

I remember my last semester in school dreading having to take a class on the history of photography. But as I continued into the semester, to my surprise I began to love the history behind photography, and by history, I mean from its beginning in 1836, when the first photo was ever taken. Throughout the semester our class discussed Photographies beginning roots till its uprising around the world. Photography is “the art or process of producing images by the action of radiant energy especially light on a sensitive surface such as film.” When learning about Photography and its timeline throughout the years we discussed a variety of photographers both men and woman. It was interesting to see the purposes behind the works of those photographers. Photographers such as Alfred Stieglitz, Lewis Hine, Paul Strand and Diane Arbus all captivated the eyes of many. Those photographers and many more brought about a creative way to communicate to the world. Photography continues to dominate as a key source for just about anything! One good example of someone who used Photography to her advantage was Diane Arbus, she focused on people who were neglected, mistreated, and misguided because they were considered “Different.” With her camera and skills Arbus brought about a compelling set of photos that forever will be recognized in today's world.

Arbus was born 1923 in New York City she was raised within a wealthy family, before marrying her last name was Nemerov. Her father David Nemerov ran a fashionable department store called “Russeks.” Arbus had a younger sister named Renee Sparkia who became a sculptor and designer, as well as an older brother named Howard Nemerov who won a Pulitzer prize for U.S poet Laureate in 1988. Her mother Gertrude Nemerov was the one who named Arbus Diane. Even after her father retired from the business career, he and his family remained very successful when he became a painter.

At in early age Arbus was given the opportunity to show her artistic skills due to her father himself. He encouraged Arbus to study and practice painting. In high school Arbus studied painting and ironically hated it. She said, “I hated painting and I quit right after high school because I was continually told how terrific I was”, continuing on to say years later “I had the sense that if I was so terrific at it, it wasn't worth doing.” One might wonder, if she hated painting because of how good she was, what did she think her photography was like? Although high school wasn't all that dreadful for her in fact part of the reason, she lost interest in painting was due to her romance. She met her first love in high school at the age of 14. His name was Allan Arbus and he was 19 years old. Her parents disapproved of the relationship for unknown reasons, but it didn't stop Allan and Diane from having a romance that eventually flourished into marriage. She stated her only ambition was to become Allan's wife.



Diane and Allen (Frances Mclaughlin-Gill/Code Nast, via Getty Images)

In 1941 at the age of 18 Diane and Allan were married. This marks the beginning of Diane's life with photography. Both her and her husband Allan shared a deep interest for photography. After the family accepted the marriage the couple began to work with Diane's father by shooting fashion photographs for the store Russeks's advertisements. Eventually World War 2 had begun, and Allan served as a military photographer. Diane stayed at home and was pregnant with her first child named Doon Arbus. After the war ended the Abruses photographic career evolved and soon enough they were working for top women's magazines and advertising agencies. Doon was already born and a second child came in 1954 and her name was Amy Arbus. Diane and Allen worked as a team, Diane would set up the props and come up with clever ideas for the photos while her husband shot the scenes. One example of Diances and Allans work was a photo made for Vogue magazine. It was of a father and son reading a newspaper, this photo was eventually included in the Museum of Modern Arts popular exhibition called "The family of Man" in 1955. Although as time passed both Diane and Allan became frustrated with the limitations of fashion work. Diane wanted to focus on more of an artistic career path with photography while Allen wanted to become an actor. These conflicting moments put a strain to their marriage and had begun Diane's depressive moments. In 1956 Diane quit the couple's business in order to focus on making photos of her own.

At the time magazines such as Life, Look and the Saturday Evening Post had been in desperate need for photographers, although Diane wanted to focus more on the artistic aspect of photography, not just using images to sell or advertise products. Other Photographies had a similar interest to those of Diane such as Robert Frank, and William Klien, and eventually were pursuing their own vision of what photography could be. One of the most favorite approaches was street photography. A couple of Diane's early work was her trying her own version of street photography. Although that wasn't her true subject. The breaking point for Diane's career was when she took a course with photographer Lisette Model at New York City's New School. With the help of Model, Diane was able to realize exactly she wanted to focus on. Doom Diane's daughter spoke with Model and was told that Diane said, "I want to

focus on what is evil.” Later, her daughter interpreted that quote by saying “I think what she meant was not that it was evil, but that it was forbidden, that it had always been too dangerous, too frightening, or too ugly for anyone else to look on.” Diane began to photograph what she thought was “was life on the edge attitudes about money, social status and sexual freedom.”

After she separated from her husband in 1959 and moved with her 2 daughters money began to bring pressure on Diane. Fortunately, in the fall of 1959 she was assigned her first photo essay about New York City for Esquire.



Photos by Diane Arbus for Esquire magazine

<https://classic.esquire.com/article/1960/7/1/diane-arbus#!&pid=102>

By 1962 Arbus more and more over the years made her relationship with the people she photographed the subject of her work according to an article written by Smithsonian she was curious about “ the details of their lives, their willingness to share their secrets and the thrilling discomfort she felt during these encounters.” some of arbus subjects where Dwarfs, a female impersonator, and hippie chicks who were working as topless dancers.



Diane Arbus Photos (<http://www.ucreative.com/features/diane-arbus-finding-beauty-in-the-odd/>)

After editors began to see her work for Esquire she followed by publishing more than 250 pictures in other magazines such as Harper's Bazaar, and The Sunday Times Magazine of London. With the help of the magazines she worked for she was able to be funded for her own artistic projects. Some might say are her best pieces of work for instance, was the 1970s portrait of the king and queen of a senior citizens dance appeared in large circulation magazines. Arbuse's career continued to grow and flourish and be featured in many museums such as the Museum of Modern Art where they held one the first major retrospective of Arbus and her work in 1972. She was also featured in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Finally, she was featured in the exhibition Catalog named "Diane Arbus Revelations" it was organized by her Daughter Doon and Sussman Arbus. It was the first authorized biography of the photographer. It features a 104-page illustrated chronology of Arbus's life.

In the summer of 1971 on July 26, she slit her wrists and was found dead 2 days later in her bathtub in her apartment. No one really understands why she took her own life, although critics "found in her suicide evidence that her pictures reflected pathology more than art. The story surrounded her life has put some threat among her work. Although Diane Arbus was an intelligent photographer who put passion in her work and will remain loved and honored by many. no matter what the critics say or what people think about the meanings behind her work, her photos will forever be inspiring and capture the essence of photography.



Diane Arbus (https://garage.vice.com/en_us/article/ev3d5j/diane-arbus-zwirner)

Work cited page

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