

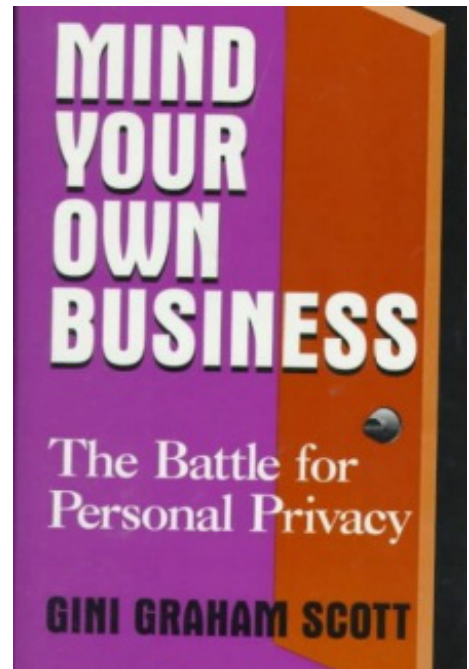
Mind Your Own Business

 thelastbastille.wordpress.com/2013/03/06/mind-your-own-business/

Personal privacy is all about the individual control of information. Choosing how to present yourself publicly is no less dishonest than deciding how to spend time with what you do in your own private life. Unfortunately, with the advent of the total surveillance police state apparatus, retaining what little autonomy you have left, with regards to controlling what people know about you, seems like a losing battle.

Privacy was not as critically important when we still had communities. Granted, while you didn't want your neighbors (whom you have known all your life) to cause trouble for you because of what some would consider to be embarrassing pastimes, at the very least the knowledge of it couldn't spread farther than your own hometown. Ever since the [War Between the States](#), due to increased geographic and job mobility, [rampant urbanization](#), and [corporatism](#), privacy is that much more important since hostile strangers, wherever you go, seek to gain at your expense, by either trying to advertise to you cheap Chinese crap you don't need, or gossiping about your life, which now can travel literally around the world at the speed of light. Admittedly, at least at first glance, it's more than enough to encourage anyone with any remaining sense of decency to become a recluse.

The author sets the tone by setting up the dichotomy about what is essentially the relationship between the individual and the collective. As she puts it:



“Somehow, we need to find a balance between two key needs: (1) the need of society to know certain facts to protect itself from individuals and groups that might otherwise harm us through crime, fraud, terrorism, and serious irresponsible behavior; and (2) the need of individuals to be protected from an overprotective, domineering, controlling, invasive society.”

Or you could just realize that [since only individuals tangibly exist](#), maybe if they were knowledgeable enough to protect themselves from scumbags (like street muggers) and criminal syndicates (such as government), then perhaps that would solve two birds with one stone, thereby negating the pretext about the “needs” of “society.” Last time I checked, you can't solve the problem of collectivism with nicer, “more balanced” collectivism, but I digress.

Monopoly government courts, through judicial case precedents, have set the legal rules for “who can do what to whom” in terms of what they consider to be criminal behavior. For instance, at the workplace, the employers are in the catbert seat, thereby automatically negating most claims by employees for unfair treatment or malicious business practices (well, the more subtle ones, in any case). Freedom of the press

trumps any sort of considerations for privacy (most of the time, anyway), police power is noticeably much more intrusive, expecting your medical records to be kept confidential is naive, public schools are [indistinguishable from prisons](#) (albeit, one that you don't have to sleep overnight at), corporations use your credit report against you, paranoid goofs hire private investigators to surveillance their lovers, government spy agencies are free to gather intelligence about the domestic citizenry for their massively growing databases, and even the government court buildings themselves have more security than Fort Knox.

In spite of all this, the free market (and some corporations) has been able to provide [countersurveillance](#) products and services intended for a very privacy-conscious clientele. Thankfully, untappable phones, [covert listening device](#) detection, executive protection specialists (that is, bodyguarding services), [digital cryptographic encryption](#), and just plain learning [how to shut the fuck up](#), all serve to protect individual privacy. As a fairly intriguing side note, apparently Dr. Scott seems to suggest that increasing financial anonymity by using multiple mail drops, giving out various aliases, and saying very little to bank tellers is desirable; this is done for the explicit purpose of minimizing the risk of asset seizure by the police.

[Dr. Gini Scott, Esq.'s *Mind Your Own Business: The Battle for Personal Privacy*](#) is a decent book on the historical development of [Big Brother](#). While it does have a different focus than [Our Vanishing Privacy](#), I found her acquiescence to monopoly government courts a bit tiring. At least Smith gave the vague impression that he wanted Big Brother taken down, but the good doctor here just seems to accept the way things are by providing a seemingly convincing rationale for [survivalists](#) and other dissidents to go hide under a rock instead of trying to topple [the Establishment](#). Unfortunately, securing your Liberties cannot be accomplished by becoming invisible alone; however, there are other related skill sets that can not only help you with your privacy now, but which are also valuable for resistance efforts, such [hiding things in public places](#).