

Academic Innovation and Distance Education

Assignments

1. Watch the documentary film, War Photographer

War Photographer is a documentary by Christian Frei about the photographer James Nachtwey.

As well as telling the story of an iconic man in the field of war photography, the film addresses the broader scope of ideas common to all those involved in war journalism, as well as the issues that they cover.

One of the main themes of the documentary is the level to which a journalist should become involved in the events that they are there to document. Nachtwey credits the intimacy of his photography to his emphasis on establishing a rapport with his subjects, often despite a significant language barrier. Des Wright, a cameraman with Reuters, describes the problem of being too far removed from what is happening. “[Some journalists] say, ‘I’m sorry, I’m a journalist, I’m not a part of this.’ And I say, but you are a part of it. I think a lot of people would be quite happy for that man to be killed so they can get the particular picture that they want.”

The documentary uses footage filmed with a small “microcam” video camera mounted on Nachtwey’s SLR cameras. This technique gives a sense of immediacy to the viewer, showing events from the perspective of the photographer.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_Photographer

2. Read the PDF by Susan Sontag, On Photography

Susan Sontag was an influential, American author, literary theorist, and political activist. In this short essay, she discusses some important ideas about photography.



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3. Respond to the Discussion Question, “Do Photographs Tell the Truth?”

There is a new discussion question available to you. Remember to respond according to the discussions rubric in the General Course Info folder.

4. Critique your fellow classmates’ work on their eFolios

This week you will review your classmates’ work and critique it. How well do you think they accomplished the macro assignment? How do their images relate to their chosen semester-long theme? Did they find creative solutions to shooting in macro mode? What is working, what is not working? Are the images under exposed or over exposed? Are they in focus? Is the focused on the right point? Do the images work well together as a group? Be sure to critique using the critique rubric in the General Course Info folder. Remember to use the concepts and vocabulary we looked at in the previous weeks.

5. Order the film, Baraka, by Ron Fricke

You will need to watch this next week, so make sure you have it on hand and ready to go.



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