

Ashley Guachichullca

Essay 1: My photo Essay

English 1121 (Prof. Scanlan)

Date: 09/24/2024

A Better Version

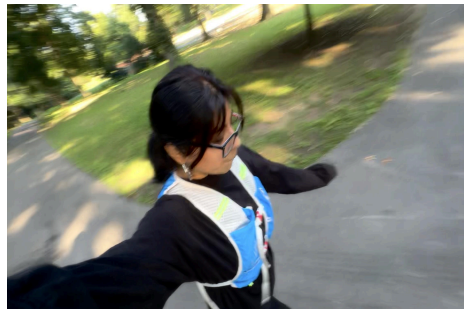


Nina's difference (2024)

Everyone can have their lazy days but a lazy day used to be an everyday thing for me until I decided to change that and become a better version of who I was. In the photo we see a husky and golden retriever dog mix in the middle of catching her ball. Her name is Nina. I got her when she was just a puppy and from then on she changed my way of living. Nina is a very active dog which included me to also become active since she needs her daily playtime.

Therefore it was my responsibility to help her get her exercise in and energy out. While rotting in bed everyday was nice, it was fun to be outdoors being active with my dog instead. We would go to my yard and play fetch with her favorite ball while also running around everyday, morning and night. I took this photo at a decisive moment not knowing how it would come out. I threw Nina her ball and started taking pictures of her catching it. If I were to take the photo even a

second later her ears, position, and ball would all be in a different place. In Teju Cole's "Perfect and Unrehearsed" it writes "a precise organization of forms which give that event its proper expression." This relates to Nina's difference photograph because it refers to the deceive moment of the single moment captured of Nina ducking down to grab her ball showing the significance of the moment. Nina was just the beginning of my journey to becoming a better version. Not only is she my best friend now but she's the reason I'm not laying in bed all day.



Nature Views (2024)

I was never a runner. Gosh I hated running so much I never even did the required pacer test every student needed to do for gym class back in High School. But now I can't say the same. In the photograph "Nature Views" we can see it as a dominant impression. The first thing we notice is the person in the middle, which is me. In this photograph I can be seen holding my camera up high while running through a trail with trees and grass around me. We also see a pop of blue wrapped around me which is my running vest in which I carry my water and other essentials I need while running. The photograph can also be a documentary because I am running which is considered a sport. When I first started my running journey I would run out of breath after a minute but that didn't stop me. I was determined to better myself and with the consistency of going 3 times a week I was able to push myself, raise up stamina, and run a full mile at a

consistent pace. During my running I would also take Nina with me so she can have her fun as well. This benefited both Nina and I by getting the proper exercise needed. I would go every morning to this trail with an amazing view of a lake surrounded by trees. The feeling of running through the fresh air and trees feels very freeing. In the essay of Susan Sontag “On Photography” it writes “Photographs furnish evidence. Something we hear about, but doubt, seems proven when we’re shown a photograph”. If it wasn’t for this photograph no one would have believed someone who would wake up in the middle of the day and stay in bed would now be waking up early in the morning to go on runs.



Peace (2024)

Running was not enough for me. It helped me get to where I wanted to with myself but I wanted to continue to better myself in different ways. Running helped me raise my stamina and lose about 15 pounds but I thought to myself, what's next? I wanted to become stronger physically and mentally so about a month ago I signed up for the gym. This photo was taken while I was in the gym. The gym is one of my favorite places to be in any time of the day no matter the mood I’m in. The gym honestly feels like my safe place and makes me feel at peace. Not only am I becoming stronger but it helped my mentality become so much stronger as well by improving my mood, distraction from negative thoughts, and increased self-esteem. In the photo

we can see my running shoes, water bottle, lifting straps, gym bag, and some dumbbells. I first began with running before I started going to the gym which is why my running shoes are in the center. This type of photo is depth of field. In the photo we can see that it's concentrated on the items mentioned but the background of it is in a blur. In John Berger's "Understanding a Photograph" he writes "If everything that existed were continually being photographed, every photograph would become meaningless." This stood out to me when I first read it because everything has a meaning for someone. Someone may see my peace photograph and may think it's just a bunch of meaningless items but it means something to me.

Finally, I would like to reflect on three things that I learned while writing my photo essay. The first thing I learned was how much meaning a photograph can have itself. Every photo has its own meaning to different people and can be seen differently in others' perspectives. Secondly I learned how photographs have different terms depending on the setting of it. Whether it's a photo of a person, product, protest, or landscape and whether there is movement in the photo, shapes, or proportion it all comes together to determine the kind of photo it is. Lastly I learned the significance of photographs and how it has the ability to capture important moments happening around the world permanently and can be stored to show the future past events and past lives.

(1128 words)

References

Berger, J. (2013). Understanding a Photograph. In J. Dyer (Ed.), Understanding a Photograph: John Berger. (pp. 17-22). Penguin.

<https://archive.org/details/understanding-a-photograph-john-berger/page/n3/mode/2up>

Cole, T. (2015 November 11) Perfect and Unrehearsed. The New York Times Magazine.

https://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/15/magazine/perfect-and-unrehearsed.html?rref=collection%2Fcolumn%2Fon-photography&action=click&contentCollection=magazine®ion=stream&module=stream_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=4&pgtype=collection&_r=0

Sontag, S. (2013). On Photography. In D. Rieff (Ed.), Susan Sontag: Essays of the 1960s & 70s (pp. 531-539). The Library of America.

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