Every couple months I meet with the three other library staff that plan and provide computer instruction. I shared with them that I’m putting together a class on protecting your privacy while using social media. I identified the talking points below as conceptual content to bring up in class apart from the nuts and bolts of settings. At the time of our meeting, I didn’t have them written out as succinctly as below, but we chatted a bit about these topics in general. My coworker brought up that we sometimes get a diverse cross-section of the community in classes, and that it would be interesting to hear different perspectives on these points. I also shared with them that the Electronic Frontier Foundation has lesson plans available and encouraged them to check out the Security Education Companion. Our discussion was brief, but I think it’s important for librarians and library staff to discuss and think about how these issues should inform their teaching.

Talking Points:

* Facebook uses a complex algorithm with over a hundred inputs to suggest “People you may know.” It can connect people from circles that you want to keep separate.
* Social media allows advertisers to engage in discriminatory activities such as racial profiling and redlining, though they have made some steps to correct this in accordance with anti-discrimination laws.
* Facebook sells nuanced and specific information about you to companies that use it to target you with (unnervingly) personal advertisements.
* Google syncs information about you across their platforms, so that YouTube views, Google searches, calendar info, etc. can be aggregated for marketing purposes.