Goldfish in a bowl

Teaching privacy literacy to undergraduates

Holly Reiter
Director, Library Teaching and Learning
holly.reiter@okstate.edu

OSU | LIBRARY

What we'll cover today

- What is "privacy literacy" and why is it important for undergraduates?

- Privacy outcomes and session details for a for-credit information literacy course

- Privacy outcomes and session details for a one-shot library session

- Reflections on teaching privacy to undergraduates

What is "privacy literacy"?

And why is it important for undergraduates?

LIBRARY

Privacy literacy

Privacy literate individuals should be able to:[5]

- Distinguish between different types of personal information
- Know the contexts in which they will share data and which they will not
- Understand the limitations of anonymity online
- Know the threats possible from over-exposing data

LIBRARY

Why teach privacy literacy?

- Privacy is a core value of librarianship[2, 3]
- Online environments exist on the "premise of information exchange."[5]
- Privacy paradox[7]

OSU LIBRARY

Teaching privacy in a credit-bearing IL course

LIBRARY

Learning outcomes

- Course outcome #7
  - Articulate how access to and awareness of information has a demonstrable impact on social, economic, and political well-being.

- Unit outcomes
  - Define privacy.
  - Discern how personal information is collected, stored, and shared in contexts relevant for them.
  - Decide whether to participate, modify, or disrupt the flow of their personal information.

OSU | LIBRARY

Unit context

- Scheduled in the last few weeks of a 16-week information literacy course.

- Issues of privacy have likely come up organically during the rest of the course, laying a foundation for "why this matters" with the students.

- Takes place over 2-3 class periods, and includes readings and out-of-class activities.

OSU | LIBRARY

Unit preparation

- Adapted from *Privacy Workshop*[1] by Alexandria Chisholm, available on Project CORA

- Reading: *Twelve Million Phones, One Dataset, Zero Privacy*[6] from the New York Times

Unit, part 1

- In-class presentation and reflections on their own data habits
  - Where have you left data tracks today?
  - What apps do you use daily?
  - What apps are required for you to be a student?
  - What does privacy mean to you?

Unit, part 2

- Presentation & discussion about different types of data
  - What kinds of data do you think is collected about you regularly?
- Activity:
  - With a small group (2-4), students read an article (from a curated list) about data that is collected in different contexts (location, health, consumer, etc.).
    - Discuss: What are the positive and negative impacts on individuals and society?

OSU LIBRARY

Unit, part 3

- Presentation & discussion about how to protect online privacy
  - What steps do you already take to protect your data?
  - What do you *not* do, that you think you probably should?
- Activity: explore one privacy-related resource and share something you learned, or something you are going to change about your habits, with the class.
  - Data Detox Kit
  - Privacy Rights Clearinghouse
  - Surveillance Self-Defense

LIBRARY

Challenges of teaching privacy in a one-shot

- No established relationship with the students
- May or may not have the ability to assign pre-work, like a reading
- Limited class time (50 or 75 minutes)
- Unsure of students' backgrounds/experience with/knowledge of privacy literacy

OSU | LIBRARY

What do I do? Mix & match.

Option 1

- Presentation & reflection on data habits
- Activity: read an article about data that is collected and think/pair/share.

Option 2

- Presentation & discussion about ways to protect online privacy
- Activity: Explore a privacy-related resource and think/pair/share.

OSU | LIBRARY

Reflections on teaching privacy literacy

Key takeaways from my classes

- Students are smart. They are already taking steps.
- Students *care* about privacy, they just do not always have the knowledge or agency to do something.
- Of all the concepts I teach, this one gets the most "follow up" from former students. It matters to them.

References

1. Chisholm, A. (2018). *Privacy Workshop*. Community of Online Research Assignments. https://www.projectcora.org/assignment/privacy-workshop

2. Core Values of Librarianship. (2019). ALA. https://www.ala.org/advocacy/advocacy/intfreedom/corevalues

3. Hartman-Caverly, S., & Chisholm, A. (2020). Privacy literacy instruction practices in academic libraries: Past, present, and possibilities. *IFLA Journal*, *46*(4), 305–327. https://doi.org/10.1177/0340035220956804

4. Kumar, P. C., & Byrne, V. L. (2022). The 5Ds of privacy literacy: A framework for privacy education. *Information and Learning Sciences*, *123*(7/8), 445–461. https://doi.org/10.1108/ILS-02-2022-0022

5. Rotman, D. (2009, February 8). Are You Looking At Me? - Social Media and Privacy Literacy. *Proceedings*. iConference 2009, Chapel Hill. https://hdl.handle.net/2142/15339

6. Thompson, S. A., & Warzel, C. (2019, December 19). Twelve Million Phones, One Dataset, Zero Privacy. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/12/19/opinion/location-tracking-cell-phone.html

7. Trepte, S., Teutsch, D., Masur, P. K., Eicher, C., Fischer, M., Hennhöfer, A., & Lind, F. (2015). Do People Know About Privacy and Data Protection Strategies? Towards the "Online Privacy Literacy Scale" (OPLIS). In S. Gutwirth, R. Leenes, & P. de Hert (Eds.), *Reforming European Data Protection Law* (pp. 333–365). Springer Netherlands. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-9385-8_14

OSU LIBRARY