

# *The Shrewdness of Apes*

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## *Introduction*

The photographic act consists of three principal parts. They are varied.

## *The Technique*

## *The Apparatus*

## *The Spectrum*

Here the term spectrum is as first used by Barthes<sup>1</sup>.

Photography is a brutal act. The vocabulary surrounding a photograph is violent. There are shutters & filters & bellows; aberrations & distortions; solarizers, polarizers, sensitizers; developers, fixers, stoppers; these, in conjunction with those other progeny of the industrial revolution, are used to shoot subjects, to capture them.

A dark-room is simply that: a camera oscura. It is at once terrifying & purposeful in its intent. Film & paper, once exposed to the tyranny of that lies without, may not lie naked again until they have been rehabilitated, until they have recovered to a state where they are deemed meaningful<sup>2</sup>. This process of selection is exquisite in its sadism; we now have machines that make light of these macabre methods.

The earliest kind of photograph is the blink. A blink is a preventative mechanism. One blinks to see better. One blinks to lubricate. A blink is also a pause. It is when Man first noticed the images formed on the inside of his eyelids, at once black & orange, shape-shifting & electric, that the seeds of photography were sown.

The sneeze came next. Now we had a sound to emulate: the shutter<sup>3</sup>.

The Eye is King. The Mind is his Queen. They have no children.

We now live within that panoply of apparati the mechanical Eye has birthed: chortles, sniffles, chuckles, giggles; cracks, queefs, farts, wheezes; yawns<sup>4</sup>, moans, grimaces, frissons; burps & belches, whispers & snores.

## *References*

R.Barthes. *Camera lucida: Reflections on photography*. Hill and Wang, 1994.

<sup>1</sup> R.Barthes. *Camera lucida: Reflections on photography*. Hill and Wang, 1994

<sup>2</sup> J.Tagg. *The disciplinary frame: photographic truths and the capture of meaning*. Univ Of Minnesota Press, 2009

<sup>3</sup> J.Tagg. *The burden of representation: Essays on photographs and histories*. Univ Of Minnesota Press, 1988

<sup>4</sup> R.Barthes and S.Heath. *Image, music, text*. Hill & Wang, 1978

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