**Privacy**

**A minister announced that admission to a church social event would be $6 per person. “However, if you’re over 65,” he said, “the price will be only $5.50. From the back of the congregation a woman’s voice rang out: “Do you really think I’d give you that information for only 50 cents?” *(The American Legion magazine)***

**A neighbor decided it was time for her small son Joe to learn about privacy, so the next time she went into the bathroom, she shut the door. Joe was soon calling to his mother and pounding on the door. “There’s a lady in the bathroom,” she yelled out to him. “You can’t come in.” “Mom!” Joe replied. “Who is in there with you?” *(Quentin J. Marsh, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Canada’s North Country covers far more territory than, say, India, yet fewer people live there than show up at a typical big-college football game. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**While watching a movie recently, I couldn’t hear the dialogue over the chatter of the two women sitting in front of me. Unable to hear it any longer, I tapped one of them on the shoulder. “Excuse me,” I said. “I can’t hear.” “I should hope not,” she replied sharply. “This is a private conversation.” *(David Carver, in Reader’s Digest)***

**The mother coyote digs two dens, if she can find places to do so. One is for the offspring. The other is for herself to get away from the offspring. The father coyote digs a den, too, for himself – to get away from all of them. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**How Damon maintains mystique: Despite being a Hollywood star for a quarter-century, Matt Damon is still – somehow – something of an enigma, said David Marchese in The New York Times Magazine. The actor makes a concerted effort to keep a low profile, which he thinks helps audiences suspend belief when watching him onscreen. “If people see 16 pictures of you drinking coffee or walking your dog,” he says, “it dilutes the desire to see you in a movie.” Damon, 50, gained some of that wisdom by observing the struggles of his friend Ben Affleck. Following the success of the pair’s breakout movie, 1997’s Good Will Hunting, Damon had high-profile relationships with actresses Minnie Driver and Winona Ryder, then vanished from tabloid covers, living a quiet family life with his wife, Luciana Damon, and their three daughters. Affleck, meanwhile, spent years being defined by his very public relationships with Jennifer Lopez and Jennifer Garner. Around 2003, Damon says, Affleck confided in him: “I’m in the worst place I can be. I can sell magazines but not movie tickets.” Damon sees himself as “in the last of that line of people who want to maintain privacy. There’s this new line of people inviting everybody into their daily lives: Hey, I’m at the gym! There’s something tactfully brilliant about controlling the narrative, but it’s the exact opposite of how I’ve always thought.” *(The Week magazine, August 13, 2021)***

**Emily Dickinson, whose poetry thrills millions today, fantasized about the earth and sky and heaven itself, but left her home state, Massachusetts, exactly once, and that was to visit her father in Washington where he was a Representative. She became such as recluse that she would not stay in the same room with her guests but would speak with them from an adjoining room. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts. P. 201)***

**The Demilitarized Zone between North and South Korea is the most heavily fortified border in the world. And yet, precisely because so few people have ventured into the 150-mile-long, 2.5-mile-wide strip for half a century, it has become a wildlife haven. Fifty types of mammals, including the rare Asiatic black bear and Amur leopard, call the DMZ home; so do hundreds of bird species, including the endangered white-naped and red-crowned crane. “Many of the species you find are no longer found in the rest of the country,” said Ke Chung Kim of Pennsylvania State University. “This could serve as a model of how you take an area once inhabited and return it to nature.” (*The Week magazine, June 16, 2006)***

**A Chinese university has set up a separate dormitory for overprotective parents. Thanks in part to China’s one-child policy, Chinese parents are so focused on their kids’ well-being and studies that they follow them to college, and “even sleep in their children’s dormitory with them,” said a spokesman for the university, in Wuhan. The new parents’ dorm will at least ensure that clingy moms and dads have “a place to wash and eat.” *(The Week magazine, December 24, 2010 – January 7, 2011)***

**The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court granted 2,370 requests to search or eavesdrop on suspected terrorists and spies in the U.S. last year – 9 percent more than in 2006. “National security letters” issued by the FBI requesting customer information from banks, phone companies, and Internet providers are also up, to 12,583 in 2006, the latest year available. *(Los Angeles Times, as it appeared in The Week magazine, May 23, 2008)***

**JMR Instruments of Chatsworth, California, manufacturers an orange box about the size of a picnic basket that contains sophisticated electronics equipment that can tell you within ten inches your exact location on earth. It is used for large surveying jobs as well as oil exploration at sea. The device hones in on an orbiting Navy navigational satellite, feeds the signal to a computer, and there you are. It is an ideal gift for the man who has everything and who always wakes up New Year’s morning with a hangover, wondering where in the world he is. It is a bargain at $40,000. *(Bernie Smith, in The Joy of Trivia, p. 332)***

**I work for a daily newspaper covering some small towns in Maine. Often people will give us information but don’t want their names in the paper because everyone here knows everyone else. Once while I was working on a series about a community’s fiscal problem, a woman phoned in a tip. “But I can’t tell you who I am,” she whispered. “I have to remain monogamous.” *(Tom Molloy, in Reader’s Digest)***

**As a member of the intelligence branch of the Canadian Forces, my husband told the rest of the family he would not discuss his work under any circumstances. When our 15-year-old daughter began a new high-school year, she had to fill out a standard information form. She stopped at the section regarding father’s occupation. Then she filled in “Unknown.” *(Mary Ann Bate, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Once, while on a fishing trip, I noticed a man relaxing in a chaise longue right on the edge of a lake. He had a cold beer in one hand and a pipe in the other. His fishing rod was propped up with a stick, and the line attached to a bobber was gently bouncing on the ripples of the water. As I approached him, I asked if he was having any luck. “Yup,” he replied, “they haven’t bothered me yet!” *(David Kelly, in Reader’s Digest)***

**The football huddle was conceived by a deaf quarterback at Gallaudet University who used sign language to communicate. Not wanting the opposition to see his signals, the team would bunch together to shield him. (David Hoffman, in Little-Known Facts about Well-Known Stuff, p. 133)**

**When Henry Ford was asked why he went to his executives’ offices instead of having them come to his, he said: “I’ve found that I can leave the other fellow’s office a lot quicker than I can get him to leave mine.” *(E. E. Edgar)***

**On July 6, 1942, Anne Frank's family went into hiding in a secret attic apartment behind Otto Frank's business, where the 13-year-old girl would hide for two years and write her famous diary. *(The Daily Chronicle)***

**Fraud losses from the theft of personal information over the Web grew from $690 million in 2004 to $1.5 billion last year. *(BusinessWeek, as it appeared in The Week magazine, April 28, 2006)***

**There’s a new garlic diet around. You don’t lose weight, but you look thinner from a distance. *(Red Shea, on “The Tommy Hunter Show,” TNN, Nashville)***

**Relying on the government to protect your privacy is like asking a Peeping Tom to install your window blinds. *(John Perry Barlow, poet)***

**The Great Wall of China – 2,500 miles long, stretching over more than one-twentieth of the Earth’s circumference – was the longest continuous construction project in history. It was built over a period of 1,700 years; enough stone was used to build an eight-foot wall girdling the globe at the equator. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts. P. 318)***

**When Harvard College was founded in 1636 it was surrounded by a tall stockade to keep out prowling wolves and hostile Indians. *(David Louis, in Fascinating Facts, p. 36)***

**The human animal needs a freedom seldom mentioned, freedom from intrusion. He needs a little privacy quite as much as he wants understanding or vitamins or exercise or praise. *(Phyllis McGinley, American poet)***

**The Ferraris’ recent findings indicate that the humpbacks seem to be abandoning Maui’s shoreline waters, including those off the town of Lahaina and the resort center of Kaanapali Beach. This trend is ironic because whale-watching cruises and whale souvenirs have become a multi-million-dollar business on Maui in recent years. (Joel Schwarz)**

**So far this year, the personal data of almost 50 million Americans has been improperly exposed because of security breaches. Experts say that up to one in six people are now vulnerable to identity theft. *(Money, as it appeared in The Week magazine, August 26, 2005)***

**At last report, there were 17 private islands for sale in the Caribbean. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Japan closed itself off from the rest of the world in 1638. Thereafter until 1854, any Japanese fisherman shipwrecked on a foreign shore was not allowed to return to Japan. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**What prompted Thomas Jefferson to invent the dumbwaiter? He liked privacy from his servants when he ate. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Maine is the only state in the United States that adjoins only one other state. *(E. C. McKenzie, in Tantalizing Facts, p. 33)***

**Client says to his lawyer: “Change it to, ‘not guilty by reason of personal health issues.’ Mentioning insanity violates my right to privacy.” *(Mike Baldwin, in Cornered comic strip)***

**Dad: “Wouldn’t it be more fun to watch a real, live meteor shower than an old rerun?” Kids watching TV: “Wouldn’t it be more polite to respect its privacy.” *(John Allen, in Nest Heads comic strip)***

**46% of Americans say the U.S. “should mind its own business” internationally and let other countries get along on their own. Only one-third felt that way three years ago. *(USA Today / Gallup Poll, as it appeared in The Week magazine, April 28, 2006)***

**A visitor in 1946 to the Greek Orthodox monastery of St. Catherine’s, founded in the sixth century at the foot of Mount Sinai, learned that the monks there did not know of World War II and that some had not heard of World War I. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 372)***

**The people in front of us at the movies were so talkative I finally had to lean forward and whisper, “Do you mind? We can hardly hear what’s going on.” “You’re not supposed to,” one of them snapped. “This is a private conversation.” *(George Kottwitz, in Reminisce magazine)***

**Why did Brigham Young forbid his Mormons to mine for gold? He didn’t want a gold rush to flood the Salt Lake territory with hordes of gentiles. (L. M. Boyd)**

**The human animal needs a freedom seldom mentioned: freedom from intrusion. He needs a little privacy quite as much as he wants understanding or vitamins or exercise or praise. *(Phyllis McGinley, in The Province of the Heart)***

**Never tell a child anything you wouldn’t want the whole neighborhood to know. *(Evelyn Beilenson, in Motherhood Is Not For Sissies)***

**Biggest Central American country is Nicaragua. It’s the least populated, though. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Privacy didn’t fall like the Berlin Wall, with a cloud of cement dust and cheers. It didn’t happen over a few days but a few decades, and it didn’t fall exactly, but is falling. We increasingly know things about each other that we should not know, have no right to know, and have a right, actually, not to know. There is no hiding place now, and this strikes me as something of huge and existential import. It’s like the closing of yet another frontier, a final one we didn’t even know was here. *(Peggy Noonan, in The Wall Street Journal)***

**Am told 70 percent of Norway is utterly uninhabitable. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**President Bush is claiming that a new postal law gives him the authority to read anyone’s letters without a warrant. If you’re upset about the law, you can let Bush know by writing to your sister. *(Conan O’Brien)***

**Beijing, China, was built around the Forbidden City, the palace of the emperor. This group of buildings was forbidden to everyone except the emperor, the family and his staff. It is the largest palace in the world. There are almost 10,000 rooms. Beijing was founded in 1057 B.C. *(Betty Debnam, in Rocky Mountain News)***

**Self-made multimillionaire H. Wayne Huizenga is chairman of Blockbuster Entertainment Group and owns the Florida Marlins baseball team, the Miami Dolphins football team and the Florida Panthers hockey team. Many Floridians are, therefore, surprised when they learn that his home phone number is listed in the Broward County phone book. “I am listed,” Huizenga says, “because I believe that when you are in business, people who are angry should have the right to look you up and tell you so.” *(Dan Le Batard, in Miami Herald)***

**The platypus, very shy, is seldom seen in the wild, and rarely survives in captivity. *(Joseph Cassidy)***

**Grandmother decided to send a playpen to her daughter who had just given birth to her fourth child. “Thank you so much for the playpen,” she wrote. “It’s wonderful. I sit in it every afternoon and read. The children can’t get near me!” *(Delia Sellers, in Abundant Living magazine)***

**Two researchers at Carnegie Mellon University have calculated that if every American were to actually read the privacy policies governing every website he or she visits in a year (best estimate: about 1,460 sites), it would take 76 full-time working days. The median privacy policy, they found, is 2,500 words long. *(TheAtlantic.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, March 16, 2012)***

**Actress Dina Merrill was teaching her three-year-old daughter, Nina, to say her prayers. The child was mumbling and her mother said, “I can’t hear you.” Nina looked solemnly at her mother and replied, “I wasn’t talking to you.” *(Bits & Pieces)***

**None of the twenty-five U.S. presidents between the second, John Adams, and Woodrow Wilson, made an appearance before Congress. Wilson broke the century-old precedent on April 8, 1913, emphasizing before a joint session his determination to lead in legislation and to use all his powers as President and leader of the Democratic party. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 358)***

**Vermont Senator Patrick J. Leahy’s neighbors are determinedly protective of his privacy. A traveler on the dirt road near the Leahy farmhouse asked of a neighbor, “Senator Leahy live up this way?” Neighbor: “You a relative?” Traveler: “No.” Neighbor: “A friend of his?” Traveler: “No.” Neighbor: “He expecting you?” Traveler: “No.” Neighbor: “Never heard of him.” *(New York Times)***

**In the last two years, 93,754,333 private records have been lost or stolen from U.S. companies and institutions, according to the Privacy Rights Clearinghouse. This month, for instance, Chase Card Services announced it had inadvertently tossed into the trash computer tapes containing personal information on 2.6 million Circuit City card account holders. (The New York Times, *as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 6, 2006)***

**It may be that the stars of heaven appear fair and pure simply because they are so far away from us, and we know nothing of their private lives. (Heinrich Heine)**

**It is awfully important to know what is and what is not your business. *(Gertrude Stein)***

**If nobody knows the troubles you’ve seen, you obviously don’t live in a small town. (Joyce Stahl, in Chicago Tribune)**

**United Nations cleanup crews are directed to destroy every loose scrap of paper they find at day’s end on desks and tables. (L. M. Boyd)**

**Venice’s population has shrunk from 171,000 in 1951 to 62,000 today, as residents are driven away by soaring real estate costs, food prices, and hordes of tourists. On many days, the number of tourists in the city is more than double the number of Venetians. (International Herald Tribune, *as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 13, 2006)***

**Son: “What did Dad want?” Shirley: “He didn’t want anything; I called him.” Son: “What did you want?” Shirley: “I just needed to ask him a question.” Son: “What was the question?” Shirley: “That’s none of your business.” Son: “Was his answer any of my business?”*(Jerry Bittle, in Shirley & Son comic strip)***

**A French bakery opened in the same building where Weight Watchers meetings were held. One day I noticed a sign in the bakery window: “Note to Weight Watchers – all cake sales confidential.” *(Marcia Talmage, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Mother: “Please, Jeffy, I’d like some privacy.” Jeffy: “Okay, I’ll get it for you, Mommy. Where is it?” *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)***

**Only 3.8% of the U.S. is officially designated wilderness. (Uncle John’s Unstoppable Bathroom Reader, p. 315)**

**It’s the younger households that tend to have the most unlisted phone numbers. (L. M. Boyd)**

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