

Plural versus Possessive Nouns Exercise

Directions: The passage below contains several plural-possessive errors. Locate, underline, and correct each error in the passage. When you are finished, check your responses with the answer key on the next page.

Ex. *As the weather turns warmer, my dogs winter coat gradually falls out.*

Corrected: As the weather turns warmer, my dog's winter coat gradually falls out.

Facebook has recently been criticized for allowing personal user information to become available to online advertising company's. A researcher from Stanford named Aleksandra Korolova performed a study in which she was able to locate the age and sexual orientation of certain Facebook user's by creating ads specifically aimed at their profile's. In a separate study, researcher's from both the India branch of Microsoft and the Max Planck Institute for Software Systems discovered that Facebook user's listed as homosexual were shown different advertisement's than users listed as heterosexual. This is not only a case of direct discrimination; it opens up issues of privacy regarding personal information such as a persons sexual orientation. To further elaborate on this issue, an article titled "Facebook in Privacy Breach" published in The Wall Street Journal stated that online advertising companies not only obtained users private information, but sold this information to other advertising companies. The fact that a persons private information can travel to so many places across the Internet without the owner's knowledge is extremely unnerving.

Answer Key

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Note: The paragraph's author, Hannah Brooks, is one of our Saint Francis tutors. I thank Hannah for granting us permission to use her writing. Hannah committed no errors in the original paragraph. Errors were later added to give students practice in identifying and correcting plural/possessive errors.

--Dr. Brennan Thomas, Writing Center Director