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Conversation: actions of spyware should be criminalized
Subject: actions of spyware should be criminalized

Anything that changes any settings on my computer without my express permission is criminal in the same way that trespassing or vandalism are, and can be much more harmful.

I've spent the last 2 days trying to clean out my wife's computer after some "drive-by" downloads that she didn't want, and that have rendered her computer almost useless. I've used multiple respected anti-spyware tools and gotten the assistance of experts at 2 tech forums, and it still isn't clean.

Her computer has many mission critical business functions, and is currently hampered by constant browser redirects, memory errors, virtual memory errors, etc. all related to this problem. If we had to pay for the level of tech support I've supplied it would be approaching a month's gross by now, and it still isn't clean yet!

This is theft, vandalism, and trespassing. While I'm not generally an advocate for increasing government regulation this must be stopped. The authors of this garbage are in the same category as virus and worm authors, who are prosecuted vigorously because of the money they cost big business. It is often said that the anonymous and international nature of the internet makes regulation impossible, but recent studies demonstrate that 60% of malware originates here in the US, with no other country in double digits. We need to do something!! Current proposed legislation and regulation are woefully inadequate. Anything that changes settings or tracks use without the knowledge and consent of the owner is crime, and must be treated as such.

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