



# Lecture 3-2

# Networked Communications

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# Participation Quiz

I just went to see Bastille play at UBC on Tuesday evening.



Did you? How great was the concert?

- A. I have no idea who Bastille is
- B. I've heard of them
- C. The concert wasn't bad
- D. The concert was great!
- E. Kevin likes Bastille? For shame! Ha ha...

# Government Control of the Internet

- North Korea: Internet mostly inaccessible; Myanmar: formerly inaccessible; Cuba: Notoriously slow & expensive.
- Saudi Arabia: centralized control
- People's Republic of China: “one of most sophisticated filtering systems in the world” as well as censorship
  - Current censorship of “occupy central” news on mainland
- Germany: Forbids access to neo-Nazi sites
- United States: Limits access of minors to pornography
- *Can you think of other examples?*

## Internet Controls by Country

Governments, especially authoritarian ones, are using increasingly sophisticated technologies to seize control of the internet.

|  | RUSSIA | TURKEY | CHINA | IRAN | UNITED STATES |
|--|--------|--------|-------|------|---------------|
| Social media or communication <b>apps blocked</b>  | ●      | ●      | ●     | ●    |               |
| Political, social or religious <b>content blocked</b>                                      | ●      | ●      | ●     | ●    |               |
| Local or national <b>shutdown of internet and social media</b>                             |        | ●      | ●     |      |               |
| Pro-government commentators <b>manipulate online discussions</b>                           | ●      | ●      | ●     | ●    |               |
| New law or directive increasing <b> censorship or punishment</b> passed                    | ●      | ●      | ●     |      |               |
| New law or directive <b>increasing surveillance and restricting anonymity</b> passed       | ●      |        |       |      |               |
| <b>Blogger or social media user arrested or imprisoned</b> for political or public content | ●      | ●      | ●     | ●    |               |
| <b>Blogger or social media user physically attacked or killed</b> (including in custody)   | ●      |        | ●     | ●    | ●             |
| <b>Technical attacks</b> against government critics or human-rights organizations          | ●      | ●      |       | ●    | ●             |
| <b>Freedom on the Net score</b>  | 66     | 66     | 87    | 85   | 21            |

# Forms of Direct Censorship

- Government monopolization of a communication medium
  - E.g., the government owns all television stations, or all printing presses, and so controls the message
  - Doesn't work so well with the Internet (though see Saudi Arabia; China)
- Prepublication review
  - Certain kinds of information must be reviewed before they can be published
  - E.g., nuclear/military secrets
- Licensing and registration
  - You can't operate a TV station without a license
  - Necessary because of limited bandwidth
  - Opens the door to regulation of content (as in Canada)

# Self-censorship

- Most common form of censorship
- Group decides for itself not to publish
- Reasons
  - Avoid subsequent prosecution
  - Maintain good relations with government officials (sources of information)
- A “soft” form of self-censorship: ratings systems
  - Movies, TVs, CDs, video games
  - Nothing similar has happened on the Web
    - At least, not consistently.

# Challenges Posed by the Internet

- Many-to-many communications
  - Hard for the government to shut down (but, Arab Spring)
- Dynamic connections
  - Computers coming and going all the time; hard to know who's who
- Huge numbers of Web sites
  - Hard to control access to online information
- Extends beyond national borders, laws
  - Governments may have limited authority to shut down sites
- Hard to distinguish between minors and adults
  - Important for initiatives that seek to restrict children's access

# Ethical Perspectives on Censorship

- Kant opposed censorship
  - Product of the Enlightenment: reaction to institutional control
  - “Have courage to use your own reason”
- Mill opposed censorship
  1. No one is infallible: we may silence the truth.
  2. Even if not, an opinion may contain a kernel of truth.
  3. Even if not, the truth must be rationally tested and validated.
  4. Ideas are most persuasive if they’re tested rigorously.

Principle of harm: “The only ground on which intervention is justified is to prevent harm to others; the individual’s own good is not a sufficient condition.”

*When, if ever, do you think censorship is justified?*



# Freedom of Expression: History

- De Scandalis Magnatum (England, 1275)
  - You could be imprisoned for weakening loyalty to the King
  - Not so different from lèse-majesty laws today, esp. in Thailand, Morocco, Jordan (see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lese-majesty>)
- 18th century: freedom of the press in England
  - Anyone could print what they liked
  - Punishment for libel: publication causing harm, even if truth
- American states adopted bills of rights including freedom of expression
  - Freedom of expression in 1st amendment to U.S. Constitution: “Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press”

# Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

1. The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* guarantees the rights and freedoms set out in it **subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law** as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.

2. Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms:

- (a) freedom of conscience and religion;
- (b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication;**
- (c) freedom of peaceful assembly; and
- (d) freedom of association.



# Freedom of Expression is always in the news



# Freedom of Expression is not an Absolute Right

- Right to freedom of expression must be balanced against the public good
- Various restrictions on freedom of expression exist
  - e.g., Section 1 of the Canadian Charter is used to justify laws against hate speech, even though these limit expression

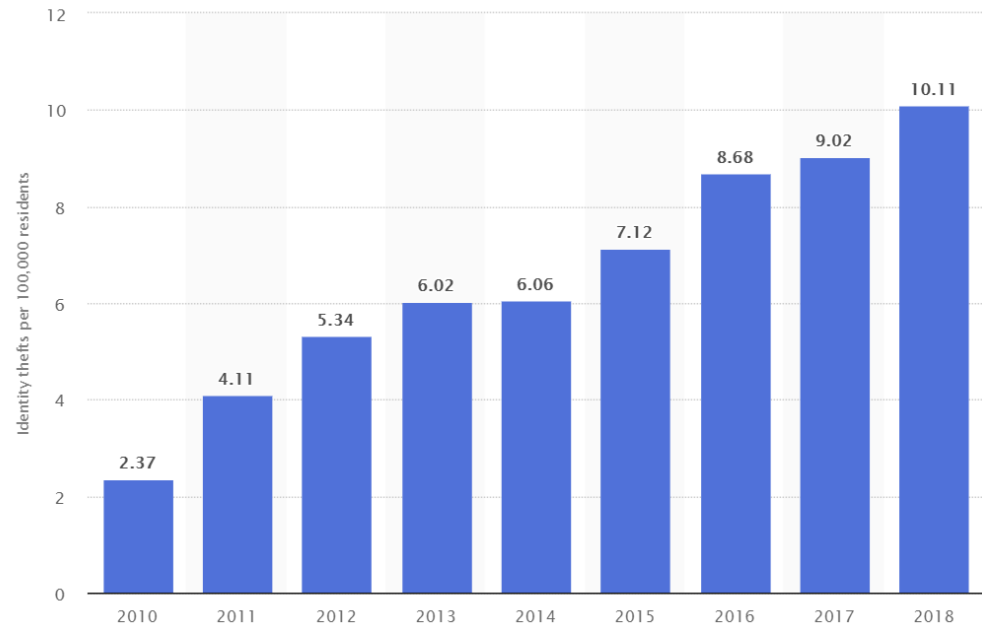
## **In pairs:**

*Which restrictions on freedom of expression do you think are justified?*

# Identity Theft

- Identity theft: when a person uses another person's electronic identity
- Phishing: use of email to attempt to deceive people into revealing personal information

Rate of identity thefts in Canada from 2010 to 2018



source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/544904/identity-theft-rate-canada/>

# A Timely Reminder

World Mental Health Day  
October 10



# Child Sex Abuse Imagery

- Recent explosion in online child sex abuse imagery  
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/09/28/us/child-sex-abuse.html>
  - 1998: 3,000 reports of child sex abuse imagery
  - 2009: over 100,000 reports
  - 2014: over 1,000,000 reports
  - 2018: over 18,400,000 reports
    - 1/3 of total ever reported; represents over 45,000,000 images
- It's important that we approach this issue with sensitivity
  - also important that we not ignore it; it's important
- *What factors contribute to this epidemic?*
- *Why have legal responses failed?*
- *What can be done?*

# Sexting

- Definition: sexually suggestive text messages or emails with nude or nearly nude photographs
- In a 2009 survey, 9% of U.S. teenagers admitted to sending a sext, 17% admitted to receiving a sext
- 2018 study: 14% sending; 25% receiving
- Case of Jesse Logan
  - killed herself after ex-boyfriend shared pictures
- Case of Phillip Alpert
  - just turned 18; sent pictures of his 16 year-old girlfriend.
  - sentenced and registered as a sex offender for child pornography
- Case of Ting-Yi Oei
  - principal kept a copy of a picture as evidence
  - angry parent sued him
  - lost job over child pornography charges

*How should society respond to sexting?*



# Cyberbullying

- Cyberbullying: Use of the Internet or phone system to inflict psychological harm
- In a 2009 survey, 10% admitted to cyberbullying, and 19% said they had been cyberbullied (2016 same)
- Case of Ghyslain Raza “the Star Wars kid”
  - videotape fell into the wrong hands, shared online, went viral
  - harassed at school, eventually dropped out
- Case of Megan Meier
  - 13 yr old girl met 16 yr old boy on myspace, flirted online
  - then he broke up: “you are a bad person and everyone hates you”
  - she killed herself
  - the boyfriend didn’t exist: two neighborhood girls and their mom
  - there was no law against what they did; no charges

## Girl allegedly commits suicide after being bullied



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CTV British Columbia  
Published Thursday, Oct. 11, 2012 11:33AM PDT  
Last Updated Thursday, Oct. 11, 2012 11:50AM PDT

Online condolences and tributes are spreading on social media after a teenage girl who was allegedly bullied in Coquitlam committed suicide.

The Gleneagle Secondary School student posted a YouTube video in September flipping through index cards that tell the story of how she was bullied.

The cards describe how she was forced to move schools several times because of bullying, but the torment never stopped.

She said she was punched and naked pictures of her were cruelly posted online.

## Vancouver area teen commits suicide after telling story of being cyberbullied (with video)

#RIPAmanda is trending as people post news and condolences for the teen, Amanda Todd

BY GILLIAN SHAW, VANCOUVER SUN OCTOBER 11, 2012 1:05 PM

A Vancouver area teen who told a heart-breaking story in a [YouTube video](#) of cyberbullying that led to an all-out schoolyard attack has committed suicide.

In stories and posts flooding Vancouver's social media networks, #RIPAmanda is trending as people post news and condolences for the teen, Amanda Todd. Amanda died in Coquitlam last night.

The young teen went to school in Maple Ridge but had changed schools and was living in Coquitlam. She joined YouTube on September 6 and posted her video September 7. Her last YouTube activity was when she added a Hunter Hayes music video to her favourites on YouTube.

On September 7, she also uploaded a presentation Cyber Bullying on Prezi in which she explains what cyberbullying is and gives advice on dealing with it.

In what could turn out to be her own very sad legacy, Todd urged people to stand up to bullies and to help their victims:

"If you see that someone is being bullied, don't be afraid to tell the bully to stop doing what they are doing. Make sure to tell them that it's wrong and that they shouldn't bully other kids."

To parents, Todd urged them "to always give your child emotional support" and help them if they are being bullied.

The Amanda Michelle Todd memorial Facebook page, posted early this morning, already has 2,000 people "liking" it.

# Chat-Room Predators

- Chat room: supports real-time discussions among many people connected to network
- Instant messaging and chat rooms replacing telephone for many people
- Some pedophiles meeting children through chat rooms
- Police countering with “sting” operations

## ***Are chatroom “stings” ethical?***

Kantianism, Utilitarianism (act/rule), Social Contract,  
Virtue Ethics

# Internet Addiction/Excessive Use

- Some liken compulsive computer use to pathological gambling
- Traditional definition of addiction:
  - Compulsive use of harmful substance or drug
  - Knowledge of its long-term harm
- Some people spend 40-80 hours/week on the Internet, with individual sessions lasting up to 20 hours



# Is Internet Addiction Real?

- Kimberly Young created test for Internet addiction
  - Sample question: “Have you repeatedly made unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back, or stop Internet use?”
  - Patients who answer “yes” to at least 5 of 8 questions may be addicted
- Arguments against it being an addiction
  - Computer use is generally considered a positive activity
  - Do not need more to function; we don’t develop a ‘tolerance’
  - Excessive use does not lead to criminal activity
  - More accurate to call excessive use a compulsion

# Vote

*Do you believe that internet addiction is real?*

A: Yes

B: No

*Does society bear an ethical responsibility for excessive internet use/internet addiction?*

A: Yes

B: Somewhat

C: No

*Should we hold tech companies accountable?*