Searching in the age of the online Social Network

Shanda Young
Chris Young
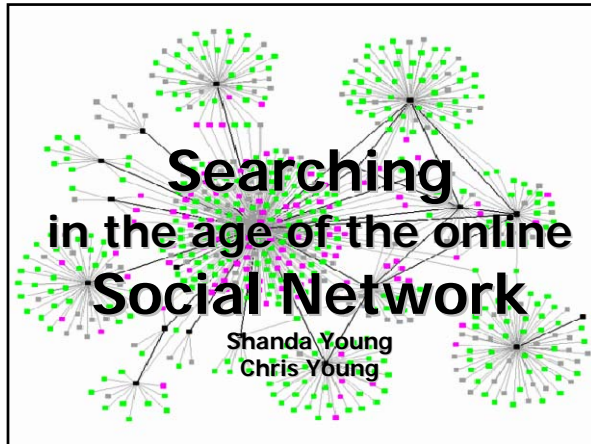
Introductions

◆ **Christopher S. Young**
  - Contra Costa County Sheriff
    - Search and Rescue since 1982
    - Reserve Deputy since 1987
  - Chairman - Bay Area Search and Rescue Council (BASARC)
  - Author, National Presenter, State SAR Management Instr.

Urban Search
Managing Missing Person Searches in the Urban Environment

Christopher S. Young
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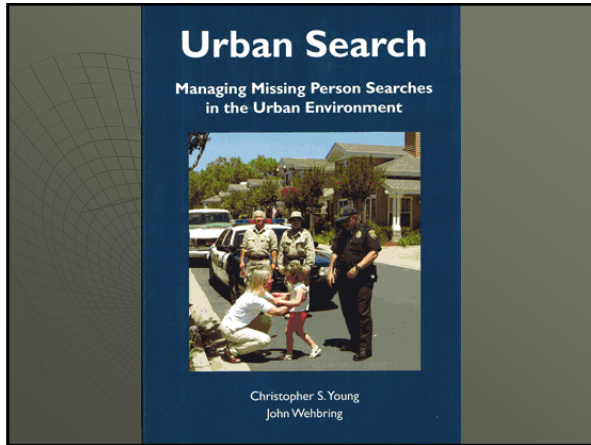
Introductions

◆ **Shanda L. Young**
  - Chris's Daughter
    - Search and Rescue Victim Since 1988
  - Contra Costa County Health Department – TAP Program
  - Author

What We Will Cover

- *Examples of Use of the Internet/Social Networks in Real Missions*
- *Why Study*
- *Definitions*
- *History*
- *Reviewing the Social Network Sites*
- *What to Look For*
- *Exercise*

Yosemite Abandoned Campsite

◆ Crews found site abandoned
◆ Google Search of name from backcountry permit
◆ Located work website
◆ Made contact with colleagues
◆ Contracted via e-mail

Urban Search for Teen

- Missing possible despondent
- Interviewed Classmates
- Gained access to Facebook account
- Noted favorite places to go
- Change focus of search effort

Steve Fossett Search

InternetSAR.org

Al and Jean M.
From Facebook
("Cloudsipper")

"One man's turbulence is another man's thermals"

I try to maintain "even thousands plus 500", but all this strong lift makes it difficult.

Missing Hikers Footprint

- *"Yesterday, teams were able to trace the subject's prints in the caldera, literally finding where he stood, squishing his feet into the volcanic mud. Following his trail, they left the caldera. Through the subject's personal Facebook account, we discovered a previous picture he took of his own feet, and own print. We also discovered corroborating photographs of his stance..."*

- *Blind Hiker on Appalachian Trail*
  - *From BLOG*

Slide 1

- *Blind Hiker on Appalachian Trail*
  - *From BLOG*

Slide 2 — Why Study
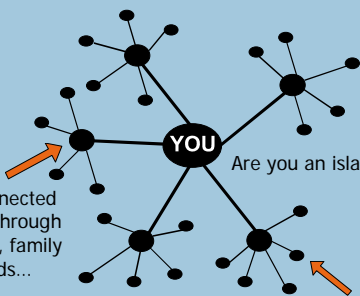
Why Study

- *Part of Investigation*
- *Additional Information to Build the Missing Person Profile*
- *Provide Lists of Friends (those with First Hand Knowledge of the Missing Subject)*

Slide 3 — Networking – what is it?

Networking – what is it?

YOU

Are you an island? **NO**

You are connected to people – through work, school, family and friends...

And through those connections, you are connected to even more people.

Slide 4 — What IS An ONLINE Social Network???

What IS An *ONLINE* Social Network???

Slide 5 — Social Network sites allow individuals to:
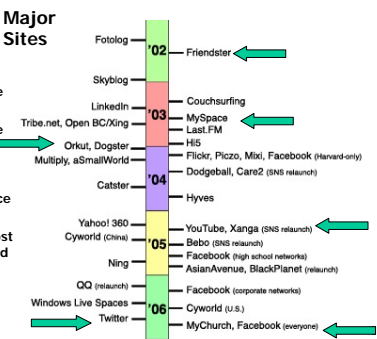
Social Network sites allow individuals to:

- Construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system
  (MySpace/Facebook)
- Articulate a list of users with whom they share a connection
  (My Friends)
- View and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system
  (Look at Friends and Invite Complete Strangers)

Slide 6 — When did it all begin?

When did it all begin?

Launch Dates of Major Social Network Sites

Stats:
- 90% of people are online
- MySpace has more than 110 million monthly active users around the globe
- 1 in 4 Americans is on MySpace, in the UK it's as common to have a MySpace as it is to own a dog
- Facebook is the sixth-most trafficked site in the United States (comScore)
- Facebook has more than 65 billion page views per month

How have online social networks changed our culture?

- "MySpace: The Verb"
  - ➢ "Did you MySpace me today??"
- Social Network celebrities
  - ➢ Tila Tequila, etc.
- What's real? What's fictional?
  - ➢ Posers v. People

- Second Life
  - ➢ 3D Virtual Social World
  - ➢ Residence = Avatars
- Cyber Backfire
  - ➢ "WHY ARE YOU YELLING AT ME?"
- Cyber Bullying
  - ➢ Psychological Harm
- The Future
  - ➢ What's next???

Cyberbullying

What is it?
- When a child preteen or teen is
  - Tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child, preteen or teen using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones.
- It has to have a minor on both sides, or at least have been instigated by a minor against another minor.
- Once adults become involved, it is plain and simple cyber-harassment or cyberstalking. Adult cyber-harassment or cyberstalking is NEVER called cyberbullying.

http://www.stopcyberbullying.org/index2.html

Cyberbullying

How does it work? Two Kinds:

- Direct attacks (messages sent to kids directly)
- Cyberbullying by proxy (using others to help cyberbully the victim, either with or without the accomplice's knowledge). Because cyberbullying by proxy often gets adults involved in the harassment, it is much more dangerous.

http://www.stopcyberbullying.org/index2.html

Cyberbullying (cont.)

Why do kids cyberbully each other?
- Who knows why kids do anything?
- When it comes to cyberbullying, they are often motivated by anger, revenge or frustration.
- Sometimes they do it for entertainment
- Because they are bored and have too much time on their hands and too many tech toys available to them.
- Many do it for laughs or to get a reaction.
- Some do it by accident, and either send a message to the wrong recipient or didn't think before they did something.

http://www.stopcyberbullying.org/index2.html

Cyberbullying (cont.)

Why do kids cyberbully each other?
- The Power-hungry do it to torment others and for their ego.
- Revenge of the Nerd may start out defending themselves from traditional bullying only to find that they enjoy being the tough guy or gal.
- Mean girls do it to help bolster or remind people of their own social standing.
- And some think they are righting wrong and standing up for others.

http://www.stopcyberbullying.org/index2.html
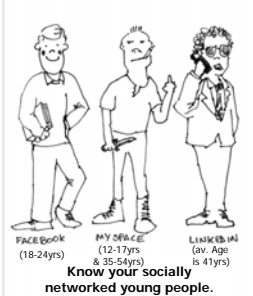

What's next??

- Social Marketing
  - products & services will be marketed based on context
  - products and services based on social responsibility
- Middleware
  - tools that allow an individual to complete a single social networking profile and 'syndicate' relevant profile information to various vertical networking groups
- Open Extensibility
  - users will be able to extend core platforms, allow social networks to evolve in an 'open' environment driven by the needs of its user groups ("wikis")

http://www.gimmiethescoop.com/the-future-of-online-social-networking

Slide 1

So now it's time to get a little more specific...

Slide 2

What are the differences from Site to Site?

FACEBOOK (18-24yrs)   MYSPACE (12-17yrs & 35-54yrs)   LINKEDIN (av. Age is 41yrs)

Know your socially networked young people.

- Many sites cater to a particular demographic
- Profiles on different sites can contain very different information
- Profile formats and ease of navigation are extremely different per site
- How easily an outsider can view a profile can differ from site to site

Slide 3

So how do social network sites help us when searching for lost folks?

Quick updates from missing subject

Who've they been talking to

Recent activities

Who's been talking to them

"Would it kill you to update your Twitter status if you're going to stay out so late?"

Slide 4

Let's start with MySpace...

Slide 5

Slide 6

What's where on a MySpace Page?

Status (mood/state of mind different from relationship status)

Vital Stats: Gender, Age, Location

When s/he was last logged in.

"About Me" Important and vital information about the subject.

URL...can also be important

What's where on a MySpace Page?

General interests…What are they into? Who are their heroes? What other web/social network sites are they on?

Important details that are also valuable.

Top friends: Those the person is closest to or most influenced by are located here.

Roadblock:

This profile is set to private. This user must add you as a friend to see his/her profile.

How do we overcome this particular obstacle?

Where can you find the info you need?

Listed below are all of the different categories one would find on a sample MySpace page:

Pictures   Interests   Companies   Who I'd like to meet
Status   Details   Blog   Friends
How to contact   Schools   About me   Comments

Which categories do you think you should start with on your initial investigation?

Why should you start with these?

What can you find here?

Blog:

- Many blogs provide commentary or news on a particular subject
- Others function as more personal online diaries.
- A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic
- The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs.
- Blogs can be very useful in learning pertinent information about the subject.

What's in a BLOG?

Also important to note that one can also see who's reading a blog regularly by checking out who subscribes to the blog in the "My Readers" section.

What can you find here?

Comments:

- Below the user's Friends Space (by default) is the "comments" section wherein the user's friends may leave comments for all viewers to read.
- MySpace users have the option to delete any comment and/or require all comments to be approved before posting.
- Comments posted by friends may be a good source of information for what is currently going on in the user's life.

What's where on a MySpace Page?

Below where the Top Friends are listed are the comments.

Here is an example of the standard comment section layout. Notice it has a picture of the person leaving the comment, date/time the comment was left and most importantly, the text of the comment.

Note: this is where one would possibly see cyberbullying in action.
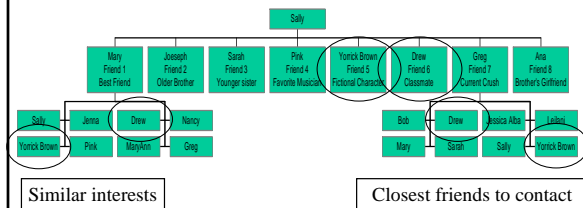

What can you find here?

Friends:

- The users friends that appear on the landing page are considered the "top friends" by the user.
- One can have a top 4, 8, 12, and so on.
- These "friends" are usually the people they talk to the most or, in the case of a recording artist in the top 8, someone they admire greatly.

Sally's MySpace Top 8

Similar interests   Closest friends to contact

What do you notice about the different connections Sally has made? Do they overlap with anyone else's? Is that significant?

What can you find here?

Status:

- The status of a user can indicate what type of mood a person is in at a particular time.
- This can give insight into the emotional and/or physical state of the user.

Status: What's it all about?
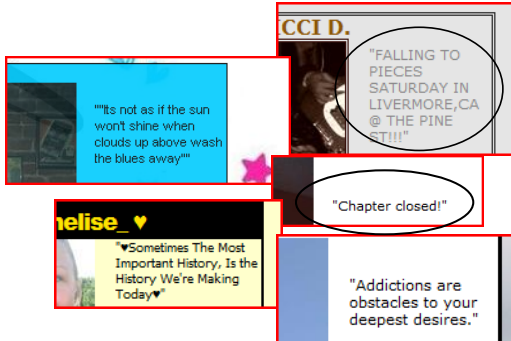
Navigating through the Public v. Private Views:

- Public:
  - MySpace (primarily)
  - Anyone can see profile
  - Easy to access
  - Easier to stay anonymous
  - Access to anyone who is a part of MySpace
  - MySpace "Find People" search: Name, location (city, state), and age are enough to find a person on MySpace (without ever logging in)

- Private:
  - Facebook (primarily)
  - Must have access through friends
  - Not as easy to stay anonymous
  - "Wall to Wall" postings
  - Status updates
  - You can search Facebook, but without being connected to someone, you may only be able to see the limited profile
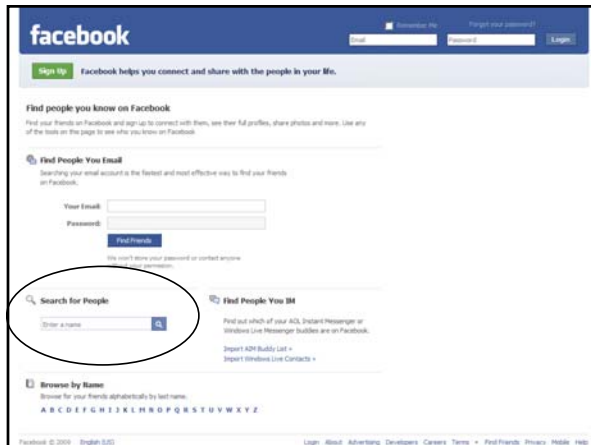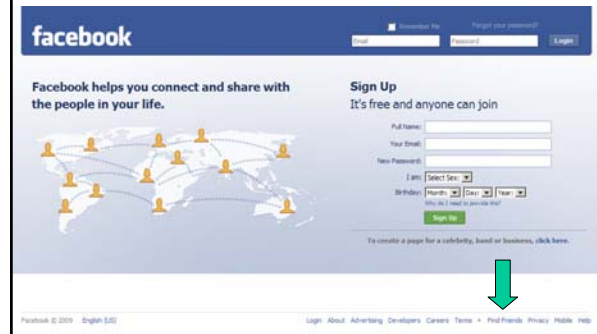
So let's focus now on Facebook...

"On Facebook, 273 people know I'm a dog.
The rest can only see my limited profile."

Facebook Login Page

Notice the difference from the MySpace status... on Facebook, you can see the day/time the status was updated.

Now let's talk about Twitter...
"It's all about status"

What is Twitter and how does it work?

Twitter is a free social networking and micro-blogging service that allows its users to send updates (otherwise known as tweets) which are text-based posts of up to 140 characters in length. Users can receive updates via the Twitter website, instant messaging, SMS (Short Message Service i.e. text messages), RSS (syndication format), email or through an application such as Twitterific or Facebook.

The Twitter Blast

| Sally Higgens |
| Twitter Subscriber |
| Comment: |
| "I'm feeling like no one knows I'm feeling." |

| Twitter: Best Friend | E-mail: Sister | Cell Text: Brother | Facebook: School Friend | Facebook: School Friend |
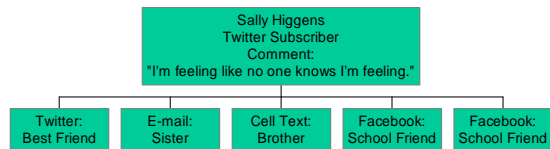
Why is Twitter so useful?

- Extremely short bursts of information that can easily be updated:
  - Cell phone
  - E-mail
  - Twitter Site
  - Facebook
  - Etc.

- Therefore, a person who is missing/lost may be able to send bursts of information from their current location to many people at the same time, but not be able to make a cell call.

So let's put what we've learned to use…

Scenario

Meet Sally Higgins:

Sally Higgins is 5'2", 115 pounds, has brown eyes and brown hair, has a light complexion and is 16 years old. She was supposed to show up at swim practice at 3:00pm and never showed. She didn't show up for dinner at 5:00pm and her parents called Walnut Creek PD at 8:00pm to report her missing. During the preliminary investigation, the parents called some of her close friends and found out she didn't show up to school that day. SAR was called at 11:30pm.

While the interview team is talking to the parents, you've been assigned to see what you can find on the internet.

Where do we begin:

Step one: Do they have a MySpace/Facebook page? How do we find this out?

Step two: How do we access their MySpace/Facebook page? Are there multiple ways to do this?

Step three: What information can we gather from the MySpace/Facebook page?

Books — So, this is also going to sound really emo, but they made me read Go Ask Alice in, like, 7th grade. It's been my favorite book ever since.

Heroes — Anyone who keeps it real and isn't fake with me... like some people I know.

"Go Ask Alice"
Drug Use and Suicide

SallyIsFabby's Details

Status:	Single
Here for:	Friends
Orientation:	Not Sure
Hometown:	Dub-C
Body type:	Average
Ethnicity:	White / Caucasian
Religion:	Agnostic
Zodiac Sign:	Aries
Smoke / Drink:	No / Yes
Children:	Someday
Education:	High school
Occupation:	One With The Water
Income:	$250,000 and Higher

**Searching Online:
MySpace Worksheet
General Info:**

MySpace URL: _____

Screen Name: _____

Last Login In: _____

Vital Stats (are they different from stats already collected):_____
_____
_____
_____

About me Info: _____
_____
_____
_____

Details: _____
_____
_____
_____

Personal Pictures:
   Pictures of note: _____
_____
_____

Date/Time of Most Recent:

   Blog Post: _____

   Comment: _____

**Searching Online:
MySpace Worksheet
Key Info:**

Blog:
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Comments:
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Friends:
_____
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Status:
_____
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_____
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_____

Glossary

Avatar: Graphical images used in virtual worlds to represent people. Users can create Avatar visual personalities selecting a gender, body type, clothing, behaviors and name.

Blog: Shortened from the original term "Weblogs" These self-published websites containing dated material, are usually written in a journal format. Content such as text, pictures, video and/or audio have URLs plus other ways of identifying them by keywords (tags). This allows visitors to pull items to their desktop through subscriptions or aggregators without having to visit the actual website. Blogs often have links to other relevant online content, plus invite feedback through "posts" which are comments from readers.

Feeds: The means by which you can read, view or listen to items from blogs, podcasts and other RSS-enabled sites without visiting the site, by subscribing to a directory or aggregator such as iTunes or Bloglines.

Photosharing: The social networking practice of uploading digital images to a website such as Flickr, where tags can be added, so others can comment or even reuse the images under certain stated copyright license conditions.

Post: The social networking practice of uploading digital images to a website such as Flickr, where tags can be added, so others can comment or even reuse the images under certain stated copyright license conditions.

Glossary (cont.)

Profile: The information someone provides when signing up for a social networking site. This may include a picture, basic biographical information and tags to help people search for like-minded individuals.

Social Networking: The term used to describe the tools and platforms people use to publish, converse and share content online. These include blogs, wikis, podcasts, and the sites dedicated to share information, stories, photos, audio and video files, and bookmarks.

Tagging: A way of categorizing online content using keywords that describe what can be found at a website, bookmark, photo or blog post.

Tags: Keywords attached to a blog post, bookmark, photo or other item of online content so you and others can find them easily through searches and aggregation.

Threads: Strands of online conversation referring to messages, feedback or content that relate to the same subject.

User Generated Content: Text, photos and other material produced by internet users and posted online for public consumption.

Wiki: An online, collaborative work space for multiple users of a web page or set of pages that can be edited collaboratively. The best known example is wikipedia, an encyclopedia created by thousands of contributors across the world. Once people have appropriate permissions set by the wiki owner, they can create pages and/or add to and alter existing pages

Questions ?

For More Information

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Thank You For Your Valuable Attention