

MySpace and Facebook

Social networking, good or bad?



What is FaceBook and MySpace?

- ◆ Social networking sites that allow users 13 and over to communicate with others across the United States and across the world

Original Intentions

- ◆ Facebook was first used for Harvard University students as a communication device
- ◆ It later expanded to other colleges/universities in the Boston area
- ◆ Followed by use within the Ivy League schools
- ◆ 2006 it became a site for any age 13 and over

Original Intentions (cont.)

- ◆ MySpace was a spin off of the site Friendster in 2003
- ◆ Through word of mouth and the ability to “friend” people, the website grew to be the largest networking site
 - Facebook and Twitter now has more users than MySpace

Terms and Conditions: MySpace

◆ Eligibility

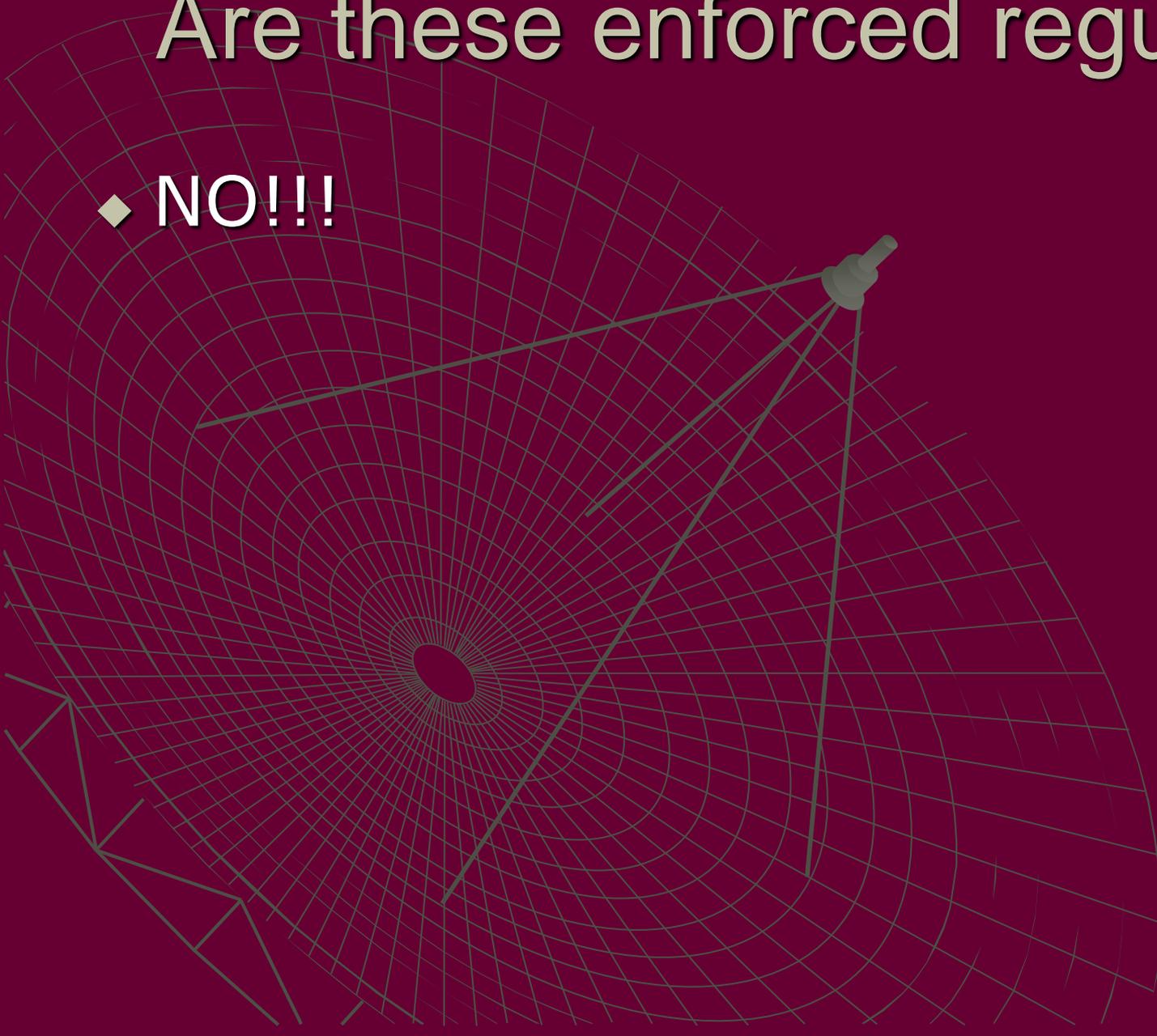
- All registration information submitted must be truthful and accurate
- Must maintain accuracy of such information
- Must be 13 years or older
- Use of the site does not violate an applicable laws

Terms and Conditions: Facebook

- ◆ Registration and Account Security
 - Will not post content that infringes or violates someone else's rights or violates the law
 - Will not create more than one personal profile
 - If site is disabled by FB, will not create another site without our permission
 - Will not use if under 13
 - Will not use if you are a convicted sex offender
 - Will keep contact information up-to-date
 - Will not share password
 - Will not transfer your account to anyone without getting FB permission

Are these enforced regularly?

- ◆ NO!!!



Positive Qualities

- ◆ Communication tool
- ◆ Allows for broader experiences (pen pals)
- ◆ Communication with long distant family members and friends
- ◆ Allows for expression
- ◆ Reconnect
- ◆ Academic advising/assistance
- ◆ Political and social connectiveness

Negative Qualities

- ◆ Public: millions of people have access to where you are, what you are doing, pictures, personal information
- ◆ Lost sense of morality: will say and do things that you would not normally do
- ◆ Predators: adults and juveniles
 - Means to bullying: tendency to be more cruel
- ◆ Addictive: becomes teen's reality, instead of reality

Cases gone awry

◆ MySpace

- An Australian 16-year-old boy advertised a house party that attracted 500 people. Police cars were attacked, the dog squad and a helicopter was called in
 - A 17-year-old girl hosted a party with the subtitle "Let's trash the average family-sized house disco party." Her parents were left with an American equivalent bill of \$48,000 from the police
 - 17-year-old American high school student was shot dead at a party
- ## ◆ All of the above cases were advertised using MySpace

Cases gone awry (cont.)

◆ Facebook

• Commissioner Patterson's Story

- ◆ 12-year-old niece was struggling to deal with divorce of parents and father leaving home
- ◆ Met older men via Facebook and ran away from home to pursue "relationships"
- ◆ Niece never returned home—got into life of prostitution and drugs

Miscellaneous Facts

- ◆ Each year in the U.S., about 2,000 youth complete suicide
- ◆ Suicide is the third-leading cause of death among ages 15 – 24
- ◆ For every two victims of homicide, adults and children, in the U.S. there are three deaths from suicide
 - ◆ www.facebook.com/topic
 - ◆ www.nationalsafeplace.org

Solutions

◆ MySpace

- Minimum age to use is 13 (not enforced)
- Profiles with ages set from 13 – 15 are automatically set to private
- Delete fake profiles
- 2007, found and deleted 29,000 profiles belonging to registered sex offenders
- Users whose ages are set over 18 no longer are able to add users ages 13 to 15 as friends unless they know their full name or email address

Solutions (cont.)

◆ Interviewees

- Stricter federal regulations (end time for minors, age regulations)
- Severe school consequences (bullying/harassment)
- Increased teen and parent workshops to inform about proper usage of sites
- Curriculum on internet/social networking safety

Solutions (cont)

◆ PARENTAL CONTROL

- Computers not in children's bedroom
- Have passwords to all accounts
- Limit time used (not past 10:00 at night and for only a certain amount of time, i.e. 1 hour)
- Be your child's "friend"—you see what they see, and other's see you as active parent
- Cell phones not in children's room at night (chargers stay in parent's bedroom)
- Familiar with technology
- Monitor friends and friends' parents