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In this essay I will be discussing about the digital age open how it changed photography. Discussing how it started off. How it quickly grew with the internet and how its completing changed our lives on how we see photos today. It will finally end to find a conclusion on the digital age whenever we are moving in the right direction and to get a better understanding. The question I ask is this the end of photography or just a new beginning.

"it's the little things: your friend who texts instead of ringing a doorbell. A bus filled with people looking at phones instead of newspapers." I quoted this from Nathan Jurgenson at the beginning of my thinking because I believe this is worrying. The world has drastically changed over the years of the digital age. The way we read, the way we communicate, the way we consume. It all has changed. Photography has completing changed with it. And I believe its ruining our lives. I believe there is some much exploitation on social media.

Photography has completing changed are views on the world. Before it seemed like a way of documentation. Now today everyone could claim to be a photographer. With power of Instagram and other apps. Anyone can add filters and visual changes to photos to make the setting completely different. It doesn't give us a complete truth. "It can change the possibility of time and space, privacy and visibility, truth and falsity". It seems to be hard to claim anything you had done in your own life. Another quote forms the same book from a writer called Emile Zola said in 1901, "In my view, you cannot claim to have really seen something until you have photographed it." I believe this quote is invalid in today's world as you can manipulate anything on social media to claim you have done. To me it's hard to find any truth with photos on social media now.

What can people trust what they see? Do I believe that social media is destroying social media? Yes and no. Photography in the digital era has become so popular for sure in today's world. Everyone near enough will have a smartphone. "People taking photographs of their food in a restaurant instead of eating it," says Olmos. "People taking photographs of the Mona Lisa instead of looking at it. I think the iPhone is taking people away from their experiences." As someone who has seen it as well, I can safely say this is very true. People take photos of a painting to me ruins the integrity of that painting. People don't care enough to look but to take a photo and use it for a social media purpose. To claim they have seen it. It seems that way is the only way to prove it now days.



Figure 1

In figure one is photo created by Andreas Varro called selfish. He quotes “do you approve of me and my baby? Thanks for the likes, I’m sure when my child grows up, she won’t mind that ive shared her life with the world – good or bad – to sell products, services and promote brands “. This photo shows an example of the issues we face on social media. Everyone now has the access. Using photography as the media. I too see this media a lot and its damaging. There are many dangers I think people are aware of social media that don’t seem to really care of the potential backlash of social media. I think Andrea’s Varro really captures the situation we are in today’s world of the internet age. People want approval. They look at numbers. The photos they use and how the portray it. It gives wrong impression. Is she happy? Is this right? Who knows? Everyone will see it very differently and will have their opinion. I believe it destroyed the privacy of her and her child. As we spoke before about people don’t understand the dangers and if they do choose to ignore it to get approval. It also very concerning too for parents. I see a lot of parents posting images with their children in cheesy or unnecessary posts. It is worrying because of potentially how sick people can be. They want the approval to show how good of a parent they are.



Figure 2

Another piece of Andreas Varro work discusses big tech companies promises to keep us more connect but will this make us unhappy in the long run. Scientist's research does suggest that these apps are making us less happy. I think this taints photography as I feel it gives such a fake and unreal approach. Photography I felt use to be taught to us by professional and enthusiasts, now it's easier with the uses of the internet and social media. It is shown online now. Forget books and tutors. The internet and social media can now do that for us. To me the image show there is no trust at all backing what I believe on social photography too. There is no trust. And there is real danger. I believe this backs my thoughts to believe the art of photography is dying. There's now so much saturation. It leads me into my thoughts onto art on social media in general. Do the likes make the decision if the piece of art or a photo good? If it gets over 100 likes does that mean he a skilled photographer with 10 years' experience? You can't tell someone or understand if they are an artist or photographer on platforms like that. It can be false. It might not even be their own work too? Things can be completely stolen for someone else's gains

A lot of my work started off using Instagram to show off my work and photos. I used to be posting constantly. But now I find it off putting. There are over 1.2 billion Instagram users. That's a lot. As possibly many don't claim to be photographers or artists. I think people don't realise they are in a way. Instagram is saturated with landscapes. All good. So how can you tell the different between a photographer and not. If you don't click on their profile to find out if they are. You will never know. Photographers put in time into their work where the normal user doesn't but could get recognition. It hard to find like minded people as there are so many.

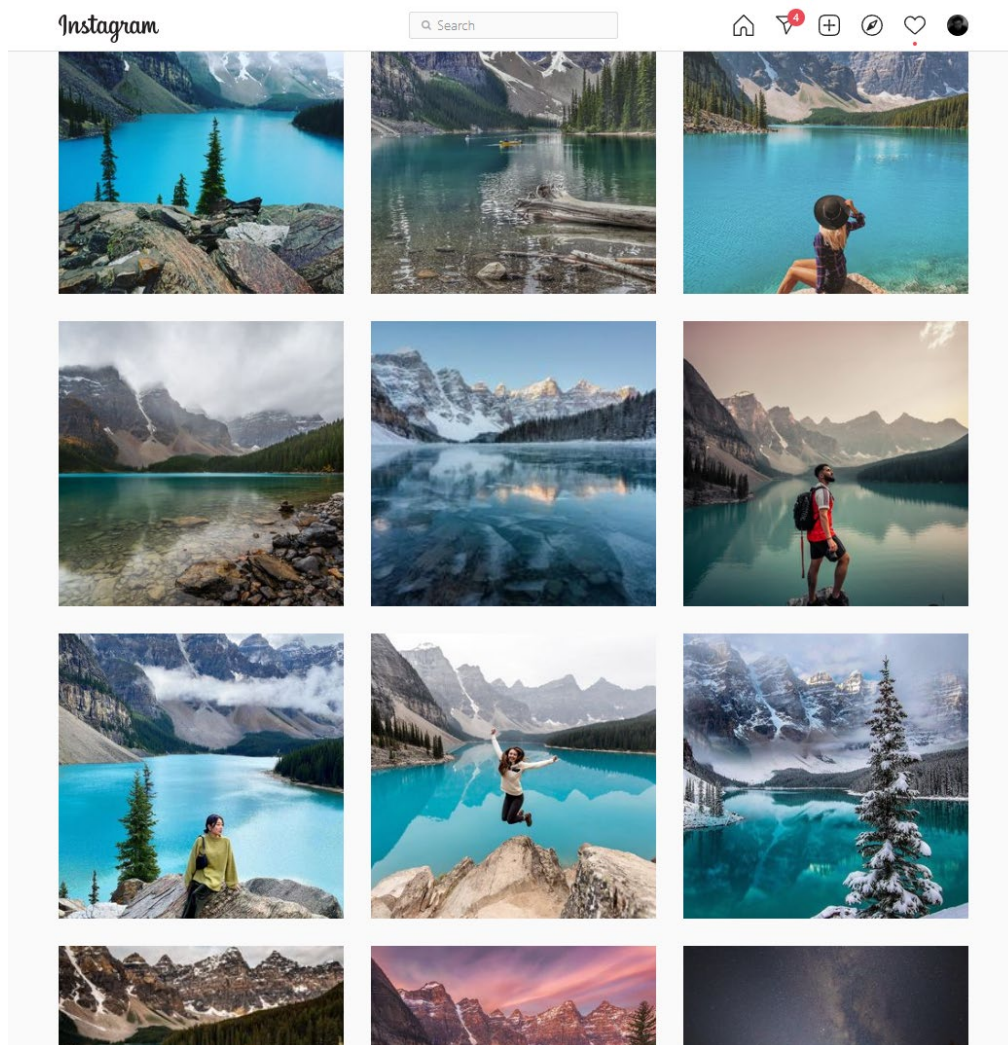


Figure 3

In figure three is a screenshot of an Instagram of many landscapes of moraine lake. Popular destination in Canada. All amazing pictures but who are the people taking them? Photographers? Or just another tourist. Who knows? But this feed on Instagram is completely saturated of the same location. Many Photographers will possibly have the same shot of the location and will not have the same recognition as someone else has. To me Instagram is not the place to showcase your skill and work. Its more becomes your portfolio in the end. A place where someone can quickly search you and to see what type of photographer or artist you are. I believe this could kill printing and other forms of media. What's the point of creating something physical where less people will see it where you can share it on Instagram for free to billions of users? To me this is killing the art of photography and art in general. Here is some photo over million times. Instagram or social media platform can't be an art gallery. It must be a place for people to share experiences instead. It is the place to capture the world. art should be showcased in gallery or some physical form in my eyes.



Figure 4

As I continue my research I stumble across an interesting article on the Mona Lisa. I was glued on one paragraph in this article written by Scott Reyburn on what the Mona Lisa tells us about art in the Instagram era.

“The young couple moved to the front of the crowd to look at the painting. After a few seconds, the woman turned around, smiled into her cell phone and took some selfies. Next, she handed her device to her husband, who took more formal shots of her in front of the work. The two then posed arm in arm for selfies together, turned to have a last brief look at the painting — and moved away.”

In figure 4 you see a photo that I have seen in person as well. Phones held high to take photos of the Mona Lisa. To claim you have seen it. It seems more now that. Instead of looking at the actual work it seems to become more of an experience that you have been there. You saw it. But people would not tell you what they thought of the Mona Lisa. Rather it's just become more of a status that you have seen it. I never took a photograph, but I tried to understand the painting. Been younger than it wasn't easy for me to understand but it was just very distracting. People crowd around the Mona Lisa just taking photos and they just leave. But when you are 16 years of age and see this, you think this is the normal. 10 years later. It certainly leaves me questioning what the world has become in this digital age.

As I do my research on social media. The art form now and how people now look at photography. It is completely changed us forever. And there is no going back. I believe everything becomes much more saturated and unoriginal. That's not to say people can't be creative and try things that have been done. It seems a lot of people care about their brand, their social media presence. What does that mean for photography and art. Well, it will keep growing. More and more people can acquire a smart phone and instantly take photos and send them off to social media in a matter of seconds. As I go back to the same quote at the start of the essay from Nathan Jurgenson. "it's the little things: your friend who texts instead of ringing a doorbell. A bus filled with people looking at phones instead of newspapers." To me the world has socially devolved over the years. It keeps people quiet. No one wants to talk. I see around a table of people and most of them are on their phones. Consuming some content. Now as it seems rude, I think it is more worrying. Damaging to our health and wellbeing.

In Susan Sontag's book, *On Photography*, reading a sentence that interested me 'To collect Photographs is to collect the world' it gave me more thoughts about how real that has become with social media photography. We now see the world. As some may not get experience the world at all. But does that mean people don't have too, I guess. They can see now online. Through search engines. Through social media. The world has reached our phones. As this may be a representation and we know it's different. Eventually we might not have to. Do we need photographers anymore? The world is already there.

With all things considered, I think this will ruin the art of photography but art just in general. We used to talk about it. Now we comment on a post on twitter. We could see in an art gallery. Now we can see it on our phones. It damages the way we see things. As I have social media myself, I have become less wanting to use it. I feel like a lot of younger generation have become zombies to technology. I have to say I do sound like I'm completely ranting about social media and with photography. Having more thoughts on it, I don't think it will destroy art and photography. I don't go back on what I say or think about it though. Overall, I have an attitude against it. The market is saturated with photographers of the same thing. It encourages a lazy attitude for photography too. Photographs that don't have any meaning to me anymore if they get posted on social media. Even my own work has the same feeling. It's why I don't want to post anything. I want to print more and make physical work now. To give it more meaning. Art will never die. It changes. But that doesn't mean it's getting better in ways.

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Figures

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