

# Short Paper 2.1: Autobiography Re-Vision

engl 111 / sec. Q / fall quarter 2006-07 / chang



*"On the Internet, nobody knows you're a dog."*

You have already written an autobiography for the first sequence. It is time to complicate the autobiography, to **revise** it for an extended purpose. Your autobiography can be more than just a summary of events, a telling of a story, or a collection of facts and details. First, consider how an autobiography can serve as a persuasion. In this case, **revise your MySpace Autobiography to challenge a particular assumption or stereotype about you.**

Second, the Autobiography Re-Vision will require a new attention to format. Your MySpace Autobiography asked you to choose a telling photo and write a supplementary "about me" essay using the photo as a starting point. A personal photo and autobiography are only two pieces of sites like MySpace or Facebook or Friendster. These social network sites offer a panoply of profile features and choices and options—the addition of other kinds of images, music, favorite lists, message board, questionnaires, polls, links to other profiles, and

so on. When a user creates a full profile, the rhetorical and aesthetic choices are similar to the kinds of choices you make in your writing, in your arguments. In other words, what is the user saying about themselves? About who they are and more importantly whom they want their audience to think they are?

Your task is to imagine and create what writer Mary Louise Pratt calls an "autoethnographic text" by developing a fuller, more articulated "profile" on paper (though you may choose to build an actual MySpace page for your Re-Vision—talk to me about it). However, this profile must have a specific analytical and rhetorical purpose or claim. **Choose an identification, a culture, or a stereotype that you wish to describe, critique, and complicate.** You may want to challenge or complicate a label like "Asian" or "American" or "college freshman" or "athlete" or "homosexual" or "Jew" or "learning disabled." In **only 3-pages**, describe and articulate yourself or your culture; use your first autobiography and photo as inspiration and evidence. However, these 3 pages additionally **must contain** the following (use your space well):

- 1) prose or standard essay writing or narrative,
- 2) verse or poetry, and
- 3) images, drawings, figures.

Your Re-Vision must **argue for something**, want to relay something, have a stake in showing your audience something about you and your culture. Consider how you wish to put together your text, how you wish to arrange or mix the pieces. The composition of your text is up to you, but keep in mind your overall goal and your intended audience. You could duplicate the format of a MySpace page. Or it could be a traditional essay mixed with verse and image, or it could be a comic book, a mixed-media collage, a newsletter. Again, the text must have writing and image, prose and poetry, argument and art. Have fun, be creative.

Third, your MySpace Autobiography was most likely written for an audience of me as your instructor or perhaps your class as a whole. **You now must imagine a different audience for your Re-Vision.** For example, how would you change your argument, your language, your design, and your purpose if you were creating a profile for a future employer? Or for a college application? Or for a student organization website? Or a family reunion? Include, on a separate page (apart from the Re-Vision itself), a single paragraph identifying your new audience, what your audience's expectations are, and how you will revise your paper to better persuade them.

**Targeted outcomes:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Turn in:** 3 pages (only)  
audience analysis paragraph

**Due:** Tuesday, November 7