

# Homework Assignment 1

Due on Tuesday, September 8, 2020

## Goal

The goal of this assignment is to get perspective on the scale and pervasiveness of the problem of data breaches.

## 1 Introduction

[Wired reported on 01/26/1999:](#)

The chief executive officer of Sun Microsystems said Monday that consumer privacy issues are a “red herring.”

“You have zero privacy anyway,” Scott McNealy told a group of reporters and analysts Monday night at an event to launch his company’s new Jini technology.

“Get over it.”

Widely criticized at the time as an indication of Sun’s lack of commitment to privacy, the proclamation, “Privacy is dead, get over it!” has come to be understood as a statement about reality.

One person who really drove this point home is Steven Rambam, a persuasive private investigator who gave a series of influential lectures at two HOPE hacker conferences in 2006 and 2010. Videos of his lectures are available on YouTube as well as other places on the internet. They are long (approximately 3 hours in all) but compelling and well worth watching.

Steven Rambam and four others were originally scheduled to give a 3-hour talk entitled, “Privacy Is Dead - Get Over It” at the [HOPE Number Six](#) conference held on July 21–23, 2006, in New York City. Apparently he was arrested minutes before he was scheduled to go on stage, so his talk got postponed. He gave it on November 16, 2006, at the Stevens Institute. Almost 7 years later, Stevens Institute released it to YouTube. It is available in 3 hour-long chunks:

- [HOPE Number Six \(2006\): Privacy is Dead - Get Over It \(belated version\) \(1 of 3\)](#)
- [HOPE Number Six \(2006\): Privacy is Dead - Get Over It \(belated version\) \(2 of 3\)](#)
- [HOPE Number Six \(2006\): Privacy is Dead - Get Over It \(belated version\) \(3 of 3\)](#)

Steven Rambam was again scheduled to give a talk by the same title at [The Next HOPE conference](#), held in New York City on July 16-18, 2010. A video of that talk can be found on YouTube: [The Next HOPE: Privacy is Dead - Get Over It \(Complete\)](#)

## 2 What to do

1. Read the article:

Judith Rauhofer, “Privacy is dead, get over it! 1 Information privacy and the dream of a risk-free society”, 195–197, 19 Nov 2008.

This article is available for download to the Yale community through the Yale Library at <https://doi.org/10.1080/13600830802472990>. For off-campus access, you will need to use VPN to connect to the Yale network.

2. Listen to either the 2006 or the 2010 version of Steven Rambam's talk.
3. Write a brief paper (300–500 words) discussing the following assertions:
  - Privacy is dead because people do not value their privacy and are willing to give it away.
  - Privacy is dead because people lose control of their information once they give it away for legitimate purposes.
  - Privacy is dead because computer security is too weak to prevent data breaches.
  - People today care more about their privacy than they did a decade ago.

Support your statements with references to the Rauhofer paper, the Rambam talk, or any other relevant materials you find. As always, give proper citations to the work of others that you are using.

### 3 How to submit

Submit your paper as a PDF file. PDF files can be prepared using `pdflatex`, MS Word, or other common word-processing tools. It does *not* work to take a plain text file and simply change the file name extension to `.pdf`. Be sure to include your name, date, and homework number *inside* the file. Please submit your PDF file electronically using the Canvas *Assignments* tool. If you have trouble creating or submitting PDF, please *ask the TA for help*.