

Instagram Categories

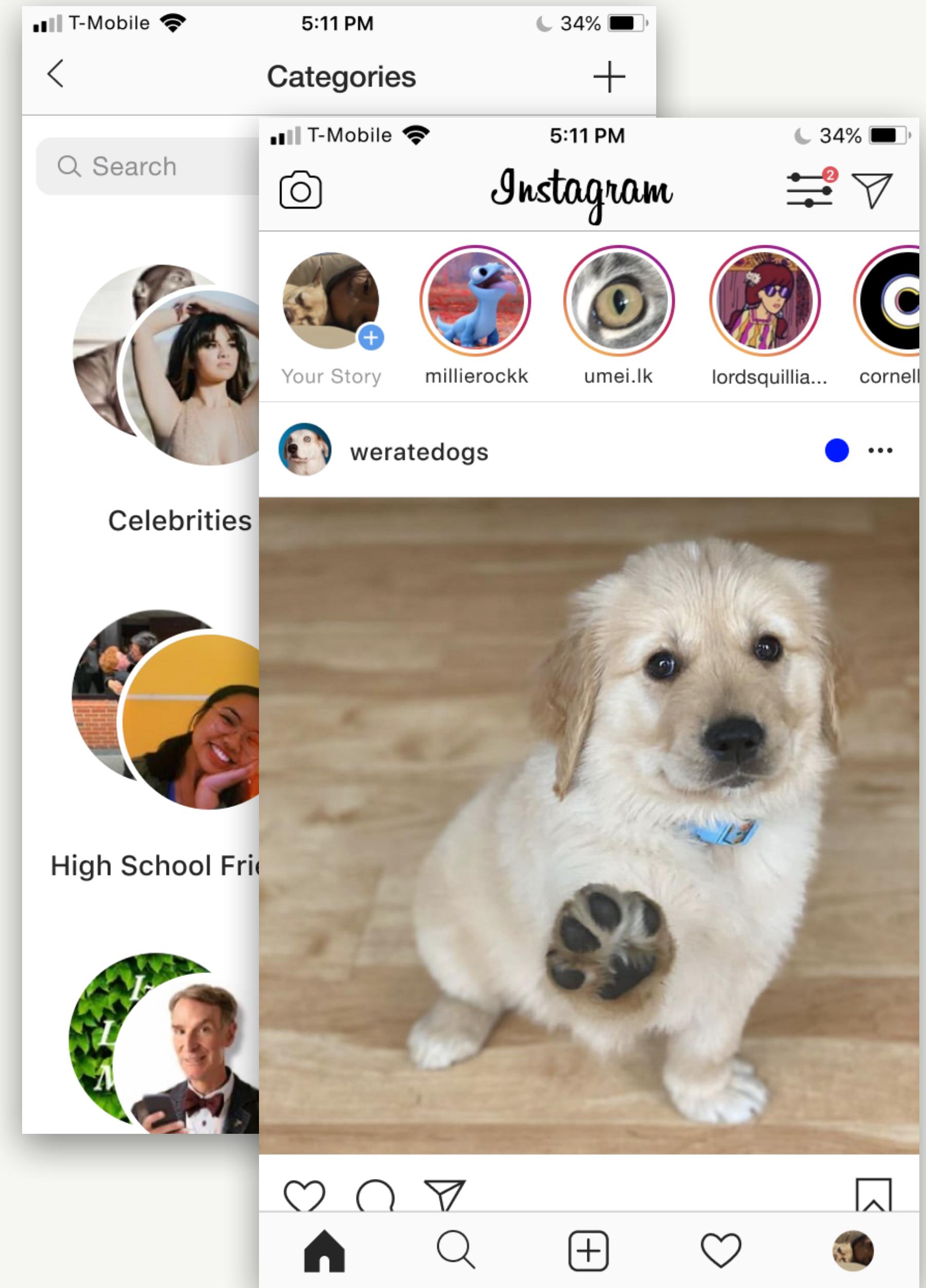
Intro to Digital Product Design

By: Samantha Zhang

Overview

Instagram Categories

- With the help of 9 interviewees, 2 brainstorming friends, and 10 fellow students...
- From February to May 2020, I spent my first-year spring semester studying Product Design and inventing solutions to improving Instagram



Why Instagram?

500 million +

Instagram accounts worldwide are active everyday

And I'm One of Them!

- **User Interviews**
 - **Objective:** Identify key pain points in Instagram's personalization features.
 - **All types of users** — ranging from daily users to inactive
 - **General questions** regarding typical activity on Instagram





Instagram Findings ❤️

Behavior	Posting	Home Page	Explore Page	Following
Seek entertainment & a way of passing time	Posts about events or big/noteworthy moments	Scrolls past a lot of posts on the home page with little to no glance	May spend hours on the explore page	Follows users out of courtesy (follow back friends)
Uses frequently	Takes a long time to post	Checks Instagram Stories	Explore page is for entertainment; home page is for information/updates	Following a lot of accounts that have content that is irrelevant to their interest
Interested in being updated on peoples lives'	Usually posts with multiple pictures	Spends little time on home page		Intends for account to be a first impression
Likes customization features (close friends, gifs, music, etc)	Posts often on rinsta/finsta	Will like or comment on posts from the home page		
	Edits photos in other apps	Avoids posts featuring people		

Trends

- With so many users on Instagram, it is **easy to get lost in your feed**
- Users tend to **follow people without necessarily being interesting in their content**
 - Friends, networking associates, etc.
- Users often **scroll past tons of posts** on their Home page with no more than a glance
 - Interests can vary over time

So... what is the actual problem?

People Problem

During their everyday life, users want to see what people are posting on Instagram, so they can stay updated on the content they're interested in. But they can't do that well because:

1. Posts on the home page can become overwhelming with information
2. Users can't easily find content that actually interests them

Discover Opportunities	10.Trending pages with top posts shared to other users	19.Rating system to foster user input on content they view on the home page	certain content (beauty, memes, etc)	6. Permit users to follow users without their content popping up on the home page	(not scrolling)	designated friends	4. More ways for users to respond to content; reaction emojis	empowerment
1. Recommended tab that has content your friends like				28.Integration and sharing of news articles/magazine pages by users	16.Allow users to get memory reminders of posts they liked from a year ago	25.Filter through lists of followers to denote which ones are the most interactive with your page.	5. Notify users of content they had missed from close friends	14.Casual Instagram holidays where people can post personal content for others to learn more about them
2. Recommended tab that has content your friends manually send	11.Trending pages with categories	20.Centralization of content in order to place more emphasis on content they want to see		7. Categorize & filter home page content by the type of user (celebrity, friend, etc)	17.Allow users to get memory reminders of posts they saved from a year ago	26.Option to not see/ skip past long concert posts/stories	6. Notify users of content they had missed from users they interact with the most	22.Group users by industry
3. Recommended tab that has content you features liked posts from people on your close friend list	12.Trending pages that use specialized tags	21.Notifications for hit trends		8. Relocate/reduce advertisements	18.Feature posts shared by users on the home page instead of direct messages	27.Filter stories by number of slides/posts	7. Match with users who share similar liking habits	23.Group for users of a local community or organization
4. Recommended tab that has content your close friends manually send	13.In-app notifications to new interest			9. Reformat stories				24.Profile option to add-in education title (ex: CU 2023)
	14.Instagram run stories that cover niche or specialized content	22.Notifications for products that users are marketing		10.Allow users to rank				25.Search option to look for people with similar bios
5. Collaborative recommended tab that users in a group can suggest to/collaborative saved posts	15.Stories focused on topics that are run by magazine companies							16.Sticker incentives for getting new users to make an Instagram account
6. Match and option to follow users who like the same content as you	16.Screen that recommends mutuals to follow based on users following/followers that they interact with the most	or the user	that they are following	receive updates on the home page from close friends	21.Option to only post for viewing with close friends	30.Option to organize following into categories	10.Feature news/worldly updates into stories	26.Setup public chatrooms based on interests
7. Trending pages with top likes		25.Recommendations based on pages the user follows	3. Collaborative/group posts - multiple users post one combined post	13.Option for users to post with indicators of its atmosphere (casual, professional, etc)	22.Create folders/categories for stories	Make Connections	11. Promote Instagram to different socioeconomic groups who may not feel privileged to make content	17.Game feature for users to interact with other users
8. Trending pages with top saves	17.Screen that recommends popular accounts that has content users close friends interact with often	26.Recommendation pages based on posts users tend to like on the explore page (tik toks, twitter screenshots, art, etc)	4. Make group tags/toggle for posts - tag for people who all post about one thing/event	14.Simplify the format of the homepage	23.Filter stories so that users can only see stories from close friends	1. Create community spaces by identifiable groups	19.Foster positivity by creating positivity feeds	27.Setup group pages for academic subjects (i.e. physics, history, english)
9. Trending pages with top comments	18.Integration of explore and home page	27.Ranking list of top users with the most followers in	5. Allow users to mark/prioritize their favorite users	15.Implement a new feature to look at the information on the home page	24.Filter stories so that users can only see stories from	2. Create community spaces by internet culture groups	12.Days featuring diversity	28.Create location-based events for people to meet up
						3. Create community spaces by interests	13.Days featuring women	29.Allow brands to designate specific people as representing their brand
								30.Add chat games to interact with followers/friend

Brainstorming

Solution

Categorizing & Filtering the Home page

Feature

- Goal: Users can easily organize and locate diverse content from the users they follow.
- Filter the home page by user-created categories
- Categories comprised of users
- Give users the freedom to define categories and assign other users under them

Envisioning This Feature

Three Critical Steps:

Assign Category to a user

Filtering by Categories

Category Settings

Medium Fidelity Flows

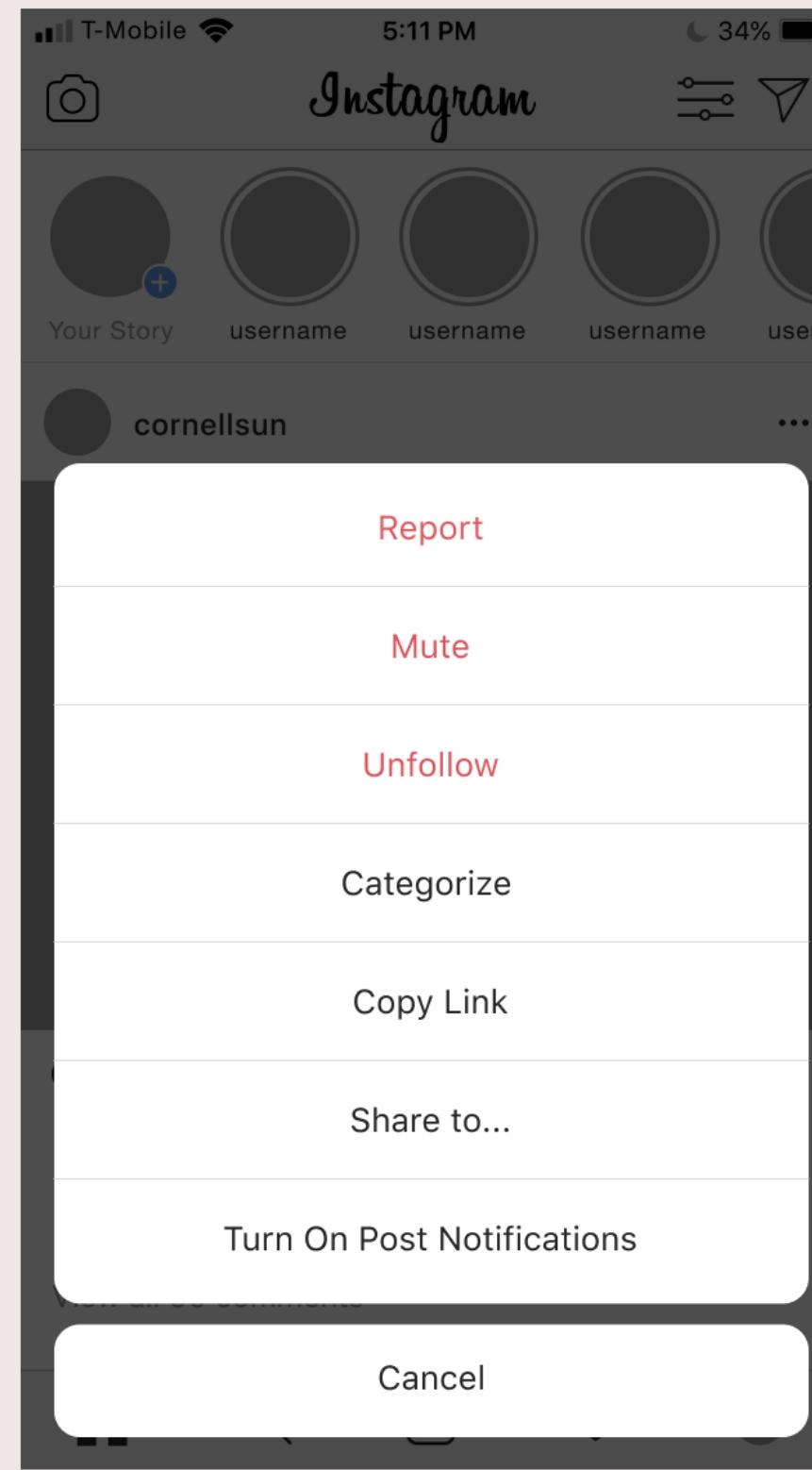


Assigning Categories

Category Selection Screen Exploration

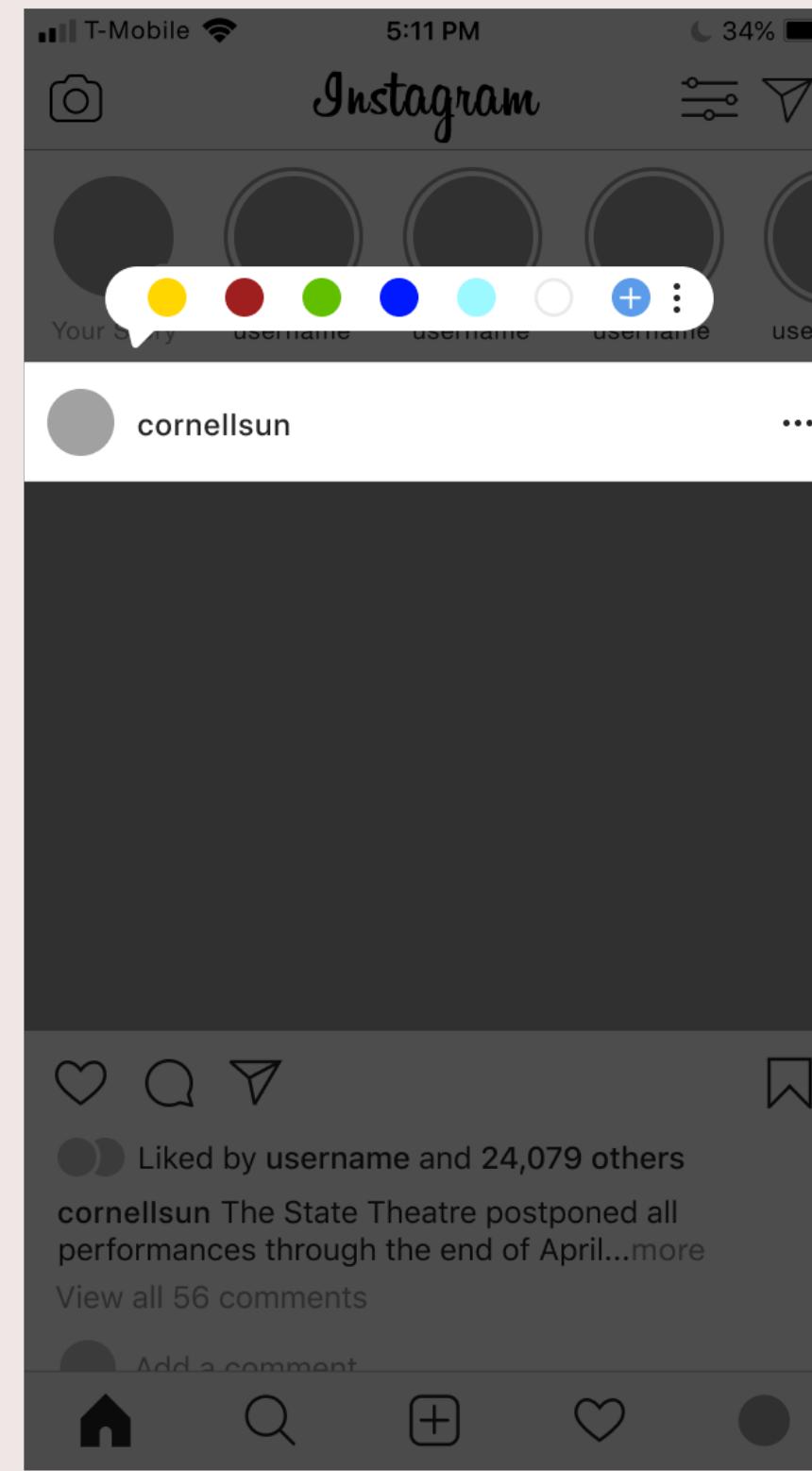
A. Pop-up Menu

Categorize option added to the pre-existing menu that appears upon tapping the ellipse on the username bar.



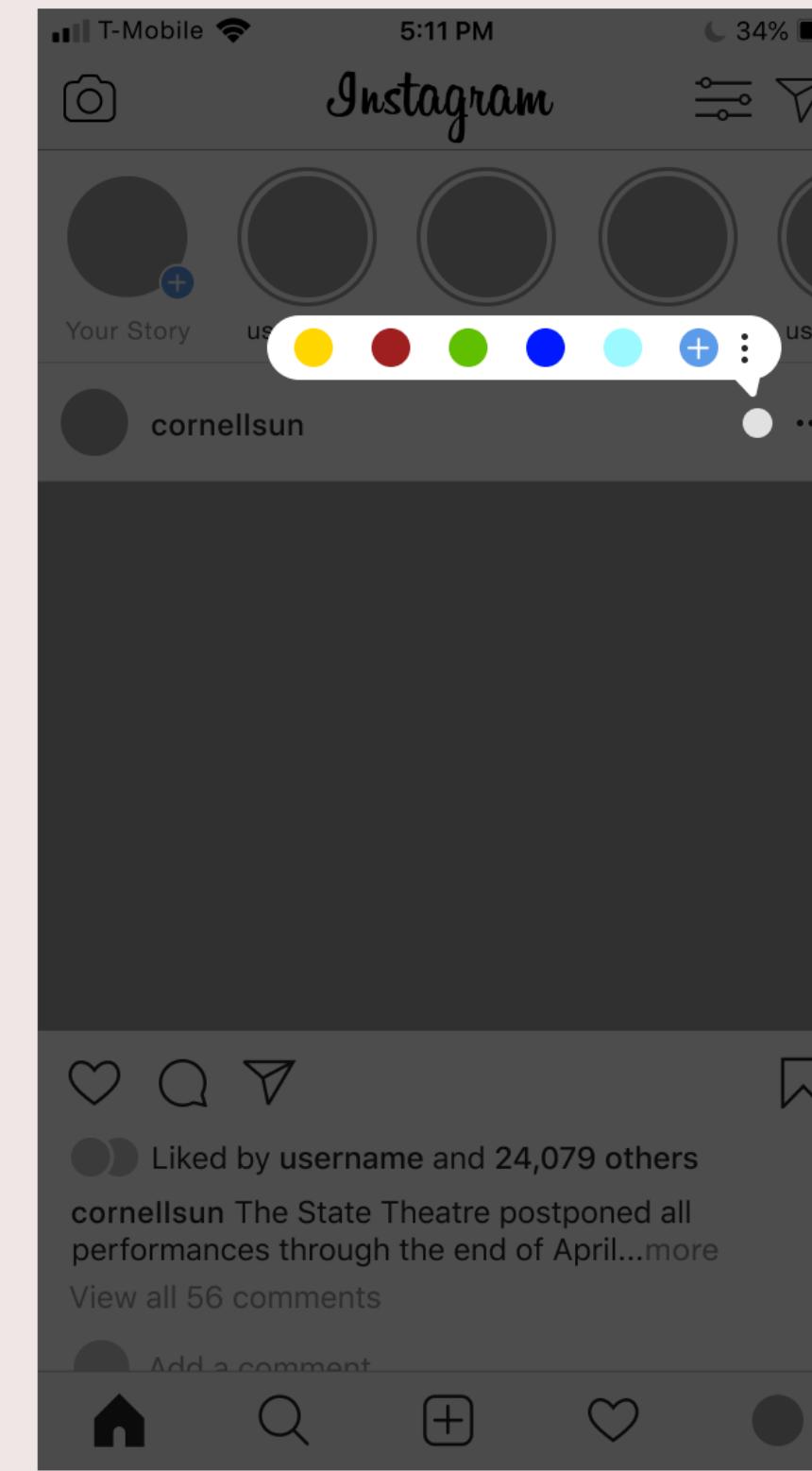
B. Username Bar Bubble

Upon pressing down the username bar, a bubble will appear above the highlighted bar. Colored circles correspond to their respective Categories.



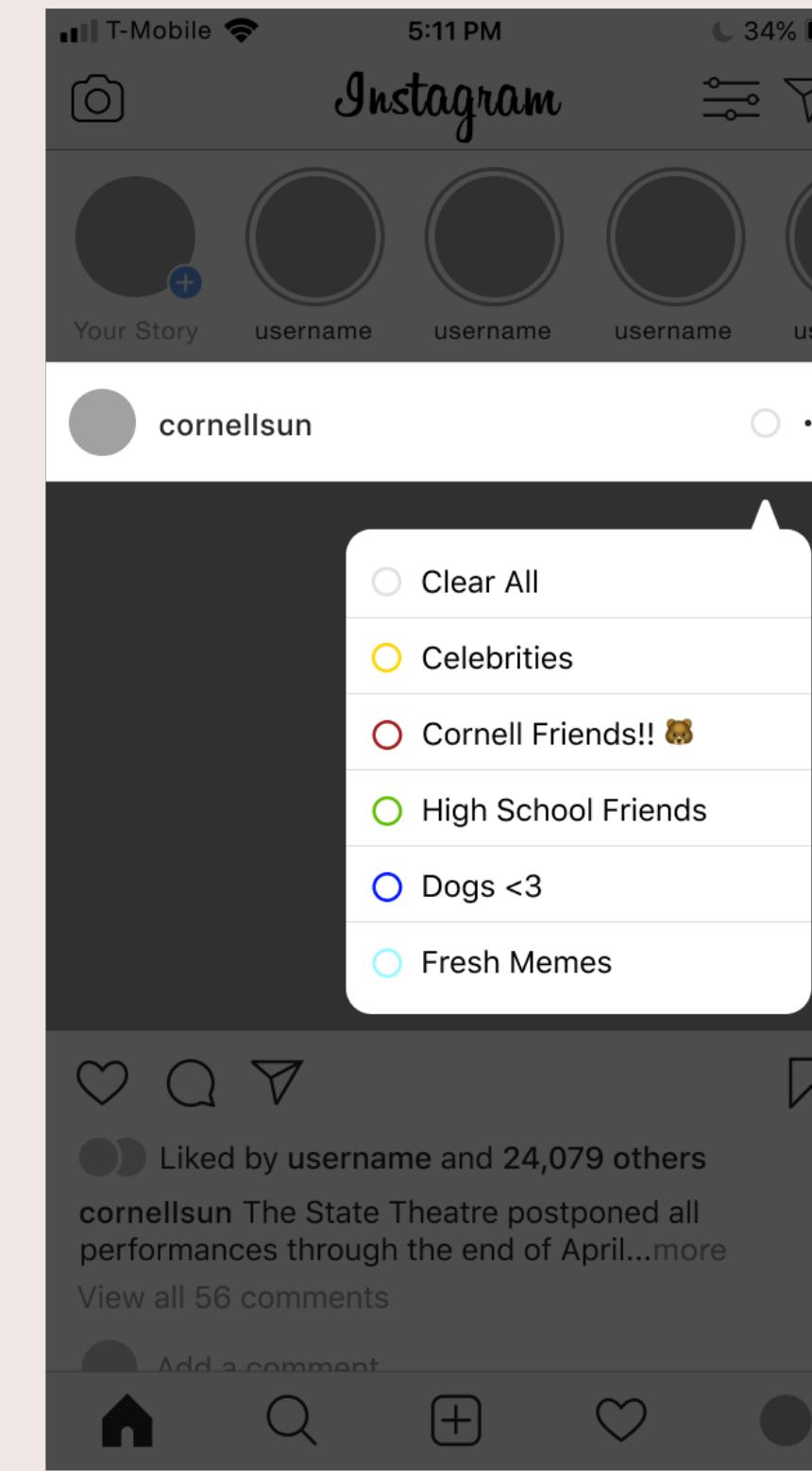
C. Category Dot Bubble

Upon clicking the added dot, a bubble will appear above it. Colored circles correspond to their respective Categories.



D. Drop-down Menu

Upon clicking the added dot, a drop-down menu will appear below the highlighted username bar.



Assigning Categories

Categorized Home Screen Exploration

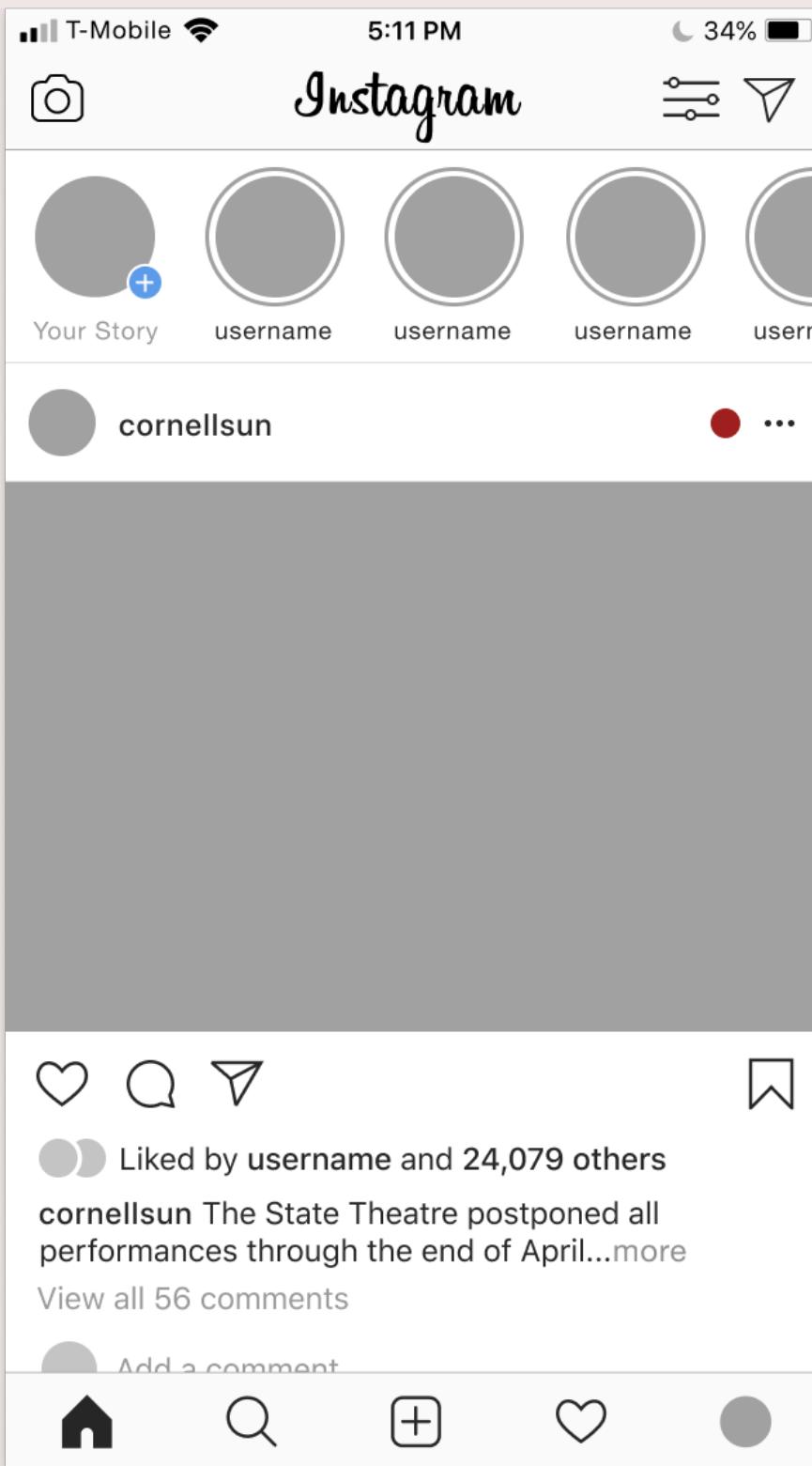
A. No Change

Regular Home Page. No explicit indication that the user belongs to a category.



B. Category Dot

Colored dot on the username bar corresponding to the user's respective category. Dot will be an empty grey dot if there is no category is applied.



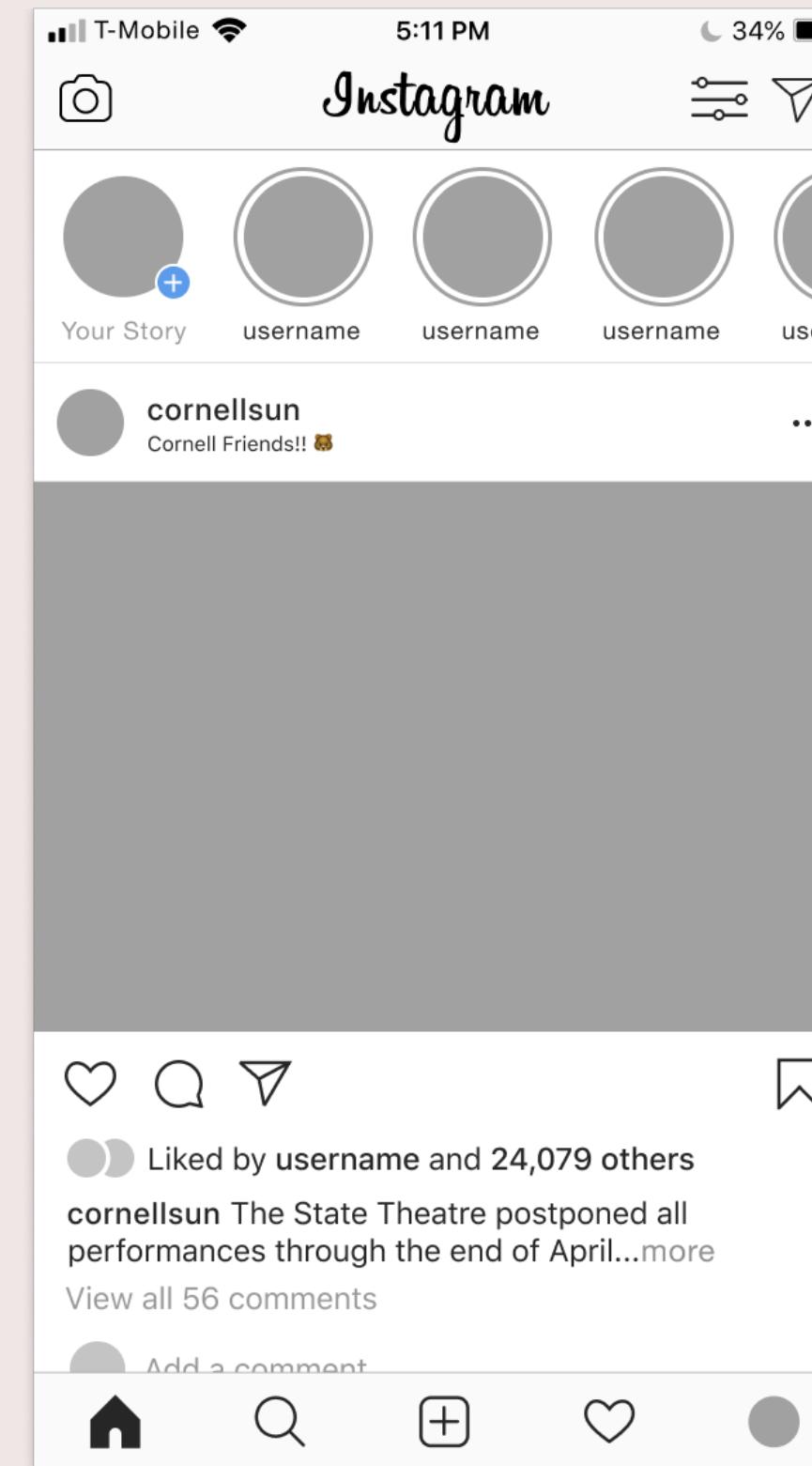
C. Category Toolbar Dot

Category indication resides in the toolbar, next to the direct message option. The dot will be an empty outline if no category is associated.



D. Subtitle

The name of the user's corresponding category is below their username.

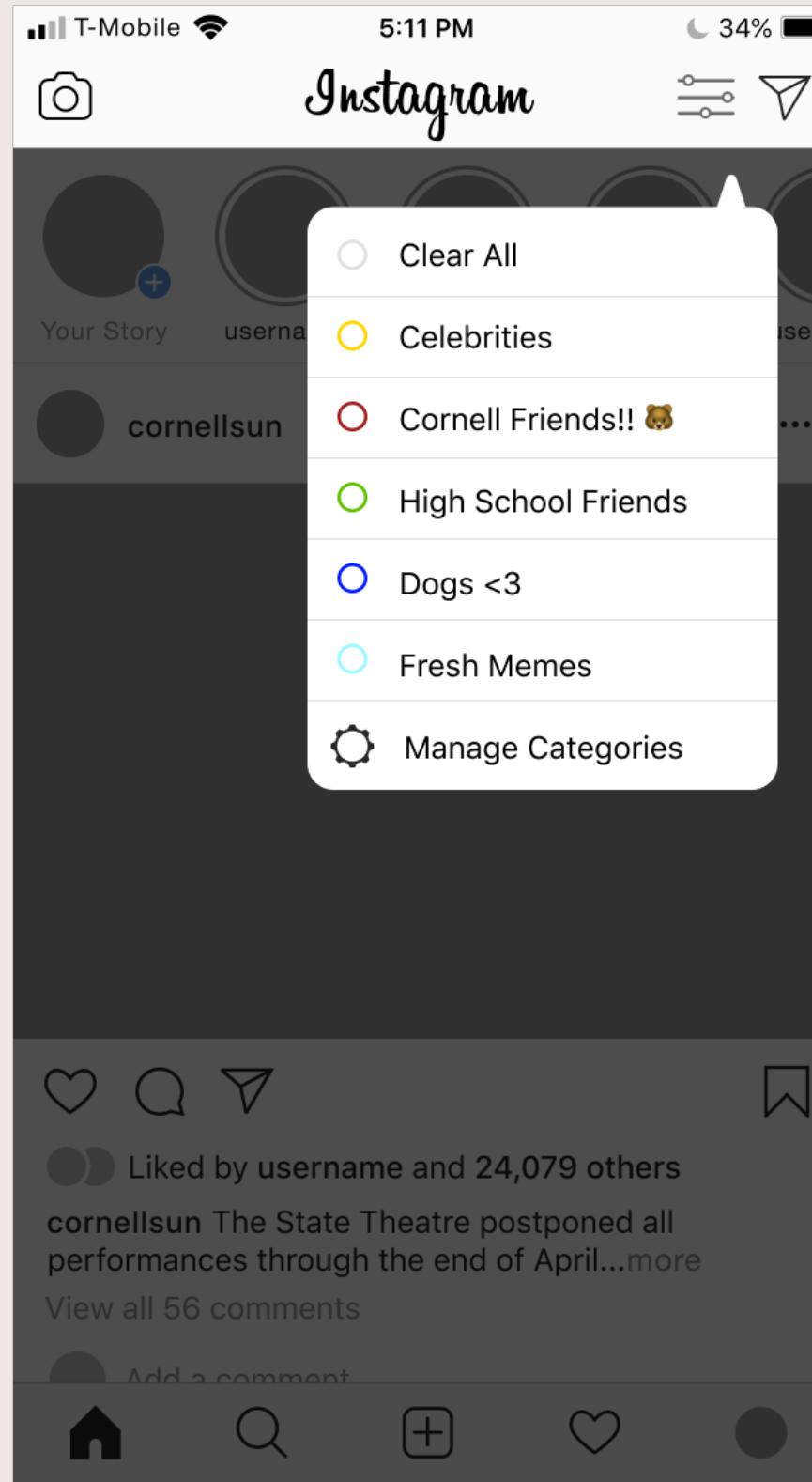


Filtering by Categories

Filter Selection Screen Exploration

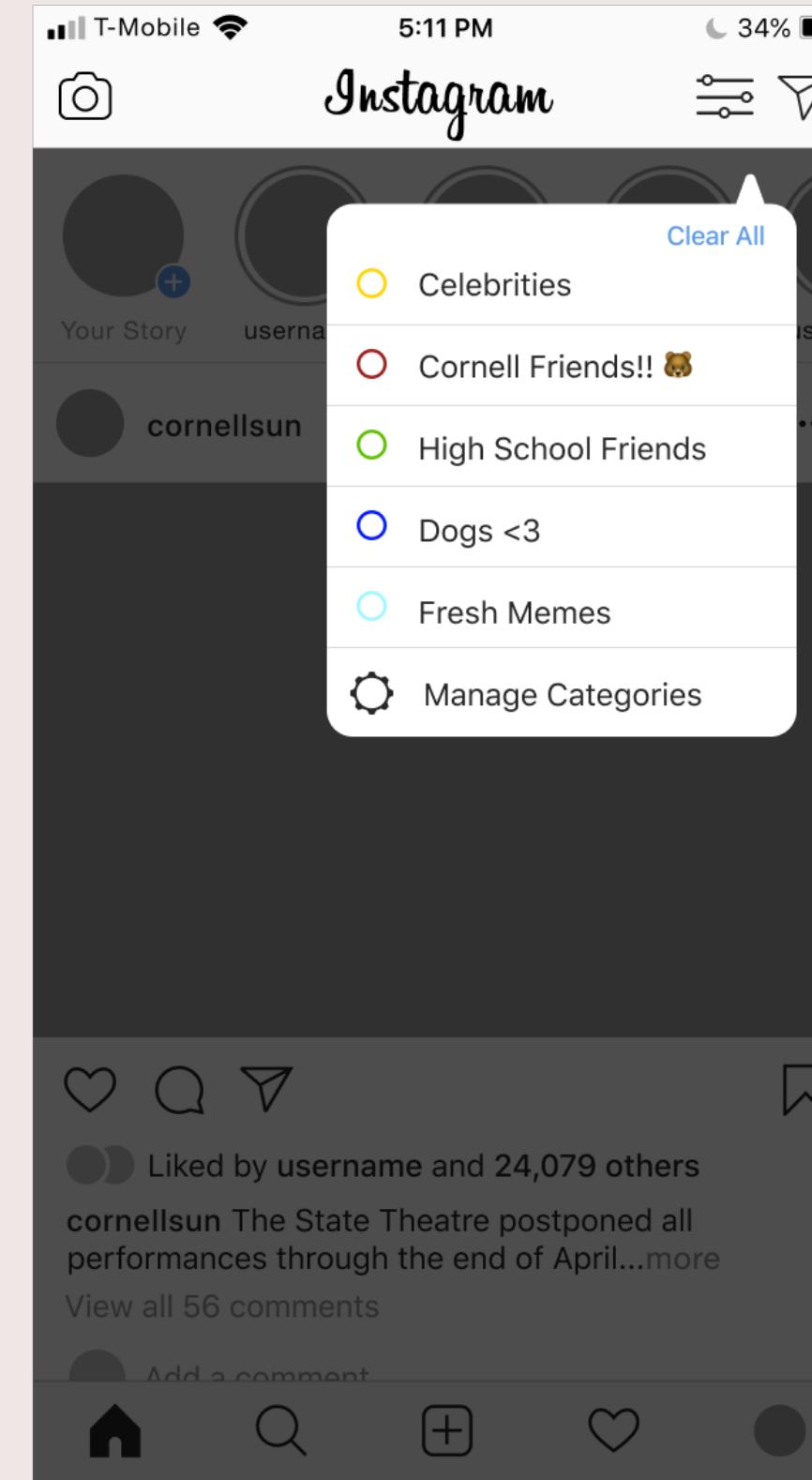
A. All Cells

"Clear All" and "Manage Categories" functions are also cells in the drop-down menu.



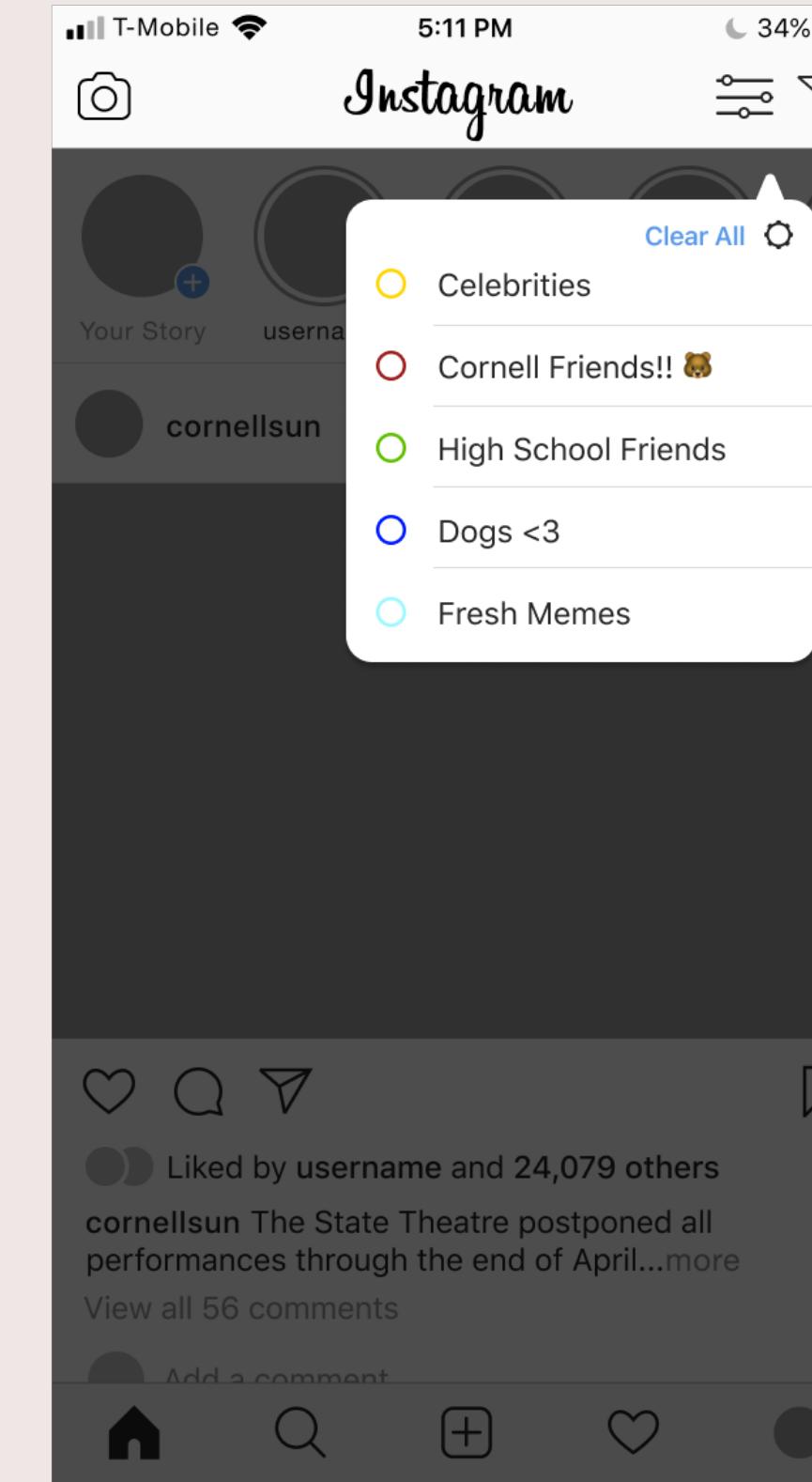
B. Clear All is Separated

"Clear All" is made into a separate option.
"Manage Categories" is still a cell.



C. Clear All & Manage Categories is Separated

"Clear All" and "Manage Categories" made into separate options. "Manage Categories" does not have a corresponding label.

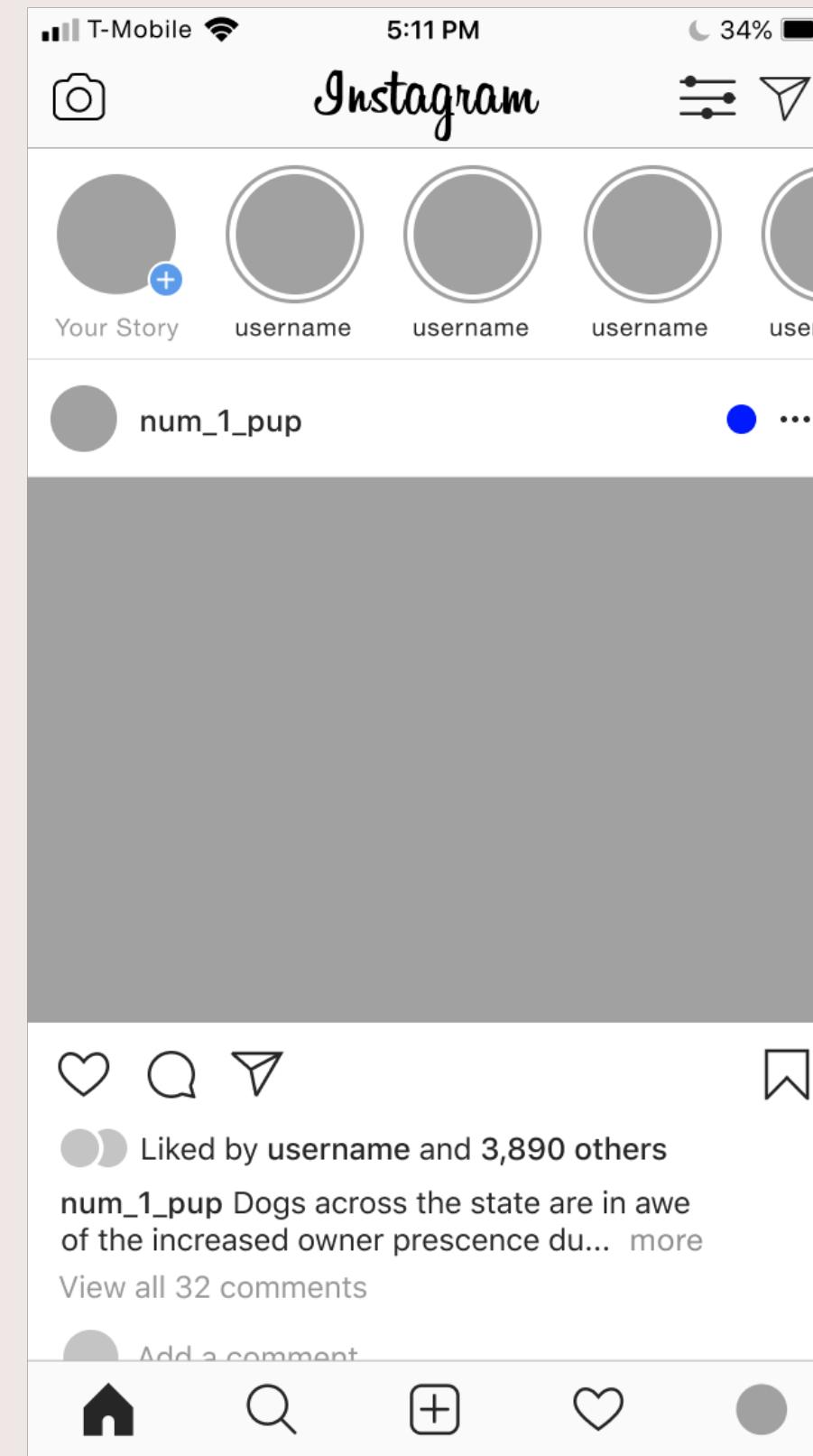


Filtering by Categories

Filtered Home Screen Exploration

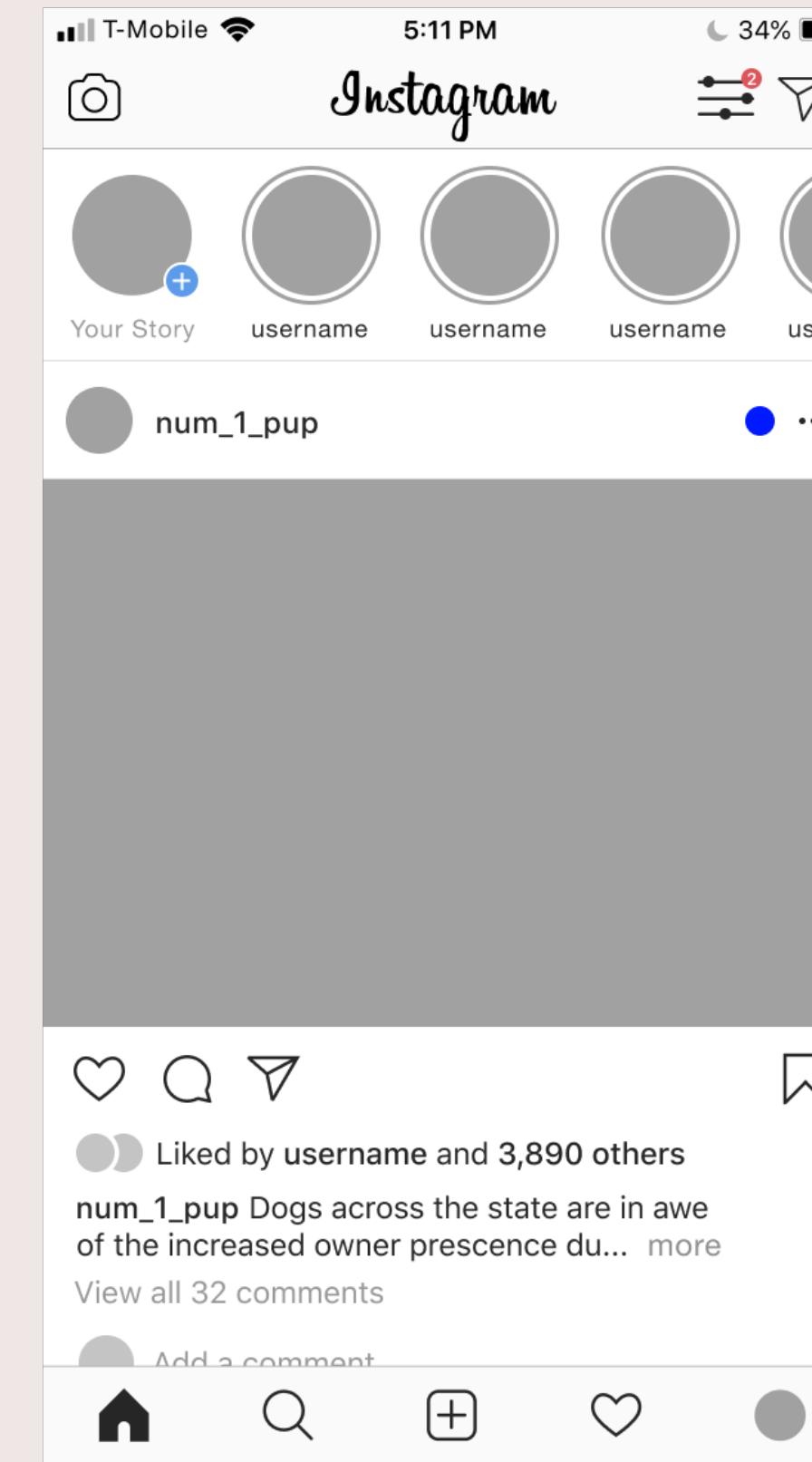
A. Filled Icon

Three line filter icon consists of filled-in circles.



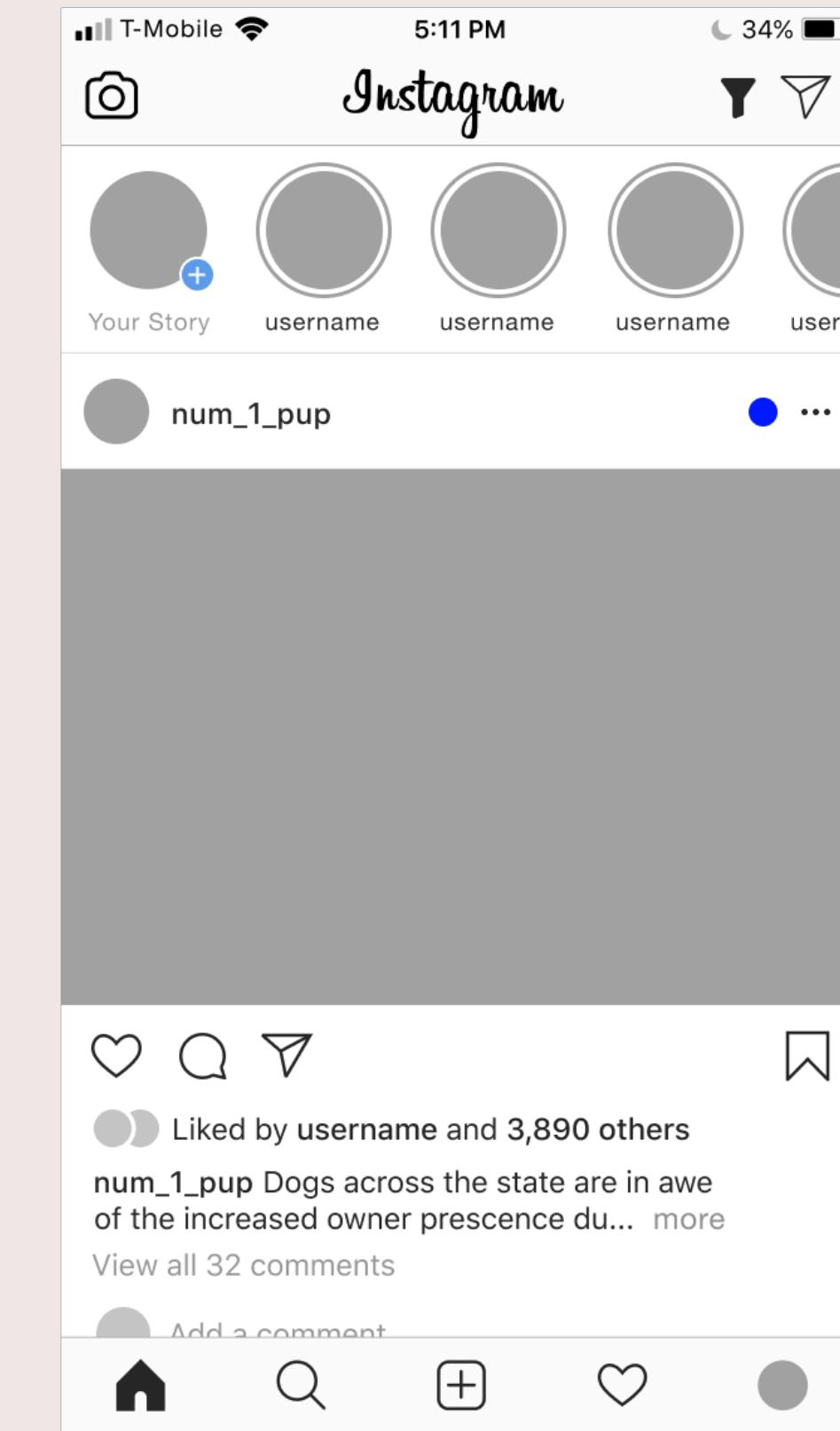
B. Filled Icon with Numbers

Three line filter icon consists of filled-in circles and a red bubble with the number of filters applied.



C. Funnel Filter Icon

The filter icon would be a funnel shape across all the screens. This icon will become filled in after filters are applied.

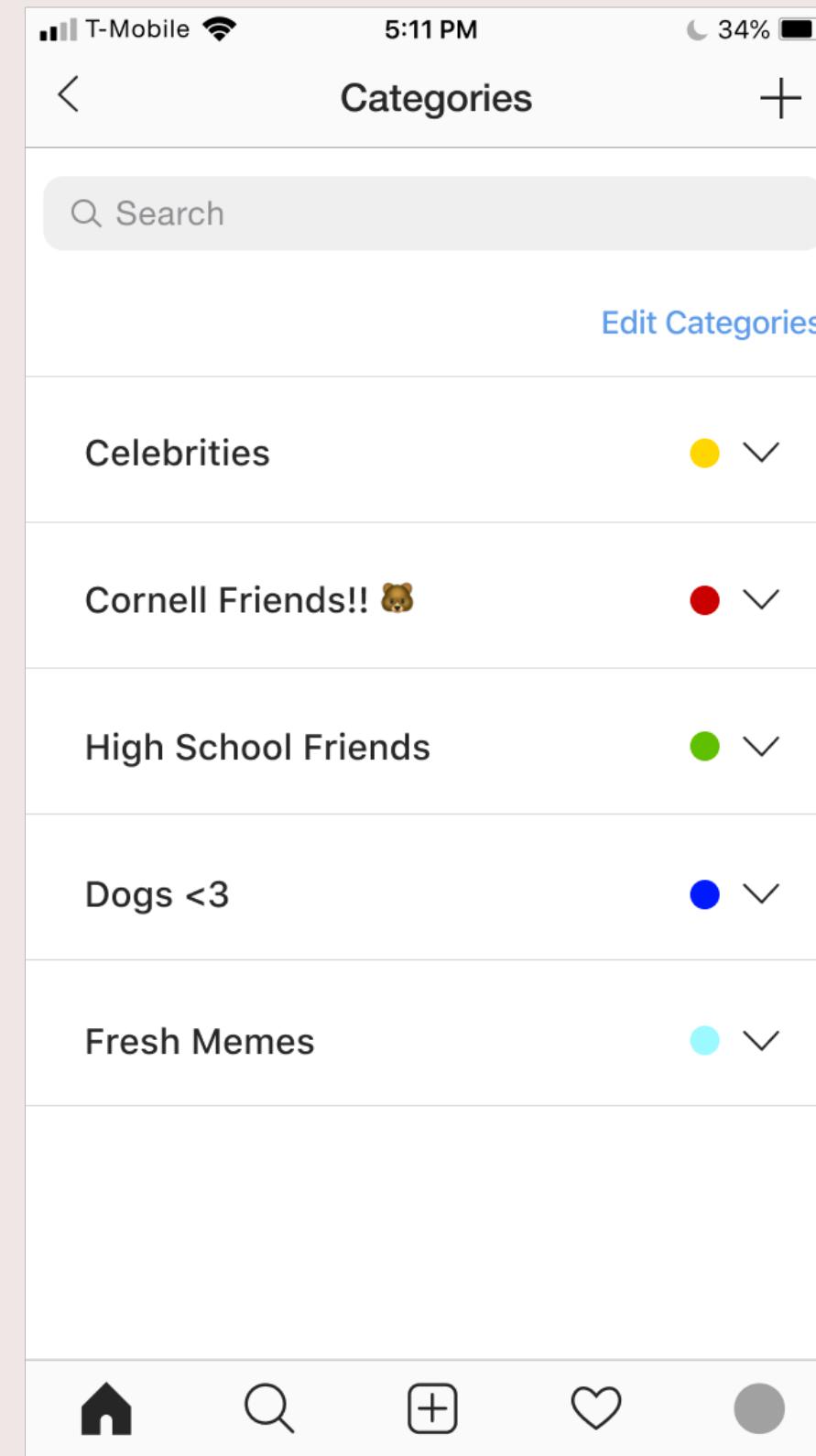


Category Settings

Category List Screen Exploration

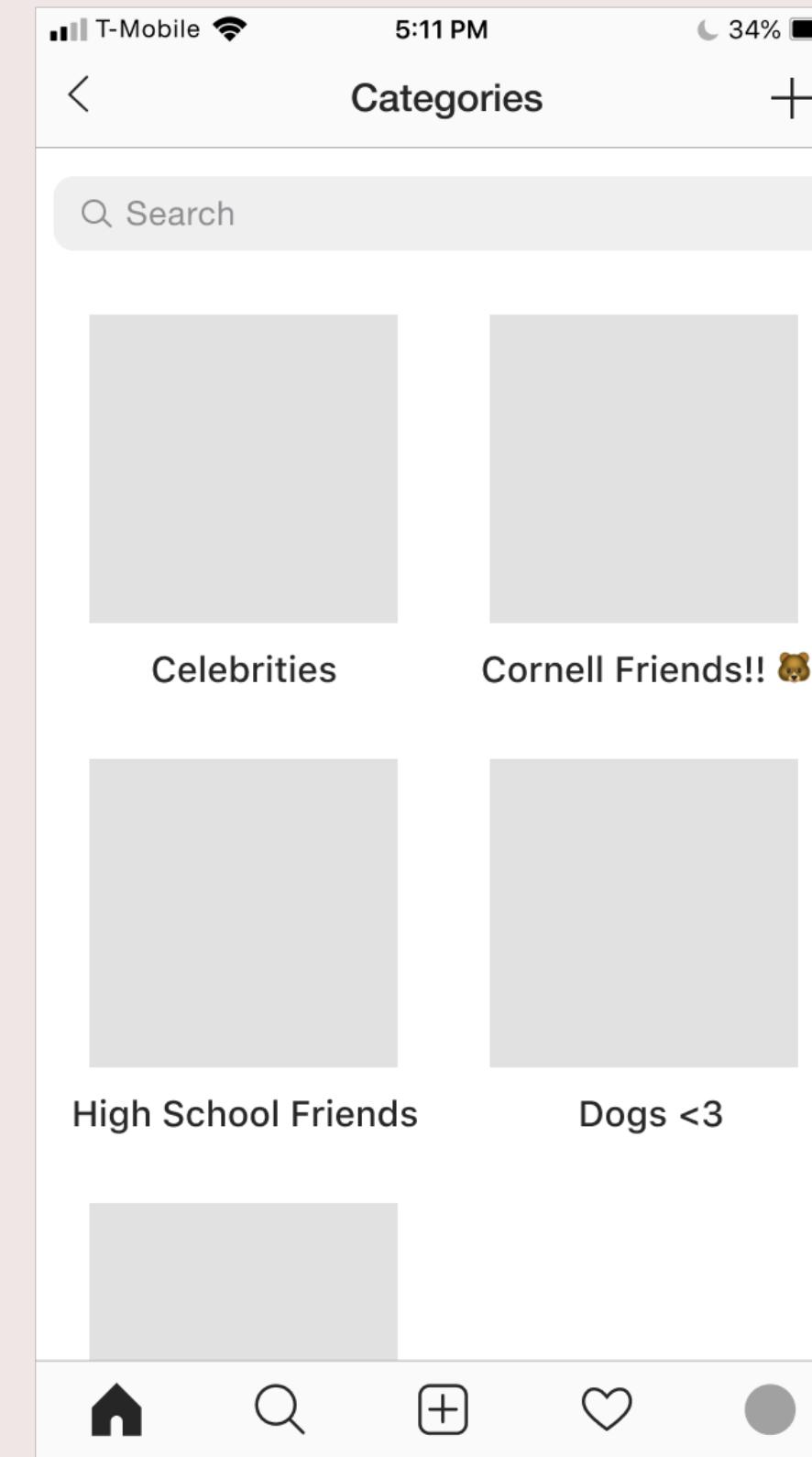
A. Drop-down List

List of categories with corresponding colored dots.



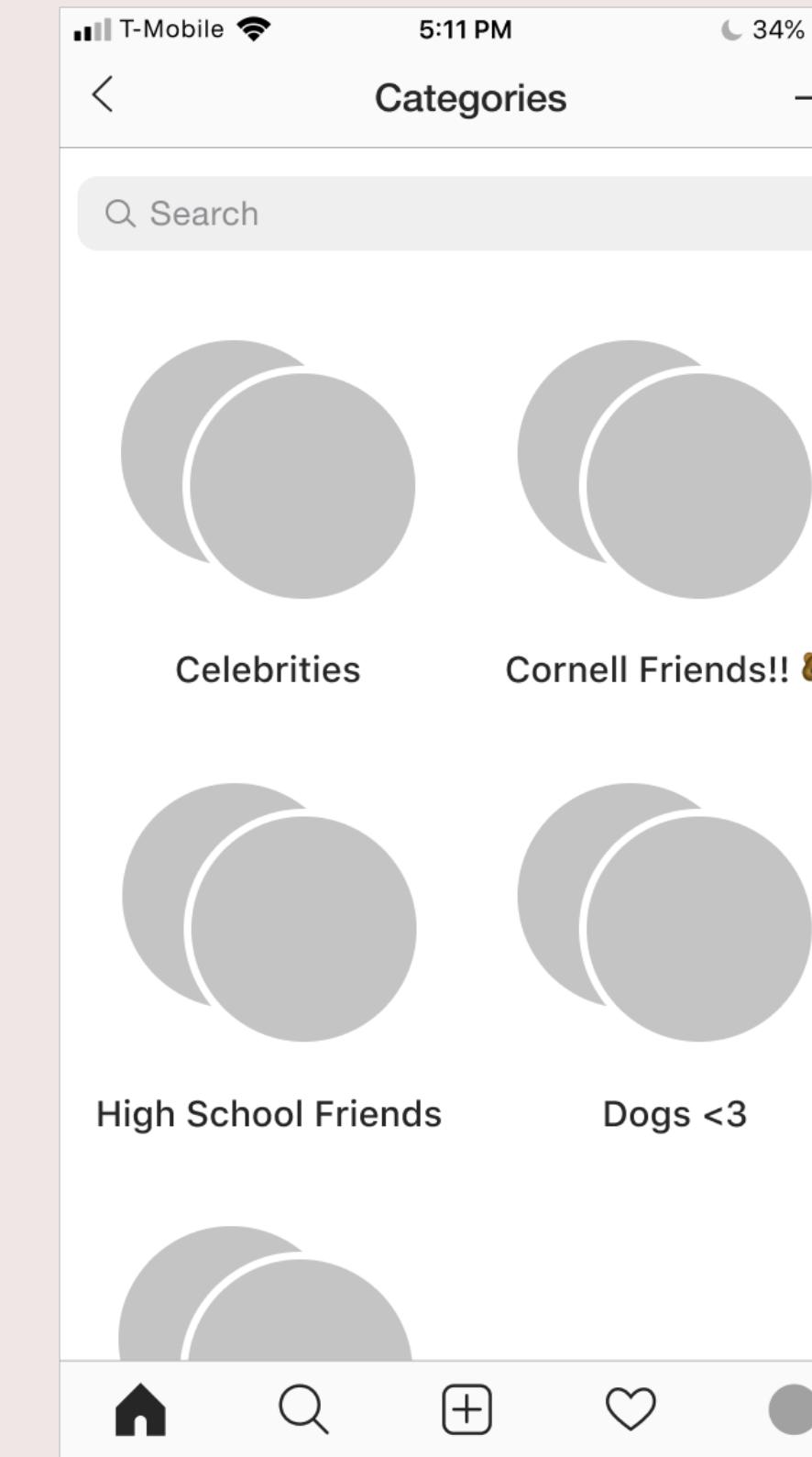
B. Image List

Similar to the Collection's feature, images or posts represent their respective categories.



C. Member List

Members' profiles will represent their respective categories. Member profile design resembles that of group chats.

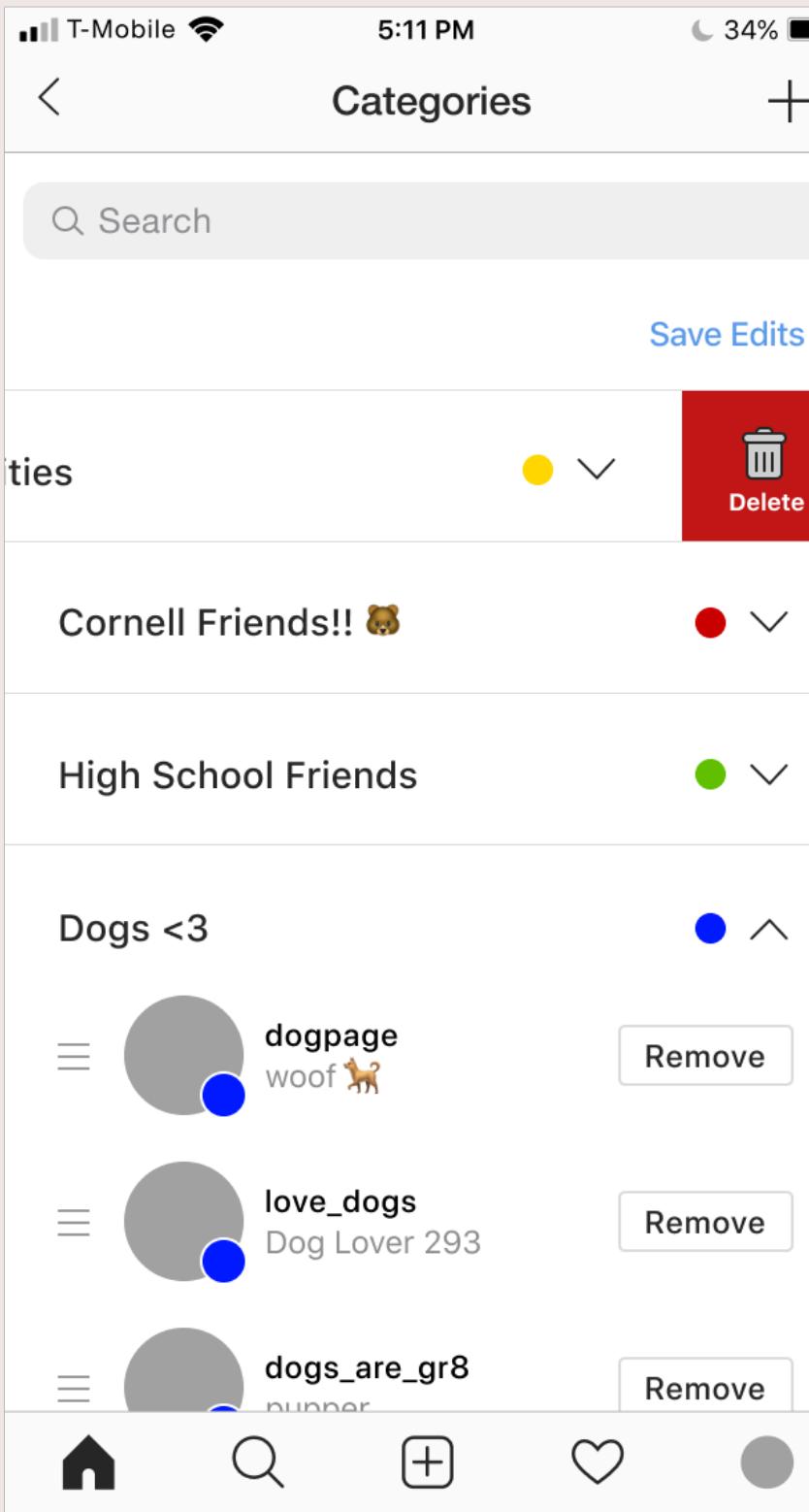


Category Settings

Member List Screen Exploration

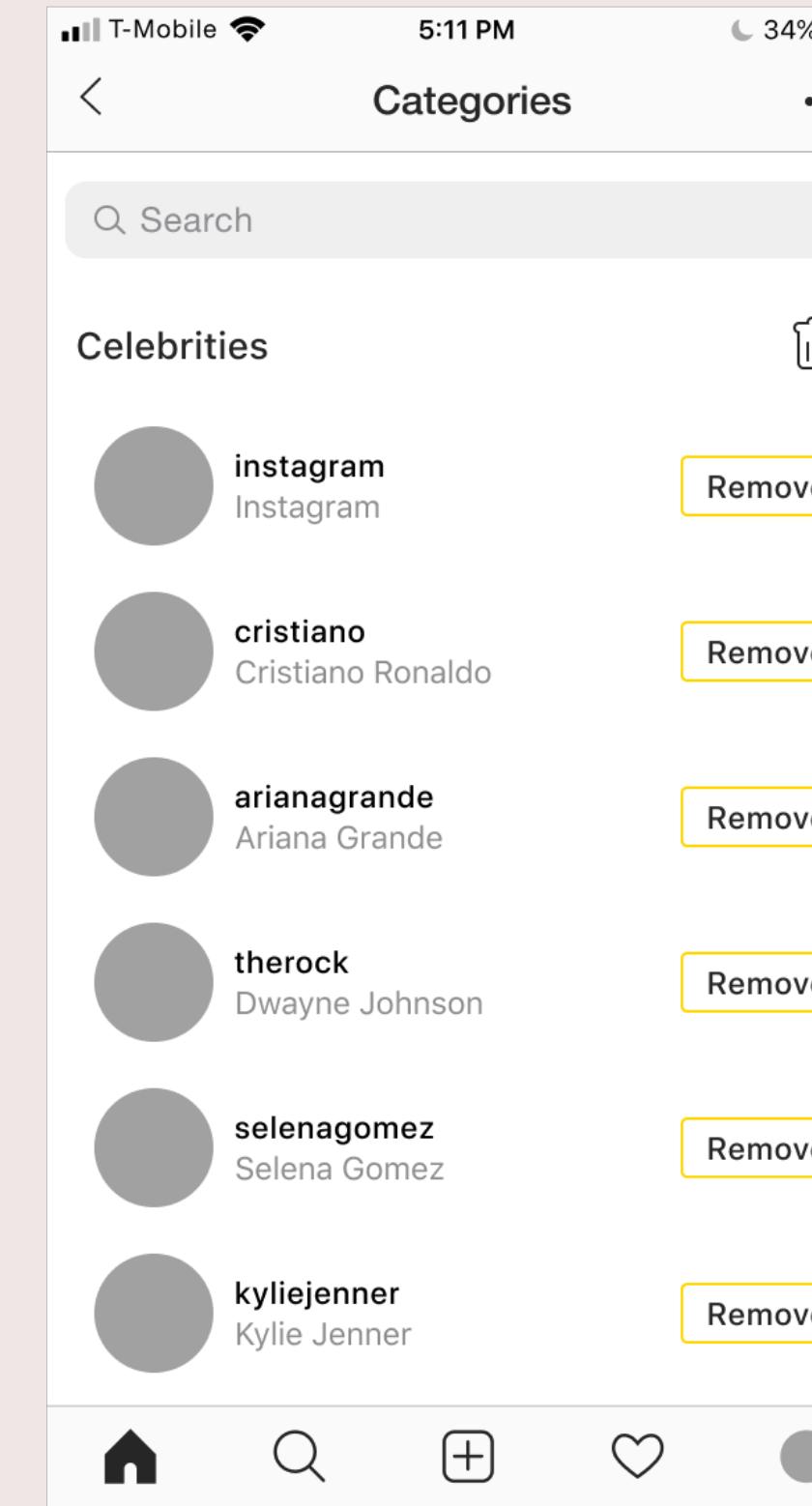
A. Drop-down List

Edit option allows users to drag and drop members listed under the drop-down to other categories. Swipe to delete a category.



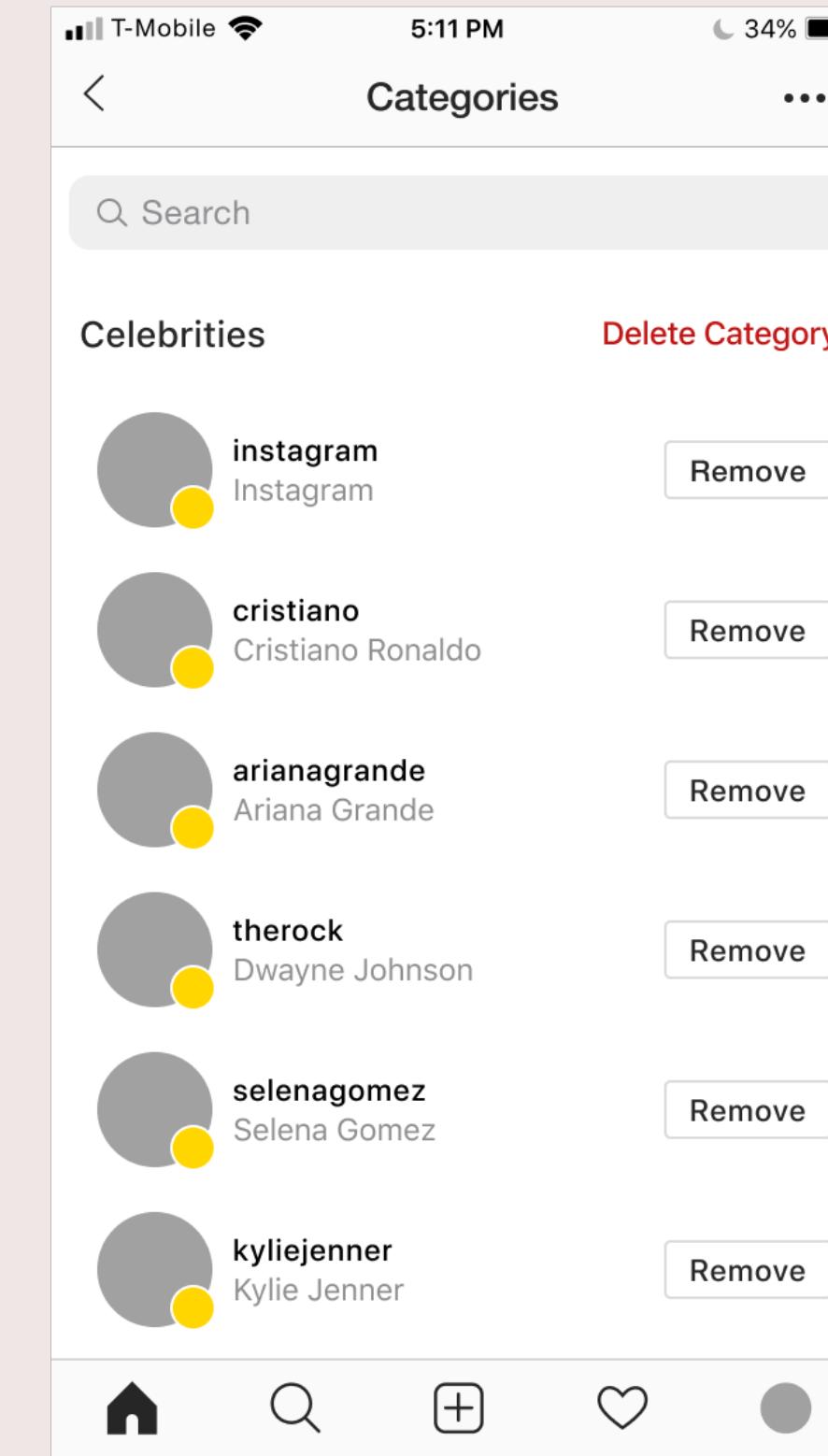
B. Image List

Similar UI to the Close Friend's List. No associated dot next to each profile picture. Remove button outlined in category color. Trash Icon deletes the category.



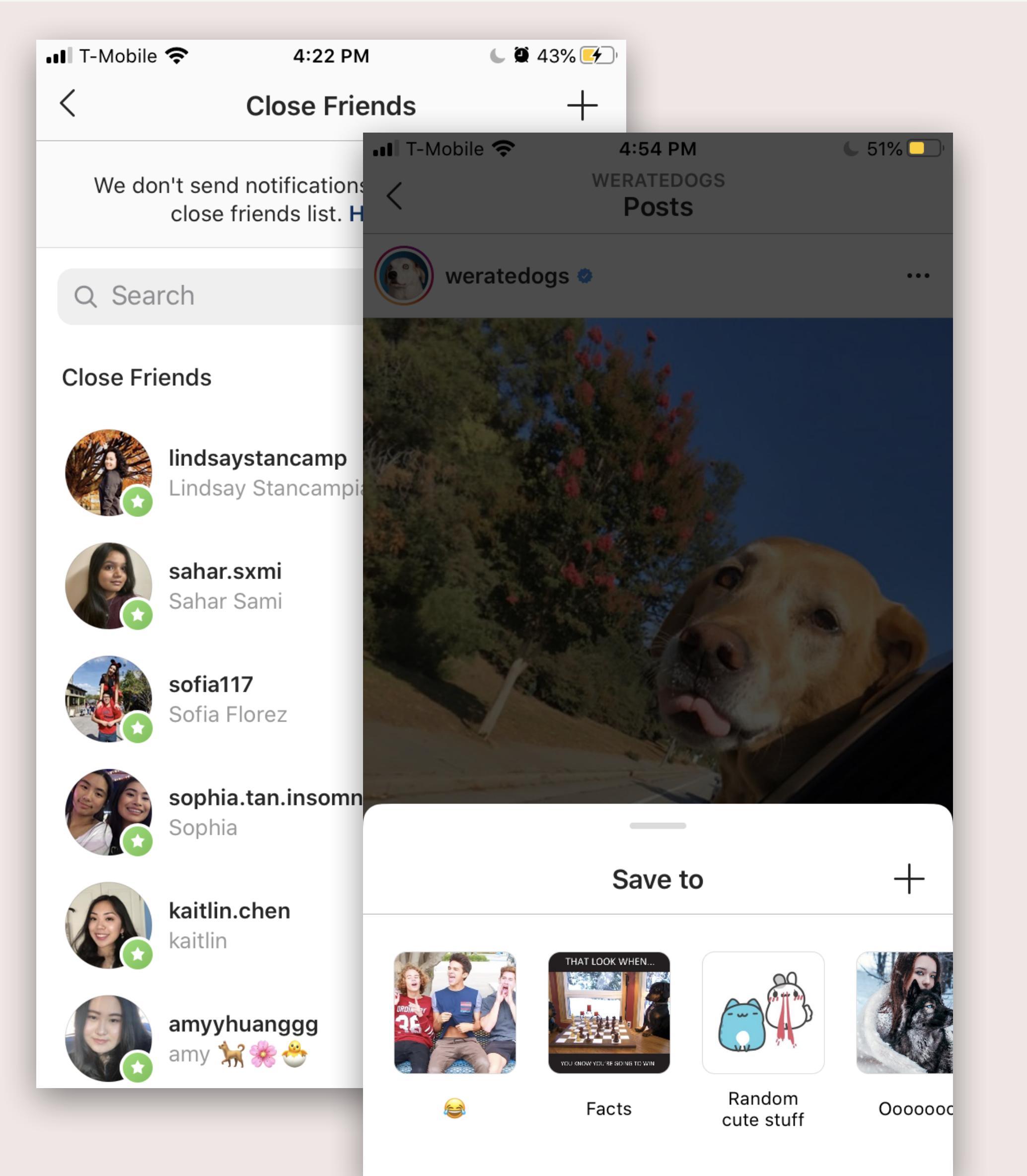
C. Member List

Similar UI to the Close Friend's List. "Delete Category" is in red to warn of its permanent action. Profile pictures have an associated dot, like the Close Friend's List. Dots are customized to the category's color.



Inspiration

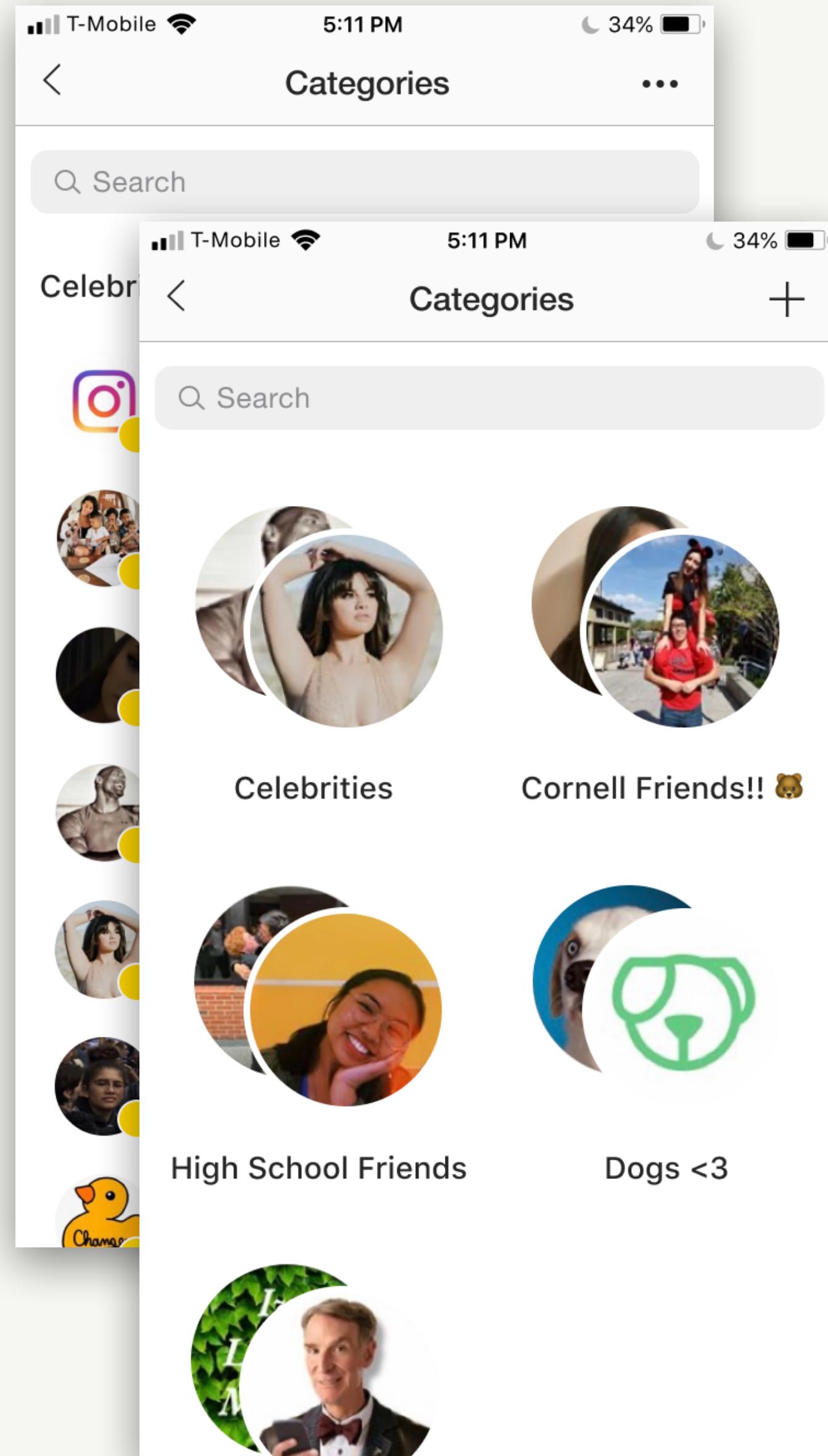
Drawing on Instagram's Existing UI & UX Design



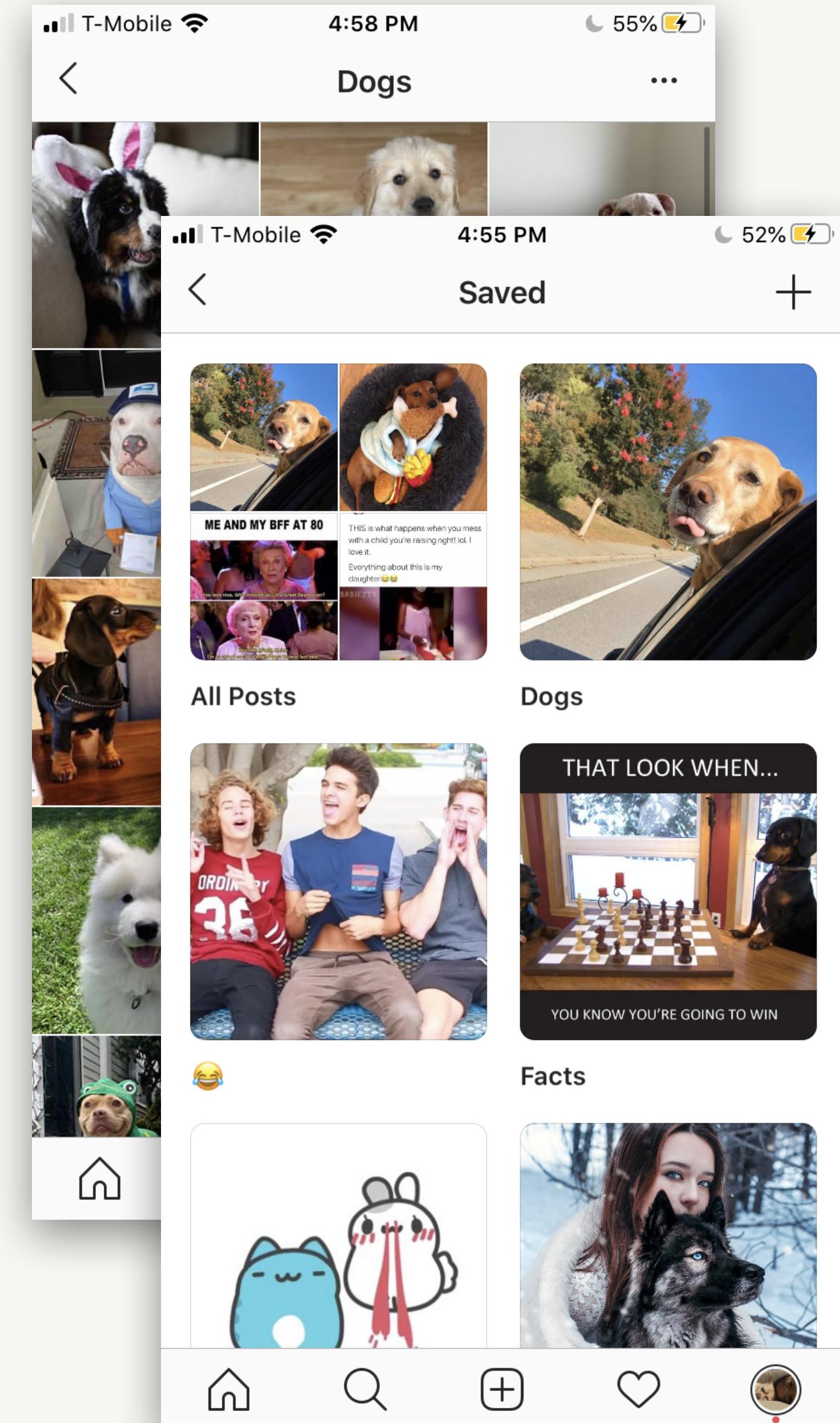
Instagram Collections

Similarity to Categories

- Users save posts to their personal collections
- Similar to adding posts to their collections, users can add the users they follow to custom categories
- Instead of square posts, categories are represented by its members



Instagram Categories

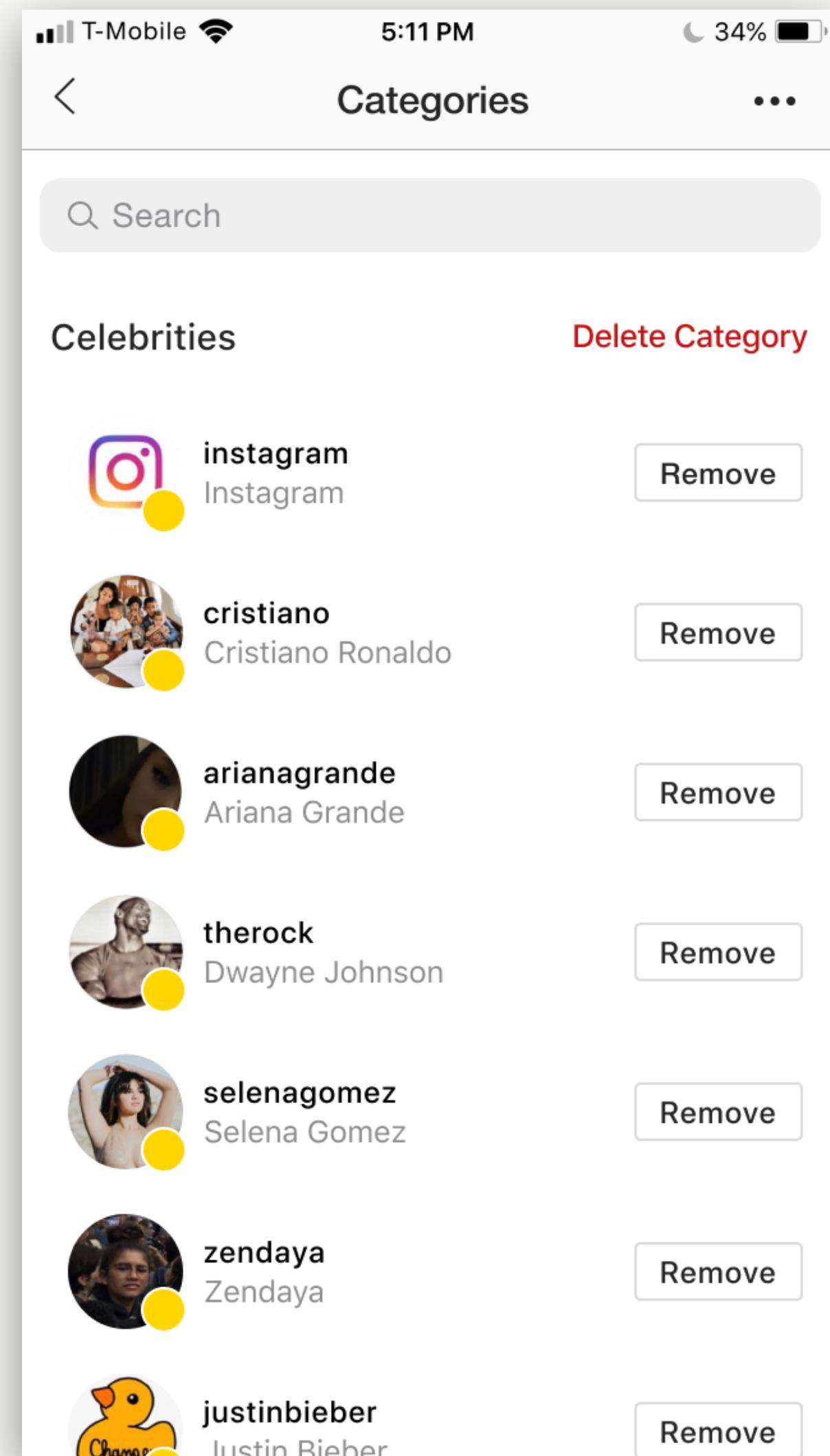


Instagram Collections

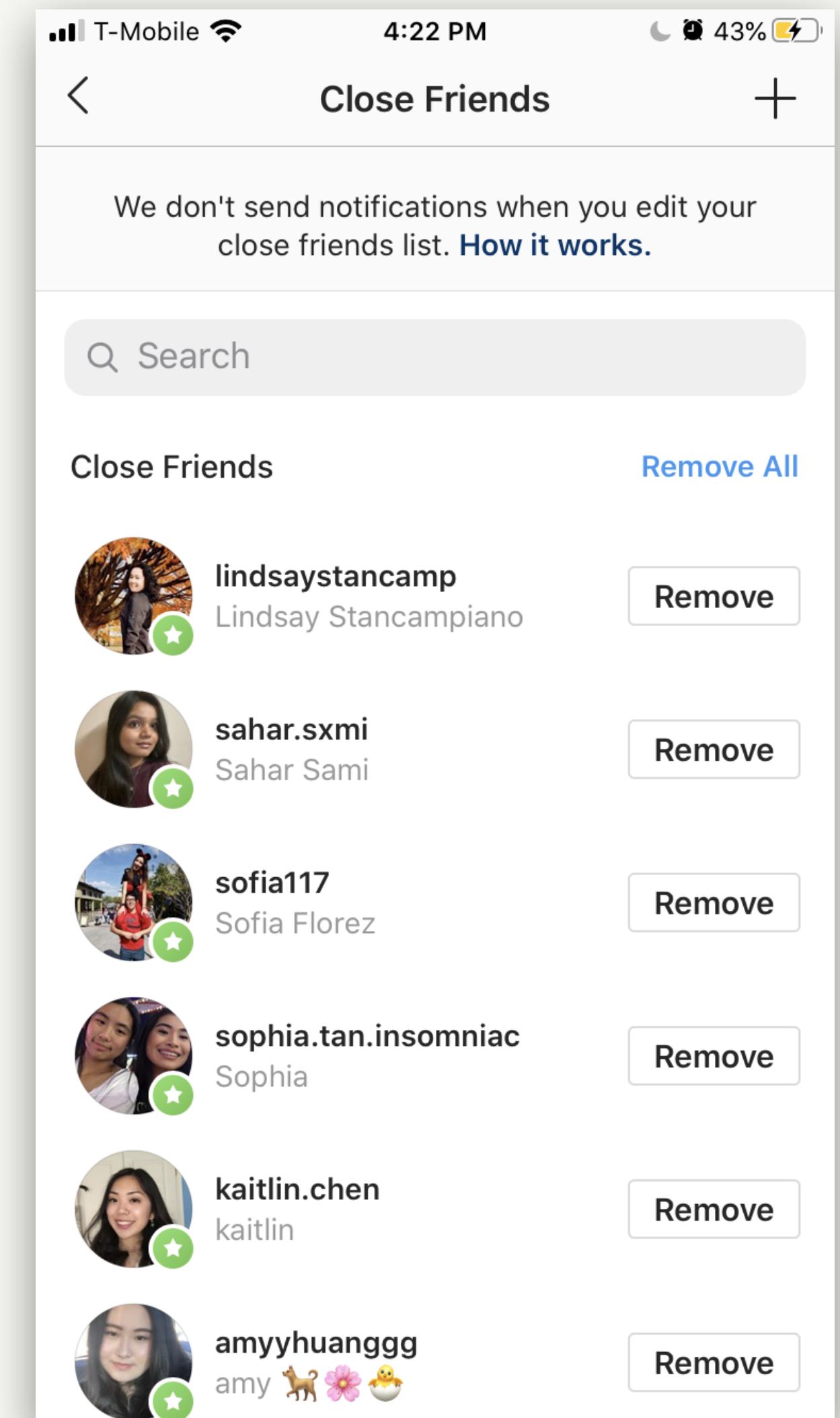
Instagram Close Friends List

Similarity to Categories

- Users can mark their followers under their Close Friends List, giving them exclusive access to their private story
- Similar to adding members to their Close Friends List, users can add users they follow to a category
- Staying consistent with native design

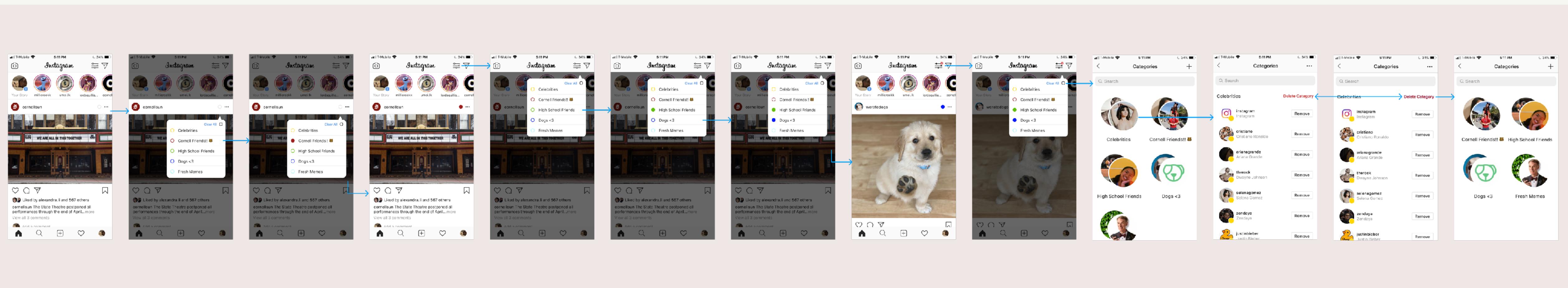


Instagram Categories



Instagram Close Friends

High-Fidelity Flow



Questions?

Samantha Zhang (sjz46)



T-Mobile 5:11 PM 34%

Instagram

Your Story millierockk umei.lk lordsquillia... cornel

cornellsun

STAY SAFE WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER BE KIND

Liked by alexandra.li and 567 others

cornellsun The State Theatre postponed all performances through the end of April...more

View all 3 comments

Add a comment

Home Search Create Like Profile

This Instagram post shows a photograph of a theater marquee. The marquee displays the text "STAY SAFE", "WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER", and "BE KIND". Below the marquee, the entrance to the theater is visible. The post has received 567 likes and includes a caption from the user stating that the State Theatre postponed all performances through the end of April. There are also links to view all 3 comments and add a comment.