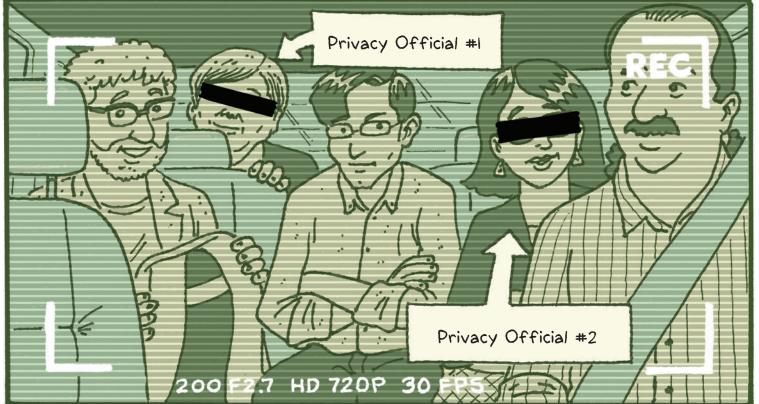


We had just finished giving a presentation at a large university on our previous comic, "Terms of Service: Understanding Our Role in the World of Big Data"...



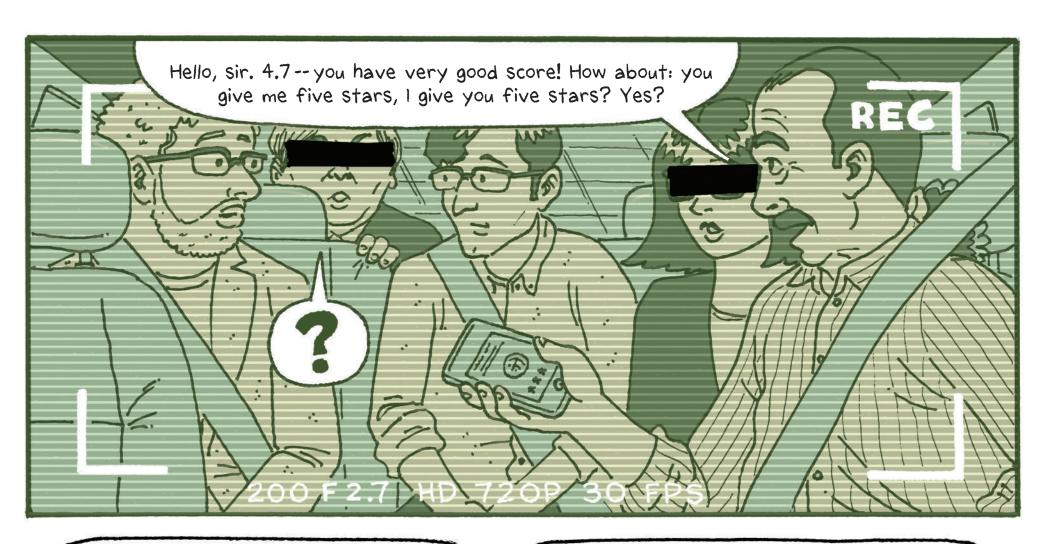
...when we took an Uber ride with two members of the university's privacy office,\* one of whom is an avid Uber user.



Wow, Michael, with you thrown in--quite a collection of privacy nerds!



\*They have asked for anonymity because they are not speaking on behalf of their employer or in an official capacity as privacy officers.



At that point I didn't know that in the Uber universe, the passengers and drivers rate EACH OTHER—and the rating determines which drivers get fares, and who gets picked up.

Right. This "rating economy" underpins the whole system -- as it does a host of other apps like Lyft, AirBnB, etc.. And, it has its vulnerabilities..

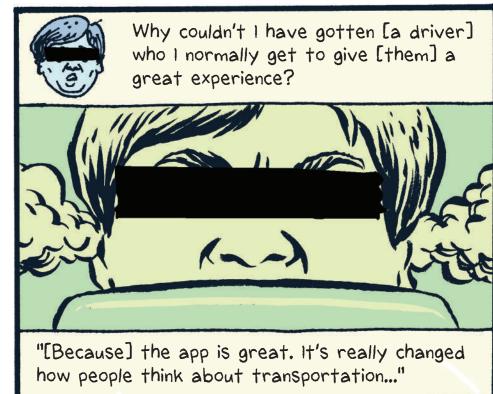




















If your job is pegged to a score, you'll do everything in your power to push back against a possibly unfair rating --



including
doing the thing
you yourself fear
most -- having your
actions portrayed
differently from
what you
intended.

What concerns me more is how this kind of incident is only getting more common -- ratings and surveilling each other play a part in all our livelihoods now, even as simple consumers...



Some restaurants depend on Yelp ratings or rate customers on loyalty. The FTC can bring legal action if things like Amazon product reviews are unfair, they told me, but the agency hasn't offered guidance for ratings of people.

Online dating is one Big Data rating game, AirBnb reviews can determine where you vacation. Employers sort job applications by "creativity" and "leadership."



The list goes on.



How does a driver's subjective rating of me--that I can't easily see\*-impact my future ability to get transportation?
Or a job? Or who knows what else third-party companies do with this data?

\*The official way to find out your Uber score is to request it from the company -- or ask your driver to tell you...

Well, if you don't want it to be "subjective," you should have recorded him too!

You know, I didn't think to at the time. Also, that would have been just as illegal -- at least in California\* -- as his recording of us.



\* A California appellate court has ruled that this statute applies to the use of hidden video cameras to record conversations as well. See California v. Gibbons, 215 Cal. App. 3d 1204 (Cal Ct. App. 1989).



Ha! He out-surveilled us! It's like an arms race -- or a Mexican standoff...









\*The Chinese government is reportedly planning to implement a social credit system, using Big Data to issue financial and social scores for all adults, linked to ID cards to be issued by 2020.

Since then someone has pulled up my rating and it's [now] a 4.8.

"I am a good person I have a 4.8!"







Uber citizen!

After you all got out, the driver gave me his code, and we did a zero-mile ride. He gave me five stars and I gave him five stars. I'm a model



