

CSE312/ISE312

Gift of Fire, Fourth edition by Sara Baase

Read: Section 3.3-3.4
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Net_neutrality

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What We Will Cover

- Posting, Selling, and Leaking Sensitive Material
- Anonymity
- The Global Net: Censorship and Political Freedom
- Net Neutrality Regulations or the Market?

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Censorship and Political Freedom

- Authoritarian governments have impeded flow of information and opinion throughout history
- The Internet threatens governments in countries that lack political and cultural freedom (e.g., collapse of Soviet Union)
- Oppressive governments now restricting access
 - Some countries (e.g., China, Saudi Arabia) own the Internet backbone within their countries and limit content
 - Some countries ban all or certain types of access to the Internet

What are your experiences in non-US countries?

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Tools of Censorship/Oppression

- Ban YouTube (Turkey)
- Block pornography and gambling (Saudi Arabia)
- Banned Internet telephony (Pakistan)
- Internet access (Myanmar, middle east countries)
- Ban/restrict Skype (China)
- Web censorship (China, Iran)
- Identify dissidents (Tunisia, Lybia)

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Censorship and Political Freedom

- To operate within a country, companies must comply with the local laws
- Examples
 - Skype works with a Chinese company
 - Yahoo provided info to China that led to jailing of pro-democracy activists
 - Google modified search engine to comply with China's restrictions

What are the ethical considerations for a company doing business in a country that 1) restricts access to data and 2) requests info to help identify dissidents?

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Censorship and Political Freedom

Discussion Questions

- *Should we participating companies as*
 - *partners in the Chinese government's ethically unacceptable restriction on debate and access to information by its citizens? or*
 - *appropriately respecting the culture and laws of the host country?*
- *Does censorship in other countries have an impact on free speech in the U.S.?*

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Selling Surveillance Tools

- Repressive governments intercept citizens' communications and filter Internet content.
- Companies in Western democracies sell them tools to do so
 - Filter Web content
 - Hack cellphones and computers
 - Collect and analyze massive amounts of Internet data
 - Monitor social networks
 - Track cellphone users

Is it ethical for companies to sell tools to repressive governments/

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Shutting Down Communications

- In free countries
- In the U.S., the Supreme Court would probably declare unconstitutional a law that authorized a government agency to order a private communications service to shut down
- However, there are other precedents
 - BART shutdown of wireless services
 - Possibility of signal blockers
- Precedent of 2004 NY Convention

Should governments have the ability to restrict coordination among demonstrators?

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Net Neutrality

- Refers to a variety of proposals for restrictions on how telephone and cable companies interact with their broadband customers and set fees for services
- Should net providers have the ability
 - to exclude service based on content or content source
 - Charge differential pricing (tiered service)
- Decided in US with a 2015 FCC ruling that the Internet is a common carrier
- Affirmed in 2016 DC Court of Appeals ruling

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