Introduction and Methods

- **Experiment**
  - Introduce non-mutual friends to Elliot through social media and to Spencer in person.
  - Survey their reactions and perceptions.

- **Goals**
  - How does the increased use of social media impact our perceptions of others?
  - How do these perceptions affect social interaction in real life?
What is the general vibe you get from this person?

Based on their profiles, name three things they might bring up in conversation.

How much does he use social media? Do you predict him to have all the most popular social media outlets like Instagram, Snapchat, etc.?

How much does he use the internet for non-school related things?

What socioeconomic background would you guess they are from?

Would you be friends with them?

How often does he go out?

What’s his sex life like?

What parts of his life do you envy?

For example, what’s a skill you think he might possess that you don’t have?

Based on their profile, what would you say are this person’s defining characteristics?

What are their interests?

How accurate do you think your first impression will be?
POST EXPERIMENT QUESTIONS

- How do you think your reactions between Elliot and Spencer differed?
- Do you think having “seen” Elliot on social media beforehand influenced your interactions between one another?
- Do you feel that because you had previous knowledge of Elliot, it was difficult or easier to carry out conversation?
- Has this experiment led you to question your own assumptions of others on social media?
- Describe how your impression changed or remained constant throughout
- How accurate were your survey responses?
- Do you feel like you enter real-life interactions with predispositions based on media profiles?
Elliot Rask

I gotta say.. Today was a good day
University of Oregon
Connor Kennedy

Age: Freshman
Born: California
Social Media: Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat

Preliminary Responses

- Funny sense of humor
- Personable and easy going
- Upper middle class, but not eager to show off possessions
- Envious of Elliot’s ability to play football
- Expected his first impression to remain accurate when he met him
Connor Kennedy (cont.)

Post-experiment responses

- Conversation with Elliot felt generic and forced
- First impression of Elliot was “hit or miss”
- Felt good about initial interpretation of Elliot’s character, thought they would have more in common
- Had a more “real” conversation with Spencer
- Surprised at how easily the conversation flowed from topic to topic with Spencer
Liam Maher-Hall

Year: Freshman  
Born: Bend, OR  
Social Media Accounts:  
Facebook & Snapchat

Preliminary Responses:

- “Seems to have good vibes”
- Interested in sports, humor, family
- Moderate Social Media use
- Average/Middle-class background
- Wouldn’t be opposed to being friends
- Seems to be social
- Unsure of the accuracy of his impressions from social media
Post-Experiment Responses (After meeting Spencer & Elliot):

- No preconceived notions of Spencer, but did of Elliot.
- Meeting wasn’t heavily influenced, but the dynamic of conversation changed a bit
- Possibly more difficult to carry out conversation
- Not huge on social media, so doesn’t judge people unless he knows them
- Thinks social media is somewhat destructive
- Doesn’t normally meet people online before in-person
Sydney Pincus

Year: Sophomore
Born: L.A. (the Valley)
Social Media Accounts:
Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, Tumblr, Wordpress, Pinterest, Tinder

Preliminary Responses:
- He seems like a cool dude,
- Loves his family, probably a down-to-earth guy.
- On social media a lot, uses Twitter the most
- Parties a lot, confident
- Feels like she’ll be accurate but fears quick judgement
Post-Experiment Responses

- Very different reaction; convo with Elliot felt awkward, didn’t expect him to be quiet
- Thought Elliot was a “frat star”
- Basing judgments off of social media is no way to measure personality
- “Assumptions are more aligned with reality the more you know a person, but they seem to be different at the first meeting”
Cass Anderson

Preliminary Responses:

- Seems pretty chill, probably likes to party.
- Interested in sports, partying, and friends.
- Is fairly active on social media
- Feels like her responses will be somewhat accurate.

Year: Freshman
Born: Ashland, OR
Social Media: Facebook and Snapchat
Post Experiment Responses:

- Elliot was more closed off than expected.
- Thinks it is beneficial to go in with an open mind during first meetings.
- Felt her predictions were fairly accurate.
- “I think it depends on the person. If they are really active on facebook it is easier to create predispositions about them.”
### Test Subject Reaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elliot</th>
<th>Spencer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Going into the meetings, I had very little knowledge as to who I was meeting with.</td>
<td>- Conversations felt pretty organic; nothing to hide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- This created a rare situation in which I met someone without first observing their social media.</td>
<td>- Knowing it is an experiment, some validity is compromised on both sides.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- One could argue, I am so use to knowing someone’s “social side,” that without knowing this social side, I become awkward when thrown into conversations with these people.</td>
<td>- Don’t <em>always</em> feel super comfortable in conversation; I can be awkward, but the reactions indicate that people felt the conversations were maintained, possibly indicating genuinity of meeting someone before knowing anything.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Error Analysis

- Elliot & Spencer role reversal
- Having the subjects unaware that they are participating in an experiment → More authentic interaction and responses?
- More test subjects → More conclusive analysis
- Randomly select participants...?
- Have Elliot scope their social media too?
Concluding Conjectures

- People generally felt more comfortable conversing with Spencer than Elliot.
  —Result of an assumed conception of their persona?
  —Causing uncomfortability in interaction? Or personality type?
- Tend to believe impressions from social media to be somewhat accurate, but were always surprised by something.
  —Impossible to know much from media
- More difficult to carry out conversation because of previous knowledge of Elliot
  —Greater implications?