

# Photographs as a mode and medium for the construction of self through time

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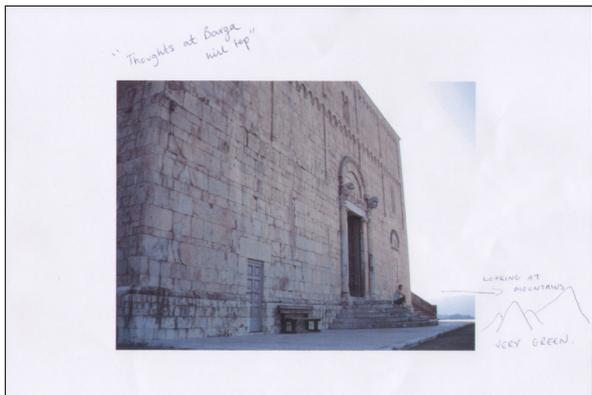
'I'm very fond of this photo. Not that I can remember. You can think I can remember four parrots on my arms. But what I do remember is that I'm definitely with my father. And, err, we've gone to visit the circus. And I think this was done after we've seen the show. My father absolutely loved the circus. And this was a Christmas treat that, err, we would go to the circus.'



'This one is the, how can I say, my own place where I was born, you know. And this is the farm of my mum. And then, how can I say, my parents, no. And I'm so attached to that, err, because, you see.'



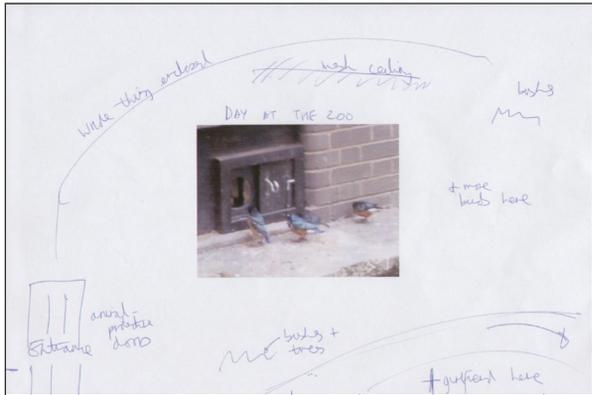
'My grandfather flew, err, in the RAF during the Second World War. Right. And he flew on of these. It's a Handley Page Halifax. And I know this because the house was full of these pictures. In fact, they actually had this picture.'



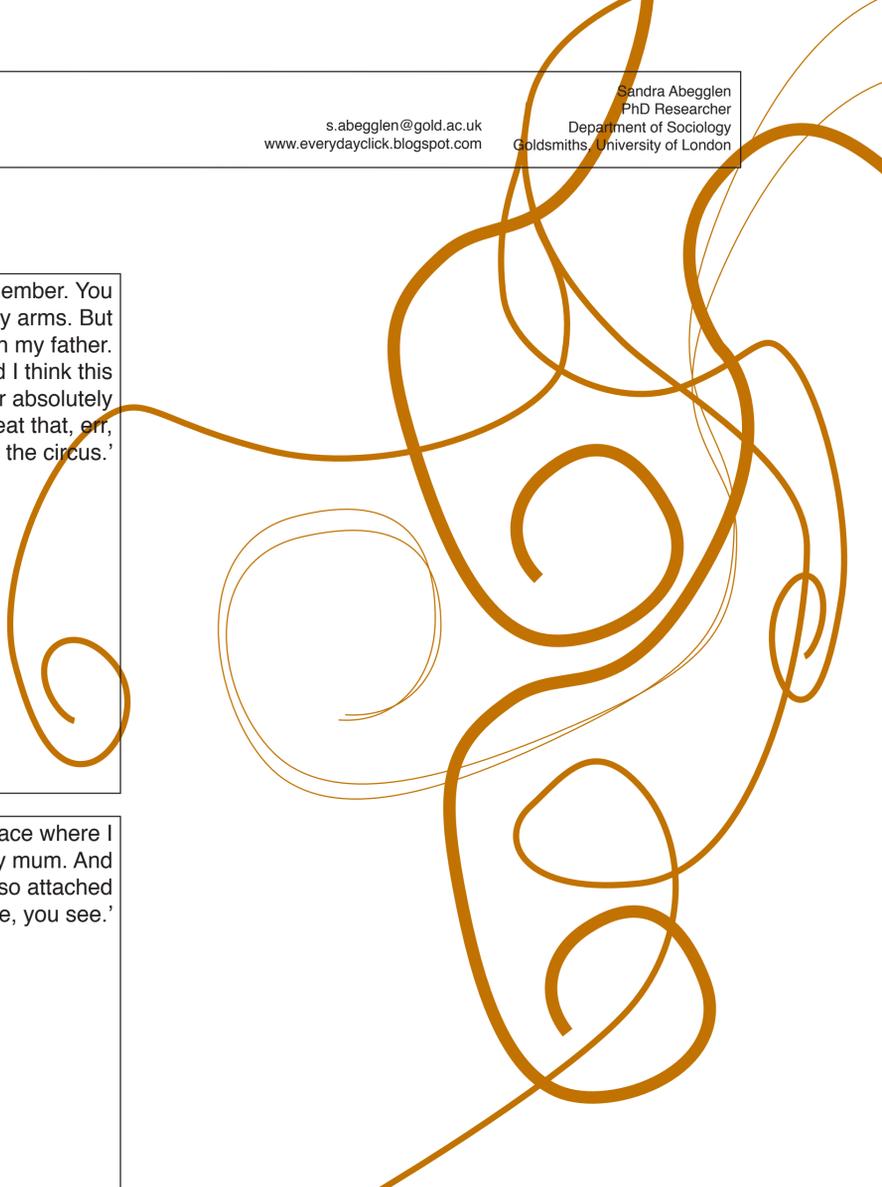
'This photo is quite nice because it reminds me of, of, how I felt at that sort of moment in time, which is why I think I picked it, because it has a big association of feeling wellbeing.'



'This is my uncle (*name of the uncle*). And I met him three weeks ago, in (*name of the place*). And he died last Sunday. Not yesterday, but the previous Sunday. So that's eight days ago. And he was one of my mentors since I was born. When I was born, I actually lived in this house for a year. Err... And so we had an attachment. And so, three weeks ago, I was in this house, the same that I speak off, and as I was saying goodbye to him... I didn't realize it was the last time I was saying goodbye to him. But as I was going at the door, I took my camera and I took a picture of him.'



'It's a bit random, but it was taken when I went to the London Zoo, and I am really fascinated with animals and nature.'



*'Whether a visual image really looks like the original or not, it has a sort of ritual function in telling its viewers something about itself, and about society in relation to itself' (Schirato & Webb 2004:77)*

In recent years, photography has had a tremendous boost through the development of smaller and cheaper means and techniques and is no longer restricted to only the professional arena. It has become a gadget for private devices. The number of photographs taken every day is enormous. This raises questions about the value or the meaning of an image everyday life.

The primary aim of this study is to advance knowledge and understanding of photographs as mode or medium for the construction of self. The study investigates how visual stories are combined with linguistic stories and what these stories say about the individuals who possess these images, but also the society they live in. In other words, the study explores how still images shape the stories we tell.