

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: Joe Bunyan

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 book will focus on a series of image I took in my Grandad's house. I took these pictures before his house was cleared, trying to focus on some of the objects that hold significance for me- this was quite difficult as things I had in mind from years ago have since been buried underneath other junk. Essentially the topic of the book will be hoarding – this subject fits in well with themes I have explored in previous work, such as materialism, object and memory. However, there will also be the personal aspect- at the moment, I'm not so sure how much I want to project this to the audience (through image selecting and editing I can present the series as more generalised or focus on a selection of images that hold a lot of personal weight).

My initial idea for binding, which is what I've done for my first dummy, is the stitch binding method. The reason for this is that it links into the themes of materialism and objects, in that it doesn't attempt to mask any aspect of the book's construction. In quite an elegant way it highlights the book's construction and therefore speaks to the man-made and tangible. In contrast, a sleek hardback book's design means we focus on the images and perhaps don't pay so much attention to it's tangibility.

For the covers I want to use card different to the pages inside. At the moment I quite like the idea of having just the title on the front and nothing else. This is what I have done on the dummy, except I didn't know how to print onto the black card I had, so I just printed the title on white paper and stuck it on. Because the images inside will look chaotic and messy, I'd like the cover to be simple and unassuming. One thing that I have seen on quite a lot of photobook covers is a small image set in a slight indent – I might experiment with this idea as well. For the dummy I used black card because that's what they had in the post office – but as I make more dummies I would like to use a muddy green colour card because it would resemble junk or dirty plastic, and also because my grandad was Irish and would spend a lot of time teaching me about Irish history, culture, music etc.

For the paper, I was thinking of using something with a bit of grain. I think this would fit the aesthetic of the images well (I have currently shot a roll of film of some of the pictures from the series projected onto the wall in the lighting studio – I haven't scanned them yet but I'm hoping this will add some more texture). Also the feeling of rougher paper may resemble touching something dusty, like the objects in every picture. I also considered the idea of using really thin paper, almost like newsprint (I got this idea because one of the things he used to hoard was newspapers, magazine etc), although I'd imagine that the thinner the paper, the less texture it's able to hold so perhaps I'll have to find a compromise or just pick one or the other.

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)



From series *Back Yard*, Daisuke Yokota.

This image appears to show a pile of earth, although it's hard to tell exactly. The striking thing about it is the shadows and texture. Daisuke Yokota's photographic process involves a cycle of re-photographing, developing and letting light leak, solarising prints and so on (Exposure Magazine, 2018). This technique results in layers and layers of shadow, grain and reduced clarity. This laborious process explores themes such as time, memory and temporality, literally incorporating layers of time into the images. In one article Yokota discusses how memory relates to his photographic practice: "Although physical experience of time is singular, time at a conscious level can multiply with each recollection of memory and the different experiences of time generated by these actions pass in parallel to a physical time" (Amison, 2013). We can see in this quote how each repetition of re-photographing mimicks the way we revisit our memories, and unfortunately in time our memories begin to fade, much like how the images degrade.

In relation to my own concept, the themes in Yokota's work resonate a lot with my experiences in my Grandad's house. I can remember each time visiting there it felt like a time capsule, and once I was inside, the outside world seemed irrelevant as the interior was familiar and unchanged. Although, as I'd look around I'd slowly noticed that it wasn't unchanged at all, and that objects were continually re-arranged, buried under other things, and degrading. My memories of the house always look the same – in my head the house never really changes, yet every time I'd visit in person I could notice a million differences. There was always a sense of flux and temporality, but now that the house has been cleared the images I'm working with relate solely to my memory, and not to a location I can go back to and reshoot.

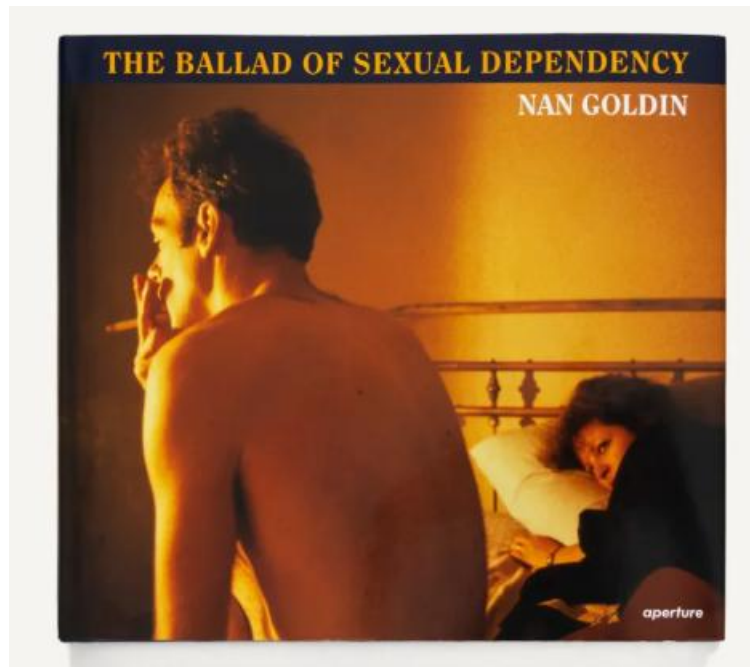
I plan to experiment with these images using film, roughly based on Yokota's process and maybe things I have played around with in the past. Firstly because it relates to a person's hoard and its continually changing nature, but also because I'm not sure I feel comfortable exhibiting or making a book with the raw images. For years and years I've wanted to record the interior of the house, but I know that my Grandad would murder me if he knew I'd taken photos inside, so I think abstracting the images slightly makes them more universal, or about hoarding and consumption in general rather than my Grandad's struggle with hoarding in particular – at the same time it still remains a personal project for me.

Exposure Magazine (2018). *(In)visible and (In)audible Temporalities in the Work of Daisuke Yokota*. [online] Medium. Available at: <https://medium.com/exposure-magazine/in-visible-and-in-audible-temporalities-in-the-work-of-daisuke-yokota-9f62f113e867>.

Amison, P. S. (2013). *Daisuke Yokota*. [online] 1000 Words. Available at: <https://1000wordsmag.com/daisuke-yokota/>.

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)



“I took the pictures in this book so that nostalgia could never color my past.” - Nan Goldin

Nan Goldin’s book *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* contains a collection of images taken in the 80s, recording her experiences and her friends at that time in her life. The photographs provide a very raw documentation of certain underground scenes which Goldin was a part of - highlighting all the excitement, love and friendship whilst also covering many of the issues these groups contended with such as substance abuse and the growing AIDS epidemic. The book follows a traditional documentary format (i.e. one image per page with white border), which suggests that Goldin did regard herself as part of the American documentary tradition, yet used her camera to record something very different to those who came before her. With the images’ content and composition often being weighty, the white border also allows the images space to breath. The use of colour film is an unusual choice, as it was looked down upon within documentary photography at that point – so perhaps Goldin saw herself at the end of the that tradition and wanted to break off from it and create something fresh.

I find the choice of cover image interesting - for me it sets an unhappy and anxious tone for the book, and not all the images inside match these kind of emotions - regardless it still taints my view of the work as a whole because I saw it first and it gave me an impression which permeates my reading of all the images inside. If, for example, the image below was used as the cover I might feel differently:



I did look through the book in a bookshop in Amsterdam and there seemed to be a mix of a lot of emotions in it, all far ends of the spectrum – nothing felt average or mundane. I think this image has a great mix – the woman with the cigarette looks angry, but the two dancing are clearly having a great time.

Goldin, N. (2022). *Why 'The Ballad of Sexual Dependency' Endures in the Twenty-First Century*. [online] Aperture. Available at: <https://aperture.org/editorial/why-the-ballad-of-sexual-dependency-endures-in-the-twenty-first-century/>.