

# PRIVACY IN THE AGE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING:

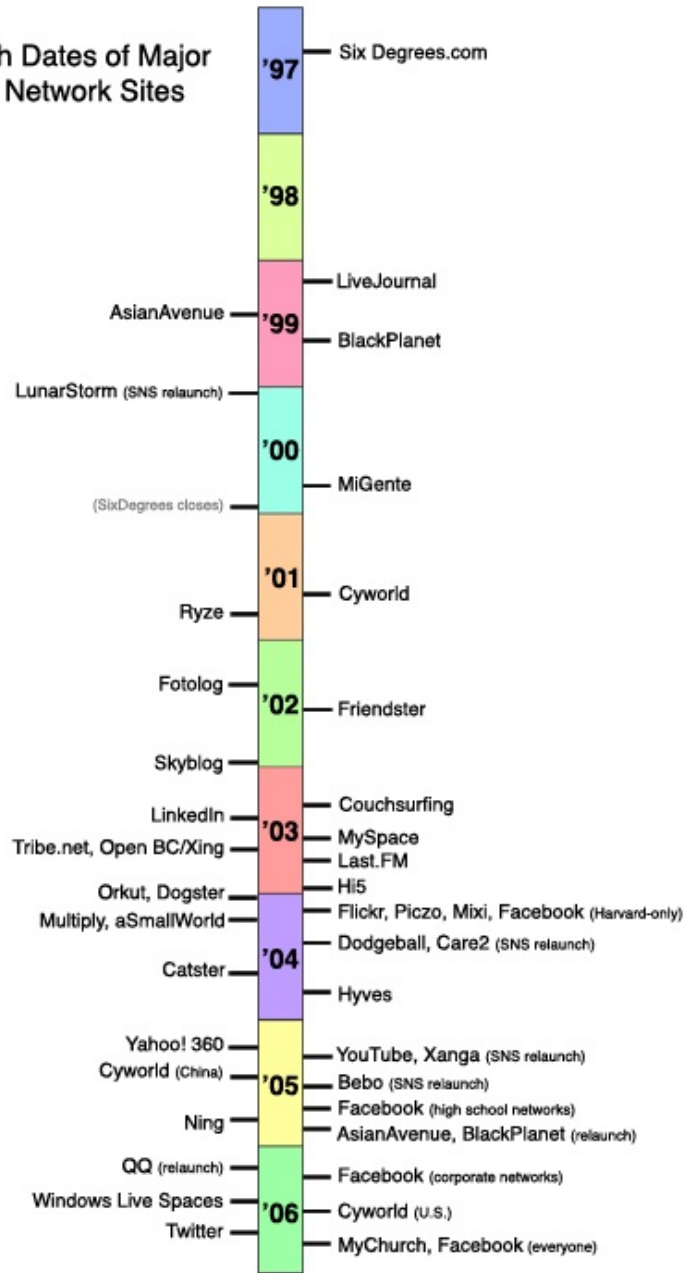
Ethical Considerations

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# History

- ❑ First social network site SixDegrees.com launched in 1997
- ❑ Friendster, the first fairly successful SNS with around 300,000 users, but was plagued by technical issues among other things
- ❑ MySpace was first to garner media attention, sold for \$580 million to news Corp in 2005, helped to push social networking into the main stream
- ❑ Facebook arrived in 2004 but was not open to everyone until 2006, has quickly become the dominant SNS
- ❑ Beginning of a new web paradigm linking networks of websites with users, by their preferences and personal information

## Launch Dates of Major Social Network Sites



# Why So Popular?

- ▣ Allows people to connect with old friends or stay in touch with family
- ▣ Meet new people
- ▣ Share ideas with like minded people
- ▣ Easily share media: pictures, music, videos
- ▣ Great marketing tool
- ▣ Opportunities for profit

# What's the Ethical Issue?

- ▣ People are putting large amounts of personal information on sites like Facebook
- ▣ 88 % revealed their birthdays, full name
- ▣ 83% public wall posts
- ▣ 75% access to photos
- ▣ 88% Friends
- ▣ 84% gender
- ▣ 82% access to applications
- ▣ 50% email addresses, political, religious affiliation
- ▣ 10% included zip code, home address, phone numbers

# Risky Behavior

- ❑ Can lead to identity theft
- ❑ Threats to personal safety
- ❑ Social risk of self-identification with a minority or stigmatized social group
- ❑ Will your future employers judge you based on online profile?
- ❑ Can information be used in court to incriminate you?
- ❑ Information can be sold to advertisers for targeted ads..
- ❑ Applications can be built to mine public data

# Trust Me

Zuck: Yeah so if you ever need info about anyone at Harvard

Zuck: Just ask.

Zuck: I have over 4,000 emails, pictures, addresses, SNS

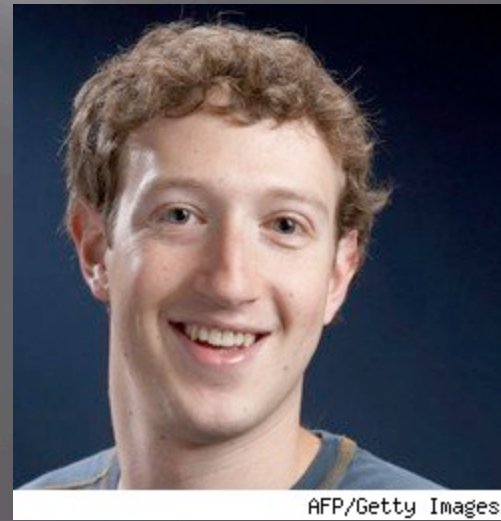
[Redacted Friend's Name]: What? How'd you manage that one?

Zuck: People just submitted it.

Zuck: I don't know why.

Zuck: They "trust me"

Zuck: Dumb [expletive]



AFP/Getty Images

# Ethical Problems

- ❑ Facebook using classic bait and switch tactics, repeatedly making changes to default settings.
- ❑ As of April everything on profile was default made public
- ❑ Shares your data with 3<sup>rd</sup> party websites
- ❑ May 21<sup>st</sup> Wall Street Journal finds Facebook and MySpace have been sending data to advertising companies that can be used to identify you
- ❑ Takes a 33 page tutorial to show how to lock down personal information, 50 settings, 170 options
- ❑ Has a track record of unethical behavior
- ❑ Beacon advertising, tracks user behavior, automatically opted-in
- ❑ Lost a class action law suit \$9.5 million over beacon



# Thoughts/Conclusion

- ❑ Many people are unaware of how information is being used
- ❑ Direct correlation between age and quantity of public exposure
- ❑ Corporations whose main motivation is profit do not have your best interest in mind..
- ❑ Too many hands in your personal information and not enough safeguards..
- ❑ Facebook, etc have the ethical responsibility to the assured privacy of your information..

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