

Stephen Prado
Essay 1: My Photo Essay
English 1121 (professor Scanlan)
9/24/24

Great meanings

According to *Understanding a Photo* (2013), “The immediate relation between what is present and what is absent is particular to each photograph: it may be that of ice to sun, of grief to a tragedy, of a smile of pleasure, of a body to love, of a winning race-horse to the race it has run (pp. 20).” Any photo of something has its own backstory, even the simplest and mundane photo has its own, some can tell you all you need to know while others need a bit of explanation or context. The first two photographs will be tied together, the last one won’t be tied to the first two, however it will have an interesting backstory.

Seeing Myself on TV



Biggest moment

This is one the proudest moments of my life so far. It was the first time I appeared on TV. Here's the backstory, I was on FOX 5 news because my math teacher in my senior year of high school ran a sports trading card club. I was in that club, and my professor asked me if I wanted to be on TV, I casually said yes. I wasn't particularly scared to be on camera and have a microphone, I was actually pretty excited. It wasn't just me who was there, a lot of friends were also there just out of frame. To make the filming easier we separated areas by sport, most of my friends were in the basketball area and I was in the soccer area along with another friend of mine. During filming the cameraman was asking me questions about my card collection, what my sport was, and who my favorite athlete was in my collection. The filming took place in May 2023 and it only took less than a month to be in the news. I told my parents the time, day, and channel I was going to be on. I ironically missed my big moment because I took a nap.

My idols



Three legends

In *Understanding a Photo* (2013) it reads, "A photograph, while being recording what has been seen, always and by its nature refers to what is not seen (pp. 20)." The "My idols/legends" photo connects to "Seeing myself on TV". These cards I got from that very same card club I was involved in. It took me months for me to find all four of those cards, and when I started collecting cards I didn't think I would have these specifically in my possession. Actually, my math teacher gifted me the Charles Leclerc card for my birthday. He and I are very close and still keep in touch to this day. I look up to these three legends very much, especially Ronaldo.

Selfie at MSG Studios



In Front of the Cameras (Dec. 2023)

This photo has a disconnected story from the first two photos, but regardless, at the same time, has an interesting backstory as well. According to *On Photography* (2013) it states, "While a painting or a prose description can never be other than a narrowly selective interpretation, a photograph can be treated as a narrowly selective transparency (pp. 531)." In this photo, you can see only a certain instance in time where I'm allowing you to see what my life is like or what is happening. You didn't know that I was simply invited to watch a game with two anchors, the one you see on the top left is actually the one who invited me to watch. He and I are very close and met in high school and see him as a mentor. You didn't know that that wasn't actually the last time I went to MSG Studios, I went there two more times in not even the past year. You also

didn't know that while these guys are involved with basketball, I'm actually not a basketball person. I do believe the sport is entertaining and I would rank it as one of the greatest, I rarely watch basketball.

Ultimately

All in all, a photograph can tell a story whether in a direct or indirect I think this quote from Understanding a Photography (2013) really sums up this whole essay, it reads, "A photograph is effective when the chosen moment which it records contains a quantum of truth which is generally applicable (pp. 20)" When I look at my own photographs I like to think the backstory is more interesting than the actual photograph. I also think I am fortunate to have experienced these moments so far in life. Additionally, I think it's also interesting how the last two photos somewhat relate to the rule of three. The first photo (or second photo) is about my three favorite athletes who I look up to. And the second (or last photo) is showing three people, me and the anchors. It's something cool that I didn't even notice until now.

(890 words)

References

Sotang, S. (2013) On Photography. In D. Rieff (Ed.), Susan Sontag: Essays of the 1960's and 70s. The Library of America.

<https://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/scanlan-english-1101-d333-spring2018/files/2018/03/Sontag-On-Photography.pdf>

Berger, J. (2013) Understanding a Photograph. In G. Dyer (Ed.), Understanding a Photograph (pp. 17-21). Aperture.

<https://archive.org/details/understanding-a-photograph-john-berger/page/20/mode/2up>