

DEFINING FAMILY

OBJECTIVE

To become the documentarian of your family (if not already)

To observe and record the colorful qualities of your family

To tell the story of the relationships in your family.

To observe the social interactions of your family and to make editorial images to express how you feel about them or about being with them

Become a fly on the wall, see quiet moments, and record real moments.

ASSIGNMENT

For this assignment, "Family" will be whomever you are with over the spring break. This could be blood related family or friends or even whatever community you're hanging out with during your week. It can even be a group of people that are strangers to you, but whom you choose to photograph over the week. Essentially I want you to become a documentarian of your community, wherever and whomever it may be over the next week.

Make sure you're shooting everyday and at many different parts of the day. Carry your camera gear with you all the time. Talk with your subjects about what you're doing in advance and ask that they not pose for you nor act for you in any way. The goal is to record moments that show the reality.

Focus on relationships and don't shy away from making images that help to tell your impression of those relationships and people close to you.

Don't feel that the only thing you can photograph are "moments" or "events". What about a couple reading together or sitting and watching TV? Doesn't this quiet moment say as much as a "loud" moment might about a relationship.

Think about visual variety. Make images in a variety of light, point of view, composition, use a variety of focal lengths and change your distance to your subjects. We will edit these down to a short little essay with 5-8 pictures, so they must have a variety.

Feel free to make a portrait, but don't make a posed portrait. Look for natural poses and make portraits that are naturally occurring.

REQUIREMENTS

Unless you are staying on campus, all images should be made off campus at your home, in your community or wherever you are while on break. You can photograph both friends, family and strangers who are in that community. Don't forget images that evoke a solid sense of place.

I don't want to see posed, goofy snapshot pictures, or typical vacation pictures. You're welcome to take those, but not for this project. This is an unposed documentary project. Take it seriously, even while you're having fun. It can easily be done.

Shoot at minimum of 600 images throughout the break. If you work a little at a time, this won't be hard.

Don't edit anything in advance of bringing them back from break. We'll look at these on **Tuesday, March 21st** in lab.

Keep a journal or log with full, correctly spelled names of everyone you photograph. Get ages of anyone under 18. Take notes about your observations, write down quotes you overhear and talk with your subjects about their relationships and what they mean to them.

DEADLINES

- Bring in all images to lab
Tuesday March 21
- Edit work in Lab with
Partner Thursday, March 23
- Toned prints (6-10) due
Tuesday, March 28
- All outtakes due in the server

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- What defines family to you?
- How do your friends (old and new) fit into this?
- How about your house?
- Got pets?
- And what about those who visit?
- How about the places you 'hang out' at?
- What about a sense of place defines the family?
- What else can you show that defines family besides the people?
- Is your family neat or messy?
- Is your brother/sister neat or messy?
- What about the place do you love hate?
- Be very personal about what you are showing and remember to let us in on your secret and make exciting images about it.
- Can you make a photo that is about the past?

THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER:

Sentimentality, Nostalgia
Familiar, Comfortable, Friends
Family, Family tensions, Loved-ones, Not-so-loves-ones, The ones you put up with, The meaning of 'family' (friends as opposed to 'related' or 'blood' family)