

# The Phenomenon of Facebook Pictures

## Photos

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You're working away diligently in the library when, all of a sudden the urge strikes. You crave it like a drug of some sort. It's an addiction, and no one is willing to stage you an intervention because they're all addicted too. Before you know it, you're flipping through pictures on Facebook again for what you're telling yourself will only be a five minute study break. Uh huh, sure.

Five minutes quickly turns into 15 as you flip through all of your friends recent pictures, and profile pictures of people you perhaps are attracted to (if you're lucky enough to be romantically involved with someone, maybe you peruse the pictures of the two of you.) Then that rather disconcerting feeling dawns on you yet again. It prods at you and begs the question "is my Facebook profile adequate enough?"

What is it that makes us so adamant about taking pictures of our crazy night lives? After clicking through a few photo albums of friends, all of the pictures begin to look strikingly similar. There are usually those classic red cups, people looking hot in their evening attire, characters are usually donning their best smiles and posing in such a way that makes them look hottest. Such pictures are also rarely photoshopped.

The truth of the matter is these pictures represent what sort of individuals we are or hope to be. We have control over how we are seen by others on Facebook. This is why we generally only want pictures of ourselves looking beautiful and

gregarious. How we present ourselves on the Internet shows to all of your friends on Facebook just how you would like to be perceived as an individual. We might even expound upon this further and go so far as to say that the types of pictures we put up on Facebook exemplify what sort of life styles we lead and therefore what sort of people we want to be surrounded by.

But do Facebook pictures help us to live life more fully? The '70s children seemed to have gotten along just fine without this massive web of virtual connections. Nonetheless, it seems to be an integral component of our generation. If someone doesn't continually maintain their own personal website that is their Facebook page, they seem to slip from the group conscience amidst their peers. But by continually posting new pictures, a person is making their presence known.

Let's be honest. How gratifying is it to have posted a new profile picture that quickly receives a multitude of comments beneath it? If you change your picture at the right time, and there are a lot of friends online at the time that you change it, you're bound to fetch a lot of comments.

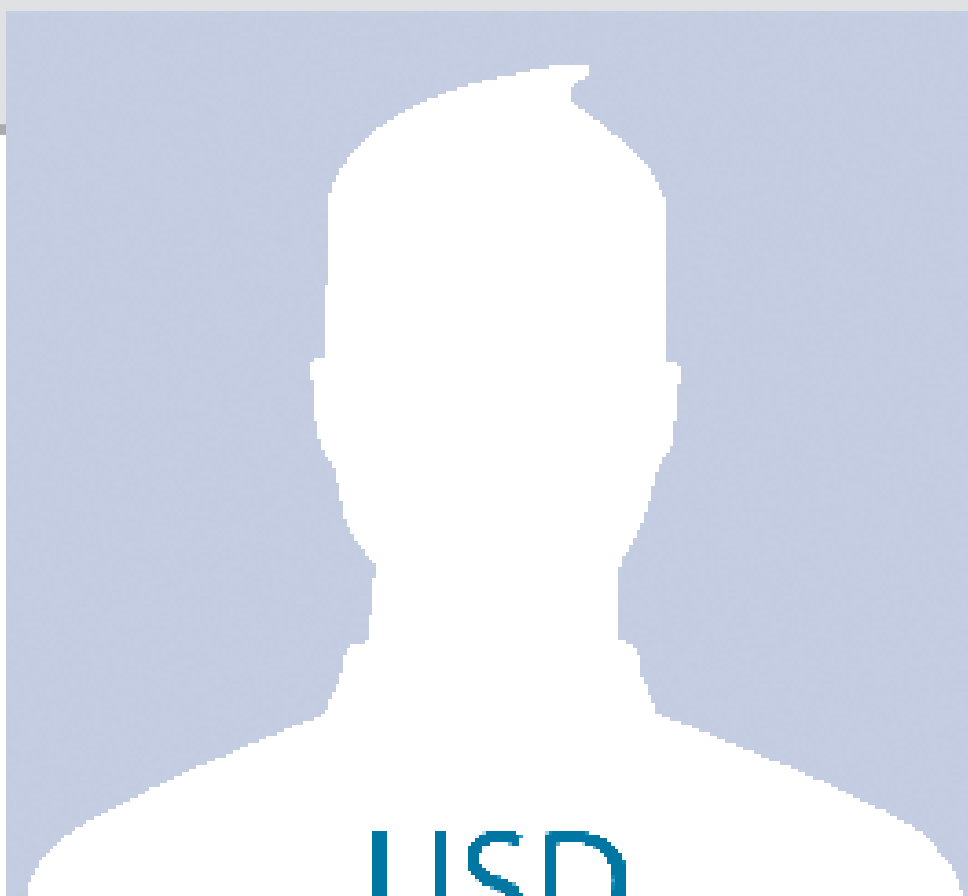
Let's go past the surface and examine these classic pictures that seem to receive so many comments. Some pictures have so many comments, that it is easy to grow tired of reading them all. These pictures tend to be pictures of people doing things that conjure up the emotion of hilarity. When people look at Facebook they want to laugh. The whole point is to either reminisce or live vicariously through others' life experiences right? Who wants to ruminate upon sad life experiences? It should come as no surprise that the pictures that seem to be most adored, aside from comedy

central status pictures, are pictures of couples. We all want to come together and witness the love that exists between two people.

It's most certainly a status symbol to have a lot of pictures of this sort. Perhaps this is why so many people are willing to risk losing \$300 digital cameras while going out and taking pictures. Having countless pictures with comments lined up beneath them shows to everyone looking at them that you are a very beloved individual. It's the same concept behind the beauty of our school. The motivating factor behind making our university look so beautiful and well groomed was to ultimately attract more students. By making your profile look beautiful and classy you are inviting more people into your life just as our school is so inviting to prospective students on those campus tours.

But does the number of Facebook friends an individual has really reflect how popular he or she is? Of course not! Some people seem to get along just fine without it, while others have developed such an intimate relationship with Facebook that they update it daily like applying make-up or picking out an aesthetically appealing outfit for the school day.

So we must ask ourselves, "How dependent upon Facebook are we?" Is our relationship with the website a healthy one, or is it bordering upon obsessive compulsive disorder? Now that people can update their profile with their iPhones, who knows how bad this addiction could truly become.



### Joey Haggerty

"The best pictures are the ones that you can't really tell what they are at first because they spark your curiosity and you want to see exactly what they are. Ultimately a funny picture really makes a good one."

### Robyn Pak

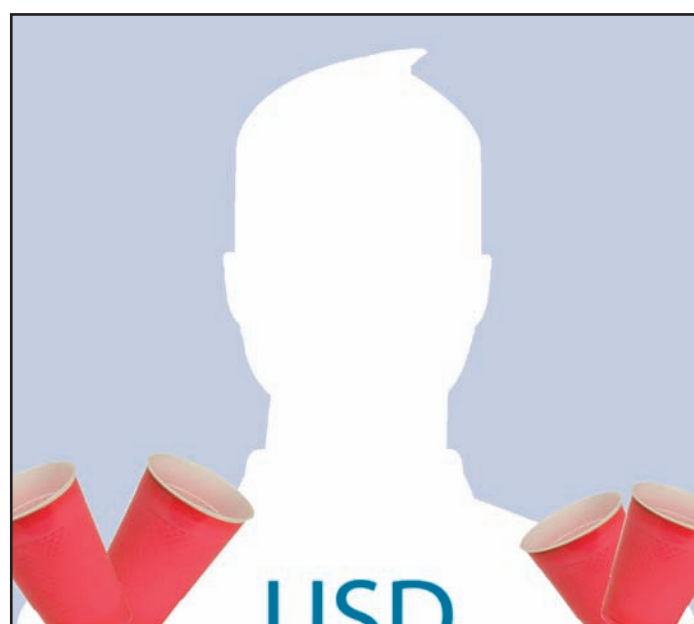
"I hate pictures where it looks like people are advertising alcohol. I don't get it. It just looks like they're trying to sell booze to people or prove that they drink."

### Amanda Shaffer

"It bothers me when people have Facebook pictures that look nothing like them, it makes no sense. Make sure your picture actually resembles you."

## What does your picture say about you?

First impressions are always memorable, and often a Facebook profile picture is just that. Friends, family, and even employers can judge you off of one picture. So what impression are you giving off with your profile picture?



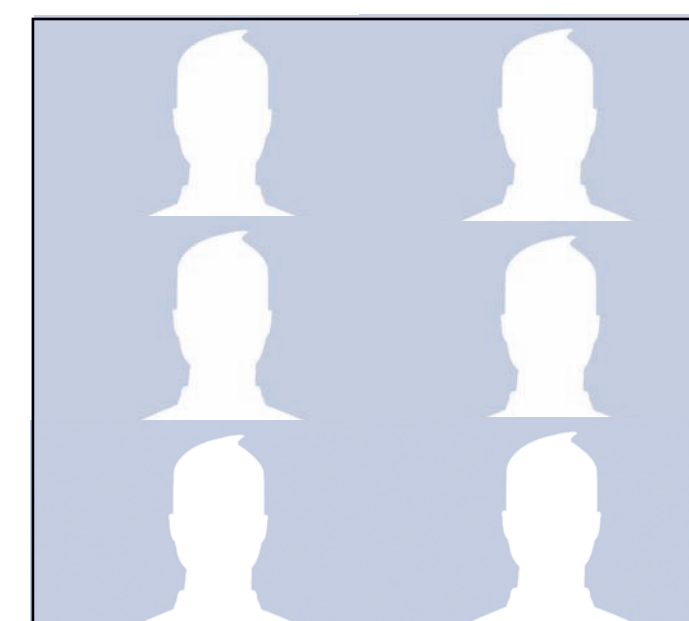
The Red Cup is often the unofficial symbol of college life. Brightly colored, disposable, and useful in various avenues, the red cup appears at social gatherings. No matter its contents, the presence of a red cup in a photo translates to, "I'm ready for a good time."



When the Eiffel Tower, Taj Mahal or London Bridge become the background of a profile picture, it is obvious the subject has an adventurous spirit (and has probably studied abroad).



The appearance of a beach in a photo elicits the So-Cal cool attitude. However when the beach is on display, beware of comments from envious friends who are stuck in the mountains or plains. If you wish to show off "the good life" of a USD student, the beach is the perfect backdrop for your profile picture.



Group photos show that the subject is likeable and friendly. However too many people in a picture can take away from the subject's personal glory.