

A critical analysis of any media artefact of your choice essay example

[Design](#), [Photography](#)



Photographs capture the current state of the world in terms of culture and philosophy. Photographs are an integral part of mainstream media. They are used to pass on information about the status quo in terms of both political and cultural power. Though seemingly simple and irrelevant a deep analysis of photographs reveals a lot about the culture of the society from where the photograph is taken. Photographs are also very important in evaluating the psychology of the person taking the photograph. The media artifact in my discussion is photographs. The following essay discusses photographs under the feminist theory and the queer theory. The essay explores how photographs can carry a lot of detail oblivious to the observer but clear when the feminist and queer theories are applied.

Analysis of photographs through the feminist theories reveals a lot of stereotypes about gender. Photographs of male and female personalities usually differ in the way and perspective in which the personalities occur and are portrayed in the photographs. Masculinity in photographs is usually portrayed as very active and very strong. be it a billboard advertisement or a website photograph as long as it has elements of masculinity in it the photograph tends to come out as rather active and in deed very strong. This is one gender stereotype clearly visible in almost all photographs available. Photographs with a masculine inclination also tend to have a hint of rationality. The photographs tend to bring about the picture of rationality and clear and well established thought whenever the photograph is of a man or anything masculine. This is yet another cultural stereotype that is clearly visible through deep analysis of photographs especially while applying the feminist theory and point of view. Photographs with a masculine intonation

rarely have portrayals of sexual objects. This is because males are not viewed by society as sexual objects to be used for purposes sex. However whenever portrayals in male photographs involve personification of sex objects these photographs usually portray or bring about the element of bestiality. This is because society views males as sexual beasts. They are fierce creatures as far as sexual matters are concerned. it is very rare verging on impossible to find a photo of a man with a sexual intonation where the man is not brought out as a beast. Even analysis of photographs of gay men show significant differences from photos of women. Gay men despite their nature are still brought out in photos as fierce sexual creatures in other words sexual beasts (week 9, p. 16).

Analysis of any billboard or photograph with female intonation will reveal that women are more often than not brought out as being weak (week 8, p. 33). Women are also portrayed as passive creatures not nearly as active as their male counterparts. This portrayal of women as weak dates back to the early painters and photographers. an example is the work of Leonardo da Vinci. Analysis of two of his paintings the Mona Lisa and the painting of Saint Jerome in the wilderness clearly show disparities in the depiction of masculinity and femininity in paintings and photographs. On first sight it is very clear that though very beautiful and stunning Mona Lisa is weak. She is a fragile creature that looks vulnerable to the cruelties of the world much like a delicate flower. The saint of Jerome however appears very different in comparison to Mona Lisa. Though much older than Mona Lisa the saint of Jerome is much stronger and much more assertive in the painting. The saint of Jerome portrays a man though in a state of suffering coping perfectly with

his situation and predicament. This man appears to be rather strong and not subject to his environment. Though in a cruel environment this man has managed to adapt. This man has managed to manipulate his environment to the extent that it serves his best interest rather than being a constant threat that he has to protect himself from.

Photographs with a feminine intonation also tend to portray women as domestic beings whose main purpose in life is the nurturing of the young (week 8, p. 13). This can be attributed to the cultural stereotype that is age old and dictates that a woman's place is in the kitchen. Even photographs of the leading women in the corporate scene still depicts them as domestic creatures more inclined towards nurturing the young. Emotions are also very prominent in photographic depictions of feminism. Feminism is associated with inclination toward sensitivity and high emotional irritability. This high emotional irritability brings about a sense of irrationality which is also very prominent in photographic renditions of feminism. as opposed to masculinity which is usually portrayed as critical thinking and rationality feminism is brought out as irrationality fueled by emotional disposition and a lacking capacity to control these emotions (week 8, p. 11).

It's very rare to find a photographic depiction of feminism without the depiction as sex objects (week 7, p. 40). This depiction as sex objects is clearly visible from the way women appear in photos. A key element in the photograph of any woman is beauty. This element is present in every photographic depiction of a woman. This fuels the fact that society has for the longest time viewed women as sex objects thus their depiction in photographs has elements of sex in it.

The queer theory is also very insightful when applied to photographs. The queer theory states that there is a generally accepted system of life in terms of behavior and sexuality. There is also a system of life which is apparently new and strange and might in certain instances be deemed unacceptable by society. These new systems tend to disrupt the social construct of society that has existed for ages. These elements thus appear queer when portrayed in society by photographs or any other form of media. This thus brings about the element of sexual stereotypes in photographs. Photographs depicting heterosexuality usually appear natural (week 9, p. 13). A man and a woman in any photograph appear natural and comfortable with each other.

Heterosexuality is thus brought out as the type of sexual behavior approved by nature. Heterosexuality also has an element of purity whenever it is depicted in a photograph. A photograph of a man and a woman appears pure and also has elements of clear understanding of sexuality and the natural order as nature intended. an element of love is also brought out in photographs of men with women. This love is accompanied by a sense of faithfulness and the beauty of the relationship between man and woman. Photographs of homosexuals to the contrary appear queer to say the least. This sexual inclination is usually depicted as abnormal and in constant conflict with the natural order (week 9, p. 14). it is also brought out as deviant and in constant conflict with the norms that are widely accepted by the greater society. as opposed to heterosexuality homosexuality is stereotyped by society as promiscuous. This element of promiscuity is clearly visible in photographic depictions of homosexuals be they men or women. Photographs of homosexuals are also not as colorful and as bright as

photographs of heterosexuals. This is because homosexuality is considered by society as sexual perversion and is not accepted in many societies.

Photographs are a very important media in terms of their portrayal of society. Analysis of photographs under the feminist theory reveals just how society feels about women and men. Analysis of photographs through the queer theory also reveals practices that are not accepted by society or are considered abnormal.

References

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