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3. Ideal Photographs and Photographic Transparency

Where Wollheim holds that photographs don't represent their subjects *in the same way* as paintings (they express thoughts about a subject by being used as representations), Scruton goes much further and holds that photographs don't represent their subjects *at all*. Rather controversially, photographs are not representations. Like Wollheim, Scruton is concerned with the intentional relationship between a representation and its subject matter (what it represents). Representations, such as paintings, are understood as essentially intentional and to express a *thought* (the artist's thought) about what they represent. In contrast to this, Scruton believes, the relationship between a photograph and its subject matter is essentially a causal (causal-mechanical) one. Photographs, or rather ideal photographs, are understood as literal visual records of how their subject matter looked at a particular time, and are characterised as transparent. Because photographs are not intentional, they cannot be representations.

Another, related, concern of Scruton's is aesthetic interest. Because a photograph acts as a surrogate for the subject matter itself, (because it is transparent), it invites no aesthetic interest in the photograph for its own sake. Although a painting may also similarly simply act as a surrogate, in contrast to a photograph, the possibility of taking aesthetic interest in a painting for its own sake is also available, for example in the way it treats or presents its subject matter (expressing the painter's thoughts). 'Aesthetic interest' concerning pictures is used here as a technical notion, and is not intended to involve critical evaluation.[1]

[1] Alex Neill and Aaron Ridley draw our attention to these two concerns and conclusions of Scruton in: Neill and Ridley (1995), p. 87.

I am grateful to Jonathan Friday for clarifying some of the details and depth of Scruton's argument concerning photographs.

In this chapter, through investigation of Scruton's position and the notion of photographic transparency, I query whether we might be able to dispense altogether with the intentional element in understanding photographs.

3.1 The Ideal Photograph

In order to more clearly articulate the notion that photography is not a representational art, Scruton begins by stating that: '… it is important to separate painting and photography as much as possible, so as to discuss not actual painting and actual photography but an ideal form of each, an ideal which represents the essential differences between them. Ideal photography differs from actual photography as indeed ideal painting differs from actual painting. Actual photography is the result of the attempt by photographers to pollute the ideal of their craft with the aims and methods of painting'.[2]

An ideal painting stands in an 'intentional' relation to a subject matter, as outlined above. An ideal photograph is defined as follows:

> By an 'ideal' I mean a logical ideal. The ideal of photography is not an ideal at which photography aims or ought to aim. On the contrary, it is a logical fiction, designed merely to capture what is distinctive in the photographic relation and in our interest in it.[3]

We can note that while comparing the 'ideal' forms of painting and photography is useful for contrasting the two media, and respects a certain tradition in understanding aesthetic appreciation, in order to apply the insights the comparison offers to our understanding of real photographs, it will ultimately have to be shown how and to what extent the sphere of logical ideal photographs coincides with the sphere of ordinary, everyday photographs.

Are photographs best understood as transparent, and thereby lacking any serious or important intentional content? Scruton variously likens ideal photographs to mirrors, frames held up to the world and television – the latter being a kind of paradigm of the ideal photograph, for seeing something on television is similar to seeing something in a mirror recorded. The

[2] Ibid., p. 90

[3] Ibid., p. 90

notion that ordinary photographs are transparent lies at the heart of views which hold that photographs convey reality, and these transparent ‘supports’ are understood to isolate for our attention and faithfully capture some portion of the world around us. I will take the mirror and frame analogies first.

3.2 Are photographs transparent – and essentially like mirrors and frames held up to the world?

Consider the following disanalogies between a (real) photograph and a mirror. A mirror cannot be fixed – it has no fixed point of view – so it is not a picture in any ordinary sense. You could never take a mirror over to a friend's house and discuss it without actually taking along the subject matter itself (and recreating the ambient lighting and so on). Multiple viewers could never look at the same image at the same time (and pointing out various aspects and features of the work would necessarily be an ambiguous affair). Uncontrollable elements, such as cats and flies and dusk, may enter and sully or change the image.

Frames held up to the world, which distinguish and draw our attention to some portion of the world, suffer all of the above dissimilarities to photographs found in mirrors, but also have a three-dimensionality which draws them closer to sculptural works than pictures.

A still picture normally allows the viewer to experience a scene, or parts of a scene, in a much more highly focused and extended manner, and regularly for as long and as often as the viewer pleases. Viewers of still pictures are free to relate one part of a picture to others and reflect on those relationships. Any narrative in a still picture can only be suggested or inferred, it cannot be 'captured'. Christian Metz, in his essay 'Photography and Fetish', in distinguishing between experiences of still and moving pictures, not only draws attention to the difference in temporal dimension, but also points out the difference in aural dimension:

> Movement and plurality [of images, of shots] both imply time, as opposed to the timelessness of photography which is comparable to the timelessness of the unconscious and of memory. In the auditory sphere – totally absent in photography – cinema adds phonic sound (spoken words), nonphonic sound (sound effects, noises, and so forth), and musical sound. One of the properties of sounds is their expansion, their development in time (in space they only irradiate), whereas images construct themselves in space. Thus film disposes of five more orders of perception (two visual and three auditory) than does photography, all of the five

> challenging the powers of silence and immobility which belong to and define all photography …[4]

Comparing our visual experiences of the *world* to that of photographs, Abigail Solomon-Godeau reminds us that: 'While natural vision and perception have no vanishing point, are binocular, unbounded, in constant motion, and marked by a loss of clarity in the periphery, the camera image, like the Renaissance painting, offers a static, uniform field in which orthogonals converge at a single vanishing point'.[5] By extension, this also marks a difference between our visual experiences of objects seen through frames and various optical devices, and seeing those objects depicted in photographs. This brings to mind photographer Garry Winogrand's famous comment that photography is not about capturing what things look like but 'to find out what something will look like photographed'.[6]

Nigel Warburton holds that with our visual experiences of the world, unlike our visual experiences of subject matter in photographs, we are privy to the causal chain – we usually know how those experiences are linked to their causes. His example concerns our understanding a fairground distorting mirror image: in real life we can see why the image is the way it is, whereas in seeing the image in a photograph we can only make inferences or interpret it.[7]

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[4] Metz (1991), p. 157

[5] Solomon-Godeau (1991), pp. 180-181

[6] Garry Winogrand responding to questions from a student audience when visiting the Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, New York, 10 October 1970. Cited in Petruck (1979), p. 127.

[7] Warburton speaking to the Birkbeck Philosophical Society, 15 November 2000. Warburton identifies four areas characteristic of ordinary seeing which photographic seeing lacks: (i) virtual simultaneity (between seeing and experiencing an actual event); (ii) sensitivity to change; (iii) temporal congruity; as well as (iv) being privy to the causal chain. See Warburton (1988).

Not only are mirrors and frames not pictures in any ordinary physical sense, they are also not pictorial 'works' in any standard sense; they are not pictures with any intentional content (desires, thoughts, beliefs, etc.) – the reason Scruton likens ideal photographs to them.[8]

3.2.1 Intention Imported Into Our Understanding of Ideal Photographs

There appears to be an oddity within Scruton's account of ideal photographs in which the intentional element is imported into the ideal. I think it can be seen to enter if we consider two factors: the role of human agency in the photographic process; and Scruton's notion of a 'copy of an appearance'.

I take it that ideal photographs, despite being 'logical fictions', are the sort of picture which human agents *could* produce (i.e., it is a logical possibility). If ideal photographs were pictures which could *not* be produced by human agents (if they stood akin to Platonic ideal objects, for example) – and this would be to characterise ideal photographs much more strongly than I believe Scruton intends – then ideal photographs would stand at a very great distance indeed from real photographs. *Too* much distance would have been put between the two, with the result that ideal photographs would be of almost no use in characterising our understanding of real photographs.

Scruton says that an ideal photograph is a copy of an appearance, and explains:

> By a 'copy' of an appearance I mean an object such that what is seen in it by a man with normal eyes and understanding … resembles as nearly as possible what is seen when such a man observes the subject itself from a certain angle at a certain point in history. A person studying an ideal photograph is given a very good idea of *how something looked*.[9] (Original emphasis).

[8] *Some* intention must be involved if an agent sets either a mirror or frame up in some particular manner to draw our attention to a subject matter, but let us assume, in support of Scruton, that both mirror and frame are 'found' objects.

[9] Scruton (1995), p. 99

If ideal photographs, like real photographs, may be the result of human agency, there must be scope for getting ideal photographs wrong as well as getting them right. The notion "'copy' of an appearance" above seems to presuppose certain aspects of the photographic process which are often the result of choice and intention in getting a photograph right. For example, some photographs may require some thought, desire, experience and commitment on the part of the photographer in order for them to 'resemble as nearly as possible what is seen' by 'a man with normal eyes and understanding'. Images produced without these intentions in mind may simply seem obscure to normal viewers. If the ideal photographer unthinkingly (unintentionally) photographs, say, a subject positioned very close to her camera lens, so that the resulting print depicts only a miniscule part of the subject in extraordinarily fine detail, the resulting photograph, although sharp and well exposed, may be nothing like the 'copy of an appearance' expected of an ideal photograph. Similarly, the photograph resulting from a camera being unintentionally dropped to the ground may depict the world from a perspective unrecognisable to viewers normally equipped in Scruton's sense. His use of 'appearance' suggests (but does not specify) that an ideal photograph will depict a subject matter from a reasonably normal human *viewpoint* under reasonably normal viewing *conditions*.

Of course, defenders of ideal photographs might respond by saying that normally visioned and understanding viewers *may* take up these unusual perspectives (by, say, viewing the subject matter of the first example very close up; by viewing the subject matter of the second example while lying with an eye to the ground) and therefore these photographs may be ideal photographs. This is consistent with the ideal photograph thesis, but it does stretch the notion of what it would be for an (ideal) photograph to 'resemble as nearly as possible' what is seen by a normally sighted and understanding man (albeit, it probably doesn't stretch the notion to breaking point).

Consider, though, some simple non-perspectival examples. If a photographer neglects to focus her manual camera when producing an ideal image, or neglects to choose a lens which

approximates normal vision, or selects a shutter speed which doesn't approximate the human capacity for tracking moving objects, it could easily result in a photograph which does *not* give us 'a very good idea of *how something looked*' – part of Scruton's characterisation of an ideal photograph. Some motivation for getting an image right seems to be required in producing an ideal photograph, and in this way intention would appear to be imported into our understanding of it.

3.2.2 Documentary Photographs Which are not Surrogates for Seeing Their Subject Matter

There is also a basic fact about photographs which sits uncomfortably with the view that (real) photographs, in essence, depict 'how something looked' to normal viewers. The subject matter of some photographs simply cannot be seen when we do look at them directly (in real life), or with the aid of mirrors, frames and some of the other optical devices theorists mention, such as eyeglasses, telescopes, binoculars.[10]

Muybridge's locomotion photographs of athletes or horses, such as *Daisy With Rider* (c.1887) (**Plate 17**), or Dr Edgerton's photographs of milk drop splashes forming coronets (in his *Milk Drop Splash Series* (c.1935)) and bullets piercing light bulbs or severing playing cards, such as *Cutting the Card Quickly* (1964) (**Plate 18**), are classic examples. These sorts of real photographs seem to have characteristics which stand exactly opposite to those Scruton cites for ideal photographs (and, by analogy, for mirrors and frames), for when we look we cannot see them this way. These photographs are not surrogates for looking at the

[10] See, for example, Kendall Walton (1984), p. 251-3.

subject matter. They are perhaps better recognized as *interpretations* of reality rather than presentations of how something looked.[11]

Again, counter to Scruton, it seems entirely plausible that the intentions of Muybridge and Edgerton *should* 'enter as a serious factor' in determining how their pictures are seen and understood. Edgerton, for example, in producing the bullet and card image, could have slowed his exposure time down (from 1/3 of a millionth of a second to, say, 1/2 of a millionth of a second) so that a certain horizontal grey blur isolated the top card fragment from the bottom fragment in the photograph. (Note that he could also control the length and position of the blur in the photograph through control of the flash exposure). This would be another interpretation of the subject. Surely it couldn't be another, in Scruton's sense, 'presentation of how something looked', because 'normal' viewers couldn't see it.

Of course, one might say that if our visual apparatus operated in the manner of high speed cameras, then these images, seen from certain positions, under certain lighting conditions and so on, would be what the normal person would see for himself. But this would be to beg the question and, again, distance our understanding of ideal photographs from that of real photographs.[12]

The advent of developments in macro and micro photography, electron microscope imagery, satellite and heat-based imagery can only serve to qualify debates about how like or unlike mirrors and frames photographs really are, for in these types of photographs depiction is being extended beyond natural human visual capabilities along a range of dimensions. Clearly the subject matter of some microscopic and telescopic photographs, for example, cannot be seen *at all* by a man with normal eyes and understanding when he observes the

[11] If one balks at 'interpretation' in this context, and if the route I have taken in Chapter 2 is correct, this will probably be due to preconceptions about the importance of the causal element in the production of photographs and overestimation of the extent of its reach in guiding our understanding of photographs.

[12] For a full discussion comparing and contrasting the natures of human and photographic optics, see Pirenne (1979).

subject matter itself. These sorts of images, along with Muybridge's and Edgerton's quasi-scientific pictures, sit pretty deeply within the documentary photograph camp. It is likely that the creative photographs I was discussing in Chapter 2, where various aspects of the photographic process are manipulated, will be even poorer surrogates for looking at subjects themselves.

3.2.3 The Decisive Moment

There is a further important disanalogy between photographs and mirrors and frames. Because the subject matter of a mirror or frame is always changing, there can be no moment of depiction – no 'decisive moment' in Cartier-Bresson's famous quip. Change may be very slow if the subject perceived is a tree or an abandoned building, or very fast if the subject is a humming bird or a landslide. Yet surely a precise moment of depiction is as central and important to the character of the majority of photographs as a depicted perspective or point of view.[13] A fixed moment of depiction may be less important to some highly creative photographs, but it is certainly central to documentary type photographs – the type of photographs which stand the best chance of approaching ideal photographs.

[13] The precise moment may be very short – measured in milliseconds, as in Dr Edgerton's photographs – or indeed much longer – measured in hours, such as in some photographs of the night sky. There may be more than one point of view – as found in multiple exposure photographs, for example.

3.3 Are photographs transparent – and essentially like television?

Roger Scruton further likens ideal photographs to television. I have already discussed the differences between our understanding of static and moving images (Section 3.2). Here I wish to point out that televisual works, also, give us no decisive moment of depiction; they can only give us a decisive *period* of depiction, which can only be grasped after an initial full viewing. Although one may be (and usually is) able to quickly and spontaneously identify objects and actions depicted from a variety of perspectives in a film – two cars moving at high speeds in an urban setting, for example – this is not to *understand* the film. To understand the televisual film (understand it as a work, we might say), given that it is successful, one must first experience its temporality – by viewing and understanding the scenes of which it is constituted. One must come to understand the scene with the two cars as a car-chase scene and then be able to (roughly) place this car-chase scene temporally within the context of the television film's other scenes.[14]

There *is* a similarity between our understanding of static photographs and moving televisual images in that both often involve (sometimes extensive) manipulation. This fact, though, only serves to take us further away from the notion of transparency, and drive a wedge between television and mirrors and frames.

A television monitor which relays continuous images from a camera (such as a security camera) gives neither moment nor period of depiction, and our understanding of these images is thus one step more remote from our understanding of ordinary television. Monitors which

[14] Compare this with our understanding of a painting. For example, one may see in a painting thirteen men curiously seated along the far side of a long dining table, yet require further attention to it in order to understand the painting as a depiction of the Last Supper. With the painting there is one single image to experience in order to begin to understand the work; with the (successful) film there is a reasonably coherent temporal progression of images to experience *first*, before one can begin to understand the work.

relay remote images are similar to mirrors and frames in that they are not ‘works’ – they are almost invariably without some guiding intention or human specification and therefore there may be nothing to ‘understand’ about them beyond the simple pictorial conveyance of objects and events elsewhere.

3.4 Have I been too literal in evaluating ideal photographs?

Is my reading of Scruton's view fair, or have I taken the analogy between photographs and mirrors, frames, television and so on too literally? Could we not speak more loosely of experiencing 'frozen moments' reflected in mirrors or seen through frames, for example?[15] There is a sense in which many photographs are like frozen moments of looking at things themselves. It is tempting to say that my seeing Tony Blair in a photograph on the front page of *The Times* is my seeing Tony Blair – for I would then be able to recognise him and pick him out of a crowded banqueting hall, for example.

Once again, although this is true for 'straight photographs', it will not be true with more conceptual or abstract photographs (including those of Tony Blair), even if we loosen the mirror and frame analogies and refer to frozen moments. In considering ideal photographs, we are not concerned whether we can find *some* images which reflect the world as if seen through a mirror or frame, but whether *all* photographic images should be understood in terms of transparency.

[15] Barry C. Smith suggested the notion of frozen moments to me.

3.5 Scruton and the Victimising Causal Process

Scruton admits that it is not necessary to define the subject matter of a photograph in terms of its inherent causal element. The reason we do is because 'it is in terms of the causal relation that the subject of a photograph is normally understood'.[16] He asks us to grant this one premise for his logical ideal's application to real photography. And here is the crux of the problem: how subjects of photographs are normally understood is not how they are always, or should always, be understood. My discussion concerning Wollheim's views brought to light some quite different understandings of real photographic work. How might artistic and creative photographs, such as Man Ray's *The Primacy of Matter over Thought*, Wanda Wulz's *Cat + I* (1932) (**Plate 19**), some of Fay Godwin's latest colour images (see **Plate 20**), or some of the other playful images I have noted, be accommodated in Scruton's view? Clearly they will not be like ideal photographs.

In Scruton's view the photographer is a 'victim' of the causal process and is 'imprisoned' by the causal chain, such is the power of the causal element, and any move which strives towards representational art is a move towards the ideal of painting and necessarily 'pollutes' the medium of photography. It is difficult not to see this as simply Scruton's prejudice underwritten by his notion of an 'ideal photograph'. I have already spoken (in Section 2.3.1) of bona fide artistic photographic practice, which has been with us almost from the medium's conception, and the pedigree of manipulation within the medium.

The French art critic Delécluze, writing in 1851, had similar prejudices, but concerning painters moving in the opposite direction. He saw them polluting the medium of painting by aspiring to what was generally felt to be the objective realism of photography (then in its infancy). The subject matter depicted by realist painters such as Courbet was seen as stark,

[16] Scruton (1995), P. 99

ugly and banal. It was feared that notions of the 'ideal' and 'beauty' in painting would be left behind.

> The taste for naturalism, is harmful to serious art. … [The naturalist painter] renounces himself; he makes of himself an instrument, he flattens himself into a mirror, and his principle distinction, is to be perfectly uniform and to have received a good silver finish.[17]

Both Scruton and Delécluz, agreeing on the essentially mirror-like quality of photographs, wish to keep the boundaries of photography and painting sharp and tight, with no messy overspill. I think some artists, including photographers, have retained the notion of 'beauty' in their work, but we appear to have moved dramatically away from notions of the 'ideal' in artworks. If we consider the plasticity of photography and painting as practised since the latter half of the 19th century, and the cross-pollination of media generally, this isn't surprising.

There seems no good reason to deny photographers the possibility of *treatment* of a subject, as Scruton consistently does. For example, in discussing aesthetic interest in a picture *itself* (as opposed to an abstract interest solely in its surface markings, or an interest which solely seeks access to the object depicted), Scruton implies the impossibility of this mode of interest towards photographs because of their surrogacy. He uses the example of Manet's *Bar aux Folies-Bergère*. Taking an interest in Manet's treatment of the barmaid's hands on the counter – i.e. his particular way of painting the gesture and thereby expressing something of the barmaid's character – 'is a reason not only for an interest in the subject but also (and primarily) for an interest in the picture, since it gives a reason for an interest in something which can be understood only by looking at the picture'.[18] So, because (ideal) photographs are transparent, and replaceable by the thing depicted, they cannot inspire aesthetic interest or

[17] Aaron Scharf (1983), p. 128. Scharf here translates and quotes Delécluze's sentiments from the *Journal des Débats*, 21 March 1851.

[18] Scruton (1995), p. 97

give rise to aesthetic experience in this way, despite the thoughts or intentions of the photographer.

William L. King, in his response to Scruton's paper, rightly questions how and to what extent this type of expression, this treatment of a subject, would be denied to a photographer and suggests it is difficult to see how a photographer, intent on such expression, would be greatly impeded by his medium.[19] It is difficult to see how a photographer's treatment of a barmaid's hands would necessarily differ in *kind* from Manet's. The photographer would only be impeded if she were aiming for an 'ideal photograph' – which simply would disallow her any possibility of expression *by definition*. The ideal project seems at far remove from the vast majority of photographic projects and only emphasises the very slender overlap between the sphere of ideal photographs and the sphere of actual photographs, and thus our understanding of them.

Scruton concludes his discussion of static photography (before continuing with moving imagery) by saying:

> The property of representation, as I have characterized it, is the upshot of a complex pattern of intentional activity and the object of highly specialized responses. How can a photograph acquire that property? My answer is that it can do so only by changing in precisely those respects which distinguish photography from painting. For it is only if photography changes in those respects that the photographer can seriously address himself to the thoughts and responses of his spectators.[20]

In understanding painting as an art, Richard Wollheim holds that the painter takes up the role of viewer as well as artist as he produces his work, to help ensure success in addressing himself to the 'thoughts and responses of his spectators', i.e., that his intentions will be understood by other viewers.[21] Wollheim, though, like Scruton, denies this possibility to the

[19] King (1992), pp. 117-8

[20] Scruton (1995), p. 109

[21] For a thorough explanation of the artist's role as spectator in producing a work, see Wollheim (1987), pp. 39-45.

photographer, because it is thought the causal will always be at least as important as the intentional in setting the standard of correctness for seeing and understanding a photograph.

But aren't these claims for serious painters just what most serious *photographers* have always practiced, or attempted – in both Scruton's and Wollheim's sense? Many photographers take up the role of viewer to ensure their works can be understood. Both abstract and documentary photographers often engage in complex patterns of intentional activity and depend on their viewers to engage in highly specialized responses in order to understand their work. Advertising photographers often operate in this manner and depend on such responses. Interpretive portrait photographers work in this fashion and make similar demands on their audiences. Any serious professional photographer who seeks more than a simple, literal record of objects seen will be engaging in a pattern of intentional activity – to a lesser or greater degree of complexity – and will require a viewer to respond to their photograph with an equal degree of sophistication in order to fully understand (and appreciate) it. The list of serious practitioners will include sports photographers, photographic book illustrators, fashion photographers, medical photographers and many others. It is surely not helpful, in explaining photographic understanding, to see any of these photographers and their projects as either misguided (struggling in vain against the ever dominant causal elements inherent in their medium) or somehow more 'painterly' than photographic.

Earlier (in Section 1.1), I sketched a view which suggests that there can be no 'unmediated, uncrafted photograph or an image which is not the result of intention and shaping by the photographer' – even in 'straight photography'. This seems true of the work of at least most professional photographers, for they are usually aware of the photographic practices of others within their chosen field and the expectations of viewers. Most photojournalists *do* eschew artificial lighting and orchestration of subject matter, in order to work within the broadly accepted and expected parameters of photojournalism. Deciding to work within this

'tradition', or field, reflects part of the photojournalist's intentions – her 'desires, thoughts, beliefs, experiences, emotions and commitments' which cause her to photograph as she does – and this will be borne out when attending to one of her successful photographs.

Do amateur and snapshot photographers, often much less aware of 'tradition' and 'photographic practice', produce unmediated and non-intentional photographs? Perhaps some children and other neophytes with their first cameras produce such photographs – those who have managed to avoid engaging with any of the superabundance of photographs in modern societies and the snapshots of others. I suggest, though, that these would be unusual cases. Clearly, choosing to produce photographs in a particular way is, in Martin Lister's words, 'itself the outcome of working with ideas and making choices within a wider set of possibilities'. Intention here is operating within a certain context (of which the photographer may or may not be consciously aware), and in this respect the contextual element in *producing* the photograph will affect how it is understood by a viewer.[22] I will not follow this lead concerning the contextual element involved in photographic understanding here, but only flag it and suggest that it supports the case I have outlined so far in this chapter for thinking that we cannot entirely dispense with intention in explaining our understanding of photographs.

[22] As opposed to the context within which the photograph is *viewed*, which will also affect, in a different way, how the viewer understands it.

3.6 Conclusions on Ideal Photographs and Photographic Transparency

The sphere of ideal photographs, without a trace of intentionality, stands too distant from the sphere of real photographs to sufficiently capture our understanding of real photographs. Photographs are not 'transparent', like reflections in mirrors or what is seen in frames held up to the world or on television screens. They are graphic representations of our world – 'graphic' in the sense of graphic design, through which that world may be visually expressed, rendered, or presented. The photographic depiction may be very similar to how that world looks to us, or it may be very different to how that world looks. The photographer may make the relationship between her picture and the real world a very close and precise one, or she may make that relationship a very imprecise and abstract one.