

# Movie Kit



American  
Spaces

## *The Social Network*



**Year of Release:** 2010

**Rating:** PG-13

**Length:** 2 hours

**English level:** Medium

**Director:** David Fincher

**Starring:** Jessie Eisenberg, Andrew Garfield, Justin Timberlake

**Themes:** Entrepreneurship, Intellectual Property Rights

### Warning/General Advisory

Includes some profane language, sexual content, alcohol use, and brief violence

In 2003, Harvard student Mark Zuckerberg (Jesse Eisenberg) created a social networking site, “Thefacebook” (and renamed to just Facebook in 2004) for college students to connect with each other in his dorm room – a few short years later, Facebook was on its way to becoming a cultural phenomenon and Zuckerberg became the youngest self-made billionaire in history. As Facebook’s value began to climb, Zuckerberg found himself in court facing two legal battles over property rights, one from two brothers claiming he stole their idea and the other from a former partner who was forced out of the company.

### Additional Context

Mark Zuckerberg was a nineteen year old student at Harvard University when he launched the social networking site Facebook. During Facebook’s formative years, the social media company was challenged by two major lawsuits disputing the ownership of the company’s intellectual property rights. The Winklevoss twin brothers claimed they originated the idea for Facebook when they recruited Zuckerberg to help them with their conception for a social media site, called *HarvardConnection*, for Harvard students. Zuckerberg’s early partner Eduardo Saverin who provided initial startup money for Facebook also filed a lawsuit, claiming that his shares of Facebook were unfairly diluted when the company was incorporated.

The Winklevoss brothers accepted a settlement in 2008 which provided a mix of \$20 million cash payment and Facebook stock worth \$45 million at that time. Saverin settled out of court, and the terms of the settlement were not disclosed and Facebook affirmed Saverin’s title as a co-founder of the company.

### Key Characters

- **Mark Zuckerberg** – co-founder of Facebook
- **Cameron & Tyler Winklevoss** – twin brothers who along with their business partner, **Divya Narendra**, founded social networking site *HarvardConnection* (later named to *ConnectU*).
- **Eduardo Saverin** – co-founder of Facebook who later sued Mark Zuckerberg

- **Sean Parker** – co-founder of online file-sharing service Napster who convinces Zuckerberg to move to California

### Key Vocabulary/Places

- **HarvardConnection** – a social networking website for the university students founded by the Winklevoss brothers and business partner in 2004
- **Palo Alto** – a city in California south of San Francisco; it is the home to Stanford University and a number of high tech companies that make-up Silicon Valley
- **Napster** – an online file sharing service for music founded by co-Sean Parker
- **Intellectual Property** (definition from World Intellectual Property Organization – [www.wipo.int](http://www.wipo.int)): refers to creations of the mind, such as inventions; literary and artistic works; designs; and symbols, names and images used in commerce. Intellectual property is protected in law by, for example, patents, copyright, and trademarks, which enable people to earn recognition or financial benefit from what they invent or create.
- **Angel investor** – a person who provides money (capital) to a new business usually in exchange for an ownership share (percentage)

### Discussion Questions

- What was Mark Zuckerberg's motivation for creating Facebook?
- Can you describe Mark Zuckerberg's and Eduardo Saverin's friendship? Why did Eduardo Saverin file a lawsuit against Facebook?
- Why do the Winklevoss twins sue Zuckerberg? What are your thoughts about their claim that Zuckerberg stole their initial idea of a social networking site?
- What are your thoughts about Facebook? What do you see as the benefits and drawbacks?
- How has Facebook impacted our culture?
- What is the role of intellectual property (IP) rights in society?
- What is the process of protecting intellectual property in your communities?

### What are Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)?

(Source: World Intellectual Property Organization, [www.wipo.int](http://www.wipo.int))

“Intellectual property rights are like any other property right. They allow creators, or owners, of patents, trademarks or copyrighted works to benefit from their own work or investment in a creation.” The main types of intellectual property include:

- **Copyright** – a legal term used to describe the rights that creators have over their literary and artistic works.
- **Patent** – an exclusive right granted for an invention.
- **Trademark** – a sign capable of distinguishing the goods and services of one enterprise from those of other enterprises.

### Why Protect Intellectual Property?

(Source: World Intellectual Property Organization, [www.wipo.int](http://www.wipo.int))

- **Progress through new works** in areas of technology and culture
- **Legal protection of new creations** encourages the commitment of additional resources for further innovation
- **Spurs economic growth**, creates new jobs and industries, and enhances the quality and enjoyment of life.