Art 218/Introduction to Digital Photography
Spring 2016
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<u>COLOR BALANCING SKIN TONES</u>

Adjusting Skin Tones By CMYK/RGB Values:

Skin tone values can be one of the most difficult things to color correct or balance in Photoshop because there are such a wide variety of skin tones values. You can use the CMYK values to get a sense of the dominant colors in any given skin tone and evaluate how you need to balance those values based on some guidelines for different races.

One thing to note is that skin tone changes in different areas of the face. Because of this, it is beneficial to take several readings using the eyedropper tool in Photoshop to get a variety of readouts. The forehead, chin, shoulders, and under the eye (with the exception of one who had dark circles under their eyes) are usually great places to take readings. Be careful if you take readings on a woman's face who is wearing makeup as these readings may throw you off.

Here are some <u>loose</u> guidelines for different races:

Caucasian:

Light Skinned Babies and Young Children: Yellow and Magenta are equal

Adults: Yellow is often one-fifth to one-third greater than Magenta

    Cyan is about one-fifth to one-third lower than Magenta

Here is a sample CMYK value for a Caucasian Adult: 10, 33, 40, 0 (this does not mean in any way that these values will be the same for all Caucasian skin.)

Asian/Hispanic:

People of Asian or Hispanic background are close to Caucasian, but tend to have more Yellow than Magenta (often 10-15 points more). They are often very close to Caucasians with darker skin.

Here is a sample CMYK value for an Asian/Hispanic Adult: 15, 44, 55, 1 (this does not mean in any way that these values will be the same for all Asian/Hispanic skin.)

African American:

Cyan is usually at least one-third of the magenta value.

There may be a presence of Black (K) in the value range

Here is a sample CMYK value for an African American Adult: 32, 81, 81, 4 (this does not mean in any way that these values will be the same for all African America skin.) The K value may be anywhere between 2-35ish.

When color correcting skin tones in RGB, keep the following in mind:

- Red is the opposite of cyan, and it will be the highest color component.

- Green is the opposite of magenta, and it will be one-fifth to one-quarter lower than red.

- Blue is the opposite of yellow, and it will be the lowest value—anywhere from one-third to one-half the value of the red values.

- The lighter-skinned the person is, the closer to equal these RGB values will be, with red being slightly higher.

The darker-skinned the person is, the lower the blue values will be.

TIPS:

These tips will help you when working with portrait color correction and retouching:

- When correcting in RGB, set the Info palette's second readout to CMYK and watch the relationships between the two color modes.

- To get an overall feel for the skin tones of a person, measure an average medium value on the person's face. Avoid dark shadows and extreme highlights.

- A woman's make-up can distort the readout. Try to avoid areas that have a lot of make-up, such as cheeks, lips, and eyes.

- Collect patches of various skin tones. Select a color-corrected patch of skin, run the Gaussian Blur on it to destroy any vestige of film grain, copy it, and create a file with various skin tone swatches. Refer to these skin colors when color correcting and during advanced portrait retouching sessions.

**Info taken from: http://www.peachpit.com/articles/article.aspx?p=101197&seqNum=6
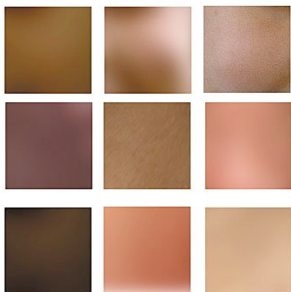
Skin Tone Balancing Exercising:

Choose a portrait (of your own) to color balance. Use the above numbers and the method presented in class to color balance the skin. Use the notes tool to designate your before and after RGB or CMYK values. Be sure not to flatten your image and save as a PSD to retain your layers. Name appropriately and place it in the Photoshop Exercise Turn In folder:

LastNameFirstName_SkinTone.psd

DUE: **by the beginning of class, October 6th**