Lecture 6-2
Privacy and the Government
Clicker Quiz: “Split the Dollar”

- Suppose I promised to give you $100, provided that you offer to split it with a random (anonymous) student in class, and he/she accepts your proposed split. If he/she rejects the split, you both get nothing.
- How much do you offer to the other student?
  - A. $50
  - B. $40
  - C. $30
  - D. $20
  - E. $10
Government-Issued ID

• Government-issued ID is needed for many activities
  – Getting into a bar
  – Flying on a plane
  – Renting a car
  – Opening a bank account

• Advantages:
  – reduce illegal activities
  – Hard for people to change identities

• Disadvantages:
  – Facilitates fraud (easier to assume my identity)
  – Facilitates data mining (provides a unique key)

Should everyone be required to have a government ID card?
Should there be rules about what I’m allowed to do without showing government ID?
Public Records: Statutory Disclosures

• Census
  – Purpose: ensure that seats in Parliament are apportioned correctly
  – Worry: this data may also be used for other purposes
  – Much recent political discussion about the long-form census

• Revenue Canada
  – Intentional disclosure (rogue employees)
  – Unintentional disclosure (lost laptops)

...how worried should we be about the existence of such records?
“Lie Detectors”

• Present Day: Polygraphs
  – Scientific status: ambiguous
    • NAS: better than chance, far from perfect (in lab conditions)
  – Legal status:
    • USA:
      – Maybe admissible as evidence
      – Subject must volunteer
    • Canada:
      – Not admissible as evidence
      – Legal for investigating

• Near Future: Neuroimaging
  – Legal status:
    • India: 1 murder conviction
A Working Lie Detector

Suppose a 98%-accurate lie detector were invented. What should its legal status be?

- A. Admissible in court, and can be court ordered.
- B. Admissible in court, if the subject volunteers. (USA)
- C. Usable during investigation, not admissible in court. (Canada)
- D. Never to be used.
Data Mining

• Data mining
  – Searching for patterns or relationships in one or more databases
  – This info typically provided by the customer for another purpose

• Many internet services are essentially provided as an opportunity to gather valuable data
  – Google; Facebook; free online courses

• Also performed by the government
  – Efforts to detect terrorism via phone, bank, travel records
  – Tax audits

• Questions:
  – Ethics: what data mining activities are unethical? Which are ethical?
  – Does it make a difference whether DM is opt-in or opt-out?
  – Should we worry about ending up in a “personalization bubble”?