

TASK 2 - Illustrated Book Project Proposal Task

500 words, due 5pm Feb 12th, submitted via moodle.

Formatting: please use the headings below making use of the advice and resources provided.

References should be made using the Harvard format.



Name: Joseph Allen

Theme/Context

Provide a brief summary of the theme or subject you want your work to focus on. You might include details about the impact you hope to achieve, how the book format will help you connect with your audience, and what will make your work stand out. (300 – 500 words)

My idea for my book is to do a person-centric street study. Much like Martin Parrs work where he traverses any given area and documents the time he spent there by photographing the people going about their routines. No matter how normal or absurd they are. I hope to portray my own look into normality through my own take on documentary style photography. I will be attempting to include the use of close-ups, wide angle portraits, photographs of people from afar without their knowledge, some staged photographs of people looking into the camera. And some photographs of interesting architecture. I hope the audience reaction to this book is to understand the studied area better than before they read my book, or to at the least, be more interested in the place that I have photographed. I may even use humour in the way that I layout the photographs in my book to allow for a more enjoyable read than just a photographically competent one. One that allows the reader to make connections between photographs that may or may not be intended so that they can imagine their own fiction about the people that I will be photographing.

I will be creating a book that feels robust in its making, thick glossy paper and if I can manage it, a hardback book. Any writing that I include in the book will be at the end and the beginning of the book, to allow the viewers to digest my photography uninterrupted by information or explanation. This will give the time the viewer needs to create their own thoughts on the photographs as a collective. "What is this book telling me about this place?" "Is it good?" "Is it bad?". I want the audience to figure this out for themselves through the photographs alone, without my input. I will be using a very user-friendly font too, and preferably not too much Aesthetic language to allow for the book too be picked up by a wider range of people. I understand this book will just be made for a small amount of people, but I like to imagine that this book will be sold at shops in the local area, opening myself to critique about how accessible my book may be to the general public.

Influence

Highlight the work of a photographer who currently inspires your work. Analyse an image of theirs and explain your interest in their work. Consider style, theme, context, practical technique. (300 – 500 words)



Nice, France, 2015

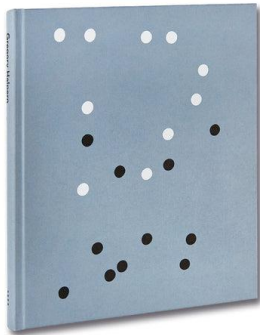
One of the largest influences on me and my work recently would be Martin Parr. Not so much his use of flash, but his large focus on people, and more generally, the nature of the modern person. How people act when caught in a moment, whether they know you're taking the photo or not. His ability to capture a moment that seems so purely personal is something that I look at as a skill that he has honed into his own. And has been inspiring me more and more to hone into my own too. I hope that my work only slightly reminds people of his work, I do not want for an easy comparison or side by side opinion.

For example, this photo from Martin Parrs work *Life's a Beach*. A photograph of an older woman holding her sopping wet dog and smirking in amusement at the camera. Wearing a loose golden bikini, green & gold sunglasses and a sun hat. She is also standing on a pebble topped beach, the waves rippling behind her with the sun glistening off everything around her, including her shoulders and head. The use of flash here would normally be abnormal given that the photograph is clearly taken during the day, but he still uses it to separate the woman from the background, freezing her in artificial light whilst surround by natural light. Having an older woman standing as she is, cradling her small dog on a sunny say at the beach feels incredibly ordinary, so ordinary that it starts to look staged, as if she was brought there by Parr specifically for this shoot. This is one of my main takeaways from his work, in particular this photo, his ability to frame normality in such a way that it feels surreal. This is something that I aspire to be able to do later in my photographic career.

The inspiration I have taken from his work is not his grand use of a flash, but instead his unapologetic approach to photographing the public in their natural routines. Documenting the Nature of the common person.

Book Form

Referencing the session PowerPoint on Moodle (or another relevant source), discuss at least one book that has influenced you. Explore its visual and aesthetic qualities, social or historical context, impact, or practical methods relevant to your theme. You may also evaluate its overall effectiveness. (300 – 500 words)



A book that has influenced me for years and will continue to influence me now that I have a physical copy is Gregory Halpern's book *ZYZX*. In this book, Gregory Halpern photographs a poetic image of California by merging images of dry deserts, beautiful gardens, the decay of urban areas and the fragility of human nature. The way that he juxtaposes photographs of people with architecture and textures with bright colourful portraits creates these dreamlike, almost surreal page turns.

My main takeaway from this book is the portrait photography.

Whilst my style is much more natural and is in no way posed, I still look at the portraits in this book for the composition techniques and the way they frame their subjects. The framing techniques don't only apply to people, they apply to any subject that he chooses. Whether it's a rock, a flower, grass or just textures, there is clear intent in the framing of every photograph. As for the physicality of the book, much like how I want to present my book, it has a hard back cover. I feel that this allows the book to convey a feeling of permanence or something that you cannot throw away, something that I care about in my work.

In my opinion, this book uses the colour blue to draw a very clear through line which is present in almost every single photograph in this book and is also the colour of the book cover. This gives the book a very fresh feel and an overarching calming tone, no matter the photograph that you are looking at. The book is allowing you in to venture a world of juxtapositions where elegance sits side by side with destruction.