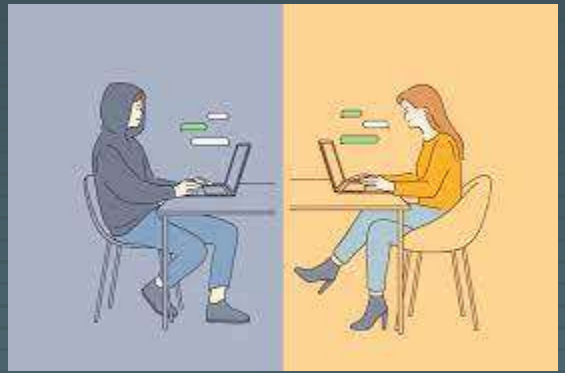
# Catfishing

# What is Catfishing?

Catfishing is a deceptive activity in which a person creates a fictional persona or fake identity on a social networking service, usually targeting a specific victim.

The practice may be used for financial gain, to compromise a victim in some way, to intentionally upset a victim, or as a form of wish fulfillment (to gain the attention/affections/etc. of the victim that the perpetrator may not otherwise gain).

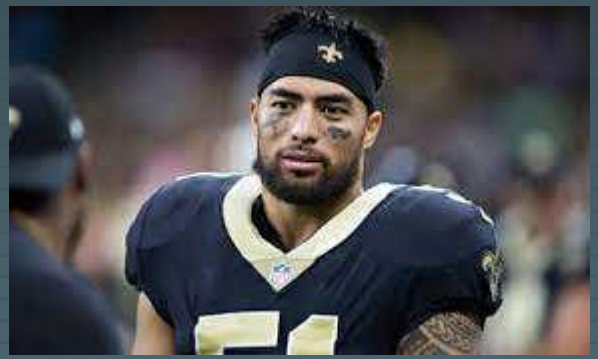


# Notable Catfishing Cases

# Manti Te'o Fake Girlfriend

Manti Te'o was a Notre Dame football player who claimed to be in a relationship with a woman named Lennay Kekua.

Te'o believed this person to be real and had even communicated with her over the phone. However, it was later discovered that Kekua was a fictional character created by a man named Ronaiah Tuiasosopo, who had deceived Te'o.



# Catfishing of Meri Brown

Meri chose to enter into an online relationship with a man named Sam Cooper. Unfortunately, it was later discovered that this person turned out to be a catfish. “Sam Cooper” was actually a woman named Jackie Overton.

Jackie had a history on online scamming and often used multiple accounts to lure unsuspecting people in. When Meri discovered Jackie’s deception, she ended the online relationship, which angered Jackie. Jackie, in response, released compromising photos of Meri and even published a book about the ordeal.

# Mark/John Suicide by Murder

Note: Both of the people involved in this case were miners and will be referred to using pseudonyms to protect their identity.

“John” took on the online disguise of a female British secret agent to convince his friend “Mark” that he was being vetted and initiated into the British secret service for a secret mission. Through online messages from his fictional identity, “John” persuaded his friend “Mark” that he had to stab him (“John”) to death in order to pass a fictitious initiation test for the British secret services.

In reality, “John” was attempting to have “Mark” help facilitate his own suicide.

Fortunately, “Mark” was unsuccessful and that “John” survived the attack. Both participants in this case received the support they needed to recover from this ordeal and build successful futures.

# Red Flags

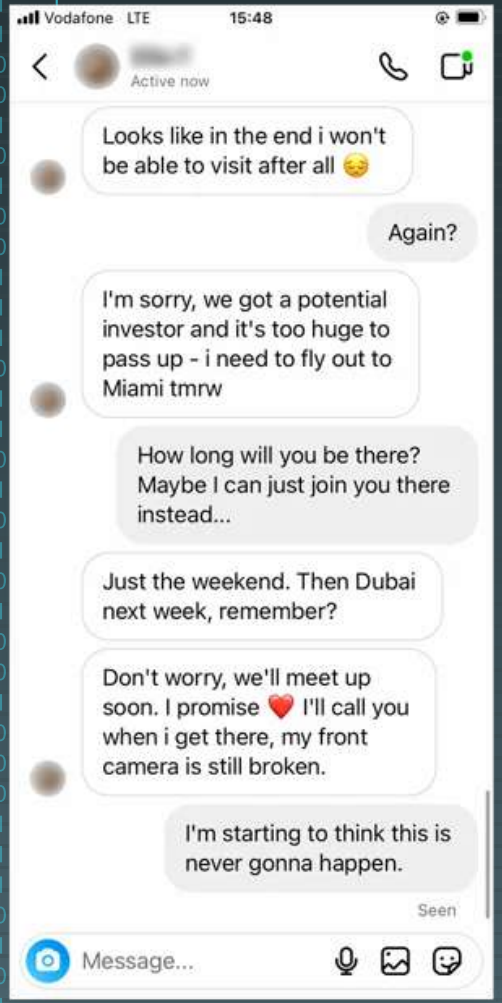
# Some Warning Signs...

Warning signs that someone may be a catfish include:

- Showing extreme affection right away
- Asking for money, even though you've never met
- They won't give you their phone number or won't pick up the phone when you call
- They don't have many followers or friends on social media
- Their story doesn't add up
- They're using someone else's photos (as discovered through a reverse image search)
- Their only photos are professional
- They never send casual photos
- Reluctant to meet in real life or video chat
- They make plans but never follow through or always cancel
- They ask for deeply personal information, but keep things about their own life vague

# Identify the Red Flags

On the following slides, you will see images from a variety of real-life catfishing scenarios. Identify the red flags that you see.

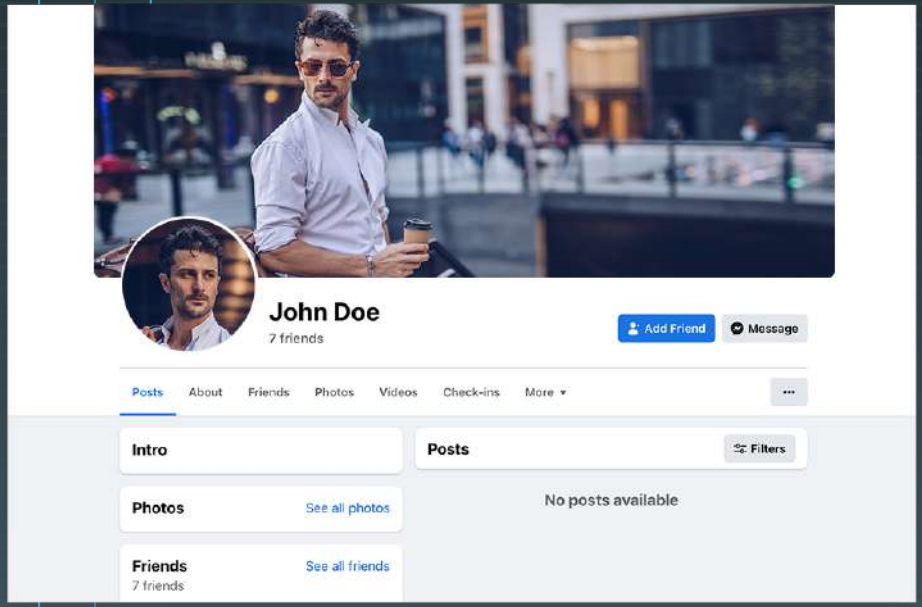


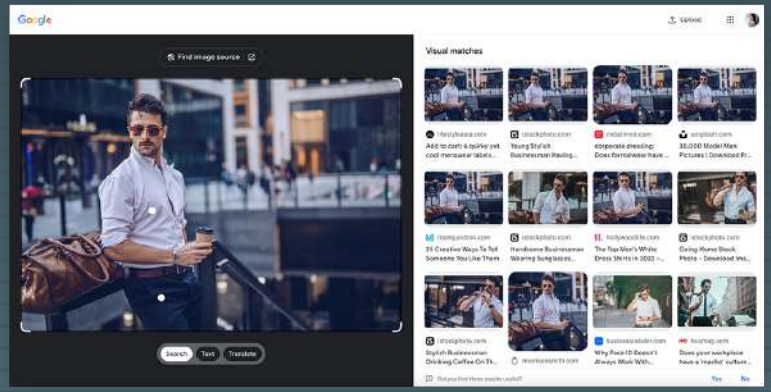

# Example #1

What red flags do you see?

Type your answer here.

# Example #2




What red flags do you see?

Type your answer here.

# Example #3

What red flags do you see?

Type your answer here.

# Catfishing Article and Questions

# Catfishing Article

Read the article given to you on Google Classroom. As you read, answer the questions on the document also given to you on Google Classroom.

When you have finished reading the article, submit this activity along with your question document to Google Classroom.