Title: An Empirical Investigation of Privacy: The Impact of Multiple Levels of Trust

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ABSTRACT

The research and writing related to privacy has approached the concept from psychological or philosophical perspectives with little empirical foundations. While the concept has been discussed and debated theoretically for years, little to no data has been collected. This article seeks to remedy this issue using a nationally representative web-based sample. The main focus of the paper is to provide an overview of the most influential contributors to privacy research and their theories of privacy, while also providing an exploratory empirical examination of three conceptualizations of privacy: privacy with personal information, privacy with financial information, and privacy with others’ information. Using three structural equation models, a number of demographic factors along with three levels of trust are employed to predict these three conceptualizations of privacy. Results indicate that privacy is a complex feature of individuals, with willingness to share different types of information having different predictors. This paper begins to lay the groundwork for a series of empirical investigations of differences in individuals perceptions of privacy.
INTRODUCTION

Privacy is commonly defined as “the state or condition of being free from being observed or disturbed by other people” (Merriam-Webster 2014). Warren and Brandeis (1890), wrote an article entitled *The Right to Privacy* which is often credited as the first publication to establish the philosophical grounds for a right to privacy and for over a 125 years, privacy has been viewed as a natural right with individuals desiring the protection of their personal lives and information. While the right to privacy was included in the 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, the legal conceptualization of privacy within America is viewed as implicit within the U.S. Constitution, however, this right has been highly debated over the years. With the recent events regarding the controversy of governmental surveillance in 2013, the right to privacy has been brought to the forefront once again. Individuals are forced to determine whether their right to privacy is more important than their safety. Beyond issues of national security and governmental surveillance, privacy has also become an individual-level concern with individuals having the ability to share personal information faster and easier than ever before. In a world of continuous technological advancements allowing individuals to share information in a variety of ways across multiple mediums, privacy has becoming an increasingly difficult concept to define and protect. Despite the increasing difficulty of defining and theorizing about privacy in recent years, the concept of privacy has been creating theoretical and definitional issues for over 50 years (Margulis 2003). A majority of privacy research falls within philosophy, political science and psychology with little to no sociological research conducted. Notwithstanding the lack of sociological research on privacy, several questions emerge from the previous body of research: Are there patterns in the ways groups of individuals define privacy based on a variety of structural and individual-level characteristics? What information do we consider too private to
share with others? For example, are some people just private about their financial information or are their entire personal lives off-limits? Do people only worry about their own privacy or are they considerate when it comes to respecting the privacy of others? What predicts how private a person is and what factors influence a person’s level of privacy? These questions mark the beginning of a research trajectory aimed at empirically and theoretically exploring the sociological nature of privacy. This paper is the first amongst several to empirically explore the concept of privacy using a large nationally representative sample of U.S. adults. This paper begins with a review of the privacy literature drawing from theories and perspectives within philosophy, political science, and psychology. It continues with a discussion of the concept of trust and how various levels of trust may or may not impact three different conceptualizations of privacy: general privacy, financial privacy, and respecting the privacy of others. Following the literature review is a measurement section describing the operationalization of the variables and a discussion of the statistical analysis utilized to explore the relationship between trust and the privacy outcomes. Next, a discussion of the results is provided which is followed by a conclusion which describes the major findings, limitations, and suggestions for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theories of Privacy

Due to the broad applicability and complex nature of privacy, a variety of disciplines has theoretically examined the concept in several different manners. A review of the privacy literature reveals different disciplines approach the topic from distinct perspectives. Philosophy attempts to articulate privacy’s recondite foundations; Political science approaches privacy as a social issue requiring public policy solutions; and Psychology approaches privacy as mental
mechanisms for the protection and control of information. It is the latter perspective that has been the most influential in definitions and theories of privacy.

Theories of privacy fall into three broad categories: non-intrusion, seclusion, control or limitation (Tavani 2007). First, the non-intrusion theories of privacy generally define privacy in terms of natural rights, such as a right to “being let alone” or as an aspect of liberty from government intrusion. This perspective is largely influenced by the scholarship of Louis Brandeis and Samuel Warren, specifically their 1890 article entitled “The Right to Privacy.” Second, a seclusion theory of privacy defines the concept as an actual physical separation or isolation from others, thus limiting or entirely eliminating opportunities for others to observe an individual. This perspective, though it addresses an important aspect of privacy, fails to address the full breadth of issues related to privacy. Third, control or limitation theories of privacy, treated by most theorists as identical concepts, address privacy as a means or need of controlling access to an individual’s personal information. The minor distinctions between the two perspectives exists when considering how this control or limitation is accomplished (Tavani, 2007). Taken together, these theories constitute the theoretical background for privacy research.

Amongst privacy researchers there is minor debate about the categorization and/or classification of the primary theories of privacy. It seems a healthy consensus exists, however, that the theories can be categorized as falling into the control or limitation category, though they are often referred to as limited access theories of privacy (Margulis 2003a). This perspective approaches privacy as mechanisms, either singular or many interconnected mechanisms, which limit or controls who has access to information possessed by an individual. Within the limited access theories of privacy literature, Irwin Altman (1975) and Alan Westin (1967) are the major contributors to the advancement of our understanding of privacy. It is also necessary, however,
to mention the writings of Stephen Margulis (2003a; 2003b) who contributed important commentary and analysis of Altman and Westin’s work. Additionally, Margulis provided guidance for future privacy research.

Defining Privacy

Defining privacy and creating practical theories is difficult due to the simple diversity within the concept, its uses, and who is concerned with it. In addition, defining privacy is complicated because it may have a diversity of meanings to different people. For example, privacy, as a concern, will naturally fall upon different objects with varying levels of intensity based upon a person’s age, social structural location, and/or their personality. Despite the various differences in how theorists define and articulate privacy, several universals exist between definitions. First, nearly every theory or definition of privacy is information centric. For example, a discussion of privacy is synonymous with a discussion of information. Privacy merely focuses on the normative and practical issues surrounding who should and should not have access and control to certain information. This information can be diverse ranging from the manifest and physical such as the information contained in a room (its physical contents) to the emotional or intellectual (a person’s state of mind or emotional reaction to events in their life). With emerging technology new dimensions of concern regarding privacy may even extend into cognitive processing; such that privacy concerns protecting knowledge of the actual workings of a person’s moment to moment conscious experience. Two prominent privacy theorists who have influenced a large body of privacy research are Westin and Altman both provide their own unique spin on a definition of privacy.

Alan F. Westin in his 1967 book Privacy and Freedom roots his theory of privacy deep within animal psychology which retains an expression in modern humans. This expression is
rooted in territoriality, the inherent nature of most animals to stake out a position and defend it from intrusion. Westin maintains this is, in principal, an animal claim to “private space” and it is by this means that an animal is capable of performing the normal functions of mate selection and child rearing, while excluding intruders and interlopers (Westin 1967). For lower animals this territoriality extends no farther than the physical, however, in humans this need to defend territory pushes into the abstract areas of mind and relationships. Westin (1967: 7) defines privacy in the following way:

Privacy is the claim of individuals, groups, or institutions to determine for themselves when, how, and to what extent information about them is communicated to others. Viewed in terms of the relation of the individual to social participation, privacy is the voluntary and temporary withdrawal of a person from the general society through physical or psychological means, either in a state of solitude or small group intimacy or, when among large groups, in a condition of anonymity or reserve.

Within this definition there are several important points deserving attention. First, Westin recognizes concern for privacy extends beyond the individual and includes groups or institutions while also defining privacy as the selective transmission of information to others. Some theorists have stressed Westin’s claim that privacy is a “withdrawal of a person from the general society,” but it is important to note he frames this, not only in physical terms, but also states this withdrawal can be achieved by “psychological means.” Westin also maintains that “privacy is neither a self-sufficient state nor an end in itself, but a means for achieving the overall end of self-realization” (Margulis 2003b: 2). Westin bifurcates his theory into states of privacy and functions of privacy: effectively summarized as the means and ends of privacy. Westin further articulates differences between desired and achieved levels of privacy, and how distress occurs as a result of having either more or less achieved privacy than is desired.
Westin’s four states of privacy (Solitude, Intimacy, Anonymity, and Reserve) are the mechanisms which are used to achieve the desired level of privacy. First, solitude is the actual physical separation of the individual “from the group and freed from observation of other persons.” Westin qualifies this by stating it does not imply a perfect solitude from the disturbance created by other people, which he describes as “jarring physical stimuli, such as noise, odors and vibrations.” Second, intimacy is a small group retreating from society at large to “achieve a close, relaxed, and frank relationship…” (Westin 1967: 31) The actual mechanism Westin means for this intimacy to be achieved is somewhat unclear within his writing. Whether this intimacy is merely the solitude of more than one person or referring to the more complex interplay of a small group who have a more intimate relationship than mere strangers is unknown. Third, anonymity is the withholding or the obscuring of one’s personal identity. Westin articulates this as being achieved either by physically submerging oneself into public spaces and blending into the crowd, or by failing to reveal identifying features, such as publishing anonymously. Fourth, reserve, on Westin’s account, is the most subtle, and likely the most often used state of privacy. It is the “creation of a psychological barrier against unwanted intrusion” (Westin 1967:31). The exact means by which this is done, however, is not entirely clear and varies. According to Westin, etiquette rules may be one way of maintaining reserve given that these rules make it socially unacceptable for certain things to be discussed amongst certain people i.e. one does not discuss their sex life with their employer. It is important to note this requires the willing participation of those in contact with the reserved individual. Alternatively, it is certainly possible for these etiquette rules to be broken or for others to actively seek to subvert an individual’s ability to withhold information particularly by means of surveillance or coercion.
These four states of privacy are meant to achieve the functions of privacy: Personal Autonomy, Emotional Release, Self-Evaluation, and Limited or Protected Communication. Personal autonomy is the freedom from being under the influence of any outside force whether by means of manipulation or coercion. Emotional release is the relaxation from the necessity of occupying a social role in society and is facilitated from being protected from societal enforcement for minor deviations from social norms. Self-evaluation provides for the integration of collected information and the time for needed self-reflection beyond the view of society at large. Limited communication allows for the setting of boundaries between individuals, in essence maintaining individual sovereignty regardless of the intimacy of any given relationship. Protected communication allows “for the sharing of confidences and intimacies with those he trusts…” (Westin 1967: 38). On Westin’s account, privacy is an operation with a particular goal, this goal being “self-actualization”. This is the salient point of his theory as distress from a failure to achieve privacy is stressful not due to vulnerability or the violation of a natural right but because it does not allow a person to realize their full potential which is a far different perspective than that taken by other theorists.

The second major privacy theorist, Altman, largely expands and refines Westin’s theory of privacy, retaining and changing certain crucial aspects of the original work. Altman proposes some significant linkages between the concepts of territoriality or personal space and the expression of privacy, while maintaining that privacy is a “dynamic process of interpersonal boundary control” with differentiated “desired and actual levels of privacy” (Margulis 2003b:419). Altman defines privacy as “selective control of access to the self or to one’s group” and he further articulates the central characteristics include allowing for a diversity of social units and treating privacy as a bi-directional and dynamic process (Altman 1975: 18). Similar to
Westin, Altman proposes that privacy is a cultural universal, though the expression of concern for privacy or the dynamic process is likely culturally specific and unrecognizable from one society to another.

Several other theories of privacy exist, but they are largely derivative from the work of Westin and Altman. Most of the research following Altman approaches privacy as being related to the environment somehow, though what environment is not always clear and certainly not universal across research efforts. For example, environment can mean the architecture of a space or building, the set of social circumstances an individual finds him or herself in, or it could mean the environment of constructed meanings contained within our thoughts (Margulis 2003b). While theoretically grounded in the work of Altman and Westin, this research is exploratory in nature and seeks to explore multiple conceptualizations of privacy. The main goal of the research is to identify factors that predict differences in individuals’ perception of personal privacy, financial privacy, and the privacy of others. Considering little to no empirical research on privacy exists, this research examines multiple levels of trust as well as several demographic factors as predictors of these various conceptualizations of privacy.

*The Concept of Trust*

Previously within research, trust is treated both as a stable aspect of a person’s personality (some individuals are inherently more trusting of others) and as being situational (trust is either more likely or more necessary in certain circumstances as compared to others). Trust as a concept has two primary components: the act of trusting (referred to in the literature as “trust”) and the quality of being trustworthy (referred to in the literature as “trustworthiness”). Additionally, trust (the act) has two further components: trust is relational and is seldom unconditional. To explain, when discussing trust as relational, one is referring to the fact that
trust involves more than two parties, usually an individual and another individual, group, or institution. When one is describing trust as seldom being unconditional, one is referring to the fact that trust is given almost always to a specific individual, group, or institution over a specific domain (Levi and Stoker, 2000).

When including trust within research, the distinction between trust and trustworthiness is an important one. The act of trusting is largely situational. One may be influenced by their vulnerability in a given situation, their power, or their ability to exit the interaction cleanly. In addition, one can be heavily influenced by the quality of trustworthiness either in the person trusting or the person being trusted. A person who is inherently trustworthy is one who has demonstrated either a commitment to a principle of abiding by their obligations, promises, a moral code, or they have displayed a sufficient competence or capability to fulfill their obligations and promises, so “the trustworthy will not betray the trust as a consequence of either bad faith or ineptitude” (Levi and Stoker 2000:476).

For the purposes of this research it is important to make one further distinction within the concept of trust, and this distinction relates to who is involved in the trust transaction. Trust in this research is divided into general trust; trust related to non-governmental societal actors, such as other individuals; and trust of government. These three levels are treated as stable aspects of a person’s personality or character rather than as being situational, though trust as a whole concept is both principled and practical. Trust of government is also treated as a stable quality rather than relating to incumbent government, a salient distinction made in previous research on trust and government. This distinction between “trust of people” and “trust of government” is important because the relationship of an individual and government related to trust and privacy is
profoundly different than most other relationships, because of contemporary issues and enduring conflicts.

As privacy consists of mechanisms for concealing and revealing information, it is far easier to measure what individuals are willing to reveal as they naturally do not advertise that which they wish to conceal. Because of this, the current research effort naturally focuses on what information and to what degree individuals are willing to share. What factors determine what an individual is willing to reveal are varied and numerous, and are both situational and stable, but trust is likely a key component in any privacy related decision.

METHODS

Data

The data analyzed are from a nationally representative web-based panel of U.S. adults. The sample was provided by Survey Sampling International (SSI), using their Dynamix sampling platform. This technique initially contacts individuals via traditional random digit-dialing and cell phone sampling frames. The initial contact establishes whether individuals are willing to participate in online panel surveys and collects some basic demographic information. If the respondents agree to participate, they are added to SSI’s pool for online panels. Emails are then sent to inform participants of new surveys when they come available. The Dynamix sampling method has been shown to produce nationally representative samples that are equivalent to random digit-dialing techniques (Braunsberger, Hans, and Gates 2007; Yeager, Krosnick, Change, Javitz, Levendusky, Simpser, and Wang 2011). The current sample consists of 1312 U.S. adults, 18 years of age or older. The full survey consisted of over 150 questions and took respondents 20-25 minutes to complete.
Measurement

This paper examines three different conceptualizations of privacy as the main endogenous variables. As noted in the literature review, privacy is a concept that is very difficult to define, and even more difficult to measure. Since individuals naturally will not report regarding information they wish to keep private, the survey was designed to ask respondents about what information they would be willing to share. The more information and people they are willing to share with, the less private they are being with that information. The first conception examines individuals’ levels of privacy with their personal information. This concept was measured with seven items. Respondents were asked to select whether the statement was “very characteristic” or “not characteristic” of them on a zero to ten scale. Higher scores on these items represent lower levels of privacy. The first statement reads “I am a private person.” The other seven statements are about the frequency an individual shares “deeply personal information.” Each of the six items are worded similarly except that the “other” that is referred to. For example the second statement reads:

“I frequently share deeply personal information with those I have an intimate relationship with (i.e. spouse, partner, boyfriend, or girlfriend.)”

The bolded section of this statement changes for the other six items, with the following inserted: close friends (people I can count on if I need help), friends (people I know and do things with), coworkers, parents/guardians, and family members (other than parents). The second conception of privacy examines individuals’ willingness to share personal financial information with others. Similar to the first set of items, the eight financial privacy statements refer to a number of different “others.” These items all are worded similar to: “I discuss my personal financial information with my employers.” The bolded section of the statement is altered for each item and includes: close friends (people I can count on if I need help), friends (people I know and do
things with), girlfriend/boyfriend/husband/wife/partner, parents/guardians, siblings, extended family members, coworkers, and employers. The final conceptualization of privacy measures individuals’ willingness to keep others information private. Respondents are asked to select on a zero to ten scale whether they “Strongly Disagree” or “Strongly Agree” with each statement.

Eight items are used to measure this conceptualization:

* It is okay to eavesdrop on other people’s conversations when they are in earshot.
* It is okay to just knock and announce before entering a neighbor’s home.
* It is okay to listen to people’s cell phone conversations when they are within ear shot.
* It is okay to take a photo/video of a stranger in public without them knowing.
* It is okay to post pictures/video of strangers to social media without them knowing.
* It is important to keep information private when asked to do so by those I have an intimate relationship with (i.e. spouse, partner, boyfriend, or girlfriend.)
* It is important to keep information private when asked to do so by close friends (people I can count on if I need help).
* It is important to keep information private when asked to do so by friends (people I know and do things with).

In order to explore individuals’ levels of privacy, this paper explores a number of demographic factors as well as three levels of trust as predictors of these three conceptualizations of privacy. Education is measured with a single item asking respondents “Which of the following best describes your education?” Respondents are given “Less than high school,” “High school graduate,” “Some college or technical school,” “College graduate,” and “Graduate or professional degree” as possible responses. Age is measured simply by asking respondents “What is your age?” and giving a space to type their age. Gender is measured by asking respondents “What is your gender?” and giving “Male” and “Female” as possible responses. Lastly, income is measured with the following item and response categories:
Below are some income categories. Please choose the category that best describes your personal income. Do not include income from members of the household.

1. Less than $9,999
2. Between $10,000 and $14,999
3. Between $15,000 and $19,999
4. Between $20,000 and $24,999
5. Between $25,000 and $29,999
6. Between $30,000 and $34,999
7. Between $35,000 and $39,999
8. Between $40,000 and $44,999
9. Between $45,000 and $49,999
10. Between $50,000 and $59,999
11. Between $60,000 and $74,999
12. Above $75,000

In addition to these demographic factors, three levels of trust are examined as possible predictors of individuals’ levels of privacy. The three levels examined include a general measure of trust, a measure of trust in other people, and a measure of trust in government. The first general measure of trust is designed to examine an individual’s overall level of trust. The concept is measured with five items. Respondents are asked to select whether the following statements are “Not at all like me” or “exactly like me” on a zero to ten scale.

I am concerned that someone may be monitoring my cell phone calls, text messages, and emails.

I do not take phone calls in public areas.

I close the shades in my home because my neighbors may be peering in.

I speak in hushed tones in public no matter how impersonal my conversation may be.

I avoid social media for fear of others monitoring my activities.

The second level of trust, regarding individuals’ trust of others, is measured with four items. Respondents are asked to select whether they “Strongly Disagree” or “Strongly Agree” with each item on a zero to ten scale. The items include:

Most people are basically good and kind.
**It is safest to assume that all people have a vicious or mean streak and it will come out when they are given a chance.**

**Most people who get ahead in the world lead clean, moral lives.**

**Anyone who completely trusts anyone else is asking for trouble.**

Lastly, trust in government is measured with seven items using the same “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree” scale. The seven items are:

- **Governments generally abide by the will of the people.**
- **Governments only keep secrets that would otherwise endanger their citizens.**
- **Governments can be trusted most of the time to do the right thing for most people.**
- **Government power can only be checked and guarded against by an armed populace.**
- **The opinion of the general public is the main influence on public policy decisions in government.**
- **The opinion of the rich and powerful is the main influence on public policy decisions in government.**
- **Centralized power in government can never be trusted.**

**RESULTS**

Three structural equation models are estimated; one for each conceptualization of privacy. These models are estimated using Stata 13 and the conceptual model shown in Figure 1. Overall, the models fit the data adequately. A number of fit statistics are reported in Table 1, 2, and 3 for the three models. While the chi-square is significant, the RMSEA and CFI in each model support adequate fit of the models.

The first model examines personal privacy as an outcome of demographic factors and the three levels of trust. The results are shown in Table 1. Interestingly, none of the exogenous variables are significantly related to personal privacy. None of the four demographic factors
impact individuals’ report of privacy with “deeply personal” information. Additionally, neither general trust, trust of others, nor trust of government is significantly related to personal privacy. This suggests that privacy with deeply personal information has little to do with levels of trust, or demographic factors. In this model, it seems that privacy with personal information is a relatively static feature for respondents.

The second model, shown in Table 2, replaces deeply personal information with financial information. In terms of demographic information, both age and gender are negatively related to individuals’ privacy with financial information. The financial privacy items are coded such that a higher score represents lower levels of privacy. Thus, as age increases, individuals’ level of privacy with financial information also increases (p<.001). Additionally, gender is coded with male as zero and thus the negative effect shows that males report significantly higher levels of privacy with financial information (p<.001). Unlike personal privacy, financial privacy is predicted by two of the three levels of trust. General trust is significantly positively related to financial privacy (p<.001); the higher an individual’s level of general trust, the less private they are with their financial information. This effect is understandable given that most people must be willing to trust in order to divulge specific information. In addition, trust in government is significantly positively related to financial privacy (p<.01). As individuals’ level of trust in government increases, their privacy with financial information decreases.

The third and final model examines individuals’ levels of privacy with other people’s information. The results are shown in Table 3. Three of the four demographic factors are significant predictors of privacy with others’ information. The measure of others privacy is coded such that higher scores represent higher levels of privacy. Thus, as individuals’ level of education increases, their reported levels of keeping others information private also decrease
(p<.01). In addition, older individuals (p<.001) and females (p<.01) report higher levels of privacy with others information. In terms of trust, similar to model 2, general trust (p<.001) and trust in government (p<.001) are both significantly related to privacy with others information. As these two levels of trust increase, levels of privacy with others information decreases. This provides more support for the notion that being a trusting person and trusting the government will decrease individuals’ levels of privacy in terms of the release of information. The more trusting an individual is, the more information they are willing to divulge, at least in terms of financial and other peoples’ information. This is possibly due to their belief that who they divulge this information to will be appropriately private themselves.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This paper is the first of a series to empirically examine individuals’ perceptions of privacy. Given the lack of empirical research, this analysis was exploratory in nature, simply seeking to examine what factors predict individuals’ levels of privacy. Given that privacy is notoriously hard to define, and varies from individual to individual, the overall concept was broken down into three different conceptualizations of privacy: personal, financial, and others privacy. These three conceptualizations of privacy were used as outcomes in separate structural equation models using a number of demographic variables and three levels of trust as predictors. The results indicate personal privacy is not predicted by any of the levels of trust or demographic variables examined. Additionally, the other two conceptualizations of privacy, financial and others information, are predicted by some of the demographic information and two of three levels of trust. It is possible that privacy with regard to deeply personal information is a relatively static concept, while privacy with financial and others information is more fluid, and dependent upon situational factors. For example, norms within our society dictate that disclosing
one’s financial situation on a first date may not be advantageous, and therefore, an individual deems this information to be private. Alternatively, when discussing the purchase of a new house or vehicle with one’s significant other, the sharing of financial information is expected. In addition, childhood socialization teaches us to treat others how we want to be treated, which helps shed light on why individuals respect the privacy of others. If you expect others to keep your information private, the norm of reciprocity prescribes you do the same with others’ information you are privy to. Your willingness to respect another person’s privacy, however, may differ depending on the information available, the situation you are in, the consequences of violating their privacy, or the relationship you have with that individual. One’s respect for another’s privacy is, therefore, more susceptible to external forces. Lastly, when considering privacy with regard to one’s deeply personal information, this aspect of privacy is relatively stable for an individual and is potentially capturing a component of their personality or an individual trait. For a “private” person, it is entirely feasible that, regardless of their levels of trust and demographic factors, they are a private person and their actions and beliefs reflect this aspect of their identity.

As with any research, there is always room for important both theoretically and methodologically. There are several limitations within the current work worth noting. First, given the exploratory nature of the research, the models estimated in the current paper are relatively basic and only begin to examine the potential factors influencing privacy. Second, given the data was collected online (or even that data was gathered at all), the sample may be missing those individuals with the most extreme levels of privacy. These individuals are highly unlikely to purposely share their information via a survey and may be particularly unlikely to do
so in an online format. Lastly, as has been noted, the survey does not truly measure privacy, rather it measures what people are willing to share as a proxy for how private they are. These results and limitations point to future research examining both privacy as a trait (“I am a private person”) as well as privacy as a variable based on any number of factors including: the type of information, the context of interaction, the trust in specific others, or one’s social structural location. Future research will seek to explore privacy as a component of personality or as a “person identity” (Burke and Stets 2009), which carries throughout interactions and defines an individual across those situations as a private person. Additionally, future research should explore the impact of social media and how privacy unfolds across multiple mediums. With the rising popularity and use of social media sites and texting via cell phones and tablets, “the privacy feature” of these sites and devices is of utmost importance for privacy researchers as we move forward into this digital age of communication and information sharing. One possible question to explore is: How do private people disseminate personal information online or do they avoid these social networking sites altogether? Future research should explore additional questions related to this topic. While this research is exploratory and relatively basic, it adds empirical investigation to a heavily theoretically driven literature. The data analyzed for this paper contains innumerable opportunities for the continuation of this empirical line of research. As this paper represents one of few empirical investigations of privacy, it also represents the groundwork for future research exploring these ideas.
Works Cited


Figure 1: Conceptual Model
Table 1: Unstandardized Coefficients (with Standard Errors) for Personal Privacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Personal Income</th>
<th>General Trust</th>
<th>Trust Others</th>
<th>Trust Government</th>
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<tr>
<td>General Trust</td>
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<td>-.015***</td>
<td>.137</td>
<td>.039*</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>.004</td>
<td>.13</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.019***</td>
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<td>.027</td>
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<td>.005</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust Government</td>
<td>-.133</td>
<td>-.018**</td>
<td>.196</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>.002</td>
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<td>.001</td>
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</table>

*Significant at the 0.05 level. **Significant at the 0.01 level. ***Significant at the 0.001 level
Model Fit: \( \chi^2 = 1141.591, \text{pvalue} = .000, \text{CFI} = .766, \text{RMSEA} = .073 \)

Table 2: Unstandardized Coefficients (with Standard Errors) for Financial Privacy

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<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Personal Income</th>
<th>General Trust</th>
<th>Trust Others</th>
<th>Trust Government</th>
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*Significant at the 0.05 level. **Significant at the 0.01 level. ***Significant at the 0.001 level
Model Fit: \( \chi^2 = 1930.836, \text{pvalue} = .000, \text{CFI} = .752, \text{RMSEA} = .085 \)
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*Significant at the 0.05 level. **Significant at the 0.01 level. ***Significant at the 0.001 level

Model Fit: $\chi^2 = 2838.787$, pvalue = .000, CFI = .608, RMSEA = .106