

## Paper #2: Portrait

This essay is an opportunity to explore your identity as a scientist. It may be helpful to think about this as a history of the construction of your academic self. This exploration / expression will be presented through five to six pages of typed text, and a five minute presentation. We have briefly discussed conceptions of 'identity' in class; develop a narrative that explores the foundations and outward characteristics of your personality and background. Explore your conceptions of regional and/ or global communities in terms of where you consider your placement within or without those collectives. What defines you?

Draw on past experiences (perhaps involving friends, school, work, religion, trips, tenacious memories, personal interests, hobbies, obsessions, quirks, aspirations, crises, ambitions, a personal philosophy, career goals, family history, etc.) to attempt to map the terrain of your scholarly 'self.' Try to draw your information from all kinds of texts: letters, notes, journals, emails, poems or other literature (written by you or someone else), music, pictures, personal trinkets, etc. Peruse your room, car, attic, etc. to find interesting and applicable items. Augment this with your background, interests, identifying characteristics, personality traits, and tastes. *The point is to show who you are and why / how you have become this person.* Who do you want to become? (Note: You'll be sharing this assignment with your peers, so be leery about including embarrassing or personal feelings if you do not want others to know about those things.) Don't think of this as a mundane laundry list of personal descriptions, but rather as a creative autobiography that traces the particular network of formative inputs that have produced the effective outputs constituting your current self.

Presentations should be approx. five minutes in length. For those who will need to use AV equipment, i.e. laptop, projector, TV, DVD, VHS, etc., let me know ASAP. When working on portrait presentation, don't feel constrained by the minimum requirements. Instead, take as much creative liberty as necessary, so long as it is an portrait narrative in some medium (PowerPoint, iMovie, pictures, film, objects, music, a website, multimedia, or a combination of these). If the presentation of this project will take more than five to seven minutes, which is okay, let me know ASAP.

Finally, have fun, get crazy, experiment! Push your mode of thinking to its limits; this may reveal something about yourself that you never fully recognized. Enjoy looking at your past and yourself in an introspective manner. This assignment can be enjoyable and rewarding for you and should bring up some important perceptions and valuations that may (and probably will) change as you continue your education.