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Privacy in Sociotechnical Realms

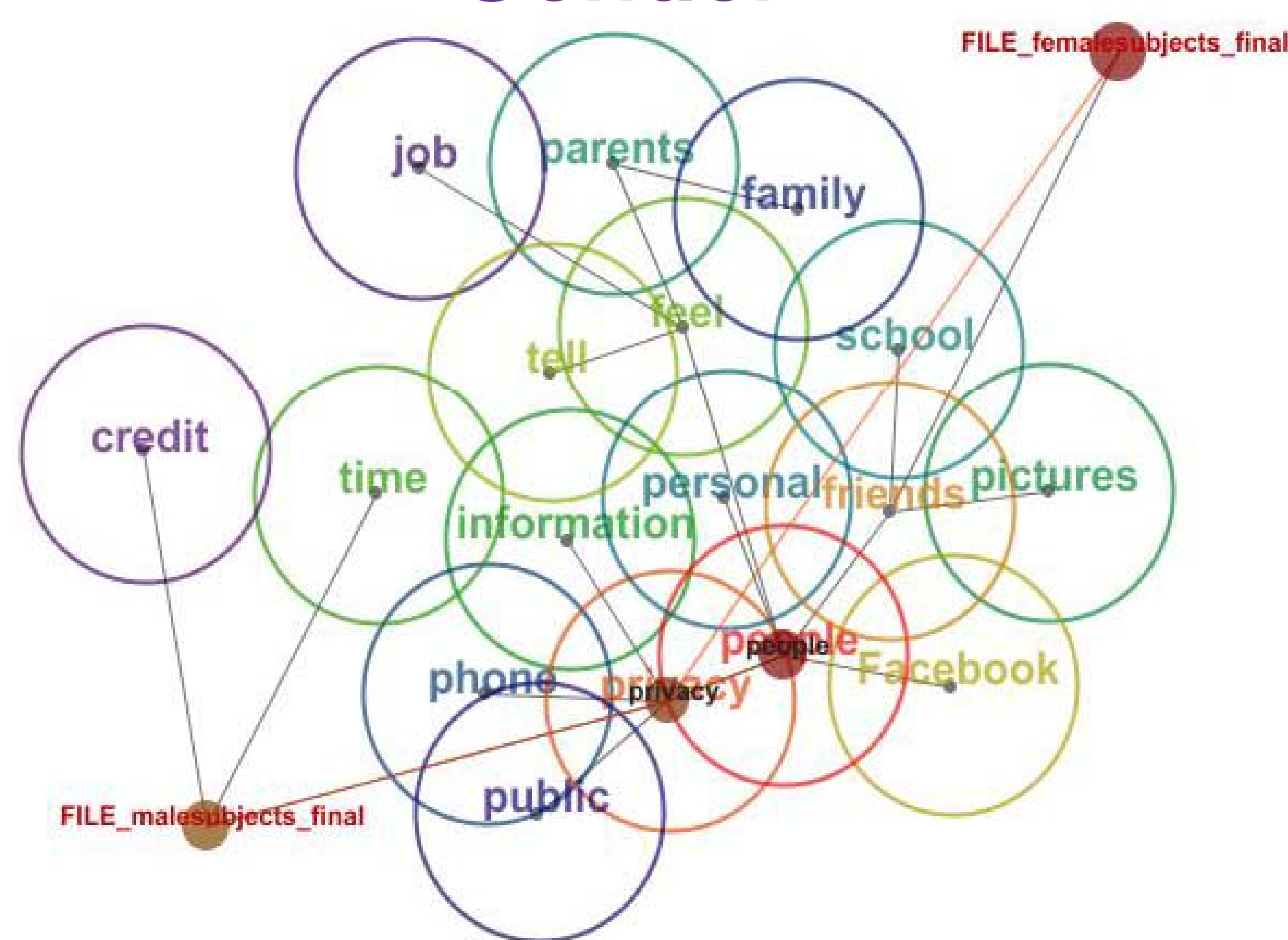
Semantic Network Analysis of Discourses

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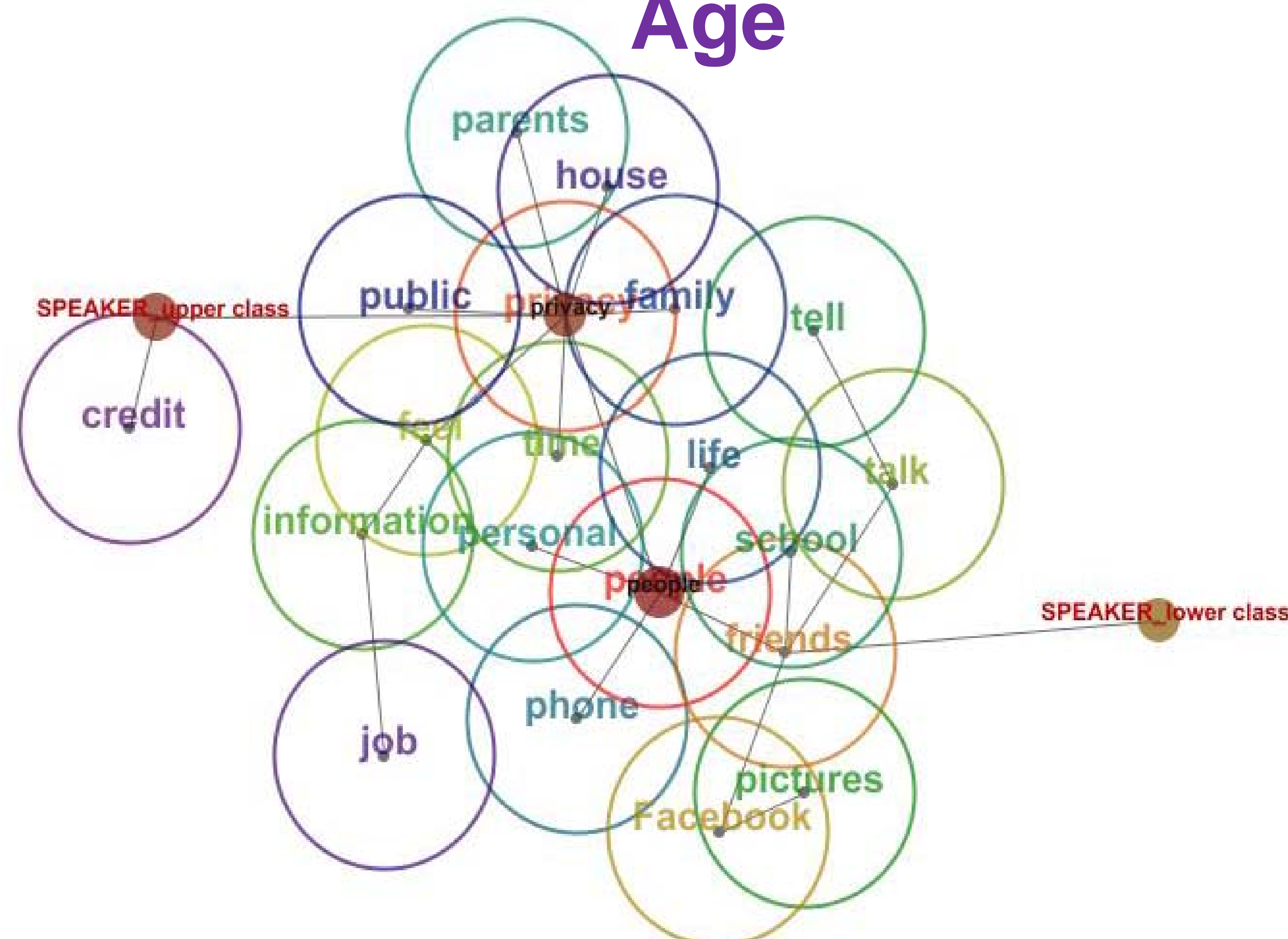
How do young adults articulate the meaning of privacy, and do these discourses vary by gender and age?

Concept maps and knowledge pathways

Gender



Age



Concept co-occurrences

Concept co-occurrences		Gender		Age	
		Men	Women	Lower	Upper
Relational themes	Family	0.29	0.70	0.24	0.62
	Friends	0.37	0.58	0.64	0.32
	School	0.29	0.70	0.64	0.35
	Pictures	0.23	0.64	0.63	0.24
	Feelings	0.42	0.57	0.28	0.72
Material themes	Credit	0.69	0.31	0.0	0.90
	Job	0.84	0.16	0.25	0.54
	House	0.62	0.37	0.34	0.55
	Information	0.61	0.39	0.23	0.72
	Phone	0.74	0.25	0.44	0.45

Methods

Participants (N=61) were 33 female (54%) and 28 male (46%) undergraduate students (average age 20.17, *SD* = 1.32). In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted using open-ended questions and hypothetical scenarios. A total of 28 hours of recorded text were transcribed, yielding 371 pages of single-spaced text. Analysis of the text was conducted using *Leximancer* semantic network software to generate conceptual maps, knowledge pathways, and concept co-occurrences.

Discussion

Discursive research provides unique insights into the shifting meanings of privacy in 21st century sociotechnical realms. Current research favors material privacy concerns such as identity theft and data privacy. Discourses of young adults indicate privacy is meaningful, yet in varied ways: Males and upperclassmen more typically articulate privacy in material and informational terms, while females and underclassmen tend to articulate privacy in relational terms. Thus gender and age contextually influence privacy concerns: As students near graduation, material consequences become more salient and shift concerns of privacy away from the relational issues more common in early college years.

Implications

System designers should recognize privacy concerns vary in young adults, and can include relational as well as material concerns. Design options might address varied needs in: a) profile creation; b) privacy setting controls; c) "image" monitoring; and d) the use of relational contexts for privacy control.