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Digital Image and Culture
Study Log

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1 By The Canal



2 Transported



3 Castles in the Sky



4 The Many Faces



5 Old Industry



6 The Gallery

1 The Layered Image

In deciding what to do with this exercise, I wanted to make images that are a little clearer in their subject than some layered imagery. Where some can appear at first glance to be nothing more than a confused blur, taking time to work out the artist's intent. Others can appear to be simple visual treats for example a beautiful landscape or seascape within the silhouette of a human body. I hoped to get somewhere between these two extremes, and at least with some of the images have some intention visible.

My intent with 'By the Canal' was to show not only the illuminated plant sculpture part of a larger collection spread along the river, but the people photographing it as well, the idea being that the layered application of the coloured structure would indicate the different viewpoints of the people looking on. On reflection I think this is the least successful image, at no point could I get enough people actually looking at it, and people tended to hurry along when they spotted my camera. It is also possible that the below zero temperatures didn't help, meaning less people were out viewing the exhibits than would normally be expected.

'Transportation' is a combination of three images. The intent here was to show both an overview of the railway station, but also to try to give

a feeling of the busyness often encountered in railway stations and airports. To an extent I think I have succeeded here, but this image may have worked better using a station in a much larger town, with more people filling the platform.

'Castles in the Sky' was an attempt to make something a little dreamy, where you find yourself wondering if it is real or not. I think on reflection this image may have been better served using more extra layers on top of the base image, and introducing some kind of haze or blur, either through deliberate miss focusing or through the use of Photoshop. As such while it meets my intentions, it is kind of only halfway, and could be improved upon.

With 'The Many Faces' I wanted to create something simple, illustrating the different sides of a person, or how we can see things in different ways or directions. The image again whilst working as I intended could maybe be improved on by either using more expressive layers, or simply by having the two outer facing layers expressing a different, but obvious emotion.

'Old Industry' is probably the image I am happiest with. Working exactly as I intended it shows old industrial buildings, flanked by modern construction, locked and chained and no longer in use.

The idea was to hint at how we would rather allow perfectly usable structures to rot and decay, whilst we build around them, and finally over them in attempts to make thoroughly modern cities.

With 'The Gallery' I wanted to illustrate the sometimes overwhelming feelings you get with large exhibitions, almost as if there is too much to see and not enough time. Surrounding the visitor with imagery at every angle, and direction. It is also worth noting that the display images themselves are from multiple genres, as many galleries run more than one exhibition at a time, meaning we spread ourselves even thinner in an attempt to see everything, rather than perhaps taking time to enjoy or understand each artist or image. I think this image works well, it has a confused and cluttered feeling that to me suggests too much, or too many things vying for attention.

I must admit that whilst quite enjoying this exercise, for a while the phrase layered images did slightly irritate me. Multiple exposures was the term I was familiar with, due to my photography hobby predating digital photography and editing by many years. It is understandable how and why terms change, yet to my mind it is always useful to know where and why things originate.



Laurence Winram

Photographer Laurence Winram is a photographer with many sides to his work. Whilst his commercial work places him soundly in the areas you would expect, fashion and beauty, corporate, industrial etc etc, it is his personal work which I find quite intriguing.

A particular series entitled 'Shadows' uses layering techniques with fine art style nudes to create something surreal and strange, yet at the same time visually appealing. Many of the images use layers to create a texture on the body, replacing the skin with twigs or leaves, creating a layer that clothes the body. Others use landscape effects to create a new image within the frame of the body, or as in the case of image number 1 to give you a feeling that the model is almost emerging from or part of the water.

Image number 2 is one that I find much more interesting, the way the foliage is shaped combined with the mask, created by what I believe are the trunks of the trees, give the model a bird like appearance, but why use foliage? This could have been achieved easily using a layer of feathers. I think that here that the suggestion works far more effectively than the obvious, a touch of the surreal improving vastly on what something a little more realistic might have achieved. This is something that I like in his work, where the obvi-

ous or easy or even most sensible choice is passed by to create something with a little more whimsical flavour.

With image number 3 we see something different. Careful application of the layering makes our eyes believe the limbs of the trees are forming the face, which on closer inspection can be seen to be incorrect. However that initial belief doesn't go away when we view the image again, even though we know the secret we still look for the face within the branches, and this is something I think that it is hard to do well. To deceive the eye to the point that even when we know what we are seeing, we choose to see it as the artist intended.

The choice of textures is something I also find interesting. Each seems to be have chosen for a specific image, and I suppose this is where the skill lies. Knowing which will work for a given image, some being less detailed than others, some light some dark, each is applied with care, to bring out the result Winram is looking for. I would guess that a lot of trial and error has been put into this, and that what we see is not only the result of a talented photographer, but also that of a patient man.

It is worth touching on the aspect of the images being nudes. I would assume that this choice is

due to the way Winram layers the images, wanting to make it seem a part of the body, as aside from him telling you they are based on nude images it you would never really think of them as nude photography.

Some of his other personal work is also very interesting, and whilst not being relevant to this exercise on layering, his series Mythoslogos and Conemen are both very interesting.

Mythoslogos explores a world where we, in his words, 'imagine a world where logic has been sidelined by the mythic', or where we see 'images that mock our need to analyse and break down those parts of our life that we should truly respond to more intuitively'.

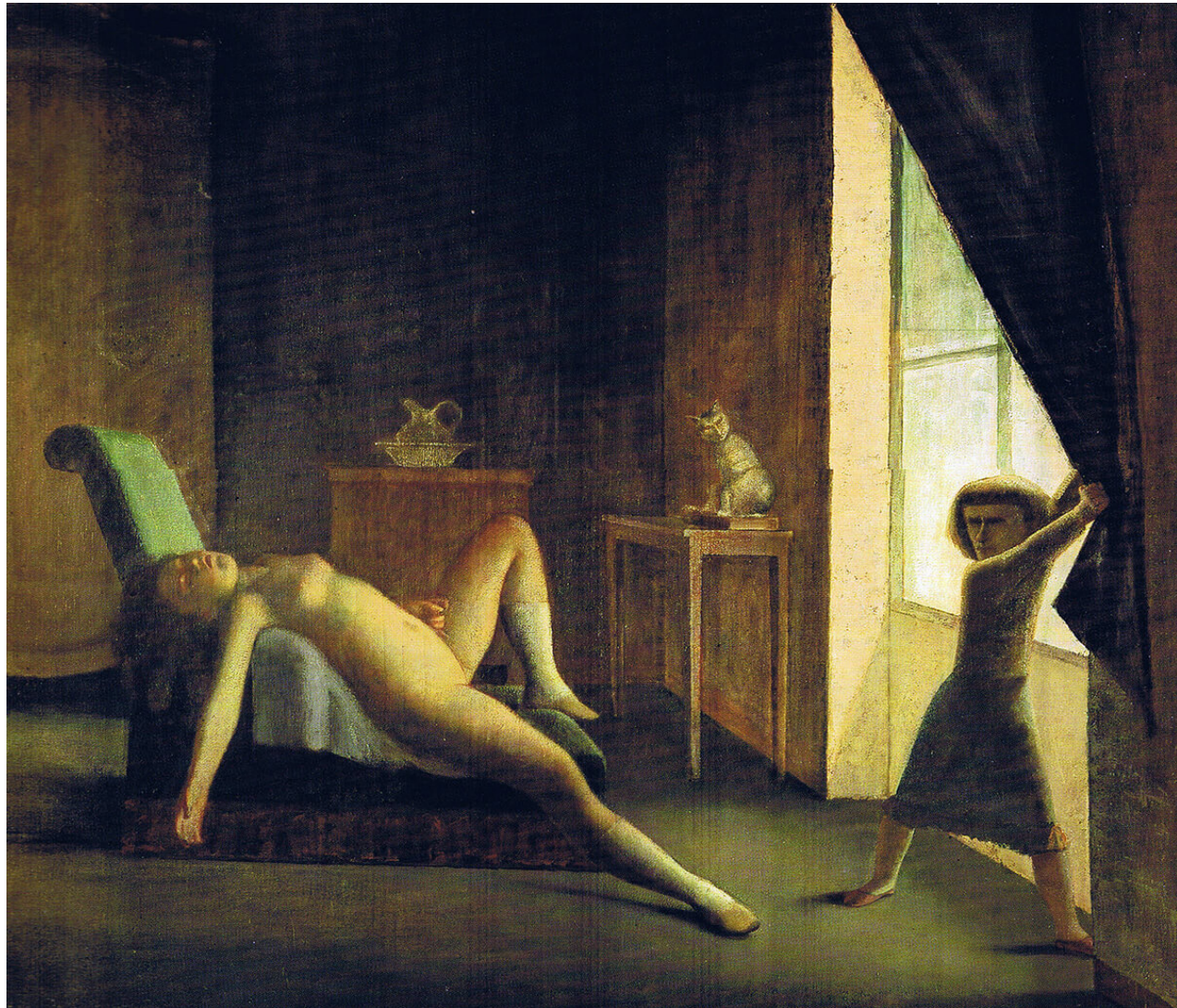
Conemen is a series of images based on 'The Conjuror' by Bosch, a selection of ambiguous moments containing both mystery and drama, as he describes them, where much of the interpretation is left to the viewer to decide.

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The Room – Balthus



Study of The Room – Hisaji Hara

2 Through a Digital Lens

For this exercise I decided to use a work by Hisaji Hara, based on the image ‘The Room’ by Balthasar Klossowski de Rola or Balthus as he is more commonly known.

I will start with the original painting. To me, at first glance I find this image to have a slightly aggressive feeling. Whilst it may be normal to focus on the figure on the chair, my eye was drawn more to the figure pulling back the curtain. Looking at her it is as if she is angry, her expression suggests this as well as the way in which she is standing. To my mind it is almost like seeing a parent who has had enough of their teenager sleeping in until the afternoon, and in an effort to wake them has ripped back the curtains flooding the room with light, hoping to disturb them. Even the posture of the girl suggests someone who was up a little too late, and may have drank a little too much the night before. Even the expression of the cat on the cabinet makes it look as though it has been suddenly woken from a deep sleep by the force with which the curtains have been pulled back.

This feeling of light flooding the room is illustrated by the way in which the foreground and background are still dark, and that there is in effect a beam of light illuminating only the middle portion of the image, with a little spilling towards the back wall.

The version by Hara is something altogether different, yet still obviously influenced by the origi-

nal. Lacking both the parent figure and the cat, we are given a view through a partially opened door, where sunlight is flooding the room and illuminating what appears to be a sleeping girl. To me, this image is much more gentle than the original, almost peaceful. At the same time however it does leave me feeling slightly uncomfortable, there is something a little voyeuristic in the way it is presented. Almost as if the photographer has quietly opened the door, just enough to capture the image of the sleeping girl without disturbing her. This may not have been the original intention, and it is entirely possible that the idea was to create a calm peaceful image of a young lady asleep in a chair, whilst being bathed in soft sunlight.

The light itself also has a noticeable difference, the original is quite harsh, the hard bright light forcing its way into the room with the singular intent of waking the girl. Where the Hara image again is much softer and gentle, almost as if the light is soothing and warming the sleeping girl. It is interesting to me that two images that at first glance are so similar can create such a different reaction.

If I had to choose my preference would be for the photograph by Hara, it is a little more contemporary and a little less harsh on the eye. The original, whilst I can appreciate it in its own right as a work of art, is not really to my taste.



It Follows – Original



It Follows – Reimagined

2 Through a Digital Lens

The brief here was to reimagine or recreate an image, whether it be a print or painting, I decided to chose a movie poster. Specifically a horror movie poster. The main reason for this is movie posters have always been something interesting to me. Older ones from the 30's 40's and 50's more so. These were most often hand drawn rather than images form the movie itself, and had a look to them that appeals today, with many people collecting specific types of poster. Horror movies were always the most interesting to me, they nearly always needed to show not only the main cast members, but also the adversary, in a way that gave you some idea of the plot. Most modern advertisements don't do this, and we are often just given the title, a cast list and some kind of logo.

The movie 'It follows' released in 2014 had several posters, the one I have chosen to rework is more like a poster from the 50's or 60's than a modern one, being that it has an image that whilst not hand drawn, has been made to look like an illustration.

I wanted to create a feeling that was a little more intense than the original, so by using an image I had previously taken, I isolated the eyes a little more and a then added the figure into the background, using a creative commons licensed

image. A slight crop to the height of the image was used to create a more letterbox format, with the black spaces added to simulate the look of a movie.

I wanted to keep the image quite dark, and chose to use a quite contrast heavy black and white, to again add to the old horror movie feeling.

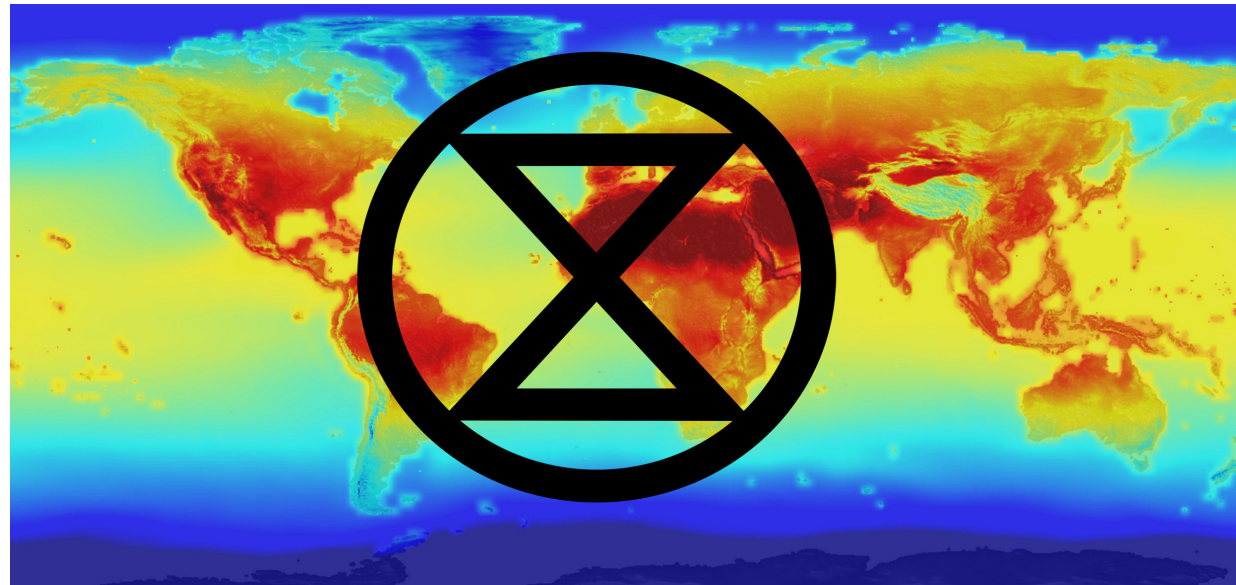
Was the exercise successful? I think so, whilst it is not a direct copy of the original, it is my reimagining of how it might have looked had it been in a movie the the 1940's. There is enough of an element of tension or fear in the eyes of the model to suggest she is aware of something being behind her. There is a feeling of 'It Follows' which is exactly what I wanted to create.

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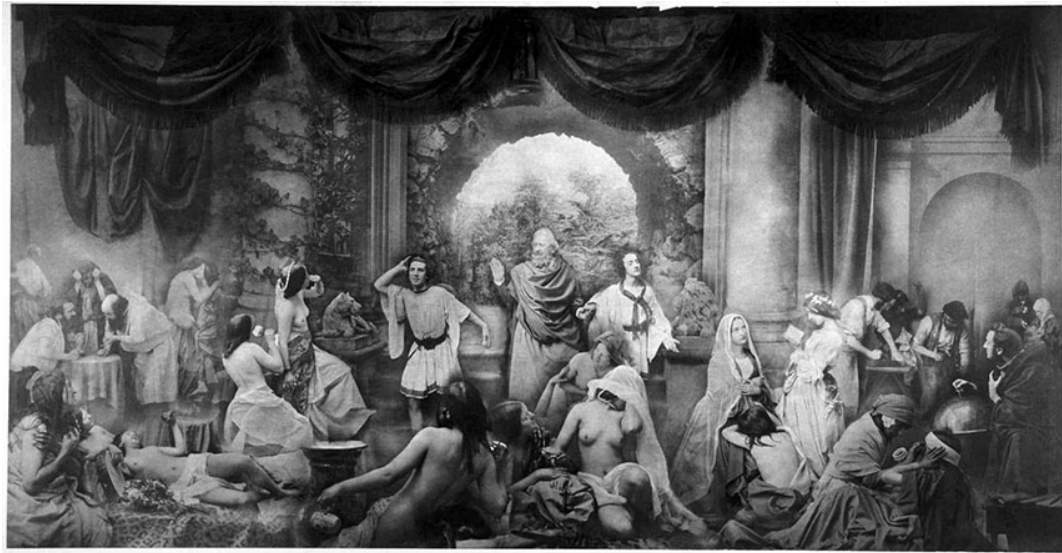


3 The Found Image in Photomontage

I decided to use the Extinction Rebellion protests in London to create the narrative series. The reasoning behind this was rather than show the protests and effects, I wanted to try and show their intent. I also wanted to keep the series as simple as possible, in order to avoid any confusion. Using a selection of images I decided I would add their logo to each one, to try and give each image a stand alone identity. The series was to start with the protest, show several of the effects they were protesting about, and end with an aim, or idea.

I think the final series works as I had intended, showing a flow or direction to the images, that leads to the concluding image. I'm not entirely sure whether the idea of adding the logo is entirely successful, but it does allow each image to stand alone, and still maintain the point of the series.

I must admit to not being entirely comfortable with both using, and the concept of found imagery, something I will touch on at a later point. Obviously when making a narrative like this you would be much more likely to use images of your own.



Oscar Gustave Rejlander – Two Ways of Life (1857)
 Earliest example of photo montage in the Victorian era



Man Ray (1932)



John Knoll – Jennifer in Paradise (1987)



Erik Johansson – Above the Sky



Erik Johansson – Last One Standing



Natalie Chau – Ritual



Natalie Chau



Layered Golf

4 Photomontage in the Age of the Internet

The world wide web and digital technologies have opened up a whole new world when it comes to the photomontage. When Oscar Gustav Rejlander created Two Ways Of Life in 1857 he used more than 30 negatives combined to make one image, to create something reminiscent of an old masters painting. Over the course of six weeks the images were created and combined into what is one of the earliest and most famous examples of photomontage. For over 100 years the same time consuming techniques were used to create composite images, Many of the images produced were of a surrealist nature, with even Salvador Dali experimenting with the process. Photomontage imagery was also very popular in the production of propaganda, for example , Alexander Rodchenko and the husband-and-wife team of Gustav Klutis and Valentina Kulagina producing large numbers of works for the Soviet government in the 1930's.

Moving forward to 1987 the image Jennifer In Paradise by John Knoll holds a special place in the history of the photomontage. Scanned from a 6x4 print, this was the first image used to show the capabilities of a new computer programme that came to be called Photoshop.

With the advent of digital editing, photographers and artists no longer had to spend weeks or days constructing their images, it could all now be achieved whilst sitting in front of a computer. The techniques and results haven't changed so much, with maybe the ability to create completely realistic images from even the strangest of subjects being the most obvious advantage. Processes still use names like cut and paste in reference to the physical acts originally required, though this can now be carried out in a matter of seconds rather than minutes or hours.

Erik Johansson uses these montaging techniques to great effect in his imagery, creating surreal views of landscapes and portraits. The viewing of which can be confusing, we know they are not real, yet the finished effect is one of a real photograph.

Natalie Chau creates images that involve not only montaged photographs, but also hand painted and digital layers. The results being images that can be both beautiful and disturbing at the same time, with a dark almost Gothic feel somehow intertwined with contemporary fashion photography.

It is worth thinking about both the legality and ethical issues when creating composite or photomontage images. Using images you have permission to use is advisable, or at least images with a creative commons license if you are not using them commercially. It can also be classed as a Derivative Work, protecting both the original copyholder rights, and the rights of the new creator. For this to apply however the work must have a significant modification or adaption, and contain some amount of originality. The Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, an international copyright treaty, states that

“Translations, adaptations, arrangements of music and other alterations of a literary or artistic work shall be protected as original works without prejudice to the copyright in the original work”.

Ethically things can be a little more complicated. With the ability to create photo realistic images, there is the opportunity to use them in a way as to suggest things have happened that are just not true. International press associations have rules against such modification,

however with the rise of websites dedicated to spreading fake news, images such as these can be used as a very convincing tool. Images that are heavily altered or edited are also often used in fashion and advertising. Changing the body shape of a model, or making a product appear more impressive than it really is. Whilst this falls short of being a montage, the intent to use an image of something which is no longer real, suggesting it is real, is an ethical issue brought about by our ability to alter images in such a way that they still appear to be real.

The internet has allowed artists to get much greater exposure for their work. Whether it is on hosting sites like DeviantArt or Flickr, or on a website owned by the artist themselves, people from around the world are now able to see and share things that previously would have been reserved for exhibitions in galleries, or reviewed in magazines. This wider access to art and ideas can only be of benefit to artists of all types. There is also a benefit to people who otherwise may not visit galleries or be overly interested in art, viewing imagery or art online may open up a new found interest, either in creating or viewing visual arts.

The world wide web itself has opened up many opportunities for photographers wanting to experiment with photomontage. With numerous software types available for download, ranging from expensive professional products like Photoshop, to free programmes created by enthusiastic amateurs, it is easier than ever to try your hand at creating something new. For inspiration we can view the work of artists world wide, and discuss ideas on forums and social media platforms.

Learning these techniques is also easier than ever. Youtube for example has thousands of

tutorial videos, from the simplest of techniques, up to creating digital art from scratch. Easy to follow and equally easy to rewind and pause as you practice. There is also the availability of images to add to your work. Many thousands of images uploaded with a creative commons license , or even images you can buy, to add into a photomontage. Thousands of different textures can be either downloaded for free, or purchased to give your image that little something extra. In many ways the tools for learning or working with creative arts have never been so widely or easily available, which can only be a good thing for the future.

I am not a heavy user of Photoshop. I mainly use it for corrective editing or for conversion to black and white. However, as an example of the ease of creating a believable image I decided to try and create one. Taking the image of a golfer at the end of his swing and a close up of a golf ball, I simply placed the golf ball where I thought it might be if the golfer had just hit it. Adding a little rotational blur and some movement blur to the layer containing the golf ball gave it the realistic feeling I was looking for. This exercise took little more than 10 minutes from start to finish.

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Schewe J (2020) Thomas and John Knoll <https://photoshopnews.com/feature-stories/photoshop-profile-thomas-john-knoll-10/> Accessed 21.07.20



Clowns – Physical montage



No Way Out – Physical montage



Spiders – Physical montage



Ghosts – Digital montage



In the Shadows – Digital montage

Assignment 1: Combined Image

This assignment involved creating a series of images, either landscape or portrait, using both traditional cut and paste techniques, and digital editing techniques. Having chosen to use portraits as a basis I decided I wanted to try and illustrate themes found within bad dreams and nightmares. Whilst it is not a traditional genre of photography I do have a love for imagery from old horror movies, and how these images were used in the marketing process. Horror photography as a genre itself has probably evolved more in the last 20 years than before that. With the advent of digital editing technology, what once would have been impossible can now be created with such realism that it is often difficult to tell where the photograph begins and the computer generated effects start.

Photographers such as Joshua Hoffine and Christopher McKenney use both straight forward horror imagery and a touch of surrealism to create images that could easily be frames taken directly from a modern horror movie. Their approach to creating the image itself is akin to a film production, with sets, props and special effects all being utilised alongside the usual lighting equipment. Paulo Paulauskus on the other hand creates imagery with a link to the occult and macabre, but in a more vintage style, almost Victorian in the way subjects are posed. One of the more interesting to me is Danielle Tunstall, a photographer who combines horror imagery, with the elements from photographic styles that you would think unsuitable for such projects. The results, whilst obviously horror filled in their subject matter, have a look to them that encompasses styles seen in fashion and beauty photography.

Having decided to approach the theme of bad dreams I wanted to isolate it further, picking

specific elements or fears to illustrate. There was no deep meaning to the subjects I chose, merely picking things I could remember from my own recent bad dreams.

The first three images were created using the traditional methods of cutting and pasting images together.

Clowns is made up of three images, and was intended to avoid the 'horror clown' look and focus more on a feeling of being surrounded by these happy yet strangely creepy people. In a way I think I did manage to create a feeling of being hemmed in, but whether or not I managed to bring any menace to this I am not so sure. Technically the finished image could be improved, simply with more accomplished cutting round the edges of the two faces.

No Way Out is made up of two images, intending to have a slightly claustrophobic feel, I wanted to show a room with no exits, and the person stuck facing the walls. I think this one doesn't work quite as I hoped, there is little in the way of the oppressive feel I wanted to create, that we feel in dark rooms and look for the nearest exit. Again my trimming of the person could be better, choosing such complex shapes does not make the task easier.

Spiders, this is just a common view on a fear many people have, spiders and giant spiders. I wanted to show it towering behind a person who has resorted to covering their eyes in fear. Whilst the image conveys the feeling I wanted quite well, it does suffer again from the problems associated with physically cutting pieces from a photograph. Visible white edges showing obviously where additions have been made.

With these three images I must say that although they work in the way I had intended, I am generally less than happy with them. The

visible edges are annoying, and the finished images just don't seem to fit together as well as I had hoped. As an exercise this is valuable in itself, showing that things are not always as easy as we would hope.

The final pair of images were created using Photoshop and digital editing techniques.

Ghosts was created using 5 images. The first image of the person holding the lamp, was taken using a weak fill flash, at a normal shutter speed to get a sharp figure. The other images were taken at various longer shutter speeds with only a flash light to light the image. This allows them to become soft and blurred. The 5 images are then combined in Photoshop using layers and opacity adjustments to vary the solidity of the 'ghosts'. This image in some ways has worked much better than the previous three. It is more realistic in appearance, as we can not see any of the joins. If doing it again however, I think the lighting could be much improved, with less spill over the background, and the ghosts themselves might benefit from a more consistent movement rate, as some are a little more defined than others.

In the Shadows was meant to play on a fear of being followed, of someone or something being there, that you can never quite see. Using two images I wanted to create something where very little was actually clearly visible, the portrait I chose from a previous exercise, had a little tension to start with. Adding the second figure just behind, was meant to add a little more. Obviously adding the whole figure was not needed, so I decided to concentrate on the eyes, bringing these in as a separate layer and adjusting until they were less obvious. I tried the same image with the addition of a whole figure, who is mainly hidden apart from her

hands, whilst this image is a little stronger, it does use a creative commons licensed image, so is not all my own work.

As a whole, I am much happier with the digitally edited images. Being less obvious is one area in which they are stronger. Much of this may be to do with me being more comfortable editing images this way in a digital environment. Whilst I am used to working with and developing analogue images, I have never got overly involved with the manipulation of negatives and prints, and as such find the methods used to combine images a little awkward and clumsy. This is of course not to say either way is right or wrong, as we photographers we all use the tool which works best for each of us.

Some people may say that physically cutting and glueing images is an outdated practice, and that we should make use of all that modern technology has to give us. Whilst to a point I agree, there is a lot to learn from things we may consider old fashioned. We are after all still basically doing the same things, just using different tools to do them. This 'old fashioned way' does make you think more and plan more, there is less room for trial and error, and things need to be more precise, and as such these are things that can be beneficial even in the world of digital editing. The only real advantage to digital editing to my mind, is that it allows us to do things that otherwise might be impossible or beyond the pockets of normal photographers. We would all like to be able to have expensive sets, effects, and the like, but sometimes we just can't afford it, being able to exercise our creativity where previously it may have been controlled or cut back or even given up on, is a benefit to us all.

Assignment 1: Tutor Report



Formative feedback

| | | | |
|------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------|
| Student name | Sean Sweeney | Student number | 510149 |
| Course/Unit | DIC | Assignment number | 1 |
| Type of tutorial | Written | | |

Overall Comments

The final images were inline with expectations for this assignment and I hope you learnt a lot through making them. The five images each use montage in a different way and, for me at least, invoke ideas of bad dreams and nightmares. As such, I felt this was a successful assignment. I have concentrated my discussion below on you self-reflection as I felt you were a little down on yourself in cases where it wasn't warranted. Remember, the goal at level 2 is still to experiment as much as possible whilst furthering your own understanding of where you want to take your practice.

Assessment potential

Assignment 1

You may want to get credit for your hard work and achievements with the OCA by formally submitting your work for assessment at the end of the module. More and more people are taking the idea of lifelong learning seriously by submitting their work for

assessment but it is entirely up to you. We are just as keen to support you whether you study for pleasure or to gain qualifications. Please consider whether you want to put your work forward for assessment and let me know your decision when you submit Assignment 2. I can then give you feedback on how well your work meets the assessment requirements.

Feedback on assignment

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Quality of Outcome, Demonstration of Creativity

- To start, I'm not sure I agree that the physically manipulated images don't work as well. Yes, you can see the evidence of your intervention with the pair of scissors, but is this really a bad thing? The work is about montage and signifying this in the images isn't something to avoid. You aren't trying to make something that appears flawless, but something that promotes relationships between otherwise distinct images. Physically cutting the work out and rephotographing or scanning (which is really a form of photography anyway) is different from trying to create a photoshop illustration.
- If you look at the spider image for instance, no one is (hopefully...) going to read it as a 'real' scene, so the cut-out marks are fine. The work isn't about recording some 'truth' but about trying to picture dreams.
- In some ways this critique carries over to you digital montages as well. Don't try to be overly technical at this stage. The core focus should remain on the message you are trying to convey. These images aren't photographs anymore but photographic illustrations. If, and I would argue it largely doesn't, you assume that the photograph contains a 'true' record of a scene, then it is this attribute that you are playing with when you create montages. What you have to consider is the ways in which your photographs confront the believability of a photograph. Do you want your pictures to be taken as fact or to challenge how we judge photographs?
- A quick comment on the writing. As you go forward you will find that there is an increasing requirement for written work in line with wider degree expectations. Try to stick within the guidelines for length as this is often picked up on by assessors. Too short raises questions about intellectual engagement with the work and, as in your case, too long often prompts assessor comments regarding self-discipline. As such, it's important to edit your text down so that it falls in line with the given parameters.

- Whilst it is reasonably obvious which is which, it wouldn't hurt to make it clear in the organisation of the images themselves which images are for part 1, and which for part 2 of the assignment. When labelling the backs of the prints this information could be included.

Pointers for the next assignment

Please make sure you include a link to your learning log with the next assignment.

Please inform me of how you would like your feedback for the next assignment: written or video/audio.

| | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Tutor name | David Wyatt |
| Date | 1/10/18 |
| Next assignment due | 19/11/18 |

Coursework

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Demonstration of Creativity

Please see 'Learning Log' section

Research

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

Please see 'Learning Log' section

Learning Log

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

I haven't been able to find your learning log. There wasn't a link included in the submission so I checked your website (sjs-photos.co.uk) and could only see pdfs for your previous modules, not for Digital Image and Culture. As I am sure you are aware, the learning log is a vital part of the OCA model so please make a start as soon as possible and forward with your next assignment.

Additionally, if you are not, I strongly recommend you take the opportunity to engage with other students via the OCA forum and regular study visits. These both offer you a platform to discuss your ideas about a wide range of art practices with other students.

Suggested reading/viewing

Context

It's a bit difficult to recommend many works without seeing what you have been working on and looking at outside of the assignment itself. You have mentioned a good range of practitioners in your assignment write up so what I suggest is you send me your ideas going into assignment 2 and I will send you some possible sources of inspiration.

Assignment 1: Response to Tutor Comments

I have no complaints about any of David's comments regarding this assignment. I do find myself perhaps being overly critical, and I am aware that at times I will write more to clarify any points I am wanting to make, than maybe is needed.

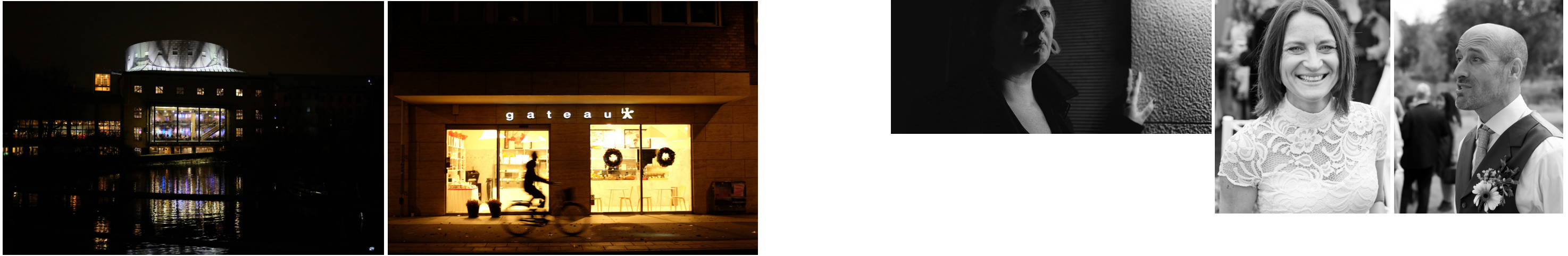
What did draw my attention though was the comment about the physically montaged images not needing to be realistic or refined as such. I think as a whole photographers today are affected by the sheer processing power we have at our fingertips. We are so used to seeing perfectly produced and blended images, where reality and fantasy coexist, that to our detriment, we may be losing a little of our willingness to accept something that has been physically constructed, rather than made in Photoshop.

It is interesting to wonder if these physical montages would perhaps have been better served by using a rough torn edge, instead of trying to make everything fit. I think sometimes we view the editing technology

we have as necessity rather than as a tool for gentle improvements. Images from the past constructed whether in the dark room, or with cut and paste techniques still stand up well today, we accept them for what they were and for what the image maker was trying to achieve.

For myself, whilst not being a heavy user of Photoshop, I do find myself making more tweaks than is maybe strictly necessary, more in the area of tidying and correction of things I deem unacceptable. Maybe it is time to start comparing a less edited image with the one I would usually select, and see if this serves what I am trying to convey with the image in a better manner.

As to the learning log, I find myself often running behind transferring from my notes to the PDF. I am catching up with this delay, sometimes it just takes a little longer than is expected due to other things getting in the way.



The Archive and the Found Image in Digital Culture

1 The Artist as Curator

I decided for this exercise to try and create a number of archives with different purposes.

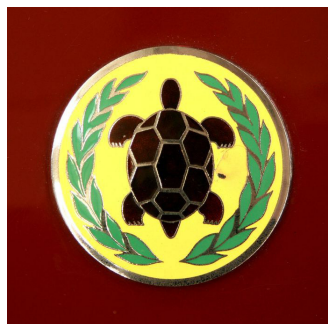
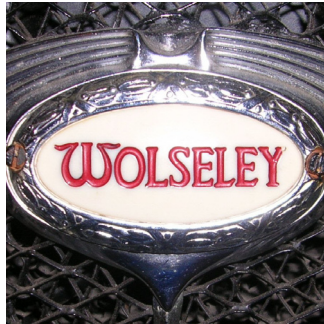
The first archive is meant as a purely reference archive, showing the badges of 12 now defunct British auto-mobile manufacturers. The idea being to create a record of logos and badges that are no longer likely to be seen, other than on historic vehicles. I decided to use a grid layout as this creates an easily viewable reference source.

The second archive was a personal archive for myself, a number of portraits in black and white. The idea here was to allow me to see what differing styles of both processing and lighting I have used, and to see whether or not these styles are either suited to a specific type of portrait, or indeed to give a visual idea of how they would look mixed within a set.

The third archive is a concept based idea for use in an upcoming assignment, using the city at night as its connection between images. This would be best shown printed as 12 full page images, as a grid format or slide show may detract from the subject matter. These images were taken as test images for use in the assignment A self directed project in the landscape module.

I think having created more than one archive for differing purposes has allowed me to see for myself how not all archives serve the same purpose. The curator or creator of the archive needs something to tie the images together, some central idea or theme, be it a simple or complex one. Without this whilst we still have an archive, it is likely to be much larger and more difficult to navigate. This is not to say that an archive can not be large, but to suggest that when searching for an archive for reference, or research purposes it is a lot easier if we know that the archive contains and relates to without having to search through all of the contents to see if it relevant to what we are looking for.

I think the archives I have created work to their intended purpose, they would of course be more useful as larger archives, but each has its own identity and purpose, which are clearly visible. With more time the portrait archive could prove itself useful to me not only as a tool for reference relating to styles and lighting, but also as a way of viewing progress and improvement.





Benjamin Stone – Kern Baby, Birmingham Library



Faye Claridge – Kern Baby

2 The Artist as Archivist

‘My year zero is remembered as culture’s struggle with nostalgia and desperation for authenticity, a fresh start made impossible by its own nihilism. Here, then, begins a fascination with representation and belonging in a country obsessed with (constantly reworked) history. My practice explores how current and future identities are shaped by ideas about the past. ‘ - Faye Claridge

Whilst reading for this section of my studies I was introduced to the work of Faye Claridge through GRAIN and their collaborative work with the Library of Birmingham. She worked extensively with the Library of Birmingham’s Sir Benjamin Stone collection. There is an obvious theme and influence to some of her work, reaching back into the old traditions and myths of the British Isles. Obviously these traditions far pre-date my memories but it is in some way comforting to see something that I half remember from my childhood, when village fetes would have may poles and morris dancing, even if they are modern recreations. These re-imaginings of Sir Benjamin Stone’s works contain strong bold colours, something the originals could not show due to technical limitations at the time. These bright

colours place images that, visually, could be from any point within the last 150 years, directly in the modern world.

Kern-baby – a doll or image decorated with corn (grain) and flowers etc. Traditionally carried in the festivals of kern or harvest home (harvest festivals).

The image I have chosen reminds me strongly of both of people dancing round the may pole, and the corn dolls that were present in half remembered harvest festivals. It also has a slightly more sinister resemblance to scenes from ‘The Wicker Man’. The way she has used children to circle the kern baby suggests a celebration or ritual about to take place, connecting the modern children to their relatives in the distant past. I like to think that she is trying to reconnect us with our past, to show us how shared identity was held in days gone by, and that in this modern world where people choose to stand divided by any small thing, that perhaps everyone has far more in common than they like to think.

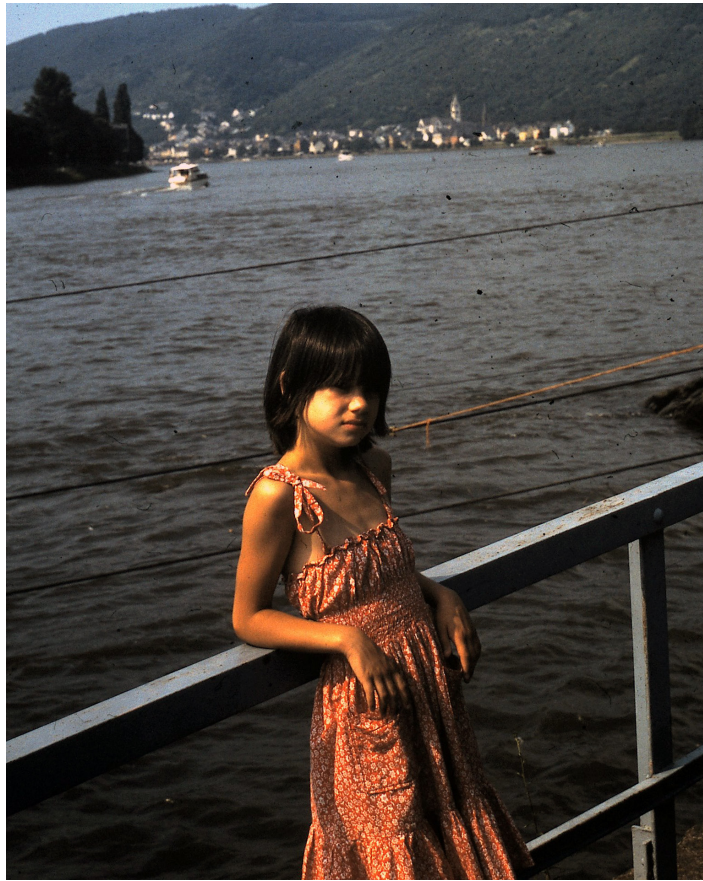
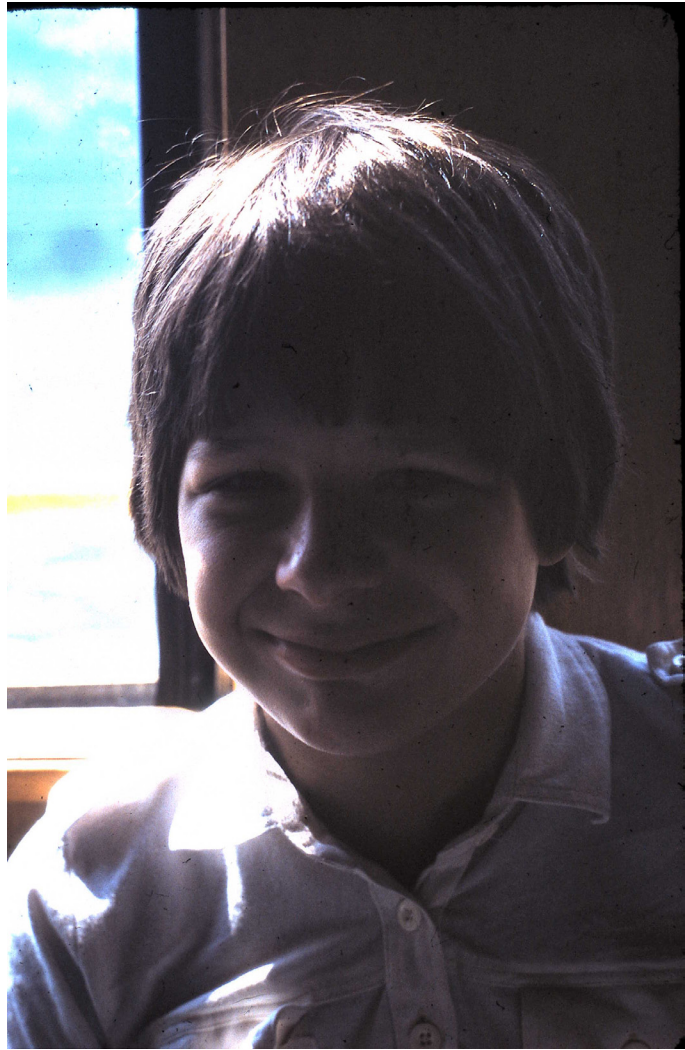
Having had a long seated interest in history, myth and folklore, I find it very interesting how these traditions have evolved, viewing some of

the work from the ‘Sir Benjamin Stone’ collection we can see there is little change in the way some of these festivals occur, even if the meaning is no longer quite so important. Harvest festivals and village fetes are no longer as common as they once were, May day celebrations no longer fill village greens. It is sad that many of the traditions are being lost, and things that once served to bring people together, are now of less and less importance. Large scale kern babies are unlikely to be seen any more, and it was interesting to note that Faye later returned the one she created to the site of one photographed by Stone in 1901. The kern baby tradition having been lost in Northumberland, it seems to be almost a homecoming, or a thank you for something wonderful.

Reference

Claridge F (2021) <https://fayeclaridge.co.uk/introduction.html>

<http://www.libraryofbirmingham.com/benjamin-stonecustomsandfestivals>



3 The Digital Family Album

In thinking about exploring the family album and the iconography it represents, there can only really be one starting place for someone of my age, the holiday photograph. As a child I remember not so much our own holiday images, but being shown those of friends and relatives on numerous occasions, in the form of prints and slide shows. At times these showings could last for what seemed like hours, depending on the relative glamour of the destination or just how long each photograph would be discussed.

As a child the summer holiday was a big thing, unlike now where distant destinations are commonplace, in the 70's and 80's only the most adventurous of families would venture far outside of mainland Europe. Places like Tunisia and Turkey were considered almost exotic. However, no matter where we went, my father could be relied upon to keep a record of what we saw and did, and when he couldn't be the one taking the photographs one of us would take over. This is all too apparent when looking back through the scanned images today, and seeing how few he was actually in.

Every family had a photo album or albums, and within these albums were physical representations of happy holiday memories. Whilst today

we may take more photographs than ever, I think we also spend less time viewing them than we would in the past. Today they are either sat on a hard drive or somewhere on the internet and once the initial viewing has taken place they lie forgotten, occasionally noticed when maybe a random stranger 'likes' an image. I think in the years to come we may find a shortage of images that show things like family holidays, weddings and the general day to day life, not because we didn't create any, but because they were all just data, and hardly anyone made physical copies. Hard drives fail, we change our computers for newer faster shinier ones, internet based options come and go, possibly taking with them every image uploaded. It would be sad to think that in the future people won't be able to discover the past as we can today.

When preparing for this exercise there was one thing that constantly inspired me, the images always popping into my head: Martin Parr 'The working class, The Last Resort, 1982–1985' and 'Mass tourism, Small World (1987–1994)'.

Whilst both being interesting insights into how people spend their leisure time and holidays, they always had the power to remind me of the holiday albums of friends and family. Now I am sure

this was not what he intended, but there is always something about them that makes me remember the whirl and click of a slide projector.

I think the images I have chosen work well to replicate or evoke memories of the holiday album, some portraits and some landscapes, just as I remember from the time. I deliberately decided to

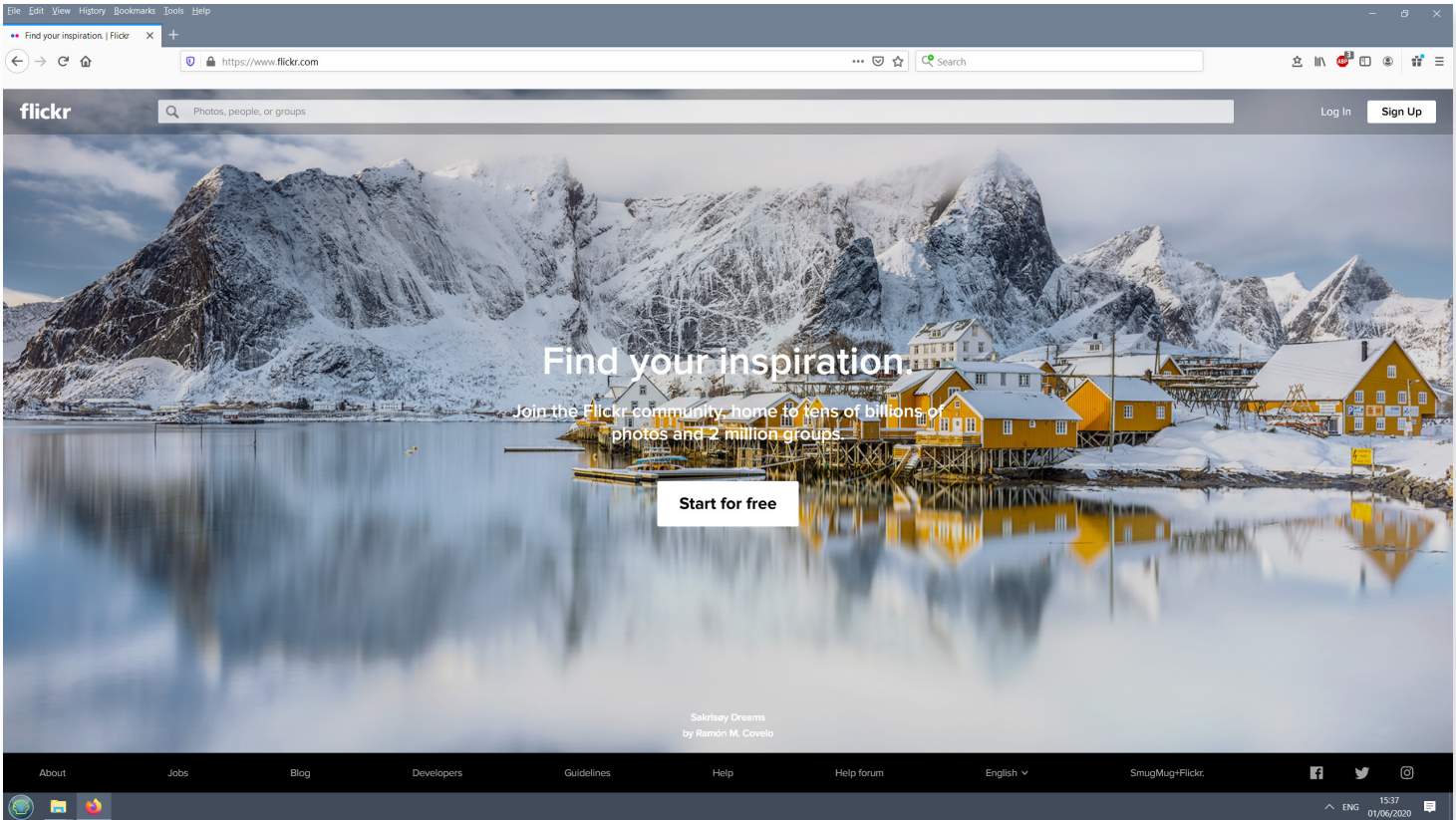
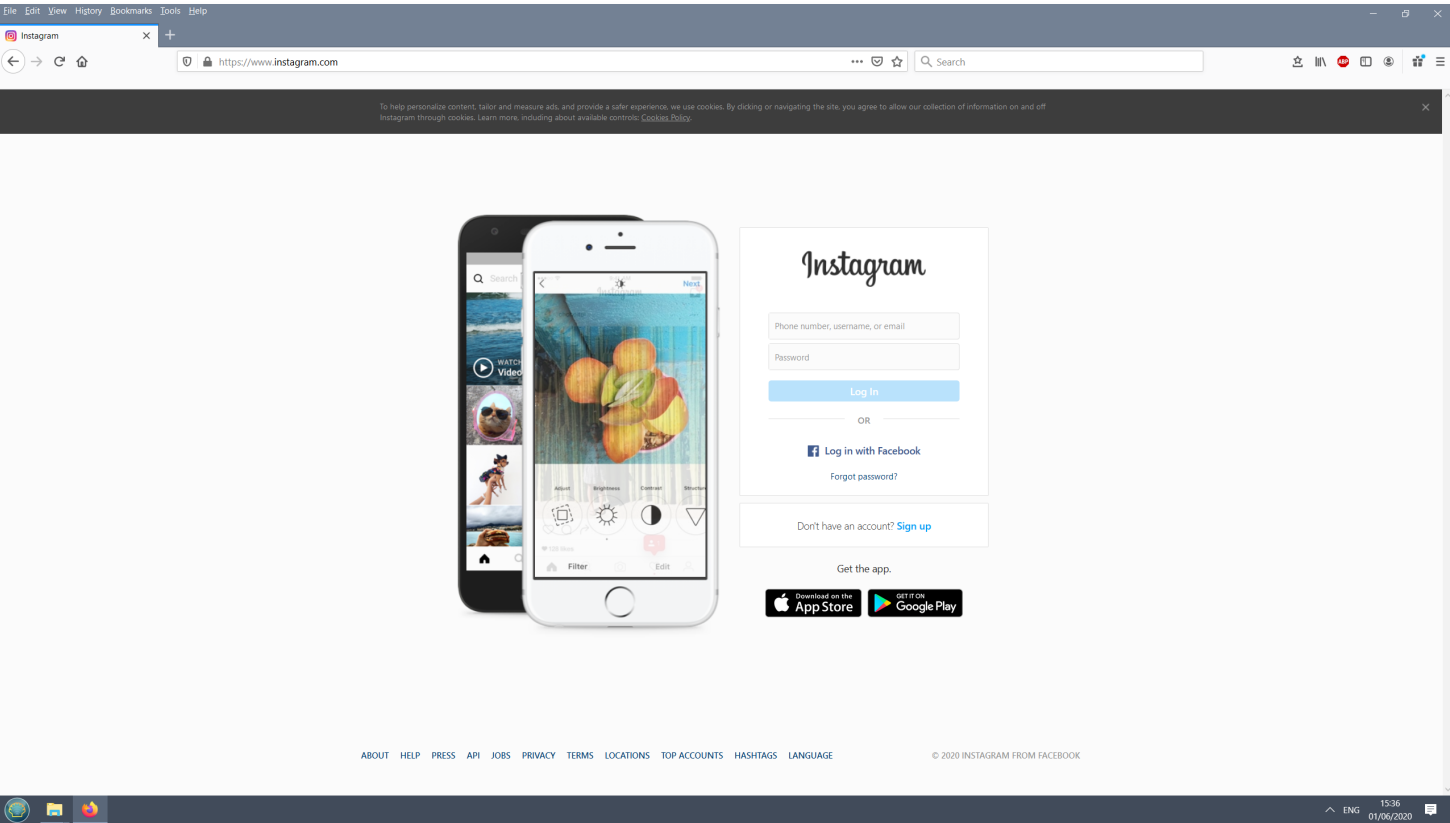
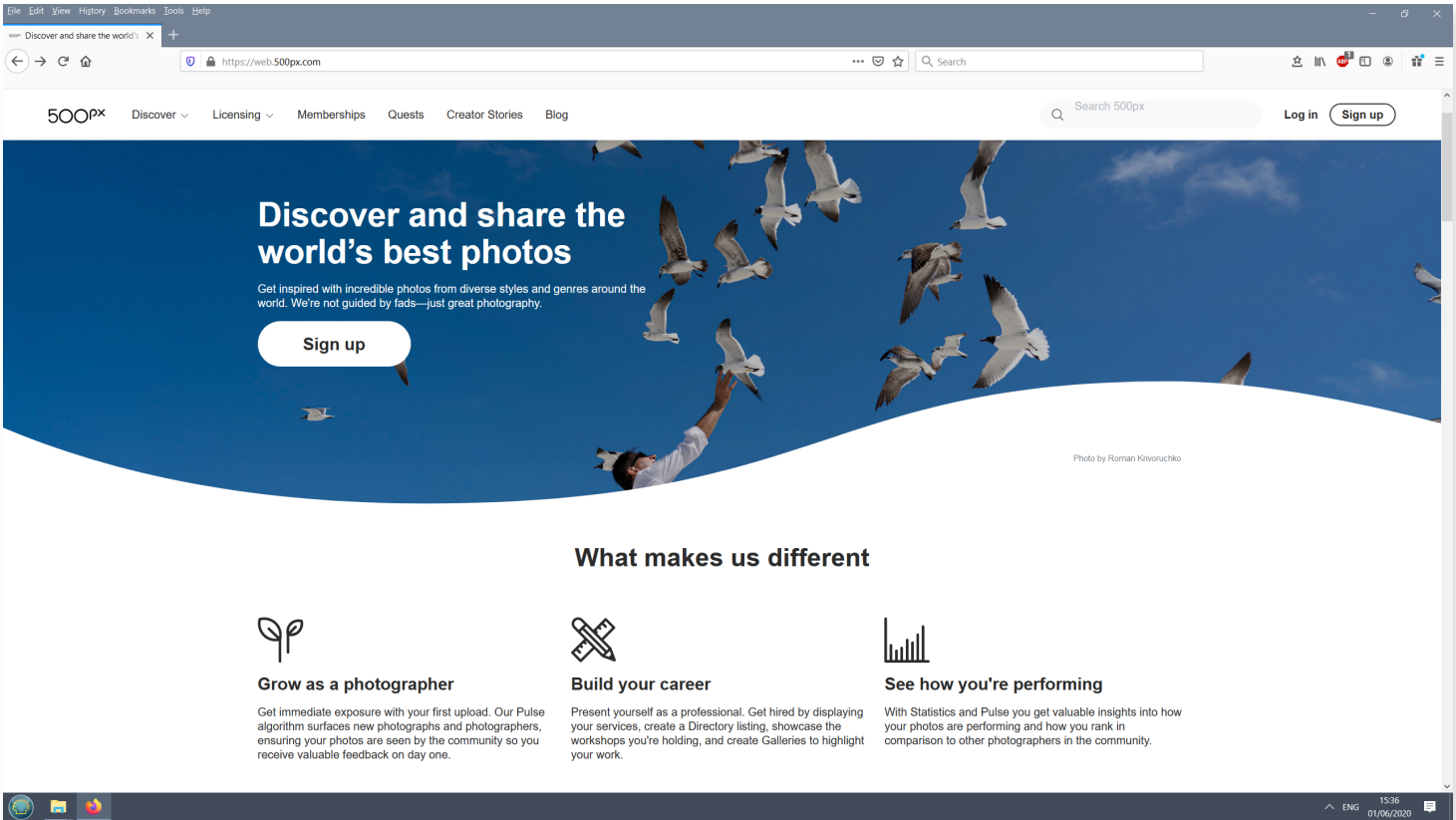
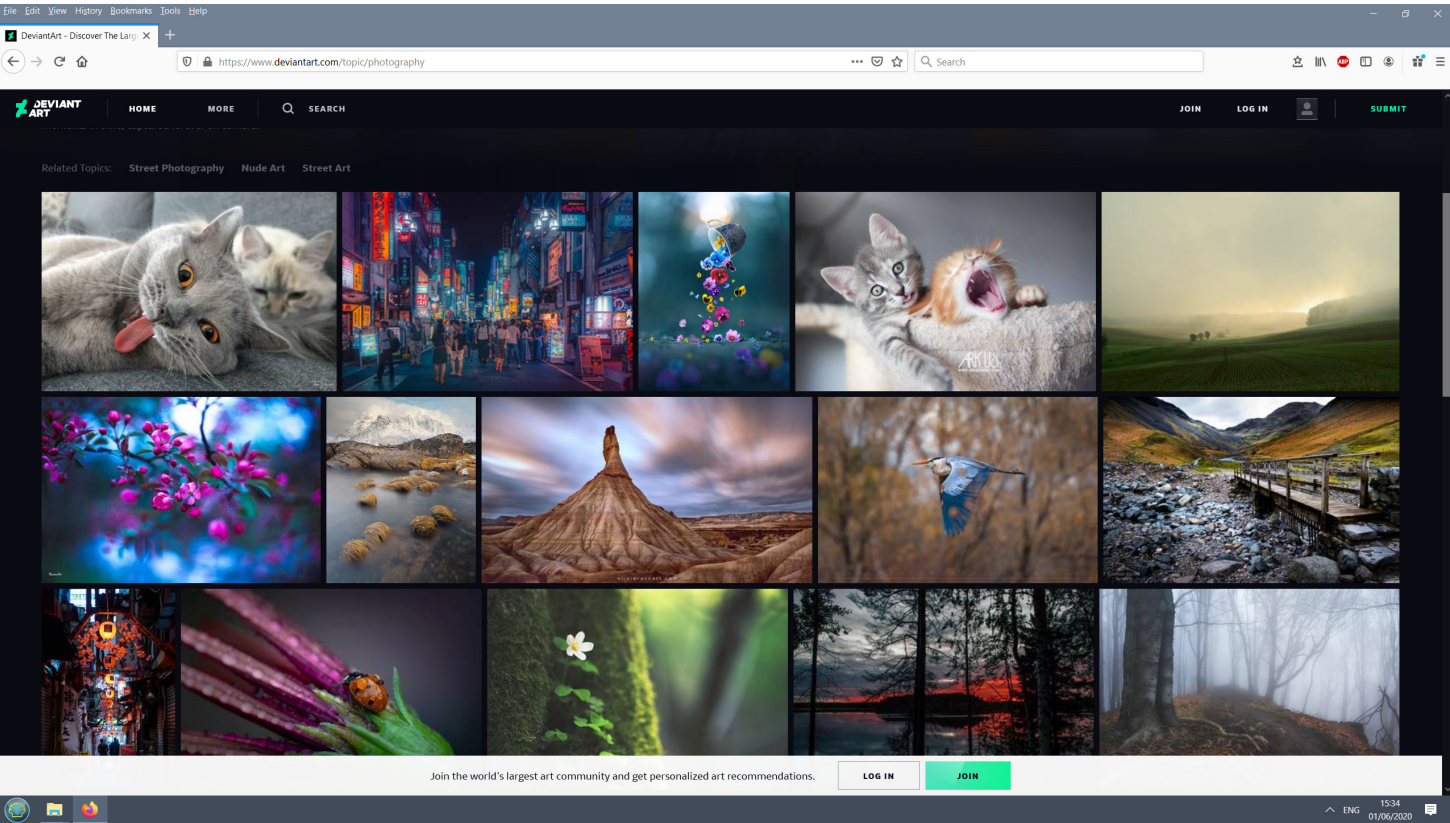
choose images that were less than exciting, the kind of images that filled much of a roll of film, nice views or family members sitting on a rock. I do however think the exercise would benefit from having a larger number of images.

Bibliography

Parr M (1996) *Small World* Dewi Lewis Publishing

Parr M (2009) *The Last Resort* Dewi Lewis Publishing

Parr M (2019) *Early Works* RRB Photobooks/Martin Parr Foundation



3 The Artist and the World Wide Web

The world wide web opened up new opportunities to artists of all genres. As internet access speeds have risen, and we have gained the ability to connect to the internet wherever we want, whenever we want, the options available to artists have also increased dramatically.

From a business standpoint it is now possible to have your work viewed by a huge number of potential customers, whether it be through your own stand alone web site, or through the various social media platforms, the ability of a professional artist to get exposure has increased in ways that could never have been expected. Where as in the days before the internet advertising would have been both expensive and of a limited impact in the area of which it could be viewed, a web site or social media platform is available anywhere in the world to anyone that wishes to view it. Getting your work on display required some kind of gallery exhibition, whether it be a small local one or something larger the footfall was again limited, as was any advertising placed to promote said exhibition. The internet allows us to display work to numbers of viewers that previously would have been impossible. It is not uncommon for Instagram images to receive hundreds of thousands of views, some receive millions. While these are not all images by artists it does illustrate the point that as artists our potential audience is far wider than it has ever been.

There is of course a huge choice when it comes to displaying our work. There are numerous photo and art sharing web sites, from Instagram through to more specialised sites like 500px or Deviantart, and more social platforms like Facebook and Twitter, all can be used to not only gain exposure but also drive traffic to a business website, if you have one. Whilst this increased exposure is great, there is of course the downside in the fact that competition for viewers has also grown. More people than ever are uploading images to the internet, and in some cases, for example Snapchat, and some of the other social media platforms, the images themselves have become almost consumable, something that is viewed briefly before the next thing appears. Snapchat even going as far to delete images after a set period of time. Many of these web sites do however allow us to host vast numbers of high resolution images, along with contact details if we so wish, making them useful tools in gaining exposure or advertising.

The internet also allows us to learn in ways that previously would have required purchases of courses or videos, or attending classes. Now if there is a technique you wish to learn, or some kind of software you wish to master, there will be tutorials for it somewhere online. Of course formal courses still exist, but these to can be delivered online, making time manage-

ment much more efficient. Publicly available archives are much easier to use, when you can simply access them from home, rather than having to travel to them, especially if they happen to be located in a foreign country. We can also carry out research on locations, and look for inspiration in the work of others all without leaving home. Forums can also be of great benefit. Wide ranging in subject matter, but usually places where like minded individuals discuss their interests. These forums can be very useful when it comes to advice on products and purchases, or even with advice from professionals working in a field you may be interested in. There are also websites dedicated to every artistic genre, for example fstoppers, which covers photography both from a business and hobby viewpoint. With news, reviews and articles covering every aspect of photography. The web also gives us access to a much wider range of suppliers than ever before, allowing us to source products cheaper or faster or that would generally not be available in our local area. This does have it's downsides, the increased use of online shopping in cameras and related equipment for example, has seen a big reduction in the numbers of bricks and mortar stores we can visit to get a feel any equipment we may want to buy.

There are of course downsides to the world wide web. As mentioned before competition

for both professional work and even recognition for the work of talented amateurs has increased, and it can take something very special to be truly noticed in such a crowded environment. Another unfortunate problem that has appeared in conjunction with the increased number of images uploaded is that of image theft. Less scrupulous companies or individuals can copy high resolution images and use them for their own purposes. Whilst this can often be remedied by contacting the person or company involved and requesting payment, or removal of the image, or even threatening legal action, it may not always be resolved in the favour of the artist.

If I had been told in the 1980's that the camera I was carrying could instantly transmit its images to anyone I wanted to see them, or that I could, in effect, take as many photographs as I wanted, edit them and store them, or that I could talk with photographers from all around the world, all whilst sitting at home, or even in fact being anywhere else, I would have put it firmly in the realm of science fiction. Now I accept it as being the normal, a modern high tech set of tools that compliment the box I carry around that captures light, much as it did nearly 40 years ago.

The Little Book of
Interesting Filling
Stations



Assignment 2: The Archive

I had initially decided to create an archive based on living in a small village, showing how over time things had changed. I then began to think about how things had changed within my own lifetime, how small local businesses were vanishing to be replaced by large national and international chains. This led me to the idea of filling stations.

When I started driving I remember using small village filling stations, locally owned and often named after the owner or village. Sometimes these stations would be little more than a couple of pumps outside of a small store, or even just a large shed or workshop type building. I find it quite sad that these businesses are vanishing, or have vanished nearly entirely from our roadsides. Aside from the fact that they were often very useful for being a local amenity, they were also a part of village life. People would stop and talk, the owners knew their customers by name, and would often go out of the way to help them. I remember the one just outside our village giving me a tow home when my alternator belt snapped, and he didn't have the correct one to replace it, even though it was 11pm and quite a distance out of his way.

I think our villages and small towns have suffered somewhat with the move to large chain stores, everything situated on a retail park outside of the biggest nearby town. The same can be said for filling stations, no longer do you find them on quiet B roads, in out of the way villages, they are always on a main route, large impersonal places that no longer have the feeling of being a part of the community.

Looking through various online archives I found that it is quite common to use ar-

chitectural elements as a theme, there are also often social elements to these archives showing things like village post offices or other services.

Reference Archives:

Archives Hub – <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/>
Irish Architectural Archive – Cartlann Ailtreachta na hÉireann
<https://iarc.ie/>
Historic England
<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/photos/englands-places/>
Princeton University School of Architecture Online Image Libraries
<https://soa.princeton.edu/content/online-image-resource-list>
t
Royal Institute of British Architects official image library – <https://www.architecture.com/image-library/>
University of Michigan Library Free Access Databases – <https://guides.lib.umich.edu/c.php?g=282888&p=1885038>

The archives listed above cover not just imagery but also have extensive document archives. When searching for places, buildings or businesses these documents are extremely interesting to read, giving a full history of the subject being researched. These archives were used more to show me how and why archives are created, than to give me an idea of content. I wanted to understand why a specific subject is chosen for a particular archive format.

Having decided to collect images of old style filling stations, this meant mostly using web found imagery, with a creative com-

mons license attached. Thankfully there are numerous people who also have an interest in this area, both architecture and motoring enthusiasts seem to be interested in the fact that these small unique stations are almost gone from our towns and villages.

On further researching these sites, it seems many have been converted into different businesses, shops, garden centres and the like, or in the case of some housing and apartments. It seems that the more impressive the building, the more likely it is to have been saved. With the large Art Deco style ones all seeming to be popular for conversion.

I feel the images I have chosen show how these stations were situated within communities, or at least nearby. They show something we are losing or have lost, and create a record of something we are never likely to see again. I know several younger people who have never used anything other than a large service station, usually with some kind of attached chain store or fast food restaurant. Gone are the days of buying home made sandwiches from a small fridge next to the cash register.

I think as an archive this could benefit from being a much larger project, and possibly even from using then and now photographs. Showing the stations in their heyday versus how they are now. It could also form part of an archive showing the change in village life, how they have transformed from living working communities into being often not much more than the homes where commuters sleep after work. I decided to use an A6 format for the book, as it reminds me of the series of I Spy pocket books I remember

having as a small child. These books were intended to keep children occupied on long car journeys, as they ticked off specific items as they were seen or passed.

Bibliography

Archives Hub – <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/> Accessed 29.08.2019
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<https://iarc.ie/> Accessed 29.08.2019
Historic England
<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/photos/englands-places/> Accessed 29.08.2019
Princeton University School of Architecture Online Image Libraries <https://soa.princeton.edu/content/online-image-resource-list> Accessed 29.08.2019
Royal Institute of British Architects official image library – <https://www.architecture.com/image-library/> Accessed 29.08.2019
University of Michigan Library Free Access Databases – <https://guides.lib.umich.edu/c.php?g=282888&p=1885038> Accessed 29.08.2019

Assignment 2: Tutor Report



Formative feedback

| | | | |
|------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------|
| Student name | Sean Sweeney | Student number | 510149 |
| Course/Unit | DIAC | Assignment number | 2 |
| Type of tutorial | Written | | |

Overall Comments

Overall, I felt this assignment was an interesting concept that has provided you with a useful learning experience. The lack of an included study log means this feedback is short because I have so little to work with. All I can look at is the work and your synopsis as there is no reflection included in your submission. The ideas behind the work seem interesting, but you will need to fully interrogate these within your supporting research and reflection to pass the module.

Assessment potential

Assignment 2

I understand your aim is to go for the Photography Degree and that you plan to submit your work for assessment at the end of this course. From the work you have shown in this assignment, providing you commit yourself to the course, I believe you have the potential to pass at assessment. In order to meet all the assessment criteria, there are certain areas you will need to focus on, which I will outline in my feedback.

Feedback on assignment

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Quality of Outcome, Demonstration of Creativity

Below are a series of key points concerning your submission. They aren't in a specific order but are intended as a general prompt of the areas in which I feel you would benefit from some further self-reflection and technical adjustments.

- The concept worked well however it is let down a little by your introductory text. Think about how a viewer engages with your work. You note in the beginning that you would have preferred to do a family album topic. This is great for supporting documentation (alongside tests), but not to put front and centre in an introduction to what a viewer is actually looking at. The implication is this is not the work you intended to show, and therefore not the best of which you are capable. If you are not confident in your work, why should a viewer be?
- The list of reference libraries is useful but, with no analysis, it is just a list that doesn't add anything to your work. In what ways did you consult them? How did the archive information they hold aid you in making this body of work? To what extent did you utilise them in forming your overall strategy?
- The assignment is, in part, about found imagery. This is a well-documented and used strategy in the arts. You are deliberately harnessing the approach to make your work, so commenting that travelling to make the work is, 'somewhat impractical' is superfluous. It comes across as if you are only using found imagery because you don't have the time or resources to make the pictures yourself, which I would hope is not the feeling you wish to convey...
- The imagery itself is interesting. Technically there are problems all over the work but that is part of using found imagery – technical perfection isn't the goal. Whether you wish to correct images for colour and contrast is up to you and dependent on the parameters you set yourself.
- A crucial point you don't comment on is the issue of ownership. Where did you source the images? What is their copyright status? Did you seek permission to use and republish the works? This is especially important if publishing the work in any form (online, especially on a commercial platform such as you have could lead to issues if you do not have permission to use the images).
- Did you identify the locations? Caption information might have been interesting to know either where the image was made or who by (possibly both, depends really on your angle)?
- Did you consider alternative approaches once you identified the sites? If you used these images as your lead, you could have used a Google Street View strategy to 'photograph' each site, and therefore skirted the main issues of ownership of the images.

Coursework

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Demonstration of Creativity

None submitted or viewable on your website

Research

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

The Archive and the Found Image in Digital Culture

None submitted or viewable on your website

Learning Log

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

None submitted or viewable on your website

Suggested reading/viewing

Context

I suggest you look into photographic typologies and see how other artists have used the pictorial strategy to great effect

Ed Ruscha - Twenty-six Gasoline Stations (for obvious reasons this should be your starting point for research into how Ruscha used typologies. Ruscha influenced the New Topographic 'style' of photography that often utilise typologies.

<https://www.tate.org.uk/about-us/projects/transforming-artist-books/summaries/edward-ruscha-twentysix-gasoline-stations-1963>

Andrew Freeman – (Manzanar) Architecture Double – A slightly different take on the typology but effective nonetheless and shows you a way in which the strategy can be modernised. <http://andrewfreeman.net/work/manzanar-architecture-double/>

Pointers for the next assignment / assessment

- Remember it is vital to include your research and reflection posts with an assignment submission
- The next assignment is the essay. Unfortunately, we couldn't discuss this in an AV tutorial for this assignment due to your schedule, but remember that you are only writing 25000 words so keep your subject short and your writing concise. You cannot tackle everything of relevance to your chosen topic so instead concentrate on producing a well written, thoroughly referenced, argument.
- I thoroughly recommend consulting the UCA and OCA guidelines and recommended reading on academic writing and referencing before getting started.

Please inform me of how you would like your feedback for the next assignment: written or video/audio.

| | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Tutor name | David Wyatt |
| Date | 17/7/19 |
| Next assignment due | 4/9/19 |

Assignment 2: Response to Tutor Comments

When I create an image archive, it is for one of two purposes. Firstly, a collection of my own images centred around a specific subject, with the intent of using it as either an aid in my own development, or as cataloguing process in order to allow me to keep track of subjects within my own collection of images. The second purpose would be using both my own and found imagery to create an archive for the purposes of inspiration. Whether this archive is for a personal or work based project, it is used to give me ideas not only about the actual image content, but about how I would like the series of images to look, and how I might go about having a connection between all of the images within the series. The whole process is used in much the same way as some designers use a mood board, with images not always being directly related to the project as such, but having some influence over the end product.

Whilst researching this exercise it was interesting to see just how vast some of the collections are, for example the National Archives of the United States has thousands and thousands of images spread over numerous categories. Equally the Library of Congress has archives ranging from

subjects as diverse as the houses of Cape Cod, to portraits of photographers of the Farm Security Administration. The National Geographic image collection contains over 10 million digital images relating to nature, geography, people and places. Even smaller collections like the Nationaal Archief contain over 400 thousand Dutch press images. It is very easy to be somewhat overwhelmed by these archives, the size and the complex cataloguing systems give you access to imagery from even the most obscure of subjects, but it is also very easy to find yourself wasting away many hours viewing work that is in areas that are of interest to you, both personally and commercially.

This was something that I found somewhat restrictive within the exercise, the feeling that I wanted the collection to be somewhat bigger, somehow more. I understand of course that both time constraints and just the actual issue of constructing huge archives would be very impractical for the purpose of the exercise. One of my other issues with the exercise was the fact it relied upon found imagery. Whilst the reasoning for this is within the context of the exercise, I think that creating an archive of our own images would have

not only been a little more challenging in some ways, but maybe more interesting or motivating as well. For example, had I created the filling station images myself I would have liked to have done things my own way, i.e. taking all of the images from the same angle, all at the same time of day with the lighting as similar as possible, even to the point of using portable lighting during the hours of darkness, to create a uniform appearance.

Whilst I am happy overall with what has been created, I do also feel a little indifferent to the resulting product. Whilst it fulfils the brief and has a subject that I do actually find interesting both from a physical and social point of view, I find it difficult to shake off the feeling that it isn't mine. I think this is because while I am happy to use other people's images for inspiration or educational purposes, even using them within a transformative or derivative capacity, I find it hard to create something based entirely on found imagery. While I understand that it is an accepted practice, it still feels a little like cheating to me.

In response to the comments of my tutor David Wyatt, There are a number of points I would like to cover.

The Archive and the Found Image in Digital Culture

Firstly ownership of the images. I have added to the text body that these images all have creative commons licenses, and I have removed the finished archive from the commercial site. I only added this in as I was a little confused by the phrase

‘use blurb or other proprietary software that will allow you to easily construct your book and publish it to the web.’

Having used InDesign to create a .pdf file that I uploaded, I was concerned that this was not proprietary enough, and that the use of stand alone commercial software was required. It is interesting that Blurb should be suggested when there are obvious issues surrounding found imagery with regards to finding either the copyright status or the original owner, perhaps in future publications of the unit Blurb should not be suggested.

As to correction of the images, I deliberately chose not to alter them in any way. Whilst to quality of some is not perfect, or the composition leaves something to be desired, I quickly decided that as these were not my images I would present them in the same way as the original owner had. I can understand that this decision may not be to every-

one’s taste, but I feel that if they had wanted them altered or corrected in any way then they would have done it themselves.

With reference to identifying the locations of the images. Again I decided that this was something I did not want to do, the idea was purely to show a type of building that is vanishing from our landscape, not to create a guide book as to where such buildings might be found.

As to the suggestion of using Google Streetview. Whilst this may be a route some people would go down it is not something I would choose to do. Whilst I may use Streetview to locate something, to then visit and photograph, lifting the image directly from Google is not something I would want to do, for a number of reasons including image quality.

Then there is of course the issue of fair use when using images from Streetview in this way, and that is something that would have to be checked with a legal expert.

Fair use

Apart from any license granted to you by Google, your use of the content may be acceptable under prin-

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Points of View: The Guardian 1986 Screen capture

1 Hyperphotography

Fred Ritchin: Towards a Hyperphotography (2008)

Ritchin's article is very interesting, the points he raises lead naturally to further research of other websites, videos and essays. This research results in a suggestion being given in relation to photo-journalism, and how when engaging with subjects there seems to be a need to use interactive digital methods, creating multiple layers woven together into a narrative. The idea being that by including hyperlinks and hypertext, self contained within the image, you can allow the viewer to access further information, not only on the image itself, but on any linked subject, even adding to it themselves. This would in turn allow the history of the image to constantly grow and evolve. In the essay Ritchin writes 'reality has no single truth' (2008:147) and that the idea of a contradictory 'double' image exists that would illustrate how the event captured could have been staged or simulated for the benefit of the photographer.

This kind of event manipulation is already becoming quite widely used, for example in the context of the crowds surrounding politicians being made to look larger by a careful choice of camera angle, or images from the invasion of Haiti in 1994, as referenced by Ritchin himself in his essay *Exposure Time* (Ritchin After Photography W.W. Norton, 2009) This ability to manipulate what is seen in reality, and create a new version of what happened, takes me to the heart of what Ritchin seems to be saying, that like the works of a

cubist painter there are always multiple versions of reality.

An example that springs to mind was the 1986 television advertisement for the Guardian newspaper entitled 'Points of View'. The first scenes show a skinhead running down a street, towards the camera, as the scene opens out it appears he is running directly at a businessman of some kind, carrying a large brief case. It is only as the camera moves yet again that we realise the aggressively charging skinhead is not in fact attacking the man with the brief case, but in fact trying to save him from falling builders materials over head. Each section has its own suggestion as to what is happening, and when we see the end of the sequence, it shows that none of these suggestions are correct. However, from each point of view these suggestions could easily have been correct, or equally easily have been used in a manner to show something that never happened, actually happening. The premise behind the advert being that we need to always see the bigger picture, rather than isolated points of view within it.

'The contradictory image 'double image' is cubist; reality has no single truth.' (Ritchin, 2009: 147)

The format of the digital image itself leads us to many possibilities. Whilst an analogue photograph can only show what is recorded at the time, digital imagery can be manipulated in a vast number of ways. For example the photograph of a missing person from the 1980's will always remain the same, a digital version of that image however can

be altered in such a way as to show how they may have aged as time has passed. The digital image has also allowed us to change how images are viewed, now we can instantly upload and share images with anyone, anywhere in the blink of an eye. These images can be added to and commented on, creating new layers of context and reference, and dialogue between viewers, where previously it would need to be displayed in a gallery to even stand the chance of receiving views, let alone comments.

The essay leads me to a crucial point, the need for, or the importance of context. Two or three images of exactly the same subject can have very differing meanings dependent on such simple things as changing camera angles. We as photographers chose this context when we create the image. It is of no real importance which of these views is the correct view (as long as we are not claiming it to be a factual news story), as long as there is some context to the image. The photographer decides what context they wish to show or create, but they must show something.

References

- Ritchin F (2008) *Towards a Hyperphotography* Norton
Ritchin F (2009) *After Photography* Norton



Bergen Belsen Liberation – Oakes, H (Sgt), No 5 Army Film & Photographic Unit



Phan Thi Kim Phuc – Nick Ut



Saigon – Eddie Adams



Bosnia – Ron Haviv

2 Digitizing Atrocity

Throughout the history of photography images have been captured recording acts of atrocity, these images whilst shocking or unpleasant are, in my opinion, a necessary and important part of history. Many of the images have been captured in war time, and to some extent could be considered records of conflict. However, they are often used in other ways. During the Vietnam war for example, images such as ‘Napalm Girl’ (Phan Thi Kim Phuc) and ‘Execution in Saigon’ were also used by the anti war movement to change opinion at home, along with the images of injured or dead soldiers. These powerful images helped create enough feeling amongst the American public to contribute to the ending of the conflict.

Other images serve as a record of things that should never be forgotten, the liberation of Bergen Belsen for example resulted in a number of images that not only horrified the public on release in the 1940’s, but still have the power today to demand that the viewer reflects upon what they are seeing. Some of these images and many others have been used as evidence in trials for war crimes. An example being the work of Ron Haviv during the Bosnian conflict in the 1990’s, several of his images being used as evidence during the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia at The Hague.

These images can also be used to prompt international action, being used as evidence to enable

organisations to act. The recent conflict in Syria for example saw video and photographic evidence being used to gain approval for direct action against the government regime.

There are a number of well known and acclaimed war photographers, Don McCullin springs instantly to mind, James Nachtwey, Margaret Bourke-White, and João Silva are amongst many others who have produced work that both shocks and informs. Allowing the public to see what is really going on during conflicts, on both sides, is something many of the above photographers would agree is or was an important part of their work. Showing the truth of these situations being something that is at the core of their work.

Recently however it seems things are changing. Where photographers and journalists once had free reign to record and report, it is now more the case that they are attached directly to military units, their work being approved or not as the case may be by press officers. This seems to have become more prevalent in the last 20 years, I remember graphic images from the Falklands war being shown in both print and on television. One of the reasons given for this tighter control is that governments often have no will to show their own soldiers being injured or dead. Now while no one would chose to view these kinds of images for fun, it is important to realise that they show what is actually happening, and that all news both good and

bad should be reported and recorded for history. These types of censorship also lead in to conspiracy theories, the question being asked

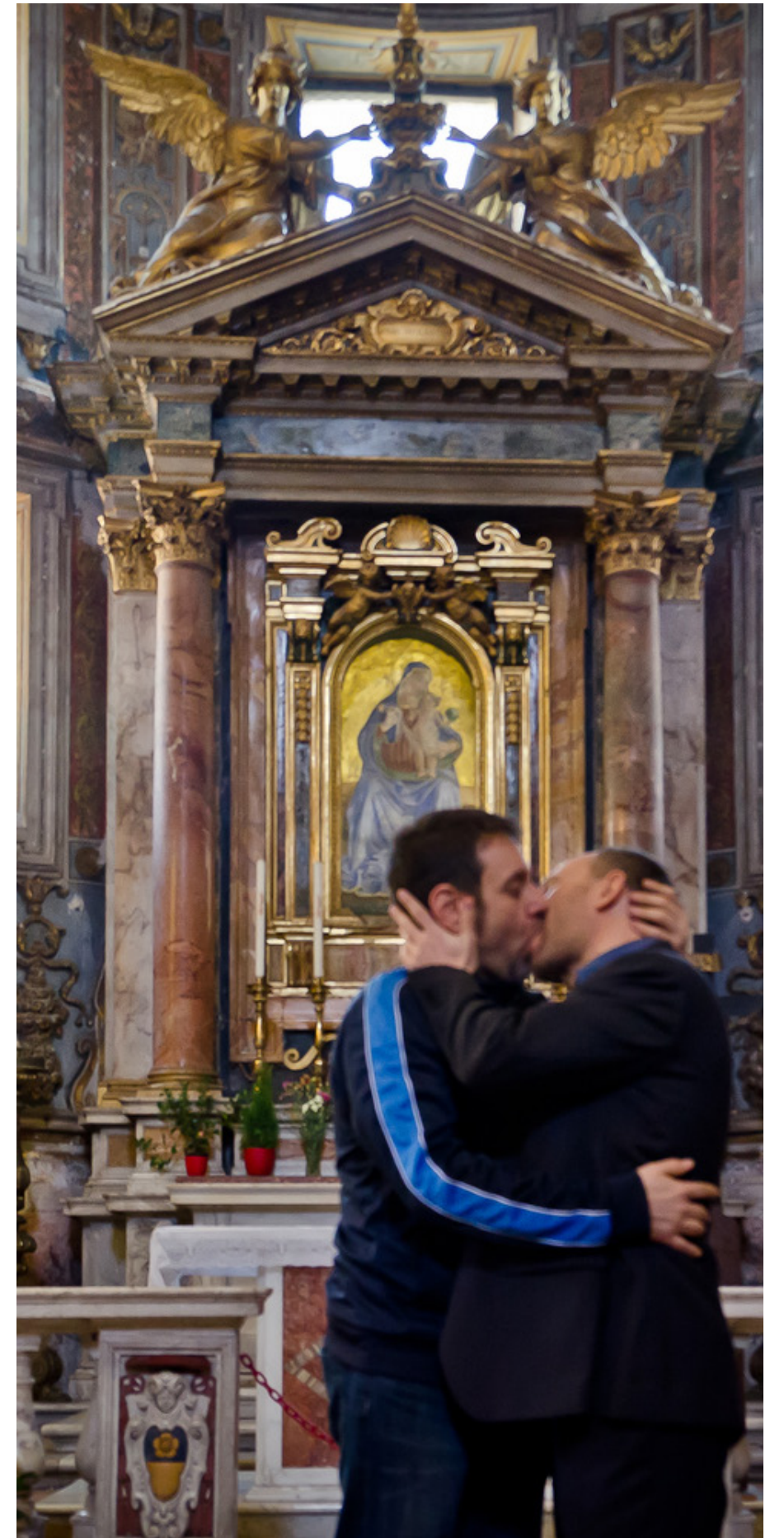
‘...if they aren’t letting you see that, what else aren’t they letting you see?’

The answer of course is we don’t know, even if there is anything at all. There have been enough leaked images, Abu Ghraib prison for example, that could cause you to question if the loss of freedom for war correspondents was having an effect on what is reported.

The film *McCullin* (2012) is well worth watching. Covering not only his time as a war photographer, but other work as well. It shows how his ethos on photo-journalism has changed throughout his career, and how his work has affected him. This film also gives us an insightful glimpse into the conflicts of the second half of the twentieth century. McCullin himself comes across as not only a talented dedicated photographer, but as a man of integrity and honesty, he also shows himself to be deeply uncomfortable with the title of war photographer. This final point is quite important as I feel it relates to the subject at hand, we are all uncomfortable with images of atrocity and war, but they are things we all need to see if we wish to have any hope for the future.



Kerstin Langenberger (2015)



Si Quiero – Gonzalo Orquín (2013)

3 Images and Controversy

For this exercise I have chosen two images that I consider to be controversial. Not because they shock or horrify like the images we see daily coming out of areas in conflict, but because of the way they have polarised opinion.

The first image is that of a starving polar bear, captured by Kerstin Langenberger in 2015. Langenberger posted the image to facebook, suggesting that the condition of the bear was a direct result of global climate change. This in turn led to a heated discussion between people commenting on the image, as to whether or not climate change was solely to blame. The image itself went viral, being used in numerous news and website articles supporting the idea that this was the result of climate change. There were however a number of people of opposing views. Some suggesting that the image in question had been Photoshopped, and other perhaps more credible people pointing out that there could be a number of reasons for the fact the bear appeared to be in poor health. For example Kit Kovacs, a biodiversity researcher for the Norwegian Polar Institute. The Senior Director of Conservation for Polar Bears International released a statement, saying that Langenberger's claim was 'a bridge too far'. What I find most controversial about the image is the fact that an obviously emotive image, is used to tug on the heartstrings of viewers. We all feel bad when seeing an animal suffering, and climate change is an

easy scapegoat for any natural occurrence that is out of the ordinary. This image however has nothing to back up the facts it is claiming, there is no veterinary evidence to suggest any cause for its condition. Despite this the image is still one used to illustrate the consequences of climate change on the population of polar bears.

The second image is from Gonzalo Orquín series entitled *Sí, quiero* 2013. This was a project where Orquín photographed a series of gay and lesbian couples kissing in Catholic churches, he had planned to include these photos in an exhibition titled "Trialogo," which was scheduled to be opened in Rome, at the Galleria L'Opera.

However, these images would never be shown, Vatican City officials had sent a letter threatening legal action should the exhibition take place. Representing the Vatican City Claudio Tantarri told a newspaper that the photos violated the Constitution of Italy

"Italian constitutional law safeguards an individual's religious feeling and the function of places of worship. Therefore photos that are not suitable and do not conform to the spirituality of the place. offend and infringe upon the advancement of man in the particular place for the expression of faith."

"LOOK: Vatican Kills Gay Photo Exhibit". The Huffington Post.

After taking legal advice Orquín decided not to exhibit the images for security reasons. He was hopeful of showing them at a later date. He did however protest by showing them on facebook, censored with black crosses, saying that he found Italy to be a very homophobic country.

Later in 2014, it was announced that the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art would host the exhibit under the title, "*Sí, quiero*", (English: "Yes, I want").

The real controversy here of course, is not the gay couples kissing in catholic churches, it is the fact that the catholic church used its legal might to stop a photographic exhibition dedicated to gay couples. The fact that the images were taken in churches should not be sufficient to bully the artist into cancelling the show. The exhibition would not take place on church property, and it is highly unlikely that anyone attending the exhibition would be so offended by it. That religion can still hold such power over artistic expression, due to its backwards views on homosexuality, is a little surprising, it comes as no surprise however that someone decided to show the exhibition.

Reference

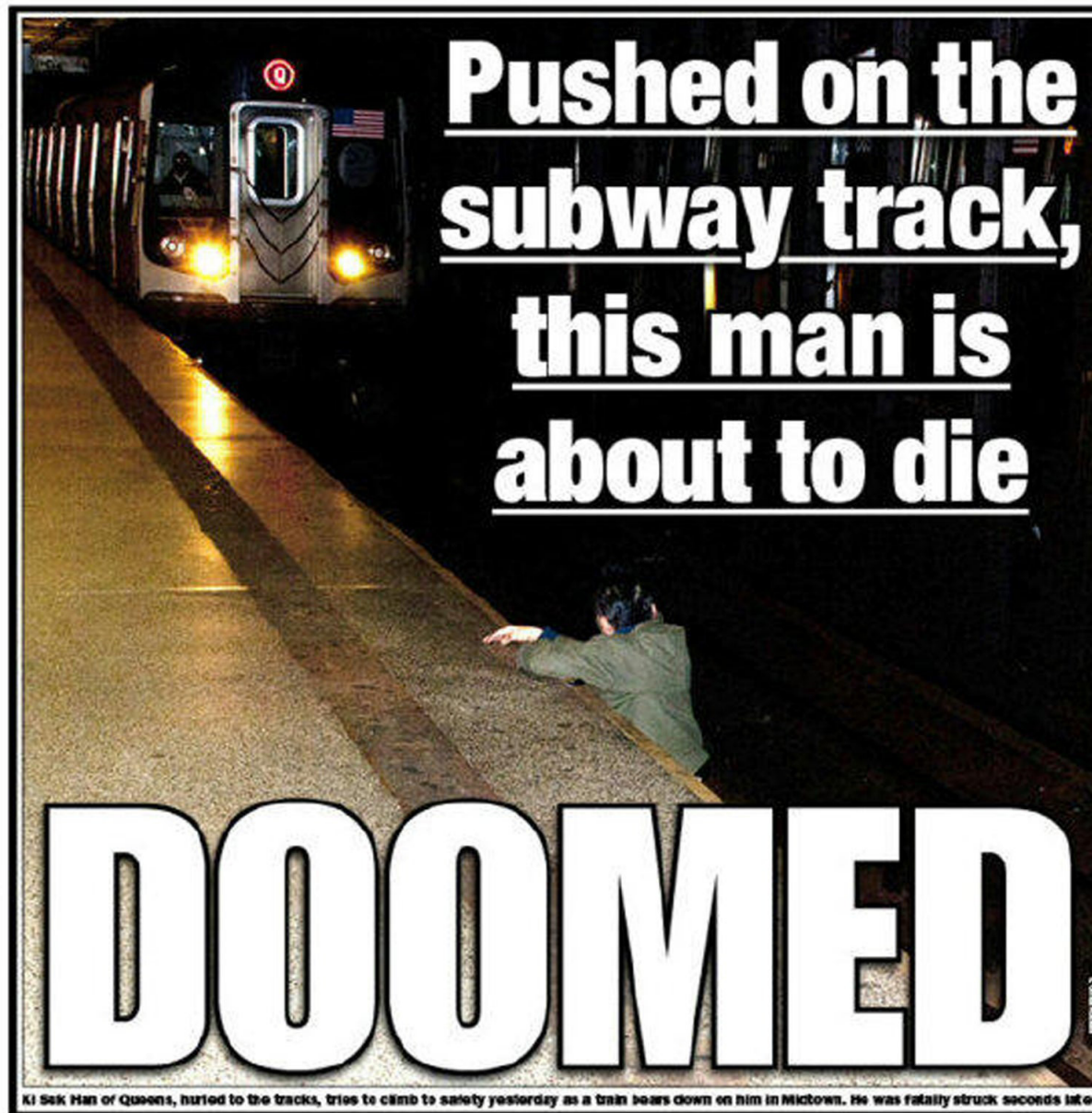
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NEW YORK POST

**Page
Six**

LATE CITY FINAL



**Pushed on the
subway track,
this man is
about to die**

DOOMED

Ki Suk Han of Queens, hurried to the tracks, tries to climb to safety yesterday as a train bears down on him in Midtown. He was fatally struck seconds later.

4 Breaking the news?

When is it right to show scenes of suffering, horror and death? When do we as photographers decide to put the camera down and try to help? Both of these questions could be asked of the photographs taken by R. Umar Abbasi, of Ki Suck Han, only moments before he was hit and killed by a subway train after being pushed onto the track by another man. The New York Post published three images taken by Abbasi, for his part Abbasi claims he was trying to warn the driver of the train with his flash, and that he was not actively trying to take photographs.

‘And then when I’m looking at it, I think why am I here, what does this have to do with photography. That’s a very difficult question to answer yourself when it’s happening, because you can’t intervene. And people ask me, “have you ever intervened?”, and the answer is not really, but on a couple of occasions I’ve intervened by picking up a wounded soldier’ McCullin, 2016

It is interesting that in such situations many photographers renowned for their work in conflict areas explain that they very rarely get involved with what is happening in front of them, a professional detachment to the subject at hand, yet occasionally they do...

‘In my first war in Cyprus, I was so shocked by it that I picked an old lady up who was trying to walk through a hail of bullets in this Turkish village. She weighed nothing, I was young and strong and swooped her up in my arms and ran off with her. It was the right thing to do. Photography should have taken second place, which it did that day.’ McCullin, 2016

It is McCullin's choice of words in this interview that strike me ‘It was the right thing to do. Photography should have taken second place, which it did that day’, suggesting that there is a point where the camera should be put aside and help offered.

With regards to the incident on the New York subway, we have little in the way of facts. We can only guess at the distance Abbasi is from the man on the tracks, would being closer have changed the way he responded? Possibly not, I think photographers in general will reach for the camera out of instinct when something out of the ordinary is happening, especially if they are a freelancer for a newspaper. Whether or not they then have the self awareness to realise that helping may be more important than photographing is something that will vary person by person. It is easy to tell ourselves how we would react in such a situation, but until one actually occurs we will never truly know.

I would like to believe that Abbasi's reaction was instinctive, and that he was not taking images with the idea in his head of getting a good story, but the fact they are well composed, exposed and focussed suggests otherwise. My main issue with Abbasi's ethics is that he decided to sell the images afterwards. If they were an instinctive response, or even if they were obtained while firing his flash to attract the driver's attention, the fact they were of a man seconds before his death should have given him a reason to think about what he was doing. There are many instances where photographs like these have been published, images from war zones, the concentration camps of world war 2, even the famous ‘falling man’ image from the Septem-

ber the 11th attacks. These are all generally large events of global importance, where imagery is used to show the true horror of a given situation.

In my opinion the images of Ki Suck Han do not need such exposure, and selling them on to a newspaper shows both dubious ethics and taste. Whilst his murder is important and newsworthy, there was nothing to be gained journalistically by including the images in the story. This leads me on to the New York Post, by all means pay for the images just to keep them from being published, but do not buy them and then publish them just to get an exclusive front page. The story would have been served equally well with just a portrait of Ki Suck Han. I do not believe the behaviour of the New York Post in this matter has anything to do with morals or ethics, other than a desire to gain sales. Someone, somewhere decided they would make a great exclusive front page, and that would drive sales, or at least brand recognition.

Newspaper editors have to take great care in what is appropriate for publication. The publishing of images of a dead body is undignified for the subject, and there should be at least some thought and consideration given to how the family may feel. These photographs are completely different, Ki Suck Han is not dead. This is a far more personal moment, showing a man in his final few seconds before death. In some ways the actual headline of the page is more upsetting than the images

DOOMED Pushed on the track, this man is about to die

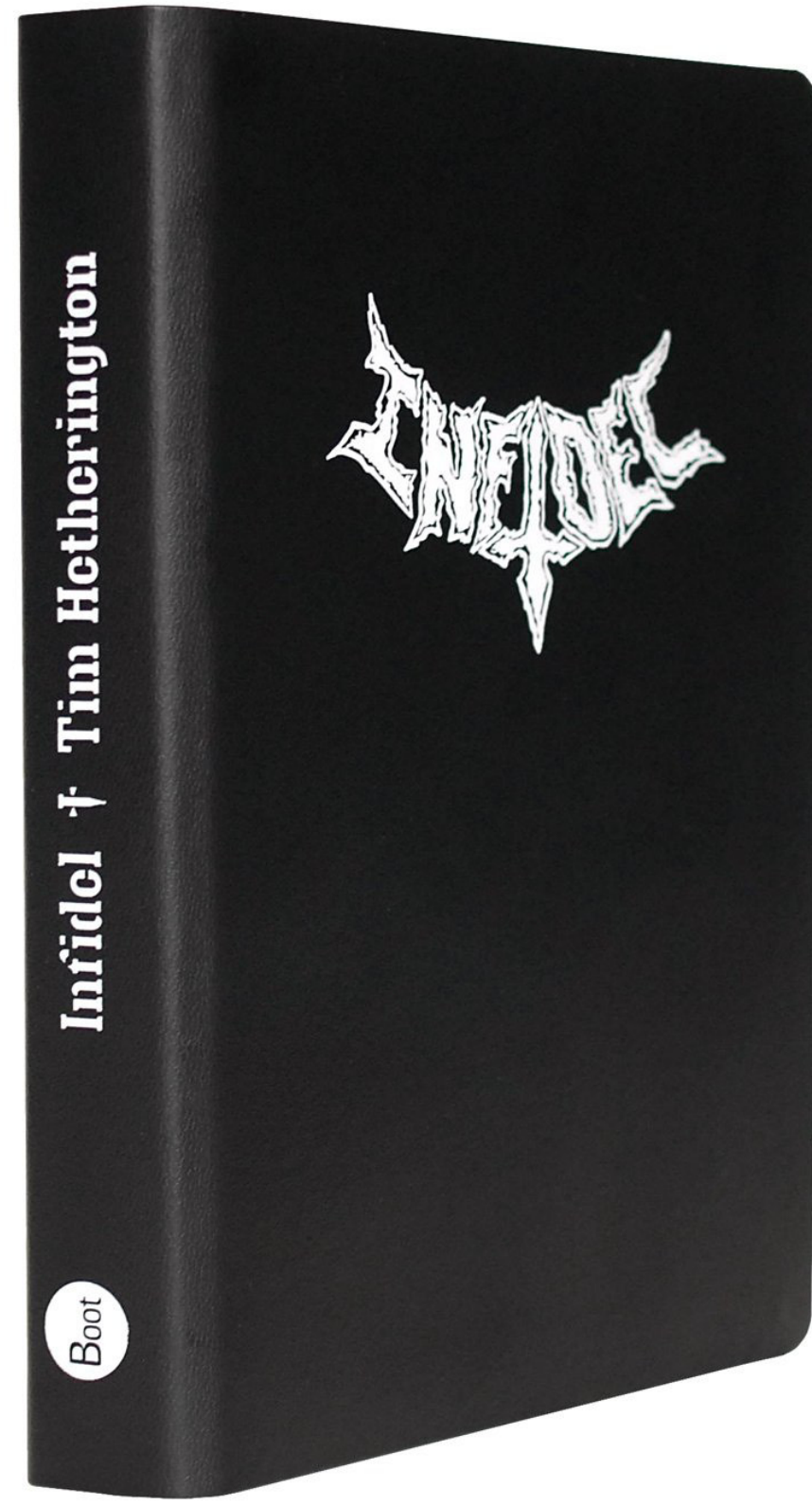
New York Post, December 4, 2012

It just needs ‘and we have the pictures to prove it’ in print after it. It is almost celebrating the fact it can show the images. I am fully aware of the need for the news and media to show that bad things happen, when these things are in the public interest. This incident, whilst newsworthy for the fact it is the murder of an innocent man, was not so much in the public interest that it needed to show the final moments of his life.

This leads us to the question of who is at fault? Regardless of the reason for capturing the images, whether it be deliberately taking photographs of an incident, or trying to signal the train driver with his flash, Abbasi should not have sold the images to a newspaper. The New York Post for its part should not have published them. Yes, blood and gore sells newspapers, and all newspapers want those exclusive stories and images to increase their sales. In this case though, was there really a need to show the unnecessary suffering of a man in the final moments of his life? I think both Abbasi and the New York Post have displayed at best, questionable ethics and taste in this matter, and at worst they have completely disregarded any thoughts of decency in the pursuit of financial gain

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5 Post Photojournalism

Tim Hetherington - Infidel

In 2007 Tim Hetherington accepted an assignment from Vanity Fair Magazine, to work with the writer Sebastian Junger in Afghanistan, specifically covering the American operations in the Korengal Valley. What had been intended to be a normal assignment found itself growing into a 2 year project, resulting in not only a journalists coverage of the Afghan War, but a multimedia multi-screen project entitled Sleeping Soldiers, a documentary, Resrepo and the book Infidel, along with a fly poster exhibition.

The book Infidel consists of images captured during the time Hetherington and Junger spent embedded within a U.S. Army Unit. Second Platoon, B Company, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, were positioned in a remote outpost in the Korengal Valley. Whilst talking about this body of work Hetherington has been quoted as saying

“It’s all about the men. I didn’t want to pretend this was about the war in Afghanistan. It was a conscious decision. It’s brotherhood. The flow of pictures is to introduce you to the Korengal Valley first and then to

see the men in an intimate way...To get to know them and how they lived. Then you see them in combat in the traditional combat style. Finally, you see them as young men, sleeping.”

The book itself is interspersed with illustrations of the tattoos the soldiers gave each other in the camp. The title Infidel is apparently derived from a tattoo the men adopted as a badge of their comradeship.

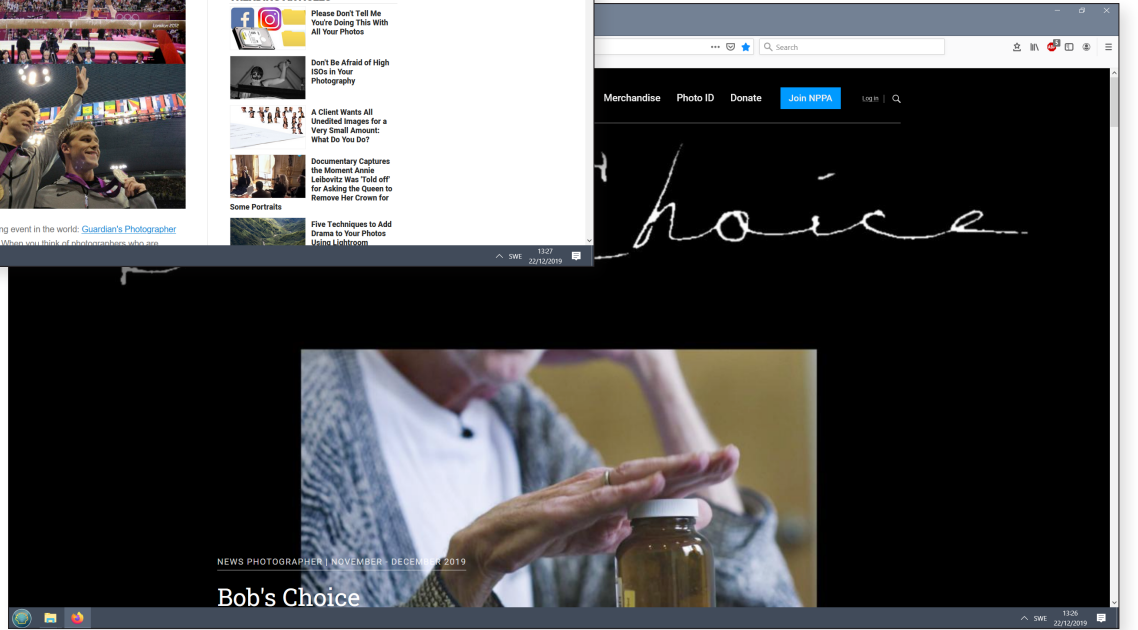
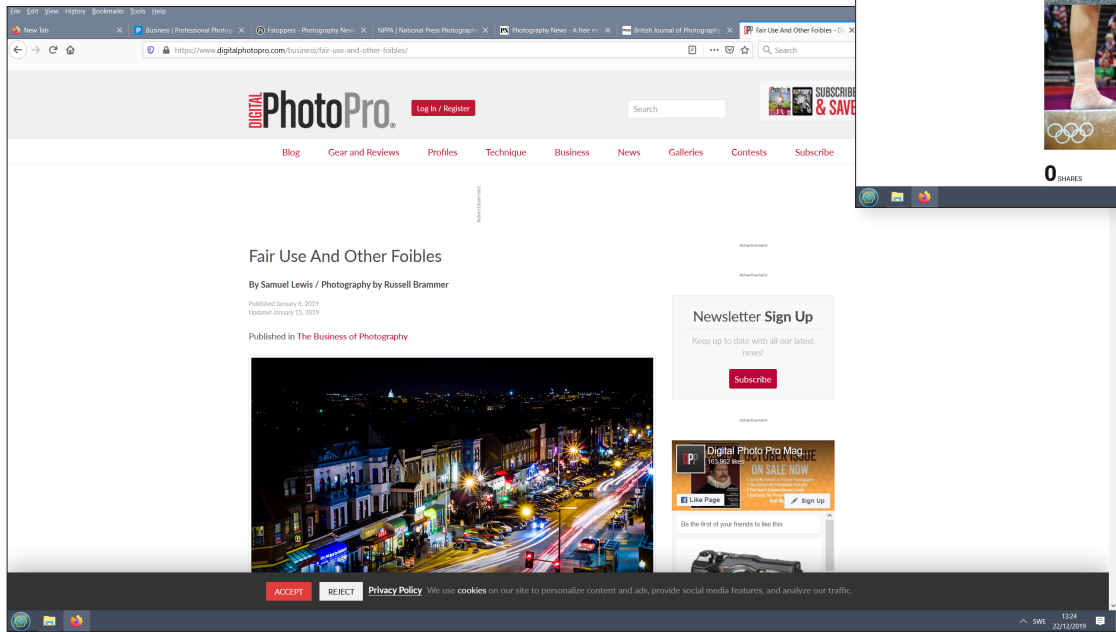
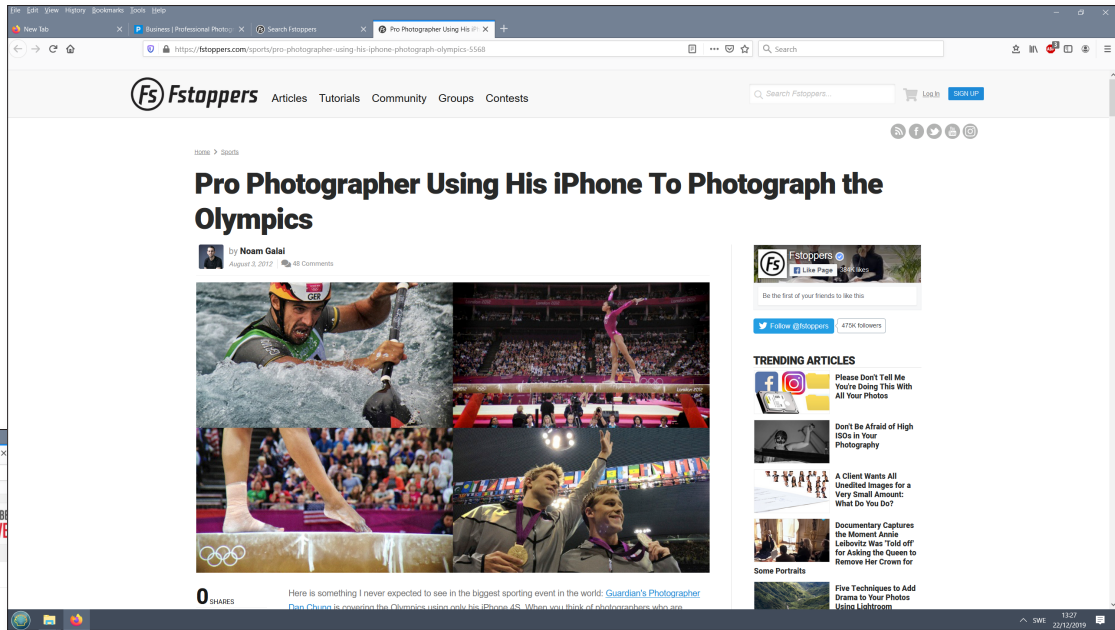
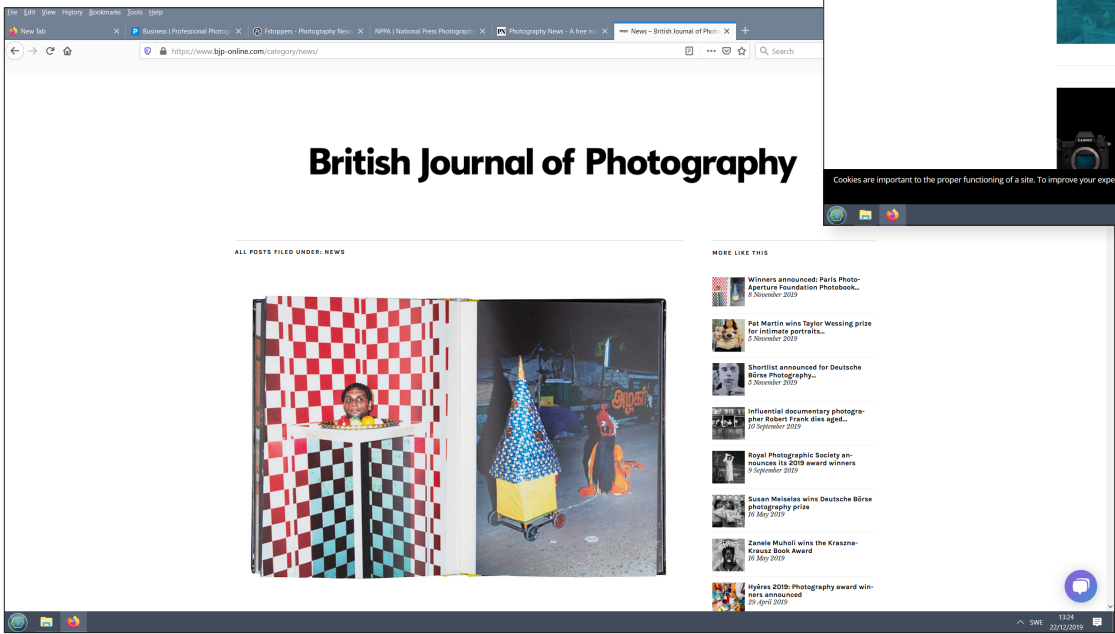
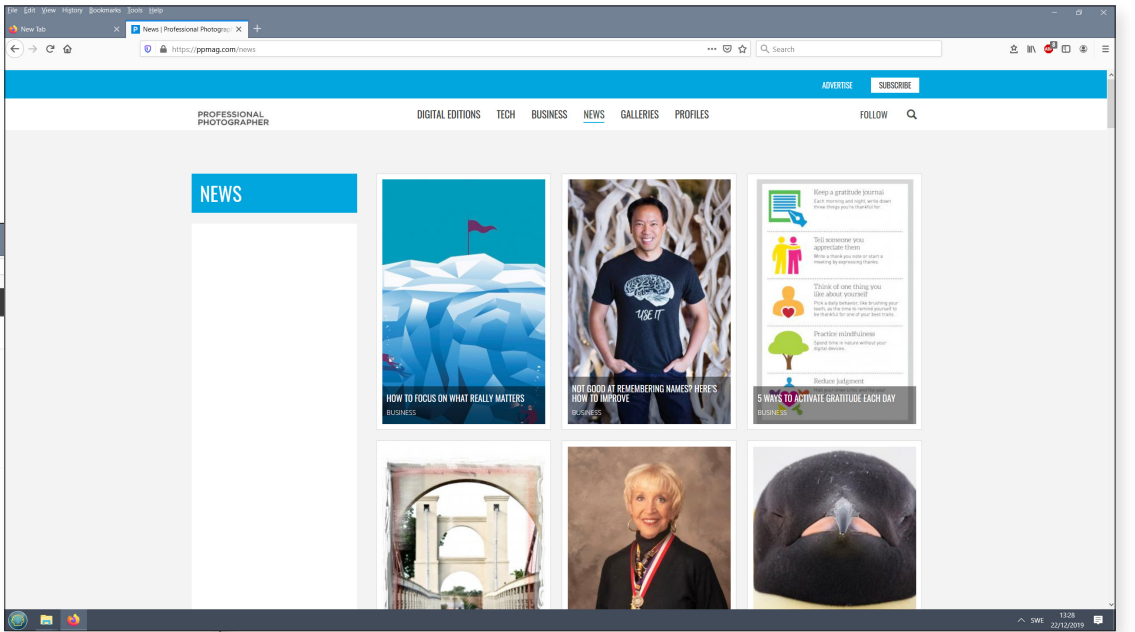
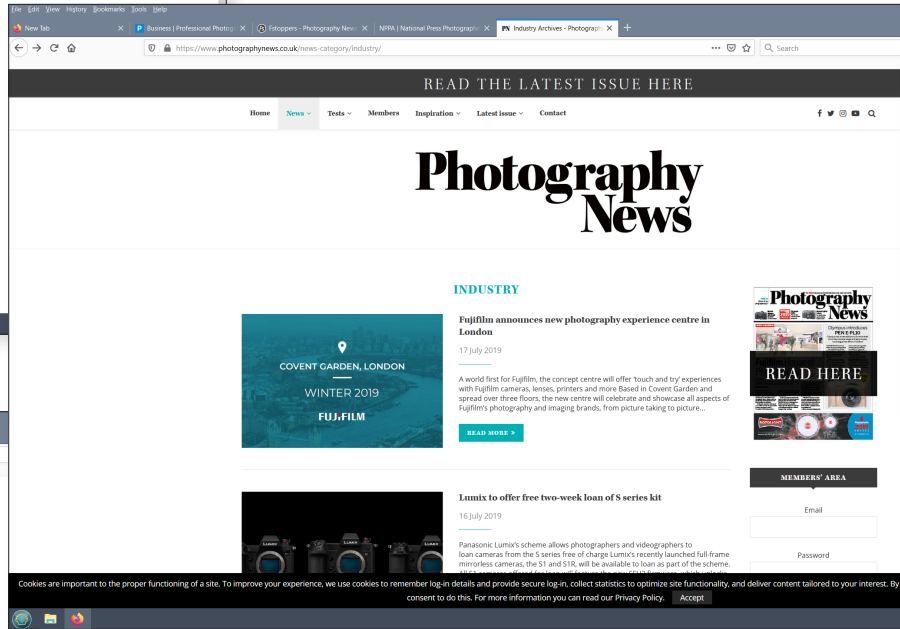
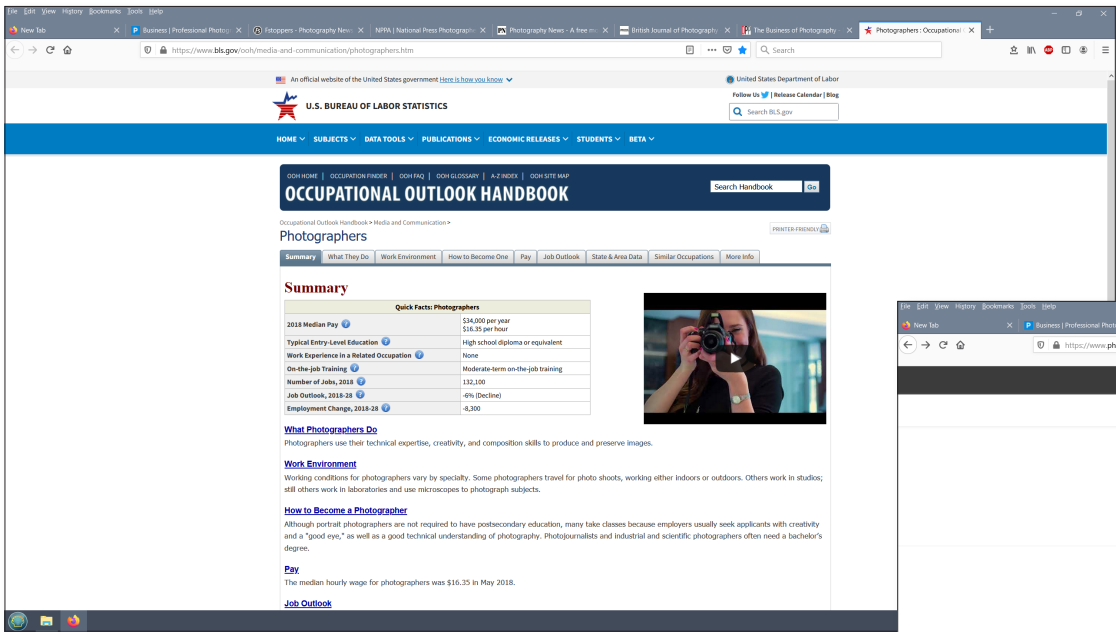
I find the way the book flows to be quite interesting, in that it is not in some senses a traditional war documentary. Whilst it does have some combat imagery, the main focus to my eyes is on the soldiers as young men. Showing them in such a way we almost forget about their role as part of the military machine, and see more the sons, brothers and fathers they may have been at home. The images have a feeling of both camaraderie and vulnerability, especially the series of the soldiers sleeping, which again leads you to view the subjects as normal men. The interviews with members of the platoon within the book give a personal insight into their thoughts and feelings, and work well to re-enforce the feeling that this is

more about vulnerability and love than it is about a war.

The flow of the images create a narrative, almost as if you are being introduced in person. Each time seeing a little more of what is happening, and learning a little more about the people involved. The images themselves are quite striking, not in the way of something like a Peter Lik landscape, but in the way they all appear to have been captured at just the right moment, the composition and lighting adding atmosphere. The images also have a slightly retro feel, almost as if they are paying homage to the images captured during the Vietnam war. It would have been so easy to create a book of images that shows the war in Afghanistan, what Tim Hetherington has created is a book that shows the lives of people involved in that war.

Reference

Hetherington T (2010) Infidel Chris Boot



Assignment 3: Critical Essay – Notes

Approaching the critical essay I found myself heading towards the title of ‘Has the digital revolution created more problems than opportunities for the professional photographer?’ However as I began to research the points I wanted to make I found my self being constantly drawn into another area, ‘Has the digital revolution devalued photography?’ When I say drawn I mean my interest was peaked by a number of articles referencing how photography is become less valued. Both in a financial sense and in the way that people view it.

There are numerous articles about how photography is changing and I wanted to start the essay by pointing out that in essence photography itself does not change, that we, as photographers still do the same things in much the same way, as we always have done.

Searching for relevant stories would involve quite some time spent browsing various news and photography related web sites. It was important to me to show that permanent paid professionals were being replaced in some instances with publicly sourced materials. Starting with nppa.org, the National Press Photographers Association of America I began looking back for articles relating to staff being laid off from newspapers. This lead me in turn to references to the Chicago Sun Times and New York Daily News laying off entire departments of staff photographers. I also searched through the articles on websites such as dpreview.com and fstoppers.com, as these often link to news stories relating to photography elsewhere. There were several results relating to orphan works bills, both in the USA and UK. A wider we search linked to surveys carried out in France in 2010 for the government, and for a digitalisation project carried out in the UK in 2010 relating to the

number of images referenced as orphan works. Whilst these surveys may be slightly old, there is no doubt that their results are representative of today’s society.

I also found a number of interviews with photographers expressing their opinions on how the public and industry viewed photography today. This is useful in showing that whilst we can all see the devaluation apparent in the loss of jobs and lowering of prices, that the public perception of photography is also being altered as well, with both Todd Maisel and Dan Chung expressing the view that to the public as a whole, and some people within industry, that they don’t care what camera is used, or if it was even well photographed as long as it is OK. Obviously what the general viewer thinks is OK, and what a photographer thinks is OK can vary by quite a large amount. This acceptance of mediocre imagery, touched upon by Todd Maisel, is in my view a huge part in the devaluation of photography.

It was important to me to also find reference to practices that in the past would have been unacceptable, for example unfair contract terms in music photography, web site submissions etc. Image grabbing clauses where an artist or company get the sole rights to a photographers work, usually for no recompense, are another indication of a loss of respect for both the art of photography and the photographer. Thankfully these were easy enough to find, with the likes of specific music photographer forums giving lists of artists and bands that are known to have such clauses. Even NBC news listing legal cases against artists using images without permission, because they believe that they have the right to do so, despite having large legal teams and management companies that could

quite easily tell them they do not.

There is also the issue of photography being promoted as easy, this is something that I find occurring more and more regularly, special modes for phones and cameras being designed to replicate photographic techniques, or lighting. These processes are often shown in adverts as being instantaneous, usually with the phrase ‘some sequences have been shortened’ underneath. Companies even go to the length of employing expensive production teams, costing hundreds of thousands of pounds just so they can tag an advert with the phrase shot entirely on xxxxx phone.

How do we change this? Do we as photographers have to become more aggressive in defending our rights as creators? Do we educate and encourage others? Can we even change the direction of how photography is currently viewed? These are questions that I admit I don’t really know the answers to. Standing up for our own rights, and educating and encouraging others can’t hurt in the long run. Even if it allows the stand alone camera to disappear, as long as there are people creating images, there will be those that want to take it more seriously, and these people regardless of the technology used will be the photographers of the future.

I think I have achieved what I set out to, the essay covers the points I wanted to make, and is clear in its intent. The only issue I find my self having is worrying that some of the quotes are a bit long, the problem being that they need to be this long to make sense. There is also the worry that the style of writing may be a little dry and factual and not to some people’s taste, but then that is something beyond my control.

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Assignment 3: Critical Essay

Digital Identity: On 'Digital Natives', Their Advantage
And The Trend To Analogue.

Total Word Count 2710
Quotation Word Count 693
Word Count 2017

‘Digital native’ – A term first used in 1996, was later popularized by Mark Prensky. Prensky’s idea was that there is a distinction between the younger generation, born into a digital world, who he referred to as the ‘digital natives’ and older generations who may have trouble adapting, who he named the ‘digital immigrants’. The third group, ‘digital settlers’, are those who had already adopted the use of digital technology when it first arrived in their homes or workplaces.

“The importance of the distinction is this: As Digital Immigrants learn – like all immigrants, some better than others – to adapt to their environment, they always retain, to some degree, their “accent,” that is, their foot in the past. The “digital immigrant accent” can be seen in such things as turning to the Internet for information second rather than first, or in reading the manual for a program rather than assuming that the program itself will teach us to use it. Today’s older folk were “socialized” differently from their kids, and are now in the process of learning a new language. And a language learned later in life, scientists tell us, goes into a different part of the brain.” (Prensky 2001).

Prensky suggests that the brains of these ‘digital natives’ have physically changed as a result of the digital revolution. Much has been written about the negative effects of the digital revolution on the young – bad spelling and mathematics; difficulty to absorb large amounts of information in one sitting, preferring short bursts, short attention spans, poor social skills due to a life spent communicating via phone or social media etc.

‘Early research has explored the impact of traditional media (e.g., television, movies) on children’s acute fears, which can result in anxieties and related sleep disturbances that are difficult to remedy. More recent research deals with the interactive nature of newer media, especially social media, and their impacts on anxiety and depression. Key topics of inquiry include the following: anxiety and depression associated with technology-based negative social comparison, anxiety resulting from lack of emotion-regulation skills because of substituted digital media use, social anxiety from avoidance of social interaction because of substituted digital media use, anxiety because of worries about being inadequately connected, and anxiety, depression, and suicide as the result of cyberbullying and related behaviour. A growing body of research confirms the relationship between digital media and depression’ (Hoge et al 2017)

Obviously this is a generalisation and many of this younger generation have a perfectly good balance between their online digital life, and the real world of social interaction. Sonia Livingstone and Julian Sefton-Green spent one year with a class of 13 year olds – at school, at home, with friends, and online. In the book ‘The Class: living and learning in the digital age’ the researcher was encouraged by how well they managed numerous digital devices and content and concluded that ‘*I found what teenagers wish for most is control over how they spend their time and with whom – not just to use digital media for its own sake.*’ (Livingstone 2016)

Wendy McMurdo’s 2015 project Classrooms uses both photography and the moving image to explore how using online building games, for example Minecraft, has impacted on the formation of identity in younger children, and how these younger children differentiate between the world of online data, and the physical world. Near her home in Edinburgh, McMurdo photographed a number of Victorian school classrooms, where bookshelves, children’s drawings and desks are overlaid by a number of geometric forms. Hovering gently above the desks, these 3d objects enter the space of the classroom, the new and different shadows they cast on the floor mingle with the old shadows that have always been in the room. In a juxtaposition of animation and still photography, the project hints at the existence of these new and different spaces through which childhood is now experienced. As the result of a commission awarded by Ffotogallery to mark their 30th anniversary, McMurdo’s book ‘The Skater’ (2009) drew inspiration from the painting of ‘Rev Walker Skating on Duddington Loch, 1784’ by Sir Henry Raeburn. Her idea was to explore the way in which sportsmen are used as models for computer generated avatars. *“I wanted to explore the more immersive environment of gaming for teenagers with the emphasis on highly developed role-play and interactions with virtual environments.”* (McMurdo 2009) The project included portraits of the

teenage gamers at play, and a film, 'The Loop' (made in collaboration with film maker Paul Holmes), in which split screens are used to follow a young female gamer as she tries to mirror the movements of a figure skater on another screen.

In 'What Algorithms Want: Imagination in the Age of Computing', reference is made to '*the extended mind*' whereby memories, thoughts, perceptions extend beyond the body to algorithmically mediated objects, databases and networks'. (Finn 2017)

The extended mind thesis (EMT) (Clark and Chalmers 1998) says that the mind does not reside solely in the brain, or even the body. It extends into the physical world. The EMT proposes that as part of a cognitive process, some physical objects, become an extension of the mind. It suggests that these objects generally are used in the storage of information – diaries, books. computers etc.

This would suggest that the 'digital native', whilst growing up, connects both the devices and platforms they use with the cognitive processes that the previous generations may have connected with a book or a pen for example. This could imply that the 'digital native' has the advantage when it comes to living in the modern world, that this lifetime exposure to digital systems is somehow easier to manage than learning things for the first time at an older age. As Don Capscott (a specialist in the role of technology in business) said when referring to 'digital immigrants' in his book 'Grown Up Digital' "*Sure, you're as cyber-sophisticated as the next person – you shop online, use Wikipedia, and do the BlackBerry prayer throughout the day. But young people have a natural affinity for technology that seems uncanny. They instinctively turn first to the net to communicate, understand, learn, find and do many things.*" (Capscott 2008)

It is possible that the 'Net Generation' (as Tapscott describes them) may be more technology friendly than the Generation X's or Baby Boomers that came before them, but this doesn't mean they all prefer living in the digital world, it also doesn't mean that older users are incapable of using technology to improve or simplify their lifestyles the exact same way the 'digital native' does. It may be that a larger percentage of the younger generation will embrace new technology first compared to the older generation, but to claim that just because there is a division of generations one prefers to embrace technology whilst the other uses it if and only when they have to, is over simplifying matters. Neither learning or technology have anything to do with the generational divide. Whilst there may be clear differences between older people and younger in their actual use of technology, there is no evidence of a clear break between the two separate populations in their ability to use technology.

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In 2008 Sue Bennett, Karl Maton and Lisa Kervin published "The digital natives' debate: a critical review of the evidence" in the British Journal of Educational Technology. Within this research they set out to disprove the claim that the younger generation, or 'digital natives' "*are said to have been immersed in technology all their lives, imbuing them with sophisticated technical skills and learning preferences for which traditional education is unprepared.*" (Bennett et al 2008)

Their conclusion being that even though surrounded by technology from an early age, there is no uniform gain in learning or advantage gained.

'While technology is embedded in their lives, young people's use and skills are not uniform. There is no evidence of widespread and universal disaffection, or of a distinctly different learning style the like of which has never been seen before. We may live in a highly technologised world, but it is conceivable that it has become so through evolution, rather than revolution' (Bennett et al 2008)

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we collect experience, which itself can change how we learn in the future.

It is also useful to note that tastes and styles will change. Just because we live in a digital world, it does not mean that all digital trends can remain at the forefront. Physical books, rather than e-readers, and vinyl records instead of CD's or mp3's, are both rising in popularity again, despite the fact, for the digital native at least, these things should both be obsolete.

In The Guardian (2 Feb 2017) Simon Jenkins wrote an article noting that sales of the old-fashioned vinyl record had grown to a 25 year high. Current 2021 data showing that sales of vinyl LPs in the UK were up 16.1% year-on-year in the first three months of 2021 to passing one million units (1,080,653), according to Official Charts Company data. Printed books are recovering sales from e-readers.

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Jenkins suggested in 2017 that we were heading for the 'post-digital', employing new technology as a servant and not as a master. Whether or not this is the case is yet to be seen, with Covid-19 all but paralysing the world for 2 years, digital services have enjoyed massive growths. Netflix for example gaining 37 million subscribers in 2020. Social media platforms have more subscribers than ever, around 4 billion people, according to www.statista.com. (Other data reporting sites show figures roughly the same.) Being as we have relied so heavily on the internet recently, for everything from entertainment, through social interactions and even for grocery shopping, the question could be asked if we are now in fact more digital citizens than ever? Could the growth in vinyl LP sales and physical books be nothing more than a wave of nostalgia for physical things?

In the photographic world there has been a steady increase in the use of analogue cameras and film. A study by the film and paper manufacturers Ilford, in 2018, shows that 57% of users were either first time film users, or returning to film from digital. 90.7% of users reporting to use 35mm film, and 77.6% using medium format 120 film. Following in the footsteps of vinyl sales, instant photography has made a surprising comeback in recent years. Fujifilm, the leaders in instant film technology since the demise of Polaroid, report sales of their Instax cameras rising from 100,000 units in 2004, up to 3.5 million sales in 2019. Even disposable cameras are rising in popularity. Alex Yi, the owner of 35m Pro Photo Lab in Sherman Oaks, noticed a growth in disposable camera processing orders around three years ago. In 2017, 35m processed photos from 15 to 20 disposable cameras per week. This has now risen to around 200 per week.

So what has caused this rise in the use of analogue technology by the 'digital native'? Celebrities and social media influencers are often viewed as standing above the masses, something to be aspired to. David Beckham is often seen with his Leica camera, model Gigi Hadid was seen at the Paris fashion show in 2019, with a disposable camera in hand. David Dobrik, a YouTuber who has

more than 13 million subscribers, created an Instagram account in 2019, 'davidsdisposables'. Mostly containing images of his social circle, popular young YouTubers and famous Instagram models, all taken with disposable cameras. A certain level of trendiness will always help fuel sales amongst like minded fans and followers.

On his blog, Mark Maio, of KEH cameras, questioned a number of millennial analogue users as to why they had switched to film. The replies included the fact that high end, but used analogue equipment is much cheaper than digital equivalents, learning to use film cameras is a problem solving experience, and that film allows the user to concentrate on the creative experience.

'It's the need for authenticity that brings us back to film photography.' (Grimbert 2019)
Photographer Tom Grimbert suggests that one of the reasons for the millennials' change in formats is due to wanting something tangible and real and that *'Film photography is like a therapy in this ultra modern world where we decide to put aside all the best technologies in order to focus on the moment and the stories.'* (Grimbert 2019)

This change, combined with the resurgence of print and vinyl sales could be nostalgia led, equally it could be part of an increasing trend to slow down our lives. To take joy in a moment, and focus more on the things that really matter in life. The instant gratification of the high speed internet replaced by something with a more cosy or homely feel. This is led, in part by the younger generations. In 2019 in France, 42% of vinyl sales were to the under 30s, in the USA under 35's took the same 42% of total sales.(source www.statista.com), in the UK in 2016 the figure was 45% being sold to the under 34's. If, as Prensky suggests, the 'digital native' has such a huge advantage living in the modern world, why are so many choosing to give up these advantages and take to using, what could be considered to be, antique technologies? The answer is they are not, there is no great advantage. It is simply because they want to.

When I was young not everyone had a telephone in their house, or even a toilet, and television was nearly always in black and white. Entertainment and news came from one of three TV channels, newspapers or the radio. The first computer I saw in school took up an entire room, and by the time I left school, home computers were still a very rare thing. I am a 'digital settler', being there when the digital revolution took off, I had already welcomed computers – having worked my way up from a Sinclair zx80 to the heights of an IBM 80286 long before the internet, as we know it, arrived. I truly believe the way we learn to use technology is more about the way people relate to it and approach it, rather than some innate natural ability to understand it. I.e. some people are scared or flustered by it, and never feel comfortable, others just see a tool to be used. For the digital native, it is just a thing. A comfortable thing that has always been there.

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Assignment 3: Tutor Report



Formative feedback

| | | | |
|------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------|
| Student name | Sean Sweeney | Student number | 510149 |
| Course/Unit | DIC | Assignment number | 3 |
| Type of tutorial | Written | | |

Overall Comments

Please see my marked-up copy of your essay for the bulk of the feedback. Below are some standout points that sit aside from the main paper.

Feedback on assignment

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Quality of Outcome, Demonstration of Creativity

- The bad news is that, in its current form, the paper is pretty much unreadable. I apologise for the bluntness but it won't help you at this stage if I sugar coat it.
- That said, I got to about half way before losing your thread and you have the material here to write a paper, so treat this as the first draft and focus on building a cohesive paper that develops your thesis using existing sources.
- I should state that this is by no means unusual at this stage and is why there are writing assignments now at levels 1 and 2. Historically, students wouldn't have had to write formally until level 3 and then the pressure was high if the skills weren't yet there. I trust you will take this feedback as intended and that is to give you a little push so that you will be able to fully apply yourself to the thesis at level 3.
- A paper usually consists of three parts – The Introduction, in which you state what your argument will be. The middle or body of the text in which you make that argument and the conclusion, in which you answer to the question you set out to answer.

- Normally a reader will read the introduction and conclusion first to see how you have bookended your argument and, from this, have a pretty good idea of what the paper is about and what they hope to see interrogated.
- In this paper you are Investigating the apparent devaluation of photography caused by the rise of digital photography. This is a massive topic, but if you pick very tight case studies you might pull it off.
- In the introduction set out how you will structure the argument, which case studies you will draw upon and why the reader should pay attention. In the conclusion, tell the reader the answer to your question and, briefly, how you arrived there. The body contains the 'getting there' bit.
- I would strongly recommend getting hold of a style guide such as Cite Them Right (I have an older one but this is the title I mean <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/Cite-Them-Right-Essential-Referencing/dp/1352005131>)
- Make sure you fully read the assignment brief.
- The primary place this shows as an issue is on your formatting of the paper, which doesn't follow the guidelines laid out in the brief (especially with regard to the formatting of the paper and the citation method used).
- You need to make your argument from the outset. A good paper states in the introduction what it will argue, then body makes the argument with supporting citations, and then you say what you have shown in the conclusion.

Coursework

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Demonstration of Creativity

The course work looks to be progressing along the lines it should so theres not much to add here.

Research

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

One thing I would like to highlight is where you include pages of found images as part of your research (see p.34), it would be worth including some analysis of the images used. It wouldn't hurt to have more of your own independent analysis on photographers across the log as a whole as this demonstrates your wider interests in photography and their impact on your current practice.

Learning Log

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

A word of caution – double check the current regulations on how a learning log is presented at assessment. I'm not 100% sure so I'll leave it to you to confirm that a pdf will be fine and it doesn't need to be a blog. If it does need to be a blog, I'm pretty sure it will be straightforward enough to upload your pdf to a server so all won't be lost, as it looks great and is obviously a format you are enjoying.

Suggested reading/viewing

Context

See above for the link to the style guide I recommend plus read the UCA style guide as a first port of call.

In your discussion on Dan Chung and the iphone, it would be worth looking at DJ Clark’s work on ‘hone and Drone’. Clark is a long term colleague of Chung’s and uses a smart phone for a lot of his current work across main stream press.
<http://djclark.com/>

Pointers for the assessment

Concentrate on draft 2. This should be a much more refined piece of writing that follows the advice given above. Draft 3 will be after you proof read or have someone you trust proof read and correct any small issues of grammar or context. Draft 3 is then what you submit for assessment and summative feedback.

Please inform me of how you would like your feedback for the next assignment: written or video/audio.

| Strengths | Areas for development |
|---|--|
| Interesting idea with lots of scope of research | Many of the sources were somewhat outdated (2008 was 12 years ago now, a lifetime in terms of digital dissemination of images. Twitter had only just been launched...) |
| Some interesting ideas are beginning to show but these will need research to tie to existing studies. | You need to research how to construct an academic essay. This is a specific skill and style of writing. The sooner you get a handle on it the easier your life will be at level 3. |
| | Refer to a style guide for how to reference your sources correctly |
| | |

| | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Tutor name | David Wyatt |
| Date | 22/1/2020 |
| Next assignment due | 22/2/2020. |

Assignment 3:
Response to Tutor Comments

It is somewhat disappointing to read David’s re-
sponse to my essay, however I completely under-
stand his points and a heavy rewrite and edit will
be required. I think one of my main issues was
getting stuck in writing. Having not had to write
a formal essay for over 30 years the constant
desire to go back and change what I had written
only served to create something that other people
may find difficult to follow. I know from my own
experience that my thought processes can jump
around a bit, and obviously this doesn’t translate
well when you are trying to write an essay, espe-
cially a critical essay with points to illustrate.
The issues with quotations have been easily
fixed, my own fault for not saving over copies as
I was writing, which left in the incorrect quoting
system in place. The ending of the essay will need
to be completely rewritten, as I have strayed too
far from the point I was intending to make and
more into a discussion on the future of photogra-
phy. At least this can all be put down to a valuable
learning experience, and serve as a reminder for
the next essay that needs to be written.

Sean Sweeney
510149
Ph5 D.I.C.
Assignment 3: Critical Essay

Digital Identity: On 'Digital Natives', Their Advantage
And The Trend To Analogue.

Total Word Count 2710
Quotation Word Count 693
Word Count 2017

‘Digital native’ – A term first used in 1996, was later popularized by Mark Prensky. Prensky’s idea was that there is a distinction between the younger generation, born into a digital world, who he referred to as the ‘digital natives’ and older generations who may have trouble adapting, who he named the ‘digital immigrants’. The third group, ‘digital settlers’, are those who had already adopted the use of digital technology when it first arrived in their homes or workplaces.

“The importance of the distinction is this: As Digital Immigrants learn – like all immigrants, some better than others – to adapt to their environment, they always retain, to some degree, their “accent,” that is, their foot in the past. The “digital immigrant accent” can be seen in such things as turning to the Internet for information second rather than first, or in reading the manual for a program rather than assuming that the program itself will teach us to use it. Today’s older folk were “socialized” differently from their kids, and are now in the process of learning a new language. And a language learned later in life, scientists tell us, goes into a different part of the brain.” (Prensky 2001).

Prensky suggests that the brains of these ‘digital natives’ have physically changed as a result of the digital revolution. Much has been written about the negative effects of the digital revolution on the young – bad spelling and mathematics; difficulty to absorb large amounts of information in one sitting, preferring short bursts, short attention spans, poor social skills due to a life spent communicating via phone or social media etc.

‘Early research has explored the impact of traditional media (e.g., television, movies) on children’s acute fears, which can result in anxieties and related sleep disturbances that are difficult to remedy. More recent research deals with the interactive nature of newer media, especially social media, and their impacts on anxiety and depression. Key topics of inquiry include the following: anxiety and depression associated with technology-based negative social comparison, anxiety resulting from lack of emotion-regulation skills because of substituted digital media use, social anxiety from avoidance of social interaction because of substituted digital media use, anxiety because of worries about being inadequately connected, and anxiety, depression, and suicide as the result of cyberbullying and related behaviour. A growing body of research confirms the relationship between digital media and depression’ (Hoge et al 2017)

Obviously this is a generalisation and many of this younger generation have a perfectly good balance between their online digital life, and the real world of social interaction. Sonia Livingstone and Julian Sefton-Green spent one year with a class of 13 year olds – at school, at home, with friends, and online. In the book ‘The Class: living and learning in the digital age’ the researcher was encouraged by how well they managed numerous digital devices and content and concluded that ‘*I found what teenagers wish for most is control over how they spend their time and with whom – not just to use digital media for its own sake.*’ (Livingstone 2016)

Wendy McMurdo’s 2015 project Classrooms uses both photography and the moving image to explore how using online building games, for example Minecraft, has impacted on the formation of identity in younger children, and how these younger children differentiate between the world of online data, and the physical world. Near her home in Edinburgh, McMurdo photographed a number of Victorian school classrooms, where bookshelves, children’s drawings and desks are overlaid by a number of geometric forms. Hovering gently above the desks , these 3d objects enter the space of the classroom, the new and different shadows they cast on the floor mingle with the old shadows that have always been in the room. In a juxtaposition of animation and still photography, the project hints at the existence of these new and different spaces through which childhood is now experienced. As the result of a commission awarded by Ffotogallery to mark their 30th anniversary, McMurdo’s book ‘The Skater’ (2009) drew inspiration from the painting of ‘Rev Walker Skating on Duddington Loch, 1784’ by Sir Henry Raeburn. Her idea was to explore the way in which sportsmen are used as models for computer generated avatars. *“I wanted to explore the more immersive environment of gaming for teenagers with the emphasis on highly developed role-play and interactions with virtual environments.”* (McMurdo 2009) The project included portraits of the

teenage gamers at play, and a film, 'The Loop' (made in collaboration with film maker Paul Holmes), in which split screens are used to follow a young female gamer as she tries to mirror the movements of a figure skater on another screen.

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Their conclusion being that even though surrounded by technology from an early age, there is no uniform gain in learning or advantage gained.

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Jenkins suggested in 2017 that we were heading for the 'post-digital', employing new technology as a servant and not as a master. Whether or not this is the case is yet to be seen, with Covid-19 all but paralysing the world for 2 years, digital services have enjoyed massive growths. Netflix for example gaining 37 million subscribers in 2020. Social media platforms have more subscribers than ever, around 4 billion people, according to www.statista.com. (Other data reporting sites show figures roughly the same.) Being as we have relied so heavily on the internet recently, for everything from entertainment, through social interactions and even for grocery shopping, the question could be asked if we are now in fact more digital citizens than ever? Could the growth in vinyl LP sales and physical books be nothing more than a wave of nostalgia for physical things?

In the photographic world there has been a steady increase in the use of analogue cameras and film. A study by the film and paper manufacturers Ilford, in 2018, shows that 57% of users were either first time film users, or returning to film from digital. 90.7% of users reporting to use 35mm film, and 77.6% using medium format 120 film. Following in the footsteps of vinyl sales, instant photography has made a surprising comeback in recent years. Fujifilm, the leaders in instant film technology since the demise of Polaroid, report sales of their Instax cameras rising from 100,000 units in 2004, up to 3.5 million sales in 2019. Even disposable cameras are rising in popularity. Alex Yi, the owner of 35m Pro Photo Lab in Sherman Oaks, noticed a growth in disposable camera processing orders around three years ago. In 2017, 35m processed photos from 15 to 20 disposable cameras per week. This has now risen to around 200 per week.

So what has caused this rise in the use of analogue technology by the 'digital native'? Celebrities and social media influencers are often viewed as standing above the masses, something to be aspired to. David Beckham is often seen with his Leica camera, model Gigi Hadid was seen at the Paris fashion show in 2019, with a disposable camera in hand. David Dobrik, a YouTuber who has

more than 13 million subscribers, created an Instagram account in 2019, 'davidsdisposables'. Mostly containing images of his social circle, popular young YouTubers and famous Instagram models, all taken with disposable cameras. A certain level of trendiness will always help fuel sales amongst like minded fans and followers.

On his blog, Mark Maio, of KEH cameras, questioned a number of millennial analogue users as to why they had switched to film. The replies included the fact that high end, but used analogue equipment is much cheaper than digital equivalents, learning to use film cameras is a problem solving experience, and that film allows the user to concentrate on the creative experience.

'It's the need for authenticity that brings us back to film photography.' (Grimbert 2019)
Photographer Tom Grimbert suggests that one of the reasons for the millennials' change in formats is due to wanting something tangible and real and that *'Film photography is like a therapy in this ultra modern world where we decide to put aside all the best technologies in order to focus on the moment and the stories.'* (Grimbert 2019)

This change, combined with the resurgence of print and vinyl sales could be nostalgia led, equally it could be part of an increasing trend to slow down our lives. To take joy in a moment, and focus more on the things that really matter in life. The instant gratification of the high speed internet replaced by something with a more cosy or homely feel. This is led, in part by the younger generations. In 2019 in France, 42% of vinyl sales were to the under 30s, in the USA under 35's took the same 42% of total sales.(source www.statista.com), in the UK in 2016 the figure was 45% being sold to the under 34's. If, as Prensky suggests, the 'digital native' has such a huge advantage living in the modern world, why are so many choosing to give up these advantages and take to using, what could be considered to be, antique technologies? The answer is they are not, there is no great advantage. It is simply because they want to.

When I was young not everyone had a telephone in their house, or even a toilet, and television was nearly always in black and white. Entertainment and news came from one of three TV channels, newspapers or the radio. The first computer I saw in school took up an entire room, and by the time I left school, home computers were still a very rare thing. I am a 'digital settler', being there when the digital revolution took off, I had already welcomed computers – having worked my way up from a Sinclair zx80 to the heights of an IBM 80286 long before the internet, as we know it, arrived. I truly believe the way we learn to use technology is more about the way people relate to it and approach it, rather than some innate natural ability to understand it. I.e. some people are scared or flustered by it, and never feel comfortable, others just see a tool to be used. For the digital native, it is just a thing. A comfortable thing that has always been there.

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Thoughts and reflections on Assignment 3: A critical essay

Having read through David's comments on the original essay, something stuck in my mind. The comment he made regarding the concept of the essay being a subject perhaps too big for a short essay. After rewriting the essay I decided that it wasn't what I wanted it to be and chose to change direction completely. Having also reworked assignments 4 and 5, I had found the subjects around digital identity quite interesting, and decided to focus on this as the essay subject, looking at the alleged advantages the digital generation has in regards to technology use.

Whilst planning the rewrite I was fortunate enough to spend time with a group of friends that work in a museum dedicated to social history, and some that work for a gallery. During a discussion on photography and art, related more to what people will display in their homes, I found it interesting the younger members of the group all had a preference for analogue photography, something which tied into the theme of my essay as a whole. This discussion was of great help in formulating the idea behind my essay.

I am much happier with the results of the rewritten essay, whilst not a perfect example of an academic text, it is much better than the original version. There is a slight side step into the relationship of the 'digital generation'

and analogue technology, but over all I think it is more in line with what is required than my original essay, which had a tendency to jump between several points. The experience of working through the landscape module before I came back to looking at the essay has also allowed me to get more used to referencing and bibliography lists, here I think they are much better than the original. As to the referencing, some of the quotes come from papers written for PHD level sociology, or psychology studies. Whilst I found the studies themselves very interesting, they could be at times quite difficult to read and understand. This is obviously down to the simple fact I am not PHD level sociology or psychology student

Overall I think the essay is a huge improvement on what came before it. It is definitely easier to read, it has more of a flow regarding the discussion of the subject, and it has an actual conclusion at the end. The fact that it also has more science based references as opposed to anecdotal references also makes me feel a little more comfortable in some of the points raised. I am aware that I will need to improve my academic writing style for the next level of modules, but as it stands I am happy with the improvements I have seen in my own writing with this version of my assignment 3 essay.

1 The Digital Self

The Digital Self, False or Alternative Online Identities

‘Participants of social networks experience a temptation to build multiple profiles/identities which are homomorphous (sometimes isomorphic, often contradictory) to their real-life identities. While this experience may be viewed as a masquerade, it’s hard to deny psychological grounds of possessing multiple online identities ‘ (Evdokimenko et al 2019)

The creation of a false identity online can serve many purposes. The most obvious being hiding your real identity. This can be for a number of reasons, some people don’t like to give out any details concerning their real lives and so will create something purely for the sake of self security. In my experience people that do this have done so in order that they may interact with others, be it in a forum or discussion environment, or in a gaming setting, without the worry of their own personal life and details being disclosed. From my viewpoint this is a relatively harmless way of creating a false or alternative identity, as it generally only exists to protect the user.

More worrying are the identities created or assumed that seem to exist often on forums dedicated to an interest or hobby. These tend to be more aggressive in nature, exaggerating their own value, pushing their own viewpoints and attacking anyone who dares to disagree. I find it hard to understand why anyone would wish to act in this way, trying to seem richer or more important than you really are, being confrontational just for the sake of it. It often seems to be the behaviour of someone trying to be the stereotypical Alpha male, a suggestion often backed up when they describe themselves as “a powerfully built company director”. On forums I use regularly people like this are often

found in threads where someone else is struggling or suffering, usually telling them to work harder or man up. It is interesting of course that when they could actually be giving good advice on how to solve a problem, they would rather belittle someone else. Is the purpose of their assumed personality purely to make them feel better about themselves? Does it increase their own self worth by impressing strangers on the internet with stories of how successful they are? Or is it more likely they just like to feel that by fooling everybody they are somehow superior? It is true of course that generally they don’t fool anywhere near as many people as they would like to think they do.

Social media platforms also seem to support an increasing number of alternate identities. These seem to range from the harmless, where someone is just hiding their real identity, through to the criminal where false identities are used to facilitate elaborate scams. By far the most common seem to be identities created to promote, or devalue a particular product, person, concept etc. From the thousands of fake twitter accounts praising President Trump, to the fake accounts giving reviews on items and services, the alternate or fake identity has become a powerful tool which can be used to influence both the consumer and the world, and not always in the best way.

The other type of assumed identity I regularly encounter is in online gaming. Here however it tends to be people more interested in role playing a character within the game. Whilst I don’t tend to go so far as that, I can understand the escapism aspect of being someone and something that you aren’t in a world where you can be the hero or the villain with no real consequence. There will be the odd person here and there that are just rude or unpleasant for the sake of it, behaving much in the same way as the forum members I mentioned previously,

probably for very similar reasons. On the whole however, assumed identities in online gaming are part of the game, they are harmless and create immersion, and entertain hundreds of thousands of people.

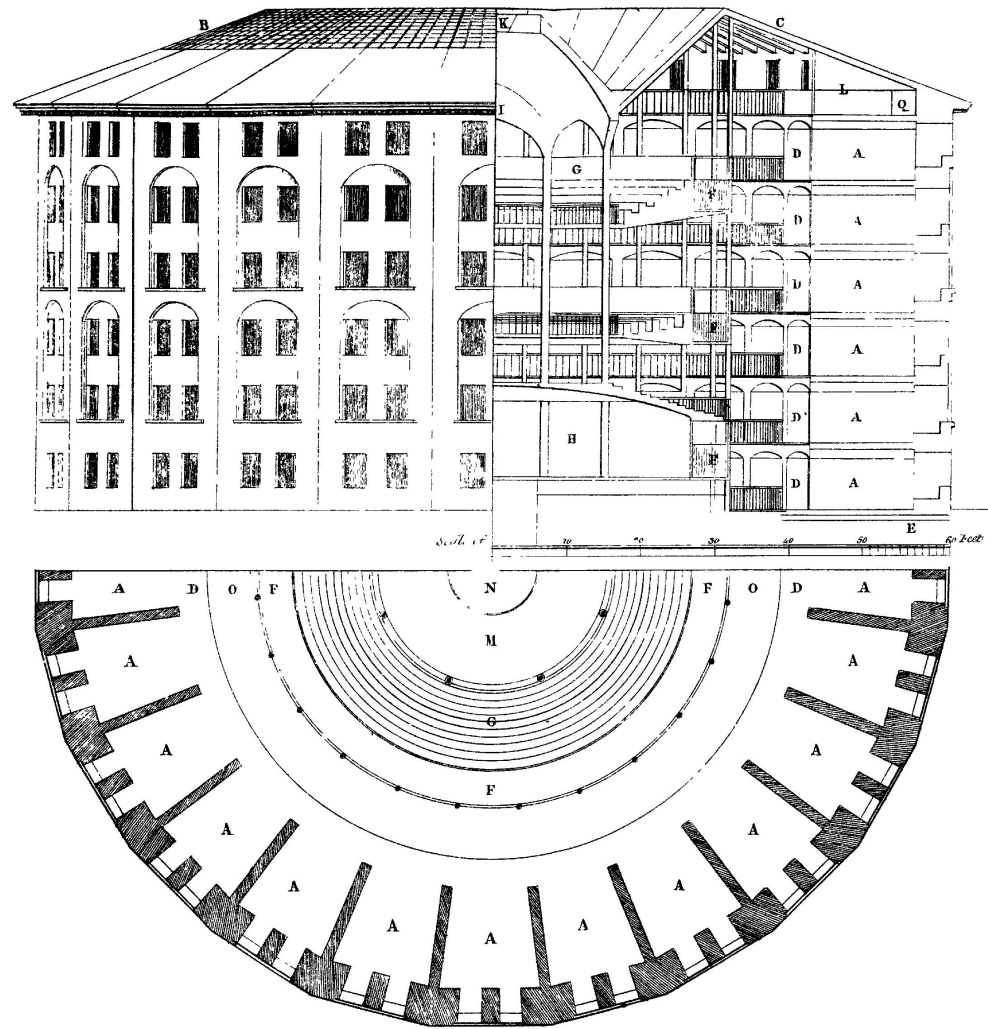
The most worrying and damaging type of assumed identities tend to be reserved for people with some kind of criminal intent. Whether it be to scam people for money or to groom minors in such a way as they feel safe enough to want to meet the person. The people that do this tend to be very convincing, though there is always something that gives them away. Often this give away is easily noticed by other people, however the person being targeted is often so invested in the online relationship by then that they fail to notice. Due to the problems and dangers caused by these types of assumed identities there are large amounts of police resources devoted to fighting cybercrimes, banks and financial institutions also have advice services devoted to avoiding online scams.

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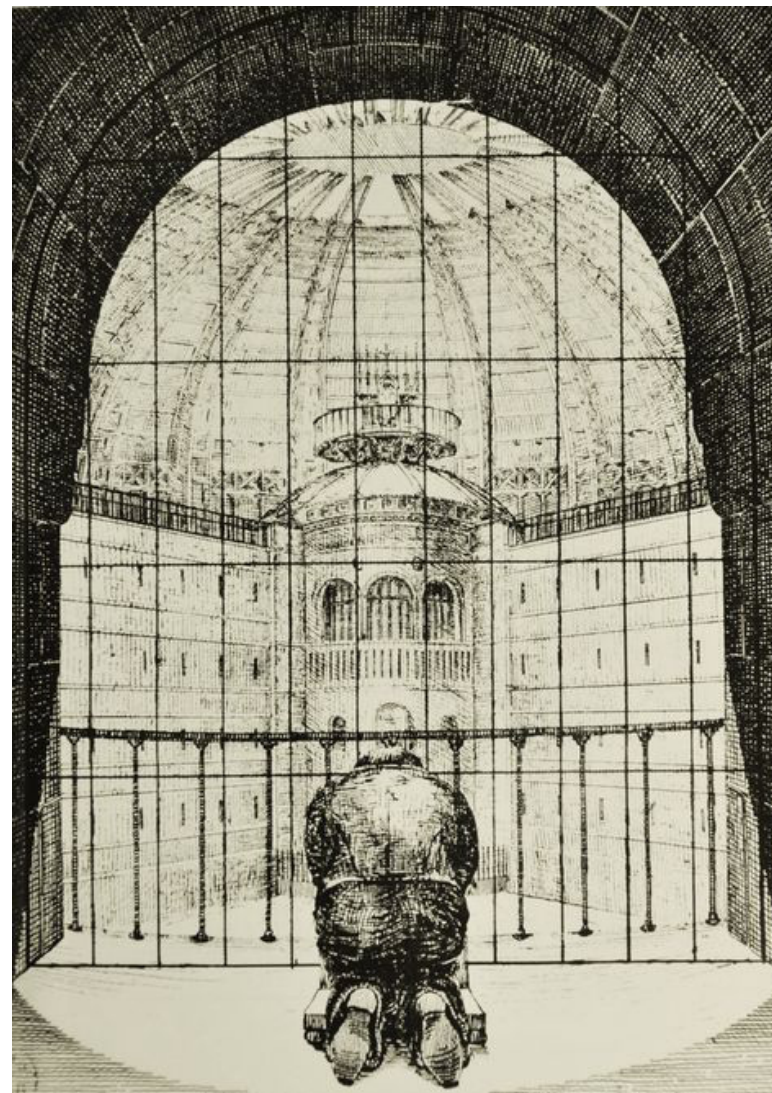
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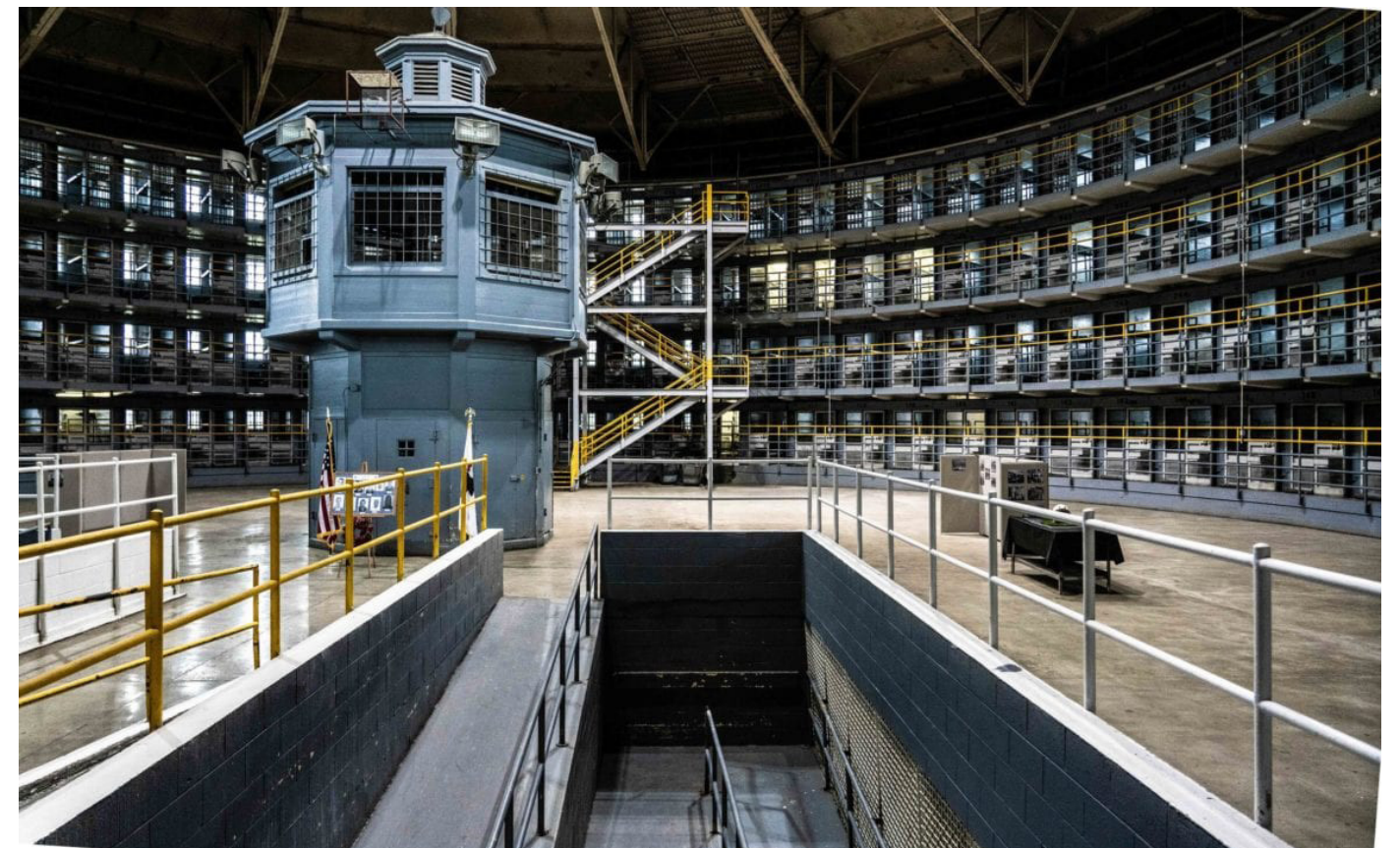
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1 Bentham's Panopticon



2 Guy Dubord – Panopticon Foucault



3 Stateville Correctional Center

2 The Gaze in the Digital Age

The fundamental point within Foucault's essay is to implement Jeremy Bentham's penitentiary 'Panopticon'. A system whereby the incarcerated can be monitored and controlled at all times. The manner in which the penitentiary is constructed allows one person to view the entire facility, while the inmates are never sure when they are actually being watched. One advantage of this system is the ability to house large numbers of people without them ever coming in contact with their fellow detainees. Another advantage being that fewer people are required to monitor what is not only a large area, but also a large population.

"Hence the major effect of the Panopticon: to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary; that this architectural apparatus should be a machine for creating and sustaining a power relation independent of the person who exercises it; in short, that the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers."

Foucault (1975)

Foucault suggests that by utilising such a system it would lead to a position where a society self-regulates their own behaviour, therefore ensuring the automatic functioning of power over the people.

In our contemporary, digital society, an essay written over 40 years ago still holds relevance. We are constantly monitored by CCTV surveillance. Whilst this physical surveillance is obvious in its intrusion, modern digital surveillance is considerably more covert. We have little knowledge of who is monitoring us, following and collecting our digital footprints, and where does this mountain of data go? How are we to be protected from the increasing ability of our information being sold or used to influence not only ourselves but others? Does knowing we are being watched really make us more likely to work for the greater good and less likely to commit crimes? Or is the fact that 'Big Brother Is Watching You' just something we accept and carry on as normal?

Awareness of the collection and use of data by third parties has increased over the past few years, but people seem to quite readily post things to the internet that they may regret at a later time. Of course it is not only commercial companies collecting this data, but governments as well. Various successive legislations have increased the ability

of the intelligence services and the police force to access data, which service providers must now store by law, for a period of 12 months. Proposals have also been put forward which will involve every journey being tracked by GPS devices in cars, pay as you go road pricing for example. In many ways we live in a modern invisible panopticon, our actions and decisions open to be viewed by not only our government, but commercial entities, both using this data in anyway they see fit. Sometimes you have to wonder if Orwell's 1984 is getting closer to being reality.

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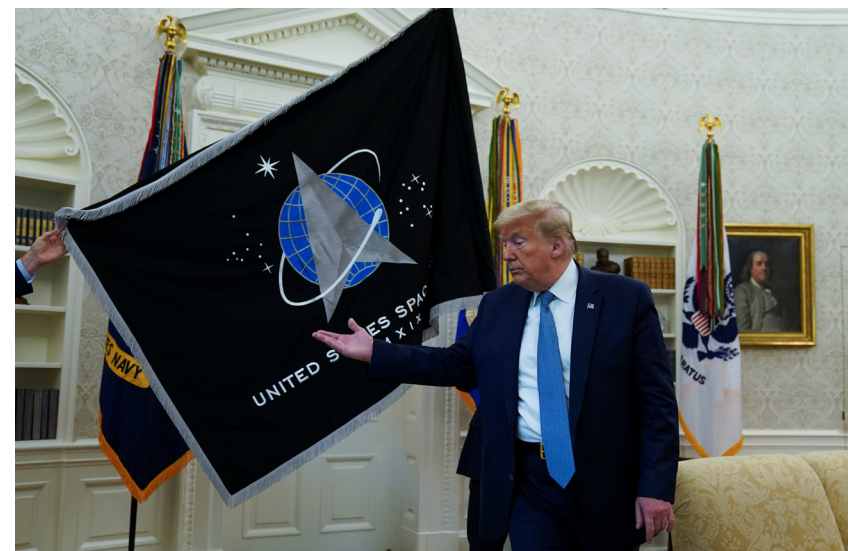
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Illustrations:

1 Bentham's Panopticon <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panopticon#/media/File:Panopticon.jpg>

2 Illustration du Panoptique dans Surveiller et Punir de Michel Foucault – 1975

3 Stateville Correctional Center <https://will.illinois.edu/news/story/illinois-issues-opening-minds-behind-bars>



3 Similar but Different: Memes, Cloning and Replication

With such a huge number of memes available to choose from I quickly decided to use two of the earliest I could remember, “I can has cheeseburger” and “All of your base are belong to us”.

“*I can has cheeseburger*” was created in 2007 by Eric Nakagawa and his friend Kari Unebasami. It was one of the first memes to use an animal based image macro with lolspeak text and perhaps one of the first profitable internet memes. As to its purpose, it seems to exist entirely to be cute.

“*All of your base are belong to us*” comes from the opening cutscene of the 1992 European release of the 1989 Sega Mega Drive/ Genesis game Zero Wing. A game famously badly translated and subtitled. The meme itself evolved from a GIF animation depicting the opening scenes of the game, accompanied by electronic techno music. In November 2000 Jeffrey Ray Roberts of the the Laziest Men on Mars band, created a techno dance track, “Invasion of the Gabber Robots”, which remixed

some of Tatsuya Uemura’s Zero Wing game music with the phrase “All your base are belong to us”.

In February 2001 a member of the Tribal War forums Bad_CRC, created a video which combined Roberts’ song and the various images created in a Something Awful Forums AYB Photoshop thread, which then proceeded to go viral. It can still be seen being used to this day, in gaming, on t shirts and occasionally even by Congresswomen on twitter.

“*All your base (are) belong to us*”

January 19, 2019,

Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

My idea was to combine these old memes with something current and possibly political. Donald Trump was the obvious choice. I did decide however not to use the text as direct copies, combining parts of one with the other to further illustrate the

points I wanted to make. Taking an image originally used when Trump decided to feed White House guests cheeseburgers due to a catering staff shortage, I added the text “All your cheeseburgers are belong to us” My intent being to suggest how greedy and self serving Trump is as a president.

The second image was from the unveiling of the new US Space Force flag. The text “I can has moon base” being added to try and illustrate the stupidity of not only the idea itself, but possibly of the person behind it as well.

Responses to the images have varied, some people have found them amusing, others have connected the dots and linked them back to the original memes. As to whether they would spread and go viral in the way the originals did I have to say I would think it unlikely. Whilst they both make the points I intended they are not as unique or special in the way that many viral memes are.



Alia Shaheen – Pout Selfie, London



Tiffany Mitchell – Smart Water



Unknown



Getty Images



Angela Nikolau @ Flickr



Getty Images



Unknown

4 The Selfie Revisited: Testimony or Trophy?

The Phenomenon Of The Selfie

With the rise of social media the role of the self portrait has changed, no longer is it just a portrait. The selfie has evolved, now being used in a number of ways for very specific purposes.

The first purpose I want to look at is the most common, that of self promotion. Whether it be a Kardashian posing in a bikini, a model or actor displaying their physique or just a normal random person looking upwards into a camera pouting, these images are posted online with the sole purpose of seeking approval, usually in the number of views or likes they collect. I would guess that the poster is seeking this adulation in order to bolster their own self worth or esteem. Any criticism is usually met with open hostility, whether it be from the original poster or one of their followers, even when the criticism may be valid. For example The actress Chloe Grace Moretz posted in response to a naked selfie of Kim Kardashian “I truly hope you realise how important setting goals are for young women, teaching them we have so much more to offer than our bodies.” To which the first reply was “Let’s all welcome @ChloeGMoretz to twitter, since no one knows who she is...your nylon cover is cute boo.” These types of images, semi dressed and provocative are increasingly popular amongst non celebrity posters, people of all ages trying to increase their number of views and likes, which is of course understandable. Everybody wants to be liked.

The second type of selfie I want to touch upon is that of the Social Influencer. These are the self appointed arbiters of taste and style. People who post images of themselves with some kind of product. These images obviously well planned are often

presented as something that just happened, with no planning at all. An interesting example was the lifestyle blogger Tiffany Mitchell, who claimed to have been involved in a motorcycle accident. Despite suffering no obvious injuries despite wearing no protective clothing, she was photographed with branded water products in pride of place, luckily there seems to have been a passing photographer to help out. It is obvious that many of these influencers receive payment, or gifts for product placements, and that also their social media accounts can be monetised due to vast viewer numbers raking in advertising revenues, yet they still try to pretend they are just living a normal life. Have we really reached the stage of capitalism where someone would fake a motorcycle accident in order to increase their following on social media? Maybe a greater issue, is the fact that a number of people online instantly assumed it was a fake, starting a debate and branding Mitchell a liar.

The final selfie type I would like to mention is basically a trophy, with a difference. These images are usually of people in either some far off exotic place, in some kind of precarious position or getting up close with wildlife of some kind. The exotic holiday destination is an understandable thing, people wanting to share their travels, however it is often accompanied by suspect details, the travel agent etc. Which suggests some kind of paid for content, semi viral advertising or even just plain deception at times. The more worrying side of these trophy selfies are those where people are putting themselves in dangerous situations, just to have something noteworthy to put on the internet. In recent times there have been an increasing number of deaths and injuries of people attempt-

ing to take selfies in situations where maybe they should think twice. For example on January 12th 2020, a 21-year-old woman from Lincoln, England, fell from a 98-foot-high cliff in Diamond Bay Reserve in Sydney, Australia. According to police, the woman was accompanied by seven friends, when they climbed a fence to sit on the edge of the cliff and take selfies. Other instances include people trying to take selfies on a busy German autobahn, or with a wild rattlesnake.

The selfie has mutated into something more akin to a social media reward points card. The more noteworthy your selfie the more likes and views it draws, this in turn bringing you more followers or friends, and we all know that the more followers and friends you have the more important and successful you are. Or is this just the myth that various social media sites want to sell to us?

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Jasco Bix



Southwest Airlines



Ducati Concessionaires UK Ltd.



Diet Coca Cola



Eau De Gaga



Versace Eros



Tom Ford 2017



Boredpanda : Before and After Photoshop – Angelina Jolie



Boredpanda : Before and After Photoshop – Beiber



Boredpanda : Before and After Photoshop – Vogue

5 The Sexualised Image

The advent of the internet has without doubt made it easier to access sexual imagery. This in itself is not a problem providing the person viewing the imagery is mature enough to do so, however this is not always the case. A study commissioned by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in 2016 found 94 percent of children who have been exposed to pornography have that experience before age 14, and 53 percent said they believed what they saw was a realistic depiction of sexual relations. Co-author of the study, Elena Martellozzo, said that boys' unrealistic perceptions of sex can lead to an inappropriate expectation for girls. *"Girls too may feel pressured to live up to these unrealistic, and perhaps non consensual, interpretations of sex. This is clearly not positive for developing future healthy relationships."* In some ways I think that this easy access has also led to, or at least had an effect on, the trend for nude selfies.

Before the internet, and digital imagery, be it from cameras or mobile devices, it would have been considerably more difficult to obtain such images of one self. Now it is so simple and quick, that it can be done almost without thinking. These images may be created freely, or more likely due to peer pressure, but the fact they are so simple to create does not help in protecting the people sending them to others.

This is of course not the only way that sexualised images make their way into our lives. Everyday advertising has long worked on the maxim that Sex Sells. Whilst the imagers we see today are not as blatant as they may have been in the 1970's, where it was perfectly normal for products for men to be accompanied by scantily clad women, there is still a trend of using softer references to sex to push products. For example the majority of advertisements for aftershaves and men's grooming products will show the man being accompanied by a younger attractive female. Of course this is a long way from the blatant advertising of the past, which would show

women throwing themselves at men for wearing a certain aftershave, but the suggestion is equally as effective from a marketing point of view.

It is also more common now for advertising to feature attractive males in adverts, both those aimed at female consumers, and those with a more general market. Perfume adverts show ruggedly handsome rich men adoring the wearer of a fragrance. Diet coke was marketed very successfully with the muscled torso of a window cleaner or builder on display as crowds of women looked on. These advertisements are of course only the tip of the iceberg. In the media the portrayal of both male and female celebrities has become more and more linked to their appearance. With headlines about seeing so and so's bikini body, and the male 6-pack seeming to be more important at times than any actual news. The images accompanying these stories, whilst natural, are still complicit in creating bad body image for many people, both young and old.

Magazine and web site images go one step further, with massively edited pictures that smooth the skin, remove wrinkles, fix symmetry and make sure there is no excess fat to be seen, which only goes to add to the problem. Celebrities posing for selfies, in hardly there bikinis, or with rippling oiled muscles, and also applying a little Photoshop magic are equally harmful. If anything more so, as they often claim to be natural images. Whilst these may seem in many ways minor points, they all have an effect on the perceptions we have of not only what we are supposed to find 'sexy', but also on how 'sexy' we are to others.

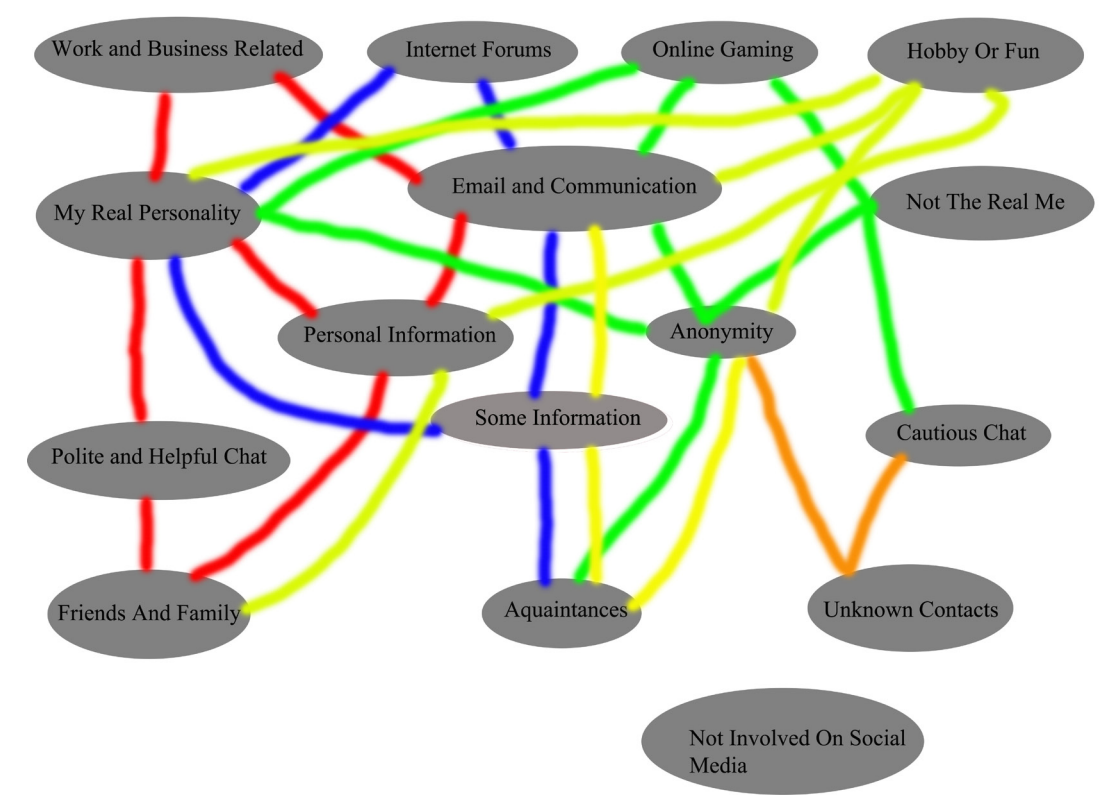
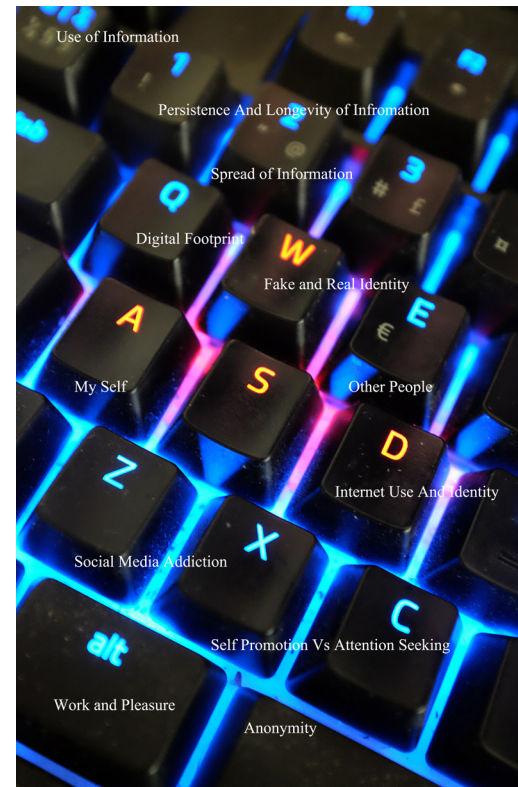
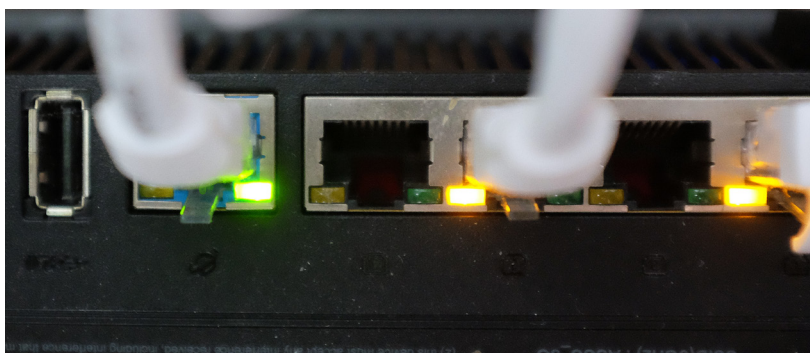
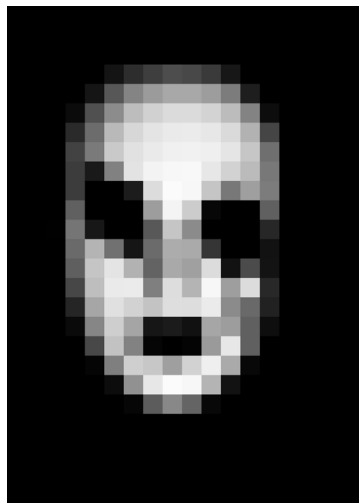
The pressure on younger people to conform to these stereotypes are huge. Teenage males now seem to be expected to have the kind of bodies seen regularly on reality TV shows and in magazines, a pressure teenage females have long experienced, and according to some studies, i.e. Liverpool John Moore's University *Image is primary motivation for use of image and performance enhancing drugs 2017*, and NIDA *Steroids and Other*

Appearance and Performance Enhancing Drugs (APEDs) Research Report 2018, more are turning to other methods of getting the correct body. Note that both these reports suggest that these drugs are not being used for an advantage in sports, but purely for an advantage in physical appearance.

The question has to be how do we combat these unnatural expectations? Stricter laws on advertising would help, for example Photoshop disclaimers made much larger and more prominent, maybe even go so far as to ban certain types of image retouching from advertising images. We also have to make sure that everyone is made more aware of the fact that these images do not represent the real world, whether it be sex or the good looking people selling you things, or the people chosen to be on reality TV programmes. They are all there to make you look, to sell you an idea of something better than reality, to entertain you. Sexualised images will always exist, there will always be a demand for them, in many ways they just need to be more representative of the real world. As photographers we want people to view our images, for our work to have relevance and influence. At times is important to remember who may be viewing our work, and what sort of influence it might just have on them.

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 Accessed 27.11.20



Assignment 4 Digital Identities 1

For this project I wanted to look at my own online behaviour. To see where I am open and honest and also where I become more guarded or secretive. Is this an instinctive behaviour, or is it something that has developed over the period in which I have been using the internet.

Looking at my interactions in the digital world, they can be split into a number of areas. Communication (email, talking with friends etc), online forums, work related and online gaming.

Taking an overview of these areas gives me some interesting results, There are areas and interactions where I become more cautious or guarded. These usually involve people or activities outside of the areas of friends and family or work. My first idea was to try and create some kind of flow diagram, to give a visual representation of how I see myself interacting online. The re-

sult is helpful but needs refinement.

In areas regarding work or business, nothing is hidden. Obviously it is important when dealing with employers or clients, or even people I am hiring myself for a single job, that everything is above board and in the open. It is important that everything is dealt with in a professional manner, and as such my name and contact details are always available.

Having used internet forums since the early days of the bulletin board system, I find myself being reasonably open about myself. Real name and general area of residence are often in my profile, but nothing more in depth. Any posts I make online, I try to be as polite and helpful as possible, and to avoid anything that looks like it may be descending into an argument. I do have a separate email address which is used entirely for online registrations. The

idea behind this was to avoid the problem of spam mail which often occurs when registering for anything online. This email is not to hide my identity as such, but to keep my personal mail as free and uncluttered as possible.

In any other area, online gaming for example, I find myself being far more guarded in how I behave. There is little or no disclosure of private information, and unless I am playing with someone I actually know, any chat will be limited to the game itself. Games are an escape for me, somewhere where I can forget or avoid the real world, and whilst I do not change my persona for them it is understandable why some people chose to.

The way I mask myself in these actions led me to try and find works where identity is changed or hidden, or in some way altered.

Giacomo Favilla (Neptune, Double Trouble)

Cait Gibbs (Animal Magnetism)

Dean Perks (Identity Crisis)

The galleries above all contain images where the face of the subject is either covered in some way or altered. Does this relate to a change or hiding of identity in the online world or have an effect in the real world? How can I illustrate this?

I also need to explain why I avoid social media of any kind. A combination of not wanting to waste time and effort, no interest and dislike of the platforms.

<http://www.giacomofavilla.com/>
<http://cargocollective.com/caitgibbs/filter/writing-sample/Artist-Statement-Photography>
<https://www.zealous.co/deanperks/project/Identity-Crisis/>

Assignment 4 Digital Identities 1: Notes

As this first part of a two part assignment is more about deciding on a subject and creating an idea to work from for a finished product I first had to decide on how I would approach the subject. Would I concentrate on my own identity online, or would I look at aspects of how others behave online? If I choose to look at other people, will it be a look at specific areas or a broader overall view? I quickly decided that it would be more factual and involve less speculation to look at my own identity online and how I interact with not only other people but the services I use.

The first thing I wanted to do was create some kind of flow chart to illustrate how I see my online activities, when using services ranging from email through to forums and gaming. This could turn out to be quite convoluted, but at the same time the complexity would go to show that if anything out digital identities are more complex than we may like to think. Equally I wanted to create some kind of diagram to show how my time is used online, a pie chart or graph of some kind. This required recording my internet usage over the course of 14 days, to get not only a total time use, but the amount of time spent using individual services or types of service.

I have two email addresses that I use in a very specific way. One is for actual personal emails, work emails, banking

etc. and the other is there purely as a placeholder, to be used when signing up for online forums, software activation, shopping etc.

Looking back at both of these email addresses over 12 months it was interesting to see just how much junk mail each account received. The personal account received 3 pieces of junk mail in a 12 month period, all relating to banking products. The placeholder account received over 340 junk emails, these were for everything from health products and holidays through to phishing emails for information and details via fake competitions. There were numerous adverts for products I have never shown any interest in, and a number of emails from contacts on social media making friends requests etc. It is worth quickly mentioning at this point that I do not use any of the social media platforms, and have no accounts with any of them. This leads me to believe that the details of the address I use as a placeholder are regularly sold on to other companies for marketing purposes.

Our data is used as a commodity, the value of it being in the adverts we view or the products we purchase. The cost of the data and the cost of sending out bulk emails being relatively small in comparison to profits that can be made by marketing agencies and companies that analyse information on behalf of third parties. For example in 2019,

Facebook made a global average of \$29.25 from the average monthly active user, with an average monthly usage of 2.5 billion people. This money isn't just paid to Facebook by advertisers because the viewers are there. It is paid because Facebook analyses user data in such away as to place advertisements solely where they are most likely to be successful. Our digital identity is dictating the product adverts we see, and subsequently what we are more likely to buy.

Ideally I want to show how my time is spent, how I actively try to keep my personal data to myself, and how I also try to minimize my exposure to anything that may be harmful or market-based.

Thoughts on Project

Whilst I am finding it easy to bring together the elements I want in text, so far the imagery I want to involve is less than successful. It may be necessary to rethink the ideas I have and adjust them, the flow chart in particular requires work. I have an idea to try some self portraits overlaid with either projected imagery, including forum pages, game avatars and the like. I was also considering the idea of cutting out sections of the image and replacing the areas with direct screen shots. Maybe a better idea is to use some kind of official identity photograph to show my real self in both hidden and unhidden

views. These are on going and will be completed for the finalised assignment. It is also tempting to use imagery of the technology involved, whether as part of a montage or as a stand alone image.

On the subject of the three photographers I referenced, both Cait Gibbs and Giacomo Favilla approach the masking of subjects from the viewpoint of creating a shared identity base. For the subjects to fit in and feel comfortable with both themselves and each other. Dean Perks on the other hand seems to show a view where the subject is in crisis, whilst none of these actually fit in with my idea, it is interesting to note that Cait Gibbs results led her to questioning whether the models she used were more comfortable in front of the camera due to the fact they were wearing masks, and whether or not this led to a change in their behaviour regarding how they would pose etc.

This change in behaviour is something which can be noticed in online interactions with people at times. The assumed anonymity of the internet letting people say things on forums or social media that they would never say in public for example, or behave in ways that they wouldn't usually, for example being confrontational in discussions on forums.

Assignment 4: Tutor Report



Formative feedback

| | | | |
|------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------|
| Student name | Sean Sweeney | Student number | 510149 |
| Course/Unit | DI&C | Assignment number | 4 |
| Type of tutorial | Written | | |

Overall Comments

Obviously, submitting assignment 4 and 5 at the same time limits what advice I can give in the work-in-progress format suggested in the coursebook, but I will try my best in this feedback to offer suggests as to who you might have progressed, before I look at assignment 5.

Assessment potential

I understand your aim is to go for the Photography Degree and that you plan to submit your work for assessment at the end of this course. From the work you have shown in this assignment, providing you commit yourself to the course, I believe you have the potential to pass at assessment. In order to meet all the assessment criteria, there are certain areas you will need to focus on, which I will outline in my feedback.

Feedback on assignment

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Quality of Outcome, Demonstration of Creativity

Below are the key points I would like to make about your submission. They are not exhaustive but represent the most salient points to be considered at this point in your learning journey.

- The key issue to start is there is a general lack of visual material in your submission.

- The notes are useful back story, but how do you visualise them? The pie chart for instance showing your time would have been interesting to actually see.
- Thanks for including your spider chart. I'm not sure I understand quite how it all ties together in its present form but, importantly, it's really for you to understand as it operates as a jumping off point for you to start thinking about how to make your photographic work.
- Presentation – whilst not crucial at this stage, it was really hard to work out what you were showing me in the pdf. The images are all small and there is no hierarchy at all – again, this assignment is intended to be a work in progress so there isn't a call for the work to be fully realised by some signposting (captions and larger reproductions of semi-final images perhaps?) would have made the submission much easier to understand.
- The idea, as far as I am understanding it at this point, is about your multiple online personas. These lead me to specific questions: How can you reference these in a visual way? How can you construct a visual narrative using photography about something that is inherently not photographic (but often aspires to be?)
- Self-evaluation – I think the problems you are having bringing together the elements you want in imagery is because you have selected an inherently non-photographic subject. Photographs are a response to what is in front of the camera, and your subject is how you interact with lines of code, and the communities that form around them and are interpreted in different ways.
- I'm not entirely sure that the technology reflects your interests here. There has been interesting work made about the tech, most notably John Gerrard's work on the Google data centre at Pryor Creek (see, 'The Farm'), and other artists have, on occasion, photographed inside data centres

Coursework

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Demonstration of Creativity

I quite liked what you did with the memes. From a visual perspective, perhaps the fints could have been more thought out in terms of how they site within the image and draw quick, easy attention so necessary in contemporary social media and forums where memes do so well.

Research

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

I found the pdf quite hard to navigate so apologies if I missed them but I didn't find much evidence of your reviewing the work by other photographers. This is a valuable part of the course that allows you to develop, practice and demonstrate your analytical and evaluative skills. You begin to evidence this in posts such as that about selfies but it is important to also review artists who have examined these phenomena critically.

Learning Log

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

Try and involve yourself in the OCA forum and networking opportunities as much as possible and think about how your identity there has similarities and differences from the other online communities you are a member of.

Suggested reading/viewing

Context

John Gerrard’s The Farm would be an interesting piece to review as it deals with how you can make work about the infrastructure that allows for the communities of which you are a member.

| | |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Tutor name | David Wyatt |
| Date | 6/9/20 |
| Next assignment due | Submitted in tandem with assignment 4 |

Assignment 5 Digital Identities 2



Assignment 5 Digital Identities 2: Notes

Having decided on using my own digital identity as an example, the question was - in what format to present the information? One idea was to convert everything, text and images into one single QR code. Whilst this is possible, it does need a format of some kind within the QR code. I decided to create a faux magazine article using my identity as an example of protecting your own online identity. This would be created in .pdf file and then converted into a QR code. I chose a QR code as this is a good example of how data relating to our identities can be stored and shared. Such a small symbol can hold up to a 20mb .pdf file. The problems began when trying to find a tool to do the conversion, free trials are only so good as long as they retain the file link required by the QR code for more than the free period. If it is deleted after this period, then the QR code simply will not work. It is possible to buy a license to use this service, however purchasing such an expensive software license, for what would be extremely limited use does not really make economic sense. The way around this seems to be quite simple. Once I have completed the .pdf file, I then upload it to my web space, and use a free service that creates a QR code that links directly to the web URL of the .pdf file. This allows the .pdf to be viewed. While this is not as direct or as quick as having the entire file within a QR code, it does serve the purpose I intended. That is to digitize my own digital identity, with the intent of showing how easily information can be spread in the digital environment.

The fake article itself needed to contain not only text and photographic images, but also two charts I had created. This means making a more careful layout on the .pdf to create a convincing looking magazine or web article page.

Looking back on the exercise, I can't help but feel short of images. I know the point of the exercise isn't so much to create images, but as an examination of digital identity, but even so I would have liked to include more. The problem I had when working on the base idea was that whenever we see articles on digital footprints, identity or the use of the internet and online activity, the images are always slightly clichéd. People sat in front of computers, close ups of computer hardware or cables going into routers with blinking lights. I really wanted to avoid using these kind of images. I think the images I have chosen work well within the context of the article, and serve to illustrate points made within. Overall I think the concept is successful, reducing information on digital identity to what is in effect a single digital symbol, is almost symbolic of the world we live in today. Where the details of everyone's life can be condensed into a series of 1's and 0's, and used or sent anywhere in the world, by anyone who has access to it. We are now the digital product, traded between companies for fortunes we will never share in.



Protecting My Digital Identity

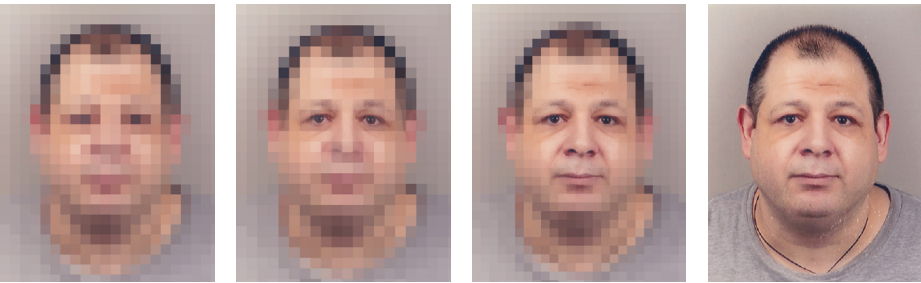
I have always been somewhat of a private person, keeping myself to myself. With the advent of the internet, and personal mobile devices this has become increasingly difficult, as my data has now become a valuable commodity, in demand by both businesses and criminal interests alike.

Whilst it is impossible to be completely invisible on the internet, there are ways to reduce my footprint. Making me less attractive to anyone with a criminal intent, and less likely to be bought and sold as a data sample by various businesses around the globe.

Obviously our data is extremely valuable to many businesses, it shows our leisure habits, our likes and dislikes, it shows what we buy and by extension what we might be encouraged to buy next. The

amount of data we create increases every day, and as such so do the opportunities for how it can be used. Whilst we can never be completely invisible, a few simple steps can make us less likely to be the victims of cyber criminals, and make us less obvious to the advertising and marketing companies. My first step is to always use two email addresses. The first for any real life interactions, family and friends, banking, shopping and the like. The second I use when signing up for services. These can vary from forums and

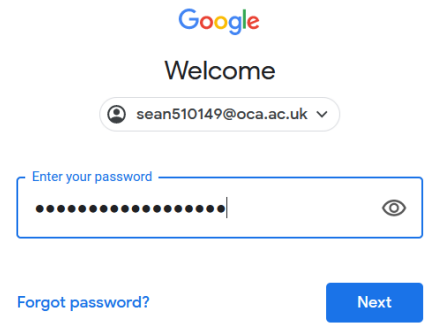
game registrations through to subscription based services like Netflix. The idea being that my personal email is kept free from being included in as many lists as possible, this way it does not get sold or passed between related companies, meaning I don't receive any junky mail, and that junk mail is often where the attempts at cyber crime are hidden. Links in unrequested marketing emails, or from banks or companies you have never had any contact with asking for your accounts and passwords as there has



been an error. This second email address just has all of the junk mail deleted without even checking it, as there will never be anything I want to read in there.

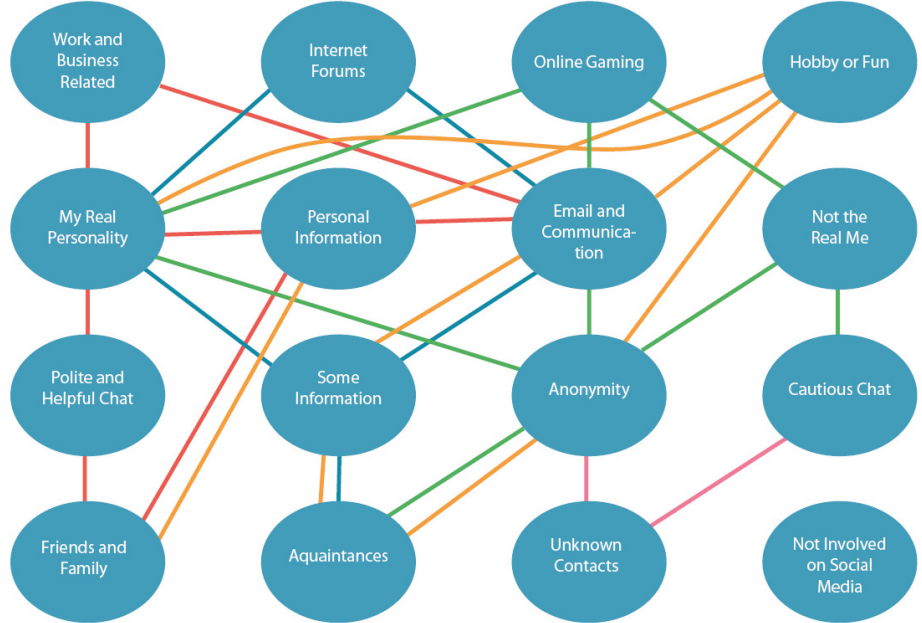
This caution also extends to how I interact with people online. The less I know of someone as an actual person the less detail I will give, partially masking myself so that important details are not left on forums or in game chat windows.

By not using any of the social media platforms, I avoid exposure to constant advertising, and in turn the collection of my data, whether that be what or who I interact with, or my browsing history, in regard to the next amazing offer I might receive. This also avoids being drawn into surveys designed purely to collect large amounts of sale worthy data, whether it be commercial or politically based.



Another way I protect myself is by using extremely long complicated passwords, letters numbers and symbols, random foreign words, all designed to make hacking just that little bit more complicated. I also regularly use a VPN to avoid website based tracking, and always remove any cookies that have actually been placed on my system at the end of any session. Up to date anti virus and malware services are also used to ensure nothing untoward is lurking on my hard drive.

This may all seem a little paranoid to some, and maybe it is a little over the top, but I have never

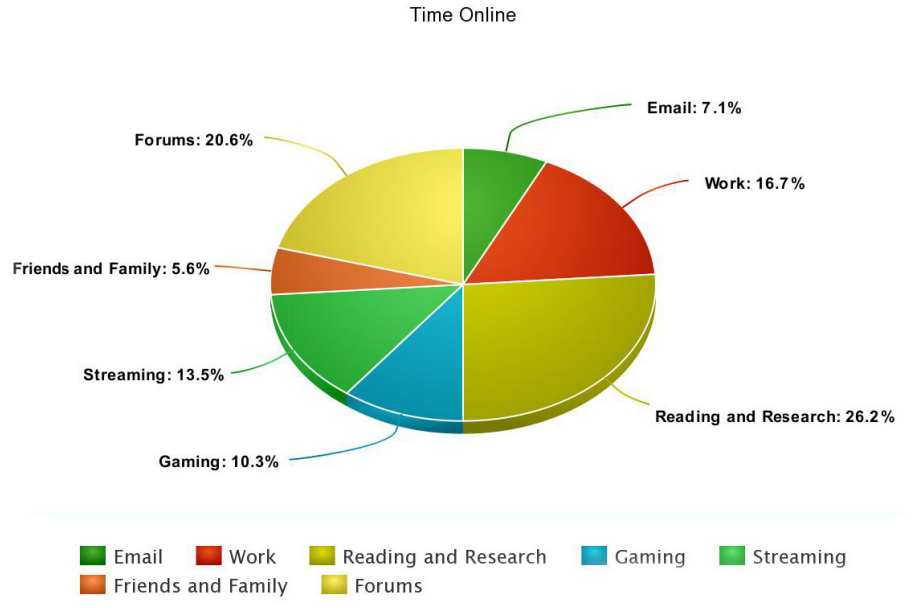


been hacked, I have never had a virus, and I don't have to spend time wading through my email separating out the junk mail from the important mail.

I am also careful with any images I may post, either on forums or sent by email. The less identifying features the better. There have been incidents of robberies where images online have been used to identify worthwhile burglary targets, for example the case of Kim Kardashian and Kanye West in Paris in 2016, when jewellery displayed on social media was stolen. Of course I am not comparing myself to the above, and this robbery was very much

in the public eye, however more and more criminals are using the same kind of online 'surveillance' techniques. A study carried out by the insurance company, Admiral in 2017, found that 25% of burglars have used social media platforms to tag their target's location when they are travelling. As a result an innocent selfie at the airport celebrating your holiday can easily transform into an open invitation to your home while you're away.

In many ways our digital identities are now as important and valuable as our real identities, and we should all take a little care in how we protect them.





Formative feedback

| | | | |
|------------------|------------------------|-------------------|--------|
| Student name | Sean Sweeney | Student number | 510149 |
| Course/Unit | | Assignment number | |
| Type of tutorial | Written / Audio-Visual | | |

Overall Comments

At the core, I think you have touched upon something interesting here but, as it stands, you have quite a long way to go to turn it into a final assignment submission. This doesn't mean it has to take a long time, but, as it stands, you have presented an article on your own digital security rather than an artwork critiquing the wider concept of your own digital identity. Re-organising the work so that your artwork is presented front and centre and then adding an introduction and analysis to the artwork itself will help you meet the requirements of the brief.

Feedback on assignment

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Quality of Outcome, Demonstration of Creativity

Below are the key points about your submission:

- As with assignment 4, I felt that one of the key issues is one of presentation. As it stands, the work reads like a magazine article where your images are secondary to the descriptive analysis you present. At this stage, it should really be the other way around.
- This may be as simple as taking your final images out from these pages and giving them their own double page spreads. Or having them as separate files for the assessment submission. The goal, at the end of the day, is to present an artwork or works you have created in direct response to the assignment brief.
- The text, too, reads as if it is a security primer rather than the introduction to an art piece. We know, or at least most of us are aware of, the risks with online identities,

- so you really need to get straight to the part where you are introducing what your artwork is trying to say about this.
- As it stands, the submission doesn't explore YOUR digital identity ion the way you have set out to. I suspect the images may do, but they are attached almost as illustrations to your article on the steps you take to protect yourself.
- In what ways do the series of portraits reference your digital identity?

Coursework

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Demonstration of Creativity

Research

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

It would have been interesting for you to review Bryan Adam's work in more depth – in what ways do you think his photography functions well?

You could also have taken your analysis of Cooper and Gorfer's work a little further, tying their practice into a long history of portraiture within the arts which they are obviously referencing through their use of collage and disregard to more contemporary ideas of perspective. I've included a couple of books that touch on these wider concepts in art practice in the suggested reading.

Learning Log

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

A lot of your reflection throughout part 5 of this course has been on the security aspect of your digital identity rather than on the work you are making. I think that is behind your feelings today this module that you express on page 71. I agree with what you say concerning the theft of images etc but that is not what this module is, at its core, about. Instead, the intention has always been to get you to consider the role of the digital in your ever-developing identity and, crucially, how this might inform a contemporary practice. Or rather, YOUR contemporary practice.

Suggested reading/viewing

Context

It is, I feel, worth you spending some time over your next module familiarising yourself with some writing about the history of art. Two good and readily available titles are (the dates are for the editions I happen to have, I've seen a later Gombrich that was better laid out):

Clark, K. (1979). Landscape into Art. New York, Harper & Row.

Gombrich, E. H. (1984). The Story of Art. 14th edn. Oxford, Phaidon.

Pointers for the next assessment

To be successful at assessment you will need to rethink your presentation and analysis of the photography you represent here. Try to review where your art work is successful and the ways in which it could be taken further.

We can discuss the relative success of the outcome and I can offer advice on the new assessment process in the assignment 6 feedback, which I suggest we have an audio visual tutorial.

Please inform me of how you would like your feedback for the next assignment: written or video/audio.

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Tutor name | David Wyatt |
| Date | 6/9/20 |
| Next assignment due | 15/9/20 (accelerated to try and give you more time to focus on your next uni) |

Assignment 4 and 5:
Response to Tutor Comments

I completely understand where David is coming from on this. Looking back I made a choice to present the assignment in a certain way, and should really have rethought the entire concept. I was worried that I was a bit short on imagery, but in the context of it being an article for a magazine, this would be in line with the presentation. I think it best to rework the entire submission, coming at it from the a different angle. The idea of showing how I and others may see my Digital identity is perhaps something more suitable. I think I will keep the idea of using scanned passport images to show my levels of visibility online, as I like how this movement of analogue photograph, to digital image mirrors real life being played out digitally.



Unknown Contacts Identity



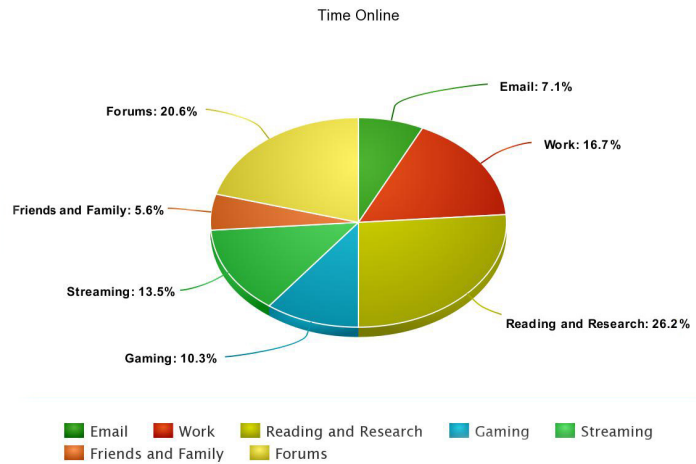
Gaming Identity



Forums Identity



Friends, Relatives and Work Identity



Assignment 5

For this Assignment I wanted to show my own digital identity, not only as I see myself but also how others I interact with see me as a digital personality. My digital identity is something that is not consistent. I have varying levels of openness depending on where I am and what type of interaction is taking place. When dealing with strangers, companies online, or situations requiring that I interact with something new or unknown my default position is to give out as little of myself as possible, this may mean using pseudonyms, an email account reserved for use where I don't want my primary account to be available to just anyone, or filling in form fields with out dated data. My reasoning behind this being I don't want my digital identity to compromise my real identity. By this mean that there are times when I don't want my real information to be available to people who I don't know, or to companies I have no relationship with. This changes somewhat when using forums. I am a long time member of a number of forums, based on interests or work related subjects. Here I allow a little more of myself to be available to see. Whilst I may still use a nickname for forum posts or when talking to people generally, there are a number of people I know well enough, both from online interactions and having met in the real world, that I will allow my real name to be known, or my primary email address to be used. However for forum registration purposes I still


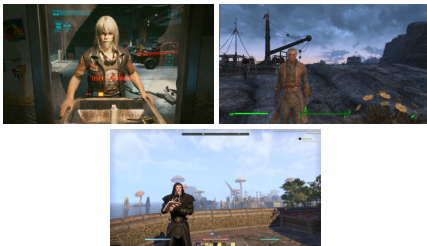
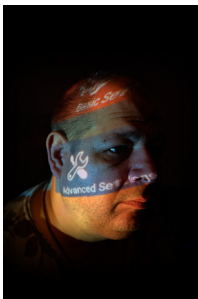

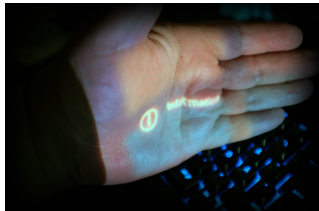
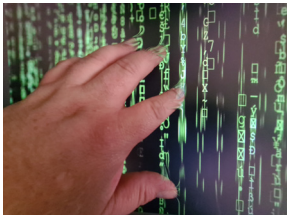


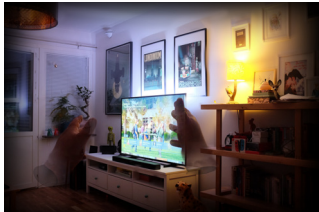


use a secondary email account. Any forum avatars will be images that whilst relating to me or my interests, will definitely have no personal aspect to them. The way I mask myself in these actions led me to try and find works where identity is changed or hidden, or in some way altered. As can be seen in the pie chart showing my online time use, I also indulge in a little gaming. Here is where things can be a mixture ranging from completely guarded to completely open. There are people I game with that I have known for many years, close friends and family members. These people will know my real name, my phone number and email address, even where I live. Occasional 'online' friends will know less, usually nothing other than general information, though some may know know more if we have played together long enough. There are people I know only in an online capacity that I have known for nearly 20 years. Of interest to me is the avatars I create whilst gaming. As a digital representation of myself they are what other players relate and react to. When looking through avatars for this assignment I noticed that many of them shared features, they are most often created as older or grey haired characters, with a friendly look. They lack the heroic aspect seen in many people's game characters, i.e. fancy costumes, imposing or impressive appearances. This would seem to tie in with the way I play online games. I don't look to stand out amongst the crowds, or be noticed for some in game ability. I am however quite approachable

and always willing to help someone. Perhaps this is a side effect of being a mature gamer. I have no need to prove anything, or gain some form of virtual respect, I don't need to portray myself as an Alpha Male. When trying to represent myself, I wanted to show how I see myself in regards to the digital world. Interacting through connections and information, always connected.

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Thoughts and Reflections

I am much happier with the result of Assignment % after reworking it. I feel it now shows my own digital identity, or identities in a more effective way. The idea behind the images is that we are always connected and always receiving information somehow, and that the way we use technology is changing everyday. Whilst I am happier with the concept of the images I still need to work on my photoshop skills, for this assignment I think the more realistic they are, the better some of the images would have worked. The idea of how my identity is overwritten and consumed by digital technology is something I would like to explore more in further projects.

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| | | <div><div></div><div>Assignment 5</div><div>Digital Identities 2</div></div> <div>Forum Identities</div> | <div><div></div><div></div><div>Digital Identities 2</div></div> <div>In-Game Identities</div> |
| <div><div></div><div></div><div>Digital Identities 2</div></div> <div>Changing Settings</div> | <div><div></div><div></div><div>Digital Identities 2</div></div> <div>Storage Media</div> | <div><div></div><div></div><div>Digital Identities 2</div></div> <div>In the Palm of My Hand</div> | |
| <div><div></div><div></div><div>Digital Identities 2</div></div> <div>Digital Learning</div> | <div><div></div><div></div><div>Digital Identities 2</div></div> <div>Augmented Reality</div> | <div><div></div><div></div><div>Digital Identities 2</div></div> <div>Time for New Books</div> | |
| <div><div></div><div></div><div>Digital Identities 2</div></div> <div>Real Virtuality</div> | <div><div></div><div></div><div>Digital Identities 2</div></div> <div>Alexa's Point of View</div> | <div><div></div><div></div><div>Digital Identities 2</div></div> <div>Weak Signal</div> | |

Assignment 6: Pre Assessment Tutorial

As I intend to complete the full BA (Hons) Photography degree it is important to get all submissions for assessment correct and fully ready. David has made a suggestion regarding assignment 5 that will require a little reworking before it is ready, but there are still a number of other things that I will need to finalise before the March 2021 assessment date.

Below is a list of everything that needs to be completed prior to my assessment submission:

- Make sure any feedback is addressed either within responses to tutor feedback or in amendments to assignments.
 - Finish construction of .pdf. Index, add book reviews, check for spelling, punctuation grammar. Make sure all contents are present.
 - Create assessment submission digital versions of each assignment.
 - Check colour, brightness are suitable for laptop screens and non calibrated monitors. Make sure all are sized correctly.
 - Review learning log .pdf to ensure that all links work and everything is easily navigable.
 - Write and include detailed overall course evaluation.
 - Upload medium resolution A3 .pdf to web-space. File size can be an issue.
- Check uploaded .pdf for access and function. Make sure all text is readable, no font issues. All images viewable. Submit web address with assessment submission.

Prepare Work to Illustrate Required Learning Outcomes

LO1 demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of technical and visual skills through a portfolio of digital photographic practice

LO2 demonstrate how research has informed your digital photographic practice

LO3 demonstrate how experimentation has informed your digital photographic practice

LO4 situate, reflect and critique photographic practices and reflect on your own learning

Suggestions As Per OCA Assessment Guidelines 2020+

LO1 To evidence this part you could select learning log entries of examples of finished work that shows your detailed knowledge of technical and visual skills with digital practice and shows how you have applied these strategies to your own thinking and projects.

LO2 It is likely that your learning log entries will evidence your research. By selecting both learning log and assignment pieces you could show how your research—of others work and of social and cultural contexts, digital projects, techniques and ethical perspectives— have made a difference to your own digital practice.

LO3 It is likely that you will have learning log entries and finished pieces that could be selected to show how your use of experimentation - through exercises, testing of ideas and trying things out, has enabled you to develop the production of your digital practice.

LO4 Your critical review (2,000 words) in part 3, is likely to evidence your ability to reflect and critique photographic practices and reflect on your own learning. Your evaluative presentation will also contribute to this and you could include key learning log entries or assignment outcomes that relate to your reflections.

RE: LO4 Critical Evaluation of Artists

Whether this be in the form of book reviews, gallery reviews or reviews of separate pieces of work, make sure that I show my ability to critique and reflect upon the work of others, and show how this may relate to my own views and work.



Formative feedback

| | | | |
|------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------|
| Student name | Sean Sweeney | Student number | 510149 |
| Course/Unit | DIC | Assignment number | 6 |
| Type of tutorial | Audio-Visual | | |

Overall Comments

We spoke at length about devising a strategy for Sean to complete the module successfully, as the work as presented will struggle at assessment due to the substantial issues he has faced outside of his studies during the past 2 years. Importantly, this is not insurmountable but I recommended that Sean put this module to one side and aim for the Summer 2021 assessment event. This will allow him time to complete the Landscape module before his level 2 deadline in February 2021. Following that, he can return to this module and prepare a much more complete submission for the DIC assessment.

Importantly, the submission for assignment 6 was not a selection of the entire work completed, but a to do list that was very similar to that included on the notes below. It was with this in mind that I suggested he focus on the next module for now so that he can then come back to this one refreshed and with a greater idea of the requirements at level 2.

Feedback on assignment

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Quality of Outcome, Demonstration of Creativity

Below are Sean's minutes from the tutorial, with David's additional comments added in italics.

As I intend to complete the full BA (Hons) Photography degree it is important to get all submissions for assessment correct and fully ready. David has made a suggestion regarding assignment 5 that will require a little reworking before it is ready, but there are still a number of other things that I will need to finalise before the March 2021 assessment date. *DavidW:*

By suggestion for assignment 5 was a little more substantial than that but centred on the lack of visual evidence of the work in that submission. There was a piece included as a very small illustration that has the potential to be an important part of your overall DIC submission. This was the self-portraits. As it stands, Assignment 5 was a 'how to' article on reviewing your own digital identity. What it needs to be is a creative, visual, piece of work that examines it. My suggestion was to develop these self-portraits into a piece that visually examines your identity and how it changes online. The critical thing is that it needs to be visual -so a series of 'portraits' along with a short intro text, presented at a size where the viewer can see them. You then evaluate the images themselves in another text that explores the extent to which they reference parts of digital identity. The work submitted is more background research before you reach this point.

Below is a list of everything that needs to be completed prior to my assessment submission:

- Make sure any feedback is addressed either within responses to tutor feedback or in amendments to assignments. *DavidW: This is a somewhat substantial task...*
- Finish construction of .pdf. Index, add book reviews, check for spelling, punctuation grammar. Make sure all contents are present. *DavidW: Remember though that you only submit highlights to evidence how you have satisfied specific learning outcomes.*
- Create assessment submission digital versions of each assignment. Check colour, brightness are suitable for laptop screens and non-calibrated monitors. Make sure all are sized correctly. *DavidW: Not sure what you mean here, you can only optimise for a calibrated screen. Anything else is a crapshoot...*
- Review learning log .pdf to ensure that all links work and everything is easily navigable. *DavidW: see above comment about only sending a selection. Focus your time going forward on identifying the key elements you will use for assessment, the posts, assignments, research etc, and really work hard on that selection. There is no value in spending your time at this point on work that won't be seen at assessment outside of your own personal learning (valuable in and of itself, but you have specific issues here with deadlines)*
- Write and include detailed overall course evaluation.
- Upload medium resolution A3 .pdf to webspace. File size can be an issue. *DavidW: ? We didn't really discuss this. I would go through the Landscape module, see how you will present that, and then return to this and use that experience to mould this submission*
- Check uploaded .pdf for access and function. Make sure all text is readable, no font issues. All images viewable. Submit web address with assessment submission.

DavidW: I've not included the rest of your notes because they were just learning outcomes section cut and pasted from the assessment guidelines.

DavidW:

My suggested strategy to get you through assessment is that you do the following steps:

1)put this module to one side and focus your time on the landscape module. You can do this as you have completed the module as soon as the office receive this feedback and are then

eligible for either of the next 2 assessment events.

2) When you finish the landscape module in jan/feb, revisit this module with the goal of submitting for the summer 2021 assessment.

3)Go through your learning log and identify specific entries (exercises, projects, research and assignments) that satisfy each learning outcome. At first, you want to select more than you will use for the final review.

4)Identify any which need more work, assignment 5 is a good example, and complete that work.

5)Write your review interrogating these posts in reference to the learning outcomes. This will involve you editing them down to the final selection.

6)Submit the final result for assessment.

Coursework

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Demonstration of Creativity

None submitted

Research

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

None submitted

Learning Log

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

DavidW: Our discussion in this assignment focused on the assessment process and how best to pass with the limited time you have available. As such, we didn't really focus on the work outside of the core sections needed for assessment. However, please do try and maintain involvement in student groups as they are invaluable in helping you understand the level of work required at each stage of the degree.

Suggested reading/viewing

Context

DavidW: A couple of potentially sueful sources for the landscape module:

Mark Klett – Thirdview

Tyrone Martinsson – Arctic View – Passages in Time

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|---------------------|-------------|
| Tutor name | David Wyatt |
| Date | 15/9/20 |
| Next assignment due | NA |

Assignment 6: Response to Tutor Comments

Looking back over David's comments I was a little confused that he suggested that my assignment for 'preparing for Assessment' was a list of things to do, rather than a selection of work.

'...the submission for assignment 6 was not a selection of the entire work completed, but a to do list that was very similar to that included on the notes below...'

On reviewing my course notes the brief for assignment 6 is **Pre-assessment tutorial**

The purpose of this final assignment is to help you review your work and decide how you're going to submit it for assessment. This covers Reviewing your assignments, Reviewing your learning log, Assessment expectations and Pre-assessment tutorial. Upon viewing some other OCA student's learning logs I noticed that a number had a different final assignment, **Assignment 6 – Evaluative Presentation**. These students all started the course some time after I had, and I can't help but wonder if there had been a change of content in that time, or if perhaps they had just interpreted it in a different way.

Regardless of this, the points David makes are all very valid, I have a lot of work to do to bring the work up to standard. The main issues being assignment 3 the Critical essay,

and assignment 5 Digital identities. Both of which require extensive reworking, if not a complete change in direction.

In my notes I mention making sure that all my images and work are viewable on laptop screens for the assessment. David questions this:

'DavidW: Not sure what you mean here, you can only optimise for a calibrated screen. Anything else is a crapshoot...'

Whilst I am aware that I cannot fully optimise the images for non calibrated screens, I can make sure that they are all converted to SRGB and are viewable my laptop at 2.2 gamma. This should allow all images to be viewed fairly closely to how I intended them to look. I also mention file sizes for the learning log pdf. As these can be very large, and should the log need to be viewed I don't want there to be a long wait for it to download.

David suggest that as I only have 6 months to complete the next module, landscape, that I put aside any large corrections until then, then submit for the summer 2021 assessment. This is good advice as I think I might have been tempted to try and get it all done for the first assessment, which would have not only had an effect on my landscape studies, but also on the reworking of digital image and culture.

Assignment 6: Pre Assessment Tutorial

As I intend to complete the full BA (Hons) Photography degree it is important to get all submissions for assessment correct and fully ready. David has made a suggestion regarding assignment 5 that will require a little (understatement) reworking before it is ready, but there are still a number of other things that I will need to finalise before the Summer 2021 assessment date.

Below is a list of everything that needs to be completed prior to my assessment submission:

- Delay Assessment from the March 2021 event until the July 2021 event. This gives not only time to concentrate on Landscape, but more time to correct any work in Digital image and Culture.
- Concentrate on completing Landscape unit. With only 6 months to complete trying to do both the corrections for Digital Image and Landscape would have a detrimental effect on both parts of the course.
- Make sure any feedback is addressed either within responses to tutor feedback or in amendments to assignments.
- Finish construction of .pdf. Index, add book reviews, check for spelling, punctuation grammar. Make sure all contents are present.

- Create assessment submission digital versions of each assignment.
- Check colour, brightness are suitable for laptop screens and non calibrated monitors. Make sure all are sized correctly.
- Write and include detailed overall course evaluation.
- Check that all references and bibliographies are correct in regard Harvard style referencing
- Review learning log .pdf to ensure that all links work and everything is easily navigable.
- Upload medium resolution A3 .pdf to web-space. High Resolution High quality File size can be an issue re download speeds.
- Check uploaded .pdf for access and function. Make sure all text is readable, no font issues. All images viewable. Submit web address with assessment submission.

Prepare Work to Illustrate Required Learning Outcomes

LO1 demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of technical and visual skills through a portfolio of digital photographic practice

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LO3 demonstrate how experimentation has informed your digital photographic practice

LO4 situate, reflect and critique photographic practices and reflect on your own learning These will be difficult to complete without some kind of crossover, as a number of my learning log entries, and assignment submissions, not to mention the assignment notes contain one or more of these outcomes.

All Assignments: Each assignment to be in a separate named .pdf with supporting text, including any alterations as suggested by my tutor. Plus copies of tutor feedback reports.

Assignment 1 to 6: Create .pdf from the images originally submitted for assignment, text from the assignment notes and any thoughts or reflections I had.

Assignment 6 Preparing for assessment: Thoughts and Reflection

This will be a somewhat short entry. Suffice to say that I have a lot of work to do to bring this unit up to standard. Being left with such a short period, 6 months, to complete my next unit, Landscape, Place and Environment means I will be doubling my work load in some places. Moving the assessment to the second available date will help, in that I will have more time to concentrate on and finish Landscape, and then with luck have enough time to go back and rewrite what needs to be done.

As much as this is partly due to my own circumstances, I can't help but feel a little aggrieved

by the fact that it also didn't help when the OCA changed the allowed timescales for each level. Originally being allowed 2 years per unit, 5 years into level one and near to finishing my third unit, it was changed to four years per level, and I was forced to borrow a year from level 2. Then of course we had the arrival of the Corona pandemic, which just served to make everything worse. Whilst these problems are in no way responsible for the fact several pieces of work need bringing up to a higher standard, they have just served to make everything that little more difficult.

Brief thoughts on Digital Image and Culture

I have had problems getting to grips with this unit from the start, and were I choosing again I think I would pick a different unit. The subjects within the unit have been both interesting and educational, but there has been something about the unit that has just left me feeling a little at odds with it. I would have liked it to have involved a little more of my own photography, and a little less reliant on the imagery of others. This also causes me to question the assessment process, where one of the criteria is personal voice. My personal voice cannot be seen in images created by other people, even if they are in line with my own work they are still someone else's voice.

As a working photographer one thing I find myself disagreeing with wholeheartedly is the acceptance of the concept of the found image. Whilst in the days of analogue photography it was perfectly possible to find stashes of unknown photographs in boxes for example, with the advent of digital imaging, the phrase today seems to be taking on a whole new meaning. That meaning often being here is something I found on the internet, and now I am going to use it.

I am not against photographers creating archives of images they find on the internet for reference or inspiration, it is a hugely valuable tool for research. These images however should not be referred to as found, this implies that they were somehow lost. There is no legitimate use of video or music that is found on the internet, in fact there are usually vast legal enterprises pursuing anybody that thinks it is OK to download music or video without the owners permission. Yet photography is not treated in quite the same fashion.

Orphan works laws seem to be more in favour of protecting the rights of a business to use an image, assuming they have diligently searched for the original owner, allowing them to use an image until the owner is found or finds them. This of course suggests the owner of the image would happily sell one of their images to a commercial concern, even when it is entirely possible that they may have some reason not to. Having been subject to several images being used by other people, some in a commercial sense and others purely as an image on a private website, I find it hard to accept the excuse of it being a found im-

age, with no way to find the owner. Even when posted on my own website, or on a sharing site under my own name, in some cases even with a copyright water mark on the image, which has invariably been cropped out. The fact that all of my images tend to carry copyright information and contact details in the EXIF data also seems to be ignored. The problem then is the reply you get when requesting payment for use of an image on a commercial website. Usually an offer of credit, or an apology and a removal, very rarely is there an offer of payment.

This of course doesn't apply so much to private websites, where a credit might be acceptable, as long as there is no monetization involved. I find myself able to give a little leeway to private individuals, trying to explain copyright and how it is always worth getting the creator's permission. I cannot say the same for the commercial entities that despite having advertising or website budgets fail to even approach the owners in the first place. Assuming that most will not have the time or funds for any legal action, especially one that may only result in a small payment.

BRYAN ADAMS **EXPOSED**

Bryan Adams: Exposed

I had been aware of Bryan Adams as a photographer for quite a while, but had never seen his work other than on a computer screen or in magazine articles. This exhibition covers a selection of his work ranging from portraits and fashion work, to a series on injured military personnel entitled *Wounded: The Legacy of War*.

It must be said that this is not just another celebrity trying something arty, and Adams himself has expressed a long held interest and love for photography. This can be seen in any image in the exhibition, all show not only an in depth knowledge of photographic technique, but an innate talent in regard to the way the images are created. There is an intimacy to many of the portraits, even those showing wounded service people, that draws you in, giving you the feeling of seeing something not meant for public eyes. The fashion work is of the quality you would expect of someone that has been regularly published in the likes of *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar* and is both pleasing and interesting to see in a larger scale than usual.

It is obvious that Bryan Adams has the ability and knowledge to create work of a very high quality, and as such the work itself would stand on its own feet, without the attached celebrity name. It does however lead me to a question. Does the fact that he is already a famous person give him an advantage when it comes to access? Many of the celebrity portraits, you find yourself wondering if they agreed to pose because it was him, or if they were already friends. Obviously we would all use this to our advantage if we were the same position, but easy access to such subjects can only ever be a bonus.

Equally with the fashion work, is a famous name good for sales of magazines, or was he chosen the first time for his ability? There is no doubt on this last point that he is more than able, but with the current obsession with everything celebrity it would be easy to suggest that a famous name is always of benefit, you only have to look at the Burberry Beckham campaign.



Amorinda and the Phoenix People, 2017 © Cooper & Gorfer

Cooper & Gorfer
I Know Not These My Hands
Fotografiska 11.3–11.6 2017



Fotografiska

Cooper & Gorfer: I Know Not These My Hands

I am somewhat unsure on where to start here. The images themselves are beautiful, created through both photography and collage techniques. They show people from various places in a way that is far more personal than you would expect from a series of images showing cultures from around the world. This is obviously with intent when you read quotes such as:

“We usually ask the people we photograph to wear something from their parents or grandparents, or something they have inherited – something with a history or meaning within their family.”

As to the style of the images, I find it hard to decide what they are. Many remind me of the kind of images you find in old churches, or even renaissance paintings. There is a wonderful feel

to them as if you are viewing something much more physically created than photographed. In part I guess this is due to the extensive collage work that is put into each image.

On the subject of the collage work itself, it is as you would expect, totally seamless. You could be forgiven for thinking that these were photographs created in camera, such is the way that everything fits together.

I am lost when it comes to trying to easily fit these images into a genre. Portraits, well... yes, but they are so much more than that. The creators have managed to not only show people, but diversity and culture, how clothing is so much more than just something we wear, and how it reflects not only our identity, but in some cases our history as well.



Guy Bourdin: Avant-Garde

It is interesting to think that Guy Bourdin in part created fashion photography as we recognise it today. Narratives, effects and high saturation, coupled with cropped compositions and sometimes the obvious surreal influences of his mentor Man Ray, are fairly standard today, along with the idea that the product is secondary to the image itself, for example not having the product as the main central focus of the image. Having only ever seen small versions of these images it is a delight to see them in a gallery setting. They work so much better in a large scale, allowing you to see more of the detail within, and emphasising things such as the slightly higher colour saturations.

You can see when viewing the images that there has been a painstaking perfectionist approach to composition taken. Everything is in just the right place, negative space used to good effect, and in

some cases blocks of colour covering large areas. This style must have been almost shocking when introduced, a huge step away from the traditional product in the centre advertising image.

There are also a number of black and white images. Whilst not as initially obvious as the colour images, these all have stunning compositional themes. There is a focus on the contrasts within shapes and forms, and areas of light and dark are played off against each other to create beautiful visual effects. *Model Eva 1969* for example, appears almost landscape like in the way it is presented.

A great exhibition for anyone interested in fashion photography, or to get a little inspiration when trying to think about doing something a little different.

Digital Image and Culture: Reflective Presentation

Looking back over the course Digital Image and Culture I find that there have been instances where I just didn't find myself connecting with it in the way that I expected. This was my first Level 2 Module, and as such the need to adapt my learning methods and skills coincided with, the still ongoing, 2 year period of a global pandemic. Whilst only marginally effected by lengthy lock downs, the inability to just go out and do things led to situations where completing coursework became difficult. Not being able to meet up with groups of friends and colleagues to discuss locations or ideas, or even go to galleries or museums, led to a touch of cabin fever.

In so far as the technical aspects of the course are concerned, I am continuing to experiment with Photoshop. As a tool it is something I have never really used to it's full extent, or potential.

There is also still a large amount of work to do scanning in old family 35mm slides, in part for a piece of the coursework and in part to create a digital archive for my family.

The first two sections of the course were made up of an exploration of techniques and ideas. The sections on Photomontage encouraged me to work with layers for both the first assignment, and after a little false start, assignment 5. The work relat-

ing to archives was quite eye opening, causing me to think of ways I could make use of the archive of images I have stored both on computer and in various print forms. It also prompted me to look into the expansive archives of pictures made by others, here I am referring more to the images of historical photographers that I will never have the chance to see in a gallery. There were several exercises in this middle section that I found truly interesting, hyperphotography, digitizing atrocity, breaking the news and post photojournalism. Disregarding any actual photography, the ethical and social issues surrounding these subjects are easily able to soak up many hours of reading.

Writing the essay acted almost as a pause, allowing me to apply the academic reading, and learning from the first half of the course to my own writing, in practice this first essay was horrible failure, which required a total and complete rethink. Sections four and five set in course a huge change in how I was thinking about the coursework. The series of works on digital identity were extremely interesting in many ways, though I think I may have gone a little beyond the realms of photography and strayed into serious .Phd level papers. This interest in the digital identity theory became the backbone of the essay. Assignments

4 and 5 suffered a little from over thinking the presentation, and not the photography. A lot of rereading of the research I had used for other sections relating to digital identity, and viewing the work of a number of photographers whose work concentrates on identity, and the reworking of the assignments began to take shape.

I need to carry on improving my Photoshop based skills, and to ensure that whilst not only do I continue my research and reading, but by doing so it will help my referencing and academic writing to improve. Whilst I could argue that this being the first essay I have written in 30 years, the final version isn't bad, it could be a lot better. I am acutely aware of being uncomfortable when I am not sure on something and I find this tends to hold me back from experimenting somewhat, especially if the subject is a little more abstract, sometimes I find it difficult to translate the concept into the finished product. The next unit I have is Landscape and I have already been making practice runs and test images for some of the exercises and assignments, the experience with Digital Image and Culture has been of great benefit when it comes to looking forward to the next series of works.

Sean Sweeney

Student Number 510149
Digital Image and Culture