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## **MY SPACE AND FACEBOOK USERS BE AWARE...**

Recently, information came to light that defense attorneys are doing their research on officers who are testifying in trials related to gangs, drugs, weapons, and all violent crime. The research is being conducted through My Space and Facebook. Information on accounts you set up through My Space and Facebook are admissible in Court. Photos, simple quotes, mottos, and shared messaging on these sites can come back to bite you.

The listed link below is a New York Times article describing the recent experience of an NYPD officer who was cross-examined over material on his Facebook page. While the officer's comment that the movie "Training Day" was a good lesson in police procedure was a joke, it did not play out that way in front of a jury. In a brilliant move, the defense attorney used the officer's public postings to paint a picture of an overly aggressive officer willing to bend the rules. It was a simple gun case in which the defense was that the officer planted the gun. The defendant was acquitted.

The Court's ruling permitting the use of Facebook and My Space postings for cross examination was completely legal. For those of you who choose to use public forums on the Internet to express opinions, comment on your work, or share a few jokes with friends, be warned - the defense is watching and surfing the internet. It is quite likely the bad guys are watching, too, so be careful out there to keep you, your family and your agency's integrity, safety and credibility intact.

Full Article:

[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/11/nyregion/11about.html?  
\\_r=1&scp=2&sq=myspace&st=cse](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/11/nyregion/11about.html?_r=1&scp=2&sq=myspace&st=cse)