

To the Editor December 23, 2019

## Stop using Google

The Internet was purposely designed with intelligence, like personal computers and other devices, only at the end points. More specifically it was designed as a democratic system with no centralized computer control of access, or data collection. This design was mostly a reaction to the perceived centralized fascistic operation of the prior mainframe computer era and its dumb terminals for computer users.

But now these unbridled capitalist digital gangster corporations like Google, have inserted themselves as Internet gateways into every transaction and communication across your Internet. They have, without your express permission, exerted Eminent Domain over your personal data. They refer to this data as digital exhaust, a euphemism to obfuscate and diminish this theft. Google alone (10 million servers headed for 100 million) collects a staggering amount of data and stores it forever. More than 500 megabytes per person **per day**. By way of comparison, this letter as an MS Word document equals about 0.3% of that amount of daily collected personal data.

*New York (CNN Business) Google has confirmed its collecting health data on millions of Americans through a new partnership with Ascension, one of the country's largest nonprofit health systems. The project is codenamed "Project Nightingale," although this revelation is light on specifics, Google and Ascension said the partnership would integrate Ascension's various silos of health data into the cloud.(in other words, Googles server computers)*

Imaging how this data might be used against you in the future, for insurance applications, college admissions, life insurance applications, or employment applications. Think of the effect not only on you, but your children and grandchildren.

Not unlike the Truman show movie, Google is using their tools and code to record everyone's digital lives, monitoring, guiding, predicting behaviors, and make enormous profits from doing this.

What to do? Stop giving them your personal data! Use DuckDuckGo or StartPage for a search engine that doesn't track you. Use browser extensions to block ads and tracking your browsing history, and use Private Browsing.

Stop using the Google Chrome browser because it tracks you, the Mozilla Firefox browser does not. Do not buy or use a Chromebook, it is a surveillance tool. Don't use Alexa for the same reason. Stop using Google Docs and use Libre Office or MS Office instead. Don't use Google Maps or YouTube. Use [openstreetmap.org](https://www.openstreetmap.org) and [Vimeo.com](https://www.vimeo.com) instead. I know you like cat videos, but do it anyway. Don't use a Ring doorbell either, or other Internet connected cameras and monitors.

*Amazon is facing criticism over its home security cameras called Ring, after a data leak exposed the personal information of over 3,000 users. The data breach, includes emails, passwords and other sensitive information that would allow hackers to access live camera footage from inside every room of people's homes. The data breach follows criticism over Ring's cooperation with more than 400 police departments, giving cops the ability to use homeowners' camera footage in their investigations. A group of 30 civil rights groups published a joint letter demanding that lawmakers stop the police partnership, calling it a threat to civil rights and liberties, especially for black and brown communities. [https://www.democracynow.org/...](https://www.democracynow.org/)*

Corporate abuse can be stopped, as were the 19th-century Robber Barons. Government intervention filed an antitrust case against IBM in the 1970's, broke up AT&T in the 1980's, throttled Microsoft with a consent decree in the 1990's , and fined Facebook and Google millions of dollars numerous times in the 2000's.

You should advocate for enforcement of existing laws, and for creating data protection laws like those enacted in the European Union.

The "Don't be Evil" slogan of an early benevolent startup company has been replaced by a malevolent software industry monopolist, because of all the money they can make from you.

To quote whistleblower Ed Snowden, "I don't want to live in a world where everything that I say, everything I do, every thought, every aspiration, everyone I talk to, every expression of creativity or love or friendship is recorded and stored permanently."

Remember, there is no cloud. That is just another corporate euphuism for other peoples computers. And in the cloud your personal information is not yours, but theirs.

They cannot be trusted, as they have a proven history of not being able to protect your data, and of using it in personally detrimental ways. You have everything to lose.