The online world is expanding at an exponential rate. The Internet is a tool that allows individuals to communicate all over the world. Society is communicating via email, chat programs, and social media networks. Everyday behaviors and activities are moving to the Internet. Individuals make banking transactions, file taxes, pay bills, and shop for goods online. The patterns behind an individual’s online behaviors hold information about the person’s preferences. As society moves online and individuals spend more time in the digital world, their personal information is more readily accessible. Names, addresses, and phone numbers can be easily looked up over the Internet. Privacy protections are essential to safeguard this data from exploitation.

Privacy is a complex issue faced with a multitude of interpretations and opinions. Robert Gellman is an online privacy expert specializing in privacy policy for health, the Internet, the homeless, and other organizations. Beginning in 1995, Mr. Gellman has consulted with companies and government organizations to develop, implement, and

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3 See WHITEPAGES, archived at http://www.webcitation.org/65SP1SLBO.
4 Robert Gellman, Privacy and Information Policy Consultant, BOBGELLMAN.COM, archived at http://www.webcitation.org/65SO64oTv (Richard Gellman has his JD from Yale School of Law).
maintain policies for personal privacy and fair information practices.\(^5\) Pam Dixon is an author and researcher of privacy issues.\(^6\) Ms. Dixon, a former educator and journalist, is the founder and executive director of the World Privacy Forum.\(^7\) She provides testimony on privacy matters before various federal agencies.\(^8\) Ms. Dixon has published eight books and hundreds of articles on the subjects of privacy and technology.\(^9\) In their first collaborative book, *Online Privacy: A Reference Handbook*, Mr. Gellman and Ms. Dixon summarize the historical development and complex challenges of privacy on the Internet.\(^10\) The authors use their expertise to present methods that users can utilize to protect themselves in the online world.

The first chapter of the book defines privacy and provides a historical background for the legal, cultural, and social issues of privacy.\(^11\) The chapter begins by defining privacy and what it means to be online.\(^12\) These definitions are not too insightful but they provide a good introduction into the concepts. The authors raise an interesting point that information stored online serves as a permanent record.\(^13\) It was surprising to learn that the Library of Congress archives Twitter posts as a snapshot of history.\(^14\) A multitude of personal information is available online.\(^15\) Although, some privacy protections have been extended to new technologies, there is a lack of legal remedies

\(^{5}\) *Id.*
\(^{6}\) *About Us and Contact Information: Selected Biographies: Pam Dixon, Executive Director, WORLD PRIVACY FORUM, archived at* http://www.webcitation.org/65SPbQrQz (Pam Dixon also has her JD).
\(^{7}\) *Id.*
\(^{8}\) *Id.*
\(^{9}\) *Pam Dixon, author and researcher, THE PAM DIXON ARCHIVE, archived at* http://www.webcitation.org/65SQugmyr.
\(^{10}\) ROBERT GELLMAN & PAM DIXON, *ONLINE PRIVACY: A REFERENCE HANDBOOK* (ABC-CLIO 2011).
\(^{11}\) *See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 1-30.*
\(^{12}\) *See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 1-4.*
\(^{13}\) *See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 11.*
\(^{14}\) *See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 9.*
\(^{15}\) *See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 11-13.*
available for breaches of privacy.16 Technological advances happen at such a rapid pace that legislatures have trouble keeping up by passing laws.17 The authors provide four case studies focusing on the Electronic Communications Privacy Act, the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act, the CAN SPAM Act, and Data Breach Legislation to illustrate examples of statutes developed in response to privacy intrusions.18 These case studies provide a broad overview of the legislation, but the authors do not delve too deeply into the legal issues of the Acts.

In Chapter 2, the authors discuss problems in the area of online privacy and provide solutions for consumers.19 In this chapter the authors also comment on regulation of online activity. The authors go into some detail concerning the privacy of health information as it relates to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA).20 The authors express that the information that is passed through Cloud computing services necessitates privacy protections that the law is deficient in providing.21 The section on social networking is somewhat outdated because it discusses Google Buzz, which was replaced by Google Plus in June of 2011.22 But in the author’s defense, the book was published that same year. The Beacon case study, an important class action lawsuit that resulted in privacy protection on social networking sites by increasing opt-in requirements, was an important inclusion.23 There are limited remedies available to ensure privacy protections on the Internet. The conclusion of the second chapter provides an overview of regulation and self-regulation of online

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17 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 20-21.
19 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 31-72.
20 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 32-33.
21 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 37-40
22 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 41.
23 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 45.
privacy. In this last section, the authors express their frustration with President George W. Bush and his administration’s failure to enhance privacy regulation.

The third chapter discusses differences in the privacy laws of the United States as compared to European countries. The European Union (EU) uses general, widespread, omnibus regulation while the United States employs a more specified, sectoral regulation. The disparities in regulation create problems for transborder activities. This chapter contains an interesting discussion on various attempts to remedy the jurisdictional problems involved in regulating online activity. The approaches described involve EU directives, cooperatives, and other entities that provide framework and supervision on transnational privacy issues.

The final part of the book serves as a resource for information on online privacy. In Chapter 4, the authors provide a broad omnibus of the evolution of online privacy over time. This chapter begins in 1791 with the adoption of the Bill of Rights and tracks the evolution of privacy protections leading up to the computer age. The chronology continues following statutes protecting online activity leading up to the Social Security Number Protection Act of 2010. This chronology concludes with the 2011 report on the Apple iPhone location tracking controversy. The authors only provide a few sentences on each event so readers will have to access other sources for further research.

24 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 55-68.
25 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 57.
26 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 73-106.
27 GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 73-76.
28 GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 77-79.
29 GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 77-102.
30 GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 77-102.
31 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 107-26.
32 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 107-10.
33 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 110-26.
34 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 126.
The fifth chapter provides descriptions of important individuals who contributed to the evolution of online privacy. This chapter reads like the dictation of a resume at a job interview or the introduction for a guest speaker at a presentation. Although the writers modestly omit their own biographies from this section, it comes off as if the authors are glorifying their colleagues in the privacy field. Nonetheless, Ms. Dixon and Mr. Gellman save their own biographies for the last page of the book, labeled “About the Authors.”

Chapter 6 is much more useful because it includes the documents related to the development of online privacy including: guidelines, statutes and cases. It would have been helpful to readers if the authors had included the language of the EU directives that were discussed in earlier chapters. The seventh chapter lists a database of organizations related to privacy along with brief descriptions of the organizations.

The final chapter provides a list and brief summaries of direct sources relating to online privacy. These references include books and other media, articles, reports, and online resources relating to the subject matter of online privacy. The summaries of informational books and articles are helpful. However, this chapter also includes fictional books, such as George Orwell’s 1984 and fictional films, such as Minority Report. These fictional resources may provide some insight into cultural views on privacy but they seem pointless for a reference handbook and extraneous to the overall

35 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 127-53.
36 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 127-53.
37 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 127-53.
38 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 153-190.
39 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 153-91.
40 GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 219, 230, 231.
41 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 219, 230, 231.
42 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 191-219.
43 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 191-219.
discussion of online privacy. Additionally, the authors provide URLs for webcasts, sound clips, online articles and reports. It would have been helpful if the author’s had archived the websites so that they could be accessed in the future. Web addresses are subject to change and articles are sometimes taken down so future access to these resources is uncertain.

This book concludes with an extensive glossary of key terms relating to online privacy, providing brief definitions for each term. The glossary includes acronyms of agencies and statutes, and Internet slang terms. Some of the terms included are obvious, such as “privacy,” but many are highly technical such as “onion routing.” The index provides easy access to flip to the topics for reference.

Overall, Online Privacy: A Reference Handbook provides an up-to-date summary of the subject of Internet Privacy. The authors’ expertise in the subject area is unquestionable and they do a good job of compiling and organizing the vast amount of relevant information. The explanations are clear and any technical language is explained clearly so non-practitioners who are unfamiliar with the subject can understand the issues. The book does not delve too deeply into any specific sub-issues but achieves its purpose of surveying the subject area. The authors do no present any profound theses or controversial legal arguments, as the book is more educational in its nature. The biography section and references are less enlightening but serves their function as an archive of relevant information. Mr. Gellman and Ms. Dixon’s book functions as an

44 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 191-219.
45 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 263-69.
46 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 263-69.
47 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 267, 268.
48 See GELLMAN, supra note 10, at 271-95.
excellent resource for laypersons and for legal researchers to use as the preliminary source when beginning their study of a subject of online privacy.