

Stop creeping and focus on yourself more

Written by Caitlin Perry, Columnist
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I'm sure we're all guilty of "creeping" on someone's Facebook profile, whether it's an old friend, a past lover, a teacher, coworker or estranged family member.

Even though I have done my fair share of looking through photos of people I'm not friends with in real life, it still bothers me how much time we invest in being nosy.

Facebook seems to be a necessary evil. There are so many reasons why we shouldn't be a part of this social network, such as privacy concerns, rights over photos and content and who has access to your contact information. Unfortunately, if we don't have a Facebook profile, we are left unconnected to our friends and miss out on a lot of social activity. Yes, if they're really your friends, they could call, text, email or visit you, but there's still a lot that you'll probably miss out on.

One of my biggest annoyances when it comes to Facebook is how people collect friends like we collected Pokémon cards as children of the '90s. Believe it or not, you do not need to add every person you ever come in contact with as your Facebook friend. Not every classmate, coworker or casual acquaintance needs to be part of your social network, and adding them just so you can get a glimpse into their life is just plain weird.

I don't believe anyone has more than 100 close friends in real life, so having 800 Facebook friends who can see all your pictures and statuses is pointless. Does every one of them genuinely care about what you are doing? Probably not, but I feel as if I have the unpopular opinion on this subject. Most people I know have hundreds of friends and don't think twice about it. I, on the other hand, frequently delete friends and deny friend requests. If we aren't close, you don't need access to my information.

For some reason we have this fascination with the lives of other people. There is some natural tendency for us to want to see how others are living their lives and even compare our interests and successes to theirs. Facebook creator Mark Zuckerberg doesn't see a problem with this,

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and in all actuality, is making our ability to search people even easier.

On Jan. 15, Facebook launched its new Graph Search in beta, which is designed to let you search for people with certain interests, friends who have been to a specific place or like a particular food. Huffington Post explained that this would make it easier to find people by searching things like “People named Drew who are friends of Peter and went to Harvard.” Facebook would draw on the information provided on our profiles and come up with a person who matches this description.

While this feature is designed to help you connect with people (whom you probably don't need to be connected with anyway), another new feature Facebook has recently released is its search log. Unbeknownst to most, Facebook has been logging every person we have searched since September 2012. Although this log is private and can easily be deleted, it is still an uncomfortable find for some people. You may be shocked to see how often you really have been looking at someone's profile.

For me, seeing the search history was beneficial. I didn't have anything to be ashamed of, but it made me realize how many times I had been looking at the profiles of my friends, and occasionally searching for those whom I am no longer in contact with. There's really no point in spending time checking up on your ex-best friend from elementary school to see if your life has turned out better, or seeing who from your high school never made it out of your hometown. We should be using the time we spend checking up on others on improving ourselves and appreciating our own lives.

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