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Facetime: Employers--and the occasional student--are finding Facebook can provide a glimpse of the reality beyond the interview

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Facebook | Brianna M. Tufts

http://colby.facebook.com/profile.php?id=15400390&hq=tufts

facebook home search browse invite help logout

Brianna M. Tufts' Profile Colby



Search

My Profile exit
My Friends
My Photos
My Status
My Notes
My Groups
My Events
My Messages
My Mobile
My Account
My Privacy

View More Photos of Brianna (286)
View All Brianna's Friends
Send Brianna a Message
Poke Her!
Add Brianna as a Friend
Report this Person

Colby Friends
113 friends at Colby. See All

Sarah Bassie Liz Palm Justin Sulcowski
Jai Shrestha Tunde Bamigboye Ekaterina Gorbenova

Friends in Other Networks
Networks with the most friends:
Colby (113)
St Andrews (23)
New Hampshire (21)
Boston, MA (18)
Northeastern (8)
Iowa College (8)
Kansas State (5)

Networks you belong to
Colby (113)
Show All Networks

Groups
14 groups. See All

Members of the NESAC web team tufts • Y&R 2006 • The Hawk Pound • Lets make this the biggest group on all of facebook • Bring Back Bitch! • Class of 2007 • Buya For Free • Official Hottest Asses at Colby College (DHACC) • Colby Track and Field • St. Paul's ASP Alumni • Willow Tree Club • COCC → • Tree Quad

Brianna M. Tufts Colby '07


Sex: Female
Relationship Status: In a Relationship with Michael Jay Walsh (Cornell)
Looking For: Friendship
Birthday: March 1, 1985
Political Views: Liberal

Mini-Feed
Displaying 5 status. See All

January 14
Brianna and Alex Becker are now friends. 8:37am
Brianna and Owen Roberts are now friends. 12:27am

January 8
Brianna and Michael Brown are now friends. 12:03am

December 12
Michael Jay Walsh tagged Brianna in seven photos. 11:08pm
Tagged in: Wedding Crashers - 25 Photos



December 11
Brianna discussed Goodbye to EAHS in the group The Hawk Pound. 5:57pm

Information

Contact Info
Email: Email@Colby.edu
AIM: Breezed0017
Current Address: 7846 Mayflower Hill
Waterville, ME 04901
West Quad 118
2846 Mayflower Hill
http://community.webshots.com/user/breez...

Residence:
School Mailbox:
Website:

Personal Info
Activities: SHOC, Quilting Club, math department
Interests: cross-country, track, crafts, music, conservation
Favorite Music: none really
Favorite TV Shows: Nick at Nite
Favorite Movies: Big Business, French Kiss, Buggy Malone, Hotel Rwanda,
Favorite Books: Secret Life of Bees, Angels and Demons
Favorite Quotes: In this life we cannot do great things. We can only do small things with great love. - Mother Teresa
About Me: Happy go lucky all the time

Education
Education Info
College: Colby
Mathematics, Economics
High School: Exeter Area High School '03

Courses
Mathematics 353 Abstract Algebra
Economics 393 Econometrics
Economics 381 Industrial Organization and Antitrust Economics
Mathematics 352 Numerical Analysis

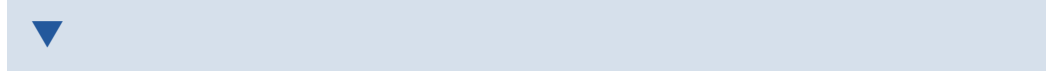
The Wall
Displaying 10 of 57 wall posts. See All

Done

USED WITH PERMISSION OF BRIANNA TUFTS '07

facetime

Employers—and the occasional student—are finding Facebook can provide a glimpse of the reality beyond the interview



Brianna Tufts '07 had been warned that potential employers might check profiles on Facebook, a social networking Web site frequented by millions of college students. So she removed a few pictures, the ones that seemed to show too clearly “the revelries of the weekend.”

Then Tufts, a mathematics major, economics minor, and cross country runner, turned the tables. She searched the Facebook site for an employee of the Boston consulting firm she was considering. Lo and behold, there was a 70-member Facebook network for some of the company’s employees. Tufts was able to learn where they did undergraduate and graduate work and to see their profile photos.

“I could look down at all the little [photo] clips,” Tufts said. “They all looked relatively young. I would say that half of the pictures looked like they were either out at bars or at dinner parties. ... It made me think, ‘These people must be good at their jobs but they still have fun on weekends.’”

By Gerry Boyle '78

This was a recent development in the constantly evolving world of online socializing, in which young people (older readers, see sidebar) profile themselves on a Web page and then create a web of “friends.” Facebook is part diary, part documentary, part communications hub—and, increasingly, a quick and easy way to peek into someone’s life.

Employers, especially in the 20-something-heavy industries of technology and finance, have figured this out, and students like Tufts, weighing job options as graduation looms, have figured out that employers have figured it out. Facebook and sites like it are now recognized as a way for people other than just friends to glimpse the person behind the formal persona.

“It’s hard to tell what someone’s really like in an interview,” said Harrison Wreschner ’03, now with a New York hedge fund but until last year an analyst at the investment house Bear Stearns. “Everyone’s had career counseling. Everyone puts up a façade.”

Wreschner and Michael Henderson-Cohen ’04 were the unofficial Colby team at Bear Stearns, where Cohen is an associate. Because Bear Stearns has no official recruiting presence at Colby, Wreschner and Henderson-Cohen, who were supported in their job hunts by Colby alumni, took it upon themselves to review résumés, to do initial phone interviews, and to talk to human resources about candidates they thought would be competitive.

In that process, Henderson-Cohen, like many of his colleagues, sometimes takes a look at a candidate’s Facebook page. While he stressed that it’s unlikely that a Facebook page would have much bearing on whether an applicant is hired, he’s hardly alone in taking a peek.

According to a recent poll by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, more than a quarter of organizations acknowledged that they checked out candidates by Googling them or skimming their profiles on social networking sites. In the high-tech sector, it was nearly half.

That’s no surprise for students like Jon Forsythe ’07.

An economics major and football player, Forsythe was in an airport waiting for a flight to take him on his semester abroad last spring when his cell phone rang. It was Henderson-Cohen at Bear Stearns. Forsythe had applied for a summer internship, and his strong grades, solid résumé, and presence during initial phone interviews had impressed the Colby alums.

They called to tell him as much, and during the conversation Henderson-Cohen noted that he had looked at Forsythe’s Facebook profile and had seen a silly photo of Forsythe being kissed playfully by his girlfriend.

“They thought I’d be a fun guy to hang out with,” Forsythe said.

The conversation was pleasant. But along with an article about Facebook and employers that was circulated to players by Football Coach Ed Mestieri, it did get Forsythe thinking—and prompted him to take a closer look at his Facebook page. “I just kind of cleaned up my profile,” he said.

A photo was removed (not the kiss). “I even changed my interests in the books,” he said. “I put *Econometrics* [*Using Econometrics: A Practical Guide*] as my favorite book.”

What was it before?

“I don’t know. *Jurassic Park* or something. Less mature stuff.”

While Forsythe may have cleaned up his Facebook profile later, the image of him as a fun guy didn’t detract from his strength as a candidate.

“We definitely didn’t look down on the fact that he liked to have fun at school—and still could maintain good grades,” said Henderson-Cohen. “That’s definitely the kind of candidate you want to see. It’s all about balance.”

What would set off alarm bells?

“Excessive alcohol use or things that don’t relay a sense of responsibility that you might be trying to portray in trying to land a job,” Henderson-Cohen said. In fact, he had just heard from a colleague at another Wall Street firm about a candidate who had photos of himself on his profile engaging in illegal drug use. That application was tossed.

But regular college socializing is another matter, Henderson-Cohen said.

“I think it’s only normal to see those kinds of photos because that’s what college life is like,” he said. And while smart, hard-working students are sought after, the strongest candidates also have social skills and lives. “I would notice,” he said, “if *all* the pictures were from the library.”

Facebook for Dummies

▼ What is it?

Social networking site, with more than 14 million users, second only to MySpace. Anyone can join but primarily used by college and high school students.

▼ Who started it?

Begun in 2004, when founder Mark Zuckerberg was an undergraduate at Harvard.

▼ How widespread?

In a recent survey, Facebook placed second to the iPod in popularity with college students. (Bear tied with Facebook.)

▼ Who can have a profile?

Anybody, but users are segmented by company, region, or school. To be grouped with a college or school, you need an e-mail address issued by that school.

▼ What do you get?

A place to profile yourself: college, class year, interests, favorite music, books, movies. Also offers a place to post public messages or send private notes. Profiles give you unlimited space to post photos—of the weekend’s parties, your semester abroad, your roommate, your messy dorm room, or anything else.

▼ Who can see your stuff?

Anyone at your college or, depending on privacy settings you control, anyone who is friends with you or anyone who is friends with someone who is friends with you.

▼ Friends?

Profiles include a list of your “friends.” Often they number in the hundreds. Facebook “friends” are not necessarily the same as real friends. Often they’re more like acquaintances you don’t dislike. [Users collect them like people used to collect postcards.]

▼ How does that work?

Let’s say you go to a party and meet a student from across campus or from another college. The next morning, that student, procrastinating before writing her English paper, checks out your Facebook profile. She clicks on the icon that says she wants to be your friend. She has “friended” you. If you accept, she’s added to your list, and vice versa.

▼ Isn’t “friend” a noun?

Not anymore.

▼ Why do I feel so old?

Because this is Facebook. Probably you are.

Sources: facebook.com, mashable.com

Or, as Andrea Linney '07J put it, "If you don't have that social interaction, what does that say about you? I would be more willing to choose somebody [for a job] who had had interaction than someone who had been closeted most of their college life."

Wreschner, who graduated before Facebook emerged on college campuses, said he has neither had a Facebook account nor has he actually done a Facebook search, though he has seen the results of searches done by younger colleagues. But, he said, he sees it as a way for employers to supplement applicants' résumés and academic records.

"They'll tell you from the very beginning," he said, "personality makes a difference. We're going to end up spending fifteen hours a day with you; we want to make sure we like you. And if you've got hundreds of résumés and they end up taking forty kids—there are a lot of kids with 4.0s from Harvard. How do you delineate? Do you fit? Do you blend well in the interview? ... People do look to [Facebook] to a point to get an idea of what your personality is like."

Unless, of course, applicants choose to make their Facebook profile private. In that setting, the page is accessible only to people the profilee has accepted as Facebook friends. Linney, concerned about reports of Facebook snooping, has done just that. "I just checked everything off," she said. "Now, unless you're my real friend or I give permission to be my friend, you don't have access to anything."

And how many Facebook friends does she have? "I have about a hundred and sixty-nine," she said. "Some people have three hundred or more. I would say that only a handful are true friends, though. I think most of them are, well, I met you once or twice."

If Facebook culture redefines "friend," it also gives new meaning to the notion of privacy. If 300 people have access to photos, writings, and messages, can a Facebook inspection by a potential employer really be called an invasion of privacy?

Yes, Linney said, if the snooping is being done behind your back. With plans to teach English in China after graduation, she wasn't concerned about landing a job on Wall Street, she said, but she still objected to having her Facebook profile perused by a potential employer. "It's one thing to check your background in terms of a criminal record that would affect how you teach the kids," Linney said. "But I don't see how your college social life would affect how you interact with kids or your coworkers."

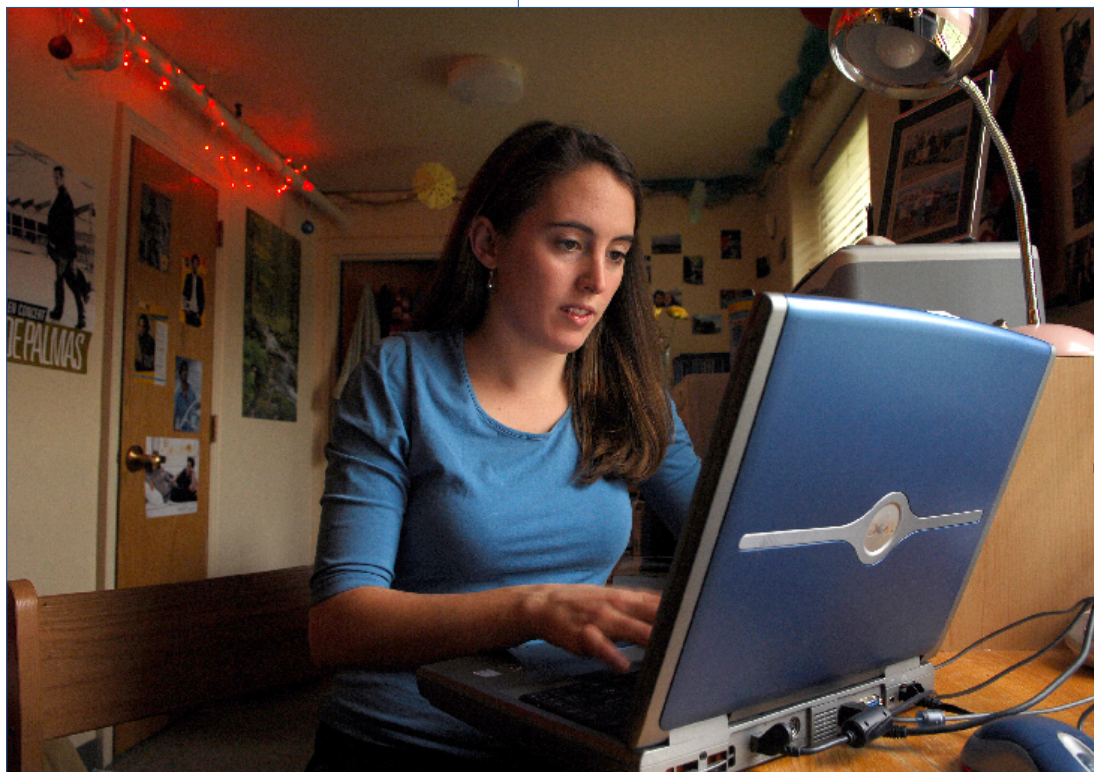
But how you portray your college social life could be a factor in determining who those coworkers are.

On Wall Street last fall, the buzz was about a video profile submitted by a college senior looking for a job at a major brokerage house. The promotional video included footage of the student playing tennis, skiing, bench pressing in the gym, and ballroom dancing. Could a Facebook profile be created expressly for the purpose of landing a job?

"The idea of tailoring a Facebook profile is probably over the top ...," said Wreschner. "But I could see some sort of ultra-competitive person trying to demonstrate just how balanced their life is. Pictures of them in the library, them doing community service. Them at a party—with a Solo cup. I think it could get a little out of hand."

▼ Facebooking

Brianna Tufts '07 (below) is one of a growing number of students aware of the potential for employers to use Facebook profiles.



FRED FIELD

▼ Harrison Wreschner '03

"They [employers] will tell you from the very beginning, personality makes a difference. We're going to end up spending fifteen hours a day with you; we want to make sure we like you. And if you've got hundreds of résumés and they end up taking forty kids—there are a lot of kids with 4.0s from Harvard. How do you delineate? Do you fit? Do you blend well in the interview? ... People do look to [Facebook] to a point to get an idea of what your personality is like."