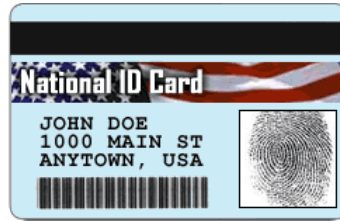


To ID or not to ID that is the question

Alexandra Pellicer



STILL A BAD IDEA

“It’s done in the name of security. But New York attorney Rhonda Gaynier says she felt violated on a recent trip through the Tampa Airport. A female screener patted her down under her armpit and touched her with an open hand between her breasts.”

- CNN Correspondent Kimberly Osias

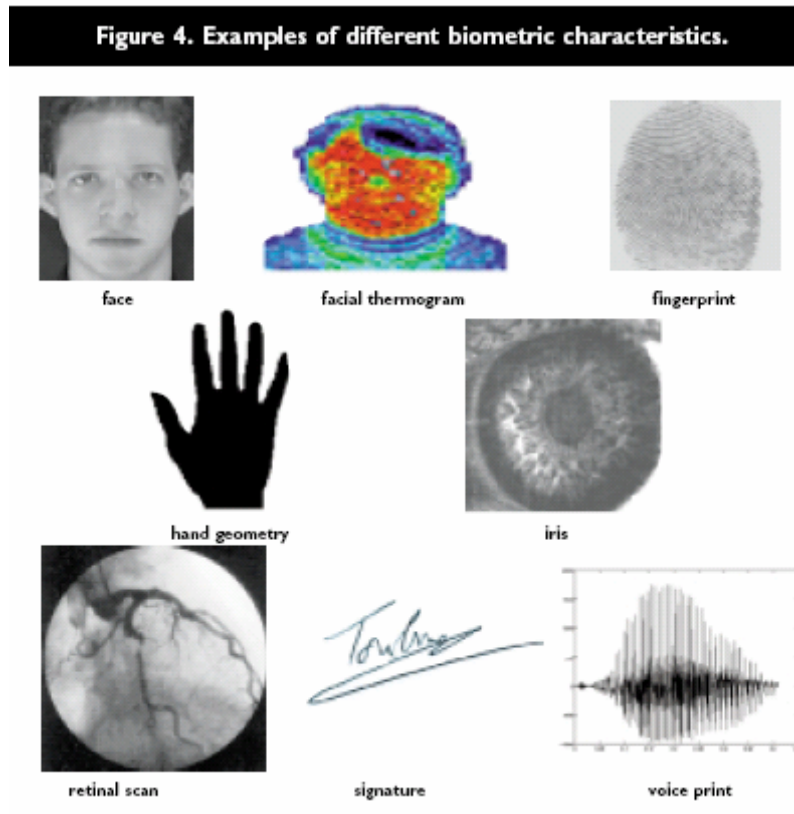
Summary:

National ID cards are meant to do many things. One of the main reasons is to help national security. Many people have problems with the idea of having a National ID card while many think it is a good idea. Every time the card is scanned it can tell people where you are. “Identity fraud in welfare disbursements, credit card transactions, cellular phone calls, and ATM withdrawals totals over 6 billion each year”

(Hong, Jain, Pankanti, 2000). For reasons like this, the ID card continues to draw considerable attention. If ID cards were made mandatory in the United States it would affect everyone who lives there.

ID Cards:

National ID Cards, also known as smart cards, are plastic cards that contain a chip which holds information about the owner. National ID cards can hold more than one type of information and can carry much more information than credit cards. Some cards can carry information like your fingerprint or eye scan.



According to Davies (2005), there are three levels of card fraud. The first level is when people do not declare their income or property for tax purposes or other purposes. Second, people could buy or make many ID cards and use them for various illegal purposes. The third level of fraud

involves situations where one's benefits get stolen.

There are many reasons why people want to have national identity cards. Although a national ID card would take away certain freedoms, some people would find it worth it. "Rhonda Gaynier might gladly trade her freedom from foolproof identification for freedom from being 'groped by a stranger' an intimate intrusion that the New York Times recently reported, that she and many other female passengers have endured under new, tighter airport security rules"(Allen, 2004). Biometric identifiers such as eye scans

or fingerprints on passports would help reduce the risk of terrorists getting on airplanes and therefore will lessen the security and pat downs. It is easy to forge most of the identification documents we have, but if we were to add fingerprint scans or eye scans it would be almost impossible to forge. This would not only help with terrorism, but it would also help with the growing problem of identity theft.

People who are against national ID cards say that one of the reasons that they do not want National ID cards is that it would be an invasion of privacy. They also argue that everything can be counterfeited. ID cards could also promote discrimination. “The success of ID cards as a means of fighting crime or illegal immigration will depend on a discriminatory checking procedure which will target minorities” (Davies, 2005).

ID Cards around the World:

Many countries have national ID cards and their uses vary. “Around a hundred countries have official, compulsory, national ID’s” (Davies, 2005), including Germany, France, Belgium, Greece, Luxembourg, Portugal, and Spain. Some countries have mandatory cards and some have voluntary cards. For example, France’s card is voluntary. It is “used to one’s identification to open bank accounts, in financial transactions, and as a travel document within the EU. It contains basic personal information, but no biometric data”(BBC News, 2005). Italy has a card also, but it is required. It has the same uses as France’s card. Some other purposes for having a national ID card are “In Pakistan, the cards are used to enforce a quota system. In China, they are used as a tool of social engineering” (Davies, 2005). The United Kingdom wants ID cards to help fight crime. Another reason why the United Kingdom wants ID cards is so that there can be an ID

card that is accepted in all European countries. New Zealand wants ID cards to help keep track of who is entitled to social welfare. Australia is one of the countries that rejected the National ID card. Some Australians wanted an ID card to help with the problem of tax evasion.

Many different types of information can be put on these cards. Most cards have basic information on them like name, date of birth, gender, where it was issued, an expiration date, a number and a place to put your signature. Most cards will also have a photograph on them. It is like having a driver's license but with a lot more information on it. "In Brazil, for example, all residents are obliged to carry at all times a plasticated flexible card the size of a credit card bearing a photograph, thumb print, full name and parent's names, national status (Brazilian national or alien resident), and a serial number" (Davies, 2005). Many other countries that have national ID cards have more information

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Lawrence J. Ellison
Birth: Aug 17, 1944, NYC
SSN: 078-05-1120
Mother's Maiden Name: (Unwed)
Blood Type: O+
DNA Markers: JK43, RB84
Net Worth: \$8.4B
Terrorist Risk: **Reg. disobeys airport orders not to land**
Sex: M Kinsey: 1
FBI Code: F8J43K97
Parents: USA + ???
Grandparents: ???

on their cards than Brazil including addresses, religion, physical descriptions, profession, fingerprints, and more. Everything has a cost. Many countries underestimated the cost of the cards. "In Australia, the cost of the proposed ID card failed to take into

account such factors as training costs, administrative supervision, staff turnover, holiday and sick leave, compliance costs, and overseas issue of cards"(Davies, 2005). After these new costs were figured in the cost was significantly higher. Cards like this with so much valuable information might be stolen or a person might loose it. This causes several

problems, including it costs money to replace it and it is also a huge security risk. Since these cards carry so much information on them it is a problem to replace them because they have to find some way to make sure you are really who you say you are.

Hot Quotes:

“A national ID card would not “suddenly mean constitutional protections would evaporate and you could be arbitrarily stopped on the street and asked to produce it.”

- John Roberts - Chief Justice of the United States. (USA Today, Roberts argued for a national Id card in 1983)

““The government seems to think that because appropriate technology exists it can be shoehorned into supporting whatever scheme it chooses”, says Andrew Kellett, Senior Research Analyst at Butler Group, Europe’s leading IT research and advisory organization.” (M2 Press WIRE, 2005)

“Of major concern with national ID card project is the technology. It has been chose before all the requirements and alternatives have been fully investigated. But it is the operational practicalities that are of most concern.” (M2 Press WIRE, Butler Group: Biometrically-based National ID Card Scheme is yet another case of the Government running before it can walk)

“Biometrics is still an emerging technology with worries about rejection rates. In a recent pilot only iris scanning reached close to 100% accuracy, and concerns have been raised that people with disabilities could be further disadvantaged,” says Kellett (M2 Press WIRE, 2005)

“Early next year the U.K. Passport Service plans to introduce the biometric passports, which will contain a chip storing a biometric of a facial image that’s obtained by scanning the applicant’s photo”(The Atlanta Journal and Constitution, Passports aren’t for grins British IDs get serious)

“As many as 15 of the 19 hijackers in the September 11, 2001 attacks would have been vulnerable to interception, the commission found, had such a system existed. The commission recommended Homeland Security build a comprehensive screening system that would include biometric identifiers of visitors to prevent terrorists from using false identities.” (Daily Mercury, Tightening borders without alienating)

Educational Importance:

You should educate yourself on this subject. It will affect everyone in the United States if the U.S. government decides to have national ID cards. It could mean the end of identity fraud or terrorism if the U.S. decided to have a National ID card. Do you want another September 11th to happen? You will probably have to give up some freedom, weather that bothers you or not is another question. This topic continues to appear, especially as technology advances.

My Opinion:

If national ID cards really can help prevent terrorism, I think they might be worth having. However, I do not like the fact that the use of such cards could facilitate discrimination. I think that for me to actually pick a side I would need to see an example of another country with a National ID card and its statistics to see if it really helped do what it is supposed to do. Although this topic has been around for a while, it is just starting to get the attention it deserves.

Case Study 1:

As the title of this article states many banks are starting to look at biometrics to help get rid of fraud. "Citibank is looking into the feasibility and cost of using biometric technology as a more efficient and secure method of identifying its customers" (Mearian, 2002). Many companies feel that fraud is such a big problem that they would be willing to invest huge amounts of money needed to buy biometrics. Most people will even be willing to give up some privacy in order to protect themselves from identity theft. There

are “500,000 cases of identity theft in the U.S. each year” (Mearian, 2002). Many banks already have been using biometrics for their employees to gain access to computer server rooms. Citibank wants to let their customers choose which form of biometrics they are most comfortable with. “In 2000 companies spent \$127 million on biometric devices; fingerprint scanners accounted for about 44% of those sales, according to Meridien (Meridien Research Inc.). Facial recognition technologies made up 14% of overall sales, hand geometry 13%, voice recognition 10% and iris scans 8 %”(Mearian, 2002). More money will continue to be spent every year on biometrics. Credit card fraud can be estimated at \$24 million per day. Identity theft is the fastest growing crime in the United States. “Identity Theft accounted for 42% of the 204,000 consumer fraud complaints filed last year” (Mearian, 2002).

Case Study 2:

This case study addresses the Army’s use of identification cards and the problems with it. The Army uses “identification cards and tags for transfusion purposes during contingency operations” (Rentas, 1999). The purpose of the study in this article is to see how many of the ID cards have the wrong blood type on them and what the repercussions for having the wrong blood type are.

“Thirty-four of 923 soldiers (3.7%) demonstrated at least one discrepancy during testing. In 1981, a study of two Army combat units in Europe showed an 11.0% discrepancy on ID cards and a 10.6% discrepancy on dog tags” (Rentas, 1999). The most common error occurred when soldiers had ‘O’ blood on their dog tags but in reality their blood type was ‘A’. It is very dangerous to have the wrong blood type on an

identification card, especially when your job is very dangerous. Getting the wrong type of blood during a transfusion could lead to death. However, as technology continues to improve, these errors should go down slightly.

Keywords:

E-passport – A passport with a chip full of information about the person

RFID(Radio Frequency ID) – “a technology similar in theory to [bar code](#) identification. With RFID, the electromagnetic or electrostatic coupling in the [RF](#) portion of the electromagnetic spectrum is used to transmit signals. An RFID system consists of an antenna and a [transceiver](#), which read the radio frequency and transfer the information to a processing [device](#), and a [transponder](#), or tag, which is an [integrated circuit](#) containing the RF circuitry and information to be transmitted.”
(<http://www.webopedia.com/TERM/R/RFID.html>)

National ID Card – “A national identity card is a portable document, typically a plasticized card with digitally-embedded information, that someone is required or encouraged to carry as a means of confirming their identity.”
(http://searchsecurity.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid14_gci939087,00.html)

Biometric Information – “Biometrics is the science and technology of measuring and statistically analyzing biological data. In information technology, biometrics usually refers to technologies for measuring and analyzing human body characteristics such as fingerprints, eye retinas and irises, voice patterns, facial patterns, and hand measurements, especially for [authentication](#) purposes. Often seen in science-fiction action adventure movies, face pattern matchers and body scanners seem about to emerge as replacements for computer passwords.”
(http://searchsecurity.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid14_gci211666,00.html)

Biographic Information – The written history of a person's life.

Identity Theft – “the co-option of another person's personal information (e.g., name, Social Security number, credit card number, passport) without that person's knowledge and the fraudulent use of such knowledge”
(<http://wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=identity%20theft>)

Biometric System – “A biometric system is essentially a pattern recognition system that makes a personal identification by establishing the authenticity of a special physiological or behavioral characteristic possessed by the user.” (Hong, Jain, Pankanti, 2000)

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