1941

We Say - Look Before You Snap

Kathryn Monson
Iowa State College

Follow this and additional works at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker

Part of the Home Economics Commons

Recommended Citation
Monson, Kathryn (1941) "We Say - Look Before You Snap," The Iowa Homemaker: Vol. 21 : No. 3 , Article 5.
Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol21/iss3/5
In advice to amateurs, Kathryn Monson suggests looking twice before snapping that picture.

The picture bug bites hard. Most students have gone through an orgy of picture taking at some period. But many cameras are on the shelf today because disappointments overtook enthusiasm.

Perhaps on your last roll of film only three pictures were good. The picture of Mary would have been excellent but a gargoyle on the building in the background chose to sit on her head.

Mr. John W. Barry, '28, a well-known Iowa photographer, says that the most important thing is seeing. You may take the same walk to class every day and then finally some beautiful spot will attract your attention. It may be that the angle of the sun, the lighting or the background will be ideal for your pictures.

The hours of the day can be as different as day and night. Photography will develop your observation. Subjects suggest themselves as you work. To tell a story a picture should convey one idea. Study the subject from different angles until you "find" the picture. This is the side of photography that relates the photographer to an artist. Mr. Barry believes that the most commonplace object can take on a new interest, become dramatic or mysterious or amusing, according to the angle and the lighting.

After you have selected the theme and angle don't let anything else steal the show. If you're taking a picture of stuffed pets in their favorite corners on your bed, you won't want your bedroom slippers to protrude.

Without hesitation eliminate and change objects that are out of harmony with the composition. Make the background conform to this principle. A background of imposing college buildings would distract from the naivete of tame squirrels at play. It is equally important to watch the foreground. Useless foreground clutters fine detail.

When you have your picture in sight, frame it in your mind. Or even better, actually take a small card with an opening the size of the picture you wish to make or line it up with your hands. The point of interest should be approximately centered.

In taking the picture you should realize the technical importance of focusing carefully; also that making the right exposure is fundamental to a fine picture. These determinations are easier with practice, but there are guides and charts to minimize guessing. Don't fail to watch these important details to decrease loss of materials and increase speed and degree of success.

Photographic enemy number one is the traditional group picture. Do you line up your friends to shoot as though they were a firing squad? Sunday afternoons has been considered an appropriate time because everyone is well dressed. Probably informal weekday costumes would be better.

Informality and naturalness are key words to picture success. Snap your friends in weekday costumes instead of Sunday-best natural and commonplace actions. Make your subjects comfortable so they haven't a strained appearance.

Sunlight is an asset in picture taking because the contrast of dark and light values is enhanced. However, portraits may be better in the shade because the subject is more comfortable.

Do not make your models face the sun unless it is early in the morning or late in the day. At these times results can be excellent. Place your models with their backs to the sun. Choose a background of trees or bushes, not sky. Allow a little light to filter through the hair.

However, under no circumstance should you let the sun strike the camera lens. Shield the lens with a card.

You needn't feel you must have expensive equipment to take good pictures. Most college students who snap pictures neither own expensive equipment (Continued on page 24)
Officially Outfitting You . . .

* Foods and Nutrition Uniforms
* Physical Education Uniforms
* Sewing Supplies
* McCall and Hollywood Patterns

AT

STEPHENSON'S

Opposite Campus

. . . famous for fabrics . . .

Photography

(Continued from page 7)

nor have much technical knowledge, but they do want to take pictures they'll be proud to show.

If an amateur photographer can sell for $135 a picture of lightning striking the Empire State Building, taken with a $2.00 camera, 25 years old, there is still hope for the Brownie you received on your twelfth birthday.

Photography can be a tool in your vocational interests. Don't let elusive beauties go by if you are an artist. Preserve them on film until you can expand them with artistic media. A food major's triumph need not vanish with the last bite. A textile major can gather ideas in metropolitan centers with a faithful camera.

If it's cash you seek, be on the lookout for amateur scoops and don't hesitate to submit to contests the pictures you prize personally.

Index to Advertisers

These advertisers are making it possible for you to read the Homemaker each month. You may show your appreciation by patronizing them.

Ames Dress Club .................. 16
Big Shoe Store ...................... 21
Brannberg & Alm .................... 17
Campus Drug Co. .................. 16
Campus 5c to $1.00 Store ........ 21
Carter Press ........................ 19
Coe's Flower and Gift Shop ...... 19
Dudleston's ......................... 19
Emerick's .......................... 19
Lila B. Fromm ....................... 22
Hill Studio ........................ 16
Lindquist's ......................... 20
L-Way Cafe ........................ 24
Memorial Union .................... 23
Moore Brothers Dairy .............. 18
Myers' Studio ....................... 21
John Morrell & Co. ................. 1
Rainbow Coffee Shop ............... 17
Recall Drug Store ................ 20
Stephenson's ...................... 24
Student Supply Store .............. 20
L. C. Tallman ....................... 23
Trueblood's ....................... 22
Western Grocer Co. ............... 25
Younkers .......................... 26

The Pony Express has nothing on us . . . Only lightning gets by our service—and little of that.

L-Way Cafe

Phone 330 — Between the Theaters Campustown

The Iowa Homemaker