

THE MYSTERY FILES from THE ORIGIN POINT

The information below is related to The Origin Point: A Future Tech Cyber Novella, the prequel to [the Life Online Files book series](#) by Case Lane.

The Origin Point....

Easter Sunday morning, 2014

A cleaner in a Washington, DC restaurant near the White House discovered a USB flash drive on a ledge next to a table. The cleaner gave the drive to the restaurant owner who searched its contents, looking for the name of the owner. The name could not be found, but the contents of the drive stunned the owner. The documents appeared to be thought-pieces, or some sort of planning documents used to help develop policy about the future of America. The owner gave the drive to a journalist he knew, Dallas Winter.

A Note from Dallas Winter

In the early morning hours of Easter Sunday in 2014, I was given a USB flash drive containing documents I believe were created by the United States Federal Security Commission, known as FedSec. These documents outlined a detailed strategy to create an online system for tracking every individual on earth. The documents were classified TOP SECRET. I am not permitted to reveal any details including the names of participants, the physical locations of server farms and other information about the foundational origins of the system, which would eventually be called The Network. To be fair, out of context, the entire set of documents has too much detail for general release.

But to provide you with an idea of the issues we will be dealing with as a society, I can release a one-page summary for selected topics that essentially captures the concept proposed in the document. It is hoped that releasing these summaries will generate discussion about the issues, and the legal and policy implications for the future.

These discussion documents were created as background material for the events in The Origin Point: A Future Tech Cyber Novella which is a prequel to the Life Online Files technothriller book series.
<http://www.claneworld.com/life-online/>

THE CONTENTS ON THE DRIVE

Below are summaries from redacted documents from the drive.

Discrimination

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Money Never Ends: Continued access to credit through online protocols

DISCRIMINATION

Preventing the next Dr. King or Ms. Steinem from Gaining a Foothold: Hiding Race and Gender Bias in Website Code

THE ISSUE: *Businesses will be able to program race and gender discrimination into the software code of websites, preventing targeted groups from obtaining a product or service, or a fair price.*

Hanging a “Whites Only” sign outside of your business is likely to generate the wrath of civil rights groups, the immediate reaction of law enforcement flying the flag of the 14th amendment, and no end of taunting from local teenagers. The local Better Business Bureau will know to disown you, and what few patrons that remain will only gingerly offer support, usually behind the barrel of a shotgun. But if you code “Whites Only” into the software code of your business’ website, you may be able to circumvent all of this unrest with no pushback.

The decision of Internet companies, retailers and other organizations to collect online personal data that can be used to create individual profiles, may lead to the creation of cyber Jim Crow for businesses that want to carefully manage their clientele. This not only applies to traditional bias along race and gender lines, but also discrimination by profession, zip code, education and every other factor that is being secretly collected by entities that consumers do not know.

Businesses are already in a position to readjust rates and prices based on selected factors. Creating another level of adjustment for the consumer’s demographics would not be a difficult leap. A resort hotel trying to avoid journalists could code “no vacancy” when a user with that profession attempts to make a reservation. A business looking to encourage an affluent, youthful clientele could provide limited customer service when an undesirable age or zip code makes an inquiry. The question is – how would you avoid getting caught?

In the past, a person would try and rent an apartment, which is available when calling about it, and then rented as soon as the landlord sees the prospective tenant. The prospective tenant would send a different demographic friend to try the same approach, and document the results. In the cyber world, where data is updated second by second, consumers would find it difficult to prove that a “no vacancy” at a particular point in time was only directed at one user. Complainants would have to subpoena the offending code, and have the program deciphered to prove that it was set-up to avoid specific groups. Right after an allegation, a business could easily replace or re-program the code, removing any trace of suspect software. A consumer would have a difficult time conclusively detecting discrimination, and making a valid claim.

The real issue for consumers is that Internet companies have made these practices possible by collecting and distributing personal information, without transparent standards. This action, by itself, has opened the door for the future civil rights violators.

THE PROBABILITY: Easy to do and difficult to prove, the current competitive marketplace may only be delaying what businesses could determine is an acceptable risk.

EDUCATION

Happy 4th Birthday, Please report to a computer: Requiring an Online-Only Education

THE ISSUE: *The entire school curriculum for a one hundred percent online education could be made available as a complete alternative to attending traditional school. The goals would be to end childhood stress from bullying and teacher complacency and bias, and to save billions of dollars.*

What is an education? It is a process used to provide a human with basic skills such as reading and writing required for operating in a modern civilization, and a common basis of information that can be used as a foundation for future knowledge. Whether the objective is spread out over 2,500 leisurely days, or crammed into half that time, hardly makes any difference to the child's eventual standing as an adult who has retained the information. If the process could be completed without the organizational, social and logistical headaches of forcing every child through a common school system, it may end up improving focus, accelerating learning, instantly updating to changing labor demands, and saving billions in one sweep of a keyboard.

Access would begin as soon as a child turns four years old, when parents receive notification that an account has been established for the child in the public school education online system. The entire curriculum from pre-K to Grade 12 plus advanced placement courses would be made available, complete with lectures, books, tests, exercises and a suggested study schedule. There would be no set school year, no defined beginning or end time. Parents could schedule the school day exactly against the hours of their own working and commuting time, and continue through the summer or other holidays based on the family's vacation plans. In most communities, children would report to a study hall where monitors would patrol the cubicles. Each child would be scanned in, and all online time would be recorded. Cameras in common areas would record all activity. Breaks would be programmed based on the student's pace of work, for example every 90 minutes. Students could test out of material they already know, and accelerate towards completion long before their 18th birthday. They could also complete college-level coursework, removing one or two years of higher education loans from their future.

To ensure compliance, students would be required to report for testing at their current level, every 90 days, and if they fail to achieve a passing grade they would have to report to a traditional teaching environment for at least one year. Even if only half the children in the country have the discipline to succeed in this system, the resources that would be saved would be enormous. For socializing, existing recreation centers and school buildings could be used to continue with sports, music, arts, drama, leadership and other extra-curricular activities. But these would be organized and managed by parents, professional coaches or expert instructors, and other interested citizens which would have the added effect of ending a reliance on teachers as babysitters, and improving the community's level of engagement with children.

THE PROBABILITY: While the basic curriculum is already available for home schooling, the next step will be the creation of advanced online tools, and whole communities demanding the transition away from their traditional, failing school.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

No License to Kill: Civilian law enforcement protocols for armed drones

THE ISSUE: *Law enforcement drones equipped with cameras and sensors are used to patrol urban areas. All are weaponized, programmed with automatic disarmament protocols, and the ability to shoot-to-kill. Civil liberties groups argue that a human must always authorize the machines' capabilities. But police forces want to activate automatic features in certain situations.*

Civilian drones, unmanned aerial vehicles used in non-combat situations, are everywhere. The machines are used to deliver packages, assist emergency rescue, handle manual labor, and gather close up and detailed information for weather, news and the paparazzi. The acceptance of drones as operational tools in many professions is extended to the use of the machines in civilian law enforcement.

For law enforcement, the capabilities are a mirror of the military's use in war. Police officers can use the drones to chase criminals, disarm them, and even shoot them if the situation arises. Prior to several court cases, every police force developed their own rules on the drones' deployment. And despite an acceptable safety record, stricter protocols were implemented.

For example, drones can be flown in any public space provided the machines are trackable, noiseless, broadcast a unique light signature, and are equipped with sensors to detect humans, birds, buildings, trees and other objects. Drones can be any shape or size. For civilian uses, most resemble the purpose such as boxes for deliveries, but law enforcement uses mini-helicopter style vehicles that can curve around corners like an accordion bus.

Police can use drones as extensions of the human force, "flying officers," anywhere a human officer would normally, and legally, go, a drone can go too. However, once the drone expects to engage with a suspect, it must come under manual human control. For example, if the suspect is wearing a mask, the human operator must have authorization to remotely remove it. If the suspect is brandishing a weapon, the human operator must survey the entire area to ensure the safety of civilians prior to attempting disarmament. And the human officer can activate the drone's weapons only after assessing the situation as if the officer were there live. The operator who fires a weaponized drone is considered to have discharged a service weapon and would be subject to the standard review process.

THE PROBABILITY: Likely that law enforcement drones are already in widespread use but few know where, how or how many.

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CONSUMER CREDIT

Money Never Ends: Continued access to credit through online protocols

THE ISSUE: *Bankruptcy and credit access issues disappear when consumers default all financial accounts and credit data to automatically search for, and access, any available commercial source of money, including new loans, whenever funds are about to run low.*

Money is whatever we want it to be. If the public believes in the power of the dollar, then it is accepted as a tradable instrument. In a completely online world, physical money, paper and coins are rarely seen, and almost never used in transactions. Instead consumers use cards, or more likely numbers representing cards, for purchases, and allow online applications to automatically pay their bills from savings accounts. When the savings account runs dry, sophisticated applications could automatically search the entire Internet for a new source of funds, scanning thousands of offers from financial institutions to extend a line of credit or loan. The consumer's pre-defined prerequisites from a cap on the amount borrowed or annual interest rate, to even the location of the funding institution, would define the parameters for an acceptable lender. The consumer's account would then receive approval, before the next bill is due, and the system, without input from the consumer, would transfer the funds, and spending could continue with impunity.

Qualifying criteria applies, and interest rates are based on familiar factors, but the bottom-line is that everyone continues to have access to credit. Performing a function now dominated by high-interest payday loan companies, this service would allow consumers the best rate available anywhere, not just in their neighborhood. The image of families being forced out of their homes by foreclosure fades as online applications crunch available data on employment history, family profile, and reliability to find a solution that prevents the bank from registering a missed payment. This is a scenario where borderline credit consumers would have to provide details for the analysis of their personal online profiles, and allow that information to be regularly updated based on their utilization of the credit services. But, the service provides stability for individuals who would no longer face the fear of losing it all, or of the money ever running out.

THE PROBABILITY: At some point America's debt dependence will run aground and this process will either be a disaster, or used to force everyone back into financial discipline by completing preventing spending when funds are no longer available from weary international lenders.