Bits of Morality

Bits of Morality: Ethical and Legal Issues for Children, Parents and Educators

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Outline
- Dangers on the Internet
  - Technological defenses
    - monitoring
    - filtering
  - Legal context
  - Political context: conflicting pressures

Problem: Dangers on the Internet
- Pedophiles
- Hate groups
- Pornography
- Plagiarism
- Stolen music & video
- Warez
- Viruses
- Criminal hackers

Pedophiles
- Misrepresentation as youngsters
- Chat rooms
- E-mail
- Video films
- Bus/Airline tickets -- meetings

Hate Groups
- Growing movements across world
- Anti-everything
  - racist
  - anti-Catholic, anti-Jewish, anti-...
  - homophobic
- Recruiting young people through Web
  - hate-rock
  - propaganda

Pornography
- Widespread - massive amount of content
- Misleading URLs
  - trademark violations, variant domains
    - http://www.whitehouse.com (still active)
  - misspellings
    - http://www.micosoft.com (no longer active)
- Junk e-mail invitations
  - e.g., new CompuServe accounts receive invitation for Russian porn from St Petersburg

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Plagiarism
- Buy / trade copies of essays, term papers
  - wide range of subjects, styles
  - choose your preferred grade (A+, B-, . . .)
- Write-to-order
  - graduate students
- Anti-plagiarism sites available for teachers
  - check student paper against database of stolen papers

Stolen Music & Video
- Napster, MP3, Gnutella, Wrapster, . . .
  - trading copies of music
  - most without permission – copyright violations
  - lawsuits against companies & individuals
  - Gnutella, Wrapster extending trades to other files
- Problems
  - bandwidth saturation – many colleges
  - legal liability

Warez
- Stolen software
  - violation of copyright law
  - often virus-infected
  - many Trojan Horse programs
- Sites
  - warez exchanges
  - individual exchanges
  - electronic auction services
- Severe penalties for school systems
  - Los Angeles: $5M fines

Malware
- Self-replicating code
  - program infectors
  - boot-sector viruses
  - Internet-enabled worms
- Non-replicating code: Trojan Horse programs
- Sources
  - accident
  - deliberate infection
  - virus-exchange sites
- Damaging
  - availability, integrity, confidentiality

Criminal Hackers
- Propaganda
  - USENET groups
  - Web sites
  - printed magazines
  - regular meetings (2600)
- Appeals to kids
  - group affiliation
  - rebellion
  - power
  - video-game syndrome

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Guidance

Bits of Morality

Games

- Cooperative multiplayer games
  - Quake
  - Doom
  - Gambling
- More a nuisance than a danger
  - high bandwidth utilization

Technology

- Monitoring
  - tools for reviewing what users are doing on the Net
- Filtering
  - tools for limiting what users are doing on the Net

Monitoring

- Audit trails
  - disk files
  - browser URL trail
  - browser disk cache
  - anti-virus products
  - anti-game software
  - anti-MP3-music software
- Real-time alerts
  - Web page
  - suspect e-mail content
- Human inspection
  - remote-access software
  - supervising by walking around

Filtering

- Anti-virus products
- Firewalls
- Self-rating & filtering proposals
- Censorware

Firewalls

- Corporate
  - see ICSA Labs Firewall Product Developers Consortium
- Workstation firewalls
  - Zone-Alarm
  - Blackice
Self-rating & Filtering Proposals
- ICRA – Internet Content Rating Association
  - RSACi system
  - already works with common browsers
- PICS – Platform for Internet Content Selection
- Fundamental question:
  - Why would objectionable sites rate themselves at all?

RSACi Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Violence Rating Descriptor</th>
<th>Quality Rating Descriptor</th>
<th>Size Rating Descriptor</th>
<th>Language Rating Descriptor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rape or wanton, gratuitous violence</td>
<td>Frailty nudity (qualifying as provocative display)</td>
<td>Explicit sexual acts or sex crimes</td>
<td>Crime, vulgar language, or extreme hate speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Aggressive violence or death to humans</td>
<td>Frailty nudity</td>
<td>Non-explicit sexual acts</td>
<td>Strong language or hate speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Destruction of realistic objects</td>
<td>Partial nudity</td>
<td>Clothed sexual touching</td>
<td>Moderate expletives or profanity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Injury to human being</td>
<td>Revealing attire</td>
<td>Passionate kissing</td>
<td>Mild expletives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>None of the above or sports-related</td>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>None of the above or innocent mimicking; romance</td>
<td>None of the above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Censorware

- Types
  - Site-specific exclusion
    - lists of forbidden sites – updated often
  - Content recognition
    - lists of forbidden terms
    - nudity-recognition algorithms
- Problems
  - very high false-positive rates (rejecting sites unrelated to targets)
  - political bias (rejecting educational sites whose philosophy the makers reject)

Legal Context: Disclaimer

I AM NOT A LAWYER AND THIS IS NOT LEGAL ADVICE. FOR LEGAL ADVICE, CONSULT AN ATTORNEY WITH EXPERTISE IN THE AREA OF LAW OF CONCERN TO YOU.

Legal Context: First Amendment Law

- Complex area – much subtle reasoning
- Ultra-simple summary:
  - Who cannot censor speech?
    - governments acting against others as sovereign to control unprotected speech
    - governments acting against protected speech
  - Who can censor speech?
    - governments controlling their own speech or that of their agents
    - within limits, anyone else dealing with private speech on their own property

Legal Context (cont’d)

How do we decide if restrictions are constitutional or unconstitutional?
- Determine capacity in which govt is acting
- Determine degree of protection of specific speech
Determine Capacity
- Sovereign – least power to regulate speech
- Employer – can regulate speech
- Proprietor – can regulate
- K-12 educator – broad but not unlimited power
- University educator – less discretion to control
- Speaker – complete power to control speech
- Subsidizer – complete power

Determine Protection
- Constitutionally valueless speech
  - deliberate or reckless falsehoods
  - obscenity (difficult issue)
  - child pornography
  - incitement to lawless conduct
  - threats
  - criminal solicitation or conspiracy
- Intermediate protection
  - commercial advertising that is not false or misleading
  - sexually explicit but not obscene speech

Determine Protection (cont’d)
- Fully-protected: all other speech
  - political, social, religious, philosophical, scientific
  - art, literature, music, poetry
  - jokes, gossip, entertainment, casual chat

Political Context: Conflicting Pressures
- For filtering
  - concerned parents
  - right-wing
  - religious fundamentalists
- Against filtering
  - concerned parents
  - libertarians
  - civil liberties advocates
  - privacy activists

Education
- Who
  - Parents
  - Children
  - Teachers
  - Staff
- What
  - Awareness of dangers as well as benefits
  - Knowledge of options and resources
  - Up-to-date monitoring of political initiatives

Values and Ethics
- Don’t lie – so what about
  - pseudonyms?
  - pretending to be what we are not online?
  - sending e-mail with forged headers?
  - manipulating the stock market?
  - plagiarism?
Values and Ethics (cont’d)
- Don’t gossip – so what about
  - spreading rumors and hoaxes?
  - posting information about others without permission?

Values and Ethics (cont’d)
- Treat the stranger with respect – so what about
  - hate groups?
  - writing or spreading viruses, Trojan horses, worms?
  - sending junk e-mail?

Values and Ethics (cont’d)
- Pay fairly for people’s work – so what about
  - using shareware without paying for it?
  - making illegal copies of software?
  - music?
  - videos?

Recommendations
- Define standards of acceptable use for children, students, teachers and staff
  - important issue is the discussion
  - safeguard children against harm
  - respect other people
  - see Netiquette guidelines
  - http://www.fau.edu/netiquette/net/netiquette.html

Recommendations (cont’d)
- School Internet oversight group
  - include all concerned
    - students
    - parents
    - teachers
    - staff
  - explicitly discuss each issue
    - protecting children against bad people
    - protecting others against children
    - intellectual property rights
    - training in critical thinking

Recommendations (cont’d)
- Provide educational resources for all concerned
  - acceptable-use guidelines
  - limited expectation of privacy
  - pamphlets
  - URLs
Recommendations (cont’d)

- At home, in libraries and schools
  - Use supervision-by-walking-around
- Install monitoring software, not blocking software
- Discuss infractions with all concerned – parents, students, staff, teachers