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Teeming with chatrooms, online discussion groups, and blogs, the Internet offers previously unimagined opportunities for personal expression and communication. But there's a dark side to the story. A trail of information fragments about us is forever preserved on the Internet, instantly available in a Google search. A permanent chronicle of our private lives_often of dubious reliability and sometimes totally false_will follow us wherever we go, accessible to friends, strangers, dates, employers, neighbors, relatives, and anyone else who cares to look. This engrossing book, brimming with amazing examples of gossip, slander, and rumor on the Internet, explores the profound implications of the online collision between free speech and privacy.

Daniel Solove, an authority on information privacy law, offers a fascinating account of how the Internet is transforming gossip, the way we shame others, and our ability to protect our own reputations. Focusing on blogs, Internet communities, cybermobs, and other current trends, he shows that, ironically, the unconstrained flow of information on the Internet may impede opportunities for self-development and freedom. Long-standing notions of privacy need review, the author contends: unless we establish a balance between privacy and free speech, we may discover that the freedom of the Internet makes us less free.

Daniel J. Solove is associate professor, George Washington University Law School, and an internationally known expert in privacy law. He is frequently interviewed and featured in media broadcasts and articles, and he is the author of The Digital Person: Technology and Privacy in the Information Age. He lives in Washington, D.C., and blogs at the popular law blog http://www.concurringopinions.com.

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