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Privacy and Facebook Reflections on Past, Present and Future Research

One of the most representative phenomena of Web 2.0 is the spread of social network sites (SNSs) such as MySpace, Orkut, Cyworld, Friendster and so on. SNSs are attracting millions of users and many people have already integrated them into their lives and daily routine.

The aim of this paper is to analyze the privacy issue and its implications inside one of the most popular SNS which is Facebook (FB).

After a brief introduction on SNSs and FB's history, I will make a review of the available literature about privacy and FB. Then, I will focus on three FB's features that have raised important concerns about privacy: the Beacon advertising system, the News Feed and Mini Feed options and the difficulty to delete a FB account.

Based on these three examples, I will then make some considerations about the altered role of friendship, the re-interpretation of privacy and the new forms of resistance which FB's users have begun against the management of FB. It is worth saying that part of this resistance relies on tools (i.e. the possibility to create "groups") provided by FB itself and that the same tools created by the social platform to encourage and sustain sociability can be used also to criticize the management of the website itself.

Finally, I will try to arise some points of interest for future research.

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