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Photography

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We linger unregenerately in Plato's cave, still reveling, our age-old habit, in mere image of the truth. But being educated by photographs isn't like being educated by older, more crafted images. For one thing, there are a great many more images around claiming our attention. Daguerre started the inventory, with faces, and since then just about everything has been photographed; or so it seems. This very instability of the photographing eye changes the terms of confinement in the cave, our world. In teaching us a new visual code, photographs alter and enlarge our notions of what is worth looking at and what we have a right to observe. The most grandiose result of the photographic enterprise is to give us the sense that we can hold the whole world in our heads—as anthology of images.

Movies and television programs light up walls, flicker, and go out; but with still photographs the image is also an object, lightweight, cheap to produce, easy to carry about, accumulate, store. In Godard's *Les Carabiniers* (1963), two sluggish lumpenpeasants are lured into joining the King's Army by the promise that they will be able to loot, rape, kill, or do whatever else they please to the enemy, and get rich. But the suitcase of booty that Michel Ange and Ulysse triumphantly bring home, years later, to their wives turns out to contain only picture postcards, hundreds of them, of monuments, department stores, mammals, wonders of nature, methods of transport, works of art, and other classified treasures from around the globe. Godard's gag vividly parodies the equivocal magic of the photographic image. Photographs are perhaps the most mysterious of all the objects that make up, and thicken, the environment we recognize as "modern." Photographs really are experience captured, and the camera is the ideal arm of consciousness in its acquisitive mood.

To photograph is to appropriate the thing photographed. It means putting oneself into a certain relation to the world that feels like knowledge—and, therefore, like power. A now notorious first fall into alienation, habituating people to abstract the world

into printed words, is supposed to have engendered that surplus of Faustian energy and psychic damage needed to build modern, inorganic societies. But print seems a less treacherous form of leaching out the world, of turning it into a mental object, than photographic images, which provide most of the knowledge people have about the look of the past and the reach of the present. What can be read about the world is frankly an interpretation, as are older kinds of flat-surface visual statements, like paintings and drawings. Photographed images do not seem to be statements about the world so much as pieces of it: miniatures of reality that anyone can make or acquire.

Photographs, which fiddle with the scale of the world, themselves get reduced, blown up, cropped, retouched, doctored, trickled out. They age, plagued by the usual ills of other objects made of paper. They are lost, or become valuable, are bought and sold; they are reproduced. Photographs, which package the world, seem to invite packaging. They are stuck in albums, tacked on walls, printed in newspapers, collected in books. Cops alphabetize them; museums exhibit them.

Photographs furnish evidence. Something we hear about but doubt seems “proven” when we’re shown a photograph of it. In one version of its utility, the camera record incriminates. Starting with their use by the Paris police in the murderous round-up of Communards in June, 1871, photographs become a useful tool of modern states in the surveillance and control of their increasingly mobile populations. In another version of its utility, the camera record passes for incontrovertible proof that a given thing happened. The picture may distort; but there is always a presumption that something exists, or did exist, which is “like” what’s in the picture.

Whatever the limitations (through amateurism) or pretensions (through artistry) of the individual photographer, a photograph seems to have a more innocent, and therefore more accurate, relation to visible reality than do other mimetic objects. Virtuosi of the noble image like Paul Strand and Edward Steichen, composing mighty, unforgettable photographs decade after decade, still want, first of all, to show something “out there,” just like the Polaroid owner for whom photographs are a handy, fast form of note-taking, or the shutterbug with a Brownie who takes snapshots as souvenirs of daily life.

Despite the presumption of veracity that gives all photographs authority, interests, seductiveness, the work that photographers do is also part of the usually shady commerce between art and truth. Even when photographers to serve reality, they’re still haunted by tacit imperatives of taste and conscience. The immensely gifted

members of the Farm Security Administration photographic project of the late 1930s (among them Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange, Ben Shahn, Russell Lee) would take dozens of frontal pictures of one of their sharecropper subjects until satisfied that they had gotten just the right look on film—the precise expression on the subject’s face that supported their own notions about poverty, despair, exploitation, dignity, light, texture, and space.

In deciding how a picture should look, in preferring one exposure to another, standards are always being imposed on the subject. Although there is a sense in which the camera does indeed capture reality, not just interpret it, photographs are as much an interpretation of the world as any other work of art. Those occasions when taking photographs is relatively indiscriminating, promiscuous, or self-effacing do not lessen the didacticism of the whole enterprise. This very passivity—and ubiquity—of the photographic record is photography’s “message,” its aggression.

Images which idealize (like most fashion and animal photography) are no less aggressive than work which makes a virtue of plainness (like class pictures, still lifes of the bleaker sort, and mug shots). There is an aggression implicit in every use of the camera. This is as evident in the 1840s, that brief period which Walter Benjamin considers photography’s greatest, the mere ten years that preceded its “industrialization,” as in all the succeeding decades, during which technology made possible an ever-increasing spread of that mentality which looks at the world as a set of potential photographs. Even for these masters of the first decade, David Octavius Hill and Julia Margaret Cameron, Hugo and Nadar, who used the camera as a means of getting painterly images, the point of taking photographs was a vast departure from the aims of painters. From its start, photography implied the capture of the largest possible number of subjects. Painting never had so imperial a scope. The subsequent “industrialization” of camera technology only continues a promise inherent in photography from its very beginning: to democratize all experiences by translating them into images.

The “industrialization” of photography that Benjamin deplores in his essay of 1931 is much further advanced now, forty years later, than even he could have imagined. That age when taking photographs required a cumbersome and expensive contraption—the toy of the clever, the wealthy, and the obsessed—seems remote indeed from the era of sleek pocket cameras which anyone can use. The first cameras, made in France and England in the late 1830s, had only inventors and buffs to operate them. Since there were then no professional photographers, there could

not be amateurs either. In this first decade, taking photographs had no clear social use; it was a gratuitous, that is, an artistic activity, without yet being an art. Contrary to what Benjamin argues, it was only with “industrialization” that photography became an art. As “industrialization” provided social uses for the operations of the photographer, so the reaction against these uses inspired the self-consciousness and taste for stylistic experiments of photography-as-art.

Recently photography has become almost as widely practiced as sex and dancing—which means that, like every other mass art form, photography is not practiced by most people as an art. It is mainly a social rite, a defense against anxiety, and a tool of power. Memorializing the achievements of individuals considered as members of families (as well as of other groups) is the earliest popular use of photography. For at least a century, the wedding photograph has been as much a part of the ceremony as the prescribed verbal formulas. Cameras are part of family life. According to a sociological study made in France, most household have a camera, but a household with children is twice as likely to have at least one camera as a household in which there are no children. Not to take pictures of one’s children, particularly when they are small, is a sign of parental indifference, just as not turning up for one’s graduation picture is a gesture of adolescent rebellion.

Through photographs, each family constructs a portrait of itself—a kit of images that bears witness to its connectedness. It hardly matters what activities are photographed so long as photographs get taken and are cherished. Photography becomes a rite of family life just when, in the industrializing countries of Europe and America, the very institution of the family starts undergoing radical surgery. As that claustrophobic unit, the nuclear family, was being carved out of the much larger traditional family, photography came along to reinforce symbolically the imperiled family life. Those ghostly traces, photographs, supply the token presence of the dispersed relatives. A family’s photograph album is generally “about” the extended family—and, often, is all that’s left of it.

As photographs give people an imaginary sense of possession of a past that is unreal, they also help people to take possession of space in which they are insecure. Thus, photography is linked with one of the most influential of modern activities: tourism. It seems positively unnatural to travel for pleasure without taking a camera along. For the bemused and somewhat anxious vacationer, the photograph offers indisputable evidence that the trip was made, that fun was had. Photographs document consumption carried on outside the view of family, friends, neighbors.

Dependence on the camera as the device that makes real what one is experiencing doesn't fade when people travel more. Taking photographs fills the same need for the sophisticates accumulating photograph-trophies of their boat trip up the Albert Nile or their fourteen days in China as it does for vacationers taking snapshots of the Eiffel Tower.

A way of certifying experience, taking photographs is also a way of refusing it—by converting experience into an image, a souvenir. Travel becomes a strategy for accumulating photographs. The very activity of taking pictures is soothing. Most tourists feel compelled to put the camera between themselves and whatever is remarkable that they encounter. Lacking other responses, they take a picture. This gives shape to experience: stop, take a photograph, and move on. The method especially appeals to people handicapped by a ruthless work ethic—Germans, Japanese, and Americans. They have something to do that is like a friendly imitation of work: they can take pictures.

People robbed of their past seem to be the most fervent picture takers, at home and abroad. Everyone who lives in an industrialized society has lost the past to some degree, but in certain countries, such as the United States and Japan, the break with the past has been particularly traumatic. Right now, the fabled American tourist of the Fifties and Sixties, rich with dollars and Babbitry, is being replaced by the Japanese tourist, newly released from his island prison by the miracle of overvalued yen, who is generally armed with two cameras, one on each hip.

In a full-page ad currently running in many European weeklies, a small group of people stand pressed together, peering out of the photograph, all but one looking stunned, excited, upset. The one who wears a different expression holds a camera to his eye; he seems self-possessed, almost smiling. While the others are passive, clearly alarmed spectators, having a camera has transformed one person into something active, a voyeur. Only he has mastered the situation.

What do these people see? We don't know. And it doesn't matter. It is an Event: something worth seeing—and therefore worth photographing. The ad copy, white letters across the dark lower third of the photograph like news coming over a teletype machine, consists of just six words: "... Prague ... Woodstock ... Vietnam ... Sapporo ... Londonderry ... LEICA." Crushed hopes, youth antics, colonial wars, and winter sports are alike—are equalized by the camera.

Part of the horror of such recent coups of photojournalism as the pictures of bonzes reaching for the gasoline can, of a Pakistani prisoner on his back about to be impaled, comes from the awareness of how plausible it has become, in situations where the photographer has the choice between a photograph and a life, to choose the photograph. The person who intervenes cannot record; the person who is recording cannot intervene. The omnipresence of cameras persuasively suggests that time consists of interesting events, events worth photographing. This, in turn, makes it easy to feel that any event, once underway, and whatever its moral character, ought to be allowed to complete itself—so that something else can be brought into the world, the photograph. After the event has ended, the picture will still exist. Thus on the event is conferred a kind of immortality (and importance) it would never otherwise have enjoyed. While real people are out there killing themselves or other real people, the photographer stays behind his camera, creating a tiny element of another world: the image-world that bids to outlast us all.

While the camera is an observation station, the act of photographing is more than passive observing. Taking pictures, like sexual voyeurism, is a way of tacitly—often explicitly—encouraging whatever is going on to keep on happening. To take a picture is to have an interest in things as they are, in the status quo remaining unchanged (at least for as long as it takes to get a good picture), to be in complicity with whatever makes a subject interesting, worth photographing—including, when that's the interest, another person's pain or misfortune.

“I have always thought of photography as a naughty thing to do—that was one of my favorite things about it,” Diane Arbus wrote, “and when I first did it I felt very perverse.” Being a professional photographer can be thought of as naughty, to use Arbus's Pop word, if the photographer seeks out subjects considered to be naughty, taboo, marginal. But naughty subjects are harder to find these days. And what is the perverse part of taking pictures? Professional photographers must often have sexual fantasies when they are behind the camera. Perhaps the perversion lies in the fact that these fantasies are both plausible and inappropriate.

In *Blow-Up* (1967), Antonioni has the fashion photographer played by David Hemmings convulsively writhing above Veruschka's body with his camera clicking. Naughtiness, indeed. In fact, using a camera is not a very good way of pushing someone around sexually. Between photographer and subject there has to be distance. The camera doesn't rape, or even possess, though it may presume, intrude, trespass, distort, exploit, and, at the farthest reach of metaphor, assassinate—all

activities that, unlike the sexual push and shove, can be conducted from a distance, and with some detachment.

There is a much odder sexual fantasy in Michael Powell's extraordinary movie *Peeping Tom* (1958), which is not about a peeping tom but about a homicidal photographer who kills women while photographing them, with a weapon concealed in his camera; he develops the films, and runs them off at night for his solitary pleasure. Not once does he touch his subjects. He doesn't desire their bodies; he wants their photographed images, particularly those showing them experiencing their own death. The film assumes connections between impotence and aggression, professionalized "looking" and cruelty, which point to the central fantasy connected with the camera. The camera as phallus is, at most, a flimsy variant of the inescapable metaphor that everyone unselfconsciously employs. However hazy our awareness of this fantasy, it is named without subtlety whenever we talk about "loading" and "aiming" a camera, about "shooting" a film.

The old-fashioned camera was clumsier and harder to reload than a Brown Bess musket. The modern camera is trying to be a ray gun. One ad reads:

The Yashica Electro-35 GT is the spaceage camera your family will love. Take beautiful pictures day or night. Automatically. Without any nonsense. Just aim, focus and shoot. The GT's computer brain and electronic shutter will do the rest.

Like a car, a camera is sold as a predatory weapon—one that's as automated as possible, ready to spring. Popular taste expects an easy, invisible technology. Manufacturers reassure their customers that taking pictures demands no skill, that the machine is all-knowing, and responds to the slightest pressure of the will. It's as simple as turning the ignition key or pulling the trigger.

Like guns and cars, cameras are fantasy machines whose use is addictive. However, contrary to the rhetoric of ordinary language and advertising, they are not as lethal as guns and cars. For cars being marketed like guns there is at least this much truth in the hyperbole: except in wartime, cars kill more people than guns do. The camera does not kill, so it seems to be all a bluff—like a man's fantasy of having a gun, knife, or tool between his legs. Still, there is something predatory in the act of taking a picture. To photograph people is to violate them, by seeing them as they never see themselves, by having knowledge of them they can never have. To photograph is to turn people into objects that can be symbolically possessed. To photograph someone

is a sublimated murder, just as the camera is the sublimation of a gun. Taking pictures is a soft murder, appropriate to a sad, frightened time.

Perhaps people will learn to act out more aggressions with cameras and fewer with guns, with the price being an even more image-choked world. One situation where people are switching from bullets to film is the photographic safaris that are replacing gun safaris in East Africa. The hunters have Hasselblads instead of Winchesters; instead of looking through the telescopic sight to aim a rifle, they look through a viewfinder. In end-of-the-century London, Samuel Butler complained that “there is a photographer in every bush, going about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.” The photographer is now charging real beasts, beleaguered and getting too rare to kill.

Guns have metamorphosed into cameras in this unique comedy, the ecology safari, because nature has ceased to be what it always was—what people needed protection from. Now nature—discovered to be pathetic, endangered, mortal—needs to be protected from people. When we are afraid, we shoot. But when we are nostalgic, we take pictures.

It is a nostalgic time right now, and likely to remain so for a while. Photography is an elegiac art, a twilight art. There is no subject the photographer might attempt that could not be touched with pathos. All photographs are *memento mori*. To take a photograph is to participate in another person’s (or thing’s) mortality, vulnerability, mutability. Precisely by slicing out this moment and freezing it, all photographs testify to time’s relentless melt.

Cameras begin duplicating the world at the time when the human landscape starts to undergo a vertiginous rate of change. Just when the greatest number of forms of life are being destroyed in the shortest space of time, a device is invented to record what is disappearing. The textured Paris of Atget and Brassai is mostly gone. Like the dead relatives and friends preserved in the family album, whose presence in photographs exorcises some of the horror and guilt of their disappearance, so the photographs of neighborhoods now torn down, rural places disfigured and made barren, supply our pocket relation to the past.

A photograph is both a pseudo-presence and a token of absence. Like a wood fire in a room, photographs—especially those of people, of distant landscapes and faraway cities, of the vanished past—are incitements to reverie. The sense of the unattainable

that can be set off by photographs feeds directly into the erotic feelings of those for whom desirability is enhanced by distance. The lover's photograph in a woman's wallet, the poster photograph of a rock star over an adolescent's bed, the snapshots of a cabdriver's children above his dashboard—all such talismanic uses of photographs express a feeling both sentimental and implicitly magical, attempts to contact another reality.

Photographs can be aids to desire in the most direct, utilitarian way—as when someone keeps photographs of anonymous archetypes of desire as an aid to masturbation. The situation is more complex when photographs are used to stimulate the moral impulse. Desire has no history. It is made up of archetypes and in that sense is abstract. But moral feelings are embedded in history, whose persona are always concrete, whose situations are always specific. Thus, almost opposite rules hold true for the use of the photograph to awaken desire and its use to awaken conscience. The images that mobilize conscience are always specific to a given historical situation. The more general they are, the less likely they are to be effective.

A photograph that brings news of some unsuspected zone of misery can't make a dent in public opinion unless there is an appropriate context of feeling and attitude. The photographs Matthew Brady took of the horrors of the battlefields did not make people any less keen to go on with the Civil War. The photographs of skeletal prisoners held at Andersonville inflamed Northern public opinion—against the South. (The effect of the Andersonville photographs must have been partly due to the very novelty, at that time, of seeing photographs.) The political understanding that many Americans came to in the 1960s would allow them, looking at the photographs Dorothea Lange took of Nisei on the West Coast being transported to internment camps in 1942, to recognize their subject for what it was—a crime committed by the government against a large group of American citizens. Few people who saw the photographs in the 1940s could have had so unequivocal a reaction; the ground for such a judgment barely existed then. Photographs cannot create a moral position, but they can reinforce one—and can help build a nascent one.

Photographs may be more memorable than moving images—because they are a neat slice of time. Television is a stream of under-selected images, each of which cancels its predecessor. A still photograph is a “privileged moment,” turned into a slim object that one can keep and look at again. Photographs like the one taken in 1971 and put on the front page of most newspapers in the world—a naked child running down a South Vietnamese highway toward the camera, having just been hit by

American napalm, her arms open, screaming with pain—were of great importance in mobilizing antiwar sentiment in this country from 1967 on. And each one was certainly more memorable than a hundred hours of televised barbarities.

One would like to believe that the American public would not have been so unanimous in its acquiescence to the Korean War if it had been confronted with photographic evidence of the devastation of Korea, an ecocide and genocide in some respects even more thorough than the ones inflicted on the Vietnamese a decade later. But the supposition is trivial. The public did not see such photographs because there was, ideologically, no space for them. Americans did have access to photographs of the sufferings of the Vietnamese because journalists felt backed in their efforts to get those photographs, some people having redefined the event as a savage colonialist war. The Korean War was understood differently—as another struggle of the Free World against the Soviet Union and China—and, given that characterization, photographs of the cruelty of unlimited firepower would have been irrelevant. If an event is now defined as something worth photographing, it is still ideology (in the broadest sense) that tells us what constitutes an event. And it is never photographic evidence which can construct—more properly, invent—events. Without a politics, photographs of the slaughter-bench of history are not identifiable as such.

The quality of feeling, including moral outrage, that people can muster in response to photographs of the oppressed, the exploited, the starving, and the napalmed also depends on the degree of their familiarity with these images. The photographs of Biafrans starving in the 1960s had less impact for some people than Werner Bischof's photographs of Indian famine victims in the 1950s because those images had become banal, and the photographs appearing now in magazines of Tuareg families dying of starvation in the Southern Sahara may seem to many like an unbearable replay of a now familiar atrocity exhibition.

Photographs shock us in so far as they show us something novel. Unfortunately, the ante keeps getting raised—partly through the very proliferation of such images of horror. One's first encounter with the photographic inventory of ultimate horror is a kind of revelation, perhaps the only revelation people are granted now, a negative epiphany. For me, it was photographs of Bergen-Belsen and Dachau which I came across by chance in a bookstore in Santa Monica in July, 1945. Nothing I have seen—in photographs or in real life—ever cut me as sharply, deeply, instantaneously. Ever since then, it has seemed plausible to me to think of my life as being divided

into two parts: before I saw those photographs (I was twelve) and after. My life was changed by them, though not until several years later did I understand what they were about. What good was served by seeing them? They were only photographs—of an event I had scarcely heard of and could do nothing to affect, of suffering I could hardly imagine and could do nothing to relieve. When I looked at those photographs, something was broken. Some limit had been reached, and not only that of horror; I felt irrevocably grieved, wounded, but a part of my feelings started to tighten; something went dead; something is still crying.

To suffer is one thing; another thing is living with the photographed images of suffering, which does not necessarily strengthen conscience and the ability to be compassionate. It can also corrupt them. Once one has seen such images, one has started down the road of seeing more—and more. Images transfix. Images anesthetize. An event known through photographs certainly becomes more real than it would have been if one had never seen the photographs—think of the Vietnam war. But, after repeated exposure to images, it also becomes less real.

There is the same law for evil as for pornography. The shock of photographed atrocities wears off with repeated viewings, just as the surprise and bemusement one feels the first time one sees a pornographic movie wear off after seeing a few more. The sense of taboo which makes us indignant and sorrowful is not much sturdier than the sense of taboo that regulates our definition of what is obscene. And both have been sorely tried in recent years. The vast photographic catalogue of misery and injustice throughout the world has given everyone a certain familiarity with atrocity, making the horrible seem more ordinary—making it appear familiar, remote (“It’s only a photograph”), inevitable. At the time of the first photographs of the Nazi camps, there was nothing banal about these images. After almost thirty years, we may be reaching a saturation point. In these last decades, “concerned” photography has done at least as much to deaden conscience as to arouse it.

The ethical content of photographs is fragile. With the exception of certain photographs, like the camps and Vietnam, most photographs don’t keep their emotional charge. A photograph of 1900 that was affecting then because of its subject would, today, be more likely to move us because it is a photograph taken in 1900. The particular qualities and intentions of photographs tend to be swallowed up in the generalized pathos of time past. Aesthetic distance seems built into the very experience of looking at photographs, if not right away, then with the passage of time. Time eventually positions most photographs, even the very amateurish, at the

level of art.

The “industrialization” of photography permitted its rapid absorption into rational—i.e., bureaucratic—ways of running society. No longer toy images, photographs became part of the furniture of the environment—a touchstone and confirmation of that reductive approach to reality which is called “realistic.” Photographs were enrolled in the service of important institutions of control, notably the family and the police, as symbolic objects and pieces of information. Thus, in the bureaucratic cataloguing of the world, many important documents are not valid unless they have affixed to them a photograph-token of the citizen’s face.

The “realistic” view of the world compatible with bureaucracy redefines knowledge—as techniques and information. Photographs are valued because they give information. They tell one what there is: they make an inventory. In fact, except to cops, novelists, and historians, even their value as information is trivial. The information that photographs can give starts to seem more important than it really is at that moment in cultural history when everyone is thought to have a right to something called “news.” Photographs were seen as a way of giving information to people who do not take easily to reading. The *Daily News* still calls itself “New York’s Picture Newspaper,” its bid for populist identity. At the opposite end of the scale, *Le Monde*, a newspaper designed for skilled, well-informed readers, runs no photographs at all. The presumption is that, for such readers, a photograph could only illustrate the analysis contained in an article.

A new sense of the notion of “information” has been constructed around the photographed image. The photograph is a thin slice of space as well as time. In a world ruled by photographic images, all borders (“framing”) seem arbitrary. Anything can be separated from anything else. All that is necessary is to frame the subject differently. Through photographs, the world becomes a series of unrelated, free-standing particles; and history, past and present, a set of anecdotes and *faits divers*. It makes reality atomic, “manageable,” and opaque. It is a view of the world which denies interconnectedness. The ultimate wisdom of the photographed image is to say: “There is the surface. Now, think—or, rather, feel, intuit—what is beyond it, what the reality must be like if it looks this way.” Strictly speaking, there is never any understanding in a photograph, but only an invitation to fantasy and speculation.

Photography implies that we know about the world if we accept it as the camera records it. But this is the opposite of understanding, an approach which starts from

not accepting the world as it looks. All possibility of understanding is rooted in the ability to say no. Strictly speaking, it is doubtful that a photograph can help us to understand anything. The simple fact of “rendering” a reality doesn’t tell us much about that reality. A photograph of the Krupp factory, as Brecht points out, tells us little about this institution. The “reality” of the world is not in its images, but in its functions. Functioning takes place in time, and must be explained in time. Only that which narrates can make us understand.

The limit of photographic knowledge of the world is that, while it can arouse conscience, it can, finally, never be ethical or political knowledge. In itself, the knowledge gained through still photographs will always be some kind of sentimentalism—whether cynical or humanist. It will always be knowledge at bargain prices—a semblance of knowledge, a semblance of appropriation, a semblance of rape, a semblance of wisdom. Photographs have a great effect on our ethical sensibility, by making us feel that the world is more available than it really is. By furnishing this already crowded world with a duplicate world of images, photography subtly devalues the world and undermines the possibility of having fresh responses to it.

Being involved with photographs is an aesthetic consumerism to which we are all, understandably, addicted. We are image-junkies now. It is a glorious form of mental pollution. Poignant longings for beauty, for an end to probing below the surface, for a redemption and celebration of the body of the world—all these good feelings are expressed in the pleasures we take in photographs. But other, more doubtful longings get expressed as well.

(This is the first of two essays on photography. The second will appear in the next issue.)