

EXHIBIT 7

The Harvard Crimson

ONLINE EDITION

Originally published on Tuesday, November 04, 2003 in the News section of The Harvard Crimson.

Hot or Not? Website Briefly Judges Looks

By **BARI M. SCHWARTZ**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Harvard students often compete in the classroom, but for at least a few hours this weekend, only one thing helped them make the grade—their looks.

Just over a month after two Harvard alums competed in the Miss America Pageant, a website created by Mark E. Zuckerberg '06 gave students a chance to rate their peers using ID photos taken from online House facebook.

“Were we let in for our looks? No. Will we be judged on them? Yes,” proclaimed the site, which Zuckerberg has now taken offline.

Zuckerberg, a computer science concentrator, said he created the site—www.facemash.com—by hacking into House online facebook and compiling ID photos onto his website, allowing viewers to vote for the “hotter” of two randomly chosen photos or rate the looks of students in a particular House against fellow-residents.

A link to the site was forwarded on many House and student group e-mail lists over the weekend—including the Institute of Politics (IOP), Fuerza Latina and the Association of Black Harvard Women (ABHW)—prompting both praise and criticism across campus.

But by Sunday night, outrage from individuals and student groups led Zuckerberg, who said he never expected such widespread publicity, to shut down the site for good.

By that time, Zuckerberg said, there had been 450 visitors to the site who had voted on their peers' photos at least 22,000 times.

“I don't see how it can go back online. Issues about violating people's privacy don't seem to be surmountable. The primary concern is hurting people's feelings,” Zuckerberg said. “I'm not willing to risk insulting anyone.”

Leyla R. Bravo '05, president of Fuerza Latina, said she sent a link to the website out over the group's e-mail list to let people know about what she viewed as a problem.

“I heard from a friend and I was kind of outraged,” she said. “I thought people should be aware.”

Both Fuerza Latina and ABHW received apology e-mails from Zuckerberg yesterday.

In the letter, Zuckerberg wrote that he was mainly interested in the computer science behind the venture.

"I understood that some parts were still a little sketchy and I wanted some more time to think about whether or not this was really appropriate to release to the Harvard community," he wrote.

According to Zuckerberg, it was his intention to only show a few friends to get their opinion on the site, but someone forwarded the link to a friend and the chain of e-mails continued from there.

"When I returned from a meeting at around 10 p.m.," he wrote in the letter, "traffic was out of hand, and after thinking about the best course of action, I shut down the site around 10:30."

Earlier that day, the site had experienced less than a quarter of those visitors, according to Zuckerberg. But when he got back to his room, traffic to the website was so heavy that he could not even log on to his own computer.

"I hope you understand, this is not how I meant for things to go, and I apologize for any harm done as a result of my neglect to consider how quickly the site would spread and its consequences thereafter...I definitely see how my intentions could be seen in the wrong light," Zuckerberg's apology letter said.

The Rules

Director of Residential Computing for Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) Computer Services Kevin S. Davis '98 declined to comment on Zuckerberg or the website.

But according to computer rules and responsibilities printed in the handbook and the FAS Computer Services website, Zuckerberg's website likely violates campus computer use policies.

"Students may not attempt to circumvent security systems or to exploit or probe for security holes in any Harvard network or system, nor may students attempt any such activity against other systems accessed through Harvard's facilities," the guidelines state.

Zuckerberg's website also appears to be in violation of the University's guidelines for distribution of digitized images.

"The copying of data from [the ID photo database] to be used in another for purposes of bypassing any of the above restrictions, or without written permission, is prohibited," according to the guidelines.

In addition to listing the "compilation or redistribution of information from University directories" among prohibited activities, the FAS handbook states that misconduct such as "knowingly gaining unauthorized access to a computer system or database" may be "subject to criminal and civil penalties" in addition to College disciplinary action.

Zuckerberg declined to comment on whether he has faced any charges or disciplinary action.

'Let the hacking begin'

Zuckerberg said his interest in computer science and boredom on a Tuesday night were the ingredients behind his rating recipe.

It took less than a week for him to create the site—and he chronicled the process in a journal published on the site itself.

He began at 8:13 p.m. last Tuesday: “I need to think of something to occupy my mind. Easy enough—now I just need an idea...”

Just 95 minutes later, at 9:48 p.m., he added another entry.

“The Kirkland facebook is open on my computer desktop and some of these people have pretty horrendous facebook pics,” he wrote. “I almost want to put some of these faces next to pictures of farm animals and have people vote on which is more attractive.”

Then, just before 1 a.m., a new post: “12:58am. Let the hacking begin.”

Starting with Kirkland and moving his way through the Houses, Zuckerberg described how he hacked into online facebookes one by one and put the photos onto his website.

Around 4 a.m. last Wednesday, Zuckerberg finished compiling ID photos of all undergraduates except for first-years and residents of Winthrop, Currier and Quincy, whose facebookes are not available online.

In his online account, Zuckerberg called the hacking “Child’s play.”

He describes how he got the photos from each House and then records the actions he took over the next few days to create the algorithms and codes to create the rating website.

Just before 7:30 a.m. on the morning of Halloween, he wrote that the site was finished.

Zuckerberg said his primary attraction to building the website was the science of creating the program and compiling the photos, not the prospect of publicizing it for widespread use.

“I’m a programmer and I’m interested in the algorithms and math behind it,” said Zuckerberg, who is no stranger to creating computer software and programs.

He received worldwide notice for an MP3-player that he created during his senior year at Philips Exeter Academy.

And at the beginning of this year, Zuckerberg said he created a “coursematch” website where students could voluntarily submit the courses they were taking so that other students in the same courses could find out who their peers were.

[Go back to original article.](#)

Copyright © 2005, The Harvard Crimson Inc. All rights reserved.