

## Over-sharing on the Internet



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I am not a very private person. I do not keep secrets. I am generally pretty open with my opinion, but even I would be reluctant to make my personal information public domain. Spokeo.com is a website that catalogs personal information for public use and one of the major reasons we should be more aware of what we share on the Internet.

The website's tagline, "Not your grandma's white pages," certainly rings true. With just a name, Spokeo allows its users to access not only a person's full address, but depending on the amount of information available, their relationship status, yearly income, and even their hobbies. For a yearly fee of just over \$35, a user can get access to even more.

As members of a post-industrial society in the 21st century, we are all part of a rapidly evolving information age. Information is readily available to anyone able to key in a few words into a Google search bar. While this kind of accessibility is convenient, concepts like information control and protection of privacy are quickly becoming a thing of a past.

Frankly, I find this scary. Admittedly the issue is a double-edged sword. A free flow of information allows for heightened government transparency, fast-forming social movements, and easy global communication. However, with websites like Spokeo popping up, which make an individual's personal information public, the ethics of our information-hungry society may need to be called into question.

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Using Spokeo, I was able to find extensive information on many of my family members and friends, but information on myself was non-existent. I wasn't even listed as an existing family member on my father's otherwise complete family tree.

I can owe this to precautions I've taken

when dealing with Internet safety: using aliases when my name is not necessary, creating multiple email addresses for mailing lists, and avoiding advertisements — if it is too good to be true, it probably is not.

A born skeptic, I was late coming into the social networking scene and since then I have been careful about privacy settings and what kind of information I publish.

Taking care to cover up digital footsteps is important to avoid being catalogued by sites like Spokeo.

While setting Facebook profiles to public may seem like a good way to reach out to potential friends, it makes any information published there liable to be taken and shared by cataloguing sites like Spokeo. Information published to the Internet can be saved and stored even if it is taken down from the original source.

Rarely do people walk around wearing t-shirts that state their income, phone number, and marital status, so it's a little confusing as to why people think the Internet is an appropriate place to post these things.

This is why I think that unnecessary information sharing should be kept to a minimum. Avoid money-making survey websites, unfamiliar social networking or dating websites, and mailing lists that require more than just an e-mail address.

Being conscious of who is getting what information about you is important, both in daily life and on the Internet. By taking a conservative approach to what information we share on the Internet, we can avoid being documented by sites like Spokeo.

## HEAT bus: effective or defective?



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You want to go downtown, but no one has a car, so you decide to take the HEAT bus. It's scheduled for 2 p.m. and you get there five minutes early to be on the safe side. But the HEAT bus is 15 minutes late ... again.

It seems that every time you want to take the HEAT bus, it does not arrive at its scheduled time. With this in mind, is it worth waiting around for?

There is always the possibility of doing something more productive with your time than waiting for the HEAT bus. However, students want to be able to get away from campus to go to concerts, shows, museums, and other events that are held in Greensboro. Without a car, a student is limited to the HEAT bus, a taxi, or the city

bus. For need-it-now service, a taxi is most convenient.

The price of the HEAT bus is expected to double for the college next year, according to first-year Peter Terrell, Senate member and Senate treasurer candidate.

"We are in the process to see if it is really worth it to have," Terrell said. "We are also looking into possible replacement options in case we do get rid of it."

If Senate decides to get rid of the HEAT bus system, other options for students would need to be brought to light. For example, many students do not know that the city bus is free for them. Upon mentioning the fact that the city bus was free for students, I received puzzled looks from fellow first-years.

However, if Senate decides to replace the HEAT bus system, the options would hopefully be cheaper and still free for students. Students take the HEAT bus because of the convenience that it goes to and from campus as well as the fact that the only thing you have to do is swipe your Quaker Card and you ride for free.

There is then the city bus:

the closest bus stop is located on West Friendly and Milner Dr., across the street from Pope House and Campbell House. Along with the HEAT bus, the city bus is in place for Guilford College students and the community around it.

One alternative is something called Zip Cars, which is like renting a car. Some colleges offer their students the option to "rent" cars for an hour or more at a time.

Although many Guilford students have cars, those who have car problems, need to run an errand, or see a doctor for an afternoon, but don't want

to rely on their friends, could drive themselves to do such things.

With the school tightening its budget belt, the question remains: we have the city bus, so why should the college pay more to have the HEAT bus at our service in the first place?

For college students on a low budget, anything labeled as "free" — and convenient — sends off happy signals. If a new shuttle system is to be put in place, it is ideal that it is free, as well as Guilford-situated.

Nobody wants to pay any amount of money just to get off campus.



## BURSTING THE BUBBLE

### One woman's trip to a strip joint



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"I like to get naked," said Briana, a 27-year-old exotic dancer and mother of four, when asked about her career choice. Bree-bree, originally from Florida, has been working at Harper's II for eight years — since she was 19.

"This is my home, we are family," she said.

When I asked what strip joint I should visit, the Guilford consensus was Harper's II on Guilford College Rd.

When I walked into the club, it was fairly empty of patrons. A young girl was working the pole, looking tremendously bored. Her moves were automatic, and her mind seemed miles away. After her song, she disappeared.

Every which-way you looked there were scantily clad women in all sorts of get-ups. An elderly man named Andrew, one of the regulars, frequented the stage for some, uh, intimate time.

Whorls of blue-gray smoke swirled through the air, along with black-light-glowing G-strings, garters galore, and Lil Wayne-inspired dancing. It was an exciting atmosphere.

I was welcomed by a lady — probably in her early 40's — who asked if I was looking for a job, while she playfully stroked my hair. After I established that I was not an aspiring dancer, I explained to the woman, who goes by Alex, that I was a journalist. She said, with complete sincerity, that it was a great idea, "just don't talk (poorly) about the 'old bitch,' 'cause that's me."

Alex was a maternal figure and the only dancer I observed who wasn't sporting a lower back tattoo, known colloquially as a "tramp stamp." Alex danced to a slower-paced song by the Smashing Pumpkins. She was naked save for a thong and black stilettos, but as I watched her dance I was awe-stricken. She moved so gracefully, even her extremely revealing upside down splits on the pole somehow retained a sense of elegance.

In between dances the girls would giggle and flirt with customers. The ones who seemed to have been there longer truly seemed to be enjoying themselves — I'm sure the drinks they kept refilling didn't hurt. The younger ones, however, looked somewhere between bored and miserable, and they were much less social.

My experience at Harper's II was a pleasant one. Surprising as it is, the club felt very warm and welcoming. Of course, my gender and intentions molded my experience. As far as strip joints go, Harper's II keeps the sleaze factor to a minimum, and welcomes everyone with open hearts (and legs).