**Social network sites, privacy and the blurring boundary between public and private spaces**

The European Technology Assessment Conference: "Technology Assessment and Policy Areas of Great Transitions", Prague, March 13-15, 2013
Session X – Privacy in the Internet World

Stefan Strauß and Michael Nentwich

# The SNS universe

- From 1997 onwards, boosting since 2002/2003
- Various definitions (e.g. profile in the centre)
- General purpose SNS vs. specifically targeted to user groups, e.g. academia
- Different content (slides, text, video, publications, …)
- Various commercial models
- Highly dynamic environment
- Increasing inter-linkage



Apps, plugins, etc.
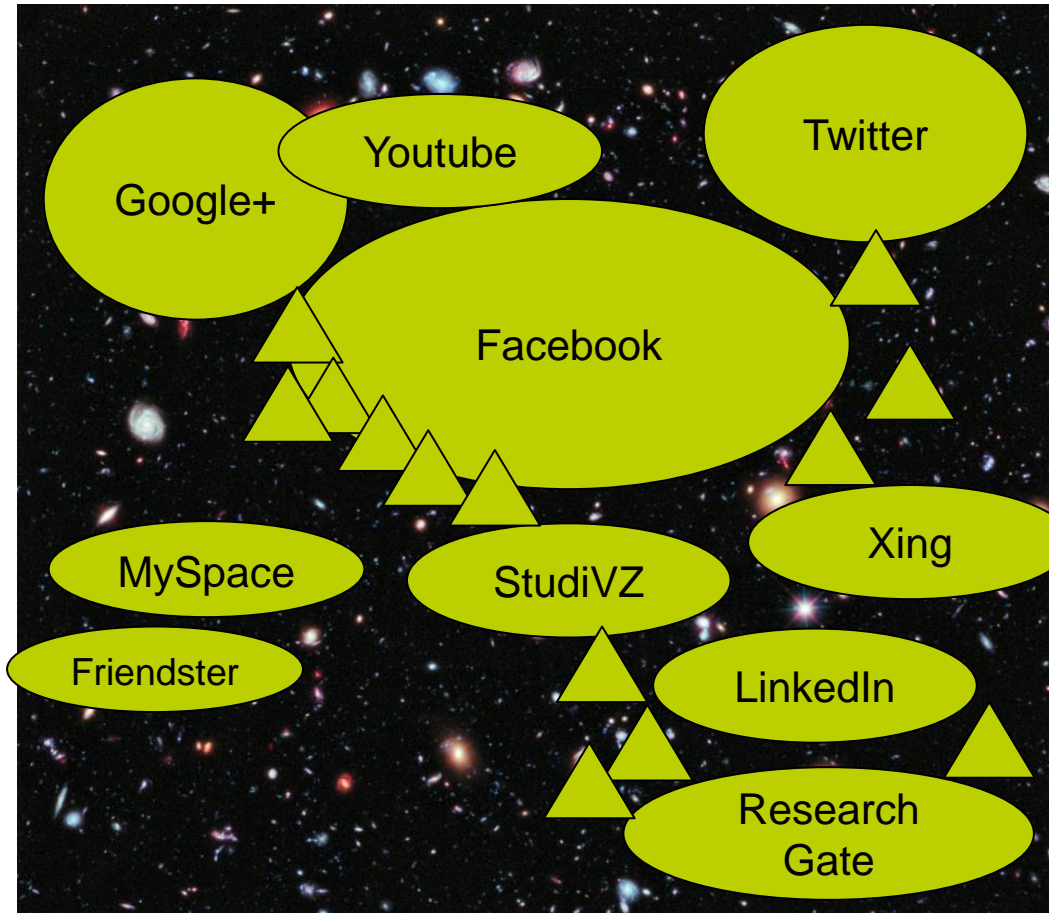
# How SNS changed the web landscape

Web 2.0 and social media entailed:

- enhanced and new modes of interaction and collaboration

- increasing personalization

- visualization of users' profiles and their relations to others

  - personal (contacts, friends, …) and

  - non-personal entities (interests, content used, linked, liked, produced, …)

- Towards a social search
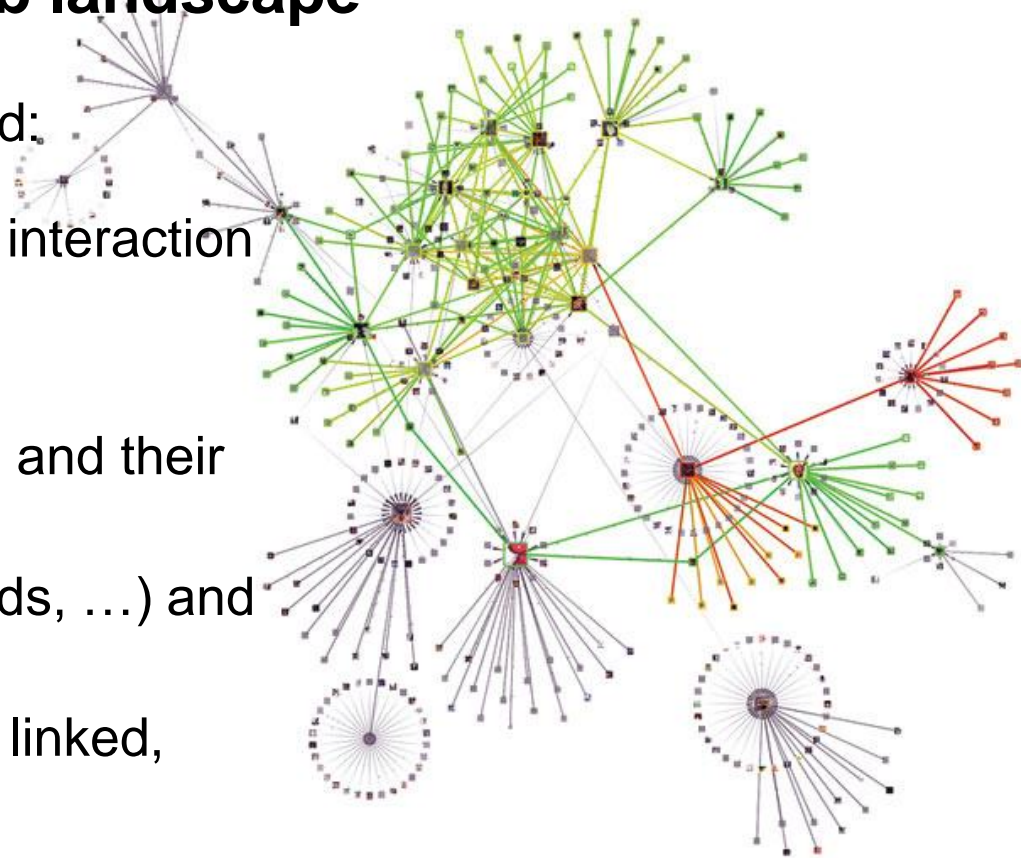
# New modes of interaction and collaboration

- Private networking, contacting
- Professional networking
- Reputation management
- Job exchange services
- Targeted marketing
- Research (cyberscience)
- Political participation (raising voice)
- Collaborative writing, action, fundraising
- …



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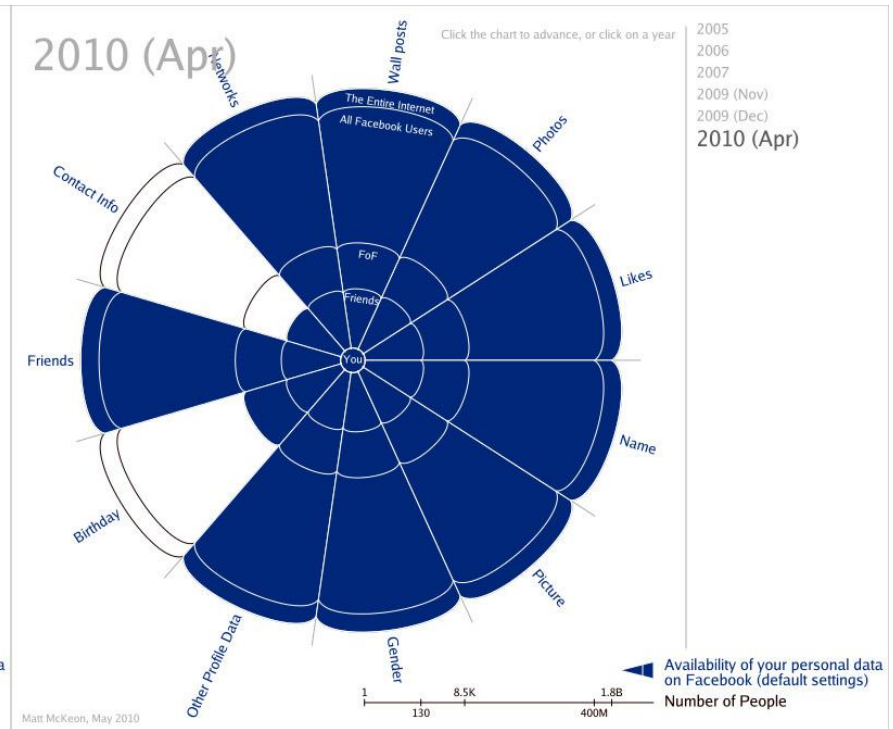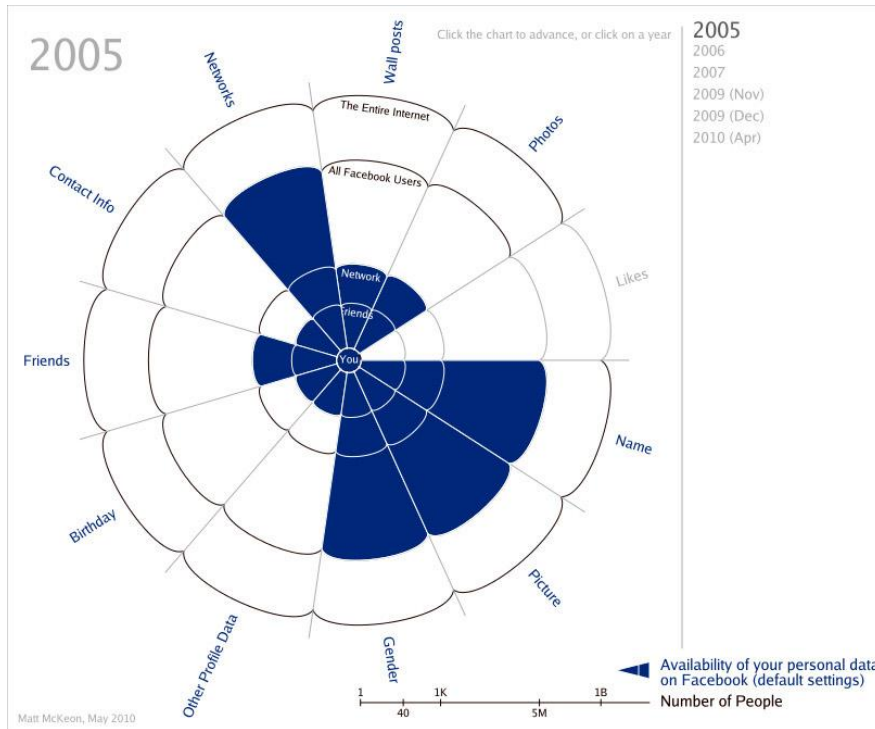Stefan Strauß and Michael Nentwich

# SNS – semi-public online spaces?

- What kind of space is an SNS?

- Is it … public, private, or both – a private space in public?

- In SNS environments, social interactions and relations become explicitly visible

→ Comparable to a public square with versatile CCTV and quickly changing features



SNS environment
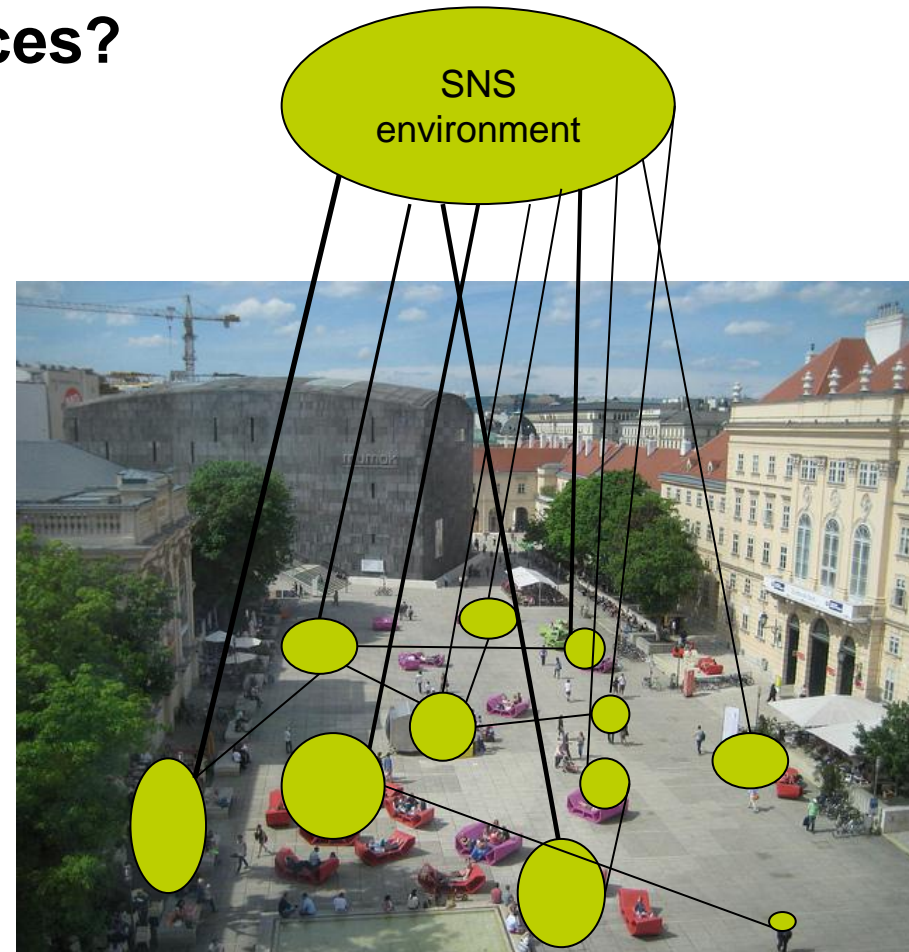
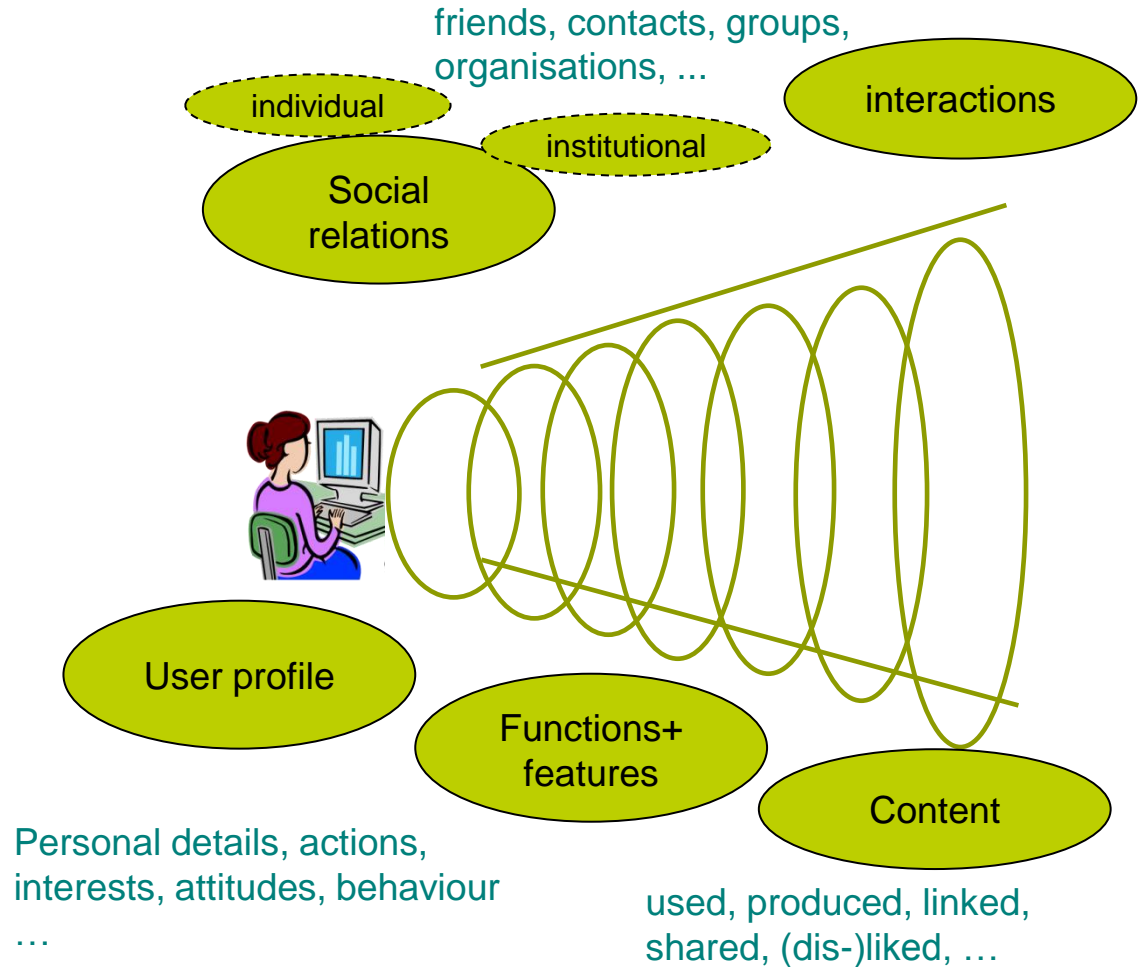# Evolution of FBs privacy settings

**From shallow privacy by default …**     **To sneaky disclosure by default …**



McKeon (2011) http://www.yalelawtech.org/control-privacy-technology/evolution-of-facebook-privacy/

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# The contextual layers of SNS …

friends, contacts, groups, organisations, ...

individual

institutional

interactions

Social relations

User profile

Functions+ features

Content

Personal details, actions, interests, attitudes, behaviour …

used, produced, linked, shared, (dis-)liked, …

# The SNS universe expanding…

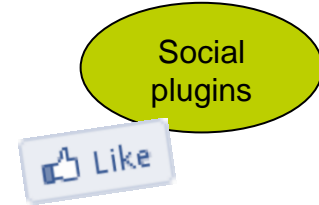**Alice… lost in space and conflation…**
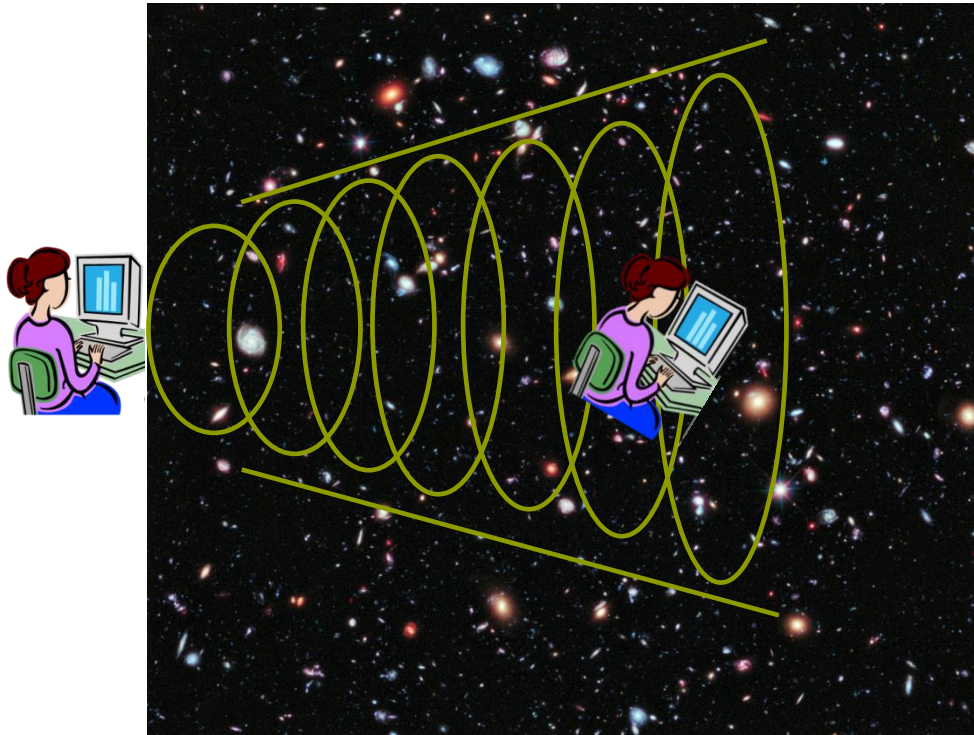
User interactions
(content used,
produced,…)
**Outside the SNS**

Social plugins

Like

Applications from „outer space"
absorbed by social plugins –
pulled into the SNS environment

Mobile SNS
geo-location,
LBS
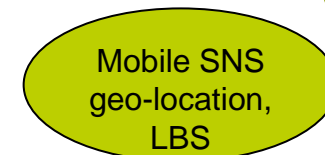
User locations
and movements
(online + offline)

# SNS privacy types affected

| Privacy type* Privacy of … | Common SNS usage | Emerging SNS usage |
|---|---|---|
| the person | | X |
| behavior and action | (X) | X |
| communication | X | X |
| data and image | X | X |
| thoughts and feelings | (X) | X |
| location and space | | X |
| association (incl. group privacy) | X | X |

\* Finn/Wright/Friedewald (2013)
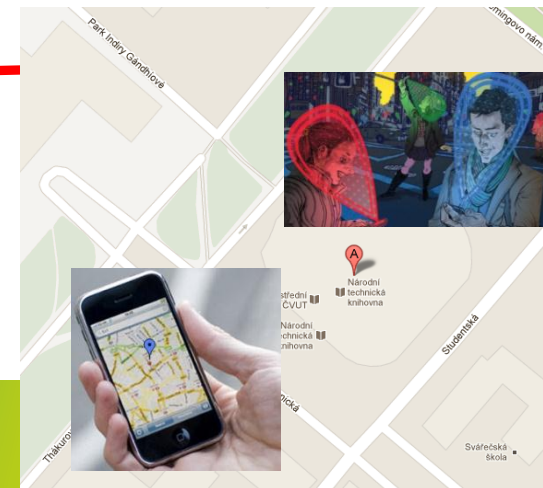
Magnified SNS towards augmented reality?



Biometrics, Face recognition



Geo-location, LBS

# SNS as food for the „surveillant assemblage"

"a heterogeneous, loosely coupled set of institutions that seek to harness the raw power of information by fixing flows of information cognitively and spatially" (Cohen 2008)

- Behavioural tracking by 3rd parties (e.g. Quantserve, Doubleclick, Akamai, Scorecard-Research,, …)
- Advanced tracking with
  - mobile SNS
  - face recognition
- Surveillance of social media by LEAs on the rise: http://tinyurl.com/74wf4z4

  FBI wants Backdoors in Facebook, Skype and Instant Messaging (wired 2012)

  Government plans increased email and social network surveillance (guardian 2012)

  ETSI standard for lawful interception function in cloud/virtual services (edri 2012)

  **Next generation identification** - FBI launches $1 billion **face recognition** project (new scientist 2012)

**Who needs a needle when the whole stack is worth a mint?**

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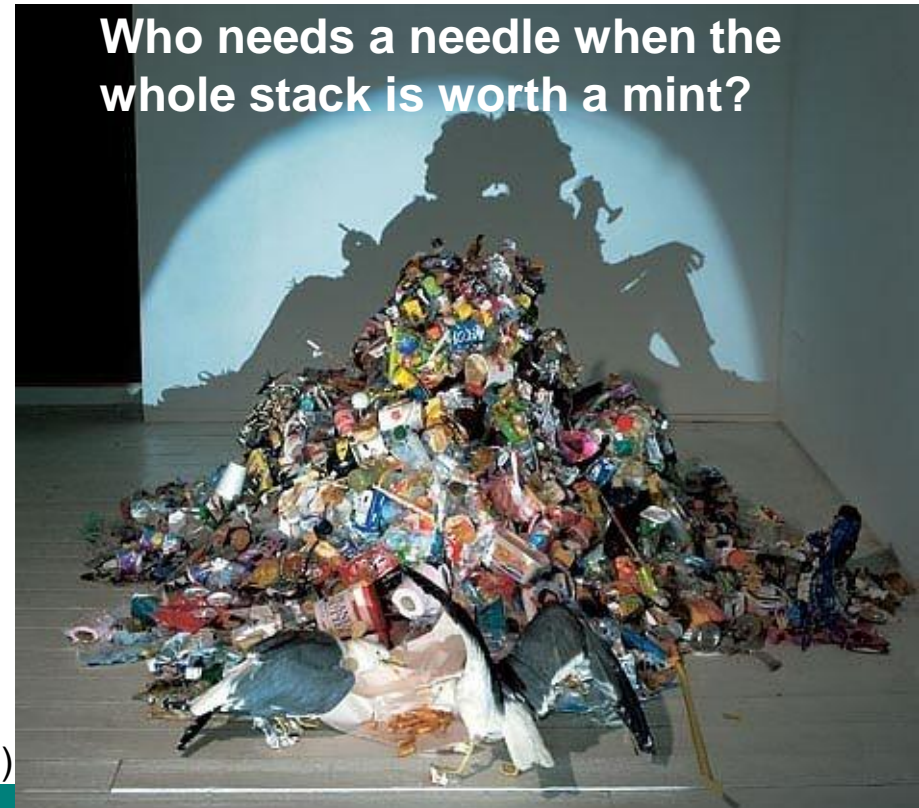
# Major aspects fostering conflation between public and private (online) space

- Seductive modes of information gathering

- SNS as hatchery for testing new apps. and technologies

- Increasing role of biometrics
  → face recognition and social media meet in the shadows (Acquisti 2012)

- Social plugins extending diffusion of SNS to „outerspace"

- Towards a social search → mapping of social relations on a global scale

- Mobile social media on the rise (comscore 2012)
  → Mobile data traffic doubled between Q42011 and Q42012 (Ericsson 2013)

# Conclusions

- SNS as indicator for increasing transformation of public and private spaces online and offline
- Integration of services and technologies foster this transformation
- Privacy protection as multidimensional challenge - lost in conflation?
- Need for revitalization of public value of privacy (Nissenbaum 2010)
- Reconsideration of the threshold between public and private spaces
- Demand for explicit decoupling of contexts and related spaces

# Thank you for your attention!

Contact:

Mag. Stefan Strauß & PD Dr. Michael Nentwich

A-1030 Vienna, Strohgasse 45/5

Tel: +43 (1) 51581 6599

Fax: +43 (1) 7109883

Email: sstrauss@oeaw.ac.at

WWW: www.oeaw.ac.at/ita