

## **Assignment Takeaway: Self-Portraits**

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Pictures show us, but not who we are. Our current mood, our actions, where we are, and who or what is around us is captured, but our overall feelings, beliefs, joys, and struggles are left up to interpretation. A picture lacks the ability to show the internal aspects of our self. Pictures help us become salient for a moment, while allowing us to carefully portray ourselves to those who view them. Unless candid, people do not often take pictures of themselves when they are sad. While some people do choose to self-deprecate, many choose to use photographs as a means of self-promotion.

When putting a group of pictures together that were taken over time, the resulting collage can show growth, adaptation, and development. From this we can make inferences about the subject's journey through life, but we cannot truly understand the in-between moments. The images cannot depict grief, disappointment, hope, or pride.

I found myself going through a bit of an introspection while looking through the photos. Because the pictures I chose for the assignment span over fifteen years, I could reflect on the growth I had experienced over time. With the knowledge I have now, I can better understand my past-self through this exercise.