

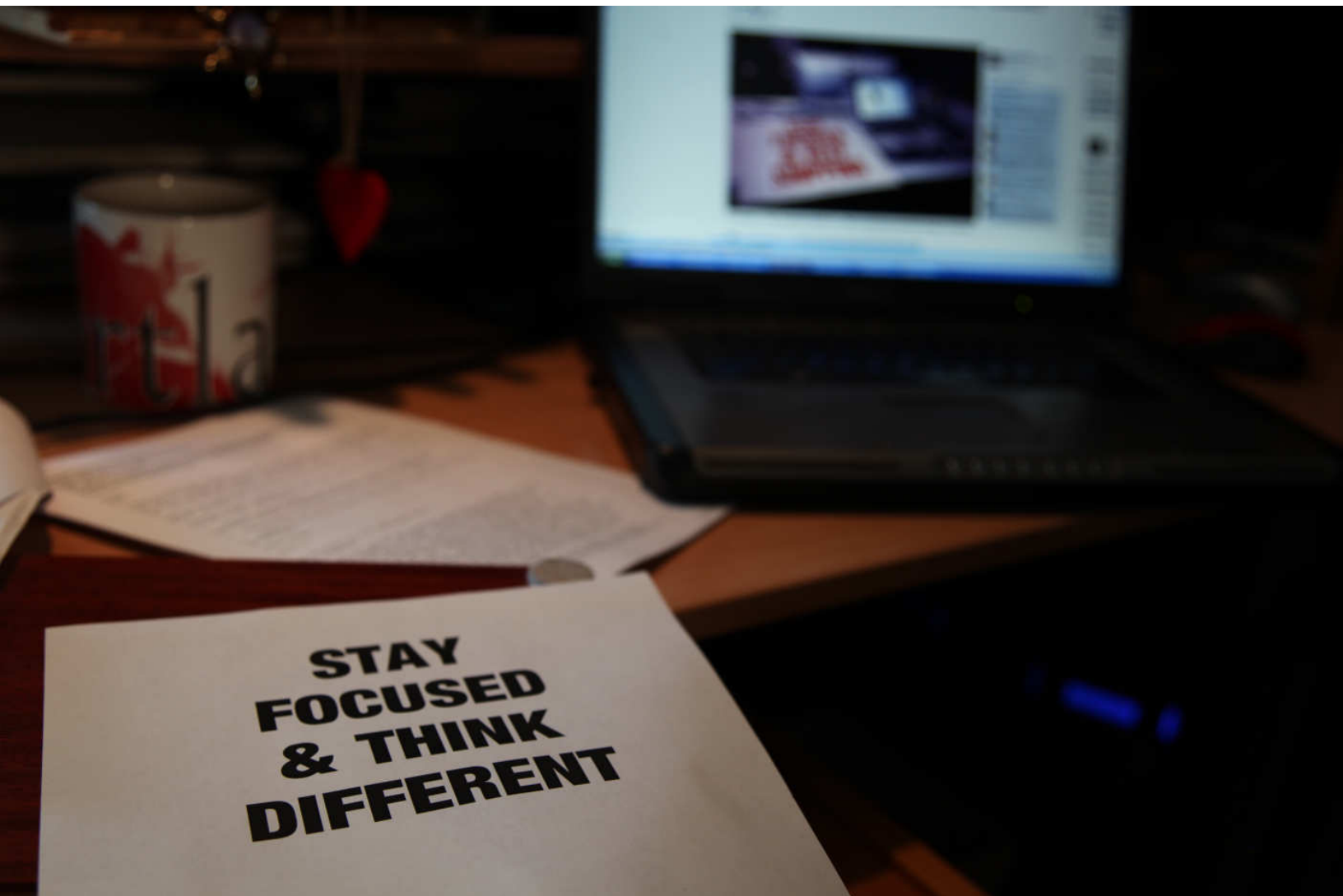


**The Clippings File.** Mark Zuckerberg's "My Desk" posting on Facebook. "We have a saying," Zuckerberg wrote to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission in a letter for the stock's long-awaited initial public offering. "Move fast and break things. The idea is that if you never break anything, you're probably not moving fast enough." And yet elsewhere in the letter, Zuckerberg reassured investors that the company's big mission "starts small -- with the relationship between two people." Investors were also told that "personal relationships are the fundamental unit of our society ... how we discover new ideas, understand our world and ultimately derive long-term happiness." So in an age where people are more connected than ever before ... and yet seemingly more lonely than ever before ... are we moving so fast that maybe we're breaking those fundamental units of our societies? Sources: Nick Bilton (2012). "Is Facebook Straying from the 'Hacker Way'?" *New York Times*, August 22, Bits Blog. Mark Zuckerberg letter included in Facebook, Inc. (2012). *Form S-1 Registration Statement*, Edgar File 287954ds1. Washington, DC: US Securities and Exchange Commission.

# STAY FOCUSED

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Zuckerberg kept a “Stay Focused & Keep Shipping” reminder for himself, and he posted this picture, “My Desk,” on his Facebook Timeline profile. Hmm. Good idea. I’m inspired to post an image of My Desk, too. How about this?

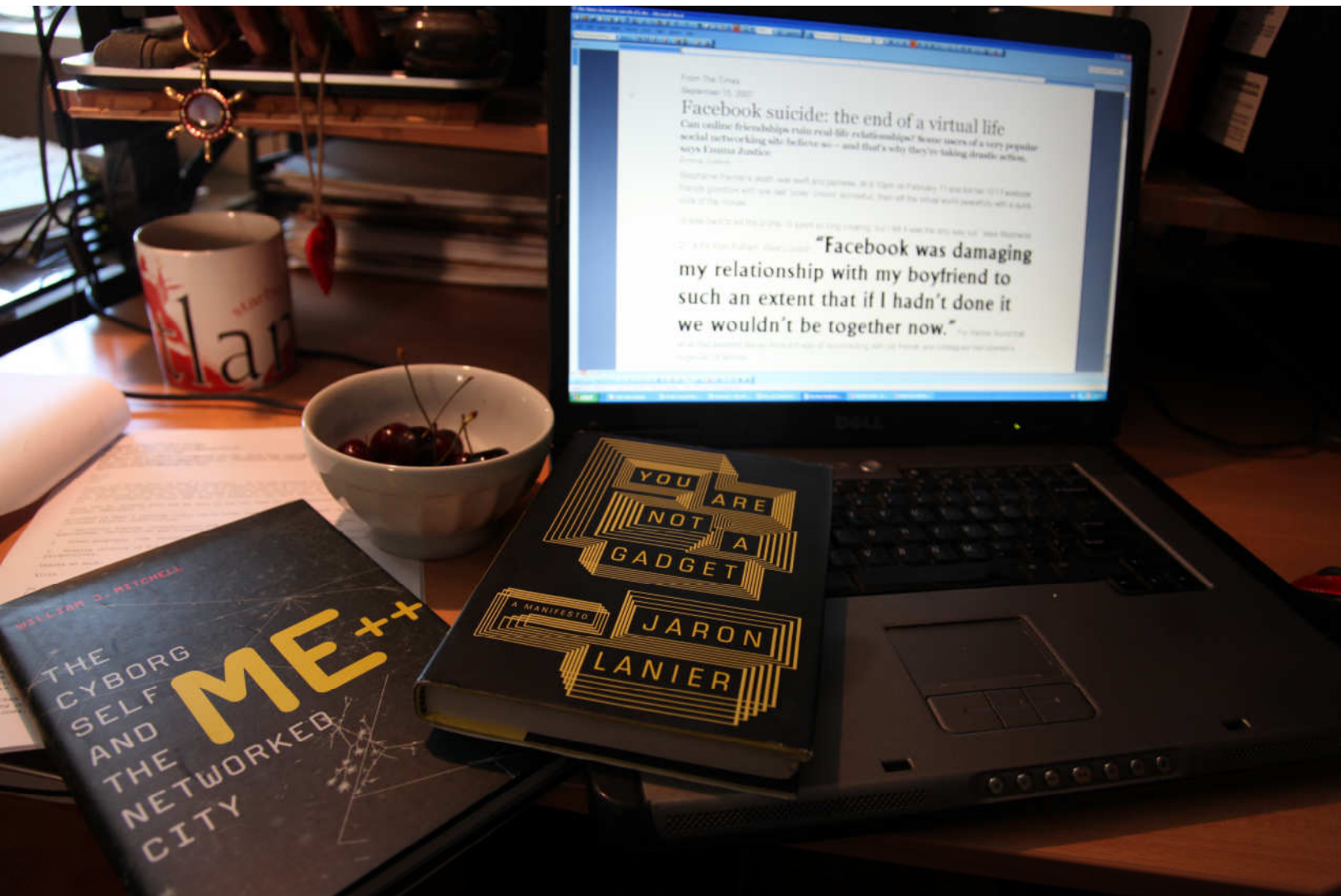


Oh, not nice, so soon after Steve Jobs’s death ... and it’s probably not too flattering to Zuckerberg, either. We should be nice.

But, still, we can’t let Mark off the hook entirely. His company is moving fast and breaking things.

Some people find Facebook so all-consuming that it transforms their social lives -- which is to say, it just fully transforms their *lives* -- and they can’t live those experiences anymore. So there’s a phenomenon known as “Facebook suicide.” Stephanie Painter, 27, from Fulham, West London told *The Times of London* why she had to “kill” her profile on the social network: “Facebook was damaging my relationship with my boyfriend to such an extent that if I hadn’t done it we wouldn’t be together now.” So the death of her digital identity “was swift and painless. At 9:10 pm on February 11 she bid her 121 Facebook friends goodbye with one last ‘poke’ (mood:

sorrowful), then left the virtual world peacefully with a quick click of the mouse.” Quoted in Emma Justice (2007). “Facebook Suicide: The End of a Virtual Life.” *The Times*, September 15.



Of course, the social network is all about innovation, and so there's now a full-fledged "Web 2.0 Suicide Machine," if you've got a bunch of your "selves" to kill. "Say good-bye with dignity," the banner proclaims, explaining how the machine

**"lets you delete all your energy sucking social-networking profiles, kill your fake virtual friends, and completely do away with your Web2.0 alterego. ... Our service currently runs with Facebook, Myspace, Twitter and LinkedIn! Commit NOW!"**

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Web2.0 Suicide Machine. At the top is a pink navigation bar with links: About, FAQ, Take a Tour, Review, Download, and Contact. Below this is the main header featuring a pink circular logo with a lightbulb, the text "web<sup>2.0</sup> suicide machine" in pink, and the tagline "Sign out forever!" in black. To the right of the text is a noose. Below the header, there's a section for selecting a social network with icons for Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. A large red arrow points from the Twitter icon to the text "click here to sign out forever!". Below this is a section titled "Faster, Safer, Smarter, Better" with a sub-header "Tired of your Social Network?". The text describes the service as a way to delete social media profiles and kill fake friends. It includes a comparison table showing the time saved by using the machine versus manual suicide. Below the table is a testimonial section with three columns: "Take the 2.0 Suicide Tour!" with a video icon, "Testimonials" with a trophy icon, and "FAQ" with a text icon.

Web2.0 Suicide Machine	0 hrs. 52 min.	vs.	manual suicide:	9 hrs. 35 min.

result of mr Suikerbolk with 1000 Facebook friends

**Sign out Forever!** The Web2.0 Suicide Machine. Source: <http://suicidemachine.org/>, last accessed August 25, 2012.

Not surprisingly, Facebook sent a cease-and-desist letter to try to stop this mischief, but it seems like it's going faster than ever. One of the Frequently Asked Questions: "I always get the message

**"Sorry, Machine is currently busy with killing someone else."** What

does this mean?" Answer: "Our server can only handle a certain amount of suicide scripts running at the same time.

**Please consider your suicide attempt at a later moment!** We are very sorry for the inconvenience and working on expanding our resources."



But this is no laughing matter. The social web has achieved the goal Facebook declared in their IPO offering -- "to make the world more open and connected." But "open and connected" is not spelled "utopia." While people have been able to do a lot of wonderful things on the social network, there's also been some horrifying, heartbreaking things. Being open and connected means being vulnerable.

A Spanish man was "found dead in his apartment in downtown Bangkok on the eve of his 37th birthday," after he "live-blogged his suicide on his Facebook page."<sup>1</sup> Facebook knows of at least six suicide-related posts a day, just from Australian accounts.<sup>2</sup> London charity worker Simone Block left a note on Facebook on Christmas Day, 2010, reading **"Took all my pills be dead soon so bye bye everyone"**; her Facebook "friends" quickly mocked her: "One friend called her a liar who overdosed regularly and others suggested it was a bluff. Her body was found in her home the next day."<sup>3</sup> Facebook had to create a dedicated "hate and harassment team" to try to deal with all the hate and harassment of the open, connected Facebook world. One of their most challenging jobs recently was the "rogue citizens of Facebook's world [who] had posted antigay messages and threats of violence on a page inviting people to remember Tyler Clementi and other gay teenagers who have committed suicide...."<sup>4</sup> Tyler was a first-year student at Rutgers University in New Jersey; he jumped off the George Washington Bridge a few days after his roommate allegedly filmed and posted a secret video of Clementi in his room with another man. "Clementi even said farewell via Facebook: 'Jumping off the gw bridge sorry.'"<sup>5</sup> Since 2003, according to the Associated Press, **at least a dozen children or young adults between 11 and 18 in the United States have killed themselves after some form of "cyberbullying."**

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<sup>1</sup> *The Telegraph* (2012). "Spanish Man Blogs Bangkok Suicide on Facebook." *The Telegraph* (London), July 12.

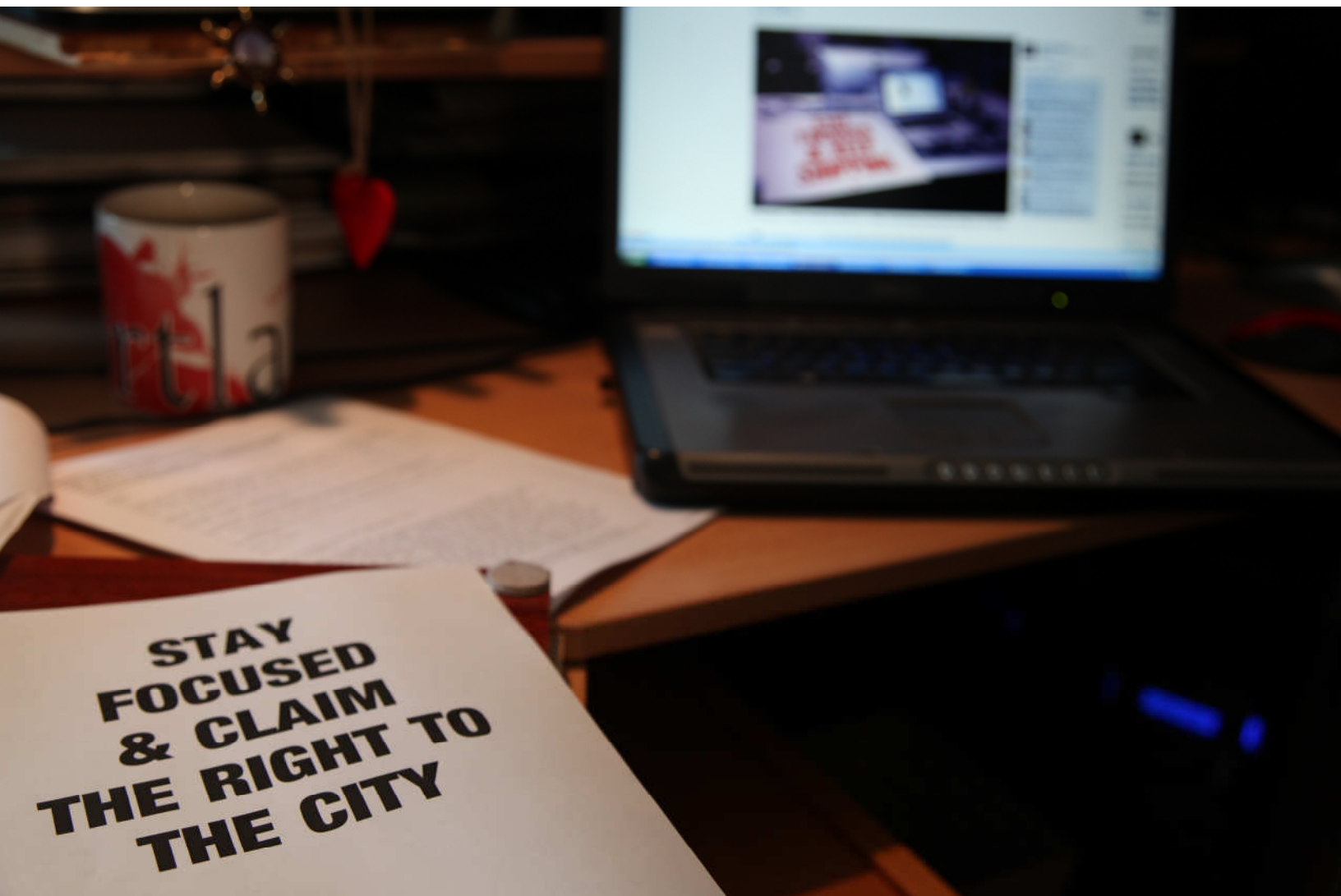
<sup>2</sup> Rachel Wells (2011). "Social Network Acts to Reduce Suicide." *The Age* (Melbourne), August 25, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Wells, "Social Network," p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Miguel Helft (2010). "Facebook's Mean Streets." *The New York Times*, December 13, B1.

<sup>5</sup> John Timpane (2010). "As Social Media Shifts Boundaries, A Student's Suicide Shows a Darker Side." *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 1, p. A1.

So let's go back to that "My Desk," and try to be nicer, to the recently departed Mr. Jobs, and to Zuckerberg. He can stay focused and keep shipping. Let's stay focused, too. How about this?



Or perhaps less tentatively,  
something like this

**STAY  
FOCUSED  
& DEFEND  
THE RIGHT TO  
THE CITY**

And we can't forget about this...

**STAY  
FOCUSED  
& DO  
CRITICAL  
STATISTICS**



**STAY  
FOCUSED  
& ANOTHER  
WORLD IS  
POSSIBLE**

