TECHGNOSTICISM AND THE CONTRADICTIONS OF PERSONAL PRIVACY AS IT IS CHERISHED AND FORSAKEN

Ralph G. O'Sullivan
Chillicothe, IL

ABSTRACT

Voluntary self-disclosure may seem counterintuitive to the maintenance of personal privacy, yet both activities are engrained in our collective life style. Today's technological era, sometimes called the .com or bluetooth generation, contains many pitfalls to the maintenance of personal privacy as we simultaneously try to maintain social bonds with others. This article, using a triptych of ideas on interpersonal communication, technological change, and sacro-secular beliefs, represents an investigation into the loss of personal privacy in the modern era.

"Computers are getting faster all the time. This Internet thing, whatever it really is, is growing like crazy, networks, paging, cellular phones, faxes."
(novelist Davis Baldacci's *Total Control,* 1997)

"…[a] generation that believes that twittering actually constitutes personal interaction."
(Davis Baldacci's *True Blue*, 2009*)*

"BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU."
(novelist George Orwell's *1984,* 1949)

"Too many people failed to realize that every conversation you made was out there capable of being retrieved."
(novelist Jack Higgins' *The Judas Gate,* 2010)

INTRODUCTION

Jurists Warren and Brandeis wrote a legal opinion that *privacy* is "the right to be let alone" (1890:1). Brandeis (1928) later refined the notion saying that privacy is "the most comprehensive of rights and the most valued of civilized men" (cited in Patterson 2001:38), ranking it alongside life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness in our ethos. Between those years, sociologists Park and Burgess (1924:231) wrote that "privacy may be defined as withdrawal from the group, with, at the same time, ready access to it," allowing the individual "to reflect, to participate, to recast, and to originate" in "the growth of the self-consciousness, self-respect, and personal ideas of conduct", thereby making privacy, commented Schwartz (1968:741), "a highly institutionalized mode of withdrawal.

We try to protect our privacy, yet we also relinquish it– sometimes freely in primary relationships, sometimes inadvertently through involuntary eavesdropping by adjacent others, sometimes through coercion, and at other times without permission through Orwellian electronic eavesdropping. Privacy's maintenance can be an elusive endeavor with its loss serving as ammunition for film producers, for "black helicopter" surveillance and government over-reach theory advocates, and for novelists, alike.

This study is an exploration into the voluntary loss of personal privacy, and its first stage is a complex theoretical framework. It is an integration of thoughts from the Johari Window by Luft (1955, 1969) that looks at disclosed information about the self; the *ExT=C* theory of cultural change by Leslie A. White; and a new term that was developed for this study– *techgnosticism.* The melded triptych is then woven into successive stages looking at some political and economic aspects of privacy and self-disclosure, to be followed by inclusive discussions of typological sociology from Dewey (1960), M. Mead (1970), and H.P. Becker (1950). This study was undertaken because the choice to share, or not to share, elements from the *ownlife* (Orwell 1949:182) appears to be under attack from many sources, threatening our right to, and freedom of, personal privacy.

I have several domain beliefs about the sociological enterprise. One of them is that sociology is the appropriate qualitative narrative of humanistic investigation. Another of my beliefs is that sociologists can, and should, look for inspiration in non-traditional locations such as literature. Novelists, for example, offer their readers isolated social observations that, when collected and collated, lend credence to many sociological assertions. Also, if a single theory is not readily appropriate but certain elements of several approaches are, then a synthetic explanation can be formed (Merton 1967). Finally, a sociologist's imagination should be open to new areas and avenues of investigation and expression, reflecting the *philosophes* of the Enlightenment: That is, experientially based, capturing the imagination; providing an inherent or vested interest in the observed; formal inquiry and analyses; with creative presentations and conclusions.

This study, having several sources, is no exception. The first was when a high school friend, also a sociologist, and I were swapping anecdotes about the classes we were teaching in Illinois' prisons. We had attended conferences in New Orleans and as we traded stories in the hotel's lounge we realized that other patrons were listening, reminding us of an old television ad for a financial investment company. A second chance experience took place with a different friend as we took a young mother to family court in Chicago. A different petitioner was pleading her case when the judge

unexpectedly announced outstanding warrants against her, so she was arrested immediately because certain venues are excluded from protections of privacy. Also, many of us have been in waiting rooms when other visitors had cell phone conversations about personal finances, health, family issues, and so on, making us unwitting participants in the strangers' lives. Such scenes as these led to my formal curiosity about contradictions of personal privacy as it is cherished and voluntarily forsaken.

CREATING A SYNTHETIC EXPLANATION

Sociological protocol requires that our studies have grounded bases. The footing for this study comes from a set of unrelated ideas, neither of which is sufficient alone, but in combination support my purposes.

The Johari Window
Named after its co-creators, Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham, the scheme is diagrammed as a four-paned window representing information known to the self and others. The basic window is contained in Figure 1, and modified versions are contained in Figure 2.

The Open Pane in Figure 1 refers to personal information that is known to the self and others, indicative of primary relationships. The window's Hidden Pane contains information that is known to the self but unknown to others: Not shared, or shared cautiously, indicating the lack of intimacy characteristic of secondary relationships, such as many work settings. The Blind Pane contains information that is not known to the self but it recognized by other, illustrated in classic Greek tragedies where protagonists' hamartia or character flaw is recognized by others on stage and by members of the audience, but not

by such a starring role as Sophocles' Oedipus. The Unknown Pane contains traits, such as hidden talents (Yen 1999), that are equally unknown to the self and others.

The four panes are pragmatic devices in personal or group therapy where Open Panes of exchange, similar to adult-to-adult discourse in Transactional Analysis (Harris 1969), is paramount to making cooperation and empathy possible. Recovery groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous, or religious renewal groups such as cursillo, are dependent upon the drunk-a-logs (Denzin 1987) or the retold epiphanies (O'Sullivan 1999) that people tell about their journeys of renewal. The announcements recounting lives once led, turning points, and new priorities allow listeners to accept their own passages while the presenters self-understand without reliving the pasts.

An intended version of the window is recounted in O'Sullivan's 2010 return to his case study from 2002. Industrial wage-earning employees and foremen are often antagonistic to each other, hampering production and employee retention. Hoping to reduce such conflict, O'Sullivan convinced upper management of "Subsidiary Logistics Kompany" to include a meet-and-greet working lunch during training for new wage earners with their intended floor managers. All participants revealed a little about themselves with the intention that labor-management tension, the hallmark of the company's local reputation, would be reduced. O'Sullivan's bosses and the new-hires liked the sessions, but influential foremen did not. Opening Hidden Panes of personal traits to *insignificant* others, they felt, bred familiarity, undermining the mystique of authority
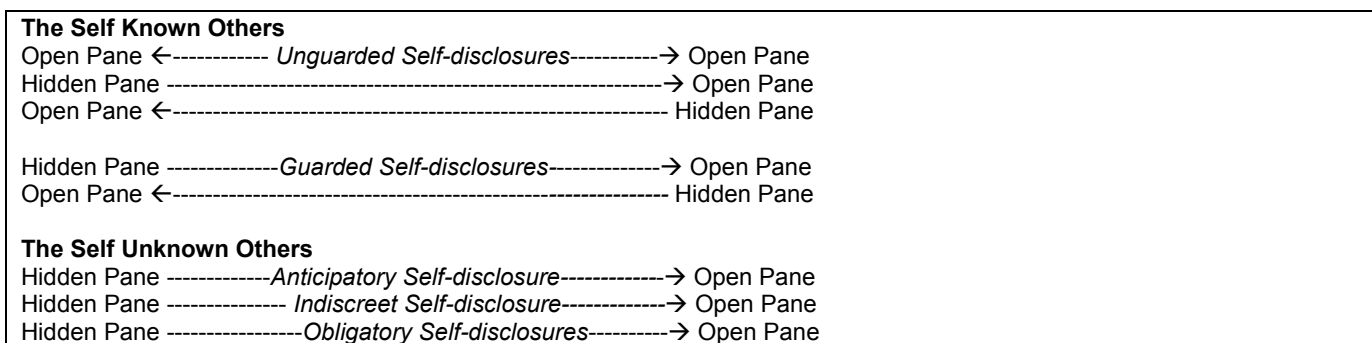
Figure 2 offers modified Johari windows depicting directions of voluntary self-disclosures. These exchanges

Figure 1 – *The Johari Window*

	Information that is Known to Self	Information that is Unknown to Self
Known to Others	Open Pane	Blind Pane
Unknown to Others	Hidden Pane	Unknown Pane

(Modified from Luft 1955, 1969)

Figure 2 – *Johari Window Conversations*

```
The Self Known Others
Open Pane ←------------ Unguarded Self-disclosures-----------→ Open Pane
Hidden Pane ---------------------------------------------------------→ Open Pane
Open Pane ←--------------------------------------------------------- Hidden Pane

Hidden Pane --------------Guarded Self-disclosures--------------→ Open Pane
Open Pane ←--------------------------------------------------------- Hidden Pane

The Self Unknown Others
Hidden Pane ------------Anticipatory Self-disclosure------------→ Open Pane
Hidden Pane -------------- Indiscreet Self-disclosure-------------→ Open Pane
Hidden Pane ----------------Obligatory Self-disclosures----------→ Open Pane
```

are based on the principles of behavioral bookkeeping (novelist Randy Wayne White 2002/2003:208) or reciprocal altruism (Stone 2001) where the norm of reciprocity is an economic exchange between the self and known or unknown others.

Movement of privacies between Open and Hidden panes is the general pattern of several types of self-disclosure. Between the self and known others, *unguarded self-disclosures* typify the intimacies of primary relationships between close kin and friends where a sense of togetherness is the goal. Yet *guarded self-disclosures* between Hidden and Open panes are indicative of limited secondary relationships with expected boundaries, as shown in O'Sullivan 2010 study.

There are also Joharian dialogues between the self and unknown others. *Anticipatory self-disclosures* from Hidden to Open are based on expected and tangible outcomes of information evaluations, such as the granting of granting of financial assistance or job offers. *Indiscreet self-disclosures* from Hidden to Open panes can be a perilous way to establish friendships, as we are reminded all too frequently in the news. *Obligatory self-disclosures* can be testimonies in court or legislative hearings where reporting self-details is required. Such revelations are recorded as matters of public concern, but as novelists Orwell and Higgins, and sociologist Patterson, have portrayed, the loss of personal privacy extends beyond specific settings. *All* actions, these writers say, can be recorded somewhere, somehow, by someone, for some use, and the subject of such observations are powerless to prevent the intrusions.

White's *ExT=C* Theory of Cultural Change

White's theory of cultural ecology and cultural materialism has been criticized for its universality that will be briefly mentioned later. Right now, however, I look at the symbols in the equation.

E= animate and non-animate sources of energy to do work, where human musculature is elemental, supplemented by domesticated dray animals. Non-animate energies are found as wind, electricity, flowing water, controlled fire, as well as solar, atomic, and geothermal potential.

T= the various tools or technologies that we have, starting with our hands, and all other created devices are their extensions. Neither E nor T can stand alone to accomplish any task, but when sources of energy are matched with applicable tools, work gets done, becoming more efficient and productive, and lifestyles change.

C= cultural changes that take place, and the social sciences have logged many theories in the history of social change or evolution. Tonnies (1887/1988) talks about the transition from *gemeinschaft* to *gesellschaft.* Dewey (1960) does the same for the transition from the rural to the urban where technological innovations have significant impact on the shift, and Mead talks about differences in generation conversations between *post-, co-,* and *pre-figurative* societies.

Earlier in this article I asserted that illustrations from popular culture can support general or specific sociological theses, and several are offered to uphold mine. By looking at the history of entertainment media, some of us can recall the two-way wrist radio and visual screen device that comics detective Dick Tracy wore and the communication device that Mr. Spock wore in his ear in the television version of *Star Trek* that looks like a bluetooth mobile phone: The fiction of science then is the reality of science now. Digitalized communications change rapidly and inexorably as novelist Baldacci noted such transitions in his books from the "dark ages" of 1997 to the then-modern era of 2009. Similarly, novelist White remarks that drums, signal fires, and landline telephones have evolved into other devices, but "our wistfulness, our rebellion against isolation, does not" (2003a:215-216), begetting newer and faster devices, prompting novelist White to postulate later that "we're all destined to be microchip [fanatics]" (2004:30).

Email, Facebook walls, Twitter, Internet cafes, chat rooms, blogs, and so on are diverse yet common blends of Es and Ts, which allow us to share different kinds of information, even self-disclosures, apart from each other. Sometimes we know the person at the other end and sometimes not. An application of White's theory to a communications model then goes something like this. Basic A-B verbal exchanges can hold unguarded contents between the Open Panes of primary others or guarded contents between the Hidden Panes of secondary others, but modern material communication technologies no longer require direct dyadic contact (Ringen 2005a, 2005b). All the while, concerns over who can be trusted with what information and how to moderate the technologies are amplified in our frenzied electronic environment.

Techgnosticism

Gnosticism is an imprecise sacro-secular belief system from Judaic and Christian backgrounds, dedicated to mystical and esoteric truths in the divine or in the creations of the divine. An intellectualized and spiritual awakening collectively adored by devotees, it elevates disciples to statuses higher than non-believers (Macquarrie 1977, Spencer 1965) just like any other social, political, or religious belief system.

Techgnosticism represents an amalgamation of gnosticism and *ExT=C*. Allowing for poetic license, novelists Hershenow (2001:36) and White (2003b:86) each agree that electronic communication couplings have reached near spiritual levels of superstition, magic, idolatry, and worship, independent of all other applied sciences. Derived from brainstorming with my nephew, Andy, the expression seems embodied in such idea people as DaVinci, Michelangelo, and Jules Verne, but they did not have the means to turn their dreams into realities. Others, people like Thomas Edison, the team of Daniel Burnham and Frederick Law Olmsted, Henry Ford, Buckminster Fuller, and Bill Gates, had the means to actualize their visions. All of these men were apparently endowed with high levels of need achievement

(McClelland 1961) to succeed and move forward, believing that the premises behind *ExT=C* were backed by the purist of motives benefiting all.

The ultra-modernists of electronic communications systems have promoted their devices to almost super-natural icons, but the near-cultic everyday user may lack the ability to understand the ensuing loss of personal privacy. Borrowing from McLuhan's (1964) and McLuhan and Fiore's (1967) slogans, the changes wrought by the new media are the messages of change that some people get and others do not, as Gavison (2001), Ringen, and Stone would each likely agree.

The *techgnosticism* of our .com/bluetooth generation has an advantage over previous ideas because the term allows for derived expressions widening its scope. *Techwizards* are the scientists and the developers of modern technologies, and *techgnostics are* the faithful users of the creations who stand in opposition to the *techagnostics* who reject the allure and promises of modern gadgetry. *Techmarketers* are the hawkers and purveyors of the emergent technologies; and *techcommunities* are social network pen pals*. From Durkheim (1897/1951) is derived *techanomie* as a collective's rejection of many modern tools, a trait of some rural communities; and from Srole (1956) we have *techanomia* as an individualized *techanomie,* possibly influenced by others who are more technologically enlightened, with *techsavvy* representing that proficiency and understanding. *Techtoys* are the mobile media that far surpass their original roles as mobile telephones. *Technocracy* is the near-obligatory communication media imposed, foisted, or *techmarketed* upon us via advertising in our *techcapitalist* and *techfrenzied* environment. There are the *technaivetes* who do not believe that the world can be a dangerous place, failing to protect themselves from cyber-crimes of *techpredators* using pseudo-*gemeinschaft* ploys (Merton 1967), and who, paraphrasing novelist Nevada Barr (2010 157), have the power to control others' finances, histories, and destinies. Finally, there are *techspies* who engage, rightfully or wrongfully, in Orewellian surveillance into our privacies for various public and private agencies.

Details in the locked safes of our Hidden Panes are secrets, after all, when only one person knows them (Higgins; Ringen 2005b). The very nature of dyadic or A-B conversations allows for shared intimacies, and the degrees or amounts of details contained in self-disclosure are functions of trust in the others. We cherish the personal privacies in our Hidden Panes, but we also voluntarily release them to others. As we become more attuned to the gadgets *de jur* some of us use them for their intended purposes, as with mobile phones. Still others go far beyond that degree of utility, fully integrating into *techgnosticism,* ingratiating themselves with other *techgnostics,* and poking fun at those who are less *techsavvy* or are *techgnostics.* Perhaps the ones who are less skilled by choice or are doubters recognize that unguarded uses of electronic airwaves jeopardizes personal privacy.

THE NATURE OF PRIVACY

Privacy, especially personal privacy, has many interpretations. Warren and Brandeis, for example, discuss its development of meaning from meddling with life, property, trespass, spirituality, intellect, the right to be let alone, civil privileges, and possessions, with subsequent definitions reinforcing those claims. Formal laws have followed suit to protect us from criminal charges based on our acts rather than on our deeds, copyrights to protect intellectual property, patents to bulwark inventions, and trademarks to safeguard corporate symbols and slogans. The U.S. Patriot Act of 2001 defends us from certain governmental invasions into our private lives; and the Health Insurance Portability and Protection Act of 1968 secures our medical records from unwarranted trespass. The Patriot Act is regularly set aside, however, when national security is threatened, and medical providers have us sign HIPPA waivers to share information for diagnoses. Privacy may be one of our rights, but it is not ensured.

Speaking of self-disclosure, I sometimes use and acknowledge electronic sources in my research because they offer condensed and easily accessible entries and articles leading to others. I use them judiciously, but in my semi-retirement I no longer have ready access to good university libraries. *To wit,* I read an entry on privacy in an online encyclopedia that complements and reflects ideas offered by Warren and Brandeis. Joined with the Johari Window, that entry is interpreted to mean that individuals, groups, and organizations are protected from invasions into their Hidden Panes. Taking the list from Brandeis and Warren and collapsing them into *physical, informational, spiritual/intellectual,* and *organizational* privacies, the categories are not mutually exclusive. Laws (governmental protections) and bans forced self-disclosures of voting choices (informational privacies) that are based on political (spiritual/intellectual) preferences. We are allowed, however, to self-disclose our election choices if we so choose, just as we can reveal any elements of *ownlives* however and to whomever we select. That is, we have the freedom to keep our Hidden Panes closed or open them at our discretion as Brandeis and Warren, Luft and Ingham, Park and Burgess, and Westin (1967) would all agree.

Privacy and Freedom

Self-disclosure may be an element of being as we promote trust in others and learn more about ourselves, but there are perils involved in the process (Borchers 1999). Others may not respond in kind; it can create an imbalanced relationship where actors A and B are not equally invested; and, while the information may be used against us, we still take such chances connecting ourselves with others.

Historic and contemporary essays have debated this exchange, treating it as one of political ideals and freedom, liberalism, and humanism. Several of these recent pieces are cited here (Borchers; Gavison;

Patterson; Ringen; and Stone). Added to that list is Leouissi's 2000 article on humanism. Their opinions are not exhaustive, but were chosen because their interpretations reflect my thoughts: Specifically, the freedom to self-disclose or not, the social contexts of laws that threaten our freedoms, and the role that technological changes have in all. These articles are addressed interpretively and comprehensively unless otherwise required.

Freedom, these articles illustrate, is like privacy– multidimensional. There is *negative* freedom to mean freedom from something. For example, the Bill of Rights puts limitations on governmental power and criminal law that prohibit certain kinds of acts. *Positive* freedom allows us to believe as we choose, and is closely related to the liberty and the real freedom schools of thought. It allows us to make our own choices and live by our own interests. The combined forms of these traditions say that we are permitted to do as we so choose, so long as we do no harm to others or to the state.

Grounded in many of the *philosophies'* ideals, both negative and positive freedoms are often seen at macro- and micro-political levels of analyses. At the macro-level, a number of possible truths exists: the fewer the number of legal restrictions placed on people, the better the government; the fewer the number of restrictions placed on people, the wider their ranges of personal choices; the fewer the number of restrictions placed on people, the wider their connectedness to others; a good government upholds the negative freedoms imposed on itself; governments that violate positive freedoms and the real school of liberty become dangerous, as Orwell depicted; finally, governments that are proactive to protect the several freedoms are better than governments that react to harms already done.

The micro-level of political ideals is less complicated. Communal strength, opportunities, and connectedness, all elements of classical humanism, are rooted in independence of action and interdependence with others' trust rather than on external controls, force, or dicta. Friendships, for example, are also based in the micro-economics of reciprocity and like-mindedness, as well as on macro-levels economics.

Political economies, such as democratic capitalism, are guided by such forward-thinking people as those mentioned earlier: Working together, they change ways of life. Governments that adopt the *laissez faire* ideology of fewer rather than more economic impediments allow the forces of supply and demand to work and level economic exchanges. The same type of attitude toward positive freedoms of belief and choice allow populations to flourish.

A market economy is based on consumers who purchase new products or services that are designed and implemented by entrepreneurs and their investors. Product and service prices are based on a combination of factors including overhead, competition, applicable trade guidelines, and what the market will bear. New products and services are introduced to a population through the

advertiser's bag of tricks including Maslovian appeals, the bandwagon approach of "everyone's doing/getting it", and ego gratification of mastery over product, utility, and safety, as well as individual modernity.

Rephrased in the current context, the entrepreneurial *techwizards* of modern communications develop or recombine energies and technologies into new products. *Techmarketers* promote the new designs and functions with near-salvific claims to potential *techmarkets,* allowing them to participate in *techcommunities* of like-skilled and like-thinking reference groups where, Baldacci laments, tweeting is seen as being interactive or conversational. The *techcommunities* embrace the *technocracy* provided by the range of *techtoys,* becoming *techsavvy* in proficiency. Others, however, are not attracted to the gadgets, remaining *techgnostics,* perhaps manifesting *techanomie* or *techanomia*. Danger lurks for them and the *technaivetes* who make unguarded self-disclosures shifting information from their Hidden Panes to their Open Panes for unknown others to view. Despite laws against social predation protecting others' properties, rights, and personal information, *techpredators* are always able to find new victims who have unwavering trust in their electronic devices and the providers' promises of security, as well as the identities and the motives of others posing as electronic friends and reference groups. Personal privacy may be one of our rights backed by an abundance of legal protections, but the individual is privacy's first line of defense.

A RECAP

Few would argue that the technologies of electronic communications have had and will continue to have profound effects on our individual and collective lives. On the beneficial side, they have enabled friendships to be maintained over time and distance when they might otherwise fade away. They have expanded our ability to present and acquire information and opinions, almost instantaneously. They have expanded political reference points so that we can make weighed rather than emotional or impression-based electoral choices. They have fueled our economy, but these same points have reverse effects. The people at the other end of our conversations may not be friends at all, only disguised opportunists. One of the criticisms that has been made about electronic encyclopedia is that information that has been electronically dispatched may not have been filtered through peer review to determine authenticity. Plagiarism is hard to detect. Political opinions can be carefully disguised so that the message portrayed is not the message given, serving to misguide the unsuspecting. They have fueled other countries' economies even more than ours because the material devices are more likely than not made in foreign countries. Many electronics service plan contracts are iron-clad, entrapping the buyer who wants the newest *techtoys*, but does not read the agreement's fine print.

The first items on the parallel lists address the issue of

friendships and personal intimacies. Close friends or close family members do not keep balance sheets typifying novelist White's behavioral accounting: Opening Hidden Panes to friends and family members is natural, not contrived. A-B conversants have electronic means to chat with each other when they are away from each other, but the same milieu contains legal protections of privacy and social predations on privacy arising at differential rates.

The belief that personal privacy is a *right* is backed by a variety of laws and regulations that protect our backgrounds. It is also true that there are time, place, and procedural circumstances wherein we are disclosed without the voluntary act of self-disclosure. We have the positive, negative and real freedoms to share or not to share ourselves with others, to buy or not to buy the available communication media, and to use those media as we choose, but we often incorrectly distinguish them, jeopardizing our privacies as we try to be modern. Instead of being held close to the vest, our private lives quickly become public domain. No longer "shouted from the rooftops" (Warren and Brandeis) by newshounds and gossip mongers through their mass media outlets, we have become quite capable of doing that all by ourselves as we succumb to cultural and social pressures of the *technocracy* in which we live.

A LARGER CULTURAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

Several undocumented sources I read viewed privacy as a modern concept in western Europe, in the U.S. and the minority of countries throughout the world. A partial product of the *gemeinshaft-gesellschaft* transition, a right to privacy emerged when populations shifted from villages with homogeneous lifestyles to urban areas with heterogeneous lifestyles.

The *gemeinschaft-gesellschaft* and rural-urban typologies have held prominent positions in the history of sociology, but they must be used cautiously for several reasons. The two sets of terms are not respectively synonymous, nor do they have the same identifiers; but those of us who are familiar with their populations realize that Weber (1947/1964) was correct when he asserted that *gemeinschaft/gesellschaft* or *rural/urban* communities could be distinguished by *communal* or *associative* relationships among and between their populations. While the sets of terms are outwardly dichotomous, we need to avoid committing the dualistic fallacy by assuming that they are absolute. There are certainly *urban* areas in rural America, just as there are neighborhoods based on ethnicity, language, and communal religions in large cities. O'Sullivan's 2007 article saying that *social variance* exists between the ideals of conformity and deviance has application here also: Lifestyles exist somewhere between *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft,* just as the old term *rurban* splits the difference between rural and urban.

Other cautions that must be addressed are the allegations of universality and linearity of movement in typological presentations. Do all communities eventually make the transition from one type/stage to another? Are the rates of transition, if they occur, uniform? If they are not, are the inhibiting factors universal? If change occurs, are the promotional factors universal? Are the causes of change the products of sovereign local inventions or of cultural diffusion? Most of us would exercise caution when answering these questions, but for the sake of argument, discussion, or analyses, we must sometimes throw caution to the wind, minimizing chance occurrence as the independent variable to social change or modernization. With that *caveat* made, I blatantly use social typology ideas from Dewey (1960), H.P. Becker (1950), and Meade with their emphases on cultural materialism to look at the loss of personal privacy in modern society.

Typology Theories and the Contradictions of Personal Privacy

White's theory states that changes in energies and technologies increase work productivity, creating a more specialized division of labor, affecting population growth. Dewey's article, a detailed literature review of social typologies, listed forty outcome variables from technological changes in social structure from eighteen authors. Two of those writers were significant. From Wirth (1938), Dewey listed five traits of urbanism, and they were complex divisions of labor, symbols of class and status, heterogeneity of values, formal laws, anonymity of individual behavior, all of which are linked to the current study. The complete list, however, contained another item, secularism, from Becker that is also important here.

Division of labor. As work becomes less time- and labor-intensive, fewer people are needed to provide for the basic necessities of life. People then move into alternative labor specializations that contribute to lifestyle and economic divisions. Social classes emerge.

Included in those labor specializations are those who engage in theoretical technology as *idea* people, and those who apply principles to productivity as developers– the *techwizards.* Another labor specialty, especially in a service-based economy such as ours are advertisers, *techpromoters,* who target *techcommunities* with specific consumer appeals, ultimately enhancing *techgnosticism* as a modern way of life.

Symbols of class and status. Material possessions and market exchanges replace communal sharing. Social positions shift from egalitarian ones to others based on the amount of money owned and its ability to acquire the latest material goods.

The newest material goods can easily become *techtoys,* and a person's social status may be measured not by the person's accomplishments, but by how new, enhanced, glittery, and expensive the acquisitions are. The advertisers know how to "trip the trigger" of consumers, appealing to social images more than the actual uses to which new technologies are applied.

Heterogeneity of values. Lifestyles and social perceptions change: Emergent social classes, for example, develop different values, and they sometimes conflict. Social ecologists have long studied the effects that immigrant populations' values have on host

populations, but heterogeneity of values can also be generational phenomenon as Mead discussed in her anthropological study of the "generation gap."

Post-figurative societies are likened to *gemeinschaft,* communal, or tightly-knit rural religious communities. Community elders teach the young truths and methods that have been effective for time immortal. The generations were cooperative, but World War II, a conflict in which tradition was repudiated and targeted for destruction (Raven 1943:80), ended with "…history's most striking conjunctions of challenge and response" (Woodhouse 1954). The development and only use of atomic weapons served as the flashpoint for the new *co-figurative* generation. The young no longer needed to learn from their elders who could not grasp the enormity of emergent informational and energy technologies that made nuclear war possible. The generation gap had emerged.

The *pre-figurative* society is identified as minute-by-minute technological and ideological changes making *techanomie* and *techanomia* normal. The young who are *techsavvy* have the opportunity to teach elder *technaivetes* about modernity and social integration, thereby closing the generation gap. *Techgnosticism* becomes a prevalent belief, but the *techwizards* retain informational control, or social power, over all others so a system of social differentiation is still present.

Formal Laws. The heterogeneity of values derived from internal and external sources eventually create social conflict needing sanctioned rather than casual solutions. Governing agents and agencies emerge providing guidelines for protections of tangible and intangible properties, freedoms and rights, lives, and the ability to be left alone, if desired. Personal privacy emerges as a dominant value.

Laws are often made as responses to social conflicts, rather than on preemptive bases. There exists a type of cultural lag (Ogburn 1957) between harm done and a government's response to it, but by the time negative freedoms have been levied on a population, new ways of doing harm have already been put into place. This principle is especially true in the fast-paced world of *techpredators* whose footprints are often difficult to find, let alone be susceptible to prosecution, but in order to retain citizen approval and confidence by doing something to protect personal rights and freedoms, governments must try to remain current.

Anonymity of Individual Behavior. If Weber is correct, then communal living was based on kinship and homogeneity. Open Panes of communication between citizens and distinctiveness of individual activity were normal and necessary. The shift to urban areas with large and heterogeneous populations, complex divisions of labor, formal laws fostering limited associative ties with unknown others contributed to much individual anonymity. A synonym for anonymity is personal secrecy, and by extension, personal privacy. Keeping Hidden Panes closed or opened guardedly provided a convenient safety net for personal protection. Concurrently, the same technological changes that served as stimuli for these cultural shifts also threaten anonymity by reducing distinctiveness of personal activity.

Here exists the glaring inconsistency between *gesellschaft/*urbanism and personal privacy– the contradiction between it being protected and it being forsaken. If anonymity of individual behavior and identity is desirable and practical, why do people open their personal vaults, their Hidden Panes, to strangers? Perhaps we see the re-emergence of communal social life in combination with sophisticated technologies that promote such cooperation– Mead's pre-figurative society.

Social mobility, social-class and value-based differences, and variations in technological savvy can cause rifts between friends and family members. People become isolated though forces not of their making or desire, but they want something different for themselves. Borrowing from Hirschi's studies on juvenile delinquency (1969), they want attachments and commitment to others, involvement in others' lives, and the belief that they are part of mainstream society, albeit one that changes rapidly.

Secularism. Becker's 1950 book also assessed social typologies, specifically addressing the sacred and the secular. Neither term was essentially religious in nature (Dewey; Lyon 1989), but referred to attachment to social values. The sacred refers to a desire/need to maintain social traditions even in the light of surrounding change, whereas the secular refers to willingness to accept social and technological change –actual elements and products within White's *ExT=C* equation.

Traditional, communal, *gemeinschaft,* post-figurative, or sacred populations find comfort in traditions. Social networks are composed of likeminded family members and neighbors. Technological and social changes are resisted because they threaten tranquility and ennui.

Modern, associative, *gesellschaft* co- and pre-figurative or secular populations thrive on social change. Social networks are no longer locally based and limited in scope, but that same vastness inhibits social contacts unless technological adaptations allow us to bridge time and space separations. While it can be argued that we still live in an environment of strangers, those same strangers can become friends over time, and the wide variety of electronic communication devices allows that to occur.

Secondary relationships can become primary ones through different forms of intimacy, and the most profound method is to open Hidden Panes of the self, trusting in the other's sincerity. Electronic posting of the hidden self to unknown others is no different in kind than emerging intimacies derived from direct contact; it is only the methods that change. *Techgnosticism* is a contemporary example of Becker's secularism: Adherents do not want to be socially or technologically "left behind" (LaHaye and Jenkins 1995), and microchipped interaction with significant and generalized others is dispensation from such a fate.

DISCUSSION

When the idea for this article was evolving, a decision had to be made as to whether or not specific examples of self-disclosures and their effects should be included. It was concluded that approach could turn the project into a listing of case studies. Each illustration would have been internally valid, but external validity and reliability would have been suspect.

Instead, principles were borrowed from White's theory of cultural materialism and the Johari Window of self-disclosure to be combined with a set of terms centered on *techgnosticism* as reverential awe of applied science. Together the ideas allowed me to look at self-disclosure, the voluntary loss of personal privacy to known and unknown others, in a way that, to my knowledge, has not yet been addressed.

Privacy, as a right and a freedom, has certain social and legal ramifications. Protected in a wide variety of legislative and regulatory proceedings, governments fulfill one of their responsibilities to their citizens. There is, however, a delay, a cultural lag, between the time that rights of privacy are abused in our fast-paced communications technology and new laws are made prohibiting violations of personal privacies. Ultimate responsibility for the maintenance of private information then rests with the individual: If a person does not want information contained in Hidden Panes disclosed, then keep the panes closed. Social forces outside the individual make self-disclosure increasingly appealing, yet dangerous.

Sociologists recognize that the labels attached to opposing ideal types are interesting and that variations of the end points exist between them, so continued discussions of the *types* provide little new information. The descriptors used in those comparisons are useful when discussing the process of voluntary self-disclosure, or the voluntary loss of personal privacy.

Traditional societies encourage Open Panes of oral communication between citizens to maintain cooperation and homogeneity. At the other end of the continuum, in modern societies, privacy is encouraged rather than discouraged because sometimes who can be trusted is unknown. Social and geographic mobility makes oral or face-to-face intimacies difficult to maintain, yet alone accomplish, so micro-chipped and digitalized products of applied science make continued, or new, relationships possible. Feelings of isolation can be abated with the tip of the finger touching mobile communication devices. In that regard, the voluntary loss of person privacy, self-disclosure, and using artificial devices is no different than the voluntary loss of person privacy or self-disclosure in direct A-B conversations.

References

Baldacci, D. 1997. *Total Control.* NY: Warner Books.
------. 2009. *True Blue.* NY: Grand Central Publishing.
Barr, N. 2010. *Burn.* NY: Minotaur Books.
Becker, H.P. 1950. *Through Values to Social Interpretation.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
Borchers, T. 1999. Self-disclosure. http://www.abacon.com/commstudies/interpersonal/indisclosure.html.
Denzin, D.K. 1987. *The Recovering Alcoholic.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
Dewey, R. 1960. The rural-urban continuum: real but relatively unimportant. *American Journal of Sociology 60*:60-66.
Durkheim, E. 1897/1951. *Suicide.* NY: Free Press.
Gavison, P. 2001. Privacy: legal aspects. *Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* ed. N.J. Smelser and P.B. Baltes Vol. 18: 12067-12069. NY: Elsevier.
Harris, T.A. 1969. *I'm O.K. – You're O.K.* NY: Harper.
Hershenow, N. 2001. *The Road Builder.* NY: Bluehen Books.
Higgins, J. 2010. *The Judas Gate.* Detroit, MI: Thorndike Press.
Hirschi, T. 1969. *Causes of Delinquency.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
LaHaye, T.F. and J.B. Jenkins. 1995. *Left Behind.* Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House.
Leouissi, A.A. 2000. Classical humanism and modern societies. *Society 37:*70-77.
Luft, J. 1955. The Johari window, a graphic model interpersonal awareness. Proceedings of the Western Training Laboratory in Group Development. Los Angeles, CA. *Of Human Interaction.* Palo Alto, CA: National Press.
Lyon, L. 1989. *Community in Urban Society.* Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.
Macquarrie, J. 1977. *Principles of Christian Theology.* NY: Scribners.
McClelland, D. 1961. *The Achieving Society.* Princeton, NJ: D. VanNostrand Co.
McLuhan, M. 1964. *Understanding Media: The Extension of Man.* NY: McGraw-Hill.
McLuhan, M. and Q. Fiore. 1967. *The Medium is the Message.* NY: Random House.
Mead, M. 1970. *Culture and Commitment.* NY: American Museum of Natural History.
Merton, R.K. 1967. *On Theoretical Sociology.* NY: Free Press.
Ogburn, W.F. 1957. Cultural lag as theory. *Sociology and Social Research 14*:167-174.
Orwell, G. 1949. *1984.* NY: Harcourt Brace.
O'Sullivan, R.G. 1999. Bill W. Meets the Spanish Armada: Sinners' and Saints' Retold Epiphanies from A.A. to Cursillo. *Free Inquiry in Creative Sociology 27*:27-33.
------. 2002. Voluntary serfdom: an ideological journey into dual-class labor conflicts and possible workers' solutions. *Free Inquiry in Creative Sociology 30*:119-133.
------. 2007. Social Variance as It Exists Between Conformity and Deviance: Following Some Advice from Ogburn. *Free Inquiry in Creative Sociology 35*:103-111.

____ 2010. No Cubes: An Updated Look at an Industrial Workplace and the Fate of Its Alienated Workers. *Free Inquiry in Creative Sociology* 38:60-72.

Park, E. and E.W. Burgess. 1924. *Introduction to the Science of Sociology* 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Patterson, O. 2002. The American View of Freedom: What We Say, What We Mean. *Society* 38:4 37-45.

Raven, C.E. 1943. *Science, Religion, & the Future.* London: Cambridge University Press.

Ringen, S. 2005a. Liberty, Freedom, and Real Freedom. *Society* 42:3 36-39.

------. 2005b. The freedom of liberty. *Society* 42:4 42-48.

Schwartz, B. 1968. The Social Psychology of Privacy. *American Journal of Sociology* 73:6 741-752.

Spencer, B. 1965. *Ye Are the Body* 2d ed. West Park, NY: Holly Cross Publications.

Srole, L. 1956. Social integration and certain corollaries: an exploratory study. *American Sociological Review* 21 709-716.

Stone, B.L. 2001. Liberalism in the science of human nature. *Society* 36:71-78.

Tonnies, F. 1887/1988. *Community and Society: Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft.* New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers

Warren, S.D. and L.D. Brandeis. 1890. The right to privacy. *Harvard Law Review* IV 1-53.

Weber, M. 1947/1964. *The Theory of Economic and Social Organization*. By A.M. Henderson and R. Parsons. NY: Free Press.

Westin, A. 1967. *Privacy and Freedom.* NY: Atheneum.

White, L.A. 1943. Energy and the Evolution of Culture. *American Anthropologist* 43:335-356.

White, R.W. 2003a. *Twelve Mile Limit.* Waterville, ME: Thorndike Press.

------. 2003b. *Everglades.* NY: G.P. Putnam's.

------. 2004. *Tampa Burn.* NY: G.P. Putnam's.

Wirth L. 1938. Urbanism as a way of life. *American Journal of Sociology* 44:8-20.

Woodhouse, C.M. 1954. Introduction to *Animal Farm.* NY: New American Library.

Yen, D. H. Johari Window. Retrieved http://www.noogenesis.com/game_theory/johari/johari_window.html.

Taking Indian Lands
The Cherokee (Jerome) Commission, 1889-1893
By: William T. Hagan
HARDCOVER ISBN: 9780806135137
PAPERBACK ISBN: 9780806142364

Authorized by Congress in 1889, the Cherokee Commission was formed to negotiate the purchase of huge areas of land from the Cherokees, Ioways, Pawnees, Poncas, Tonakawas, Wichitas, Cheyennes, Arapahos, Sac and Fox, and other tribes in Indian Territory. Some humanitarian reformers argued that dissolving tribal holdings into individual private properties would help "civilize" the Indians and speed their assimilation into American culture. Whatever the hoped-for effects, the coerced sales opened to white settlement the vast "unused" expanses of land that had been held communally by the tribes. In Taking Indian Lands, William T. Hagan presents a detailed and disturbing account of the deliberations between the Cherokee Commission and the tribes.

Often called the Jerome Commission after its leading negotiator, David H. Jerome, the commission intimidated Indians into first accepting allotment in severalty and then selling to the United States, at it price, the fifteen million acres declared surplus after allotment. This land then went to white settlers, making possible the state of Oklahoma at the expense of the Indian tribes who had held claim to it.

Hagan has mined nearly two thousand pages of commission journals in the National Archives to reveal the commissioners' dramatic rhetoric and strategies and the Indian responses. He also records the words of tribal leaders as they poignantly defended their attachment to the land and expressed their fears of how their lives would be changed.