

Harlot: A Revealing Look at the Arts of Persuasion

| Number 1

Article 9

9-30-2008

Photograph in Four Parts

Pablo Tanguay
The Ohio State University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/harlot>



Part of the [Rhetoric Commons](#)

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation

Tanguay, Pablo (2008) "Photograph in Four Parts," *Harlot: A Revealing Look at the Arts of Persuasion*: No. 1, 9.

<https://doi.org/10.15760/harlot.2008.1.9>

This In This Issue is brought to you for free and open access. It has been accepted for inclusion in Harlot: A Revealing Look at the Arts of Persuasion by an authorized administrator of PDXScholar. Please contact us if we can make this document more accessible: pdxscholar@pdx.edu.

Photograph in Four Parts

Pablo Tanguay

If you listen to enough old poets, they will tell you that these ekphrastic poems that are about art and about painting need to be able to exist independently of the painting or visual art itself. I always sort of questioned that idea—why? I think it's a physical limitation that journals don't have photographs—that it's too expensive to put the photograph with the poem. But why you can't do that is beyond me.

1.

On an ordinary Wednesday evening, the dog tears the crotch from Minnie Mouse, and yanks her snow-white insides out. I rest a cold pack against Minnie's head, and take a picture of the scene. Like a detective, I study the picture. I call my ex, a reporter for a big city paper, and offer to be quoted. She asks when the crime occurred. I say you know perfectly well when the crime occurred. She says yes, but still, I've got an article to write. I fax her the picture. I tack the picture to the refrigerator, and pour a glass of milk. She calls back with questions. I answer to the best of my recollection. She says Detective, I think you're holding back. It appears you've doctored the photo. Detective, have you doctored the photo? I have. Detective, why have you doctored the photo? You know, I say, you know perfectly well why I doctored the photo. I'm working on deadline, Detective. Why did you doctor the photo?

2.

In the art appreciation class that meets on Friday nights in the basement of a building off campus, we've been instructed to photograph our lives. We're unsure exactly what the instructor means by photograph our lives. I make a joke, confusing lives with lies, and a few of us chuckle. The instructor doesn't chuckle.

We return the next week with photos of our kitchens, our children playing soccer, our lawns. The younger, artistic ones have photographed whiskey bottles and cigarette boxes at odd angles. One or two of us show pictures of the woods across town. We're pleased to be learning about each other. The instructor calls us liars, and assigns a repeat of the assignment.

3.

Hound

The \$40 pillow's thousand feathers
floating; the snow-white stuffing yanked from Minnie
Mouse's crotch; the brand new ball glove's leather
webbing torn, swallowed, shit out in skinny
strips the vet's assistant's scared to touch
with tongs: Sister, be grateful. Thank your bright

baby bedroom stars your hound's no lush,
no ass-sniffing sway-back howling night
after run-the-streets-again night after
sadsack slackjawed mopers in heat. The holes
he digs are in the yard, the blue wood asters
he pisses on can be replanted. And the folds,
Sister, the folds of his flesh in your bed—do they
devour you or pull away, once he's fed?

4.



Pablo Tanguay holds an MFA in Creative Writing from The Ohio State University, where he served as Associate Editor of The Journal. His poems are featured or forthcoming in journals such as Field, The Laurel Review, 21 Stars Review, Poems and Plays, and the anthology Cadence of Hooves.

This work has some rights reserved under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike 3.0 License.
