LONG

Alessandro Acquisti is the Trustees Professor of Information Technology and Public Policy at the Heinz College, Carnegie Mellon University. He is an Andrew Carnegie Fellow (inaugural class), the director of the PeeX (Privacy Economics Experiments) lab at CMU, a member of the steering committee of CMU’s Center for Behavioral and Decision Research (CBDR), and the Faculty Chair of the Heinz College’s Master of Science in Information Security Policy & Management (MISPM) program. He is the current Chair of CMU Institutional Review Board (IRB). Previously, for four years he was the Faculty Director of the CMU Digital Transformation and Innovation Center sponsored by PwC (where he managed a multi-million dollar budget to fund CMU research in areas including analytics, security, and public policy), and the PwC William W. Cooper Professor of Risk and Regulatory Innovation. Alessandro has been a member of the Board of Regents of the U.S. National Library of Medicine (NLM), and a member of the U.S. National Academies' Committee on public response to alerts and warnings using social media.

Alessandro investigates the economics and behavioral economics of privacy and personal data. While completing his PhD thesis at UC Berkeley, he started contributing to the revival of the research on the economics of privacy. Upon joining Carnegie Mellon, he spearheaded the application of behavioral economics to the study of privacy and security decision making, and the investigation of privacy and disclosure behavior in online social media through the mining and analysis of public profile data. His research in these fields has kept evolving, including the investigation of nudging and behavioral interventions in the privacy domain, the study of value creation and surplus allocation in the data economy, and the examination of the economic impact of novel privacy-preserving analytics. He has published and disseminated interdisciplinary research in leading journals across diverse fields (including Science, Proceedings of the National Academy of Science, Management Science, Journal of Economic Literature, Journal of Consumer Research, Journal of Marketing Research, Marketing Science, Information Systems Research, ACM Transactions, and so forth), as well as through conference proceedings (including USENIX, CHI, CSCW, ACM EC, PETS, SOUPS, and so forth), edited books, and numerous keynotes.

Alessandro has been the recipient of the PET Award for Outstanding Research in Privacy Enhancing Technologies, the IBM Best Academic Privacy Faculty Award, the IEEE Cybersecurity Award for Innovation, the Heinz College School of Information's Teaching Excellence Award, and numerous Best Paper awards (including best papers awards across journals in the information technology and information systems fields such as Management Science, MISQ, and Information Systems Research). He has held editorial positions across several journals and conference committees, including Information Systems Research (Senior Editor) and Management Science (Associate Editor). His research has been supported by grants from the National Science Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, the Sloan Foundation, DARPA, the Department of Homeland Security, the National Security Agency, the Transcoop Foundation, Microsoft, and Google. Security education research and tools he developed with colleagues at Carnegie Mellon University were deployed in the CMU start-up Wombat Security Technologies, Inc, which was later acquired by Proofpoint.

Alessandro has testified before the U.S. Senate and House committees on issues related to privacy policy and consumer behavior, and has been frequently invited to consult on privacy policy issues by government bodies including the White House’s Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) and the Council of Economic Advisers (CEA), the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), and the European Commission.

Alessandro's findings have been featured in national and international media outlets, including the Economist, the New Yorker, the New York Times and New York Times Magazine, the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post, the Financial Times, Wired.com, NPR, CNN, and 60 Minutes. His TED talks on privacy and human behavior have been viewed online over 1.5 million times. His 2009 study on the predictability of Social Security numbers was featured in the “Year in Ideas” issue of the NYT Magazine (the SSNs assignment scheme was changed by the US Social Security Administration in 2011). Connecting his research and musical interests, Alessandro has collaborated as technologist on an interactive musical opera on privacy and surveillance inspired by his own research on social media, face recognition, and inference of sensitive information from public data. The opera, titled “Looking at You,” premiered at New York West Village's HERE in 2019, and was recently awarded a grant by the Sloan Foundation to go on tour across the United States in 2023.

Alessandro holds a PhD from UC Berkeley, and Master degrees from UC Berkeley, the London School of Economics, and Trinity College Dublin. He has held visiting positions at the Universities of Rome, Paris, and Freiburg (visiting professor); Harvard University (visiting scholar); University of Chicago (visiting fellow); Microsoft Research (visiting researcher); and Google (visiting scientist).

In a previous life, Alessandro worked as a classical music producer and a label manager (PPMusic.com) and as a freelance arranger, a lyrics writer, and a soundtrack composer for theatre, television, and independent cinema productions (including works for BMG Ariola/Universal and Italy’s RAI 3 national television). He has raced a Yamaha TZ 125 motorcycle in the USGPRU national championship.

MEDIUM

Alessandro Acquisti is the Trustees Professor of Information Technology and Public Policy at the Heinz College, Carnegie Mellon University. His research combines economics, behavioral research, and data mining to investigate the role of privacy in a digital society. His studies have promoted the revival of the economics of privacy, advanced the application of behavioral economics to the understanding of consumer privacy valuations and decision-making, and spearheaded the investigation of privacy and personal disclosures in online social networks.

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Alessandro is the director of the Privacy Economics Experiments (PeeX) Lab, the Chair of CMU Institutional Review Board (IRB), and the former faculty director of the CMU Digital Transformation and Innovation Center. He is an Andrew Carnegie Fellow (inaugural class), and has been a member of the Board of Regents of the National Library of Medicine and a member of the National Academies’ Committee on public response to alerts and warnings using social media and associated privacy considerations. He has testified before the U.S. Senate and House committees and has consulted on issues related to privacy policy and consumer behavior with numerous agencies and organizations, including the White House’s Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), the US Federal Trade Commission (FTC), and the European Commission.

He has received a PhD from UC Berkeley and Master degrees from UC Berkeley, the London School of Economics, and Trinity College Dublin. He has held visiting positions at the Universities of Rome, Paris, and Freiburg (visiting professor); Harvard University (visiting scholar); University of Chicago (visiting fellow); Microsoft Research (visiting researcher); and Google (visiting scientist).

His research interests include privacy, artificial intelligence, and Nutella. In a previous life, he has been a soundtrack composer and a motorcycle racer (USGPRU).

SHORT

Alessandro Acquisti is the Trustees Professor of Information Technology and Public Policy at the Heinz College, Carnegie Mellon University. His research combines economics, behavioral research, and data mining to investigate the role of privacy in a digital society. His studies have promoted the revival of the economics of privacy, advanced the application of behavioral economics to the understanding of consumer privacy valuations and decision-making, and spearheaded the investigation of privacy and personal disclosures in online social networks. His studies have won numerous awards and have been published in journals, books, and proceedings across different fields, including Science, Proceedings of the National Academy of Science, Management Science, Journal of Economic Literature, Marketing Science, Journal of Consumer Research, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, and Journal of Experimental Psychology. Alessandro has testified before the U.S. Senate and House committees on issues related to privacy policy and consumer behavior. His findings have been featured in national and international media outlets, including the Economist, the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post, the Financial Times, Wired.com, NPR, CNN, and 60 Minutes; his TED talks on privacy and human behavior have been viewed over 1.5 million times online. Alessandro holds a PhD from UC Berkeley, and Master degrees from UC Berkeley, the London School of Economics, and Trinity College Dublin.