

# Perceptions of Online Identity on Facebook



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# What is this about?

- How do we represent ourselves on Facebook?
- How do others see you based on your Facebook?
- How do others' perceptions of you compare with your intended portrayal of yourself on Facebook?



# Why Are We Doing This?

Our lives are exposed online and open for evaluation. But is the identity we create online truly the one we intend to portray? Is it accurate?

What aspects of ourselves are best represented online?

*Social Life?*

*Personality?*

*Work Life?*

# Questions We Asked

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This person greatly values their family.

---

This person greatly values their friends.

---

This person enjoys partying and nightlife.

---

This person has an outgoing personality.

---

I greatly value my family.

---

I greatly value my friends.

---

I enjoy partying and nightlife.

---

I have an outgoing personality.

4\* Choose how you feel about the following statements.



	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly Agree
This person greatly values their family.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This person greatly values their friends.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This person enjoys partying and nightlife.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This person has an outgoing personality.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As an employer, you would hire this person.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This person excessively posts on Facebook.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This person is honest in the portrayal of themselves on Facebook.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This person is respectful and gracious.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This person is quiet and reserved in social situations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This person has a busy social life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This person could keep a secret.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

# Categories of Questions



1. Social life
2. Personality
3. Work/ leisure
4. Privacy

# Lucas



Lucas [redacted]

+1 Add Friend Message \* ▾

Timeline About Photos Friends More ▾

## Recent

- 2013
- 2012
- 2011
- 2010
- Born

Do you know Lucas?

To see what he shares with friends, send him a friend request.

+1 Add Friend

## About

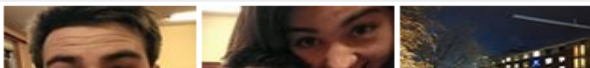
Worked at Lakeridge High School

Studied at University of Oregon  
Past: Lakeridge High School

Lives in Portland, Oregon

From Portland, Oregon

## Photos · 68



Lucas  
March 5

While procrastinating on homework. Looking through some photos. Erin Leader this describes our friendship really well haha. — with Erin Leader.



# Lucas' Opinion vs Those Surveyed

Category	Similarities	Differences
Social life	4 out of 5 (80%)	1 out of 5 (20%)
Personality	6 out of 6 (100%)	0 out of 6 (0%)
Work/ leisure	1 out of 6 (17%)	5 out of 6 (83%)
Privacy	1 out of 3 (33%)	2 out of 3 (67%)

Lucas' Facebook successfully portrayed his own idea of his social life, and personality.

His Facebook does not portray his work life and privacy concerns as he intended.



# Brenna



Brenna

+1 Add Friend

Message



Timeline

About

Photos

Friends 10 Mutual

More ▾

Recent

2014

2013

2012

2011

2010

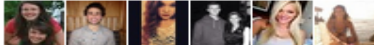
2009

Born

Do you know Brenna?

To see what she shares with friends, send her a friend request.

+1 Add Friend



10 Mutual Friends

About

 **The Dalai Lama at Papa Murphy's Pizza**  
Past: Lavenda Memory/ Photographer

 **Studied Education at University of Oregon**  
Past: Southridge High School

Photos · 456

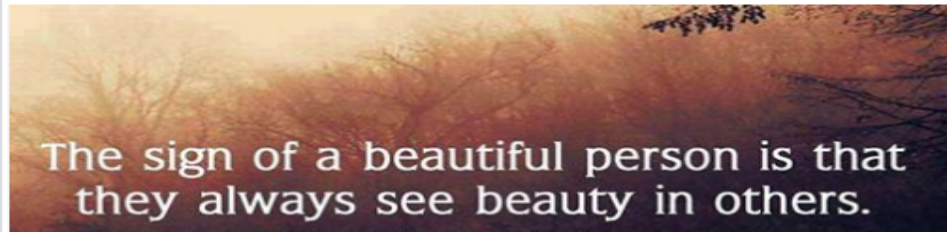


Bren

shared Sun Gazing's photo.

23 hours ago

For more great Quotes Like  Sun Gazing — with Ana Jasso Brock and 15 others.



# Brenna's Opinion vs Those Surveyed

Category	Similarities	Differences
Social life	4 out of 5 (80%)	1 out of 5 (20%)
Personality	3 out of 6 (50%)	3 out of 6 (50%)
Work/ leisure	3 out of 6 (50%)	3 out of 6 (50%)
Privacy	3 out of 3 (100%)	0 out of 3 (0%)


Brenna's Facebook portrays her social life and privacy concerns as she intended.

Her Facebook does not portray her personality and work and leisure habits as she intended.

# Kilee



**Kilee** [Redacted]

[+1 Add Friend](#) [Message](#) 

[Timeline](#) [About](#) [Photos](#) [Friends](#) [More ▾](#)

- Recent
- 2013
  - 2012
  - 2011
  - 2010
  - 2009
  - Born

Do you know Kilee?

To see what she shares with friends, send her a friend request.

[+1 Add Friend](#)


**About**



 **Studied at Oregon State University**  
Past: Red Mountain High School

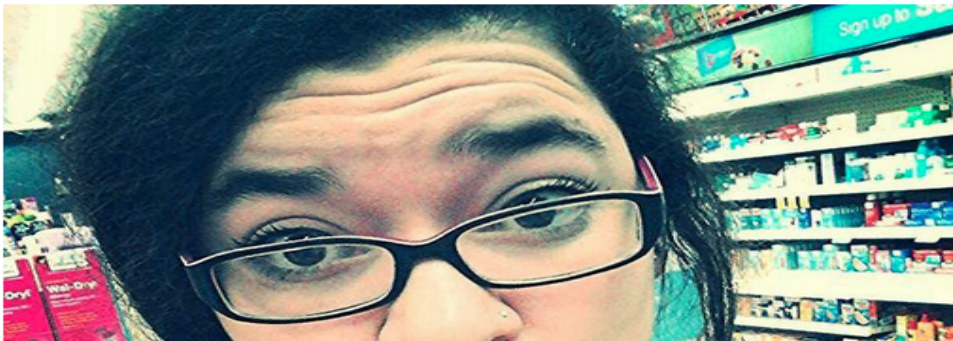
 **Lives in Corvallis, Oregon**

 **From Mesa, Arizona**

**Photos** - 284



 **Kilee** changed her profile picture.  
December 29, 2013 



# Kilee's Opinion vs Those Surveyed

Category	Similarities	Differences
Social life	3 out of 5 (60%)	2 out of 5 (40%)
Personality	3 out of 6 (50%)	3 out of 6 (50%)
Work/ leisure	5 out of 6 (83%)	1 out of 6 (17%)
Privacy	2 out of 3 (67%)	1 out of 3 (33%)

Kilee's Facebook portrays her social life, work and leisure habits, and privacy concerns as she intended.

Her Facebook does not portray her personality as she intended.

# Discussion

## Why is personality so hard to judge?

Hypothesis:

- It is easy to judge social life based on pictures, posts, and number of friends
- It is easy to judge work, interests, and hobbies based on “likes,” “about me” section, etc.
- Personality traits are harder to judge because they rely more on interpretation and personal opinion of the person.

# For example...



- We could draw many conclusions from this picture of Kilee, such as:
  - It looks like she is going to a party. She probably has an active social life. (Social Life judgement)
  - She goes to parties, she probably does not focus on school or work. (Work/Hobbies judgement)
  - She is a partier. (Personality judgement)
- Based on this one photo, one could come to the conclusion that Kilee is a partier which has many implications to our conception of her personality as a whole (mostly negative ones)
- **There is no way we can accurately judge one's personality based on just a few photos!**
- Kilee is studious and takes work seriously, but since she doesn't post photos of herself studying for a test, we don't perceive her as a studious, responsible person.

# Conclusion

- Most people feel that they accurately portray their lives and selfhood on Facebook, but are you making the statement you think you are making?
- No, probably not!
- Here are some trends we noticed in the discrepancies between intended portrayal and perception:
  - Social life and work/hobbies were the most widely agreed upon areas of personhood
  - Personality was the most widely disagreed upon area.

- We control the amount and type of information we put on Facebook and assume this means that we are controlling our portrayal of ourselves.
- But we cannot control the way in which people perceive this information or the conclusions they come to about our identity.
- This is no different than our real lives in which we are judged every day by the people we encounter. We can dress, speak, and behave in a certain way to make a good impression, but we cannot control how people will judge us!