Class 2 – Social Media and Information Age
Facebook knows you better than you know yourself – even if you don’t have Facebook
Notes

• Important clarification about yesterday’s slides
• Website/D2L is up to date, including the 2016 syllabus, homework and project rubrics.
• Homework 1 is up
• Next week: Computer Museum (?)
• Name Plate reminders
A note on Information in the Information Age

• The human brain is *really* good at finding patterns, even if there aren’t any
A note on Information in the Information Age

But not for your project (or to tell me I’m wrong)
A note on Information in the Information Age

Where you get your info from matters

• Wikipedia is good for informing yourself (taken with a grain of salt) about a topic in general but not as evidence to prove your point or convince me you’re telling the truth.
Other

Personal Ax to Grind / struggle

• Last Week Tonight with John Oliver: Scientific Studies
Social Media

• Do you have Facebook?

• Do you have twitter?

• Do you have Google +
Social Media

• What has Social Media (Facebook/twitter/etc) changed?

• Overall, are things better or worse with social media?
Facebook keeps information about you:
- Even if you left Facebook
- Even if you never had a Facebook account

How does this happen?
- Ever let Facebook use your contacts to find friends?
  - Your contacts where information such as emails, phone numbers, physical addresses, etc?
  - Ever tag a friend a friend who didn’t have a Facebook account?
Facebook – Shadow Profiles

Why does Facebook do this?
• Help make joining Facebook easier
• Figure out how to manipulate you

Why might you care?
• 2013 Facebook exposed some of this data through a bug
• It is possible to determine very personal information that you didn’t choose to share, such as your sexual orientation – just from the information your friends share.
Some other things social media has discovered about you

• How much you self censor before posting
  • 71% of us start writing a post and then never post it
• If you’re pregnant
• If you’re at risk for post partum depression
• If you’re lonely
• If you’re depressed
• How you feel about Gay Marriage
Discussion Point

• You agree to let Facebook look through your contacts (even if you didn’t realize it) – do you have the right to share your friends info?

• Does Facebook have the right to this information?

• Do you have some right to keeping personal details like your sexual orientation to yourself or does it even matter?
Informed Consent

• Not the same as the legalese things you sign to use software
• **Informed consent** is about people's understanding and willingness to participate in your study and not about signing a form. Prospective participants in your research study must understand the purpose, the procedures, the potential risks and benefits of their involvement, and their alternatives to participation.
• Sufficient information must be presented (in understandable language) so that the potential subject can make an informed judgment about participation
Why Informed Consent is Important

• **Tuskegee Syphilis Study** 1932 – 1972
• Norwegian study of hundreds of white men with untreated syphilis had neurological problems (retrospective study)
• Tuskegee study group decided to do a prospective study. 600 subjects (impoverish African Americans) were given free medical care, meals, and free burial insurance for participating in the study. 399 with syphilis and 201 without.
Why Informed Consent is Important

• **Tuskegee Syphilis Study** 1932 – 1972
• After funding was lost, experiment continued (which means, the subjects were not going to be getting medical care)
• Subjects were not told they had Syphilis, only they had “bad blood”
• It continued until 1971. Subjects were never given Penicillin, even though it was proven as a treatment in 1940.

• [http://www.cdc.gov/tuskegee/timeline.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tuskegee/timeline.htm)

• Thus, Institutional Review Boards were born (IRB)
Why Informed Consent is Important

Stanford Prison Experiment 1971

• Philip Zimbardo tried to show that prison guards and convicts would tend to slip into predefined roles, behaving in a way that they thought was required, rather than using their own judgment and morals.

• 24 male subjects judged to be most mentally and emotionally stable were divided into two groups randomly, of 12 prisoners and 12 guards.
Why Informed Consent is Important

Stanford Prison Experiment 1971

• Guards were given uniform and batons, and were told to act however they felt guards should act

• Prisoners were given in smocks (not allowed to wear underwear) and only referred to by numbers. They were told to go home and they would be called when to come in – in actuality their houses were raided by police (who participated in the experiment) without warning
Why Informed Consent is Important

Stanford Prison Experiment 1971

- All hell broke loose very quickly.
- Guards used their power to humiliate the prisoners, prisoners revolted/rioted, guards escalated. 2 subjects had to be released from the study for emotional distress. Physical abuse rapidly became more and more severe.
- Meant to least 2 weeks, only lasted 6 days.
- Over 50 people visited this simulated jail, and none raised concerns, until a grad student came in to interview participants.
Facebook Experiments

Emotional Contagion

• Facebook filtered your news feed, trying to manipulate how positive or negative your next posts would be
• Found a statistically significant, although very, very small impact

• The issues
  • Facebook didn’t get informed consent – the subjects were unaware that they were being experimented on. Facebook says that user agree to this as part of “Marketing Research” in the user agreement.
  • Facebook was actively trying to influence people’s emotions, without knowing the possible effects.
Facebook Experiments

Voting

• Facebook boosted US voter turnout through social pressure

Overviews

Being unknowing lab rats: Good or Bad?

**Good:**
- Can get significant results on an unprecedented scale.
- Can experiment on subjects that are truly in their natural state.
- Can provide meaningful, strong insights into human behavior.
- Others?

**Bad:**
- Humans are not giving informed consent.
- Can give singular industry power over you that you are not even aware of.
- Others?
The Curly Fry Conundrum

• Jennifer Golbeck – Director of Human-Computer Interaction Lab at University of Maryland
https://www.ted.com/talks/jennifer_golbeck_the_curly_fry_co
nundrum_why_social_media_likes_say_more_than_you_might
_think
Discussion

- Do you have any protection from an HR company getting a report like this? Should you?
- Do you think it’s fair that Facebook sells your information? Is it a fair trade for the service they provide
Break (10 minutes)

Coming up: Social Media and Society
Bringing people together on unprecedented scales

We’ve discussed how Facebook (and other social media sites) may be violating your privacy.

Now let’s discuss how social media is changing culture in unpredicted ways....
First Some Good

ALS Challenge
• Over 2 million videos shared
• Raised over 100 million dollars
First Some Good

Instrument of Social Change – given voices to the voiceless

• Organize Social Protests
• Highlight Social Injustice
• Spread information on a global scale
  • uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya
Less Good Side

As it is a platform for good, it is also a platform for bad. Some Examples include:

• Support groups for anorexic teenagers who want to maintain their anorexia
  • Pro-Ana: Some members claim anorexia is a life-style choice that should be respected by family, friends, and doctors
• Pedophiles help other pedophiles
• **Echo Chambers/Friend Bubbles**: positive reinforcement from those who think like you reinforce your certainty you are right
• **Centralizes Hate**
  • Groups include: gender, racial, LGBT, holocaust deniers, – general human – hate groups
  • Refresher: What is the first amendment?
Less Good Side

Harassment

Dongle Incident

• Woman tweeted about two guys behind her making “dongle” jokes
Less Good Side

Harassment

Dongle Incident

• Repercussions:
  • Fired
  • internet to the “rescue”
  • More fired
  • Violent rape and death threats
  http://cdn0.dailydot.com/uploaded/images/original/2013/3/21/Screenshot_2013-03-21_at_12.40.21_PM.png (WARNING blurred image, but still upsetting)
John Oliver: Harassment

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PuNIwYsz7PI
Cyberbullying

- 2003 Ryan believed he was AOL messaging a popular girl
- 2006 Neighbor, teenage daughter, and 18 year old temp employee set up fake “teen boy” account to mess with Megan Meier.
- “Sexting” suicides: Jessica Logan and Hope Sitwell
- 2010: Tyler Clementi secretly videoed kissing a guy
Less Good Side

Shame platform

• Tried and sentenced in the court of public opinion
• High school students tweeted racist tweets about President Obama
• Student names were published on Jezebel as well as student’s hobbies and activities, schools and principals were called to inform them
• “SEO-shaming” students to potential colleges

http://www.ted.com/talks/jon_ronson_what_happens_when_online_shaming_spirals_out_of_control
Discussion

• Is “SEO-Shaming” appropriate in this situation? Is it a fair consequence?
• When does shaming become bullying?