

Annotated Bibliography – Millie Jones (2403702)

Hirsch, M. (2016). *Family frames: Photography narrative and Postmemory*.

Marianne Hirsch explores how family photographs shape representations of family relationships, personal identity and cultural memory. She examines how photographs construct narratives about parents, children and family life, often presenting idealised versions of relationships and experiences. Through discussions of photography, literature and visual culture, Hirsch investigates the relationship between images and the stories people tell about the past. She also introduces the concept of 'postmemory', exploring how later generations develop connections to experiences they did not directly live through, through photographs, stories and inherited memories.

Hirsch provides a compelling theoretical perspective because she challenges the assumption that family photographs offer objective representations of reality. Her approach connects photographic theory with memory, identity and family relationships. However, some of her discussion focuses on historical trauma and inherited memories, meaning that not all her examples directly relate to ordinary childhood nostalgia.

This source is very relevant to my dissertation concept. It will help me examine how family photographs create idealised narratives of childhood and influence how we understand our younger selves. Hirsch's ideas make us question what photographs from our childhood show, what they leave out and how they shape our memories over time.

Kuhn, A. (2002). *Family secrets: Acts of memory and imagination*. London: Verso.

Annette Kuhn explores the relationship between family photographs, personal memories and imagination through an examination of photographs from her own childhood and family history. She investigates how photographs prompt recollection and how memories are reconstructed through personal interpretation, family stories and wider cultural influences. Kuhn challenges the idea that photographs provide straightforward evidence of the past, demonstrating that their meanings depend on the experiences and perspectives of the people viewing them.

A strength of Kuhn's *Family secrets* is its combination of personal photographic analysis and theoretical discussion. Her approach encourages readers to question what photographs reveal, what they leave out and how their meanings change over time. This makes her arguments particularly useful for analysing family archives. However, her autobiographical approach centres on personal experiences, so her interpretations may not necessarily represent **everyone's** relationship with childhood photographs.

This source is relevant to my dissertation question as Kuhn helps me understand how photographs can prompt memories that extend beyond what is visible in an image. Her ideas will support my exploration of childhood and the relationship between photographic evidence and remembered experience. The book also raises questions about whether repeated exposure to childhood photographs changes our memories and how family stories influence our interpretations of the past.

Langford, M. (2021). *Suspended conversations: The afterlife of memory in photographic albums*. McGill-Queen's University Press.

Martha Langford examines how photographic albums communicate personal and family histories. Through her analysis of historical albums, she explores how photographs gain meaning through their selection, arrangement and the stories told about them. Langford argues that albums should be understood as connected collections of images rather than as isolated photographs. She also investigates the relationship between photography and oral storytelling, showing how spoken recollections help explain images and preserve family histories.

A strength of Langford's *Suspended conversations* is its emphasis on the album as a complete narrative, offering a valuable perspective on how photographs construct meaning collectively. Her analysis also highlights the limitations of photographs when their original context or accompanying stories are lost. However, the book focuses primarily on historical albums, particularly those produced between 1860 and 1960, so its arguments do not directly address contemporary and digital archives which is a time period that I am investigating.

This source supports my dissertation question as Langford will help me explore how the selection and arrangement of family photographs can create particular narratives of childhood. Her discussion of oral storytelling is also relevant to how family members explain childhood images and influence one another's memories.