

Ad blockers for Google Chrome:

- *Ghostery* – privacy ad blocker
- *AdBlock* – best ad blocker
- *AdGuard AdBlocker*

VPNs (free and paid):

- *Clario* (based in Ukraine – support if you can) (includes VPN, Antivirus, Ad Blocker, Anti-Tracking Software)
- *NordVPN* (all platforms)
- *AVIRA Phantom* (windows, mac, android iOS)
- *Norton* (they do all surrounding privacy)
- *Express VPN* (all platforms)
- *Mozilla VPN*: <https://www.mozilla.org/en-CA/products/vpn/>

Extra – fun, useful websites:

- All about online misinformation: <https://datadetoxkit.org/en/misinformation>
- *Internet of Things* (synonym for smart devices) *Security and Privacy*:
<https://www.internetsociety.org/resources/doc/2018/top-tips-for-consumers-internet-of-things-security-and-privacy/>
- *Click click click* (fun interactive page demonstrating in real time the types of information collected while you browse): <https://clickclickclick.click/>
- Useful infographic visualising which companies access our personal information the most:
<https://clario.co/blog/which-company-uses-most-data/>
- *DuckDuckGo* shares their thoughts on Google trackers: <https://donttrack.us/>
- *Muting your mic reportedly doesn't stop big tech from recording your audio*:
<https://thenextweb.com/news/muting-your-mic-doesnt-stop-big-tech-recording-your-audio>

Glossary

Capitalism: an economic system characterized by private or corporate ownership of capital goods, by investments that are determined by private decision, and by prices, production, and the distribution of goods that are determined mainly by competition in a free market.

Cookie: a small file or part of a file stored on a World Wide Web user's computer, created and subsequently read by a website server, and containing personal information (such as a user identification code, customized preferences, or a record of pages visited).

Data provider: an organisation which produces data or metadata.

Disinformation: false information deliberately and often covertly spread (as by the planting of rumors) in order to influence public opinion or obscure the truth.

Misinformation: incorrect or misleading information.

Monetize: to utilize (something of value) as a source of profit.

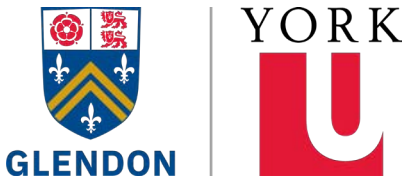
Online tracking: the practice of following, recording, storing, and repackaging your browsing history and habits in order to gather insights about what you do online or sell the data to third parties.

Profiling: the act or process of extrapolating information about a person based on known traits or tendencies.

Surveillance: close watch kept over someone or something (as by a detective).

Surveillance capitalism: an economic system in which the product for sale is personal data collected on the internet, especially from search engines and social media platforms.

Third parties: a third person or organization less directly involved in a matter than the main people or organizations that are involved.



York University's Glendon Campus has been offering exceptional bilingual university education unique in Canada for over fifty years. Our commitment to education and bilingualism also extends to our bilingual transitional programming for high school students. Learning a language is rewarding and fun, even if it can sometimes be frustrating. Our programming is designed to give students an opportunity to expand their vocabulary and learn important skills and competencies by participating in interactive workshops on financial literacy, leadership, urban geography, biology, psychology and a wide range of topics in the social sciences.

Our programming can be delivered to Francophone or Anglophone students in their mother tongue, or to Francophone and Anglophone students seeking to improve their second language learning (FSL or ESL).

#LifeLongLearningBeginsHere #BeingBilingualRocks #NinjaBilingue

Originally developed for in-person delivery, we are also able to deliver our programming remotely. Contact us today to find out how we can help you keep your students educated and engaged in and out of the classroom.

www.glendon.yorku.ca/brainboosting

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