

Good example of ethical issues in the social network movie review

[Life](#), [Friendship](#)



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The Social Network is the film that tells us the story of real business. From the very beginning it warns us that you don't get to 500 million friends without making a few enemies. This film really raises several ethical issues of business conduction and responsibility to others as well as responsibility to oneself.

With a large number of characters the film The Social Network travels from class rooms of Harvard University to dormitory rooms in Palo Alto. It tells about exciting moment of birth of cybernetic miracle that will soon capture minds of millions. In the middle of the chaos occurred we observe Mark Zuckerberg (Jesse Eisenberg), promising student of Harvard University who launches the website that will change society structure in one moment, Eduardo Saverin (Andrew Garfield), ones Zuckerberg's best friend and money investor in this idea, Sean Parker (Justin Timberlake), one of the co-founders of the Napster portal who brought Facebook to Silicon Valley, and Winklevoss twins (Armie Hammer and Josh Pence), students of Harvard University who claim that Zuckerberg has stolen their idea and lawsuit him for this issue.

The story is told on behalf of each character and obviously each one has his own version of Facebook birth. In the end we have multisided (almost holographic) picture of success in XXI century – teen fantasies and life reality that dramatically differ from each other.

One night in October 2003 Mark breaks up with his girlfriend Erica, gets drunk, goes back to the hostel and writes several offensive posts in Live Journal about this girl. Then he hacks dormitory websites in order to download photos of female students of Harvard University. Meanwhile his

friend Eduardo Saverin after reading the blog comes to ask whether he can help somehow. But the only thing Mark asks him about is a formula for ranking chess players that he wants to use for the new website. He composes pictures in pairs and offers internet users to choose which of the girls is "cooler" based on their attractiveness. The website is called Facemash and immediately takes considerable popularity (thus, completely destroying Harvard server and becoming a reason of the condemnation due to misogyny undertones). Mark is accused of all sins, including website development by unauthorized breach into the system of campus, infringement of copyright law and a violation of the law on privacy. At this very moment the idea of the Facebook website appears in the mind of young student. Soon Mark launches the website thefacebook.com that passes from one Harvard University monitor to another, from the oldest universities in New England to Silicon Valley, and then spreads all around the world at the speed of a forest fire.

In this chaos the conflict of interests appears. Students begin to fight for the right to be called the creator of one of the key pillars of modern society. This conflict turns best friends into irreconcilable enemies.

All these events are presented as flashbacks in the process of two court hearings: in one of them Eduardo acts as the plaintiff who claims Mark to oust him from the company, in the other Winklevoss brothers accuse Mark of stealing their ideas. In the final, Mark being left alone recalls his breakup with Erica that became the start of everything. He sends her Facebook friendship request and infinitely refreshes the page waiting for a response. In the final scene Zuckerberg appears to be a prisoner of the Internet being

stuck on a single page - on that very page of his previous real life that should have been turned long ago.

In the film *The Social Network* primary ethical issues include copyright infringement and unfair attitude to business partners. Secondary ethical issues are related to invasion of privacy, security breach, and cheating. The Copyright is guaranteed by the law of United States, in particular by Copyright Act of 1976 and Article 1, Section 8, Clause 8 (the Copyright Clause) of the United States Constitution. Mark Zuckerberg in the film is accused of violating this copyright law by stealing the Winklevoss brothers' idea of the social network Harvard Connect and implementing this idea in the well known Facebook. Winklevosses also claim that Zuckerberg was pretending to work on their network while he was in process of launching the Facebook taking their idea as the basis.

The unfair attitude towards business partners is the matter of the second lawsuit motivated by the fact that being trusted by his best friend and co-founder of the Facebook Eduardo Saverin Zuckerberg together with Sean Parker offers Eduardo to sign the contract regarding his share in the company and after that decrease this share by issuing large amount of new shares. However, at some point we may see that Mark regrets doing this as at the end he is also disappointed with behavior and attitude of Sean.

Invasion of privacy is also the violation of privacy laws of the United States of America. Thus, posting offensive entries about private life of Erica Albright as well as launching Facemash where pictures of female students are compared is unethical and from some point illegal. However, that was actually the beginning of the story and probably if not these violations people would

never have a chance to get acquainted with Facebook.

I also consider security breach of Harvard University network to get pictures of female students and launch Facemash as well as cheating on exams by using friends' comments on the topic as your own ideas to be unethical behavior for the Ivy League student.

I believe that examples provided in the film very clearly show some certain aspects of business conduction, especially when we talk about start up when the one who is in charge is not aware of what he / she is involved in and what its' result may be. The Social Network is very instructive film from the point of view of business ethics that presents consequences of unethical attitude and behavior on the example of Mark Zuckerberg for whom even the most successful outcome of both lawsuits turns out to be celebrated alone with his social network. Everything in the film is presented in a very objective manner, thus, we can understand each side and can analyze its' strong and weak sides. We have a chance to understand what he / she could do in the exact situation and why he / she behaved in a particular way. I believe we can conclude that the true message of the film is that 500 million unreal friends are not worth of a few real friends becoming your enemies.