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Friend Me on Facebook: A Generational Study of the Effects of Facebook on American Friendships

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Friend Me on Facebook:
A Generational Study of the Effects of Facebook on American Friendships

By
Brenda Souza

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Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for
Honors in the Department of Sociology

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ABSTRACT

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Sociologists argue that new communicative technologies have changed the way in which Americans interact, relate, and connect with one another. Studies show that as a result of people's dependency on new technologies like Facebook, friendships in the United States are rapidly declining. While there is already research addressing how younger individuals use Facebook, this study adds to the literature by examining how both younger and older individuals use Facebook. Additionally, this study examines how younger and older individuals define friendships, why they use Facebook, and whether or not they believe Facebook has affected the dynamics of friendships. Since the Union College students who were surveyed grew up on Facebook, it was hypothesized that the student's conception of friendship, as well as their views of Facebook, would be different from the faculty member's views. Faculty members were expected to hold more negative views of Facebook and the effects it has had on friendships. Findings suggest that students have different views of friendships than faculty members do, and hold more positive views of Facebook and the effects it has had on friendships.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

As social creatures, we desire relationships. We want to feel connected to one another, and we want to coexist with people we can relate to. We want to share our experiences with other people and confide in them for guidance and support. As social beings, we also want to feel like we belong and are accepted by society. Our need to feel connected causes us to meet, interact, and cultivate relationships with other human beings. Friendships are a type of relationship we form to fulfill our human needs for connection and community.

In spite of its importance, though, friendship as an institution may very well be in decline. Researchers argue that one of the reasons why friendships in the U.S. are at risk is because of our growing use of and dependency on new communicative technologies. Scholars argue that today, our interactions have been confined to text messages and wall posts on social network websites like Facebook. Ethan Lieb (2011:2), author of *Friend v. Friend*, argues that “we have fewer people with whom we can share important matters than we once did, and—with the Internet and social networking platforms notwithstanding—our nonkin circles of intimate affection seem to be getting smaller and smaller”.

While there are many studies addressing the effects of new technologies on social relationships, there is little literature on how younger and older people’s conception of friendships have been affected by the advent and excessive use of social networking sites. The goal of this paper is examine what the real reasons are that younger and older individuals use or do not use Facebook, and whether these users believe that interacting on Facebook has changed the dynamics of friendships. Given that younger individuals were brought up in the Internet and social media age, it would be interesting to compare younger and older Facebook users’ views of the site’s impact on friendship. Since older individuals were raised at a different time—a time when new communicative technologies like Facebook did not exist or were not as popular in

society— it can be hypothesized that the responses given by older individuals would be very different from the responses given by the younger individuals.

To understand this phenomenon it is illustrative to first examine what constitutes a friendship, why it is perceived as an important part of our lives, and what scholars have coined as the cause of its decline. Similarly, to understand the implications of new communicative technologies like Facebook, it is illustrative to examine the reasons why people use social network sites, and examine more closely the effects it has had on friendship dynamics.

Friendships in American Society

Why Friendships Matter

As many scholars argue, friendship is a necessary part of our lives. Friends are said to have a huge influence on our health, how we behave, how well we do academically, what career decisions we make, and even whom we date and marry. As Lieb (2011:3) argues, “[friendship] helps us psychologically, keeping us from depression and helping us manage anxiety. It helps us physically...and helps us individually and collectively in an economic sense, as well...”. In fact, friendships are proven to be so beneficial that studies show that “people with close friends at work are likely to be more productive than their counterparts”, and “businesses that help coworkers develop close friendship within the organization respond more effectively to change” (Lieb 2011:3).

Evidently, friendships matter and are an important institution that should be examined more closely. Epstein (2006:1) argues that friendships are the strongest of relationships because they do not arise out of necessity, but rather out of individual preference. Although friendships are encouraged, and as many scholars argue, central to our well-being, a friendship is a considerably difficult thing to define and describe. What exactly is a friend? How are friendships formed and how are they maintained? The topic of friendship has received great attention

amongst sociologists, psychologists, and anthropologists. To the discipline of sociology in particular, friendships have become a very popular topic as scholars seek to understand what a friendship consists of and how individuals can benefit from pursuing and maintaining friendships.

Defining Friendships

For many years, scholars have studied relationships between friends and have attempted to construct a valid definition of what it means to be a friend. According to Amichai-Hamburger et al. (2013:34), a friendship is defined as a dyadic, co-constructed phenomenon characterized by reciprocity, closeness, and intimacy. Scholars Spencer and Pahl (2006:59) offer a more detailed description of what constitutes a friend by describing friends as “people who have something in common, perhaps the same sense of humor or similar interests, or they belong to the same organization, live in the same locality, come from a similar background, lead a similar lifestyle, work in the same occupational field, or are at the same stage in their lives”. Friends are people who enjoy getting together, sharing activities, and being in each other’s company. They are people who naturally get along with each other, and can feel comfortable in each other’s presence. Lastly, friends are the kinds of people who offer each other practical help, or give each other emotional support (Spencer and Pahl 2006:59).

Sociologist Graham Allan (1989:19) argues that because many friendships originate between people who are involved with each other in formal organizations, friendships could be defined as “a relationship concerned principally with sociability...[and] appears to be one relationship to which we attach special importance personally and culturally”. He states that friendship is a social and cultural construction as friends provide each other with a sense of identity and social worth. Allan argues further that friendship is a voluntary, informal, and

personal relationship because they are ties people freely choose to have and can end when desired.

Allan (1989:20) offers another definition of friendship. He argues that a friendship is a relationship comprised of characteristics such as equality, similarity, and status. He argues that first, friendship is essentially and primarily a relationship of equality, as “friends treat each other as equal...and make sure there is a general reciprocity and equivalence of exchange within [their] relationship”. Secondly, a majority of friendships occur between people who are similar to each other. For example, research has shown that people of all ages tend to befriend others who resemble themselves in terms of physical appearance, common interests, common psychological traits, and race or cultural background (Amichai-Hamburger 2013:34). Due to social and economic divisions that exist in society, people who share similar backgrounds are most likely to meet each other and therefore have a better chance of forming a relationship. Allan (1989:23) argues that friendships occur between people “who occupy broadly similar social positions... [individuals] also tend to share similar domestic circumstances, [are] of the same gender, have similar ethnic backgrounds, [and generally] belong to the same religion”. People who share similar social characteristics are likely to have much more in common than those who do not which provides a firm grounding for the development of friendship. Lastly, Allan (1989:23) claims that status plays a role in how people befriend each other as there is pressure for individuals to “protect [their] status by having as friends mainly people who are in a structurally similar position as [themselves]”.

Establishing and Maintaining Friendships

Lieb has formed a definition of friendship based on a set of characteristics that illustrates what is conducive for friendships to be established and then maintained. First, according to Lieb (2011:20), maintaining a friendship is a voluntary act as friends “voluntarily associate with one

another with regularity, voluntarily seek the company of one another, are voluntarily interdependent, and voluntarily seek proximity to one another”. Friendships are also developed through the ability of individuals to share their most intimate thoughts and feelings with one another. Friends seek intimacy with one another through their time spent together. As a relationship develops, individuals learn to confide in each other more which then allows them to become more intimate with one another, deepening their relationship and forming a more real friendship (Lieb 2011:20). When individuals become intimate with one another trust becomes a principle and necessary part of the relationship. Lieb (2011:20) argues that relationships amongst friends must have a level of trust because real friends are those who can be “trusting of one another and develop trust through private disclosures, sincerity, loyalty, openness of self, and authenticity”.

In order for a relationship to be considered a friendship, scholars argue that friends must also practice the act of reciprocity. Friends, Lieb (2011:21) argues, are those people who “make an effort to reciprocate in the realms of caring, emotional support, and goodwill: they have a special concern for one another’s well-being”. Friends offer each other assistance as proof of their dedication to maintaining their friendship. Friendships are more than a mere relationship of exchange; however, some exchange must be part of the give-and-take of friendship. Lieb (2011) states that in order for an exchange of some sort to happen, friends must help one another out by offering advice, comfort, connections, material aid (i.e. gifts), and favors of other kinds.

Why Friendships Are in Decline

Although studies show that friendships are an important and a necessary part of our lives, scholars argue that friendship in America today is in great decline. Research shows that more Americans have fewer and fewer friends. As noted in an article written by *ABC News* writer Bharathi Radhakrishnan, a survey from Duke University shows that “Americans reported

[having] a smaller circle of friends in 2004 than in 1985. The number decreased in size by one-third, or about one friend, over about 20 years” (Duke University Official Website 2006).

Additionally, Shankar Vedantam (2006:1), argues that “intimate social ties—once seen as an integral part of daily life and associated with a host of psychological and civic benefits—are shrinking or nonexistent”.

The decline of friendships in America has brought about great attention and discussion amongst scholars who stress the importance of humans having strong friendship bonds. Many scholars argue that friendships are no longer what it used to be because of the change in American culture and especially because of the introduction of new technologies in modern society. Claude Fischer (2011:4) argues that “the most visible development of the last forty years has been technological innovation. Modern cars and planes, email, cell phones, text messaging, video links, and social networking sites vastly expanded, sped up, and lowered the cost of social interaction”. Adams (1998:154) also acknowledges that the technological changes during the past 150 years have made contact between both close and long-distance friends less expensive, faster, and easier. Consequently, however, scholars argue that these new developments have negatively affected individuals and their friendships. The rise of the internet has changed the Americans’ idea of socializing, making face-to-face social interactions less common amongst the closest of friends.

As William Deresiewicz (2011:476) argues, “friendship is devolving, in other words, from a relationship to a feeling—from something people share to something each of us hugs privately to ourselves in the loneliness of our electronic caves...”. Deresiewicz (2011:478) claims that friendship has been integrated into our new electronic lifestyles. We are too busy to spare our friends more time than it takes to send a text because we are too busy sending texts.

Although new technologies can provide a degree of social interaction and connection, studies show that these kinds of online relations have come to replace in-person offline contact, changing the nature of human relationships, and consequently the nature of friendships. Social network sites specifically are a form of recent technology which scholars have coined as a primary contributor to the decline of friendship in American society today.

Social Networking Sites

Introducing SNS

Social networking sites, also referred to as social network sites or SNS, were introduced with the goal of connecting people to each other more efficiently and effectively. According to Boyd and Ellison (2007:1), social network sites (SNS) are defined as “web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system”. SNS have become the most popular tool for online communication, allowing users to create a public profile, create and view their own as well as other users’ online networks, and interact with people in their own personal network.

SNS facilitates communication between different individuals ultimately helping foster and support social relationships individuals have with peers, relatives, and acquaintances. Pempek et al. (2009:228) note that social network sites are “designed to foster social interaction in a virtual environment. In general, communication is facilitated through information posted in the [user’s] profile, which often includes a photograph of the member and personal information describing his or her interests. Additionally, [social network sites] provide an easy, accessible way [for individuals] to interact with peers and gather feedback”.

While all social network websites are similar in that they facilitate communication and sociability, they differ in the sense that they offer diverse technological uses. The cultures promoted on specific social network websites vary as most websites support a wide range of interests, uses, and practices. As Boyd and Ellison (2007:1) argue, most social network sites “support the maintenance of pre-existing social networks, but others help strangers connect based on shared interests, political views, or activities. Some sites cater to diverse audiences, while others attract people based on common language or shared racial, sexual, religious, or nationality-based identities”.

Since its introduction, social network sites have become an extremely popular phenomenon. A nationally representative survey of U.S. youth conducted by the Pew Internet and American Life Project found that 41% of 12-13 year olds and 61% of 14-17 year olds use social networking websites (Pew Internet Official Website 2013). Pempek et al. (2009:228) note that spending time on social networking sites appears to be part of most U.S. young adults’ daily activities. In fact, one study shows that U.S. college students reported using social network sites like Facebook for an average of 10 to 30 minutes daily. Moreover, according to Comscore, a leading internet technology company, 9 out of every 10 U.S. Internet users now visit a social networking site in a month. The average Internet user spends more than 4 hours on these sites each month. Nearly 1 out of every 8 minutes online is spent on Facebook (Comscore Official Website 2011). As Bauerlein (2011:180) notes, the Pew Internet and American Life Project survey also found that more than half of all Americans between the ages of twelve and seventeen use some kind online social networking site.

Introducing Facebook Inc.

Most people argue that social network sites are an important and necessary tool for humans as these websites have become the primary way in which many individuals meet,

interact, and maintain their relationships in today's society. Social network sites have become particularly attractive because they allow for individuals to stay in *constant* contact with new and old friends and/or acquaintances, and they also allow users to create new friendships online. One specific social network site, Facebook, has completely dominated American culture.

Facebook, Inc. was founded by Mark Zuckerberg, an undergraduate student at Harvard University in February of 2004 (Facebook Inc. Official Website). The website was first introduced and made exclusively for Harvard students. Upon its official launch, Facebook was met with sudden success among its users—Harvard undergraduate college students. Facebook's success was so great that the site was promptly extended to other Boston universities, Ivy League schools, and eventually to all colleges and universities in the U.S. As of the year 2006, the network was extended beyond colleges and universities worldwide to anyone over the age of 13 with a registered email address, making Facebook a global sensation.

Facebook's mission has been “to give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected” (Facebook Inc. Official Website). Facebook operates by allowing users to select one or more ‘networks’ they wish to belong to. Examples of these networks include things like a specific high school or university, a geographical area or city, or a company. Upon registering to join Facebook, each user is introduced to his or her personal Facebook profile page—a webpage containing basic information such as the user's year of graduation, home town, as well as other personal information such as the user's relationship status. Moreover, Facebook allows its users to designate “friends” by either accepting or rejecting a friend request. Users can control how much information is made visible to their online friends by editing their privacy settings, and they can grant specific people limited access to sections of their profile page. The website allows its members to upload pictures and videos into virtual

photo and video albums, and add captions, tags, or links to these posts. Lastly, Facebook offers several options for its users to communicate and stay up to date with the people in their online networks. Public or private messages, wall posts can be exchanged between users, and groups and/or events can be created in order to help users communicate and connect more with one other. Facebook also allows its users to stay connected with their online friends through the information users present on their ‘news feeds’ and ‘mini feed’.

Today, Facebook is considered one of the largest websites in the world, frequently visited by billions of people of all ages around the world. Interestingly, Amichai-Hamburger (2013:33) notes, that “nearly 40% of children in the USA have profiles on a social network site such as Facebook”. According to the Pew Internet and American Life Project (2013), as recently as September 2009, 47% of online adults used social networking sites. Today 69% of online adults — representing more than half of the entire adult population in the United States— use an online social network site like Facebook. Additionally, statistics show that as of October 2012 Facebook has one billion monthly active users. Approximately 81% of these users are from outside the U.S. and Canada. Facebook’s influence and recognition is dominating at both a national and international level (Facebook Inc. Official Website).

With the exception of one study done by the Pew Internet Life Project, there is little information about older adult Facebook users. Most of the existing literature focuses primarily on the younger population since they continue to be the site’s heaviest users. Over the years however, Facebook use has grown dramatically across the older age groups. In fact, as stated in Pew Internet Life Project’s 2010 report, “half (47%) of internet users ages 50-64 and one in four (26%) users age 65 and older now use social networking sites” (Pew Internet Life Project Official Website).

Although email continues to be the primary way in which older users maintain contact with friends, family members, and colleagues, older users now rely on social network platforms to connect and communicate with other individuals. Results showed that although young adult users continue to be the primary users of Facebook, between April 2009 and May 2010, users ages 50-64 who said they use social networking sites like Facebook grew 88%, and those ages 65 and older grew 100% compared with a growth rate of 13% for those ages 18 to 29 (Pew Internet Life Project Official Website 2010).

Arguments For and Against Facebook

Today, the success of Facebook is apparent and its popularity is unavoidable. With its growing presence and influence over the years however, Facebook has been both commended and criticized. Some scholars argue that social network sites like Facebook have benefitted society in extraordinary ways because it has provided people with easier and more convenient ways to connect and communicate with one another. Those in favor of Facebook state that it facilitates social interaction which consequently strengthens human relations. For example, Hart et al. (2008:471) claim that social network sites like Facebook have successfully “adapted the use of social web services as a vital means of interacting, communicating, and sharing, thus enhancing human connectivity and sociability”. Similarly, researcher Kirsty Young (2011:28) conducted a study on Facebook’s function in making contact, maintaining contact, and facilitating extended contact with online friends. She found that participants believed Facebook benefitted both their well-established and casual relationships. They viewed Facebook as a tool that helped them make and maintain their social relationships. Participants also believed that the website allowed for a convenient way for them to engage in social communication. Participants also indicated that Facebook provided an additional form of contact which is convenient when face-to-face or telephone is not possible or not appropriate. In this study, Facebook served the

purpose of strengthening pre-existing bonds and encouraging the formation of new ones; however, other studies show that the opposite is in fact true.

Critics of Facebook argue that the website along with other social networking sites does more harm than good to society as it has increasingly eliminates the chances of people interacting face-to-face. According to Reich et al. (2012:357), “it is possible that the opportunity to interact with a variety of people, in a potentially less personal way, may provide fewer opportunities for more intimate interactions and consequently interfere with the development of close connections”. People’s dependency on and excessive use of social network sites have not benefitted human interactions, and have had a significantly negative effect on people’s social lives. Critics argue that socializing on websites like Facebook has caused people to interact less intimately with each other, altering people’s ability to really connect with one another.

Scholars argue that social network sites like Facebook have changed the nature of people’s social interactions because it has altered the way in which individuals communicate and form connections with one another. As Amichai-Hamburger et al. (2013:34) argue, online interactions on websites like Facebook are “less effective for conveying complex information, emotional tone, and social presence because of the reduced number of cues to social context (i.e., facial expression, body language, tone of voice) that can be transmitted”. Communicating through social network sites have also changed the level of intimacy people are able to embrace and share in social relationships. Some studies have found evidence for this as people have reported less intimacy in their online relationships than in their face-to-face ones. In one study comparing relationships developed online to more ‘traditional’ offline ones, participants admitted that their traditional, offline relationships were characterized by greater

interdependence, understanding, and commitment, which allowed for more meaningful, beneficial, and intimate friendships (Amichai-Hamburger 2013:35).

Marche (2012:2) argues against Facebook, claiming that it is ‘interfering with our real friendships, distancing us from each other, [and] making us lonelier...Social network sites might be spreading the very isolation it seemed designed to conquer’. Our networked life on sites like Facebook merely allows us to hide from each other, offering us the illusion of companionship without the demands of friendship. As Deresiewicz (2011:476) claims, with the advent of social networking sites, “the friendship circle has expanded to engulf the whole of the social world, and in so doing, destroyed both its own nature and that of the individual friendship itself”.

On Facebook networks we are together with other users, but by spending time together online we are deprived of the ability to interact and be together in real life and in real time. This, ultimately, alters our idea of what constitutes real human bonds, and affects our abilities to form more fulfilling social relationships, let alone real, genuine friendships, with other human beings. Deresiewicz (2011) wisely notes that “Facebook’s very premise—and promise—is that it makes friendship circles visible...there they are, my friends, all in the same place. Except of course, they’re not in the same place, or, rather, they’re not my friends. They’re a simulacra of my friends, little dehydrated packets of images and information...” (476). Facebook seduces its users to believe that by assembling a list of friends, or networks, one could feel emotionally proximate and connected to their online friends when in reality it is not a real connection.

Facebook does not encourage strong friendship bonds, let alone the creation of new friendships. Deresiewicz (2011:480) states that in order for people to know each other better they have to listen to each other’s stories. By doing this, people are able to connect with each other at a more personal, intimate level. He argues that this is precisely what the Facebook page *does not*

leave room for, however. He claims that “posting information on [one’s] profile page is a slick impersonal exhibition. Exchanging stories [in person] on the other hand is probing, questing, questioning, caressing. It is mutual. It is intimate. It takes patience, devotion, sensitivity, subtlety, [and] skill...”.

Conclusion

Sherry Turkle, the author of *Alone Together*, argues that these days, people expect more from technology and a lot less from each other. New technologies are in many ways useful; however, it allows individuals to ‘dial down’ human contact ultimately affecting the way in which we form and later maintain relationships with each other. Turkle (2011:xii) claims that “insecure in [their] relationships and anxious about intimacy, [people] look to technology for ways to be in relationships and protect [themselves] from [relationships] at the same time”.

Communicative technologies like Facebook have become a central part of our real, offline life. Connectivity through different communicative technologies like Facebook offers people new and endless possibilities of communicating; however, they also rob people of their ability to connect face-to-face and share any level of intimacy with other individuals. Ben Agger (2012:13) author of *Oversharing: Presentations of Self in the Internet Age* argues that “today, our relationships are mediated by the screen, behind which we hide our feelings and our vulnerability. This redoubles our vulnerability because it deprives us of face-to-face intimacy... We want others to know where we are but not *who* we are.” By not allowing people to know who we are, we are also deterring people from wanting to form friendships with us.

Social networking sites may be a positive development in the eyes of some people; however, studies clearly show that, in some ways, Facebook could be negatively affecting individuals’ social lives and relationships. As Turkle (2011:280) argues, the ties social network sites allow us to create are not, in the end, the ties that bind. Rather, they are ties that preoccupy.

On Facebook we are ‘together’ with our Facebook “friends” and we may feel connected; however, instead, we are spending more time with technology and less time with each other.

Given these findings, it is important to examine how both younger and older individuals use Facebook, and discover whether they think the site has affected users’ friendships.

Facebook’s influence is tremendous and becoming increasingly greater given its popularity in the U.S and all around the world. It is imperative that there is more scholarship addressing why and how younger and older individuals are using Facebook, and how users’ views of friendship impact how they use, or do not use, Facebook. Adding to the existing literature not only allows for a better insight into how both younger and older individuals use Facebook, but it also highlights the idea of how the site is perhaps being used to bridge the generation gap between different age groups.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

This research builds upon previous scholarly work done on the affects of social networking websites like Facebook on human relationships. As an extension of the previous conducted research and findings, this work explores whether Facebook has affected the friendships of both younger and older users. Generally, the research conducted for this project seeks to understand the effect to which new communicative technologies like social networking websites have changed the way in which younger and older individuals interact, relate, and connect with one another and whether this change has had a negative or positive effect on user's friendships. The primary goal of this research is to provide an insight on how these two age groups define friendships, the reasons why they use social networking websites like Facebook, and their views on whether or not they think Facebook has affected the dynamics of friendship. It would be reasonable to assume that the two groups surveyed would hold different ideas about friendship and the effects popular communicative technologies like Facebook has had on friendships. It could be hypothesized that the generational gap that exists between the two age groups would influence the responses they provided on the questionnaire, causing people who grew up on Facebook to hold very different views from those who did not grow up on Facebook. This study was conducted to examine this phenomenon and uncover the views of both samples.

To understand whether or not new communicative technologies have changed American's friendship dynamics, both people who grew up on Facebook (students) and those who did not (faculty) were surveyed. Participants in the study included both Union College students ranging from ages 18 to 21 years old, and Union College faculty members ranging from ages 32 to 64 years old. First, participants were provided with a series of questions about their friendships, and especially about their 'friendships' on Facebook. Participants were also given a

series of more general questions about Facebook. Participants were asked to tell whether or not they have a Facebook account, and asked to provide a reason for being or not being on Facebook. These two parts of the questionnaire were correlated to determine how participants use Facebook, for what reasons, and whether or not the way they use (or do not use) Facebook is influenced by their view on friendships.

Research Design

Sampling Selection

In January 2013, undergraduate students and faculty members at Union College were recruited to complete a questionnaire (see Appendix D for a copy). The questionnaire was a paper-and-pencil measure that consisted of 21 questions, divided into two parts. In the first part, participants answered 6 questions about friendship, along with a question on their age, and another on whether they were a faculty member or a student at Union College. In the second part, participants were asked a series of questions about Facebook. The questionnaire took approximately ten minutes to complete. It was completely voluntary, anonymous, and included no information that would indicate the participants' identity.

The student and faculty participants in this study were recruited through the use of two different methods. One method involved recruiting Union College undergraduate students to participate in the study. In order to do this, I personally visited an Introduction to Sociology class and asked if the students would be willing to participate in my thesis project. I began by introducing myself to the students and spoke about my reason for visiting their classroom. After a brief introduction, students were asked to fill out a consent form. By signing the consent form, students would be voluntarily agreeing to participate in the study. Students could refuse to sign the informed consent form which would indicate that they would not be included in my thesis project. Students were then briefly informed about the study topic and the nature of the

questionnaire in which they would be asked to fill out. They were asked to answer each question thoughtfully, honestly, and to the best of their ability. Out of the 26 students present in the Introduction of Sociology class I visited, 26 students chose to participate. One particular student did not answer the questionnaire properly, providing answers that would not contribute to my study in any way. This specific questionnaire was disregarded and its data was fully excluded.

The second method consisted of randomly selecting faculty from a list of 200 Union College faculty members. From those randomly selected, a total of 50 faculty members were contacted via email to insure that a reasonable number of faculty members would respond and agree to participate in the study. The email included a brief introduction about who I was and the reason as to why I was reaching out. It also included a short description of the nature of my thesis project, my expectations for this project, and my goals in conducting this research. I also informed candidates that if they did not want to participate in my thesis study they could simply respond via a return email and they will not be penalized or included in my sample. Similarly, I informed candidates that if they chose to participate in my thesis study they should respond via a return email and notify me of this.

After contacting a total of 50 faculty members via email I received approximately 15 return emails from faculty members stating that they did not wish to participate, and 20 return emails from faculty members who agreed to participate in my study. Of the 15 who chose not to participate, an estimated 8 people provided a specific reason for not doing so. For example, some of the reasons faculty members chose not to participate included the fact that they 'do not use Facebook' or that unfortunately they were 'too busy to spare the time needed to fill out the questionnaire'. I proceeded further by contacting the 20 faculty members who agreed to partake in my study and notified them that I would be dropping off both a questionnaire and informed

consent form at their office or department mailbox. I gave these faculty members about 3-4 days to complete the questionnaire and sign the consent form. Once they have done this, I asked that they contact me via email to notify me so that I could personally retrieve all of the questionnaires. After 4 days if I did not receive a completed questionnaire I sent out an email reminder to insure that the questionnaire would be complete and submitted successfully back to me.

Questionnaire Design

All questions that were included in the questionnaire were created by the researcher (see Appendix B). Part one of the questionnaire first included a question about the participants' age and whether or not he or she was a student or faculty member. The remaining questions were designed to identify how participants defined friendships. Some questions posed asked about the factors participants believed to be the most important in a friendship. Participants were given 6 options and asked to rank the top 3 factors they believed were 1st, 2nd, and 3rd most important in a friendship. Participants were also asked to respond to a multiple-choice question that asked about the number of people participants considered to be their 'closest friends' (i.e., 0-3, 4-6, 7 or more). Participants were then asked to choose the top 2 methods they used most when keeping in touch with their 'closest friends' (i.e., phone call, text message, video chat, email, Facebook). Lastly, the questionnaire included an open-ended question about whether the participant believed Facebook has changed the dynamics of friendships.

Questions in part two of the questionnaire were aimed at identifying participants' activity on Facebook. With the exception of 4 open-ended questions, most questions were multiple-choice questions. Participants were given the opportunity to include whether or not they had a Facebook account. If they answered *yes*, participants were asked to explain in detail why they use Facebook. Those who answered *no*, were asked to explain in detail why they chose not to be

on Facebook. Participants were also asked how many “friends” they have on Facebook and asked to give an estimated guess if necessary. To gain a more in depth insight into participants’ activity on Facebook and what they do on Facebook and why, participants were also asked questions like “Do you ever add people you do not know on Facebook?” “How many real-world friendships began on Facebook?” “Why would you remove (i.e. delete) someone from your list of friends on Facebook?” “How often do your *closest* friends post on your wall on Facebook?” “How often do your *closest* friends send you private messages on Facebook?” “How often do your *closest* friends chat with you on Facebook chat?” Participants were also asked to indicate how often they use Facebook to interact with close friends, friends, acquaintances, family members, and business people by using a scale where 1=Never, 2=Once in a while, 3=Often, 4=A whole lot.

Data Analysis Strategy

The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Using this program, frequencies were determined and contingency tables, or cross tabulations, were done. Frequencies were calculated for all the questions in the questionnaire in order to uncover patterns in the responses of both students and faculty members. Frequencies were used to describe the number of times the various attributes of a variable were observed in both the students and faculty responses. Cross tabulations were done in order to investigate the relationships among the variables studied as percentage distributions. Cross tabulations were also done to help identify whether or not student and faculty responses were similar or different from each other.

The Pearson Chi-Square test was conducted on all cross tabulations to assess whether correlations were statistically significant or not. If the significance of Pearson Chi-Square value (also known as the “p” value) is less than 0.05, it indicates that the given relationship will occur

by chance less than 5 times out of 100. Thus, significant values of 0.05 or less were considered statistically significant in this analysis. Once cross tabulations were done, the chi-square values were considered, determining whether the relationship found was statistically significant or not.

Limitations of the Methodology

There were some limitations to the study. The questionnaire was only distributed to 25 Union College undergraduate students and 20 Union College faculty members, which is a fairly small and limited sample population size. Surveying a larger number of students and faculty members might afford different and more valid results as it would be encompassing a larger population. Although the intention was to recruit random faculty members, the ones who participated in the study ended up being mostly faculty members who have Facebook. The fact that they had Facebook could mean that they had more favorable views about the website, which in the end, could have influenced their ultimate decision to participate. Faculty members who chose not to participate seemed to have a less favorable view of Facebook. Their strong opinions about the website could have influenced their willingness to participate in the study.

Other limitations involve the way in which participants were contacted and recruited. Ideally, it would have been best to visit more than 1 classroom to recruit students to participate in this study; however, because I was pressed on time to conduct my research this was not an option. By visiting more classrooms, I would have increased the chances of students completing the questionnaire. Consequently, it would have afforded more diverse perspectives and responses as well. Similarly, faculty members were contacted via email which limited the number of faculty members who would have participated. Although email is considered a primary way of communicating with faculty members, some of the faculty I contacted may have never read my email or simply chose not to respond to it. This, along with other factors, could have influenced

the number of faculty members who reached back me via a return email and the number of faculty who actually participated in the study.

Lastly, as with many questionnaires, questions may not always be interpreted as the researcher intended. Open-ended questions gave the participant freedom to explain *why* they thought the way they did; however, there is no way to tell whether participants fully understood the questions and answered them honestly and to the best of their ability. Although most participants provided thoughtful responses, some chose not to. Reasons for this could be lack of interest to provide in depth, thoughtful answers, lack of adequate time to thoughtfully answer the questions, or perhaps the participant did not understand the question they were being asked in the first place. All of this could have had a significant influence in how participants responded.

Despite these limitations, the sample provides useful data on the differences between how younger and older individuals use Facebook and view friendship. The sample studied in this project was small; however, some of the differences found in the data are dramatic enough to be suggestive of a real difference between how younger and older individuals define friendship, translating into how they use and perceive Facebook.

CHAPTER 3: RESULTS

Responses given by Union College students and faculty members are reported in this chapter in the form of frequency tables and cross tabulations. The results are organized in a similar fashion to the way the questions were presented in the distributed questionnaire; however, comparisons and correlations were drawn between the students and faculty members' responses. The first part of this section shows frequency tables which identify the number of total responses received from Union College students and faculty members. Next, through various cross tabulations, each question in part one and part two of the questionnaire was considered. Some of the cross tabulations done included either student's responses or faculty member's responses. Other cross tabulations done served the purpose of drawing comparisons between the students and faculty members responses. Patterns and associations within the data were uncovered by drawing comparisons between students and faculty member's responses.

Frequencies and Cross Tabulations

Students and Faculty Views on Friendship

As stated in the methodology section, a total of 25 Union College students and 20 faculty members participated in this study. The total sample size, or (N), is 45 when both students and faculty samples are combined. Table 1 below showcases the total percentage of faculty and students who provided responses in the distributed questionnaire. As shown, the percent distribution of faculty responses was 44.4 percent, and the percent distribution of student responses was 55.6 percent.

Table 1: Percent distribution of total faculty and student responses

	Percent
Faculty	44.4%
Students	55.6%
Total (N)	100.0% (45)

In addition to frequencies, cross tabulations were done in order to compare faculty and student responses relating to the issues of friendship and Facebook. In order to better understand how students and faculty define friendships, the important characteristics they believe are needed in a friend, and how friendships are maintained, both students and faculty were asked to respond to questions on friendship. Similarly, in order to examine students and faculty activity (or lack thereof) on Facebook, how they use or do not use the site, and their reasons for using or not using Facebook, participants were asked to respond to questions related to Facebook.

Correlating Student and Faculty Views on Friendship

With the goal of identifying what characteristics students and faculty find to be most important in a friendship, participants were asked to rank the top three factors they believed were most important in a friendship. The six factors included *trust*, *loyalty*, *honesty*, *humor*, *patience*, and *respect*. As shown in Table 2, out of the 25 students who were surveyed 48.0 percent of students picked *trust* as the factor they find to be most important in a friendship, 24.0 percent ranked *honesty* as most important, 12.0 percent ranked *loyalty* as most important, 12.0 percent ranked *respect* as most important, and 4.0 percent ranked *humor* as most important. No students ranked *patience* as having any level importance in a friendship which is an interesting observation to make. On the other hand, out of the 20 faculty members who responded to this question, 55.0 percent ranked *trust* as most important, 5.0 percent ranked *loyalty* as most important, 10.0 percent ranked *honesty* as most important, and 30.0 percent of the sample ranked *respect* as most important. No faculty member ranked *humor* or *patience* as an important factor in a friendship.

Overall, there was a significant percentage of both students and faculty who said that they find *trust* to be the most important factor in a friendship. Similarly, both students and faculty did not find *patience* as being a very important factor in a friendship. As shown in Table 2 below, a

total of 30.0 percent of faculty ranked *respect* as being the second factor they consider as most important in a friendship, whereas students did not view *respect* as very important (12.0 percent indicated that *respect* was an important factor in friendships). Instead, 24.0 percent of students believed *honesty* to be the second most important factor in a friendship, while only 10.0 percent of faculty believed this to be so. Although chi-square tests were done and there was a difference between student and faculty responses, most of these differences were not statistically significant perhaps because the sample studied was so small.

*Table 2:
Percent distribution of students and faculty who ranked each characteristic as most important*

	Students	Faculty
Trust	48.0	55.0
Honesty	24.0	10.0
Loyalty	12.0	5.0
Respect	12.0	30.0
Humor	4.0	0.0
Patience	0.0	0.0
Total (N)	100.0 (25)	100.0 (20)

**Note question prompt:* From the choices listed below, please circle and rank the top three factors you believe are most important in a friendship (1 = 1st Most Important, 2 = 2nd Most Important, 3 = 3rd Most Important)

Correlating Number of Closest Friends

In addition to a question on important friendship characteristics, participants were asked to indicate the number of people they considered to be their closest friends.

Table 3: Students and faculty indicate number of people they consider to be their close friends

# of Close Friends	Students	Faculty
0-3	52.0	35.0
4-6	48.0	60.0
7 or more	0.0	5.0
Unanswered	0.0	0.0
Total (N)	100.0 (25)	100.0 (20)

**Note question prompt:* How many people would you consider to be your closest friend(s)?

As shown in Table 3, the largest percent of students said that they considered 0 to 3 people to be their closest friends (52.0 percent). The second to largest percent of students said they considered

4 to 6 people to be their closest friends (48.0 percent). The largest percent of faculty said that they considered 4 to 6 people to be their closest friends, and the second to largest percent of students said that they considered 0 to 3 people to be their closest friends (60.0 percent and 35.0 percent, respectively). The difference between the students who chose 0 to 3 people as their closest friends and the faculty members who chose 0 to 3 people as their closest friends is 17 percentage points, suggesting a potentially significant difference in the responses. Again, although there is a difference in responses, the differences are not statistically significant.

Correlating Methods Used to Keep in Touch with Friends

Participants were asked to indicate the top two methods they used the most when keeping in touch with their closest friends. Six methods were given as the options participants could choose from: *phone call*, *text message*, *video chat*, *email*, and *facebook*. Cross tabulations were done between the student and faculty responses to better understand which methods the two groups prefer using to keep in touch with their close friends.

As shown in Table 4, a large percentage of the students surveyed chose *text message* as one of the methods they use the most to keep in touch with their friends (92.0 percent). The second largest percentage of students surveyed chose *Facebook* as one of the methods they use the most to keep in touch with their friends (52.0 percent). A total of 40.0 percent of the sample chose *phone call* and 12.0 percent of the sample chose *video chat*. No student chose *email* as a method they use the most to keep in touch with friends. On the other hand, a large majority of faculty chose *email* as one method they use the most when keeping in touch with their closest friends. A total of 95.0 percent of the faculty sample indicated that *email* is the method they use the most to keep in touch with friends. Approximately 80.0 percent of faculty indicated that *phone call* is one of the methods they use the most, 20.0 percent indicated that *text message* is one of the methods they use the most, and 5.0 percent indicated that *Facebook* is one of the

methods they use the most when keeping in touch with their closest friends. No faculty member chose *video chat* as a method they use.

*Table 4:
Percent distribution of students and faculty who chose each method as their top two choices*

Methods	Students	Faculty
Phone Call	40.0	80.0
Text Message	92.0	20.0
Video Chat	12.0	0.0
Email	0.0	95.0
Facebook	52.0	5.0
Total (N)	196.0 (25)	200.0 (20)

**Note question prompt: Which of these methods do you use the most when keeping in touch with your closest friend(s)? Please choose top two methods.*

In this crosstabulation, the p-value for the five variables—*phone call, text message, email, Facebook*— are less than 0.05 showing that the differences between the student and faculty responses are statistically significant. The p-value of the variable *video chat* however, was greater than 0.05 indicating that the difference between the participants’ responses is not statistically significant. There is however, a considerable difference between the faculty and student responses regarding the overall methods they use to keep in touch with their closest friends. Although there are dramatic statistically significant differences between most of these responses, this data is only suggestive of a real difference between what methods students and faculty use to keep in touch with their closest friends.

In summary, the data is suggestive of real differences in how student and faculty view friendship. Both students and faculty ranked trust as the most important characteristic in a friendship; however, faculty chose respect as the second most important characteristic while students ranked honesty as the second most important characteristic. Interestingly, both students and faculty did not choose patience as an important characteristic in friendships, showing a similarity in their views of friendship. Additionally, more than half of the students recorded

having 0 to 3 close friends while faculty members recorded having 4 to 6 close friends. This perhaps is due to the fact that younger people's friendship dynamics are more prone to change during their young years, which can influence the number of close friends they have at this specific point in their lives. Lastly, students indicated that when keeping in touch with their closest friends they first prefer texting over using Facebook while faculty members prefer email over phone calls. The reasoning for this is perhaps because faculty members are less prone to use new communicative technologies like Facebook over more familiar technologies like email and phone.

Correlating Students and Faculty Views and Activities on Facebook

In part two of the distributed questionnaire participants were asked to indicate whether or not they had Facebook. Of the student sample, 96.0 percent indicated that they had a Facebook account and only 4.0 percent of the sample indicated that they do not have a Facebook account. The dramatic difference in these results shows that it is more common for younger individuals to use Facebook than to not use Facebook. Of the faculty sample 70.0 percent of the sample said that they have an active Facebook account, and only 30.0 percent of the sample said that they did not have a Facebook account.

Participants were given open-ended questions which asked them to explain the reasons why they use or do not use Facebook. Patterns and common themes emerged in the responses students and faculty provided. These patterns have been classified into 5 categories—*Maintain Connections and Keep In Touch with Friends and Family, To Post Photos and Look at People's Photos, To Stay Up-to-Date with News and Events, For Entertainment, and To Meet New People.*

A large majority of students and faculty indicated that using Facebook was a way to maintain connections and keep in touch with distant friends and family members. A total of 17 students and 10 faculty members noted that they use Facebook for this reason. Some of the

student responses included “I use Facebook to stay in touch with family and friends” and “To stay updated on family and friends lives when I am not around and/or seeing them daily”. Some of the faculty responses included “Facebook is a nice way to keep in touch with my friends who live in other countries,” and “Facebook is a good way to keep in touch with friends, reconnect with old friends, and keep up with my students and colleagues”.

The second most popular response was that participants used Facebook to post photos of themselves and/or to look at pictures other people post on their Facebook page. A total of 5 students and 5 faculty members indicated that they use Facebook to post photos and/or to look at people’s posted photos. Student responses included “I use Facebook because I like to upload pictures and see other people’s pictures,” and faculty responses included “I use Facebook to post my photos and to see other people’s photos and updates because I have friends and family who live abroad and in other parts of the U.S. so posting pictures helps us keep updated on each other’s lives”.

The less popular responses fell under the *To Stay Up-to-Date with News and Events*, *For Entertainment*, and *To Meet New People* categories. Only 4 students and 1 faculty member indicated that they use Facebook to stay up to date with news and events. Student responses included “I use Facebook to see what events are going on” and “To get a sense of what events may be going on near me”. The one faculty member who noted that he uses Facebook to stay up-to-date with the news and any events noted that he likes “to be notified of some group events his friends might be going to”. A total of 2 students and 1 faculty indicated that they use Facebook *for entertainment* reasons. A response included “I use Facebook for entertainment purposes”. Only one student stated that he/she uses Facebook because according to him/her it is “a way to meet new people”.

All participants who chose not to use Facebook stated that their reason for doing so was related to *procrastination*, *privacy issues*, and/or the fact that they *prefer face-to-face interactions* instead. The 1 student who stated that he/she did not have a Facebook account said that the reason he/she did not was because he/she “was constantly on [Facebook], and [his/her] grades declined”. He/she also noted that he/she prefers “talking face-to-face with friends, and mostly uses email and phone to coordinate gatherings, events, etc”. A total of 3 faculty members stated that they are not on Facebook for privacy reasons. Responses included “I have no desire to share any concepts of my life with the world at large. It bothers me that there is no longer a notion of privacy and reserve,” and “I have no interest in Facebook; private information can be spread around”. Two faculty members stated that they prefer face-to-face interactions and included responses like “I’d rather spend my time on other things, like actually being with my friends in person,” and “I already spend too much time sitting in front of a computer. I want human, face-to-face interactions”. Lastly, 1 faculty member stated that he/she is not on Facebook because “It is a distraction and seems like just one more thing to have to do or check”.

In order to further examine participants activities on Facebook students and faculty members were asked whether they post pictures on their Facebook pages. Participants were asked to provide an explanation as to why they did or did not post pictures. With the exception of some of the responses given by students, trends can be seen when analyzing both student and faculty responses. These patterns were categorized as *Share Pictures with Friends/Family*, *To Get Comments on Posted Pictures*, and *Do Not or Rarely Post Pictures*.

A total of 15 students indicated that they post pictures because they want to share their pictures with friends and family. Many noted that doing this is also a way for them to stay in touch with their friends and family. Some responses included: “I post pictures because it allows

my friends to see what I am doing and stay involved in my life” and “To show my family and friends what I am up to”. One student admitted that he/she posts pictures on their Facebook page because “people are able to comment or ‘like’ my pictures, which is always fun”. A total of 6 students responded to the question by saying that they rarely posted photos, or that they never do. Some of the responses included “I am the worst at posting photos and rarely get around to doing it”. Some students also provided other reasons for posting pictures on Facebook that faculty members did not. They noted that they post pictures “because everyone does it,” “because it seems like the normal thing to do,” and because “it is socially acceptable to do so especially on Facebook”.

Seven faculty members indicated that their reason for posting pictures on Facebook is because it is a way to *share their pictures with friends and family*. Some of their responses included “It’s the easiest way for my family and friends to see pictures of me and my family,” and “It is an easy way for sharing pictures with family and friends of mine who are also on Facebook”. Two faculty members stated that they post pictures so that they can see people’s comments on their photos. Participants stated things like “If I have something I’m really excited about I’ll share a photo. I find it really fun to read all the comments people leave me” and “If I do something notable I post a picture so people can comment on it”. A total of 4 faculty members indicated that they either rarely post photos or do not post them at all by saying things like “I almost never post pictures,” and “I do not post pictures”.

Finally, participants were asked to provide their opinions on whether they think Facebook has changed the dynamics of friendships. All participants, regardless of whether they have or do not have Facebook, responded to this question. All students and faculty members agreed that Facebook has changed the dynamics of friendships; however participants provided different

explanations as to how friendship dynamics have changed due to Facebook. Common themes were also found in these responses in which were categorized under *Changes what it Means to be a Real Friend, Overexposes People's Lives, Depersonalizes Friendships, Weakens Friendships, and Helps People Maintain Long Distance Connections with Friends.*

Six students agreed that friendships dynamics have changed because of Facebook, and that the website has especially *changed what it means to be a 'real' friend.* These students expressed their opinions by saying things like “Facebook’s definition of a friend is different from what it was before Facebook was invented, and now people are more used to ‘Facebook friends’ than they are to real-life friends,” “Facebook skews the concept of being a friend. People are able to ‘friend’ each other after just meeting them once, and many times these people will never meet again”. Four students were concerned with the privacy issues associated with Facebook and argued that the website has helped change friendship dynamics for the worse because the site overexposes people’s lives. Some responses included “Facebook has allowed people’s lives to be overexposed to the public. People can post anything about anyone and this can cause trust issues or other problems,” and “Facebook has made friendships less private and more of an attempt for people to appear well to others online”. A total of 8 students mentioned the idea of how Facebook depersonalizes friendships which consequently affects and changes friendship dynamics in general. These students offered the following responses: “People don’t interact vocally or face-to-face anymore as frequently. People ‘stalk’ or ‘creep’ on each other on Facebook to see what is going on in each other’s lives rather than calling or going to see them,” and “People now rely more on non-social aspects of what a friendship is about. People rely too much on social media to ‘stay in touch with friends’ when really true friendships should be more about concrete aspects such as hanging out, going places, and talking in person”. Five students

also stated that they believed Facebook has threatened and weakened friendships. One student specifically said that “Facebook has diluted the idea of true friendships and all aspects of what a friendship should be in the first place”.

Very few students believed that Facebook has positively changed the dynamics of people’s friendships. In contrast, these students indicated that Facebook has helped improve friendship dynamics because the website helps people easily maintain long distance connections with friends. Some of the responses were “Facebook has allowed me and my friends to constantly interact with each other even when we are away from each other,” and “Facebook has helped me keep in touch with my friends from home which has really helped foster our friendships”.

Most of the faculty responses fell under the *Changes what it means to be a Real Friend*, *Weakens Friendships*, and *Helps People Maintain Long Distance Connections with Friends* categories. A total of 5 faculty members’ responses related to the idea of how Facebook *changes what it means to be a real friend*. Faculty expressed their opinions by saying things like “Facebook just allows people to know more about one another, which doesn’t necessarily suggest a real friendship,” and “A lot of Facebook users seem to think that ‘friendship’ means chiefly the exchange of lots of daily details on Facebook, but a real friendship is something deeper than this”. Three faculty members stated that they believed Facebook weakens people’s friendships. Responses included “my observation is that Facebook is somewhat isolating. Instead of being with friends in real life, many people choose to ‘be with them’ on Facebook,” and “Facebook has allowed us to learn a lot about a person’s opinion, their views, and their flaws. I have chosen to de-friend or not become closer to some of my friends because of things I see on their Facebook pages”. Finally, a total of 6 faculty members’ responses fell under the *Helps*

People Maintain Long Distance Connections with Friends category. Faculty agreed that Facebook has changed friendship dynamics in that it has helped people maintain these relationships. Some of the responses that illustrate this include “I haven’t lost contact with some of the friends that I would have lost contact with because we stay in touch on Facebook,” and “Facebook has allowed me to see what my friends are doing, which I think has helped our relationship a lot”.

Correlating Number of Facebook Friends

Students and faculty members were asked to indicate how many “friends” they have on Facebook. As shown in Table 5, 52.0 percent indicated that they have 400 to 800 friends on Facebook, 28.0 percent indicated that they have 800 to 1200 friends, 12.0 percent of the sample indicated that they have 0 to 400 friends, and 4.0 percent indicated that they have 1200-1600 friends on Facebook. Four percent of the sample does not have a Facebook account so they were asked to disregard the remaining questions on the questionnaire.

Table 5: Students and faculty indicate number of “friends” on Facebook

# of FB Friends	Students	Faculty
0-400	12.0	65.0
400-800	52.0	0.0
800-1200	28.0	0.0
1200-1600	4.0	0.0
Unanswered	4.0	35.0
Total (N)	100.0 (25)	100.0 (20)

**Note question prompt: How many “friends” do you have on Facebook?*

Sixty-five percent of faculty indicated that they have 0 to 400 Facebook friends. Thirty-five percent of the sample did not have Facebook accounts so they were also asked to disregard the question and proceed further with answering the other questions on the questionnaire. The difference between the student and faculty responses regarding the number of Facebook “friends” they have is statistically significant. This data is suggestive of a real, considerable

difference between the number of Facebook “friends” faculty from the number of Facebook “friends” students have.

In the second half of part two of the questionnaire, students and faculty were asked miscellaneous questions about their friendships and their interactions with friends on Facebook. Participants were asked to indicate whether or not they ever add people they do not personally know on Facebook. As shown in Table 6 below, a correlation was done to assess how many participants actually add people they do not know on Facebook. Findings suggest that most participants do not add people they do not know on Facebook (77.8 percent). Only 4.4 percent of the entire sample indicated that they do add people they do not know. The participants who do not have a Facebook account disregarded this question which explains the 17.8 percent population that did not answer the question. The difference between these student and faculty responses is statistically significant. The data is suggestive that there is a real considerable difference between the number of students and faculty who add strangers on Facebook.

Table 6: Percent of students and faculty who add strangers on Facebook

	Students	Faculty	Total
Yes	4.0	5.0	4.4
No	92.0	60.0	77.8
Unanswered	4.0	35.0	17.8
Total (N)	100.0 (25)	100.0 (20)	100.0 (45)

**Note question prompt: Do you ever add people you do not know on Facebook?*

A comparison was also made between student and faculty responses for the question on how many of their real-world friendships began on Facebook. As shown in Table 7, the largest majority of students indicated that that 0 to 5 of their real-world friendships began on Facebook (76.0 percent). Three students noted that 6 to 10 of their real-world friendships began on Facebook, and interestingly, 8.0 percent of the sample indicated that 20 or more of their real-world friendships began online on Facebook. Similar to the student sample, the majority of

faculty indicated that 0 to 5 of their real-world friendships began on Facebook (65.0 percent). A total of 35.0 percent of the faculty sample and 4.0 percent of the student sample did not answer this question because they do not have Facebook accounts. The relationship between these student and faculty responses is statistically significant. The data indicates that there is a suggestive, considerable difference between the number of students whose real-world friendships began on Facebook to the number of faculty whose real-world friendships began on Facebook.

Table 7: Percent of students and faculty whose real-world friendships began on Facebook

	Students	Faculty
0-5	76.0	65.0
6-10	12.0	0.0
11-15	0.0	0.0
16-20	0.0	0.0
20 or more	8.0	0.0
Unanswered	4.0	35.0
Total (N)	100.0 (25)	100.0 (20)

**Note question prompt: How many of your real-world friendships began on Facebook?*

Participants were then asked to explain why they would remove (i.e. delete) someone from their list of friends on Facebook. The response options given to participants are as follows: *Because you are not really friends, Because you no longer get along with him/her, Because you no longer talk to them, I never deleted someone from my list of friends, or Other.* Table 7 above shows the percentage of students and faculty who provided each reason for deleting someone from their Facebook. The majority of both students and faculty indicated that the reason they would remove someone from their friends list would have to be because they are *not really friends in real life* (76.0 percent and 25.0 percent, respectively). Eight percent of students and 10.0 percent of faculty indicated that they would remove a friend from Facebook because they *no longer get along with them*. Zero students and 5.0 percent of faculty indicated that he/she removed a friend from their friend list *because they no longer talk to them*. Four percent of students indicated that they *never deleted a friend*. The 2 students and 2 faculty members who

chose *other* as a response indicated that they removed people from their friends list if “they post inane and annoying things” or “if they are always saying offensive things on Facebook” (8.0 percent and 10.0 percent). The differences between these student and faculty responses is statistically significant, suggesting that there is a considerable, real difference between the responses.

Table 8: Percent of students and faculty who would remove friends from friend list

	Students	Faculty
Not Really Friends in Real Life	76.0	25.0
No Longer Get Along with Them	8.0	10.0
No Longer Talk to Them	0.0	5.0
Never Deleted a Friend(s)	4.0	15.0
Other	8.0	10.0
Unanswered	4.0	35.0
Total (N)	100.0 (25)	100.0 (20)

**Note question prompt: Why would you remove (i.e. delete) someone from your list of friends on Facebook?*

To examine whether participants interact with certain types of people on Facebook, students and faculty were asked to indicate how often they interact with their closest friends, friends, acquaintances, family members, and business people (i.e. co-workers) on Facebook.

Table 9:

Students and faculty indicate how often they use Facebook to interact with each group of people

	Students				Faculty			
	Never	Once in a while	Often	A whole lot	Never	Once in a while	Often	A whole lot
Close Friends	0.0	16.0	52.0	28.0	5.0	50.0	5.0	5.0
Friends	0.0	32.0	48.0	16.0	10.0	40.0	10.0	5.0
Acquaintances	20.0	72.0	4.0	0.0	35.0	25.0	5.0	0.0
Family Members	20.0	36.0	28.0	12.0	0.0	50.0	15.0	0.0
Business People	68.0	24.0	4.0	0.0	20.0	30.0	15.0	0.0
Total (N)	(25)				(20)			

**Note question prompt: Please indicate how often you use Facebook to interact with the people listed in the categories below. Use the following scale for each. (1=Never, 2=Once in a while, 3=Often, 4=A whole lot)*

As shown in Table 9, the majority of students (52.0 percent) said they *often* interact with their close friends on Facebook. Additionally, 48.0 percent of students indicated that they *often* interact with friends on Facebook, 72.0 percent said they interact with acquaintances *once in a while*, 36.0 percent of students said they interact with family members *once in a while*, and 68.0 percent of students said they *never* interact with business people, or co-workers, on Facebook.

From the faculty data, 50.0 percent said that they interact with close friends *once in a while* on Facebook, 40.0 percent said they interact with friends *once in a while*, 35.0 percent said they *never* interact with acquaintances on Facebook, 50.0 percent said they interact with family members *once in a while*, and 30.0 percent of faculty said they interact with business people on Facebook *once in a while*. The difference between these student and faculty responses is statistically significant. The data is suggestive that there is a considerable, real difference between how often students and faculty interact with each category of people on Facebook.

The following table, Table 10, shows a comparison of student and faculty with regard to how often they and their friends post on each other's walls, send each other private messages, and chat with each other on Facebook chat. The largest majority of students and faculty members indicated that they post on their closest friends' walls *once in a while* (48.0 percent and 55.0 percent, respectively). Similarly, both samples agreed that they send their closest friends private messages on Facebook *once in a while* (48.0 percent and 55.0 percent, respectively).

Table 10: Percent of students and faculty who post on close friends' wall, send them private messages, and/or chat with them on Facebook chat

	Student		Faculty	
<i>How often do your closest friends post on your wall on Facebook?</i>	Never	4.0		10.0
	Once in a while	48.0		55.0
	Often	40.0		0.0
	A whole lot	4.0		0.0
	Unanswered	4.0		35.0
	Total (N)	100.0 (25)		100.0 (20)
<i>How often do your closest friends send you private messages on Facebook?</i>	Never	8.0		10.0
	Once in a while	48.0		55.0
	Often	24.0		0.0
	A whole lot	16.0		0.0
	Unanswered	4.0		35.0
	Total (N)	100.0 (25)		100.0 (20)
<i>How often do your closest friends chat with you on Facebook chat?</i>	Never	12.0		50.0
	Once in a while	32.0		15.0
	Often	32.0		0.0
	A whole lot	20.0		0.0
	Unanswered	4.0		35.0
	Total (N)	100.0 (25)		100.0 (20)
<i>How often do you post on your closest friends' wall?</i>	Never	12.0		15.0
	Once in a while	72.0		50.0
	Often	0.0		0.0
	A whole lot	12.0		0.0
	Unanswered	4.0		35.0
	Total (N)	100.0 (25)		100.0 (20)
<i>How often do you send them private messages?</i>	Never	20.0		15.0
	Once in a while	48.0		50.0
	Often	12.0		0.0
	A whole lot	16.0		0.0
	Unanswered	4.0		35.0
	Total (N)	100.0 (25)		100.0 (20)
<i>How often do you chat with them on Facebook chat?</i>	Never	16.0		50.0
	Once in a while	36.0		15.0
	Often	24.0		0.0
	A whole lot	20.0		0.0
	Unanswered	4.0		35.0
	Total (N)	100.0 (25)		100.0 (20)

There was a drastic difference in the student and faculty responses relating to how often participants' closest friends chat with them on Facebook chat. Half of the faculty sample (50.0

percent) indicated that their closest friends *never* chat with them on Facebook, 32.0 percent of students said that they do *once in a while*, and 32.0 percent said that they do *often*.

Students and faculty were also asked to indicate how often they post on their closest friends' walls, send them private messages, and chat with them on Facebook chat. A total of 72.0 percent of students noted that they post on their closest friends' walls *once in a while*, while only 50.0 percent of faculty noted this; 48.0 percent of students and 50.0 percent of faculty noted that they send their closest friends private messages on Facebook; 36.0 percent of students noted that they chat with their closest friends *once in a while*, and 50.0 percent of faculty *never* do. The differences between all of these student and faculty responses is statistically significant. The data is suggestive of a considerable, real difference between the participants' responses regarding how often they and their closest friends post on each other's walls, send each other private messages, and/or chat with each other on Facebook chat.

Conclusion

In summary, more students than faculty indicated that they have an active Facebook account. When asked why they use Facebook more students indicated that they do so to *maintain connections and keep in touch with distant friends and family members, stay up to date with news and events, for entertainment, and to meet new people*. Overall, significantly less faculty indicated that they use Facebook to *maintain connections and keep in touch with distant friends and family members, stay up to date with news and events*. When asked why participants do not use Facebook, most faculty indicated that they do not do so because of *privacy issues* and because they prefer *face to face interactions*. When asked why participants post pictures most students indicated that they do so to *share pictures with friends and family* or that they *do not or rarely post pictures*.

With the exception of a few students, all of the participants agreed that Facebook has changed friendship dynamics for the worse. Most students believe that Facebook *changes what it means to be a real friend, overexposes people's lives, depersonalizes friendships, and weakens friendships*. The few students who believe that changed friendship dynamics but for the better stated that the site has helped strengthen friendship bonds. These students believe that Facebook allows people to easily maintain long distance connections, ultimately helping sustain people's friendships.

When asked about participants' views and activities on Facebook the student and faculty responses varied greatly. Students recorded having more Facebook friends than faculty, were more likely to add strangers on Facebook, had more real-world friendships that began on Facebook, and are more likely to delete their Facebook friends from their friend list because they are *not really friends in real life*. When asked to identify how often participants use Facebook to interact with close friends, friends, acquaintances, family members, and business people, students indicated that they use Facebook *often* to interact with close friends, *often* to interact with friends, *once in a while* to interact with acquaintances, *once in a while* to interact with family members, and *never* to interact with business people. On the other hand, faculty indicated that they use Facebook *once in a while* to interact with close friends, *once in a while* to interact with friends, *never* to interact with acquaintances, *once in a while* to interact with family members, and *once in a while* to interact with business people. Different from students, faculty *never* use Facebook to interact with acquaintances while, different from faculty, students *never* use the site to interact with business people.

Lastly, when asked how often participants' closest friends post on their Facebook wall, send them private messages, and chat with them on Facebook chat most faculty members stated

they do so *once in a while* but that they *never* chat on Facebook chat. When asked how often participants post on their closest friends' Facebook wall, send them private messages, and chat with them on Facebook a larger number of students (in comparison to the number of faculty) indicated that they post on their closest friends' Facebook wall, send them private messages, and chat with them on Facebook *once in a while*. On the other hand, half of the faculty sample indicated that they post on their closest friends' Facebook wall, and send them private messages on Facebook *once in a while*, but that they *never* chat with their closest friends on Facebook.

CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter reviews the results gathered from the questionnaire distributed in this study. Although a good portion of the questions included in part two of the questionnaire did not seem to get at the issue studied, all of the responses worthy of discussion are considered and analyzed more deeply in this chapter. Most results supported the major hypothesis discussed in the literature review chapter which indicated that responses given by older individuals who were surveyed (e.g. faculty members) would be different from the responses given by the younger individuals (e.g. students).

It was also expected that the faculty members who were surveyed would have different views on friendship. The results do support this hypothesis as most faculty responses on friendships were different from the students' views. Faculty members are also expected to hold more negative views of Facebook and the effects it has had on friendships, and results show this to be true. While the existing information on the topic of friendship and friendships allowed for a hypothesis to be explored, the data did not allow for general conclusions to be made. The data that refuted my initial claim however, made it possible for new analyses to be discovered. These analyses are also addressed in this chapter.

Analysis of the Findings

Similarities in Student and Faculty Responses

Overall the majority of the results show that student and faculty responses were significantly different from one another. For the question regarding important friendship characteristics however, responses seemed to be more similar. As mentioned in Chapter Three, a large percentage of both students (48.0 percent) and faculty (55.0 percent) chose *trust* as the most important factor in a friendship. As mentioned in Chapter One, friendships are developed through the ability of individuals to share their most intimate thoughts and feelings with one another. In order for any relationship to develop, individuals need to learn to trust each other

more. Trust then becomes a principle and necessary part of a friendship. This perhaps explains why most students and faculty chose trust as the characteristic they consider most important in a friendship.

Curiously, both students and faculty members did not choose *patience* as an important characteristic in friendships. This is a particularly interesting finding when the topic of Facebook (or other types of social media) is added into the picture. In some ways, and as many scholars argue, the use and popularity of social networking websites has probably contributed to people feeling more impatient with one another. We have all become ‘too busy’ to invest any more time and effort into our friendships. As Agger (2012:9) notes, “it is simply easier, more convenient, and less of a hassle [for us] to compose a brief text message, email, or Facebook post” to a friend (9). With the growing accessibility and convenience of these new and fast technological means of communication, younger individuals and even older individuals are perhaps more inclined to log onto Facebook and chat with friends online than they are to call a friend or meet up with them in person. Interacting face-to-face takes us more time and commitment. Interacting online, at our convenience, on our schedule, and on our own time evidently becomes a more attractive alternative.

In the study, participants were also asked to document how many people they considered to be their closest friends, and the number of “friends” they had on Facebook. Interestingly, the majority of students indicated that they considered 0 to 3 people to be their close friends, whereas, the majority of faculty said that they considered 4 to 6 people to be their closest friends. This finding was a particularly interesting one given that most students said they have 400 to 800 “friends” on Facebook. Over half of the faculty members surveyed noted that they have 0 to 400 Facebook “friends” which comes to show how less relevant ‘friending’ people on Facebook is to

faculty than it is to students. Faculty members seem to consider having more offline, close friends than online Facebook “friends”. There could be many reasons as to why younger individuals seek more friends online. For example, Agger (2012:4) would argue that teens, adolescents, and emerging adults want connection and to feel a sense of community but “they don’t have enough face-to-face friends” so they find and cultivate friendships by ‘friending’ people on Facebook.

A large majority of both students and faculty indicated that they use Facebook because it successfully helps them maintain connections and keep in touch with their distant friends and family members. This finding is in some ways predictable given our human need and desire to remain constantly connected with other people. Findings in this study show that Facebook enables its users to make and maintain connections more easily with family, friends, and peers, and especially with those who are distant. This perhaps is the reason why Facebook is seen as so attractive to the millions of people who use it. It allows for individuals to find the connection and the sense of community they need, lack, and crave so much of.

On the other hand, most faculty members who do not have a Facebook account indicated that they do not do so for privacy reasons. Interestingly, no student indicated that they do not use Facebook for privacy reasons. One reason this could be so is perhaps because students have a different idea of what should be ‘private’ now-a-days. This is especially the case when considering the information most students share on social media websites like Facebook. Agger (2012:2) claims Facebook is the biggest vehicle of oversharing as “one posts all of one’s personal details, relationship status, likes and dislikes, [and] pictures and posting of friends”. Faculty would agree that what is considered as personal is made totally public on Facebook; however, students would argue that these kinds of information are not necessarily private matters

that should be kept from their Facebook “friends”. Students would maybe agree instead that these kinds of information identify who they are, their personalities, their interests etc. which when shared with ‘friends,’ ultimately helps them feel more connected to each other.

Lastly, participants were asked the most significant question of all which was directly related to the issue studied in this project. Students and faculty members were asked to indicate whether they think Facebook has changed the dynamics of friendships. As mentioned in Chapter Three, both students and faculty agreed that Facebook has changed the dynamics of friendships. Interestingly, most of the participants indicated that this change is not a good thing. A large percentage of both students and faculty indicated that Facebook has completely changed what it means to be a ‘real’ friend. Facebook has blurred people’s ability to distinguish between Facebook friends and “real” friends. This finding suggests that Facebook makes it difficult for users to understand the true concept of a friend, or of what is expected in a real friendship.

Although students did not find privacy to be an issue in their decision to *not* use Facebook, some students indicated that Facebook has changed friendships because of privacy reasons. Students said that Facebook has not only allowed people’s lives to be overexposed, but it has also given people the liberty to post anything they want on their own walls or on their friends’ wall. Students in particular believe that this can cause massive trust issues along with other problems which could ultimately ruin any friendship. Sociologist Agger (2012) supports this idea by stating that “people overshare when communicating electronically in ways that they wouldn’t if face-to-face. We need to keep some of our private thoughts to ourselves... It is difficult to have friends, or stay friends, when we disclose everything... saying too much leads to hurt feelings” (26). Friendships are based on protecting private thoughts which is also very much related to the trust factor students identified as an important characteristic in friendships.

Some students and faculty suggested that Facebook has changed friendship dynamics for the better because it allows friends, family members, and other peers to stay in touch with each other; however, some students specifically think Facebook has also changed friendship dynamics for the worse because it has also allowed for friendships to become more impersonal. Students indicated that individuals their age rely too much on social media to stay in touch with friends when instead ‘friends’ should be meeting up and talking in person in order to catch up. Sharing aspects of one’s life or day-to-day activities also does not help friends become more intimate or trusting of one another; however, as Agger (2012:26) admits, perhaps oversharing may be a strategy Facebook users [particularly the young] are using to become more intimate and feel more connected to one another.

A Different Methodological Approach

Since this study was conducted in a short time frame, and included a very small sample, proper conclusions cannot be effectively drawn. Some of the questions distributed to the participants—such as the ones in which participants were asked how often they post on each other’s walls etc.—did not yield responses that are fully representative of the proposed research question. Although these questions allowed for an insight on how students and faculty members use Facebook, they were somewhat general and vague questions. If more specific open-ended and close-ended questions were included in the questionnaire perhaps the study would yield better findings and conclusions which would be representative enough of the two groups that were studied. Some of these questions may have included:

- “What is a friend?”
- “How connected do you feel to your ‘real’ offline friends versus your Facebook friends?”
- “Do you feel a sense of community on Facebook?”
- “How intimate do you feel to your ‘real’ friends versus your Facebook friends?”
- “How often do you interact with your ‘real’ friends on Facebook and how often do you interact in person?”

- “How comfortable do you feel sharing more private matters with your friends online?”
- “Have you ever argued with a friend over something posted on Facebook?”
- “How has your life been changed by the experience of using (or not using) Facebook?”
- “What impact does Facebook have on the relationships you really care about?”
- “How does Facebook change the way we see ourselves and others?”

As briefly discussed in Chapter Three, a different methodological approach would have possibly allowed for better results. Instead of distributing questionnaires to only 45 Union College students and faculty members, perhaps distributing questionnaires to a larger sample of students and faculty would have yielded better, more generalizable results. Questionnaires could have been distributed online rather than in person as was done in this study. Perhaps online questionnaires could have reached a larger number of participants which consequently would have increased the sample size for both groups studied. In addition to questionnaires, participants could have also been asked to participate in face-to-face interviews. It would be beneficial to introduce interviews because it might allow for a more intimate way to ask participants questions on the issues of friendship and Facebook and how friendships are changing because of Facebook use. Ultimately, face-to-face interviews could have motivated participants to conceal more of their personal opinions and thoughts on friendships in general, and on the effects of Facebook on friendship dynamics. Face-to-face interviews would also have prevented any underreporting on part of the participants.

All and all, a modified research design and process might generate more extensive findings. Participants would not be limited to provide certain answers. They would be given the opportunity to elaborate and explain all of their responses in more detail. Such methodological changes might also reveal stronger correlations and a greater number of statistically significant associations.

Future Research

Since its inception in the 19th century, sociology has been the academic discipline dedicated to analyzing social problems. Sociology does the same today as sociologists diagnose and offer solutions for societal issues. The fact that many people below the ages of 40 or 50 in today's society use Facebook makes it a worthy topic of sociological investigation. More extensive future studies should be conducted to offer more defined conclusions of why younger and older Americans use social networking websites like Facebook, and how these websites affect social relationships. Perhaps a modified version of the existing questionnaire could be distributed to students and faculty members at other colleges and universities across the country. This would not only generate a larger sample size, but it would also help eliminate the problem of only surveying potentially like-minded Union students and faculty members.

Since Facebook has become a significant part of American culture, it is necessary that researchers understand how social networking websites like Facebook (and other forms of social media) could be a contributing factor to friendships declining in American society. Agger (2012) notes that

Like their kids, adults too, text, tweet, email, and blog. They even use Facebook and other social media. We are all plugged in creating community where none may have existed before...the digital divide contains a generational divide, with kids ahead of the curve when it comes to phone and internet use, but adults are [quickly] catching up. (16)

It is imperative that researchers study how these new forms of social media are affecting not only the younger more 'technologically-savvy' individuals, but also older individuals who are now active and frequent users of Facebook.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A—Informed Consent Form

Hello, my name is Brenda Souza. I am a senior majoring in sociology at Union College. I am conducting a research project for my senior thesis that involves examining whether Facebook has affected Americans' conception of friendships. You will be filling out a questionnaire with questions on both Facebook and friendships. The questionnaire should not take long to complete.

If you do not wish to continue to participate in my thesis project you can return this consent form back to me and you will not be included in the study. If you do wish to be part of my study, please sign at the bottom of this page. Your answers will be kept confidential and no mention of your name will be used in the actual thesis.

Note: if at any point you no longer wish to participate you are free to disclose this information and I will not proceed further with the questionnaire.

Thank you for your time.
Brenda Souza '13

Signature of Participant

Date

Printed Name of Participant

Name of Researcher

Date

Appendix B—Facebook and Friends Questionnaire

Please answer the questions thoughtfully, honestly, and to the best of your ability. Again, your answers will remain anonymous. If you have any questions in regards to this questionnaire, please email souzab@garnet.union.edu. Thank you for your time.

PART ONE

1. Age:

2. Faculty or Student (circle one): Faculty Student

3. From the choices listed below, please circle and rank the top three factors you believe are most important in a friendship (**1** = 1st Most Important, **2** = 2nd Most Important, **3** = 3rd Most Important)

- a) Trust _____
- b) Loyalty _____
- c) Honesty _____
- d) Humor _____
- e) Patience _____
- f) Respect _____

4. How many people would you consider to be your *closest* friend(s)?

- a) 0-3
- b) 4-6
- c) 7 or more

5. Which of these methods do you use the most when keeping in touch with your *closest* friend(s)? (Please choose top two methods used)

- a) Phone call
- b) Text message
- c) Video chat
- d) Email
- f) Facebook

6. Do you think Facebook has changed the dynamics of friendships? (Please explain in 3 or more sentences)

PART TWO

1. Do you have a Facebook account?

- a) Yes
- b) No

NOTE: If you answered “Yes” jump to question #3 - If you answered “No” jump to question #2 and disregard the remaining questions

2. Why do you not use Facebook? (Please print clearly and answer in 3 or more sentences)

3. Why do you use Facebook? (Please print clearly and answer in 3 or more sentences)

4. How many “friends” do you have on Facebook? (Include an estimated guess if necessary)

5. Do you ever add people you do not know on Facebook?

- a) Yes
- b) No

6. How many of your real-world friendships began on Facebook?

- a) 0-5
- b) 6-10
- c) 11-15
- d) 16-20
- e) 20 or more

7. Why would you remove (i.e. delete) someone from your list of friends on Facebook?

- a) Because you are not really friends in real life
- b) Because you no longer get along with him/her
- c) Because you no longer talk to them
- d) I never deleted someone from my list of friends

e) Other, please explain: _____

8. Please indicate how often you use Facebook to interact with the people listed in the categories below. Use the following scale for each:

- 1 = Never
- 2 = Once in a while
- 3 = Often
- 4 = A whole lot

_____ Close Friends

_____ Friends

_____ Acquaintances

_____ Family Members

_____ Business People (i.e. co-workers)

9. How often do your *closest* friends post on your wall on Facebook?

- a) Never
- b) Once in a while
- c) Often
- d) A whole lot

10. How often do your *closest* friends send you private messages on Facebook?

- a) Never
- b) Once in a while
- c) Often
- d) A whole lot

11. How often do your *closest* friends chat with you on Facebook chat?

- a) Never
- b) Once in a while
- c) Often
- d) A whole lot

12. How often do you post on your *closest* friends' wall?

- a) Never
- b) Once in a while
- c) Often
- d) A whole lot

13. How often do you send them private messages on Facebook?
- a) Never
 - b) Once in a while
 - c) Often
 - d) A whole lot
14. How often do you send chat with your *closest* friends on Facebook chat?
- a) Never
 - b) Once in a while
 - c) Often
 - d) A whole lot
15. If you post pictures on your Facebook, what are your reasons for doing so? (Please print clearly and explain in 3 or more sentences)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME ☺

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at souzab@garnet.union.edu