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Facebook has become a mainstay in today's society and a new venue for employers to research their candidates. Using advice from employment etiquette guides, this exploratory study examines the presentation of self on social networking sites.

Four hundred Facebook profiles of current university students were examined by analyzing seventeen visual presentations of self and seventeen written presentations of self. Results indicated that females, African Americans, and younger college students are more likely to present negative written presentations of self, whereas males are more likely to present negative visual presentations of self. If a potential employer were to examine the applicant's profile on a social networking site these presentations could affect ones chances of getting a job. The results warn that students should be aware of the way they present themselves on Facebook and could be visible to, or influence, those who are not part of their normative facework.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PRESENTATIONS OF  
THE SELF AND EMPLOYMENT SEEKING

by

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

People have been interacting in groups for as long as people have lived in social groups. Social networking websites have introduced a new element to social interaction and the presentation of the self. Social networking sites permit users to create public or semi-public profiles, allowing the user to display him or herself to other individuals on the internet. These social networking sites are increasingly becoming popular to individuals all over the world, thus connecting individuals in ways people never thought possible, such as connecting people who may not know or see each other. Technology has created the possibility of users not knowing who exactly other users are in their social network.

Erving Goffman's theory of the presentation of self (1959) examines how face-to-face interactions are developed and maintained, as individuals attempt to control the impression he or she favors to the other individual throughout the entirety of their interaction. We all engage in this type of impression management. Most of the impression management process occurs in the "back-stage" before the interaction takes place, and the interaction takes place in the "front-stage," where the actors meet and interact face-to-face. Social networking sites have blurred the line between "front-stage" and "back-stage" presentations of self. The public nature of social networking sites reveals here-to-for private worlds of back-stage to public scrutiny. Social networks have



created a situation where individuals present themselves without any face-to-face or verbal interaction.

The significant distinction between front-stage and back-stage presentations of self is the ways in which individuals behave. In the front-stage setting, the way a person's behavior is observed by others becomes part of their identity. In the back-stage setting, individuals do not have an audience watching them, and thus their behaviors have no impact on their presentation of their public self, or others perceptions of them. Social networking sites blur this idea of public and private settings, as many behaviors one would normally perform in the back-stage setting are now brought into the public sphere and visible to an unknown audience. Facebook is both the front-stage and the back-stage. In the front-stage, the self is on display to others, but in the back-stage identity, preparation is done in the open as well through such means of editing not only what one presents about themselves, but what others have linked to a person's Facebook display as well.

Although, Goffman has shown that the self can be presented in many different venues, his theories were developed before the internet became a mainstay in our everyday lives. His theories, however, are applicable to the internet, as social networking sites are public spaces that are easily accessible. Facebook is a public social networking site, as it is free for anyone over the age of 13 to join. Due to privacy settings, Facebook allows certain information (such as name, main profile picture, and interests) available to anyone with an account. With over 500 million participants, and ever changing privacy

settings, many users either do not realize their information is available to the public or do not understand the need to update these settings on a regular basis. This can be detrimental to users trying to protect their presentation of self. Therefore, every user on Facebook can be a theoretical audience, thus making Facebook a viable venue to research the presentation of self.

Facebook users can be unaware of their potential audience. Potential employers have the option of using Facebook to analyze whether a candidate presents him or herself in a positive manner. Searching users may be a useful tool when employers are trying to decide between two qualified candidates. Since Facebook is a free, public website, to gain access to the site only requires a valid e-mail address. Once registered, an employer has the ability to search for names of user's and access any public information on the user.

College students may be unaware that information they post on the internet is public information and can be used against them. Without realizing this, college students may then be unaware of whom they are presenting themselves to, thus potentially not presenting a "professional" self-appearance that many employers seek. On Facebook, students tend to let their guard down and use informal socialization mannerisms; they may not be thinking about employment when they post information about their self. The purpose of this exploratory study is to examine, based upon what is considered good business etiquette of the degree to which is positive or negative on college students' Facebook profile.

## CHAPTER II

### HISTORY OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

The internet, and more specifically social networking sites, is a realm where theories of social interaction have not been discussed. The internet was originally a place for written interaction through messages and research; however, it has progressed into another mode of visual communication through webcams and sites like social networking sites, where features include posting pictures of the self, and thus becoming an important venue to expand on Goffman's theories.

Boyd and Ellison (2008) define social networking sites as “web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.” Individuals are able to meet individuals they may have never met otherwise. Websites allow users to construct their social networks and identities they wish to convey to others. Finally, these self-presentations are publicly available.

Boyd and Ellison (2008) give a comprehensive review of the history of social networking sites. In 1997, the first recognized social networking site that was developed was SixDegrees.com, on which users created profiles and listed their friends. In 1998, SixDegrees.com allowed their users to search other users' friend lists, allowing

individuals to expand their own networks by communicating with friends of friends. In 1999, blogging sites, such as LiveJournal, attracted users who could comment publicly on anything they desired. The idea of connection with others on the internet gained popularity causing specialty social networking sites to develop. In addition, in 1999, ethnic networking websites, such as AsianAvenue and BlackPlanet, created profiles for personal, professional, and dating purposes. Users could add others as friends without needing their confirmation.

In 2002, Friendster began to compete with online dating sites, such as Match.com. Friendster's logic was that friends of friends would be more compatible dating partners than random strangers (Boyd et.al, 2008). Friendster's popularity declined in 2003 when servers were unable to meet the demands of its rapid growth and because features which were once free, subsequently were made available only for a fee. This caused individuals looking to connect with people to leave the site in search for free social networking.

In 2003, MySpace was created by Tom Anderson, to be a free service for social networking with other individuals around the world. Relocations from Friendster to MySpace accelerated when indie-rock bands were deleted from Friendster for violating profile regulations (Boyd et.al, 2008). Although MySpace was not created with bands in mind, bands and their fans attributed to MySpace growth. Unlike Friendster, MySpace permitted users to add HTML codes to their profile in order to make each profile a truly unique representation of each individual. Unlike with other social networking sites,

MySpace users could create a unique image of themselves to present to other users in order to give off the impression they desired to imply (Manago et.al, 2008).

In 2004, MySpace permitted minors to join the site. Afterwards, three distinct groups of users emerged: musicians, teenagers, and post-college socialites (users in their late 20s to mid 30s who have a busy social life). Teenagers and adults did not interact except through the pages of the musicians. By 2005, however, the addition of teens drew MySpace into scandals involving sexual predators. Parental outrage about privacy concerns diminished the appeal and popularity of the site (Bahney, 2006).

Facebook appeared in 2004 as a Harvard only social network. Facebook then expanded to other universities in the same year. In September of 2005, high schools were given networks on Facebook, but high school networks and college networks did not have access to each other's pages (Boyd et.al, 2008). In the last quarter of 2006, Facebook was available to everyone through city networks (Tufekci, 2008). Once Facebook was made publicly available to everyone, "applications" such as games and surveys were developed to keep users engaged with the site. This feature was unique to Facebook at the time (Boyd et.al, 2008); however, in early 2008, MySpace began to offer many of the same applications that were once only available on Facebook. These applications increased the means of connection with others around the world, thus increasing the availability of one's profile.

MySpace and Facebook are the two largest social sites. In 2008, Comscore reported that "the number of worldwide visitors to social networking sites grew 34 percent to 530

million, representing approximately two out of every three Internet users. MySpace and Facebook are in a tight battle for the global leadership position, each attracting more than 100 million visitors per month” (Comscore, 2008). Facebook has many features that keep people engaged in their website such as tagging pictures (meaning linking images to other users’ profiles), joining networks (such as universities, cities, and businesses), and having the ability to decide with whom to network and who a user allows to view their profile. Other sites, such as MySpace, do not allow many of these features, such as social networks for university and location embedded into profiles.

The internet was originally a place for written interaction. Now these sites have become venues for online face-to-face interaction, where users may be unaware of the risks of self-presentation. Because of this social phenomenon, many social researchers have become inspired to delve further into what social networking means for different aspects of society.

## CHAPTER III

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Throughout the past few years, social network sites have become increasingly popular as a setting for research. Many of the studies examining the self and social networking websites have found that many users on Facebook and blogging sites are not always aware of the potential risks of having publicly available profiles. Ibrahim (2008), through synthesizing literatures on social networking sites, examines how social networking websites, such as Facebook, bring about new forms of deviance and unpredictable behavior amongst teenagers and young adults. Ibrahim was looking into this topic because the internet connects individuals from all over the planet, which opens doors to new forms of risks that can affect one's environment even if the hazards are far away. Through social networking sites, an individual's personal information (name, age, location, school, etc.) becomes social capital, which is personal information that is traded and exchanged throughout the website. This exchange of actions and communication over the internet can have security and safety consequences, as well as possible consequences on one's perception of risk. Through synthesizing the literature on potential risks of social networking sites, the author found that through these sites, risk finds new ways to become embedded in our social practices and culture, which brings about new ethical and legal challenges into society.

## Self Presentation and the Internet

In addition to the presentation of self on a social networking site, research has found that people can be judged based upon the appearance of their friends. Walther, Van Der Heide, Kim, Westerman, and Tong (2008) explored how cues deposited by “friends” or “social partners” onto one’s Facebook profile affect the observers’ impressions of the profile owner. The authors tested relationships between what one’s friends say about a person on the network with the physical attractiveness of the friend leaving the comments. The authors found this topic important to research because the owner of the page has complete control over what impressions of the self and the impressions of the user’s friends, thus allowing the self to come across however the individual desires the self to be perceived. Using Goffman’s ideas of impression management (1959), the authors explain that “people spend considerable effort in order to form and manage impressions, especially when anticipating or engaging in the initial stage of interaction” (Walther et.al, p.31). They found that both favorable and unfavorable statements about the target were biased based upon gender. For instance, negative messages about certain moral behavior increased the male profile owners’ perceived physical attractiveness, whereas females in the same situation were viewed to be less attractive. This then suggests that gendered double standards still exist even on the internet.

Farrell and Elizabeth (2006) examined social networking sites and self-presentation in terms of researching a roommate. Future roommates would search the names of their potential roommates in order to find information about the life and interests of the roommate. They found that when a future roommate posts information about the self in



their online social network, that it eases the anxieties of shy roommates by allowing future roommates to chat online and see each other before actually meeting on move-in day. However, viewing information about a future roommate can also be cause for alarm, as college officials now say that they are receiving more complaints and roommate reassignment requests than ever before based upon the race, sexual orientation, and hobbies of a future roommate. This is due to the information that individuals are finding about their potential roommates via social networking sites. This shows that the presentation of self-displayed online is a risk and does not always have positive outcomes.

In their investigation of the student /faculty relationships on Facebook, Hewitt and Forte (2006) found that about one-third of the students (65% of the female respondents and 27% of the male respondents) did not believe faculty members should be present on Facebook due to concerns about their identity management. “Goffman has observed that, when presenting one’s self to others, the performer strives to maintain a great deal of control over her persona and minimize the appearance of characteristics that are contrary to an idealized version of herself” (Hewitt et. al, p. 2). They also found that having contact with the professor on Facebook has no impact on the students’ ratings of the professor. This finding is an example of how students do not like the idea of blending their social lives with their work lives because it threatens their identity management.

Vasalou and Joinson (2008) sought to discover if the nature of an online environment could influence users to create an avatar that emphasizes particular characteristics. The

authors looked into three major aspects of online networking: gaming, dating, and blogging. The authors were interested in researching avatars because they are beginning to replace other forms of self presentation (such as photographs), and they feel it is important to understand if an avatar can influence and ultimately change users' perceptions of behavior towards others while communicating online. In examining how the users engaged in impression management, they found that "participants created self-representative avatars that extended beyond the mirroring of their physical appearance; hobbies, pets, and other self-relevant props that were not necessarily attached to one's embodiment were all important elements for identity construction" (Vasalou et. al, p. 318). This shows that users consider their identity to go beyond their physical appearance but also to their belongings and interests. The authors found that, in blogging, avatars were created to reflect the user's actual appearance, lifestyle, and preferences, whereas avatars used for dating purposes were made to look more attractive and sexy and avatars used in gaming were created to make the user look more intellectual. This indicates that people present themselves differently in varied situations.

Manago, Graham, Greenfield, and Salimkhan (2008) explored the ways emerging adults (ages 18 to 23) experience social networking. Their goal was to conceptualize the impact of the online self-presentation on the young adults' identity development. "Symbolic interactionists such as Goffman have theorized that the way individuals present themselves to others through impression management is involved in the development of self... Goffman's theory [1959] posits that individuals develop a sense of self from creating an impression they wish to give to others" (Manago et.al, p. 447).

The researchers were interested in conceptualizing this impact of online self-presentation on identity management due to the rising popularity of social networking sites, such as Facebook and MySpace and because past findings have suggested college students use MySpace as a way to explore their identity. Their study suggests that these social networking websites provide opportunities for young adults to find their possible selves.

Zhao, Grasmuck, and Martin (2008) explored the range of identity claims people tended to make in a non-anonymous online setting. They wanted to find out if identity performance was influenced by the nonymity of setting in which the performance took place. “In a fully nonymous offline world where deviance from established norms will be punished or ridiculed, the masks people wear in everyday life became their ‘real’ or known identities” (Zhao, p. 1819). These masks are a source of impression management (Goffman, 1959) and allow users to display the identity they want. This identity would be accepted as truth even if it were not true, since there is no way of knowing if the identity is truth or not.

Tufekci (2008b) explores how social networking sites, such as Facebook and MySpace, are rapidly being adopted by college students. The author was interested in this topic due to the rapid adaptation of these social networking sites by college students. It was found that females were four to five times more likely to use a social network site than a man was. The authors found that “users engage in impression management [Goffman, 1959], by adjusting their profiles, linking to their friends, displaying their likes and dislikes, joining groups, and otherwise adjusting the situated appearance of their

profiles” (Tufekci, p. 547). It is through these actions that an individual produces and affirms their identity.

### Online Risks in Self Presentation

Tufekci (2008a), while analyzing participants on Facebook and MySpace, investigated the mechanisms used by college students to negotiate the boundaries between public and private in regards to their profiles on social networking sites. The author was interested in studying the topic due to increasing media coverage about privacy and social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace, and found that there was little to no relationship between an individual’s online privacy concerns and the information that individual disclosed on the social networking site. “As Goffman [1959] explored, self-presentation is a conscious, interactive act that requires both awareness of mediated sociality, the audience has been obscured” (Tufekci, p. 22). The user no longer knows exactly who is their audience, meaning they do not know who is watching and judging their presentation of self. This is where Goffman’s ideas of front-stage and back stage become blurred. Without knowing who the audience is, it becomes difficult to know how to prepare the self in the back stage. This study found that students eliminated an unwanted audience by adjusting profile visibility or by using a nickname. The author, however, did not restrict the type of information published about themselves in their profiles.

Livingstone (2008), also studying online risk, seeks to explore the conception of “friends” in social networking sites, such as Facebook, that teenagers hold. The article

explores the teenagers' forms of social networking in order to discover the connections between online opportunity and the risks, which may be encountered through the teenagers' use of these websites. As for the gradation levels of friendships, the author found that the teenagers struggle to decide who can see what information about the self due to website restrictions. To avoid this, the author found that many of these teenagers chose to express their more personal experiences by using other more personal, forms of communication. The author also found that older teenagers tended to favor a plain aesthetic that foregrounds their links to others, thus giving the idea of an identity lived through authentic relationships with others. Younger teenagers tended to have a highly decorated, stylistic identity expressed in their profiles. This difference in appearance shows different phases of identity development, which may have implications for teenagers' experiences of online opportunities and risks. This shows that as an individual matures they tend to tone down their image of self to be more clean and professional. This cleaner and more professional image of self could prove useful when seeking employment.

### Self Presentation and Gender in Employment

Vrugt and Van Eechoud (2007) examined self-presentation and the effects of smiling when applying for a job. Smiling is indicative of a happier, more pleasing self and thus viewed more favorably by employers. They sought to study factors that could influence the smiling behavior of men and females. This is based on findings from past studies, which found that in social situations females tend to smile more than men do. Their study is based on the idea that smiling can function as a part of motives and intentions of

an actor in certain contexts. The authors assumed that men and females would actively engage in smiling as a strategy to boost the expectations of others. The article has a large focus on gender role expectations in the presentation of the self. This is because the social situation, the roles of, and the relation between the interacting persons constitute the shared social context. The authors found that females smiled more in response to jobs where social contacts were important than they did for jobs where social contacts were unimportant. There was no difference for men, implying that females tend to take their image more seriously when it comes to social interaction. This relates strongly to Goffman's (1959) ideas of impression management; the actor does what is necessary (in this case smiling to show friendliness and social importance) to control their perceived identity and reduce the occurrence of characteristics that contradict that identity.

Foschi and Valenzuela (2008) investigated the effects of gender on the self-presentation in the process of hiring for a job. They examined four variables in the hiring decision: the sex of the applicant, the sex of the assessor, the applicants' self-presentation style (referring to their written qualifications and perceived confidence in their written presentation of self), and the type of assessment decision. Although there are rules in place to try to eliminate biases in the hiring process, the authors still feel as if biases exist. They found no evidence of support for a hiring bias against female applicants. As for biases by the assessors, the authors found that there was no bias from males against females; however, they did find a basis in favor of female applicants by the female raters.

While a few studies have shown the potential employment effects from self-presentation online, there have been very few studies addressing the presentation of the self on social networking websites in terms of employment. To fill this void in the literature, this study examines the presentation of self on Facebook. Information that an individual publishes about him or herself in their public profile can potentially affect their opportunities for employment. A void in the literature has been the examination of the presentation of the self on social networking websites, especially how social networking sites can affect one's chances for employment in the business world. Because of this void, information on how to present oneself professionally can be drawn from employment etiquette guides. The information from these guides is easily applicable to social networking sites.

## CHAPTER IV

### BUSINESS IMPLICATIONS ON SOCIAL NETWORKING

One place where people constantly want to present their best selves is when applying for a job. When looking for a job, many people turn to guides for advice on how to prepare themselves for job interviews. These books advise the individual on how to present the self, both visually and in written form. This advice can easily be translated to advice for social networking sites, as there are informational sources available warning students about the pitfalls of social networking sites and employment opportunities. Information that could be seen as “job-worthy” can be drawn from multiple employment etiquette guides about obtaining a job, as well as guides on how to use Facebook.

#### Implications of Social Networking

In her book, *A Foot in the Door* (2008), Katharine Hansen points out that, according to the New York Times,

college career counselors and other experts say some recruiters are looking up applicants on social networking sites like Facebook, MySpace, Xanga, and Friendster, where college students often post risqué or teasing photographs and provocative comments about drinking, recreational drug use, and sexual exploits in what some mistakenly believe is relative privacy (Hansen, p.129 – 130).

This shows that recruiters are actually looking at Facebook profiles as another means to assess the viability of a job candidate. Hansen also explores how networking can work well for individuals seeking employment. She says that approximately the



junior year of college, students should start becoming more serious about their job search (Hansen, p. 52). If this is true, then it would be more important for their online social networking profiles to be more professional looking.

In his article in the US News, “How to Turn Social Networking into a Job Offer”, David LaGesse advises users to fill out their profile and describe themselves, talents, experiences, and accomplishments in words that a recruiter might use to search for potential employees. He advises that “employers increasingly prowl networks to find new candidates and to eliminate existing ones” (LaGesse, p.3). He also discusses the findings from Matthew Fraser’s book, *Throwing Sheep into the Boardroom: How Online Social Networking Will Transform Your Life, Work, and World* (2009), which says that many careers have been advancing almost wholly through weak ties (such as friends of friends) due to increasing networking through the Web, thus networking with others is important for career advancement.

Caroline Potter, from Yahoo HotJobs, wrote two articles addressing social networking sites and obtaining a job. In her first article, “Social Networking Basics for Job Hunters” (2009), Potter advises broadcasting the type of job you are seeking in your profile, but advises against making too many status updates. In her second article, “Tweet Your Way to a New Job” (2009), she gives more advice on how to act on social networking sites and advises users to post full information about the self (full name, location, biography, and a link to a blog).

In looking at Goffman's idea of the presentation of self, Hannerz (1980) discusses the idea of dramaturgical loyalty, which is where members of a team (a friendship in the case of Facebook), must not betray the impression an individual wishes to convey. This idea of betrayal of image has the possibility of having a high significance on Facebook. For example, if a friend posts pictures of an individual in a compromising situation, that friend could be betraying the mainstream image the individual in question was trying to convey, thus dramaturgical loyalty will have been lost. As Goffman and Hannerz have shown, maintaining a desired self-presentation is important to individuals in every venue they enter.

#### Implications of Facebook

Kanya Balakrishna, from the Yale Daily News, discusses how Facebook is now being used by employers in her article, "Facebook Becomes Tool for Employers" (2006). She states that "career services officials at a number of schools say employers have begun using Facebook.com to learn about candidates before making a decision of whether or not to hire them – a potential concern for students currently waiting to hear about upcoming internship and job positions" (Balakrishna, p.1). She finds that most students use their profiles quite freely, often discussing their weekends and humiliating stories, not realizing the implications of what they post, thus concerning career service officials. They also have a tendency to share pictures of themselves drunk and in other compromising situations. One user advises, "It is important for students to take proper measures to ensure that something like a raunchy Facebook profile does not hurt a

student's chances at being hired by a given company" (Balakrishna, p.2). However, the author notes that students have the power to decide who can see what in their profiles.

Jason Alba and Jesse Stay's book *I'm on Facebook: Now What?* (2008) is an introductory book to all the features on Facebook and how to use them. The big importance in this book was his discussion on what type of self-presentation to present on Facebook, giving the advice, "only post pictures, comments, updates, etc. that your grandma would be proud of – this might ensure you won't get hurt down the road when a boss or potential employer finds your profile" (Alba et. al., p. 77). They warn that Facebook is always changing, and therefore the possibility exists that private information has the potential of becoming more public further on down the road, this potentially hurting the individual who posts negative information about the self. He also warns not to post incriminating information about the self, such as underage drinking, as a user can be arrested for posting such information.

#### Implications of Self Presentation

In his book, *Dress for Success* (1998), John Malloy goes in detail about the proper way to dress for an interview. He discusses what the proper attire is to wear for different types of jobs in different regions of the country. His focus is on the colors of shirts, ties, and suits for men. Although this book has only one chapter on females' clothing, in his *New Woman's Dress for Success* (1996), Malloy focuses on the types of clothing females should wear in the workplace as well as for job interviews. He examines the different usage of make-up, hairstyles, accessories, and the proper styles and colors of skirts, pants,

and blouses that should be worn in the workplace. He also comments on a woman's grammar and sentence structure in resumes and interviews. Both of Malloy's books focus mainly on the visual presentation of self.

In *How to Manage a Successful Job Search* (2009), Eric Sturm focuses purely on how to improve the self. In the first part, he encourages an individual to get to know him or herself and to discover their job goals. He discusses an individual's appearance and advises individuals to maintain a professional appearance both in person and online, as the online is now public. The third part teaches users how to develop a proper resume for the written presentation of self. Part four examines way to "sell yourself" to an employer. Lastly, he encourages readers to assess themselves as if they were in the eyes of the employer in order to discover where you are under performing. This can help users of social networking sites when deciding what information to post by having users ask themselves what an employer would think if he were to view this profile.

Michael J. Willson and Karen Kelly specifically examine body language and self-presentation in job interviews in their book *Job Interview Body Language* (2009). The authors explore proper appearance in the presentation of grooming, hair, teeth, nail polish, tattoos and piercings, make-up, and perfume. Clothing wise, they explore the proper colors (which coincide with Malloy's recommendations of blue, tan, and gray) for clothing, as well as discussing the different types of shoes and accessories. They then explore the proper way to smile, shake a potential employer's hand, and how to properly angle your body during a job interview. Lastly, the authors discuss proper facial

expressions (as well as negative facial expressions) and how to display confidence through an individual's smile and posture.

The business world is infiltrating online social networking sites to help select employment candidates. In case a potential (or current) employer were to search for a person on a social networking site, these authors all give advice presenting the best online presentation of self, because you do not always know your audience is watching.

## CHAPTER V

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose of this exploratory study will be to examine, through the analysis of college students Facebook profiles, the presentation of self on Facebook. The presentation of self is defined by the way users present themselves through pictures and written statements. The study's goal is to document the presentation of the self on Facebook in relation to acceptable employment presentations of self.

The question asked in this study is, "Do Facebook users, analyzed by race, gender, age, and graduation date, display questionable information based upon employment etiquette guides that could be detrimental if a potential employer found the job candidate's Facebook profile, and if so, what percentage of users display such questionable information?" This questionable information can be in the form of pictures and written statements about the self. Discovering the answer to this research question could benefit both students and career planning departments, by having guidelines of what not to post about themselves. Career planning departments also benefit from the research because they can assist students on how to be careful with the information they post and the identity they present in their Facebook profiles.

Unique from previous books and studies, this book examines public access information from college students using a contemporary social networking mechanism.

This study also makes sociological contributions through social network analysis with implications for employment decisions, the technological subculture versus the employment industry's normative expectations, and by integrating existing theories into venues in which they were not explored by their original theorists.

## CHAPTER VI

### METHODS

Facebook has over 500 million users (Facebook homepage), and is by far the most popular social networking site. Because of its high appeal to college students, as it is the only social networking site that allows users to be identified solely by the users' university's networks, Facebook is the perfect venue for this research. The main aspect being explored in the study is the respondent's presentation of self, particularly questionable behavior, information posted and displayed about the user that could deter a potential employer from hiring the individual, being displayed through the presentation of the self, which is defined as the way in which users present themselves through pictures and written statements.

#### Sample

A convenience sample of 400 current undergraduate students at UNCG that have a publicly available Facebook profile was drawn. In a college network on Facebook, a user's role at the school is stated (i.e. faculty, staff, alumni, graduate student). Undergraduate students do not have a role listed in the network name in the user's profile; therefore, undergraduate students can easily be differentiated from faculty and staff.



Facebook users are grouped into networks based upon the network they select when they sign up. In order to join a college network, a user must have an e-mail address from that particular university, and then confirm the registration by clicking on the confirmation link set to their college e-mail address. However, a person may join any particular region location of their choosing, as there is no confirmation requirement for location. An employer can register under or link to any location their potential employee belongs to in order to research him or her. For this research, just one network, the UNC Greensboro network, will be explored, as it is the only college network to which I have access.

To access the 400 network Facebook accounts, I created a fake Facebook account with a hidden name. This account had messaging features turned off in order to avoid any possible contact with participants. To generate the pages that I would view, I typed “UNC Greensboro” into the search bar, and then selected the people option. In order to remove any possible bias Facebook would have displaying names to me, I had no contacts associated with this account. The sample for this analysis because the first 400 current UNCG students (ones who did not have staff, graduate student, or alumni listed with their account) displayed to me. Between July 2010 and October 2010, the sample of 400 Facebook profiles was coded and analyzed based on the positive and negative information a person presented about the self. Other general information such as gender, graduation date, political views, and number of pictures of the self was recorded. Each profile was only viewed once and only most recent posts and status updates (past 48 hours) were analyzed (if the user made their wall posts public). The data was analyzed

by examining the frequencies of each variable, as well as analyzing the frequency of such presentations between the three main demographic variables (gender, race, and graduation date).

As an unobtrusive study, the data being collected is publicly available data, thus no permission is needed from the participants since they published their information for public viewing. If the user makes information about their self known to the public, they are giving the public consent to use information about them without their permission, even if the user is not aware of this.

## CHAPTER VII

### VARIABLES

A review of guides on obtaining a job were analyzed in order to develop a list of behaviors (for example, partying) and presentation styles (for example; clothing, grammar) that were considered most appropriate or detrimental to employment. Using this list of behaviors and presentation styles to code the variables, I divided this advice into specific variables (based on multiple books mentioning these variables), coding them based on a combination of their specific examples and what I observed during data collection. While most of this information was geared to the presentation of self during the interview process of obtaining employment, the main themes presented in these texts were adapted to create the coding scheme used in this analysis.

#### List of Demographic Variables (Independent Variables)

The independent variables give the basic demographic information of the users on Facebook. Variables were chosen by past studies. The different studies found results by comparing the presentation of self with these different demographic groups.

Gender is coded as male, female, and transgender. Since there was only one transgender student in the sample, this individual was left out of the analysis to avoid biases in the results. Walther et.al (2008) found that when viewing profiles that both favorable and unfavorable comments about the user were biased based upon gender. For

example, negative messages about certain moral behavior increased the male's physical attractiveness, but a female in the same situation was rated as less attractive. Vrugt et al. found that females smiled more in response to jobs where social contacts were important than they did for jobs where social contacts were unimportant. They found no difference for men. Foschi et al. (2008) found a hiring bias in favor of females applicants by a female rater. There was no bias with male raters.

Perceived race was coded as Caucasian, African American, and Other/Unknown. The other races (such as Asian and Hispanic) were too small to analyze. The race categories were based upon the researcher's assessment of the race of the respondent through examining their pictures. Overall, race was easy to code, except for Hispanic, as very few users were perceived to be Hispanic. Those who did not have a profile picture (often using an inanimate object or animal) and those whose race would not be deciphered were categorized as unknown. Most of those categorized as an unknown race did not have a profile picture; however, it was often difficult to code Hispanics. Although there were more African Americans and more males than expected, this could be due to the algorithm Facebook uses to display users. This equation is unknown to the researcher, as Facebook does not publish their search algorithms. Ferrell et al. (2006) found that students were researching their future roommates by looking them up on social networking sites. They stated that college officials are receiving more complaints and roommate reassignment requests than ever before based upon the race of a future roommate.

Age was coded by the age a user posted on their page. Most users did not have their birth date visible, thus making this variable hard to analyze. Manago et al. (2008) found that college students use social networking sites as a way to explore their identity. Livingstone (2008) found that younger teenagers have a highly decorated profile whereas older teenagers tended to have plain, easy to read profile. This shows that as an individual matures they tend to tone down their image of self to be more clean and professional.

Graduation Date was used in place of age to analyze a user's sense of maturity (based upon the findings of Livingstone on age). Graduation date was coded by the graduation year the user posted on Facebook. These years were 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014. Those who didn't have a date posted that were classified as current students were placed in the unknown date category. Those with graduation years between 2010 and 2011 were considered to be seniors, 2012 were considered to be juniors, 2013 were considered to be sophomores, and 2014 were considered to be freshmen.

### Dependent Variables

The main dependent variable in this research is the presentation of self. When it comes to presentation of self on the job market, there is a great deal of information and advice. Some of the more recent work has included how a student should present themselves on Facebook in light of future employment prospects. Presentation of self can be measured through both visual and written presentations of self.

### List of Visual Variables (Dependent Variables)

Malloy (1996) advised that females should not wear a lot of bright, dark colors. He found that employers preferred more natural, lighter colors instead. Makeup was defined as the type of colors used for make-up. This variable was coded as no makeup, bright shades (bold reds, bright blues), light shades (pale pinks, pale browns), dark shades (blacks, deep reds), and cannot tell. Males were not included for this variable and instead given their own code and were placed in the system missing category. For the most part, images did not focus closely enough on the face to see the type of make-up a user wore, thus this variable was not a useful indicator of presentation of self for analyses.

Malloy (1988) advised that males always appear neat and clean, including the presentation of facial hair. Facial hair was defined as the type of facial hair a male presents in his main profile picture. Facial hair examined was categorized as none, straggly beard (an untrimmed beard, where the hair is in patches), goatee (small amount of hair on the chin), trimmed beard (a beard that looks well maintained), wild beard (a beard that is not well maintained, where the beard is in braids, spikes, or any unconventional manner), and moustache (only having hair above the lip). These categories were chosen based upon Malloy's discussions. Females were not included for this variable and instead given their own code and were placed in the system missing category.

Malloy (1988 and 1996) discusses the proper attire for men and females to wear to job interviews, including what colors, styles, and designs are most professional and what

is not. Clothing style was defined as the type of clothing style a user has in their main profile picture. For this study, clothing was coded as professional (for example, a suit or skirt and blouse combination in neutral colors), casual (for example, jeans and a t-shirt), dressy (for example, tuxedo or sundress), and other styles that would be considered unprofessional (for example, bathing suits, lingerie, etc.).

Shoes are the type of shoes a user is wearing in their main profile picture. The categories for this variables were none, sneakers, flip flops, dress shoes, low heels, stilettos, and unknown. Those who fell in the unknown category typically had images where the feet were not visible, thus making it impossible to determine the type of footwear an individual wore. Willson (2009) found that females and males should not wear spikes, stilettos, sandals, or sneakers when going on a job interview.

Hair Style referred to the type of hairstyle the user has in their main profile picture. This included being bald, having long hair (for males this was past ear length, for women this was shoulder length or longer), short hair (for men this was ear length or shorter, for women this was shorter than shoulder length) an afro, dreadlocks, and not being able to tell. Those who fell into the unknown category typically wore hats or had their head covered in some fashion. Males and females were examined separately with this variable in order to differentiate between appropriate for the two genders. Malloy (1988) advised men to wear their hair short and to never have an afro. For females, Malloy (1996) advised they should wear their hair mid length, meaning not very long, but not very short.

Malloy (1996) advises that red and clear nail polish colors are the most professional colors for females to wear when seeking employment. Nail Polish refers to the color of nails in the main profile picture. The categories for this variable are no nail polish, red, pink, blue, black, other colors, and unknown. Those who fell into the unknown category had images where their fingernails were not clearly viewable in their profile image. Males were not included for this variable and instead given their own code and were placed in the system missing category.

Alba (2008) advises against posting drunken pictures on the internet, especially when underage, as it is a way of incriminating yourself and advertising to everyone that you were doing something illegal. Balakrishna (2006) confirms what Alba advises by acknowledging the fact that college students have a tendency to share these types of pictures. When a user displayed any pictures with an alcoholic drink in hand, this variable was coded as yes, the user did have drunken pictures associated with their profile or no, they did not.

Alba (2008) and Balakrishna (2006) note similar advice and tendencies with sexual pictures as they did for drunken pictures. Sexual pictures are defined by if the user has pictures that are sexual in nature (i.e. poses that are sexual in nature, such as licking a finger in a seductive manner or giving “crotch shots” where the user opens legs fully for the picture, wearing sexual clothing such as lingerie or touching another person’s body parts in a sexual manner, such as placing hands on a female’s breasts). This variable was determined by looking at every image a person had associated with their profile. This



variable was coded as yes, the user did have sexual pictures associated with their profile or no, they did not.

Willson (2009) states that having tattoos and many piercings on the visibly on the body during a job interview is detrimental to the individual's employment opportunities. Tattoos were defined if the user has visible tattoos on their body. This variable was determined by looking at every image a person had associated with their profile. This variable was coded as, yes, the user did have visible tattoos in their pictures or no, they did not. Piercings were defined by the location of visible piercings on the body. This variable was determined by looking at every image a person had associated with their profile. This variable was coded as, no visible piercings, ear piercings, other piercings, and lastly, having both ear and other piercings.

Pursed lips means if the user's lips are pursed or not in main profile picture. This variable was coded as yes, the user did have visible tattoos in their pictures or no, they did not. Willson (2009) states that those who have their lips pursed are looked upon less favorably by potential employers.

Vrugt (2007) stated that smiling is indicative of a happier, more pleasing self and thus viewed more favorably by employers. Vrugt found that females smile more in response to jobs where social contacts were important than they did for jobs where social contacts were unimportant. Malloy (1996) advises females to always have a pleasant facial expression while on job interviews. Willson (2009) gives similar advice to both genders by advising individuals to always have a genuine smile when talking to potential

employers. Smiling is defined by if the user smiles in their posted pictures. This variable was determined by looking at every image a person had associated with their profile. This variable was coded as never smiles, rarely smiles (meaning they smiled in less than half of their pictures), smiles in most of their pictures (meaning they smiled in more than half of their pictures, but not all), and smiles in all of their pictures.

Malloy (1996) states that having good posture shows the employer that the individual has confidence in their self and their appearance. Willson (2009) adds to this idea by stating that the chin should be parallel with the floor to show the good posture and confidence. Posture was coded on the main picture as unknown, sits or stands up straight, and slumps or slouches. The cases coded as an unknown were coded this way because the user did not have a picture of him or herself as their main profile image.

Willson (2009) states that having yellow teeth deters employers from hiring the individual, so having white teeth is preferred. Teeth are described as the color of the user's teeth in their main profile picture. This variable was coded as white, yellow, or cannot tell. Those profiles that fell in the "cannot tell" category either did not have a picture of themselves as their main profile image, or they were not smiling in their main profile image.

#### List of Written Variables (Dependent Variables)

Malloy (1996) advises that having good grammar is necessary in both speaking with an employer and on the job resume. Grammar was defined as, the user uses proper grammar in the written description of self. The larger the individual's vocabulary, the

more intelligent the person appeared to the employer (Malloy, 1996). Grammar is coded as bad grammar, using text lingo, using proper grammar, or not having a written description of self. Those who did not have a written description of self either did not write anything or they had their privacy settings set so it could not be viewed by the public. There is no way to distinguish this difference. The written presentation of self was further coded to reflect whether the user uses complete sentences in written description of self. Sentence structure is coded as using complete sentences, incomplete sentences or not having a written description of self, whether the respondent used curse words in their written description of self, and a count of the number of words used in the description of self.

E-Mail address is defined as the type of e-mail address the user displays in their profile. E-mail address was coded as having none displayed, containing a nickname, using their personal university e-mail, an e-mail address containing their name, or using a business e-mail address. Only a handful of profiles had this information displayed to the public; therefore, this variable was not analyzed, as it was not a useful indicator of presentation of self for analysis. Sturm (2009) advises that the more professional looking the e-mail (best if it contains the user's name) the better the chances for employment.

Potter (2009b) advises on the type of information to post in the written description of self. He said that by posting your full name, location, and a link to an offsite blog, makes your social networking page appear professional. Name means the type of personal name the user displays for him or herself. This variable was coded as having both first and last

name, first, middle, and last name, or having a nickname displayed. By posting your current location in your profile, it allows employers to know where an individual is located in case relocation is necessary. Location was coded as yes, the user does post their current location in their profile or no, they did not post this information. The blog does not have to necessarily be owned by the individual whose profile is being observed. This variable was coded as yes, the user does post a link to an off-site blog or no, they did not post this link.

Hobbies are if the user posts their hobbies or not in their profile. Hobbies are listed by the user and have infinite possibilities of what a user can post in this section. This variable was coded into two separate variables. The first variable was positive hobbies, which is the number of positive hobbies a user lists in their written description of self. Examples of positive hobbies were interest in sports (generic baseball, football, etc., or actual sport teams), crafts (such as sewing, cross-stitch, painting), and sorority and fraternity memberships. The second variable was negative hobbies, which is the number of negative hobbies a user lists in their written description of self. Examples of negative hobbies are partying, playing video games, and “being lazy.” These variables are just a count of hobbies and therefore no further coding was needed. Sturm (2009) advises that by posting one’s hobbies the employer may find something they have in common, and therefore the user may be looked upon more favorably.

Hansen (2008) advises on having a large number of contacts as it shows the individual has a large number of connections that may become useful in the future,

especially when it comes to obtaining employment. Contacts are a count of the number of friends a user has in their profile.

Job History is defined as the user posts their employment history in their profile. This variable was coded as yes, the user does post their job history or no, they did not post their job history. Strum (2009) advises that one's job history on their social networking site makes their profile look professional and allows the profile page to resemble a resume.

Type of ID is the type of username the individual chooses for their Facebook page. This variable was coded as, the individual uses the random numeric ID that Facebook assigns upon registration, if they changed their username to be their own name, if they changed their username to be a nickname, or if they changed their user name to something that does not fit in any of the previous categories (other). Sturm (2009) advises on using the individual's name as their user ID as that is the most professional option.

Other social networking site is defined as, if the user posts a link to an alternate social networking site in their profile. This variable focused mainly on the other two major social networking sites: Twitter and MySpace. It was coded as either having no link, linking only to Twitter, linking only to MySpace, or linking to both Twitter and MySpace. Although none of the research discussed linking to these other sites, I felt it was important as it could link employers to other social networking sites that could have information and insight about the user they are researching.

Status updates are the number of status updates with a 24-hour period. This variable was coded by looking at their wall (for those who had their walls available to the public) and counting the number of status updates in the most recent 24-hour time period on the day that their profile was analyzed. This variable was only a count of statuses and therefore there was no further coding needed. This variable ended up not being included in the analysis due to a majority of the subjects not having their walls available for viewing by the public, therefore not allowing me to view their status updates. Potter (2009a) stated that “spamming” the Facebook wall with updates (meaning more than two updates a day) was unprofessional and unnecessary.

Most of the written variables were difficult to code, as it was unknown whether a user did not write anything in their written descriptions or if they had higher privacy settings, where their written descriptions were not visible to the public. By not knowing this information, the majority of users were placed as system missing in the analysis, potentially making the available samples of written descriptions too small to yield accurate results.

Although some indicators were difficult to code with the information that was available in Facebook, all of the original concepts were coded and no variables were removed during the data collection process. However, a few were added (such as link to other social networking site) due to observing a high frequency of that information being displayed in the profiles.

## CHAPTER VIII

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Demographics

Table 1 presents the demographic information that was recorded for these Facebook pages. The convenience sample from Facebook yielded 201 male (50.3%), 198 female (49.5%), and 1 transgender student. There were 168 Caucasians, 187 African Americans, 7 Asians, 1 Hispanic, and 37 student of unknown race, with more African Americans (48.8%) than Caucasians (42.0%). According to the UNCG College Portrait (posted on the UNCG website), the university is 68% female and 32% male, 77% Caucasian, 24% African American, 4% Asian, 3% Hispanic, and 8% other. The male to female ratio that Facebook provided me with was quite different from the actual UNCG gender and race ratios. It is unclear as to why this discrepancy happened, however it could be due to the search algorithms used by Facebook to display users.

Ages of students ranged from 18 – 23 years, with a mean of 20.14 and a standard deviation of 1.512. Only 22 people had their age listed as public information. Because of the small amount of respondents who actually listed their ages, Age will not be used in the analysis.

Lastly, 43 students did not state their graduation date, 49 intended on graduating in 2010, 98 in 2011, 76 in 2012, 75 in 2013, and 59 in 2014. At the time of data collection,

students had graduation dates between 2010 and 2014. It was assumed that by stated graduation year that 2010 and 2011 referred to seniors, 2012 referred to juniors, 2013 referred to sophomores, and 2014 referred to freshmen. Cases with an unknown year (10.8%) were those who said they were current students but did not state when their projected graduation date would be. The smallest groups with listed dates were 2010 (12.3%) and 2014 (14.8%). An idea as to why the 2014 group was small is that many of them are freshmen and in their first semester of college so many may either not have a Facebook account or may not have linked it with the university network yet. The largest size was the 2011 (24.5%) graduation date. A theory as to why this group is larger could be due to a longer time in college to have created a Facebook account and linked it to a university. The 2012 (19.0%) and 2013 (18.8%) group were similar in size.

#### Self Presentation Variables Displayed on Facebook

There were 28 variables (Table 2) that were coded in order to examine the presentations of self that Facebook users display. These variables were chosen at the guidance of employment etiquette guides as to what are important visual and written presentations, when attending a job interview. The presentations of self that were coded were either visual presentation of self or written presentation of self. The variables were divided into written and visual presentations, and then further divided into positive and negative depictions. However, coding of the Facebook pages revealed that not all of the information was available or visible on all of the pages. For some of the variables (such as straight teeth or tattoos) the visual presentation did not allow for the researched to see this information. For other variables, current Facebook privacy settings are such that this



information could not be gathered. Fourteen variables did not have enough information displayed in profiles to be analyzed (noted with a \* on Table 2). What information a potential employer can see is based on the privacy settings a user has set.

The visual presentations of self are displayed on Table 2. For clothing style, 8 (2%) wore professional clothing, 317 (79.3%) wore casual clothing, 24(6%) wore dressy clothing, and 51 (12.8%) wore clothing that did not fit into the main categories. For hair style, 7 (1.8%) were bald, 157 (39.3%) had long hair, 194 (48.5%) had short hair, 1 (0.3%) had an afro, 9 (2.3%) had dreadlocks, 32 (8.1%) had hairstyles that were not visible. For facial hair, of the males who had a profile picture of themselves, 130 (71.8%) did not have any facial hair, 5 (2.8%) had straggly facial hair, 13 (7.2%) had a goatee, 15 (8.3%) had a trimmed beard, 1 (0.6%) had a wild beard, 17 (9.4%) had a moustache. For drunken pictures, 16 (4%) posted drunken pictures, whereas 384 (96%) did not post drunken pictures. For sexual pictures, 11 (2.8%) had posted sexual pictures, whereas 389 (97.8%) did not post sexual picture. The average number of pictures posted was 9.91 pictures. For having lips pursed, 380 (95%) of users did not have their lips pursed in their profile picture, whereas 20 (5%) did have their lips pursed in their profile picture. Lastly, for smiling, 180 (45%) did not smile in their pictures, 24 (6%) smiled in some of their pictures, 14 (3.5%) smiled in most of their pictures, and 182 (45.5%) smiled in all of their pictures.

The written presentations of self are also visible in Table 2. For sentence structure (of those who had their written description of self available to the public), 97 (74%) used

complete sentences and 34 (26%) used incomplete sentences in their written description of self. For grammar (of those who had their written description of self available to the public), 8 (6.0%) used bad grammar, 26 (19.4%) used text speech, and 100 (74.6%) used proper grammar in their written description of self. For cursing (of those who had their written description of self available to the public), 109 (79.6%) did not curse and 28 (20.4%) cursed in their written description of self. For name being displayed, 315 (78.8%) posted just their first and last name, 39 (9.8%) posted their first, middle, and last name, and 46 (11.5%) posted a nickname. For location, 250 (62.5%) posted their location, whereas 150 (37.5%) did not post their location. For blogs, 16 (4%) posted a link to an offsite blog, whereas 384 (96%) did not post a link to an offsite blog. For hobbies, 220 (55.0%) posted their hobbies and 180 (45%) did not post their hobbies on their profile. The average for the total number of hobbies posted was 3.61 hobbies, the average number of positive hobbies posted was 3.32 positive hobbies, and the average number of negative hobbies posted was 0.32 hobbies. The average number of contacts each user had was 1194.14 contacts. For job history, 317 (79.3%) did not post their job history, whereas 83 (20.8%) did post their job history in their profiles. Lastly, for the type of ID name that the users chose, 235 (58.8%) used the random numbers that Facebook assigned them upon registration, 110 (27.5%) used their name, 33 (8.3%) used a nickname, and 22 (5.5%) used an ID that did not fit into any of the other categories.

#### Composite Negative and Positive Behaviors

The analyzed variables listed were combined for each student into new composite positive and negative variables (Table 3). Presentation of professional clothing style,

professional hair style, natural hair color, little or no facial hair, no drunken pictures, no sexual pictures, no lips pursed, always smiles, professional shoes, natural make-up shades, red or clear nail polish, no tattoos, having only ear piercings, good posture, straight teeth, and white teeth were the 17 attributes used to create the positive visual presentation of self. Casual and risqué clothing, wild hair styles, unnatural hair colors, untamed facial hair, drunken pictures, sexual pictures, lips pursed, not smiling, casual shoes, bold make-up, wild nail polish colors, tattoos, piercings other than ear piercings, slouching, crooked teeth, and yellow teeth were 17 attributes used to create the negative visual presentations of self. If the user did not have the information posted that was recommended to post by the advice books, then not posting it was considered a negative piece of information, whereas if it was not posted and it was recommended to not post that information, then it was considered a positive piece of information. Using complete sentences, proper grammar, no cursing, posting full name, posting location, posting link to a blog, not posting negative hobbies, posting positive hobbies, posting job history, and having a Facebook user ID of either random numbers or the user's name were the 10 attributes used to create the positive written presentations of self. Incomplete sentences, bad grammar and text speech, posting a nickname, not posting location, not posting a link to a blog, posting negative hobbies, not posting positive hobbies, not posting job history, and using a nickname as a Facebook user ID were the 10 attributes used to create the negative written presentations of self.

On average, students displayed 17.66 (out of 27) positive presentations of self and 9.34 (out of 27) negative presentations of self, including 12.94 (out of 17) visual positive

presentations and 4.72 (out of 10) written positive presentations and for negative presentations, 4.06 (out of 17) negative visual presentations and 5.28 (out of 10) negative written presentations of self.

### Gender Differences in Facebook Presentations of Self

The visual and written presentations of self were analyzed by gender (Table 4). For these categorical variables, a cross-tabulation with a Pearson's R test for significance was completed as well as a means analysis with an ANOVA test of significance. For gender, the following variables had no significant difference: clothing style, hair color, grammar, cursing, number of words used in the written description, number of pictures posted, having lips pursed, the type of name displayed, posting a link to a blog, the total number of hobbies posted, the number positive hobbies posted, the number of negative hobbies posted, and the type of user ID. These variables may not have been significant due to the way they were coded, such as having lips pursed, as it was just a yes or no, rather than looking at frequency of it. Variables that males and females present in similar ways, such as clothing style (since both genders tend to wear jeans and a t-shirt, which was the most common occurrence for both), hair color (because both genders can naturally have the same hair colors). The genders may have similar speech styles, causing grammar, levels of cursing, and number of words used in the written description to not be significant. Since males and females can be a part of the same sports, clubs, and interests, it most likely made it so that the number of hobbies posted, the number of positive hobbies posted and the number of negative hobbies posted was not significantly different between the genders.

For the visual presentations of self, the user's pictures associated with their Facebook profile were analyzed. For hairstyle, females were more likely to have long hair (75.4% vs. 3.5%) and males were more likely to have short hair (78.6% vs. 18.2%). While this is a significant relationship, the results reflect the social norm for females to have long hair and for males to have short hair. Males are more likely to post drunken pictures than females are (6.5% vs. 1.5%), whereas females are slightly more likely to post sexual images of the self than are males (3.0% vs. 2.0%). Lastly, females are more likely to smile in their pictures than are males (59.6% vs. 31.3%), which confirms past research by Vrugt (2009), which indicates that females in multiple venues may care more about their visual appearance than males.

The written descriptions in the user's information sections (for those who had their written presentations of self available to the public) in their profile were analyzed, for the written presentation of self. For sentence structure, females were more likely than males to use complete sentences (87.0% vs. 66.7%) in their written descriptions. Males are more likely to post their location (68.7% vs. 56.1%), most likely because females do not post personal location information over the internet because of security reasons, such as stalkers, possibly due to large amounts of warnings from media stories. Males are more likely to post their hobbies (61.7% vs. 48.0%), including listing more negative hobbies. Males are more likely to have more contacts than females (1244.52 contacts vs. 1127.57 contacts). Lastly, for posting job history, males are more likely than females to post their previous employment history (27.4% vs. 14.1%).

### Race Differences in Facebook Presentations of Self

Because of the small number of Hispanic, Asian, and other races, the bivariate analyses will include only the races of Caucasian and African American. This information is displayed in Table 4. For race, the following variables had no significant difference: clothing style, hair color, grammar, cursing, number of words used in the written description, number of pictures posted, having lips pursed, the type of name displayed, posting a link to a blog, the total number of hobbies posted, the number positive hobbies posted, the number of negative hobbies posted, and the type of user ID.

For the visual presentations of self, the user's pictures associated with their Facebook profile were analyzed. Hairstyle differs by race because Caucasians were more likely to have long hair than African Americans (45.8% vs. 35.8%), whereas African Americans were more likely to have dreadlocks (4.3% vs. 0.6%). This difference, while significant, can most likely be attributed to cultural styles and norms of the different races.

Caucasians tended to post more drunken pictures (6.0% vs. 3.2%), whereas African Americans were more likely to post sexual images (3.7% vs. 1.8%). Lastly, Caucasians were more likely to smile than African Americans (56.5% vs. 40.1%).

For the written presentations of self, the written descriptions were analyzed. For sentence structure, Caucasians were more likely to use complete sentences than African Americans (78.8% vs. 68.1%). African Americans were slightly more likely to post their location than were Caucasians (63.1% vs. 62.5%). African Americans were more likely to post their hobbies than were Caucasians (57.2% vs. 52.4%); however, Caucasians were

more likely to post a higher amount of hobbies than did African Americans. Lastly, African Americans were slightly more likely than Caucasians to post their employment history (21.9% vs. 20.2%).

#### Graduation Date Differences in Facebook Presentations of Self

Lastly, visual and written presentations of self were divided by graduation date (Table 5). The following variables did not vary among graduation date: hair color, facial hair, grammar, cursing, number of words used in the written descriptions, number of pictures posted, type of name displayed, posting their location, posting a link to an offsite blog, having hobbies posted, the number of total hobbies posted, the number of positive hobbies posted, the number of negative hobbies posted, the number of contacts, amount of smiling, and the type of Facebook user ID.

For the visual presentations of self, the user's pictures associated with their Facebook profile were analyzed. For clothing style, those graduating in 2010 or 2011 (seniors) were more likely to wear professional clothing than those graduating in later years (6.1% for 2010 and 3.1% for 2011 vs. 0% for 2012, 2013, and 2014). For hairstyle, freshmen and sophomores (those graduating in 2013 and 2014) were more likely to have longer hair than seniors (49.3% for 2013 and 59.3% for 2014 vs. 30.6% for 2010, 33.7% for 2011, and 30.3% for 2012). Freshmen and sophomores (2013 and 2014) are less likely to post drunken pictures than juniors and seniors (0% for 2013 and 2014 vs. 8.2% for 2010, 6.1% for 2011, and 2.7% for 2012). This is most likely because students graduating in 2013 and 2014 are not of legal drinking age. Lastly, for having sexual images posted, the

freshmen and sophomores (2013 and 2014) are less likely than juniors and seniors to post sexual images of their self (0% for 2013 and 2014 vs. 8.2% for 2010, 3.1% for 2011, and 2.6% for 2012). These results indicate that while the students of different graduation dates differ greatly from each other, the maturity is in different places. Freshmen and sophomores were least likely to post drunken and sexual images; however, the seniors wear more professional clothing in their images.

For the written presentations of self, the written descriptions were analyzed. Those graduating in 2012 and 2011, and those who did not state their graduation date were least likely to use complete sentences in their written descriptions (63.9% for 2011, 65.6% for 2012, and 55.6% for those who did not state their graduation date vs. 86.7% for 2010, 88.0% for 2013, and 92.9% for 2014). Those graduating in 2014 were least likely to post their previous employment history (5.1% for 2014 vs. 20.0% for 2013, 22.4% for 2012, 28.6% for 2011, 22.4% for 2010, and 20.9% for those who did not state their graduation date), which could be attributed to the likelihood of freshmen having held a smaller number of jobs as compared to sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

#### Gender, Race and Graduation Year by Number of Positive and Negative Presentations of Self

The composite scores of positive presentations, negative presentations, positive visual presentations, negative visual presentations, positive written presentations, and negative written presentations were then reexamined in relation to the demographic variables of gender, race, and graduation year (Table 6).



In regards to gender, males tended to display more positive written presentation of self (4.99 vs. 4.44), whereas females displayed a more positive visual presentations of self (12.44 vs. 12.45). However, females tended to display more negative behaviors in negative written presentations of self (5.01 vs. 5.56), whereas men tended to have more negative visual presentations of self (4.56 vs. 3.55). This shows that men are at risk for posting negative visual presentations of self and females are more at risk for posting negative written presentations of self. There was no significant difference between total positive presentations and total negative presentations, most likely because the visual and written differences cancel each other out once added together.

Caucasians had a larger amount of visual positive presentations of self (13.44) as compared to African Americans (12.76), whereas African American had more visual negative presentations (4.24) as compared to Caucasians (3.56). Overall, Caucasians had the highest number of positive presentations of self (18.28 vs. 17.41), and African Americans had the highest number of negative presentations (9.59 vs. 8.72). There was no significance difference between written positive presentations and written negative, meaning that both races present themselves in a similar written manner. These results show that African Americans are more at risk for what they post visually on Facebook. Although the overall results were significant, it could be likely attributed to there being more visual variables than written variables in the overall count of presentations.

Lastly, for graduation date, only the written positive presentations and written negative presentations of self were significant. Sophomores, juniors, and seniors had

higher a higher amount of written positive presentations than freshmen (4.82 for 2010, 4.88 for 2011, 4.92 for 2012, and 4.96 for 2013 vs. 4.24 for 2014). This could be that many of the students in the 2014 group may not have taken a college level English composition class yet, as data was collected during the first half of the fall semester, which may account for this difference in the presentation of self. The 2013 graduation group has the highest amount of positive written presentations, which decreases slightly as each year progresses. This could be because the English composition classes are fresher in the minds of the 2013 graduation students and as each year passes in college, students may forget some grammar and sentence structure rules. The visual presentations (both positive and negative) had no significant difference, meaning all college students may present themselves in similar visual manners, suggesting a college visual presentation norm amongst all students. The overall presentation counts (both positive and negative) had no significant difference as well, most likely because there are less written variables than visual variables in the calculation of the total count of presentation variables.

## CHAPTER IX

### CONCLUSION

The study's goal is to document the presentation of the self on Facebook in relation to acceptable employment behaviors. Gathering advice from guides on written and visual presentations of the self on job interviews, positive and negative presentations on Facebook were assessed. Public Facebook user pages from UNCG were analyzed for visual and written presentations of self.

As public information, potential employers may attempt to view a student's public Facebook profile when making the decision to employ the individual. Results indicated that Facebook users do display questionable visual and written presentations in their profiles. Not every violation is as detrimental as others are; for example, a violation of having an unnatural hair color may not be as bad as having bad grammar because things like hair color can be changed, but bad grammar is something inherent and learned overtime. Visually, Facebook users are not wearing professional attire in their pictures, have pictures that show either drunken or sexual situations, and do not smile in their pictures. Questionable written information ranges from incomplete sentences, text lingo, and cursing.

While only 8% of the sample actually wore professional clothing (such as suit or blouse and skirt in neutral colors), the majority wore casual clothing. This might be that

clothing style through a Facebook profile might be assumed to be casual as that appears to be the norm, so it could be possible that potential employers may overlook the clothing style of those they are interested in hiring since Facebook is not the interview itself. This advice was centered in the job interview, yet it was worthy of coding because clothing style could say a great deal about a person's personality.

Smiling is another area that differed from the advice. 45.0% of the users did not smile at all in any of their pictures associated with their profile page. It is unclear as to why this happened, although females did tend to smile more than men did, which is typical of past research such as Vrugt (2007). Smiling is much like casual clothing, where although it is important to display, Facebook itself is not the interview and there are other ways to still look personable in pictures (such as dressing nicely).

Most users did not post a link to an offsite blog, even though the advice says it is a helpful piece of information to post. Only 4% of the sample posted a link to an offsite blog. When collecting data I noticed that more people, 16.6% of the sample, were posting links to an alternate social network (such as Twitter and MySpace). This may indicate a change from a focus on blogs to a focus on further networking with others.

As for proper hair styles, the majority of the users had professional hairstyles, indicating that users could possibly be aware of needing a professional appearances. What I found for hairstyles fits the advice given in employment etiquette guides. Also fitting into the advice, the majority of users did not display drunken (96%) or sexual images (97.3%) on their profiles. Whether or not a user had pursed lips was also similar

to the advice books, as only 5.0% of the users pursed their lips in their profile pictures. This could imply that users may be aware of their visual appearances and conscious of online visual self-presentation.

Although there are many questionable presentations of the self in Facebook profiles, there are still many positive presentations being displayed. 89.5% of users had hairstyles that were considered to be professional. 89.5% of the men had professional looking facial hair. 96% of users did not have drunken pictures, and 97.2% did not have sexual images. 99.5% of the users showed off their straight, white teeth. As for the written presentation, all of the users who displayed email addresses displayed one that was considered professional. 86.3% of users used a professional username for themselves. These percentages suggest that users do care about their visual presentation that they post positive images of themselves but maybe not as much about their written presentations.

Many of the variables had no significant difference across all demographic categories. Only two of the 17 visual presentation variables were insignificant which are: hair color and having lips pursed. For both of these variables, students displayed a high percentage of positive presentations. Hair color most likely was not significantly different because most people use their natural hair color, which is good for their visual presentations. For pursed lips, this could likely be a fad that will change over time.

The majority of the written presentation variables were insignificant across all demographic categories. These written presentation variables are: grammar, cursing, number of words used in the written description, number of pictures posted, the type of

name displayed, posting a link to a blog, the total number of hobbies posted, the number of positive hobbies posted, the number of negative hobbies posted, and the type of user ID. This written information may not have been significant across gender, race, and graduation date for many reasons, such as the way they were coded or that all students display these variables in similar manners.

There may be a generational norm that guides some of these written variables, thus making them similar across gender, race, and graduation date. For grammar, with state dictated curriculums for end of grade exams in the public school system, students are learning the same things no matter where they are located, therefore potentially making grammar similar in all students. The type of name displayed and user ID could also be part of a generational norm, since the majority of students used their first and last name as their main name and the random generated number ID from Facebook as their user ID. It could be that users kept their name simple so their friends could search for them, and that they were unaware that they could customize their user ID. Cursing could also be a general trend, and with the majority of users not cursing, this is good for their presentations of self.

There are a few variables where coding differently may result in different significance if made more specific, especially in variables where only a count was taken. For variables such as the different counts of hobbies, the insignificance of these counts may be because there are a wide range of hobbies, and just a count isn't specific enough to notice trends. Instead categorizing the hobbies into topics such as sports or crafts may

have yielded different results. For number of pictures, the pictures could have been broken down into categories, such as parties or vacations, as well. Posting blogs may be turning into a dying fad as more social networking sites are developed. This variable's coding could have been improved by combining it with the number of other social networking sites posted.

When analyzing the data, there were very few students who had a mostly negative Facebook profile. While this was a positive find, it was expected. Only 21 students (5.3%) displayed more total negative than total positive presentations of self in their Facebook profiles. When looking at visual and written presentations of self separately, 4 students (1.0%) of the students displayed more negative visual presentations than visual positive presentations, whereas 207 students (51.8%) displayed more negative written presentations than written positive presentations of self. This result was highly unexpected.

This result about negative written presentations helps answer the main research question of this study, by showing that students are at a high risk of displaying questionable information, not through their visual presentations, but through their written presentations. Goffman's theories focus mainly on visual presentations, and therefore the results follow what he would have expected. However, Goffman's theories did not elaborate about written presentations of self and how to safeguard these presentations from the audience.

Those who had their written descriptions not available to the public used their privacy settings to keep others who they do not know or do not want to have access to their profile away from the things they write or say. This could be for many reasons such as hiding opinions or just a plain desire to not want their information to be publicized. The high levels of privacy may suggest that students have an awareness that people such as potential employers may try to obtain information via Facebook profiles. By not having their written information available to the public, employers would not have the ability to hold information the user posts against them when making employment decisions. With nearly three quarters of the sample having their information fall into advice, it could indicate that users are aware of their written self-presentation and desire to come across as well spoken individuals.

This study found that males tended to display more negative visual presentation of self such smiling less and having more drunken pictures, whereas females displayed a more negative written presentation of self, such as posting their locations, hobbies, past job history. This high percentage of negative written presentations of self for females could be due to the use of cursing in Facebook profiles. This suggests that females focus more on their visual presentations, and may focus so much on the visual that they possibly forget about their written presentations. This shows the value that society has placed on the physical appearance of females, and that it may be holding females back from obtaining their true potential. Thus females should view these results as advice as a way to better their overall impressions in order to get ahead in the workforce.



Caucasians had a larger amount of visual positive presentations of self (13.44) as compared to African Americans (12.76). This suggests that Caucasians focus more about their visual presentation, but that both races focus equally on their written presentations. Overall, Caucasians had the highest number of positive presentations of self (18.28 vs. 17.41), but this could be attributed to there being more visual presentation variables than written presentation variables. These results imply that when researching candidates, the employers would most likely choose the Caucasian candidate when looking for an employee with ideal written presentations, but when seeking employees who can best visually represent the company, both races would be equally qualified. African Americans having rated lower than Caucasians in all composite areas can exacerbate employers' discriminatory thoughts when researching candidates.

This study opens up the idea that Facebook has the potential to become the new form of discrimination in hiring. Out of all the composite scores, African Americans tended to score the lowest, thus opening the doors for discrimination by employers, and thus adversely affecting their employment opportunities. The first view an employer has of an individual is through their written application. With the new ability to look up the candidate on Facebook before calling the user in for an interview allows discrimination to return to the initial hiring process. Thus, Facebook could potentially become the new form of discrimination, as information posted on Facebook has the ability to confirm prejudices of some employers. Knowing that employers could use the information presented on Facebook to exacerbate the discrimination that already occurs, African

American students should ensure that their written and overall presentations of self reflect a positive identity

Lastly, students with later graduation dates were least likely to have positive written descriptions of self (4.82 for 2010, 4.88 for 2011, 4.92 for 2012, and 4.96 for 2013 vs. 4.24 for 2014), which could possibly be attributed to classes taken during their time at the university, such as English comp and the required writing intensive classes. Many students may take what they learn in these writing classes and incorporate it into their other writings, such as their Facebook profiles. This indicates that employers would be more likely to choose the juniors and seniors for employment, as their educational experiences have been more concentrated and more in depth, as shown through their written presentations of self. Students embody much of what they learn into their self-presentation, so taking what is learned in classes into their everyday lives, shows an educated, well-versed self-presentation. A second reason for this is that students may be unaware of their audiences, and thus write informally, almost as if they are spending time with their friends, and thus their online presentation of self becomes more informal and less professional. Students graduating in the near future should make sure their profile demonstrates understanding of what they have learned in college in order to show potential employers that they are educated and ready for the job market.

The results show that a majority of users and groups displaying negative written presentations of self, indicating a potential issue with the education system as it stands today. Many state governments continually have to cut their budgets, especially in the

area of education. The lack of writing skills in college students could be an indicator that, through these budget cuts, the education system is failing to help students write professionally. In the current state of the economy, writing skills are important in impressing a potential employer.

According to this research, the perfect candidate would most likely be Caucasian and a graduating senior. The ideal gender is inconclusive as males and females were each better at different aspects, and thus the choice would be based upon the employers needs. If the employer wanted someone who would better visually represent the company, then he or she would likely choose the female candidate. If the employer wanted someone to verbally represent the company, then he or she would likely choose the male candidate. This reflects current employment trends in today's society. Caucasian males have a higher employment rates and tend to earn higher salaries and these results may help explain why.

In this study, I was looking to see if Facebook users display questionable information that could be detrimental if a potential employer found the job candidate's Facebook profile, and if so, what percentage of users display such questionable information? Yes, Facebook users do display questionable information, but mostly the numbers of students who do, are not as many as suspected before collecting data. The biggest fall back for most students is their written descriptions of self. The results indicate that most students are ready to go on the job market and would not be in jeopardy if a potential employer were to look at the applicant's Facebook profile.

In Goffman's theories, when individuals were presenting themselves, they knew how to manage themselves for a known audience. They knew what to expect and had a back stage to prepare themselves for this audience. The results show that, while they are timeless, Goffman's theories need an update. Technology has added a new dimension to Goffman's theories and has allowed there to be an unknown audience, making it more difficult to manage the various presentations of self. Technology has blurred appearance, manner, and setting, as in the internet a picture states all of these at once, making it harder to control the presentation of self. Thus, it could be best to go with one formal front-stage version of the self (even if it inhibits the true self from being displayed), since the individual never knows exactly who is watching them, whether it be friends, current and potential employers, parents, instructors, or even complete strangers.

#### Limitations

A limitation of this study is the change in Facebook privacy settings that occurred right before this study was undertaken. The new Facebook privacy settings (which were made aware to all users) allowed for users to set their privacy filters. In fact, many of these privacy filters existed prior to the Facebook updates, however many users were not aware of the option (opting into or out of the standard settings). Many of the variables were not displayed in the majority of the user's profiles. This is due to the differing privacy levels the user's have selected or customized. During the data collection phase of this study, Facebook sent out a memo to users to update their privacy settings. This could account for this lack of information in the users' profiles, and thus made many of the

variables hard to code. With not having their information public, it made variables such as age and email difficult to analyze since it was not available to the public.

This study compromised of the Facebook profiles of only 400 users on a school network of about 15,000 (according to the UNCG network information page on Facebook) which is quite a small sample size when compared to Facebook's 500 million users. This information could vary greatly if this study was done in another part of the country or even another part of the world.

A final limitation is that it is not known whether these students were seeking employment at the time when their Facebook pages were analyzed. It is highly probable that these same respondents could or might alter their Facebook presentations of self before they enter the job market. While there is no way of knowing this information it is still important to assess if they were seeking employment or not in order to understand why individuals post the information about themselves and possible trends behind this.

#### Future Research

Future research may want to examine a variety of school networks to see if there are regional and global differences in college student's presentation of self. This study was limited to college students; however, analyses could compare both college students to non-college students. Further research would be needed to understand why Facebook users take the risks they do (if they know they are taking these risks), also asking the users if they are seeking employment to compare those seeking employment to those who are not.

Another area that future research would want to concentrate on is what employers think of Facebook pages. The research done in this study is all speculation that a Facebook page could damage potential employment opportunities based upon advice books on how to present the self for employers and job interviews. Future research could talk with employers to see how much, if any, importance these variables have on their employment decisions.

This study has assessed that individuals are at some sort of risk for posting negative information on Facebook. This study has a large value since Facebook is becoming a large part of society and many users are not aware of the potential risks associated with having a profile on the website.

The results of this study can be useful to both students and career planning departments. Students can benefit by having guidelines of what not to be posting about themselves. Career planning departments also benefit from the research because they can assist students on how to be careful with the information they post and the identity they present in their Facebook profiles. By using these results, career planning departments can advise students on what information to work on in their profiles. Career advisors can help females, African Americans, and freshmen with their written presentations of self, and can help males with their visual presentations of self. If a student cannot write professionally, it is best to not make a written description of self available to the public to enhance their chances of obtaining a job. Overall, they can advise all students that their

visual and written presentations are equally important and to focus on making sure that both presentations are acceptable for potential employers to view.

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APPENDIX A: TABLES

Table 1: Demographic Information

	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>Gender</b>			<b>1.50</b>	<b>.506</b>
Male	201	50.25%		
Female	198	49.50%		
Transgender	1	0.25%		
<b>Race</b>			<b>1.88</b>	<b>1.126</b>
Caucasian	168	42.00%		
African American	187	46.75%		
Asian	7	1.75%		
Unknown/Other	38	9.50%		
<b>Age*</b>	<b>22</b>		<b>20.14</b>	<b>1.512</b>
<b>Graduation Year</b>			<b>2.67</b>	<b>1.542</b>
Unknown	43	10.75%		
2010	49	12.25%		
2011	98	24.5%		
2012	76	19.00%		
2013	75	18.75%		
2014	59	14.75%		

\*Not enough data to analyze variable

Table 2: Information Displayed on Facebook

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>Number of Status Updates in 24 hour period*</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>2.09</b>	<b>2.599</b>
<b>Clothing Style</b>		<b>2.30</b>	<b>.710</b>
Professional	8		
Casual	317		
Dressy	24		
Other	51		
<b>Clothing Statement*</b>		<b>.14</b>	<b>.565</b>
None	376		
Mismatched	2		
States Beliefs / Interests	13		
Revealing	9		
<b>Shoes*</b>		<b>1.67</b>	<b>2.20</b>
None	13		
Sneakers	24		
Flip Flops	7		
Dress Shoes	4		
Low Heels	3		
Stilettos	7		
Can't Tell	342		

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>Hair Style</b>		<b>2.20</b>	<b>2.118</b>
None	7		
Long Hair	157		
Short Hair	194		
Afro	1		
Dreadlocks	9		
Other	1		
Can't Tell	31		
<b>Hair Color</b>		<b>1.96</b>	<b>2.248</b>
None	1		
Brown	283		
Blonde	67		
Red Natural	5		
Black	6		
Unnatural	4		
Can't Tell	34		
<b>Facial Hair</b>		<b>5.46</b>	<b>4.139</b>
None	130		
Straggly	5		
Goatee	13		
Beard Trimmed	15		

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Beard Wild	1		
Moustache	17		
<b>N/A</b>	<b>219</b>		
<b>Sentence Structure</b>		<b>.26</b>	<b>.440</b>
Complete Sentences	97		
Incomplete Sentences	34		
No Written Description of Self	269		
<b>Grammar</b>		<b>1.69</b>	<b>.581</b>
Bad Grammar	8		
Text Speech	26		
Proper Grammar	100		
No Written Description of Self	266		
<b>Cursing</b>		<b>.20</b>	<b>.405</b>
No	109		
Yes	28		
No Written Description of Self	263		
<b>Number of Words Used in Written Description</b>		<b>159.99</b>	<b>217.123</b>
<b>Make Up*</b>		<b>7.27</b>	<b>3.107</b>
None	26		
Bright Colors	21		

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Light Colors	25		
Dark Colors	28		
N/A	300		
<b>Nail Polish*</b>		<b>8.28</b>	<b>2.312</b>
None	22		
Red	3		
Pink	4		
Blue	3		
Black	1		
Other	5		
N/A	362		
<b>Email Address*</b>		<b>.08</b>	<b>.594</b>
None Displayed	393		
Nickname	1		
School	3		
Name	2		
Business	1		
<b>Drunken Pictures</b>		<b>.04</b>	<b>.196</b>
No	384		
Yes	4		

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>Sexual Pictures</b>		<b>.03</b>	<b>.164</b>
No	389		
Yes	11		
<b>Number of Pictures</b>		<b>9.91</b>	<b>76.782</b>
<b>Tattoos*</b>		<b>.04</b>	<b>.196</b>
None Visible	384		
Yes	16		
<b>Number of Piercings*</b>		<b>.47</b>	<b>.831</b>
<b>Location of Piercings*</b>		<b>.27</b>	<b>.513</b>
None Visible	301		
Ear Piercings	94		
Other Piercings	1		
Ears and Others	4		
<b>Lips Pursued</b>		<b>.07</b>	<b>.335</b>
No	380		
Yes	20		
<b>Name Displayed</b>		<b>1.33</b>	<b>.672</b>
First and Last	315		
First, Middle, Last	39		



	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Nickname	46		
<b>Location Posted</b>		<b>.63</b>	<b>.485</b>
No	150		
Yes	250		
<b>Post Link to Blog</b>		<b>.04</b>	<b>.196</b>
No	384		
Yes	16		
<b>Posture*</b>		<b>.96</b>	<b>.302</b>
Unknown	26		
Sits / Stands Up Straight	363		
Slumps / Slouches	11		
<b>Are Hobbies Posted?</b>		<b>.55</b>	<b>.498</b>
No	180		
Yes	220		
<b>Number of Total Hobbies Posted</b>		<b>3.61</b>	<b>6.035</b>
<b>Number of Positive Hobbies Posted</b>		<b>3.32</b>	<b>5.691</b>
<b>Number of Negative Hobbies Posted</b>		<b>.32</b>	<b>1.000</b>
<b>Number of Contacts</b>		<b>1194.14</b>	<b>810.813</b>

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>Smile</b>		<b>1.50</b>	<b>1.437</b>
None	180		
Some of the time	24		
Most of the time	14		
All	182		
<b>Color of Teeth*</b>		<b>.53</b>	<b>.505</b>
Can't Tell	191		
White	208		
Yellow	1		
<b>Straight Teeth*</b>		<b>.53</b>	<b>.505</b>
Can't Tell	191		
Yes	208		
No	1		
<b>Job History Posted</b>		<b>.21</b>	<b>.406</b>
No	317		
Yes	83		
<b>Types of ID</b>		<b>.61</b>	<b>.858</b>
Random Numbers	235		
Name	110		
Nickname	33		

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Other	22		
<b>Post Link to Other Social Networking Sites*</b>		<b>.29</b>	<b>.702</b>
None	334		
Twitter	21		
MySpace	39		
Twitter and MySpace	6		
<b>Phone Number Posted*</b>		<b>.00</b>	<b>.050</b>
No	399		
Yes	1		

\*Not enough data to analyze variable

Table 3: Composite Negative and Positive Behaviors

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>Visual Positive</b>	12.94	1.979
<b>Written Positive</b>	4.72	1.813
<b>Total Positive</b>	17.66	2.641
<b>Visual Negative</b>	4.06	1.979
<b>Written Negative</b>	5.28	1.813
<b>Total Negative</b>	9.34	2.641

Table 4: Gender and Race by Facebook Characteristics

	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Caucasian</b>	<b>African American</b>
<b>Clothing Style</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>187</b>
Professional	6	2	3	4
Casual	164	153	134	155
Dressy	8	16	9	14
Other	23	27	22	14
<b>Hair Style</b>	<b>201***</b>	<b>198***</b>	<b>168***</b>	<b>187***</b>
None	7	0	2	5
Long Hair	7	149	77	67
Short Hair	158	36	81	96
Afro	1	0	0	1
Dreadlocks	8	1	1	8
Other	1	0	0	1
Can't Tell	19	12	7	9
<b>Hair Color</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>187</b>
None	1	0	0	1
Brown	148	134	95	163
Blonde	26	41	52	14
Red Natural	4	1	5	0
Black	3	3	1	2
Unnatural	0	4	2	2

	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Caucasian</b>	<b>African American</b>
Can't Tell	19	15	13	5
<b>Facial Hair</b>	<b>201***</b>	<b>198***</b>	<b>168***</b>	<b>187***</b>
None	127	2	64	55
Straggly	5	0	1	4
Goatee	13	0	3	9
Beard Trimmed	15	0	6	8
Beard Wild	1	0	1	0
Moustache	17	0	4	13
N/A	23	196	89	98
<b>Sentence Structure</b>	<b>168*</b>	<b>92*</b>	<b>52*</b>	<b>69*</b>
Complete Sentences	56	40	41	47
Incomplete Sentences	28	6	11	22
No Written Description of Self	84	46	116	118
<b>Grammar</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>70</b>
Bad Grammar	5	3	1	6
Tex Speech	21	5	8	17
Proper Grammar	60	39	44	47
No Written Description of Self	115	151	115	117
<b>Cursing</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>73</b>
No	72	36	44	56

	Male	Female	Caucasian	African American
Yes	17	11	8	17
No Written Description of Self	112	151	116	114
<b>Number of Words Used in Written Description</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Drunken Pictures</b>	<b>201*</b>	<b>198*</b>	<b>168*</b>	<b>187*</b>
No	188	195	158	181
Yes	13	3	10	6
<b>Sexual Pictures</b>	<b>201*</b>	<b>198*</b>	<b>168***</b>	<b>187***</b>
No	197	192	165	180
Yes	4	6	3	7
<b>Number of Pictures</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>187</b>
<b>Lips Pursued</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>186</b>
No	191	185	160	175
Yes	7	13	6	11
<b>Name Displayed</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>187</b>
First and Last	158	157	149	124
First, Middle, Last	17	22	17	21
Nickname	26	19	2	42
<b>Location Posted</b>	<b>201*</b>	<b>198*</b>	<b>168*</b>	<b>187*</b>
No	63	87	63	69

	Male	Female	Caucasian	African American
Yes	138	111	105	118
<b>Post Link to Blog</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>187</b>
No	191	192	160	182
Yes	10	6	8	5
<b>Are Hobbies Posted?</b>	<b>201*</b>	<b>198*</b>	<b>168*</b>	<b>187*</b>
No	77	103	80	80
Yes	124	95	88	107
<b>Number of Total Hobbies Posted</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>187</b>
<b>Number of Positive Hobbies Posted</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>187</b>
<b>Number of Negative Hobbies Posted</b>	<b>201*</b>	<b>198*</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>187</b>
<b>Number of Contacts</b>	<b>201***</b>	<b>198***</b>	<b>168*</b>	<b>187*</b>
<b>Smile</b>	<b>201***</b>	<b>198***</b>	<b>168***</b>	<b>187***</b>
None	121	59	58	93
Some of the time	9	15	10	11
Most of the time	8	6	5	8
All	63	118	95	75
<b>Job History Posted</b>	<b>201**</b>	<b>198**</b>	<b>168**</b>	<b>187**</b>
No	146	170	134	146



	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Caucasian</b>	<b>African American</b>
Yes	55	28	34	41
<b>Types of ID</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>187</b>
Random Numbers	101	134	109	102
Name	66	44	44	53
Nickname	20	12	8	22
Other	14	8	0	1

\*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<.001

Table 5: Graduation Date by Facebook Characteristics

	Graduation Date					
	Unknown	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
<b>Clothing Style</b>	<b>43*</b>	<b>49*</b>	<b>98*</b>	<b>76*</b>	<b>75*</b>	<b>59*</b>
Professional	2	3	3	0	0	0
Casual	36	32	70	62	68	49
Dressy	1	6	7	4	3	3
Other	4	8	18	10	4	7
<b>Hair Style</b>	<b>43*</b>	<b>49*</b>	<b>98*</b>	<b>76*</b>	<b>75*</b>	<b>59*</b>
None	2	0	1	0	4	0
Long Hair	14	15	33	23	37	35
Short Hair	21	27	51	43	31	21
Afro	0	0	0	1	0	0
Dreadlocks	1	3	2	2	1	0
Other	0	0	0	1	0	0
Can't Tell	5	4	11	6	2	3
<b>Hair Color</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>59</b>
None	0	0	1	0	0	0
Brown	31	28	71	61	55	37
Blonde	6	13	12	10	12	14
Red Natural	0	0	3	0	1	1
Black	1	2	0	1	1	1
Unnatural	0	2	0	0	1	1
Can't Tell	5	4	11	4	6	5

	Unknown	Graduation Date				
		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
<b>Facial Hair</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>59</b>
None	19	15	33	39	21	13
Straggly	0	2	0	2	1	0
Goatee	1	2	5	2	2	1
Beard Trimmed	0	2	7	2	1	2
Beard Wild	0	0	1	0	0	0
Moustache	4	0	2	2	1	5
N/A	19	28	50	35	49	38
<b>Sentence Structure</b>	<b>43*</b>	<b>49*</b>	<b>98*</b>	<b>76*</b>	<b>75*</b>	<b>59*</b>
Complete Sentences	5	13	23	21	22	13
Incomplete Sentences	4	2	13	11	3	1
No Written Description of Self	34	34	62	44	50	45
<b>Grammar</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>15</b>
Bad Grammar	1	2	9	3	1	1
Text Speech	3	5	27	4	2	2
Proper Grammar	6	9	36	25	22	11
No Written Description of Self	33	33	62	44	50	44
<b>Cursing</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>15</b>
No	8	11	28	29	22	11
Yes	2	4	8	4	6	4
No Written Description of Self	33	34	62	43	47	44

	Unknown	Graduation Date				
		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
<b>Number of Words Used in Written Description</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Drunken Pictures</b>	<b>43**</b>	<b>49**</b>	<b>98**</b>	<b>76**</b>	<b>75**</b>	<b>59**</b>
No	40	45	92	74	74	59
Yes	3	4	6	2	1	0
<b>Sexual Pictures</b>	<b>43**</b>	<b>49**</b>	<b>98**</b>	<b>76**</b>	<b>75**</b>	<b>59**</b>
No	41	45	95	74	75	59
Yes	2	4	3	2	0	0
<b>Number of Pictures</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Name Displayed</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>59</b>
First and Last	31	42	79	55	63	45
First, Middle, Last	7	1	6	8	9	8
Nickname	5	6	13	13	3	6
<b>Location Posted</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>59</b>
No	17	19	40	28	25	21
Yes	26	30	58	48	50	38
<b>Post Link to Blog</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>59</b>
No	43	47	93	71	74	56
Yes	0	2	5	5	1	3

		Graduation Date					
		Unknown	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
<b>Are Hobbies Posted?</b>		<b>43</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>59</b>
	No	24	22	40	30	30	34
	Yes	19	27	58	46	45	25
<b>Number of Total Hobbies Posted</b>		<b>43</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Number of Positive Hobbies Posted</b>		<b>43</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Number of Negative Hobbies Posted</b>		<b>43</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Number of Contacts</b>		<b>43</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Smile</b>		<b>43</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>59</b>
	None	22	19	41	38	35	25
	Some of the time	2	1	13	6	1	1
	Most of the time	2	2	3	4	2	1
	All	17	27	41	28	37	32
<b>Job History Posted</b>		<b>43*</b>	<b>49*</b>	<b>98*</b>	<b>76*</b>	<b>75*</b>	<b>59*</b>
	No	34	38	70	59	60	56
	Yes	9	11	28	17	15	3
<b>Types of ID</b>		<b>43</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>59</b>
	Random Numbers	23	37	57	45	40	33
	Name	13	11	31	17	22	16

		Graduation Date				
	Unknown	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Nickname	5	0	5	12	7	4
Other	2	1	5	2	6	6

\*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<.001

Table 6: Gender, Race and Graduation year by Number of Positive and Negative Presentations of Self

	Visual Positive	Written Positive	Total Positive	Visual Negative	Written Negative	Total Negative
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	12.44 (1.89)***	4.99 (1.99)**	17.43 (2.68)	4.56 (1.90)***	5.01 (1.99)**	9.57 (2.68)
Female	12.45 (1.94)***	4.44 (1.58)**	17.90 (2.60)	3.55 (1.94)***	5.56 (1.58)**	9.10 (2.60)
<b>Race</b>						
Caucasian	13.44 (1.75)**	4.84 (1.83)	18.28 (2.37)**	3.56 (1.75)**	5.16 (1.83)	8.72 (2.37)**
African American	12.76 (1.97)**	4.65 (1.80)	17.41 (2.69)**	4.24 (1.97)**	5.35 (1.80)	9.59 (2.69)**
<b>Graduation Year</b>						
Unknown	12.65 (2.15)	4.16 (1.73)*	16.81 (2.86)	4.35 (2.148)	5.84 (1.73)*	10.19 (2.86)
2010	13.08 (2.17)	4.82 (1.78)*	17.90 (2.46)	3.92 (2.168)	5.18 (1.78)*	9.10 (2.46)
2011	12.82 (2.03)	4.88 (1.87)*	17.69 (2.84)	4.18 (2.027)	5.12 (1.87)*	9.31 (2.84)
2012	12.66 (2.05)	4.92 (1.80)*	17.58 (2.83)	4.34 (2.050)	5.08 (1.80)*	9.42 (2.83)
2013	13.12 (1.81)	4.96 (1.88)*	18.08 (2.50)	3.88 (1.808)	5.04 (1.88)*	8.92 (2.50)
2014	13.37 (1.67)	4.24 (1.63)*	17.61 (2.11)	3.63 (1.670)	5.76 (1.63)*	9.39 (2.11)

\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.001$