

Does photography
enhance or limit our
perception of reality?
essay sample



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In a world where our perception and understanding of the place in which we live is influenced by our surroundings and the way we view them, it is important that we look at all aspects of the matter from all viewpoints, both through the lens and with open eyes. In this case, I agree with Sontag in the fact that we can't learn about the world just from what the camera has captured, but disagree with her idea that photography is negative in the way that it allows for us to fill our minds and makes us feel.

Sontag says that “ photography implies that what we know about the world if we accept it as the camera records it. (L1, P1)” A photographer takes a picture of a regular, old weapons factory; a simple picture. In reality, this is a picture of the Krupp, a manufacturing company in which assisted Nazi Germany in the persecution of nearly 11 million people. Sontag is absolutely right. Photographs are deceiving, and “ one never understands anything from a photograph (L6-7, P1)” How can we be persuaded to believe that Nazi Germany wasn't “ all that bad,” from a simple photograph? How can we rely on photography to be our outlet to the outside world? Pictures can be a nice to look at, and we can infer from them what we like, but the picture can't tell us what it is, it can't explain to us the symbolism or far-fetched meaning that lies behind it. This can not be the way in which we try to understand the world.

No, we can not learn anything about or understand the world from looking at a picture, but a picture never the less is art, which has the power to heal and help so many. There is no denying that photography does have its own positive qualities. We must recognize photography's ability to “ fill in blanks in our mental pictures of the present and past, (L7-8, P1)” a characteristic in <https://assignbuster.com/does-photography-enhance-or-limit-our-perception-of-reality-essay-sample/>

which Sontag says is limiting. I say it is anything but. Without pictures, our minds would be blank canvases, with no outlet. Pictures allow us to paint a picture in an empty place in need of light. That, in my opinion, is anything but limiting.

“ Photography makes us feel that the world is more available than it really is. (L33-34, P2)” Remember that while a correct perception and understanding of the world is important, ones sanity must come first. It is imperative that we be able to express ourselves through art, or get the emotional healing that looking at a picture provides. When you’re at your lowest, is feeling that the world is there for you really such a bad thing?

As we look through the lens, and with open eyes, we see that photography is limiting but at the same time expands our imagination. It can deceive us with its message, or the image which it portrays, but can also shed light on things in need of it. It can send us the wrong message, or give us the wrong idea, but has the incredible ability to fill our minds.