



# New York teen proven innocent by Facebook

## 紐約青少年玩臉書 躲過一場牢獄之災

A New York teenager **narrowly** avoided a stretch in prison for armed robbery thanks to a Facebook status update he posted about pancakes, his lawyer told AFP last week.

Rodney Bradford was held by police for 13 days, accused of breaking into a Brooklyn residence, but was able to corroborate his **alibi** thanks to a posting to his Facebook page that showed what he was doing at the time of the crime.

Bradford's comment, teasing his girlfriend about not having joined him to eat pancakes and accompanied by a time-stamp, "was probably instrumental in the District Attorney's decision to drop the charges," his lawyer Robert Reuland said.

Bradford was accused of breaking into a sprawling 1,390-apartment complex in Brooklyn, New York with a gun, when in fact he was 13km away at his father's Manhattan home.

Jonah Bruno, a spokesperson for the Kings County District Attorney's office confirmed "the case was dismissed."

If charged and convicted, Bradford could have spent 25 years **behind bars**.

Reuland, who is also a celebrated crime-fiction author, said it was the first time he had come across a case in which Internet evidence had been used to disprove charges.

The popularity of social networking sites like Facebook, MySpace and Twitter have propelled them into the legal cases in recent years, but usually as evidence of a **transgression**.

(AFP)

上週一名紐約青少年的律師對法新社表示，他的客戶差點就因被控持槍搶劫入獄服刑，所幸他在「臉書」(Facebook)狀態更新欄中張貼的關於鬆餅的訊息，讓他躲過了這場牢獄之災。

警方指控羅德尼·布萊弗闖入布魯克林一間民宅，將他拘留了十三天，但所幸他臉書頁面上的一則貼文，為他提供了案發時的不在場證明。

他的律師羅博·羅伊蘭說，布萊弗在臉書上戲笑女友不跟他一起吃鬆餅，這則評論附有時間標記，而這「八成是地方檢察官決定撤銷控訴的主因」。

布萊弗被控持槍闖入紐約布魯克林區一棟有一千三百九十戶的公寓大樓，但事實上他當時人在他父親位於曼哈頓的住處，距離案發現場有十三公里遠。

國王郡地方檢察官辦公室發言人約翰·布魯諾證實：「該案件已被撤銷。」

若原指控成立，布萊弗可能被判二十五年的有期徒刑。

身兼知名犯罪小說作家的羅伊蘭說，這是他第一次碰到以網路證據推翻指控的案例。

近年來，臉書、MySpace和推特(Twitter)等社交網路的流行，也讓它們和法律案例沾上邊，但通常是用來當作違法的證據。

(法新社/翻譯：袁星塵)

Signage is displayed outside the headquarters of Facebook Inc. in Palo Alto, California, US, on Sept. 8, 2009.

PHOTO: BLOOMBERG

九月八日，美國加州帕羅奧多市「臉書」總公司外的招牌。

照片：彭博社

### TODAY'S WORDS 今日單字

#### 1. **narrowly** /'nærəʊli/ adv.

勉強地 (mian2 qiang3 de5)

**例**: Bryan narrowly avoided being hit by a train as he walked over the crossing. (布萊恩過平交道時，差一點就被火車撞上。)

#### 2. **alibi** /'æliˌbaɪ/ n.

不在場證明 (bu2 zai4 chang3 zheng4 ming2)

**例**: Larry's alibi didn't stand up during cross-examination. (賴瑞的不在場證明在交叉詰問時被推翻。)

#### 3. **transgression** /træns'grɛʃən/ n.

違反 (wei2 fan3)

**例**: Even a minor transgression can be enough to fail your driving test. (即使是一個輕微的違規，都足以讓你考不上駕照。)

### IDIOM POINT 重要片語

#### behind bars 入獄服刑

If somebody is **behind bars**, they are in prison. According to the article, the suspect avoided spending time **behind bars** because of evidence from his Facebook update.

Examples: "For many people in this district, long parts of their life are spent **behind bars**," or "I spent four years **behind bars** when I was younger, and I have no intention of ever going back."

若說某人「behind bars」，意思就是他們在坐牢。上文中提到，這名嫌犯因為臉書上的更新，躲過了牢獄之災。

例如：「這個地區有許多人大半輩子都是在牢裡度過」，或是「我年輕時蹲了四年苦窯，我再也不想回到牢裡了」。