

# Networking



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Harvard



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Univ. Illinois

# Who is James Mickens?

- Poet, scientist, philosopher, foosball expert
- BS in Computer Science: Georgia Tech
- PhD in Computer Science: Michigan
- @MSR: 2008—2015
- @MIT: Fall 2014
- @Harvard: 2015—now

# Nancy in Brief

- PhD @ UIUC; MS @ Berkeley; BS applied math & econ @ Stanford
- Prof @Texas A&M: 1995-2018
- Prof & Dept Head (back at) @UIUC: since Jan
- Research – Applied Algorithms
  - robotics, computational biology & geometry, parallel algorithms
  - Graduated 3 PhDs (10 profs, 9 research labs, 2 postdocs, 3 startups)
- Other stuff
  - Bernese Mountain Dogs (currently Fred & Wilma)
  - Husband Lawrence – grad school, A&M & UIUC
  - Recent highlights: bucket trip to Machu Picchu, Diving!

# What Is Networking?



The deliberate act of creating and maintaining professional relationships with people in your field.

# Why Network?

- High-level goal: Building a supportive community
- Professional benefits:
  - Discover opportunities for scientific collaboration
  - Identify internships and full-time jobs
  - Enable access to helpful service roles (e.g., program committees, invited talks)
  - Find letter writers (and general advocates for you)
- Emotional benefits:
  - Receive congratulations when things are good
  - Get consolation when things are bad
  - Enjoy a sense of belonging

# Building a Personal Brand

- Appearance: Body language, attire
- Communication skills: Clarity, confidence, ability to listen and to read other people
- Technical competencies: A particular set of scientific skills and insights
- Differentiation: How do you stand out from everyone else?



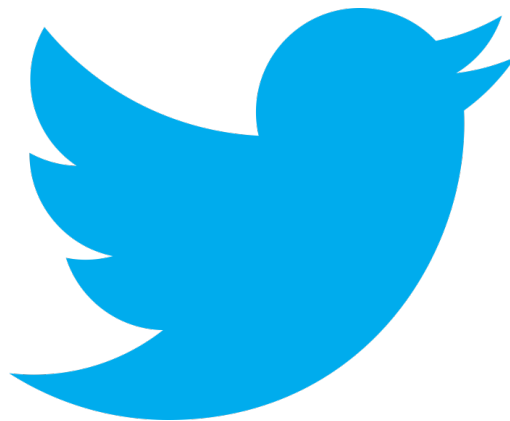
“Luck favors the prepared mind.”

# Building a Personal Brand

- Online:
  - Web pages
  - Social media
- In-person:
  - Conferences
  - Workshops
  - Poster sessions
  - The hallway track



# Online Persona: Social Media



Medium



WORDPRESS

# Online Persona: Social Media

- Social media moves faster than traditional academic publishing channels
- Ideas can be quickly publicized through
  - Blog posts
  - Tweets
  - Facebook updates
- Social media also useful for building a sense of community with other professionals in your field
- But . . .



The  
Internet **Never  
Forgets**

# Online Persona:

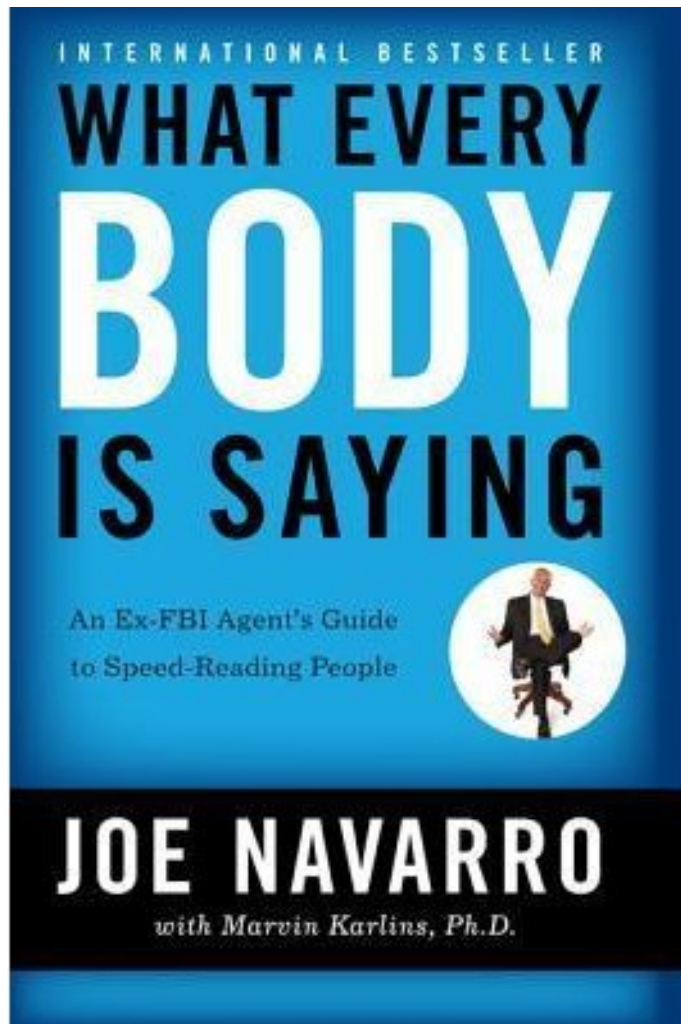
## Your Professional Webpage

- Should list your:
  - Research interests
  - Publications + posters + talks
  - Code artifacts
  - Media coverage
  - Contact info
  - Link to your CV
- Update incrementally and often!

# In-person networking



# Learn About Body Language



- Learning to read people will help you to detect when you're saying the right/wrong thing
- Learning how to project confidence can make you feel more confident

# Learn About Vocal Tone

- Watch your favorite comedians, politicians, and scientists on YouTube
  - What do they do well?
  - What do they do poorly?
- Watch recordings of yourself presenting
  - This is brutal . . .
  - . . . but invaluable!

# Prepare and Practice

- Preparation can remove the fear of game-time spontaneity or creativity
  - Ex: For a conference, read papers ahead of time and generate potential questions before meeting speakers
  - Ex: Before going to a professional event, prepare a list of who you want to meet, and how you'll introduce yourself
- Most people who seem “naturally” good at something have practiced a lot, and are not improvising as much as you might think



# MODERN OPERATING SYSTEMS

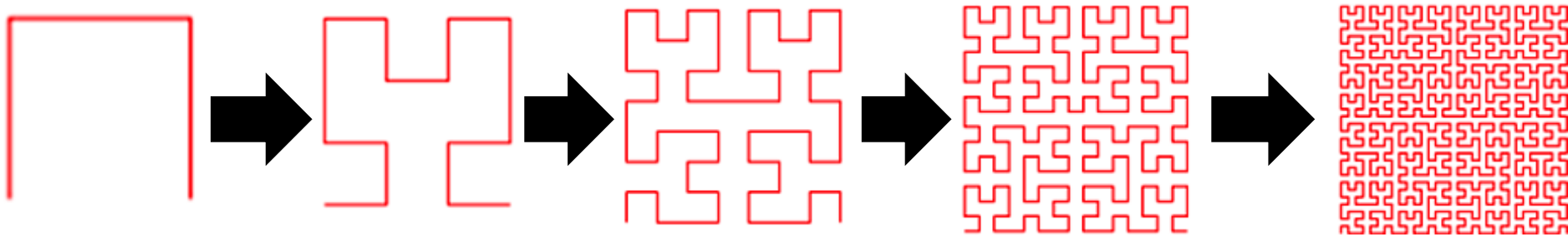


SECOND EDITION



Andrew S. Tanenbaum

# Elevator Pitches



- Should be a space-filling curve
  - 5 second version: Your basic area (e.g., systems, HCI, ML)
  - 10 second version: +Your specialization (e.g., “In particular, I study X and Y, with a focus on Z”)
  - 30 second version: +An insight from your research (e.g., “My work exploits the fact that a foo might be a baz on Wednesday”)
- Practice it!





# Networking at Conferences

# What To Do

- Wear your badge visibly
- If you hear a talk and think of a good question, ask it during Q&A
  - Use the microphone
  - Preface question with your name and affiliation
- Talk to speakers after their presentations
- Talk to other grad students
- Ask advisor to introduce you to people
- Attend social events

# What To Do

- Re-connect with people that you've met in the past
- For new connections, add calendar events to remind yourself to follow-up

# What \*Not\* To Do

- Don't only talk to your friends
- Don't interrupt heavy and/or private conversations
- Don't be overly negative
- Don't linger in a conversation for too long
- Don't get discouraged