

Sydney Philosothon 2024

Hosted by Newington College

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Topic 1 - Privacy

Is it ethical to breach someone's privacy for the sake of safety and security?

Advancements in technological capabilities have given government and corporations increased access to the lives of citizens. In Australia, government agencies have used metadata to conduct surveillance on citizens who are suspected of being involved in certain types of illegal and harmful activity. Furthermore, security firms utilise AI technology to build profiles of people in public places as a means for monitoring and securing volatile locations. The technology that makes this kind of surveillance possible is value-neutral, and thus there is always a risk that the data that is collected will be used for reasons other than safety and security.

In light of these facts, one may ask *"is it ethical to breach someone's privacy for the sake of safety and security?"*

*Note: While you are welcome to consider international examples, we would like to keep our discussion primarily focused on the Australian context. Also, while the law must be discussed the focus of our question is on what is moral, not what is legal. Please familiarise yourself with this distinction, and come prepared to discuss what *ought* to be the case as opposed to just what *is* the case.

Required Reading:

[When can government tap your phone, read your texts or access your metadata? \(crikey.com.au\)](#) - a simple explanatory piece about metadata laws and reports in Australia (2019) [[PDF version of the article](#)]

[The Catalogue on Vimeo](#)

Further Reading:

[Metadata access is being abused. Who would have thought? - Privacy108 | Australian Data Privacy & Security Consulting](#) - a more detailed explanatory piece about metadata laws and reports in Australia (2019)

[Bunnings and Kmart halt use of facial recognition technology in stores as privacy watchdog investigates | Facial recognition | The Guardian](#)

Topic 2 - Rights

Do you have a right to believe whatever you want?

Reading: <https://aeon.co/ideas/you-dont-have-a-right-to-believe-whatever-you-want-to>