



## Projections of an Image: Selfies versus Self-Portrait

### Proyecciones de una Imagen: Selfies versus Autorretratos

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#### ABSTRACT

Selfies have evolved due to spiraling smartphone technology, taking over Social Media sites by storm. The phenomenon is worth examining both as a sociological trend as well as an Art form. The potential exists and many people have started using selfies in innovating ways, making them more than passing fad. The fact that young people have embraced the use of selfies, since they utilize any new technological breakthrough, has ascended selfies into an item to be reckoned with and used as a tool. But since tools are defined by their users, making selfies a young people's game.

*Keywords:* selfies; image; self-portrait; phenomenon; smartphone; young people's game; mirror

#### RESUMEN

Las *selfies* han evolucionado gracias a la tecnología del *smartphone*, apoderándose rápidamente de los sitios de los *social media*. El fenómeno es digno de examinar tanto como una tendencia sociológica, así como una forma artística. El potencial existe y muchas personas han empezado a usar *selfies* de maneras innovadoras, lo que hace que sea más que una moda pasajera. El hecho de que los jóvenes hayan adoptado el uso de *selfies* utilizando cualquier nuevo avance tecnológico, ha hecho que se convierta en una importante herramienta. Pero dado que estas herramientas son definidas por sus propios usuarios, las *selfies* han devenido un juego para la gente joven.

*Palabras clave:* Selfies; imagen; autorretrato; fenómeno; Smartphone; juego de los jóvenes; espejo





## 1. Introduction

In 2010 the inclusion of a front facing camera in iPhone 4 enabled self-portrait pictures to be taken much easier, since people had started posting such on sites like Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat and Twitter, making the trend viral. #selfies<sup>1</sup> were the new way of showing off yourself on the Net. The multidimensionality of the phenomenon has drawn professionals from diverse fields such as psychologists to market analysts and PR specialists to essayists and authors. We use the term phenomenon since we consider the practice as something more lasting than a passing fad. In the fast-paced world of the Internet and social media any fashion is usually short-lived but selfies seem to be here to stay.

Human interest in self-exploration has been a long trait in their quest to discover identity and sense of themselves. Self-portraits came in many forms, like sculptures or paintings.<sup>2</sup> The Renaissance was a turning point since wealth and interest in the individual made self-portraits popular, along with the invention of the modern mirror. Two prolific self-portrait artists are Albert Dürer (1471-1528) and Vincent Van Gogh(1853-1890). The emergence of the photographic camera brought a new medium to be utilized. The first photo self-portrait example is considered to be the one taken by American metal worker-turned-photographer Robert Cornelius(1809-1893) in 1839. In 1900 Eastman Kodak's Brownie inexpensive and mass-produced camera made amateur photography popular.<sup>3</sup> Many photographers grasped early the idea of selfies by way of mirror photography, as Russian Grand Duchess Anastasia Nikolaevna who started taking them as early as 1914. The Edwardian era plethora of mirror-selfies

shows a fashion emerging. In the 1860s smart *cartes-de-visite* incorporated a tiny self-portrait, acting as a communication booster. Photo booths, a novelty in 1880, continues to this day a trend, since they are still used in amusement parks. Then in the 1970s the rise of the first instant photo mania was launched due to Polaroid cameras, though they first came out in 1948. Held at arm's length it encouraged people to take more intimate pictures. Artists fiddled with the medium: Andy Warhol produced his famous Polaroid portraits, including self-portraits, making them another of his ephemera which survived. Warhol intended them as helping aids for his larger portraits, which were pictures of celebrities or celebs-in-the-making, but they show an early selfie mentality. Digital cameras became widespread around 2000, though they'd been commercially introduced in the 1980s. Early models were low fidelity, compared to analog but it took them less than 25years to reach the level analog ones reached in 100. The digital camera revolution matched the Kodak Brownie's one. But amore flexible medium was needed. The mobile phone was the perfect item. Initially a status and wealth symbol it evolved from a "must" item to an everyday device. This progression allowed it to become a multi-purpose tool. Not only does it allow voice interaction (it's primary function), has instant text capabilities (substituting letters and telegrams), has internet access and gaming functions (a mini PC), it allows photographic, video and audio recording, helping preserve moments for posterity. The introduction of a secondary front facing camera gave a new dimension to the old idea of recording one's self. Smartphone companies quickly adopted the idea. Not many theories exist yet on the phenomenon

and its novelty hasn't pinpointed yet its boundaries and extremities.

## 2. Young ones and selfies

People, almost instinctively, go to lengths in order to preserve a present moment to document their lives. Diaries were their preferred medium until the photo camera came along. Then everything changed. The interesting fact is not that people used this new medium but that smaller ages started using as soon as they could get their hands on it. Younger ages grow nowadays into an ever-changing, technologically oriented, society and are more suited to use new technologies in interesting ways that adults might not really grasp, although they themselves try to use them. This made us postulate that selfies are predominantly a young people's game. Selfies are private and transient images, as they let us see ourselves alive and dynamic, something youngsters can identify with. We could also define them as a product of a mobile, social behavior. They are essentially simple reflections of self-exploitation. As such it allows youngsters to express moods and attitudes and share important experiences. It is part of their awareness within the context of the experience of growing up. And they help adolescents project an image they believe they have some sort of control over. They are shared so as to make impact. But they are also a technological item. Selfies make sense to children and adolescents. Expecting them to grasp the hidden meanings is asking too much, since a selfie might be no more than a new skin they can try and shed while trying to be accepted by their peers. They are aware that their actions could have consequences but their focus is on acceptance. We also suggest that they are, on some level, aware of the exploitation of half or full naked *nudies*, as it is part of adolescence and the process of self-finding and orientation. The trouble is grownups generally tend to overlook that such new techs helps a lot of young people connect. There is no lack of communication. Young people communicate, but with other young people. The fact that certain grownups try to exploit this communication is not news. It is

something that crept out of the closet and became an important disadvantage of the Internet based society and social media. But as younger generations are indoctrinated early on about the dangers of online communication they stand a much better chance than their parents would have had. It has reached a lower threshold, so younger ages are becoming aware of the world and its dangers much sooner. The issue is not whether fifteen year old girls, or boys for that, whom are exploring their sexuality are posting nudies.<sup>4</sup> It has to do with the democratization of power structures, enabled by the use of technology, which people in power find uncomfortable. These people are realizing that there is nothing they can do about it and they cannot adapt swiftly enough to this loss of power. Parents are authoritarian figures. But no matter how progressive they think they are their offspring view them as something right out of the Stone Age. Adolescence is a definitive turning point for humans as it moves them from the "*polymorphous perversity*" of the child age to one in which the young person pursues Ideality. This quest that adolescents undertake is essentially an enthrallment of the Absolute. They see things in terms of absolute black and white. Anything coming from their elders is black while their actions and thoughts are always white, and justified. This fanatical behavior is based on the idealization of the satisfaction due to the ideal object (Kristeva, 2007). This belief can swing from the quest belief "*Your Pleasure must have no limits!*" to the introspective and potentially self-destructive "*If I don't have Everything, I get bored*" one, hence making pursue of happiness a paramount one for young people. Selfies contribute as they act as a sort of link amongst them. Semantically speaking their images are so much stronger than words they might use with one another.

## 3. The flip side

There is a definite dark side to selfies. The incident in which a youngster killed a classmate and then, allegedly, uploaded a selfie to Snapchat made front page in the

online version of Washington Post, February 8, 2015. And of course this incident can and will be used as an example of how posting selfies is a “*disturbing phenomenon*” which “*endangers*” young people, by influencing them. The point is not the actual murder but the fact that the young person was dumb enough to pose with the corpse. This is a prime example of two things, in our opinion: Firstly young people are mean to each other. Our society, since Victorian times, has tried to idealize childhood and bury the fact that young ones are competitive and mean in order to establish dominance in their micro-societies.<sup>5</sup> Secondly we should emphasize that only an amoral person would brag. Acts of violence take all forms but adoration of the result is more a product of actual criminal pathology than one of technology. “*This is really a question about criminal pathology rather than technology. Perpetrators in need of validating their power and sense of self-importance have used all kinds of communication to ‘brag’ about criminal activities – from the local hangout to social media like Facebook*” says Pamela Rutledge, Director of the Media Psychology Research Center. Freud used the term “*polymorphous perversity*” when talking about children’s traits and we should keep in mind that many adolescents and adults never leave these childhood tendencies.

Nudies, and provocative sexy poses, are a major part of selfies, although not many adolescents will openly admit to posting. Parents and guardians make an issue of them but youngsters do it to provoke their friends and potential partners. And of course they’re imitating celebrities who take such for purely self-promotional reasons. Celebrities are exploiting the selfie as it gives them an immediate connection to their fan base, quite unheard of up to the digital social media boom. They know what and why they’re doing the selfie game: Marketing is the name of the game and selling their image is their aim. People always like to follow celebrities. If Rhianna is posting on her Facebook account daily selfie snapshots, sexy ones or not, her fans will follow suit. Monkey See Monkey Do. Celebrities have always projected their

image. And the masses always tried to copy the image, as much as they could.

Another dark interpretation of selfies has been proposed by women’s studies sociologist Gail Dines. She claims that because of the mainstream male-oriented porn culture of our current society women have internalized the image of themselves by self-objectifying. Although males gain “*visibility*” in many ways the predominant female way is through “*fuckability*”. A lot of female selfies take their visual vernacular directly from pornography, unwittingly or otherwise. We agree with this only to the point that post adolescence persons will consciously use visibility of their selfies in such a way, although if we trust surveys it is only a part of it. Polls can be untrustworthy when it comes to such matters. Can we attribute the same mentality to 10-to-15 year old young people as that of the 18-to-30 age group or even with adults? The abundance of male nudity leads us to the conclusion that “*fuckability*” is a trend used both by males as well as females. A new trend in sexy female selfies, which we believe corroborates with all the aforementioned, is the *underboob*, which celebrities have excessively used, projecting an essentially erotic image to everyone thus forcing adolescent girls to practice it, even though all they really want is group acceptance. Young girls are bombarded with such body examples which are not the norm and need external reassurance about their own ones. Such selfies feed their egos and help them connect.

#### 4. Crunching the numbers

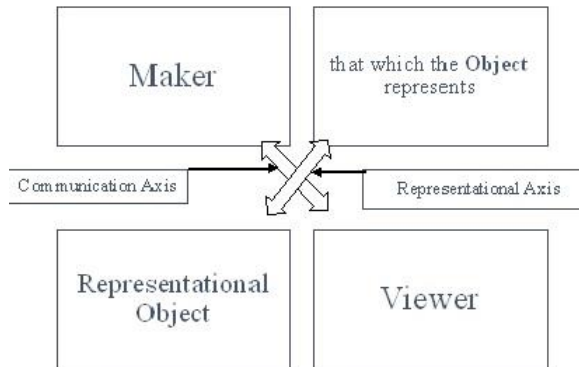
An online poll conducted in the U.K. by HTC, a Taiwanese smartphone manufacturer, in 2013 amongst 2,000 people of the 18-to-30 age group concerning their smartphone habits concluded that more than 90% of phone photographs taken were in fact selfies. The most outstanding fact was that young British males shared twice as many selfies than women. At least 30% of these young men posted no less than five portraits a week. The average person posted over 100 selfies in a year, with males contributing twice as many as females. The main reason for these

young men to post selfies was to show off or attract the opposite sex. About 25% of the surveyed group shared selfies so as to make current or previous partners jealous and about ten percent of them to make themselves more desirable to potential ones. In comparison only about 13% of young ladies take selfies to make ex or current partners jealous and only one in seven take photographs so as to make themselves desirable. The main reasons these young women are posting selfies are to share what they are doing with their friends (35%) and to record memories (about 26%). Both men and women are showing off, by way of selfies (19%). Men are far more likely to show off their body than women (76% to 46%). Women share facial selfies (55%) while men are likely to show off their chest (20%), followed by their torso (17%). However 12% of women posting body selfies admitted to revealing their breasts. It is sufficient to say that these statistics show trends and not reality as a lot of the people participating in the survey would not answer truthfully about their extreme photos, like nudies. We insist on this as we believe it sheds light on the surveys' ostentatious facts: human males are vain and show off as male peacocks would do while women try to show off their breasts and behinds? An ongoing survey on <http://selfiecity.net/> shows rather dissimilar results: people take less selfies than actual photos (not only of people but also of objects) whilst women are way ahead of males in selfie taking ranging from 55.2% to a staggering 82.0%. Women strike more extreme poses. The first survey was conducted in one country, the U.K., while the second focused in cities globally: Bangkok, Berlin, New York, Sao Paulo and Moscow. We believe that the latter is a far more representational one, even if we are not entirely certain of the truthfulness of the census participant answers. And it corroborates with our notion that selfies is a young peoples' game. Young Males emerge as predominantly insecure with their image, much more than Females. But women try to show off their face while men will show the upper part of the body. It is interesting to point out that women will devote more time in beautifying their face than any other part of their body. Cosmetic

firms sell more face products than any other product, making more than 38% of the total sales (Terrell, 2010). Also nowadays young men are devoting a lot of time in transforming their chest into an item of admiration, with the help of gyms and hair removal products. So it's only natural that they'll choose the part they want to show off on the basis of time and effort involved into making it something which has to be projected.

### 5. Deconstructing the selfie

Using existing theories we can try to understand selfies. We should avoid trying and characterizing selfies as Candid Photography. We should also try to remember that selfies are not Documentary photography, although we can extract sociological information from them. The axiom that the Camera never lies doesn't apply in their case. Actually the camera does lie, especially in the digital age. But this can lead us to other questions, particularly of the existential type. There is a distinct duality in images, since the word photograph contains the idea of script (*γραφη*) and its exemplar, which along with other dualities have laid the foundations of the project we call Western Civilization and which has certified the loss of the actual living and shifted to life through a proxy (Skarpelos, 2011). Images are thought of, by our society, as representations of the original. There is of course expressed doubt of the mechanically produced image but since vision is the sense connecting us constantly with the world around us we tend to take images as true representations of what they depict. So, based on that notion, we propose using the Representation theory as a basis for our examination and try to apply the four-part model, associated with Mitchel (1990), to them. We believe it is well situated as a theoretical approach, as it has a dual axis connectivity between the maker and the object and the viewer and object representation. The model can be visualized using the following graph:



Picture 1: Visualization of the Representational Theory 4-part model theoretical approach to Images (associated with Miller).

It shows the four parts, which consist of the Maker to Viewer association connected by the Communication Axis, and the Representational Object to that which it represents connected by the Representational Axis. It seems that most selfie critics stop at the Communication Axis trying to figure out the details of this bidirectional connection. The interesting thing is trying to apply the Representational connection. What does a selfie represent for the Maker and what for the Viewer? It has an amount of hidden agendas behind its posting: group acceptance, showing off, potential partner hunting or simple vanity. Grownups do not seem to have more complicated ones. In other words selfie posting and viewing is quite simple, if not simplistic, in its nature. So the Representational Axis is not really part of the equation? Yes, but the representation of the selfie is something to think about. The person that took the photograph is trying to represent what exactly? Usually vanity dictates that a selfie is not always taken at the spur of the moment. Some are spontaneous but others, as seen from the statistics, are anything but. Self-portraits are situated comfortably in the four-part model since a self-portrait is representational by its nature. The Maker has thought and pondered about it. Early painted self-portraits had this attitude behind them. But the Brownie revolution made them almost spontaneous. Selfies are the same: both spontaneous and thought of. So is there no difference between them? It all depends on the Viewer. The medium is not really different. Its impact is since the

abundance of the medium, thanks to digital social media interaction, has spiraled to unheard of heights.

There might be something more to help us analyze the selfie, since it is not a simple photograph but something new and evolving. *Seeing-in* is a psychologically based theory, proposed and developed by Richard Wollheim, placing visual experience in the center of pictorial representation and which exploits the mind's innate capacity to generate visual experiences out of itself. This theory states that the Maker sets an "intentional standard of correctness", consciously or unconsciously. From this we have a solid position to begin trying to understand all and only difficult or obscure pictures. The measure of success of a photographer is the extent to which any given Viewer can understand what the picture means. The segregation between "art" and "commercial photographers" is an early and entirely misguided one, since it is a false one as both groups are producing images with a financial gain in focus. The subdivision of photographers does not only represent the fundamental question of what is considered to be Art. It reflects the rigid social structure of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century's ideals, during which photography emerged as a practice. Ernest Lacan, in 1852, remarks in the photography journal *La Lumière*: "...sub-divided photographers into four classes, corresponding to social class: the basic photographer (working class or artisan), the artist-photographer (bourgeois), the amateur, in the sense of the connoisseur, hence aristocrat; and the distinguished photographer-savant, who claimed the classless status of the artist..." (Mirzoeff, 1999). So can we categorize selfies today as either artistic or mundane, as we have a society of haves and have not's who produce them? We believe it is not as simple since the stratification does exist but has moved into the realm of fame. Celebrities use selfies don't they? Are they better or worse than those taken by members of the plebe? Can we count as artistic imitation the copies fans produce of the "original" celebrity selfies?

## 6. High or Low Art?

Finding differences between self-portraits and selfies is the latest in linguistic and artistic elitism. Consider the difference between Art and craft. Art is a painting hanging on a museum wall while craft is painting house walls. Think about Haute Couture versus street wear. It all comes down to the fundamental question: What is Art? Selfies can be considered as a new form of Art. Cellphone company HTC was involved in an Art project by photographer Dan Rubin who blended selfies with celebrity pictures (#phonies). But what about a selfie taken in a museum containing an art piece? Is this Art, art or just a moment of selfish glory to share with your friends? You're the object of attention, not that little picture hanging in the background. It could be any background. It is not Art. It contains Art but it is part of the picture, not the centerpiece. You yourself is. If a professional, or even amateur, photographer pins a selfie in his Instagram or Tweet account is that a self-portrait or a selfie? The photographer will probably try, instinctively if not consciously, to acquire an image based on his knowledge and experience thus producing something of a hybrid. Will he/she spend more time than other persons would normally do? And will it be an object of Art? But it is just a selfie!

Adolescents think of selfies in terms of a visual diary, more or less. *"I can look back and see what I looked like at a particular time, what I was wearing. It's exploring your identity in digital form... A selfie is a format and a platform to share who you are...Before I go out, I'll take a couple of pictures almost to see how I look in other people's eyes... [I]f people start liking your selfie, then obviously you're going to get a natural buzz. It gives you a nice boost and you can walk with that little bit more confidence..."* says Rebecca Brown, a 23-year old graduate trainee from Birmingham. People are posting pictures of themselves, or even parts of their body, looking attractive in order to generate positive feedback. That is the bare essence of selfies as a phenomenon. And both men and women are sending those pictures they believe others want to see.<sup>6</sup>

We believe the scary part of selfies has only just emerged: selfies in situations that you should help a person or act somehow helpful and you decide instead it's a moment to share at your Facebook account. It just seems to grow into gigantic proportions. Digital social media sites just gave the boost for such behavior to run amok. A "dare" element has also evolved. For example see the Sellotape Selfie group on Facebook, a fad gone viral. Young people, and adults, have always been doing this sort of attention catcher activities. There's even a book about it: Guinness Book of Records. That shows the transformative nature of selfies. Selfies might not be a passing fad and are using their momentum to become something more permanent.

The satirical Philippine webpage *'The Adobo Chronicles'* published an article in March 2014 stating that the American Psychiatric Association (APA) had officially confirmed *"...what many people thought all along: taking selfies is a mental disorder..."*. This piece of, deliberately false, information did not go unnoticed by selfie condemners, who took it at face value since it rung true enough and in accordance to their ideas about selfies been *"a bad thing"* and produced an abundance of polemic articles. It is not a psychological disorder, no matter how hard researchers try to prove otherwise. But didn't the same thing happen before? To use an example we can compare it to the social effects of Rock music on young people. There are positive but there are also negative ones. And Rock music is to blame for that. Or we can compare selfies with the social aspects of Television. Again we can draw a rather large proportion of negative effects of the medium. It is the same with selfies. Media influence is not something new. The medium, selfies, is. The fact that a lot of selfies are nothing more than the modern incarnation of the postcard: *"Having a wonderful time. Wish you were here"* should also not escape our attention. The message that comes through is *"Envy me/us. I'm/we're here and you're not. You wish you were and we know it."* And it is something we all have done at some point or other. Does that make us selfish? Does that make us psychologically flawed?



## 7. Connecting the dots: Conclusion

Selfies which make you overthink are not the norm. They are just simple indicators of the Makers moods and usually contain very little to ponder about. A selfie of a girl at the beach means just that. True, there are meanings behind the picture but what does the Maker want to convey to the Viewer? She's simply enjoying herself. We can start trying to read between the lines: Why is she at the beach, why is she having a good time, who is with her or is she alone, how did she get to the beach. As for the Representational Object what is it? Isn't it a facsimile of a happy person? Isn't the representational object about Happiness of the Human Being? But at the end it's just a Feeling Maker and Memory Jolter. If we try and use the purely philosophical approach to the image we end up with the question of how the structure, or form, of the picture is related to the fact that it represents: *"There must be something identical in a picture and what it depicts, to enable the one to be a picture of the other at all"* and *"What a picture must have in common with reality, in order to be able to depict it – correctly or incorrectly – in the way it does, is its pictorial form"* (Wittgenstein, 1922). In plain terms the picture represents the image but it is something else in form: an item used to trigger emotions or memories, a helping tool that is real only in the sense that it represents the real thing.

The human brain has a tendency to search for patterns and meaning in all its encounters. But selfies should not be seen as homogenous attention grabbing devices. We place our own perception of ego on selfies. *"We don't see things as they are, we see them as we are."* (Nin, 1961). The interpretation of visual language as conveyed via selfies is not just about the image. Lack of understanding them produces fads. Selfies are being used by people trying to affirm their status.<sup>7</sup> It is interesting that if we try to deconstruct selfies we will discover they try to tell us a story, and people always wanted to convey stories to one another. But it seems that most selfie critics are focusing on their popularity factor and not on the fact that they provide an outlet: they reflect

ourselves and this combination of story and visibility is captivating. The popularity factor is terribly one-sided, as it allows focusing only on a vulnerability that asks for outside permission for acceptance. Selfies are akin to mirrors. They privilege us to witness, if only a bit distorted, ourselves. Morally speaking we should try and understand that we cannot condemn a person who shot a selfie as vain and selfish with narcissistic tendencies. It is something that is happening and does not alter any persons' moral beliefs. It is not unethical since our society's perspective on individuals has shifted to a more person oriented model, especially with the emergence of the digital social media. Selfies project an Image of Identity, as the Maker wants to convey to the Viewer, functioning as a link between human relationships and social structure. The selfie exploits the need for Projection and Acceptance. The fact that selfies ride on the wave of Identity issues is essential to our approach. Growth of the mass market and consumer ethic in the West, and now in the East as well, has transformed Identity into a potent social force in the realization of contemporary ideals (Finkelstein, 2007). How we think about ourselves changes periodically. So taking a selfie is establishing my Identity of the moment? Yes, but at the same time, since a society can exist on the foundation of mutual trust, a selfie is an exercise in the concatenations of the different perceptions of Identity in it. People taking selfies demonstrate these perceptions which they project in their digital social connections. The process can be defined as a debate in the formulation of Identity as an assumed status, different from the one we might actually have in the "real" world. Are photographs representations of the real world? The question is both philosophical and not since the nature of the photograph is still been debated. Plato's analogy of the Cave made some discussing the idea of simulacrum (Doy, 2005). The photograph **is** a representation. How this is perceived by the Viewer is the point. The Viewer tends to bring everything down to their standards. If these have been influenced by an external source, such as the digital social media, then they tend to take them at face value

and as absolute truth, even though some may question the truthfulness of the image. And at the receiving end experience does make a difference. The rather romantic notion of acceptance or rejection of selfie images is simplistic in its essence, since it does not accept the idea that this is a measurable phenomenon. The wide array of images from which data can result and be recognized as items to be utilized both by social and cultural researchers exists. Our own, mostly empirical, approach has led us to the conclusion that selfies need to take their place in both social and cultural disciplines, since they are a complex phenomenon. The Media, both paper and electronic, have opted for a one-dimensional way of dealing with it and they cannot keep up with it (Rutledge, 2013). The structure for interpreting an image exists. They have to be slightly modified and expanded. The Identity and Self theories can be used, but only if examined under the acceptance of their new surroundings in the digital social media society. Recommended ways of investigating images and visible social life which are systematic, situated, comparative and empirical will catch up, since they already have been used by other image dominated fields (Wagner, 2002). We contemplate that selfies are projections of the image of their Makers, however distorted they may be. Actually the distortion is more important than the image as a statement in itself, since it tells us more about the Maker. The Viewer has to “see” what the statement intends, not for what it shows but also for what it does not. The Image reflects our society, its ideas and values, but also projects the Intention of the Maker. This part of the combination is, we believe, much more important as it projects the individuals’ needs and feelings. It delivers its message strongly, as the person’s image dominates the picture thus blurring all other collaborating data. Context is the essence needed to complete the picture, and it exists in the selfie. The image is small but suggestive and laconic consequently delivering the full impact of the intentions of its Maker. And as such selfies should be recognized for what they really are: A Message. The fact that Art is starting to use this Message is paramount in our research of the phenomenon,

although Western Civilization tends to differentiate Artistic pieces from Everyday items and their usage. Selfies are something that can be both, at the same time. It can be High Art and *kitsch* simultaneously. But it is part of our everyday life. It will never die out completely since humans like to gaze upon their images. It is a biological necessity. Selfies are our new technological mirrors.

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<sup>1</sup> This is the earliest usage of the term as it appeared originally in sites like Flickr and My Space in 2004, in hashtag form.

<sup>2</sup> Some of the earliest example of self-portraits can be considered the ones made by pharaoh Akhenaten's chief sculptor *Bak* in 1365 B.C.E. Plutarch mentions that the famed sculptor *Phidias* was accused of including his likeness in a number of characters in the "*battle of the Amazons*" on the Parthenon.

<sup>3</sup> Eastman Kodak Photo Company introduced their first Brownie camera, a simple cardboard box priced at \$1, in 1900 with the promotional slogan "*You push the button, we do the rest*".

<sup>4</sup> This is a question that has nothing to do with technology itself but is oriented around the fact that our image-hungry society adores the naked while it condemns it. This duality is a result of rigid and overzealous thinking, based on the beliefs of a large part of western society.

<sup>5</sup> The book "*Lord of the Flies*" comes easily to mind. Bulling is part of all this and although it was semi-accepted up to now it has evolved into a menace that needs to be controlled and stopped, since it has piggybacked on the digital social media circuit and taken gigantic proportions.

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<sup>6</sup> A Tumblr site titled "*Selfie Boys*" lets men post pictures of their penis' or poses that allude to sexual acts. These persons are suffering from powerful feelings of insecurity, as a picture of a penis with its #selfie tag makes it more than clear that they seek not just social approval or a potential partner but something more: self-assurance.

<sup>7</sup> In Mexico for example the usage of selfies by drug cartel members is rewriting connections and relations between individuals.