Objectives
When changing the basic character of someone’s likeness within the context of portrait retouching, the photographer is crossing a threshold into the creation of something known as a derivative work, or possibly even going so far as to making a distorted representation of the subject. Although this assignment favors the former descriptor, we still find ourselves venturing into what can be rather sensitive ethical territory. Any person’s idea of truth and beauty must never be assumed as being identical to another person, but yet cultural norms and etiquette can offer common ground regarding aesthetic choices. Having the reigns of power to render the appearance of somebody must be perceived as an honor, and not as an entitlement.

One of the most important aspects of retouching worth considering is knowing how far to take an image, based on intent and genre, and knowing when to call the work finished. A viable method to integrate in an ethical retouching workflow is to imagine as if the subject is present, and watching the work being done to [on] them. Ask yourself, would they approve or disapprove of the direction and destination I am taking this image to? And, is their dignity being preserved? Do some thinking about artistic intent and the viewing context prior to starting work, since it saves valuable time and effort. In addition, it’s a great idea to show finished work to people whose opinions are trustworthy, querying whether the work is acceptable, or perhaps appears over-processed. With all that said, retouching any portrait strongly supports the rationale to obtain a model release, and making sure the document has clear language legally protecting you [photographer] to create derivative works of the subject.

Procedures
Use the retouching techniques introduced in A2.1.2 as the example, and then produce one, studio portrait that implements the Portrait Retouching & Enhancements workflow.
• To obtain full credit, make sure that the image chosen presents an adequate amount of visual problems that need to be resolved! You are strongly encouraged to seek advisement & approval from the instructor regarding the image being selected to complete this assignment.

• One digital file representing this assignment is to be submitted in the final portfolio, that must be a Layers Version, revealing a minimum of five distinctive techniques presented in A2.1.2 — i.e. selective adjustments to composition, density, contrast, color balance; cloning and healing layer; eye crease smoothing; skin tone adjustment; teeth and/or eye brightening.

• Don’t over work the techniques designed into this assignment. More extreme methods of portrait retouching can be explored in a Thematic Project, if you want, later in the semester.