

CRIMINAL JUSTICE and the **MEDIA:**

FACEBOOK AS A CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESEARCH TOOL

Many of you likely have Facebook pages that you use to keep in touch with dozens, if not hundreds, of your friends on a regular basis. It probably does not take a scientist to tell you that some people often post fairly private information on their Facebook pages. Social scientists have, in fact, explored Facebook postings of criminal justice students. In particular, criminologists Jeff Lee and Angela Largess reviewed the Facebook postings of college students enrolled in a criminal justice program. What they found was somewhat

surprising and troubling. Pictures of the students appearing to be inebriated, possibly using drugs, and passed out on their floor were among the postings found. In this case, the researchers were able to ask their research questions and answer them by reviewing publicly available records. What would researchers learn if they reviewed your Facebook page?

Lee, J., & Largess, A. (2010). *What were you thinking? Criminal justice students and their social networking sites*. Presented at the Georgia Political Science Association annual meeting, November 11.