Privacy in a Connected World
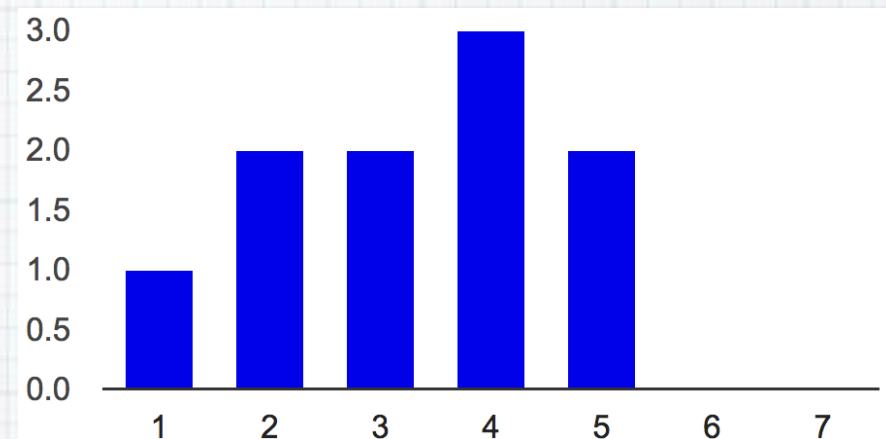
Split Opinion

Team 4 discussion on privacy in a connected world
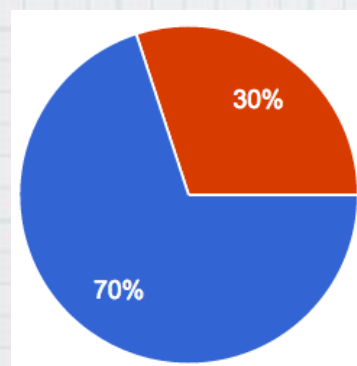
Demographics

How sensitive do you find information about your demographics?

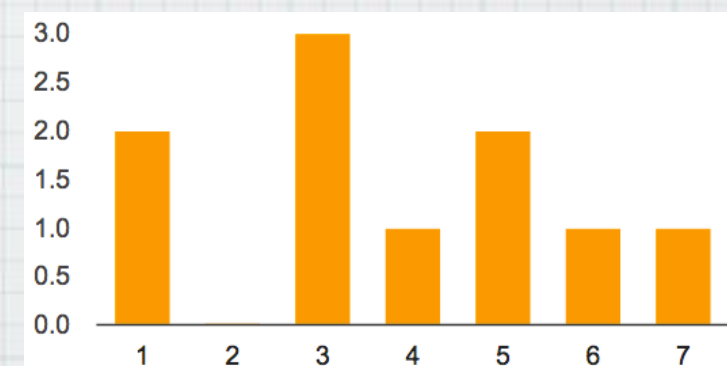gender, year of birth, nationality, country of residence, education, etc.

The group felt that demographics information was not very sensitive.

However, there is a risk that this information could be mis-used in conjunction with other personal information.
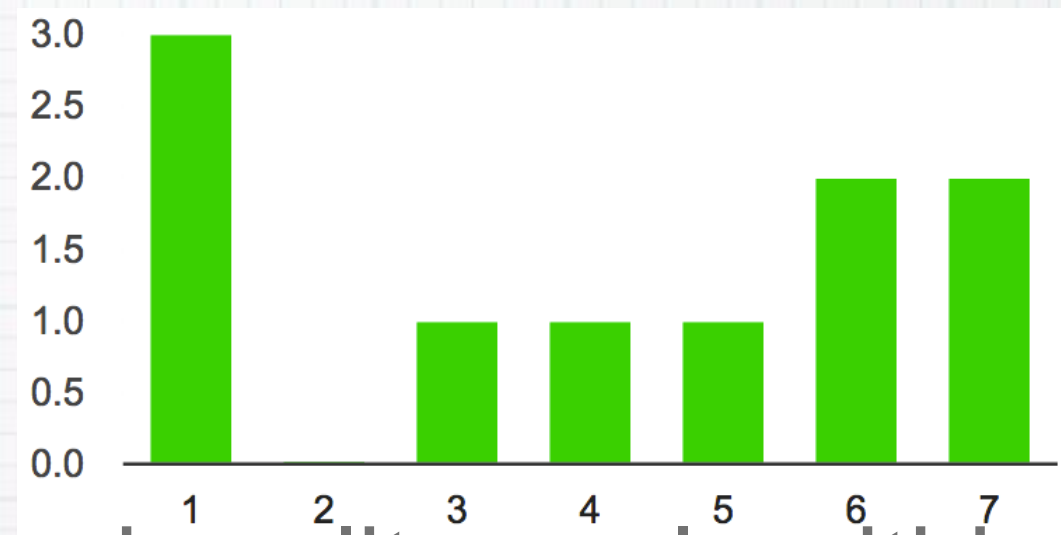

70 % of the group thought that this information could be revealed by their search behavior or on-line profile!

Although not thought of as sensitive, some people are still concerned about this information being open.
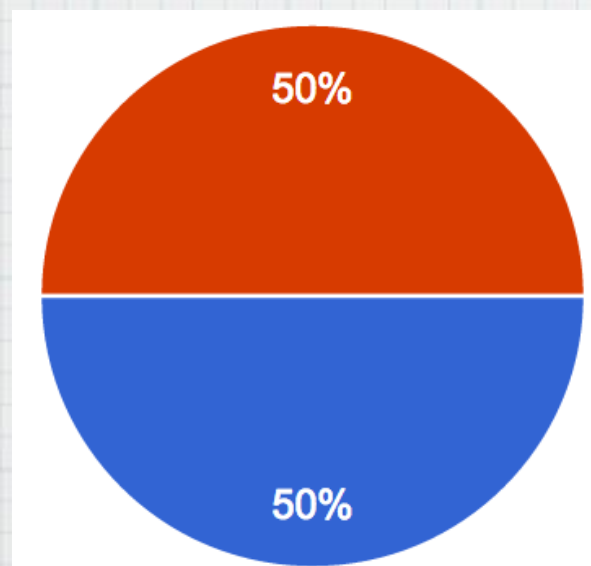
Relationship Information

How sensitive do you find information about your relationships?

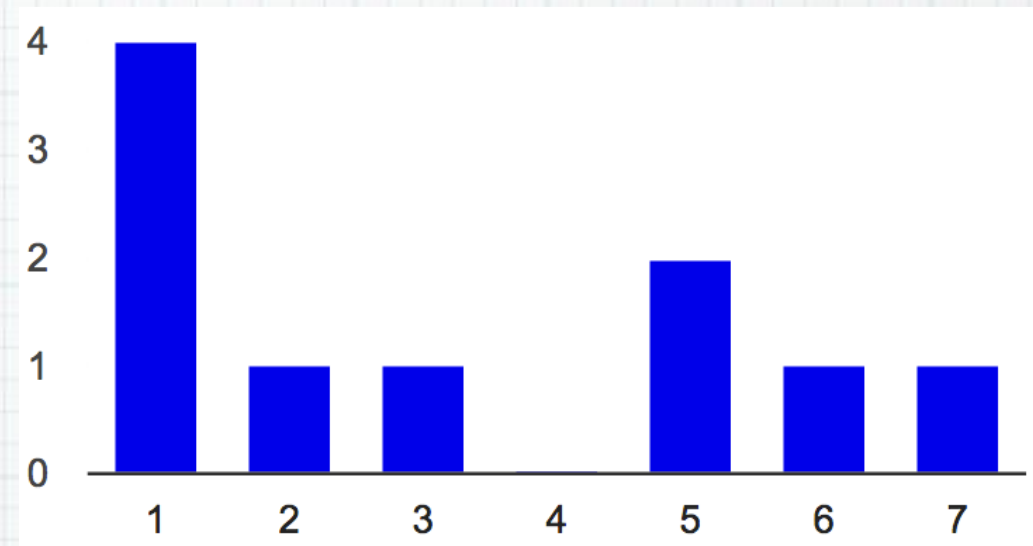The opinion on this question is split evenly within the group.

The level of sensitivity depends of the opinions of n parties in the relationship - and this privacy is difficult to control for!
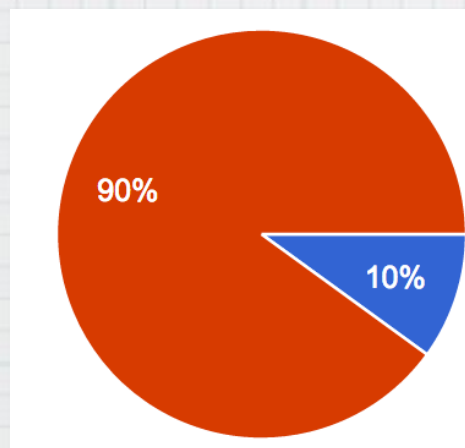

However, the group agreed that there were concerns about how companies might use this information - THERE IS NO NEED FOR COMPANIES TO KNOW THIS!
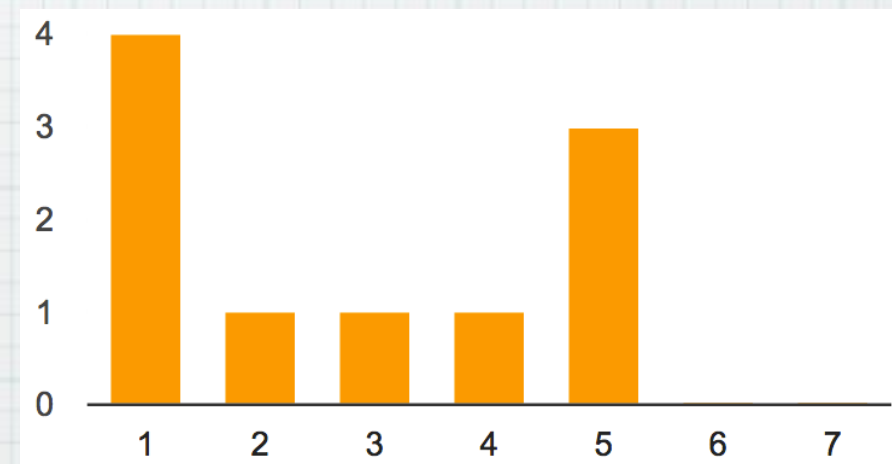
Religion

How sensitive do you find information about your religion?

The opinion on the sensitivity of personal religious information was also split, and closely linked to culture.
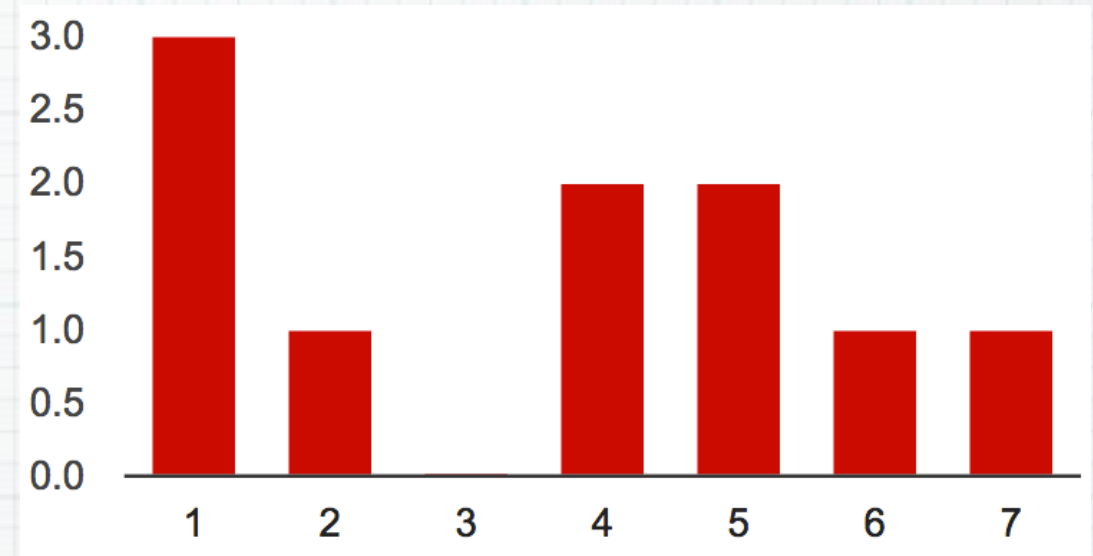

Only 10% of people felt that this information could be inferred about them from their online profile.
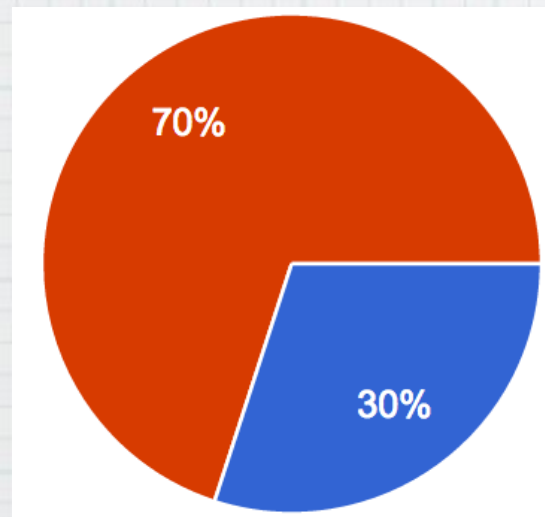

However, most people say that it is not important if this information is made public

Personality Traits

How sensitive do you find information about your personality traits?

The group agreed that this information can be detrimental to someone, if their negative traits are openly available.
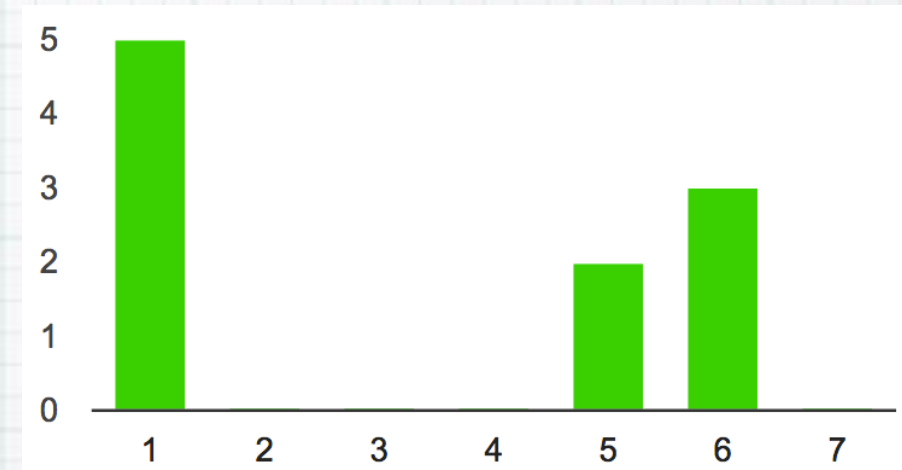

- Don't want a potential employer to know that you can be moody and uncooperative!
- Only having positive traits exposed online creates or reinforces pressures on people to be "perfect"

Only 30% of people thought this information could be inferred from their

Facebook profiles / query history etc.

Sexual orientation
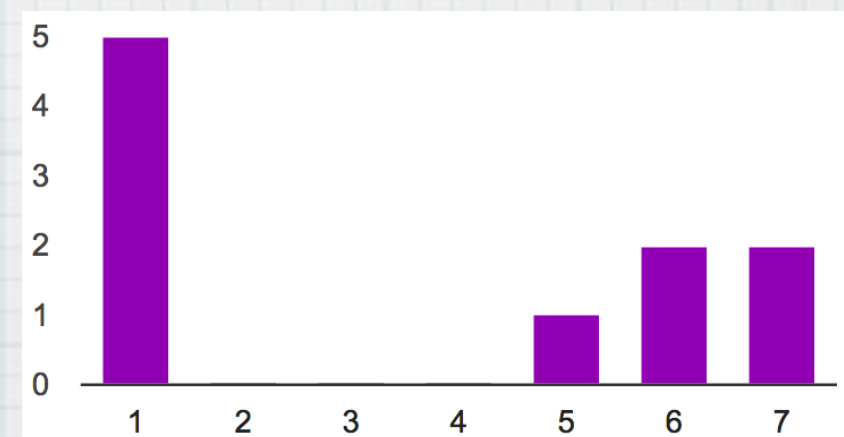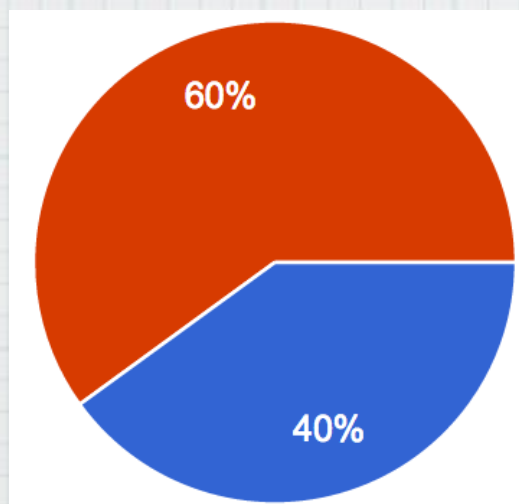
- 5 people thought this information is not sensitive
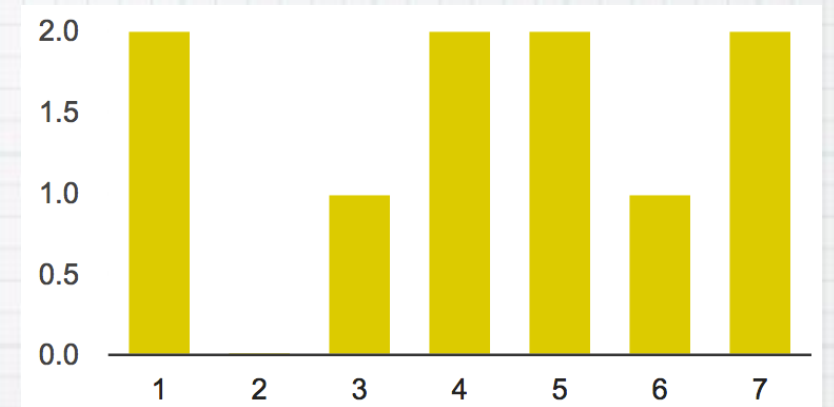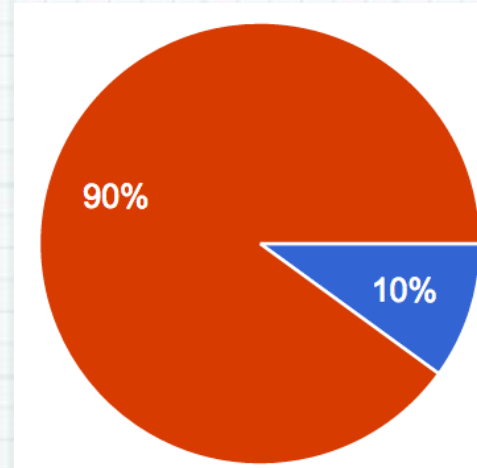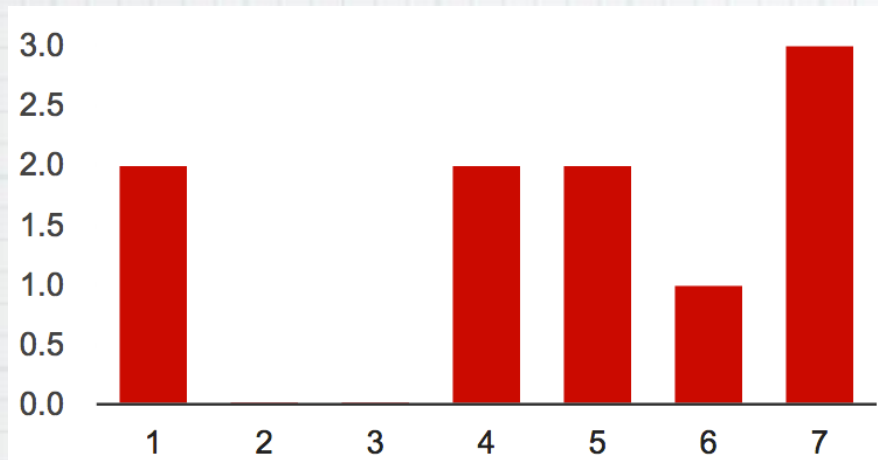- 5 people thought this information is sensitive

The group was split about 50/50 on this question.

We hypothesize that this split is largely due to cultural factors.

It is probably not an issue for people who are in the majority within their culture, unless the culture itself has an issue with it.
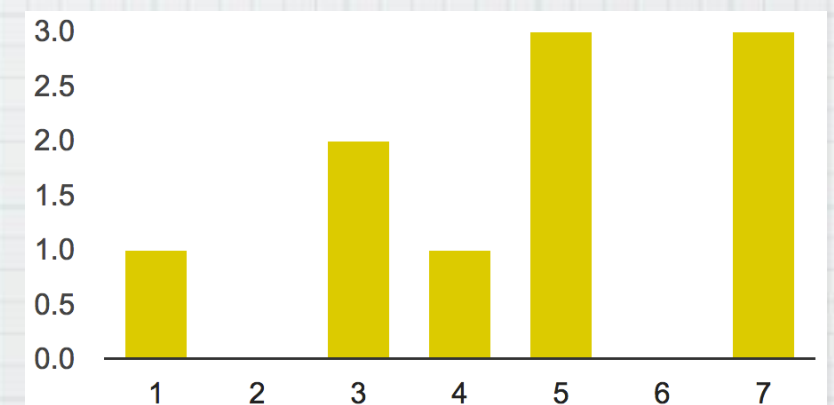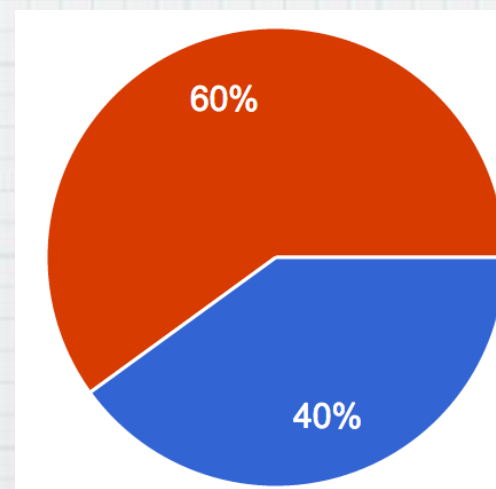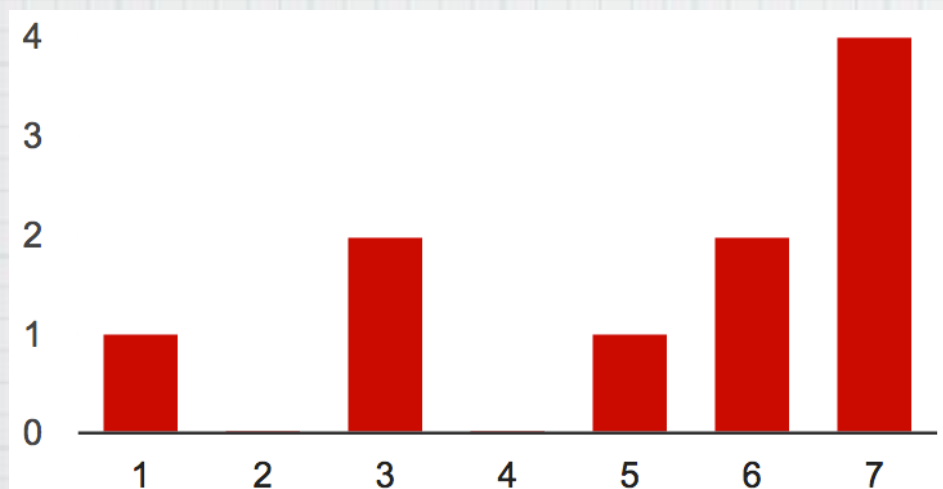
Health factors and condition

Professional and financial information

The group agreed that personal health and financial information is sensitive!

what/how much information would be willing to reveal online for better search/social media services?

The group felt that issues such as religion and sexual orientation should not be shared, the opinion was split on the rest of the topics.

what kind of information would you need to make better decisions about what to reveal online?

what should social media platforms and search engines do to preserve the privacy of their users?

The platforms need to be more open about
- how they will use your data
- how long they will keep it
- who they will share it with

General Comments

- Each answer depends on the society you live in
- People don't think about privacy issues until something happens to them
- How you use Facebook / Twitter etc. can be restricted by the primary context that you use it in (self censorship!!)
- Personalised search might be a step too far!
- Diverse group with split opinions!!

The slightly strange Bit!

- No one really felt that sensitivity of personal information could impact their research!!

caveat: 1 member of the group who is working with legal documents said it could be an issue, and me (I work on identifying sensitive information).