

Who's Watching You? Demand Your Dot Rights!

High School essay contest on internet privacy



You rely on the Internet to learn, share, shop, and connect with friends- logging onto Google, Facebook, YouTube, and many other online sites throughout the day. And all the time, personal information is collected about you from these sites. Everything from what you search for online, what videos you watch, what books you buy, who your friends are, where you go, and what you like to do?

Schools, employers, and the government can be very interested in these profiles. Even when you think your information is "private," information can end up being

used in ways that you did not anticipate.

Because electronic privacy laws have not kept up with the modern online world, the government and third parties often don't need to get approval from a judge in the form of a court order before they force a company to turn over detailed information about you- they can just ask.

Please write a 500-1000 word essay responding to either or both of the questions below:

1. Why is online privacy important? What would happen to our society if the government had unlimited access to everything that we did online?
2. What should be done to protect privacy online? Should you have to choose between using online sites and keeping control of your personal information? Should there be new laws or should the burden be on you and other Internet users to protect personal information by not using the sites or not putting up the information in the first place?

Before writing your essay, you should visit the ACLU of Northern California Demand your dotRights website at www.dotrights.org/education and Tracked in America website at www.trackedinamerica.org, for background on online privacy and surveillance issues. You may also want to review Article I, Section 1 of the California Constitution and the Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution.

PRIZES/RULES: First Place \$150, Second Place \$75, Third Place \$25. Winners will be awarded in early June, 2010. Entrants must be high school students residing in or attending school in Campbell, Cupertino, Gilroy, Los Gatos, Milpitas, Monte Serano, Morgan Hill, San Jose, Santa Clara, Saratoga, or Sunnyvale

Entries should be submitted electronically to acluscv@hotmail.com by **May 1, 2010**.

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