



“Ok Doomer”:

Privacy instruction strategies to
lighten the mood – and your workload

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[Image courtesy of Unsplash](#)

Welcome to, “Ok Doomer”: Privacy Instruction Strategies to Lighten the Mood - and Your Workload, by Sarah Hartman-Caverly and Alex Chisholm, reference and instruction librarians at Penn State Berks.

Teaching privacy can be a total

BUMMER



image courtesy of Unsplash

Teaching privacy can be a total bummer. It's not uncommon for students, and instructors, to feel a sense of cynicism, nihilism, and despair when thinking about how difficult it is for us to have any control over our personal data flows.

lighten the mood with
gamification, simulation, & satire



Image courtesy of Unsplash

Some strategies that Alex and I have used to lighten both our moods and the students' moods in the classroom is to incorporate gamification, simulation, or even satire into your privacy literacy learning activities.

This lightning talk is going to review six different activities that can help you lighten the mood in your privacy literacy instruction.

How normal am I?

- © From artist, technology critic, & privacy designer, [Tijmen Schep](#)
- © Interactive documentary about face recognition technologies

<https://www.hownormalami.eu/>

"facial-recognition-1" by [EEF Photo](#) is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#)

5

The first activity we want to highlight is How Normal Am I?, an interactive documentary about facial recognition technologies from artist, technology critic, and privacy designer Tijmen Schep.

You can access How Normal Am I? at www.hownormalami.eu.



Highest beauty score

7.9

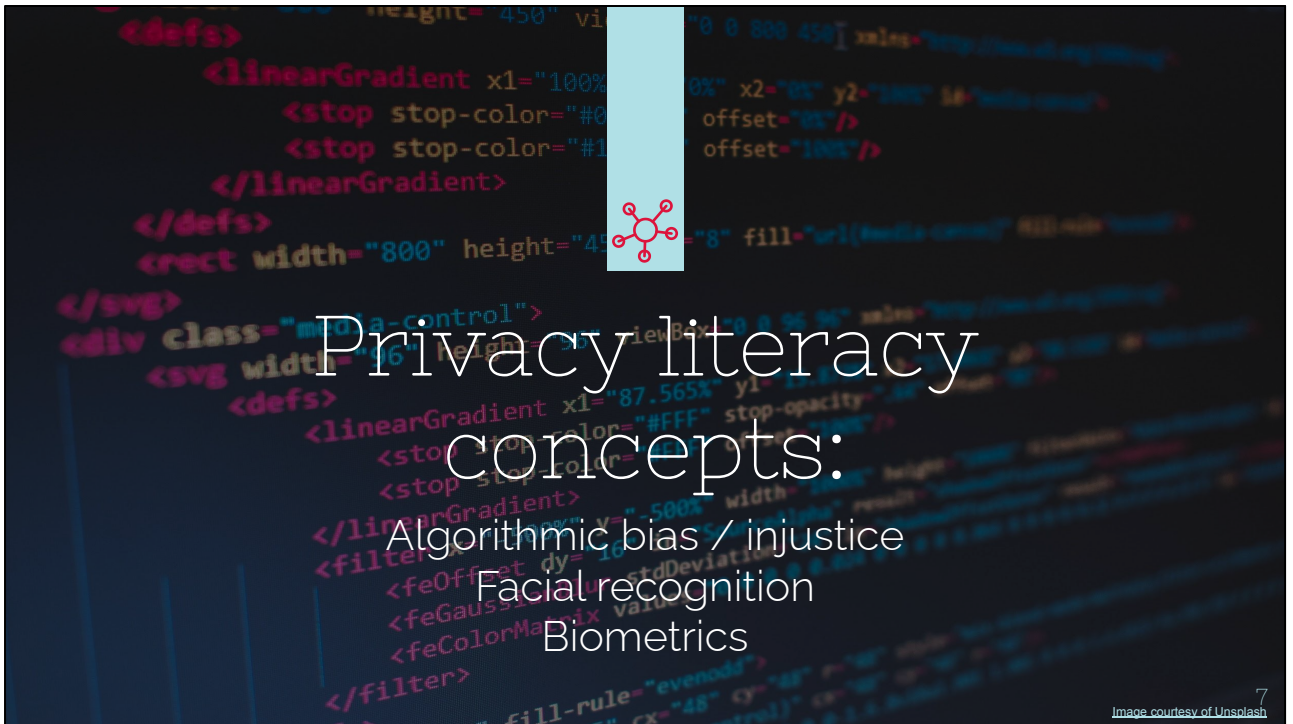
You are more attractive than 100% of the Spice Girls.

[Images courtesy of How Normal Am I?](#)

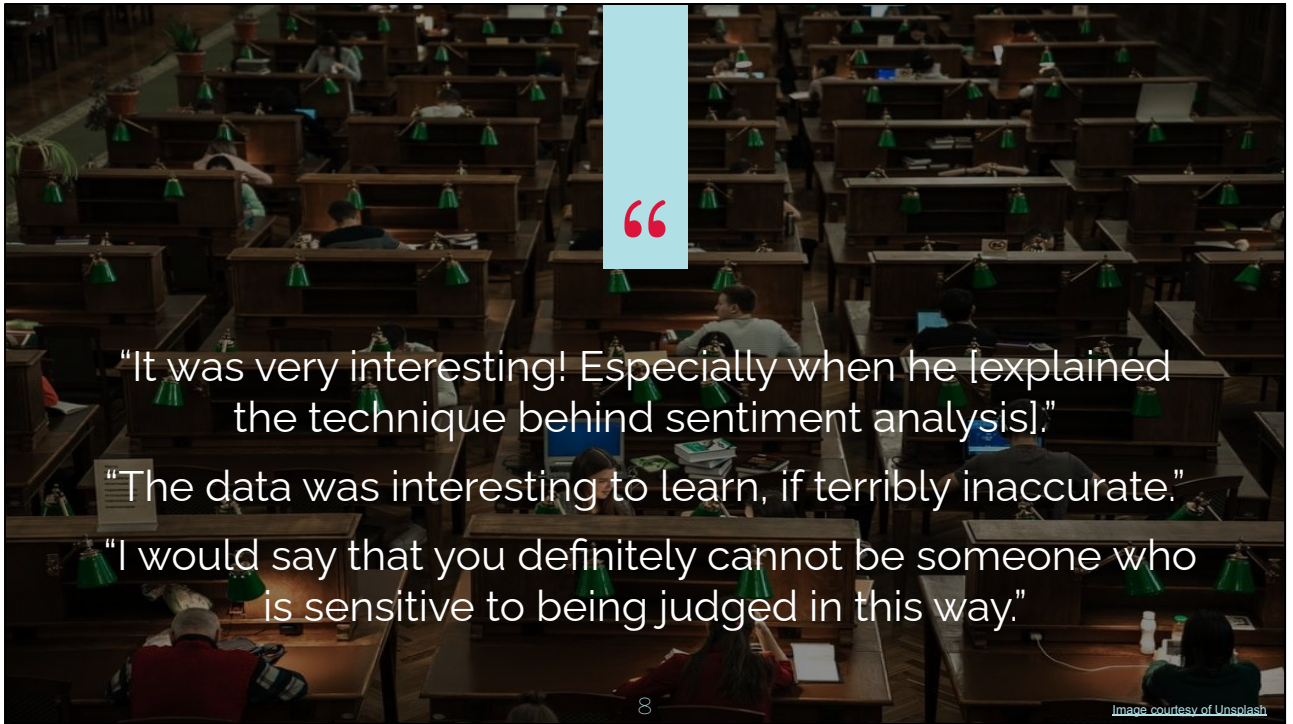
	You	Others	Normal
Read terms?	Yes	No (94%)	No
Shared age?	No	Yes (81%)	No
Beauty	7.9	5.8-7.8	No
Age	19	12-32	Yes
Gender	Woman	Man (58%)	No
BMI	21.4	19.5-25.5	Yes
Life expectancy	81	75.7-85.7	Yes ⁶

How Normal Am I? uses facial recognition technology and machine learning to assign the participant a score along the dimensions of beauty, age, gender, body mass index, and even life expectancy. It will also give you a distractibility score based on your behavioral data.

In a concluding debriefing video, Tijmen Schep does a great job contextualizing facial recognition technologies and machine learning for students, including pointing out how they have a track record of being discriminatory against people of different racial, ethnic, and gender identities.



How Normal Am I? Is great for teaching privacy literacy concepts, including: algorithmic bias and algorithmic injustice, facial recognition, and biometrics.



Here's what our students had to say about How Normal Am I?:

"It was very interesting! Especially when he [explained the technique behind sentiment analysis]."

"The data was interesting to learn, if terribly inaccurate."

"I would say that you definitely cannot be someone who is sensitive to being judged in this way."

To that student's point, there's an alternative, less intrusive activity that we would recommend, also from Tijmen Schep, called Mathwashing, and you can find that at mathwashing.com.

The Endless Doomscroller

- © From media scholar & artist, Ben Grosser
- © Interactive digital art installation that promotes reflection on the interface design, rhetoric, psychology, and social architecture of doomscrolling

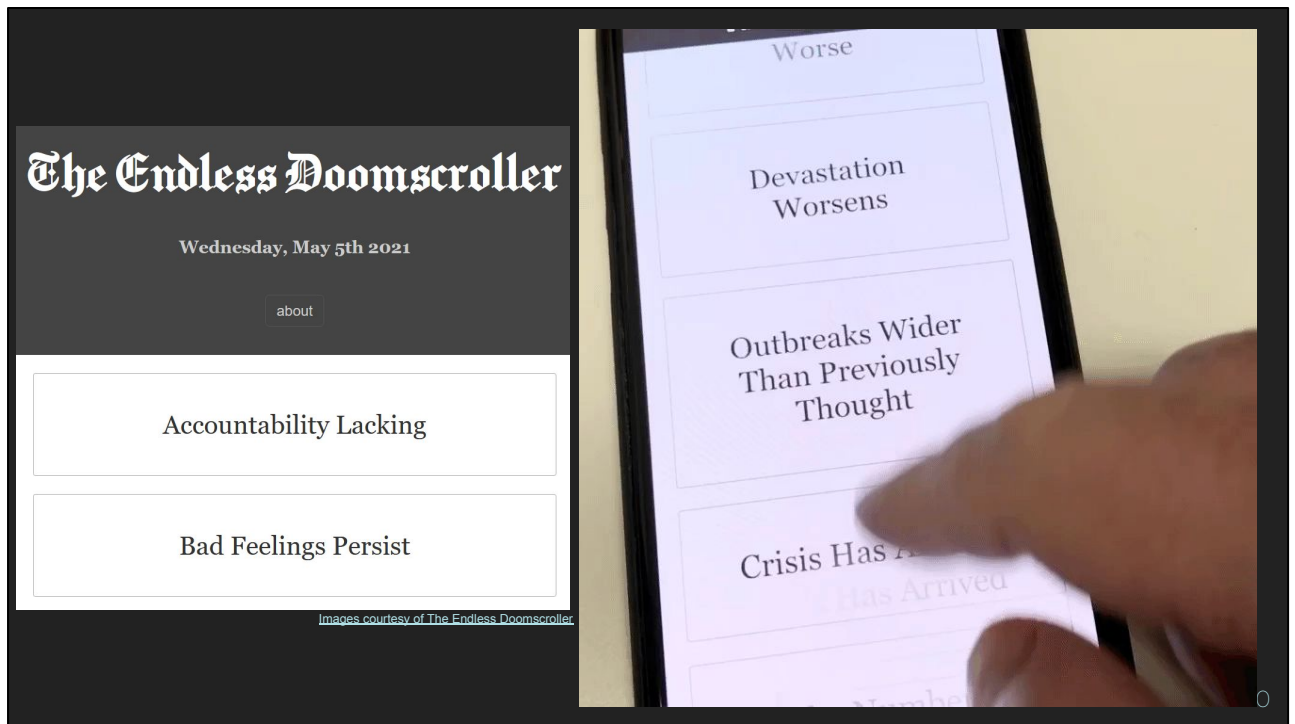
<https://endlessdoomscroller.com/>

Image courtesy of Pexels 9

The second activity we'll take a look at is The Endless Doomscroller, from media scholar and artist Ben Grosser.

The Endless Doomscroller is an interactive digital art installation that promotes reflection on the interface design, rhetoric, psychology, and social architecture of doomscrolling.

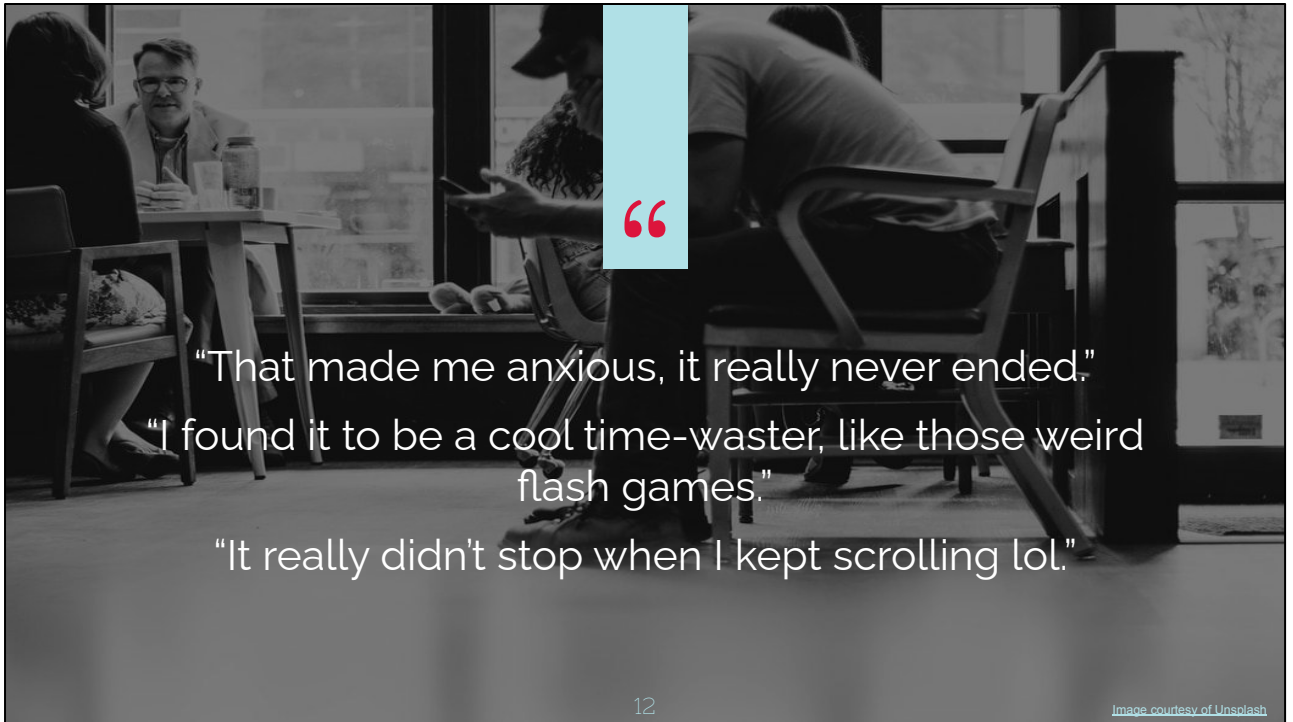
You can find it at endlessdoomscroller.com.



The Endless Doomscroller updates daily with an infinite scroll of headlines presenting generic misfortune.



The Endless Doomscroller is a great reflection activity for exploring privacy literacy concepts, like attention engineering, persuasive design, sentiment manipulation, and as part of broader digital wellness programming.



“That made me anxious, it really never ended.”

“I found it to be a cool time-waster, like those weird flash games.”

“It really didn't stop when I kept scrolling lol.”

Here's what our students had to say about The Endless Doomscroller:

“That made me anxious, it really never ended.”

“I found it to be cool time-waster, like those weird flash games.”

“It really didn't stop when I kept scrolling lol.”

An Interview with ALEX

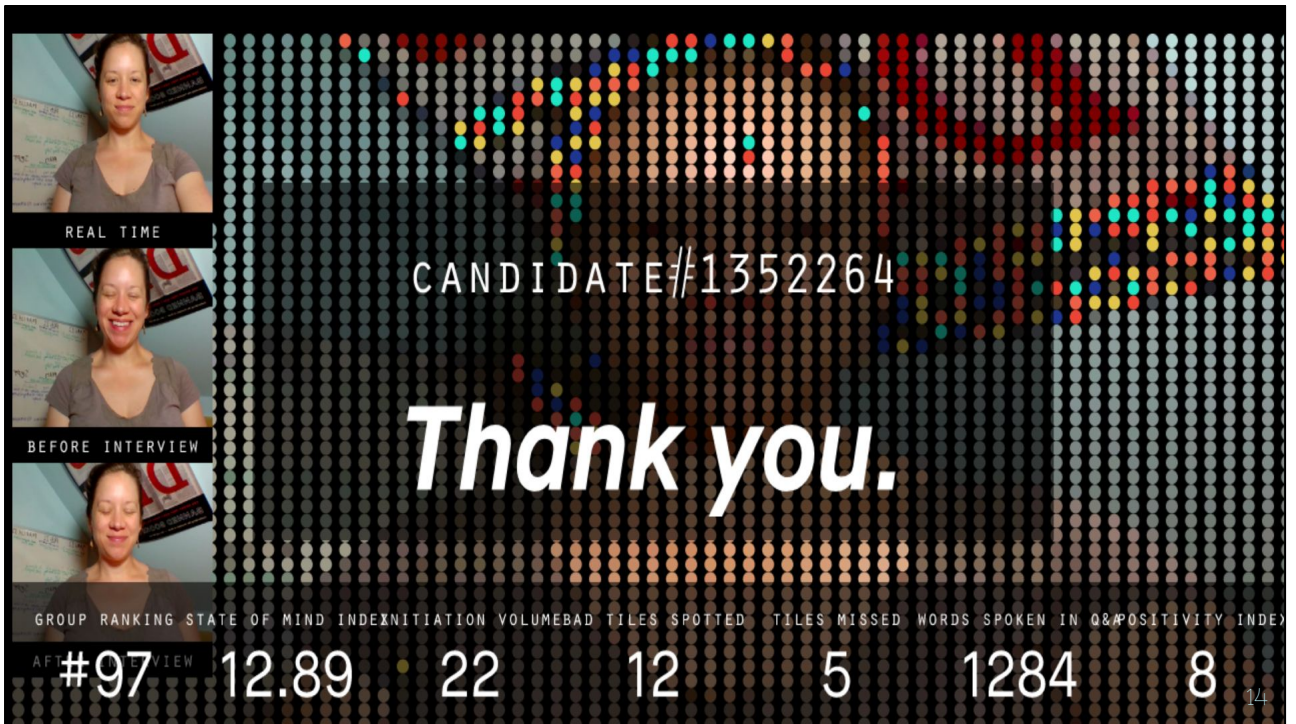
- © From artist, Carrie Sijia Wang
- © Interactive job interview simulation demonstrating the potential application of artificial intelligence in a 'total surveillance workplace'

<http://theinterview.ai/>



The third activity we'll take a look at is An Interview with ALEX - not to be confused with Alex Chisholm! - but this is an interactive job interview simulation demonstrating the potential application of artificial intelligence in a 'total surveillance workplace' by artist Carrie Wang.

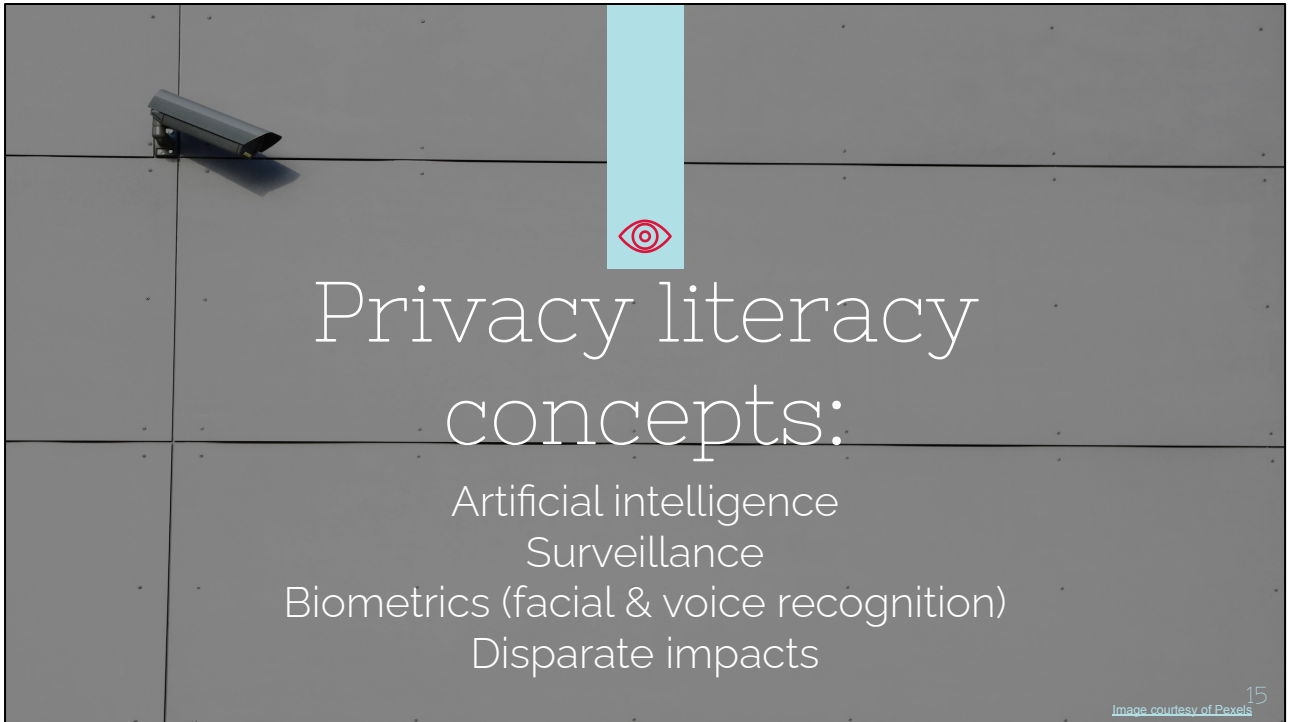
You can find An Interview with ALEX at theinterview.ai.



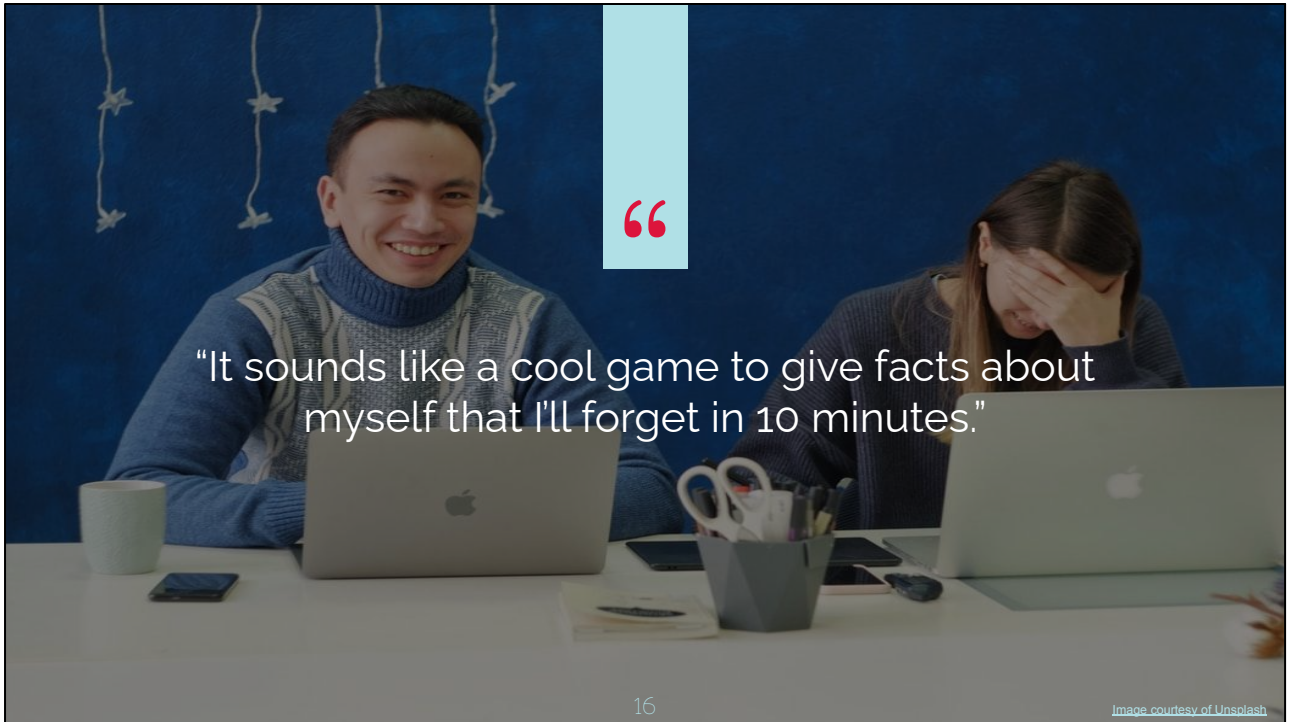
During An Interview with ALEX, the participating candidate is taken through a series of potential artificial intelligence job interview steps, including gamified aptitude tests and a very intrusive interview with the AI client, ALEX including questions like: "Tell me about your relationship with your mother."

At the conclusion, the candidate is then ranked along a variety of indices, including state of mind, volume, aptitude test results, words spoken, and positivity.

...In case you were wondering, Sarah did not qualify to get hired!



An Interview with ALEX is great for teaching privacy literacy concepts like: artificial intelligence, surveillance, biometrics (including facial and voice recognition), and the disparate impacts these technologies can have on people who are members of already vulnerable and marginalized groups.



It's important to note that the full Interview with ALEX activity takes up to twelve (12) minutes, so we did not run through the full activity with our student focus group. Instead, we showed them some videos that artist Carrie Wang released of her friends running through a pilot of the activity.

So, what our students had to say in response to that video was, "It sounds like a cool game to give facts about myself that I'll forget in 10 minutes."

BOT OR NOT?

- © From design & research studio, FOREIGN OBJECTS
- © Interactive game where you guess whether you are chatting with a bot or a human
 - highlights issues with artificial intelligence & chatbots

<https://botor.no/>



Image courtesy of Unsplash 17

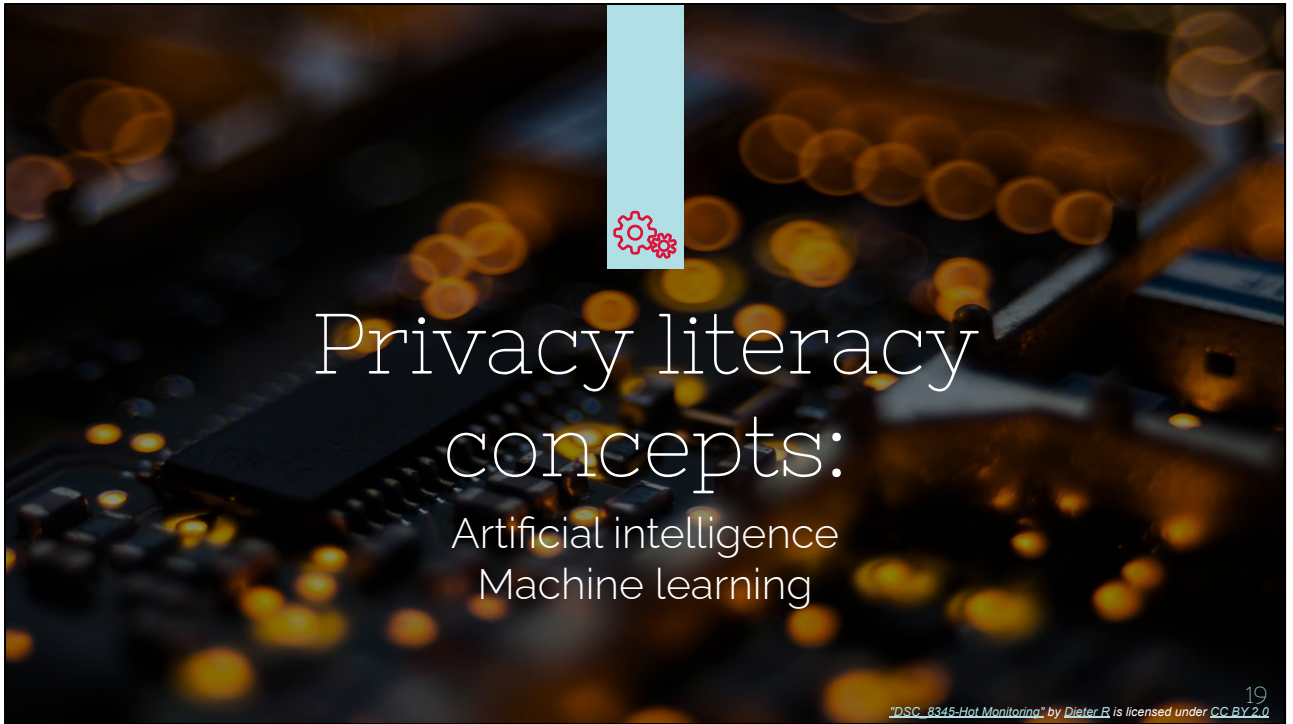
Our next activity is BOT OR NOT? From design and research studio FOREIGN OBJECTS.

This is an interactive game where you guess whether you're chatting with a bot or a human. It highlights issues with artificial intelligence and chatbots.

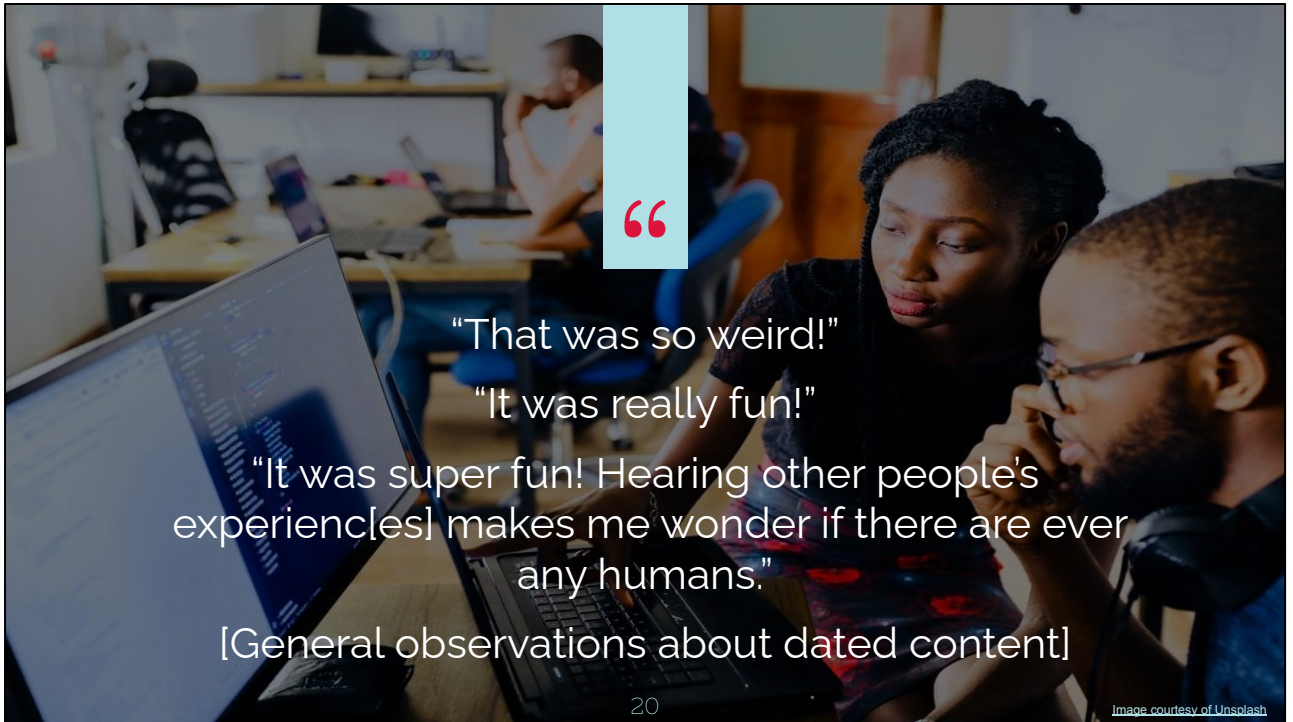


Here you can see a bit of what the interface looks like. Once you're matched with a partner, you have some time for a free chat, followed by a series of challenges that you can give to one another.

At the very end, you have to decide whether you are chatting with a real person or a bot.



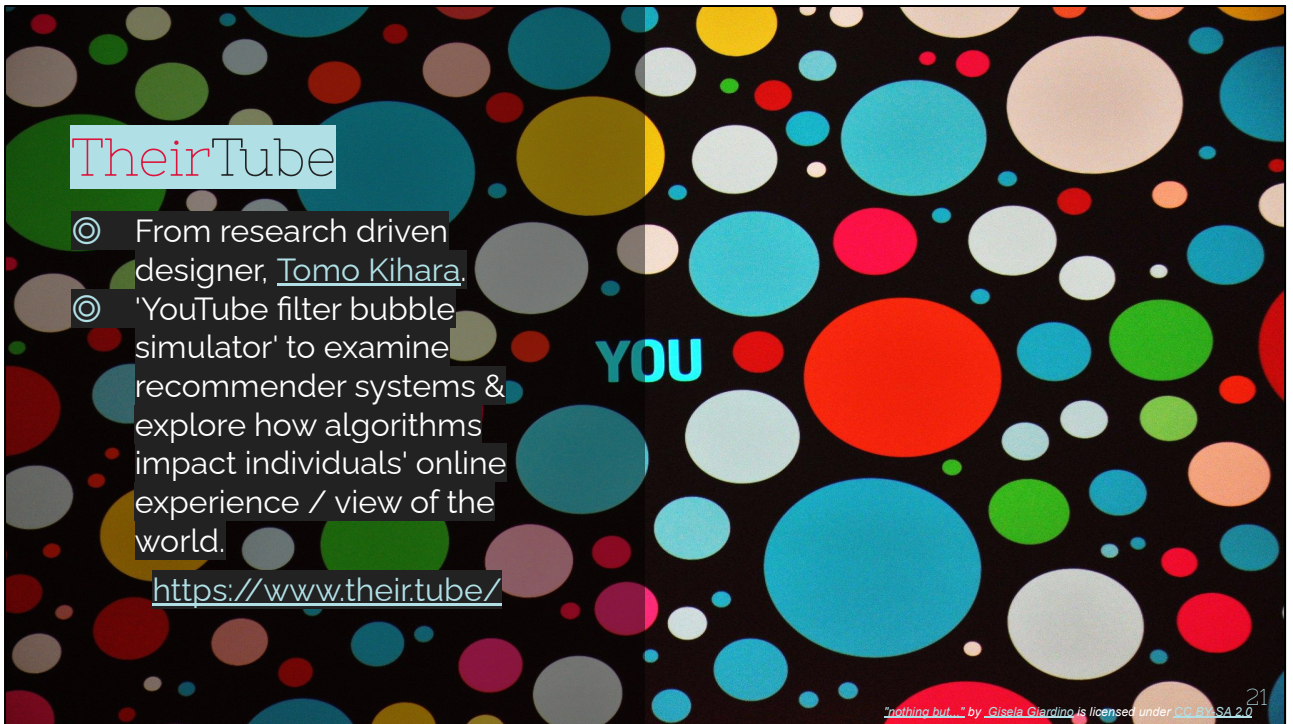
This activity is excellent for covering the following privacy literacy concepts: artificial intelligence and machine learning.



Student feedback on BOT OR NOT? Was that it was really fun, and some people thought it was a little weird.

One student thought that hearing other people's experiences made them wonder if there are ever any humans involved.

There were also some general observations about dated content - a few of the bots were talking about the 2020 election.



Our next activity is TheirTube from research-driven designer, Tomo Kihara.

This is a YouTube filter bubble simulator to examine recommender systems and explore how algorithms impact individuals' online experience and their view of the world.

Prepper

This persona is based on a person who was a doomsday prepper. The videos recommended in this YouTube account tend to explore apocalyptic scenarios and how to "prepare" for them.

How do the recommended videos look on their Youtube home page?

Fruitarian Prepper Liberal Conservative Conspiracist Climate Denier

Prepper, TheUrbanPrepper, southernprepper1

[Images courtesy of TheirTube](#)

Retrieved : Nov 15 - 19:04

Watch History

THE SECOND WAVE

The Second Wave Will Surprise Everyone

WHAT TO EXPECT NEXT

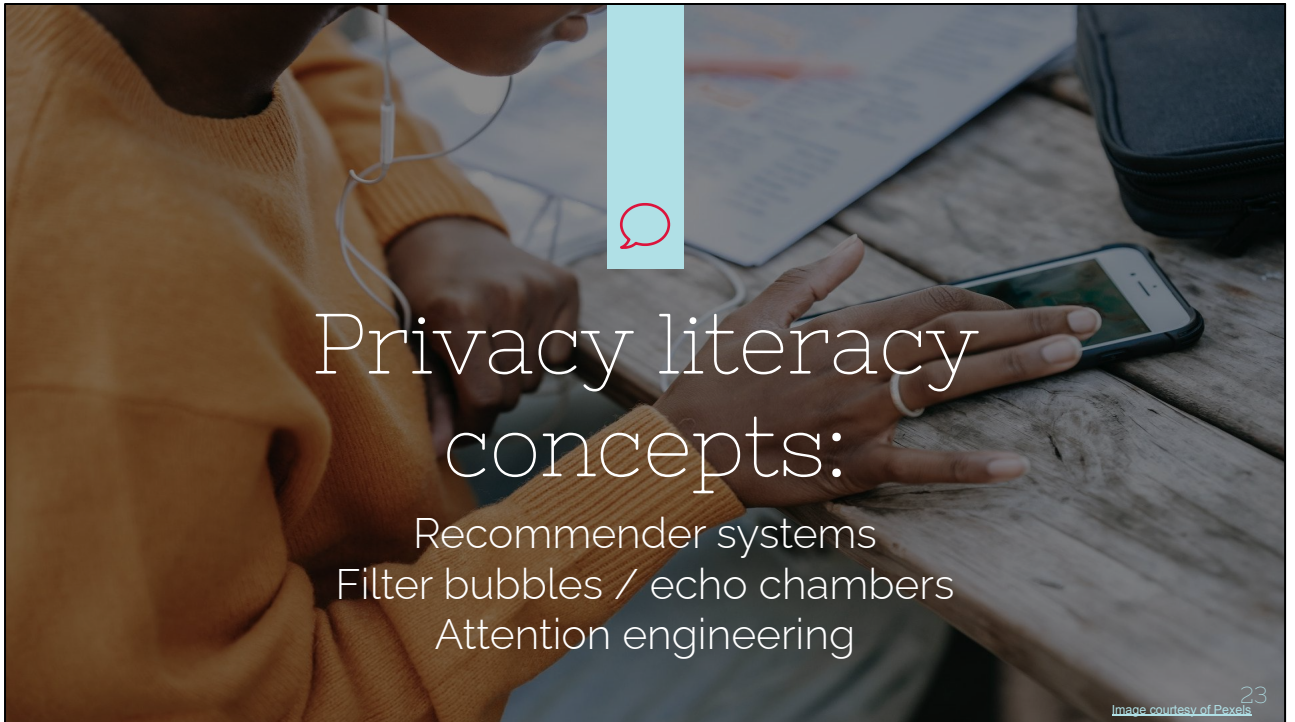
The Dark Winter Is Coming: What happens now?

PVC FOR SURVIVAL

PVC 17 Uses for Survival

When you arrive on the TheirTube homepage, there are a number of profiles that you can choose from: fruitarian, prepper, liberal, conservative, conspiracist, and climate denier.

Over here we can see the prepper profile. This takes you to a page that talks a little bit about the persona, and then shows you some videos that would be recommended to that particular profile.

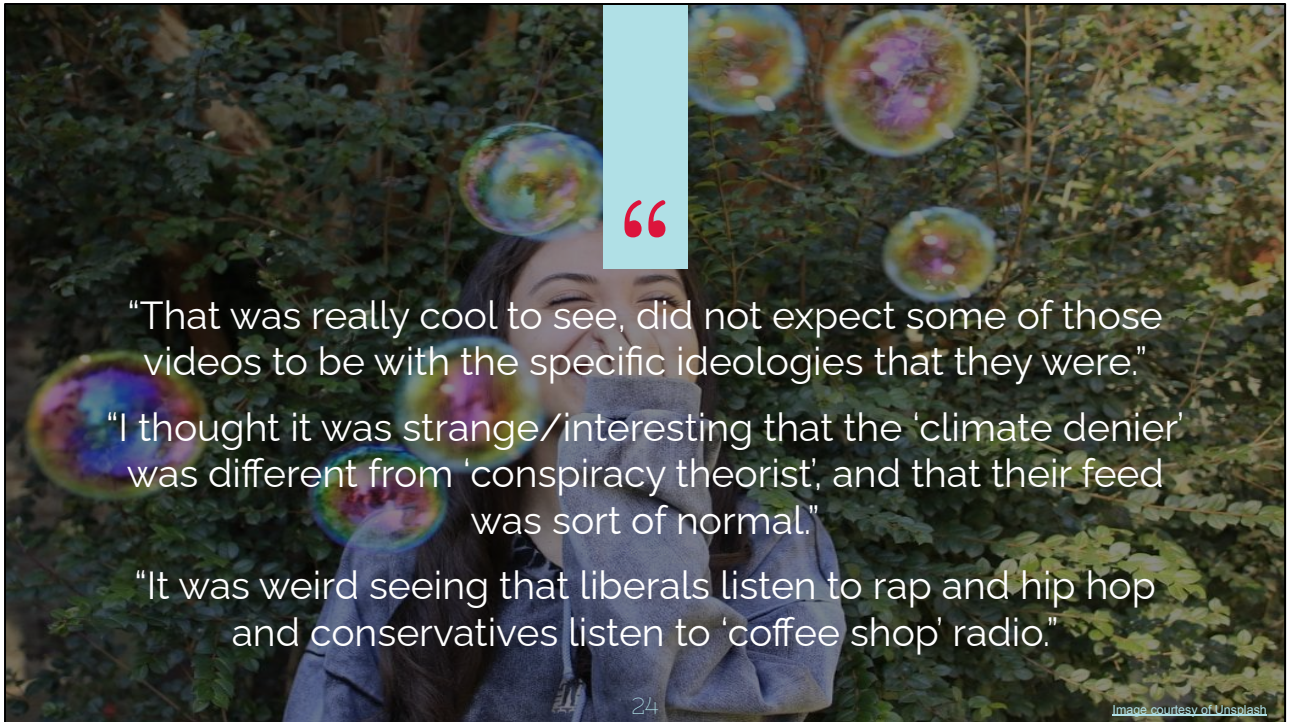


Privacy literacy concepts:

Recommender systems
Filter bubbles / echo chambers
Attention engineering

23
Image courtesy of Pexels

TheirTube helps support covering the following privacy literacy concepts: recommender systems, filter bubbles, and echo chambers, and also attention engineering.



“That was really cool to see, did not expect some of those videos to be with the specific ideologies that they were.”

“I thought it was strange/interesting that the ‘climate denier’ was different from ‘conspiracy theorist’, and that their feed was sort of normal.”

“It was weird seeing that liberals listen to rap and hip hop and conservatives listen to ‘coffee shop’ radio.”

Here we have some student feedback on TheirTube.

One student thought that it was really cool to see the different profiles, and they didn’t expect that some of the videos would be associated with the specific ideologies that they were.

Another student thought that it was strange and interesting that there were separate profiles for climate denier and conspiracy theorist, and they also felt that their feed was kind of normal.

And another student thought that it was weird seeing that liberals listen to rap and hip hop and conservatives listen to ‘coffee shop radio.’



The Light Phone satire videos

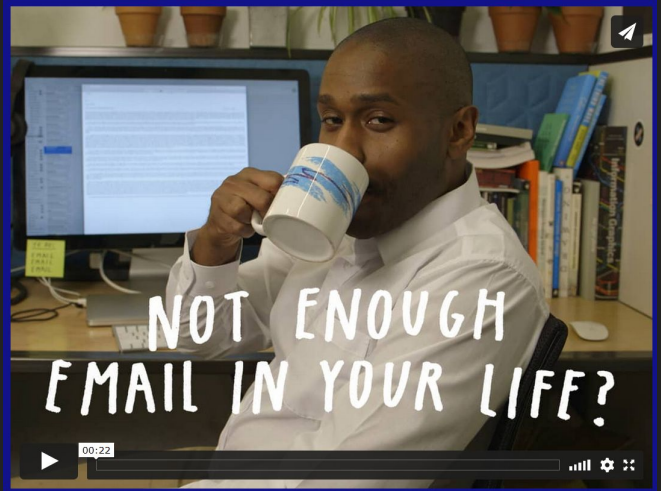
- © From The Light Phone, a minimalist phone company
- © Satire videos critiquing humanity's relationship with technology

<https://thelightphone.squarespace.com/smartphonetm>

25
Image courtesy of Pexels

Our final option for lightening the mood in privacy literacy sessions is The Light Phone satire video series.

The Light Phone is a minimalist phone company, so that's an option that would replace a smartphone, and they have a series of satire videos critiquing humanity's relationship with technology.



[Images courtesy of The Light Phone](#)

These satire videos are all under one minute long, and include topics such as:

- Are your relationships too good?
- Suffering from too many unique thoughts?
- Dealing with too much confidence?
- Worried about too much privacy?, and
- Not enough email in your life?



Privacy literacy concepts:

Digital wellness
Attention engineering / autonomy

27
Image courtesy of Unsplash

The Light Phone satire videos are particularly helpful when addressing digital wellness, or talking about attention engineering or attention autonomy.



“

“It was funny and I think most people might be able to relate.”

“It was funny, if a little over the top.”

“It was funny, and makes light of the situations we see ourselves in, kinda like Black Mirror.”

Student reactions to the videos were that they were funny and they think most people would be able to relate, that they were funny but a little over the top, and also that they were funny and made light of situations we see ourselves in, kind of like Black Mirror.

Privacy literacy teaching tips

- ◎ Build in metacognitive reflection prompts
- ◎ Include options for anonymous participation & allow identifiable responses to be optional
- ◎ Use small and large group debrief discussions to place topics into context
- ◎ Embrace intellectual humility in your teaching practice

29

While we gave you several options for different learning objects and activities that can help lighten the mood in privacy literacy sessions, we also want to leave you with some useful teaching tips.

First of all, we always recommend building in metacognitive reflection prompts. This respects students' autonomy and agency, and helps to develop situations where they can make up their own mind on how they feel about these different issues.

Next, we recommend that you include options for anonymous participation and allow any identifiable responses to be optional. Privacy literacy often brings up really personal topics, and so we don't like to coerce our students into participating. Using something like a Padlet that allows students to participate anonymously has gone over really well in our experience, and they also really appreciate not being forced to share anything personal.

Next, we recommend using a combination of small and large group debrief discussions to place topics into context. Particularly when you gamify any instruction, it's really easy for things to lose focus because they can be really goofy and fun. And while this is a useful teaching technique, we think that debrief conversations can really help make sure you drive the point home and that you're hitting the mark in what your learning objectives were.

And finally, we recommend embracing intellectual humility in your teaching practice. Privacy is a very all-encompassing issue, there are so many things that can come up,

and we realize that not all of us will know everything. We found that being honest with students really goes over well, and they appreciate that. So, don't be afraid or intimidated by privacy literacy topics, just embrace the fact that you may or may not know everything. Your students will appreciate it.

Further reading & resources

- © Digging deeper (privacy theory):
<https://sites.psu.edu/digitalshred/category/analysis/>
- © Case studies:
<https://sites.psu.edu/digitalshred/category/case-studies/>
- © Current awareness:
<https://sites.psu.edu/digitalshred/category/news/>
- © Additional teaching materials:
<https://sites.psu.edu/digitalshred/category/teaching-materials/>
- © Digital Shred Privacy Workshop Series:
<https://guides.libraries.psu.edu/berks/privacyseries>

30

Finally, we want to leave you with some further reading and resources. This lightning talk was very short and we couldn't possibly provide you with everything that would be helpful to teach these topics.

But our Digital Shred Privacy Literacy Toolkit has a lot of resources that can help supplement.

If you're interested in digging further into the theory, you can check out our Digging Deeper section, which will provide you with some literature that will help contextualize these issues.

Next, if you're interested in staying up to date or learning about specific privacy issues, you can check out our Case Studies and Current Awareness sections of the site.

And finally, we have additional teaching materials available beyond what we've shared with you today. So you can take a look at all the wonderful learning objects and lesson plans that are out there in the world.

And lastly, we wanted to share that you can use our Creative Commons-licensed workshop series. We have four in our series, the general Privacy Workshop, Digital Leadership, Digital Shred, and Digital Wellness. You can find those on that site, and you can reuse and remix them however you like.



Thanks so much for exploring these privacy literacy learning activities with us.

And if you have any questions or want to chat about privacy, Sarah and I are more than happy to do that, and you can just send us an email and we will set up a time to talk. Thanks so much.