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Essay 1: My Photo Essay

English 1121 (Prof. Scanlan)

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Hobbies

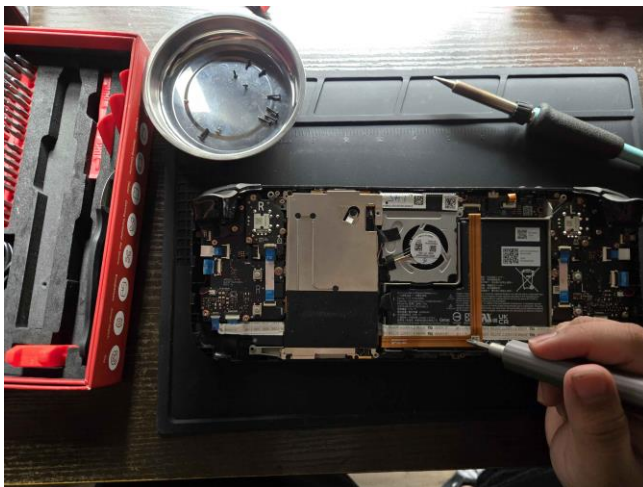
Photos tend to leave many people wondering what's the meaning behind it. Sometimes the photographer tends to leave no context while others do. These photos I have taken would be a mix of both. A quote from John Berger's *Understanding A Photograph* John Berger "I have decided that seeing this is worth recording." (19) helps somewhat guide me on how I plan to frame my photos. My attention is to have the viewer see my photos with no context at first. Each of the photos here is each of my hobbies and I tend to want the viewer to have a grasp of what kind of person I am with each photo. I'll explain the context of each photo to show why it's significant to me and why I chose to take the photo in a certain way, hoping to have the viewer have their perspective of me based on this. I would use Teju Cole's *The Rules of Thirds* (3) from "Perfect-and-Unrehearsed" to help guide me as I'm not much of a photographer while trying to implement some photograph terms into my photos.



Music for the Stress

The photo, “Music for the Stressed” shows every music-related item I own. The vinyl player was a gift from my cousins an Iron Maiden vinyl of their album “The Number of The Beast”. The Bass guitar is a Jackson JS Series spectrum with a mix combination of a jazz and precision style bass and a heavy walnut dark brown body. I wanted to give a narrative on my music taste, style, and personality from this one photo. I have recently picked up

this instrument due to being overwhelmed with my personal life and education. Ever since that day, I have been practicing with it. Sometimes I spend around 30 minutes to 5 hours just playing it. The small Fender amp is something I bought around 3 months ago from Facebook marketplace. Honestly, it's an amazing amp for anyone who's just starting to play any electric instrument even though it's designed for electric guitars. Music is truly one of the biggest impacts on my life, mostly due to my parents' influence over it. They have been taking me to concerts ever since I was around 5. I have been taken to go see Guns N Roses, Def Leppard, Amon Amarth, Iron Maiden, and more. They also influenced my taste in music as I mostly listened to most rock genres.



Damage, Repair, and Explore

The photo “Damage, Repair, and Explore” shows the electric screwdriver I bought as a way to treat myself and a slow way to upgrade my tool selection. The soldering iron shown here is disconnected but it's to give an understanding of what kind of repairs I work with. The black mat and magnetic tray with the open handheld device at the center of the

photo give a sense of balance in a way. I was always curious about computers and anything tech-related. My dad is an electrician and always taught me a couple of things whenever he had the chance. He even took me to some of his safer jobs to give me more hands-on teaching. In a way, he inspired me to learn and take on technical hardware. With each mistake I made, I would take the time to understand and learn what I did wrong. I even had one of the devices I worked with nearly short-circuit due to the solder touching two points on the motherboard. It's also the reason for my choice of major and the reason why I'm still studying.



Controller of all kinds

The photo “controller of all kinds” shows each controller and handheld device i own. The red Xbox controller, NES-style arcade controller, light blue moded PS Vita, and Steam Deck are to give the impression that video games play a big part in my life. I did plan to frame the photo to have each represent the colors of their console but didn't have much to work with. It was always my form of entertainment and just how certain games can bring

some kind of challenge and fun into the mix is what helped keep my intention in it. I remember playing games like Mortal Kombat, King of Fighters, and Halo with my relatives. I would say they even affected what kind of games I'm into and gave more into the competitive side of things. This also helped my ways of learning. Making it more competitive so I can learn and improve. There's no way to get better in a game without practice. That can be said about anything.

These photos illustrate my interests and hobbies. For me, it means a lot and I explained why but for someone who hasn't gotten to know me, I wanted to let them form their own opinion about me. In a way, it's a quantum of truth as these photos can say so much but without any context, the viewer is left wondering about the meaning behind it. Berger's explanation of the quantum of truth "The nature of this quantum of truth, and how it can be discerned, vary greatly. It may be found in an expression, an action, a juxtaposition, a visual ambiguity, or a configuration. Nor can this truth ever be independent of the spectator."(20) Leaving someone to wonder about someone's personality based on their photos is what I want out of this. May my photos be used to learn and understand what a photographer is and maybe get to know me a bit more.

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>

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