

16 Ways of Looking at a Photograph

Class Exercise: Chapter 6, Walker Evans' Reticence

What is documentary photography as an experience, not only for the photographer but also for those who are photographed? The mid 1930s subjects of Walker Evans' most famous work, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, had antagonistic and ambivalent feelings about being photographed by Evans, and having their images circulated. Nowadays, we are almost all constantly photographing each other and posting those photographs online. Make a few lists: Who are the people of whom you have taken photographs in the past month? How do you know those people? How do you get their permission to show their images? Or do you even ask their permission to post their images on social media? Where have photographs of you yourself been circulated, and shown? What does it say about our 21st century subjectivity, and what does it do to our subjectivity, to have our images always in the public view?