Formative feedback

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<th>Student name</th>
<th>Judith Bach</th>
<th>Student number</th>
<th>492829</th>
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<tr>
<td>Course/Unit</td>
<td>PH6CTS Contextual Studies: Assignment 2: Lit Review</td>
<td>Assignment number</td>
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**Overall Comments**

A well organised and presented Lit Review (although also a kind of assignment one review and lit review in one as you’ve been passed from last tutor - which is fine). This should go far to explore this very contemporary debate in photography and its uses in ‘memory work’. Can get a little dense in parts with quotes and references that haven’t been fully summarised and, as you admit yourself, chasing the most complex theoretical context seems like writing about the very meaning of photography and is therefore a massive undertaking.

Hone it down with thematic headings (as you have begun to do) and perhaps then concentrate on the ‘codes’ of family photos and how they have been used in artworks to explore context and meaning. Already seem to be concentrating on what exactly - within this broad theme - you wish to explore. It would be more useful to concentrate on the central theme and subject under discussion (photography and the effect in family photography). This with particular regard then to the affective aspects of family snaps - material qualities such as creasing and blunt edges (which Barthes alludes to) as well as the ‘disruptions’ used by the contemporary artists that you talk about. Find a visual methodology’ theoretical framework that you can make use of which include these references. i.e Semiotics (will naturally include Barthes) and Critical Discourse (Hall, Foucault) that expands on the context of use of family snaps. Gillian Rose (see - Readings) is best for this. Whether you want to additionally explore the psychological readings (also in Rose’s book) is very much up to you but this may leave you off track on your central theme you outline which is: afterlife of family photographs (what they are taken from, including a sense of their materiality, then how they are used).
Feedback on assignment

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Quality of Outcome, Demonstration of Creativity

Define the key terms before exploring them

Don’t presume prior knowledge of the reader with such terms as mnemonic, punctum, indexical which need defining then some précis analysis of:

- Afterlife of personal photographs - if this is your central theme hone it down to possible consider:
- Personal/Collective memory division and the uses of family photographs (in the case studies by artists you explore - are you looking specifically at old family photographs that have not been used in this way?).
- Snapshot / vernacular photography (as a vehicle for the above)
- indexicality (modernist / postmodernist - relation to ‘the real’)
- object aesthetic/transparent representation opposition.
- formal disruptions which upset the above (double exposure, film accidents etc)
- Context and meaning: digital culture - private images becoming public/collective on exhibition or display.

Personal/collective memory – the presumed ‘ontology’ of especially ‘documents’ or these snapshots (which are regarded as somehow more ‘authentic’ as they are taken with an intent to ‘stand in’ for memories) whether they are a representation of memory or actually ‘block’ memory as Barthes alludes to – and contradicts himself – is another matter.

- Use critical language and definitions such as photographic codes (Bate, 2016, 21) representation (Hall, 1997), and fully define them in the literature review.

Using headings to provide a summary of the themes then the literature which links to this is a sound way of doing the lit review and focusses the mind on how images are used and the meaning that emerges.

- ‘memory’ - for example place Camera Lucida in the ‘memory’ or ‘personal memory’ heading?
- Time as Punctum - bring in Berger’s notion of radial time (see annotations).
- Loss and Longing.
- Theoretical Framework - see ‘research’ below.

Research

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

‘Reality’ and Realism (as a mode of representation) and the amateur/snapshot as a ‘guarantee of an authentic vision, as “reality”’ (Bate, 2016, 51)

Delimitate aspects of the ‘snapshot’ as this is the ‘vehicle’ for personal memories and their potential disruption.

- Theoretical Framework (TF) method used to analyse images and allude to the construction of meaning (i.e. it isn’t reflected in the photo itself but works through the process of contextualising and appraising family images).
- Personally, TF would take this out as its vague at the moment. Consult Rose (2013) Visual Methodologies to ascertain which is the most appropriate analysis method.
• Doing family photography to uncover the meaning of actual family photographs to move forward to allude that you are researching ‘family photography’ as a ‘discourse’ (see her visual methodologies Chapter 6).

**Learning Log**

**Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis**

If you are using this make a reference in the next assignment and we can look at the research gathering and the essential summary.

**Suggested reading/viewing**

**Context**

Aware that you may be ‘swamped’ with readings on this central theme. So I have set up a google folder with readings which place ‘family photos’ at the centre (as this seems to be the direction) making ‘the Archive’ separate now.

- Be aware of the difference between:
  - ‘the archive’ (which implies institutional ‘collective’ memory as well as personal archives) and
  - ‘family photography’ - which may be re-purposed to an archive but is centrally about representations - and constructions of ‘personal’ familial memory.


Rose, G. 2010, Doing family photography: the domestic, the public, and the politics of sentiment, Ashgate, Burlington, VT

**Materiality and the Photographic Object**


**Reality & Realism (intro to theory) & Snapshots (Chapter 2)**

Bate, D (2016) Photography The Key Concepts Bloomsbury

**Summary**

Anchor the debate as one of aesthetic affect /transparent representation effect. I suggest using someone like Gillian Rose as a ‘template’ to analysis case studies as well as explore the central points related to family photographs: summarise of the key readings make sense to an informed general reader (which I am standing in for) then it will be appropriate.
Please inform me of how you would like your feedback for the next assignment: written or video/audio.

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<tr>
<th>Tutor name</th>
<th>Garry Clarkson</th>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>18 November 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Next assignment due</td>
<td>18 February 2019</td>
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**Strengths**

- Clear and well presented with illustrations and referenced bibliography.
- Engagement with key debates and well referenced bibliography
- Well described points relevant to the theme.

**Areas for development**

- Structure needs outlining direct relevance to core theme - some tangents (such as theoretical framework and Camera Lucida - which could be inside the memory heading) regarding using all themes
- Lit review of the key ideas listed above.
- Follow description/outline with analysis to lead to a persuasive writing style which questions some of the theoretical points by positing a counter argument.
- Uses of Photography (Berger)