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COLLECTED VISIONS

©Lorie Novak, 1998

snapshot n. (1808) : a quick shot (as with a rifle) made without deliberate aim with the sights

1. a casual photograph made by rapid exposure and usually with a small hand-held camera
2. a brief or transitory view, also: a mere segment

—Webster's Third New International Dictionary

I am fascinated by the way a snapshot can make "a brief or transitory view" permanent, capturing "mere segments" of life that could be easily forgotten and freezing them for inspection. I am the oldest of three girls and was the most photographed. I pore over my snapshots, intrigued by how I presented myself to the camera, how my parents saw me, saw our family, and then how I perceived the world when I first got a camera. I have a love/hate relationship with my family photographs. They speak to me about the hopes, joys, and sufferings of my family, but I am aware of how much was left out of our documentation. I am also repelled by the abundance of stereotypical feminine poses. Where is the evidence of struggle? "Family collections [of photographs] are never just memories. Their disconnected points offer glimpses of many possible pasts, and yet, in our longing for narratives, for a way of telling the past that will make sense in the present we know, we strive to organize these traces, to fill in the gaps."¹

I have hunted through drawers and boxes, searching for photographs that reveal other narratives than the ones in our albums. I find images of awkward moments and unflattering poses that are often more revealing than the ones framed on the walls and presented in photo albums. Were these images not as important to remember? "Yet I am not convinced that we should simply blame photography for the narrowness of its conventional pictures of family life. Indeed, the very determination to put a brave face on things, to show us all smiling as our teeth chattered on the frozen windswept beach or

at the washed-out picnic, only demonstrates our more or less desperate desire to be happy: a dumb, clumsy inchoate awareness that *somehow* life could be better than it is."² Thinking about what was and was not photographed in my family and how those choices influenced my memories and sense of self intrigues me and fuels my work.

The photographs of my childhood did not really interest me until I was in my late twenties. It was the early 1980s; I had recently completed graduate school and was starting to teach photography. Looking at these childhood images again, I felt as if I were seeing them for the first time. I used some of them in my work and embarked upon an artistic journey I continue today. Little did I know that this was the beginning of an obsession with family photographs that would culminate in a project as extensive as my *Collected Visions* World Wide Web project. Using snapshots and stories from more than 300 people, *Collected Visions* (<http://cvisions.cat.nyu.edu>) is an interactive website that explores how family photographs shape our memories. The concept for *Collected Visions* grew out of my photographs and installations from the early 1980s to the present that use family photographs³ to explore relationships between personal and collective memory.

I began my artistic career in the late 1970s photographing interiors (living rooms, bedrooms, kitchens) altered by colored lights and slide projections of shadows, light patterns, and landscapes. One day I projected an old family slide on a wall in my apartment. There I was as a child, looming like a ghost. The floating image had a dream/nightmare-like quality, and I felt as if I were making a memory materialize. These images from my past were immensely evocative. The rooms became a stage, and the projections of family photographs the players. This was a turning point in my work.

By 1983, I was creating color photographs of empty rooms in which superimposed "projections" form the visual analogue for psychological and emotional states. Using several projectors to project slides of my family photographs, I created installations specifically for the vantage point of the camera. Differences in time and distance diminished as I layered projected photographic fragments of my past. I grew up in suburban Los Angeles, and my family has taken and preserved many hundreds of evocative and classically American photographs. From these, I chose images not for

their autobiographical content but for the emotions they evoked and what they suggested about familial relationships, memory, childhood, hopes, and dreams.

I began to incorporate projections of images from the media (newspapers, magazines, TV) into my installations in 1986. This let me place my family photographs against a backdrop of images from our culture and be more specific in addressing the relationship between the personal and collective. We experience much of history as photographic moments, and these images from our cultural consciousness can trigger our personal memories in ways that our own snapshots often can't. They evoke a more specific sense of time. For instance, the photograph of President Kennedy slumped in his car in Dallas is a clearer photographic image in my mind than my family photographs from 1963. When I look at the Kennedy photograph, more memories from that period of my life are roused than when I see images of myself at age nine.

In 1987–88, I created *Critical Distance*,⁴ my first slide installation made to be experienced in its projected form. In my slide installations, larger-than-life images dissolve into each other as they are projected into darkened rooms. The space is transformed as slides cover entire walls, appear on the floor, and move across corners. The continuous emerging and dissolving of images in a darkened room evoke the sensation of thoughts rising and falling in the mind. Exploiting the power of the transitions as one image fades into another, I expanded my ideas concerning the relationships between historical imagery (collective memory) and private imagery (personal memory).

In *Critical Distance* and my next two installations, *Traces*, 1990–91,⁵ and *Playback*, 1992,⁶ I combined my family snapshots with historical media imagery drawn from books, magazines, newspapers, and television dating back to World War II. For all of these pieces, I selected media images that are widely recognizable to emphasize the power of our collective memories. Exaggerated by the scale of the projections, the scan lines of the TV imagery and the screen-generated dot pattern of magazine and newspaper photographs reveal the image sources. The family photographs have no screen, and thus appear to be more real. By carefully juxtaposing the historical images, less traditional photographs I found deep in my family's archives, and contemporary self-portraits, I

disrupt this myth of "reality" and the image of the conflict-free family that so many of the snapshots suggest.

Traces, which requires 10 projectors to display 800 slide images, is my most ambitious slide and sound installation. Two ten-minute sequences are projected floor-to-ceiling on the back wall of two adjacent spaces. Both sequences contain my family photographs slowly dissolving into each other. One of the sequences also includes images from the media, intercut with the family photographs at a faster rate. Projected into an opposing corner are dissolving images of a hand shown turning the pages of three photo albums. The architecture of the corner approximates the shape of an open book, and the perspective is constructed so that the viewer feels as if she or he is looking over the shoulder of the person leafing through the photo albums. On the floor, a woman appears to be swimming between two pools, acting as the traveler between the three projected sequences. A sound loop of a rippling stream activates the space. The sound was inspired by rushing water one hears in the ruins of a first-century Roman house buried two stories beneath the Church of San Clemente in Rome. The sound of the water acts as a layer of history, providing a physical reminder of the past.

In the slide and sound installation *Playback*, the sound is supplied by a live radio scan of several pre-programmed stations, alternating between music (oldies and contemporary), news, and talk shows—the audio equivalents of the types of imagery used. Although the scan is very much in the present, what we hear refers to the past. A blue plastic child's wading pool sits on the floor, while continuously dissolving images of children jumping and splashing in water are projected over and over again, hinting at a rougher journey than the one in *Traces*. At the same time, a fifteen-minute sequence of 120 slides is projected onto the entire back wall of the gallery forming the focal point of *Playback*. The sequence opens with images of my hand picking up family photographs—images of my lost childhood—which dissolve back and forth into newspaper images of people holding snapshots of deceased or missing relatives. These images dissolve into images of my family from the 1940s and images from World War II, followed by increasingly more recent images as the sequence continues chronologically up to the present. I update both the personal and public images each time *Playback* is exhibited, which gives it a diaristic quality and makes it my most autobiographical work.

In my search for new ways to examine my personal images against those of our culture, I realized I could use other peoples' family photographs in much the same way that I used images from the media. Because I come from a family of all girls (sisters, cousins, and nieces), I started by collecting snapshots from women. I wanted to see if other women's images were like mine. Would they be more authentic? I collected snapshots from approximately 100 women and girls of varied backgrounds and generations and created the three-part slide installation *Collected Visions I*, 1993–94,⁷ With music by Elizabeth Brown, *Collected Visions I* examines the representation of women and girls in family photographs. I collected snapshots from my friends and family, from students and colleagues at NYU and from women involved with the Houston Center for Photography, where the installation was initially exhibited. They all delved deep into their family archives providing me with a wide range of images dating from the 1940s to the 1990s depicting women from varied geographical, generational, ethnic, and social backgrounds. Parts I and II—ten-minute sequences of slide images examining the representation of girlhood and the experience of coming of age—are projected on adjacent walls in a corner of a gallery. Part III—a twenty-minute chronological sequence of girls age one through adolescence simply standing before the camera—is projected on adjacent walls in the opposite corner.

Elizabeth Brown's music is written for flute, glass harmonica, cello, and viola d'amore, and is melancholic in tone. Elizabeth created a score that "would sound like something you remembered or dreamed about [and be] mesmerizing rather than grab attention at any one point."⁸ The music, which has a sadness that expresses yearning and loss, extended the emotional depth of the piece.

The similarity of so many of the images I collected was striking, especially in the ways that they only hinted at the female experience of coming of age. Except for clues of dress or format (black-and-white versus color, white border on the print versus no border), the differences in how girls and women present themselves in family photographs from the 1950s and 1960s as compared to the 1980s and 1990s are far less apparent than I expected, given the changes in women's roles and the influence of feminism over this forty-year period. Subtleties of gaze and gesture suggest the ways in which girls find their voices. A photo of a smiling girl gazing directly into the camera and with her hands

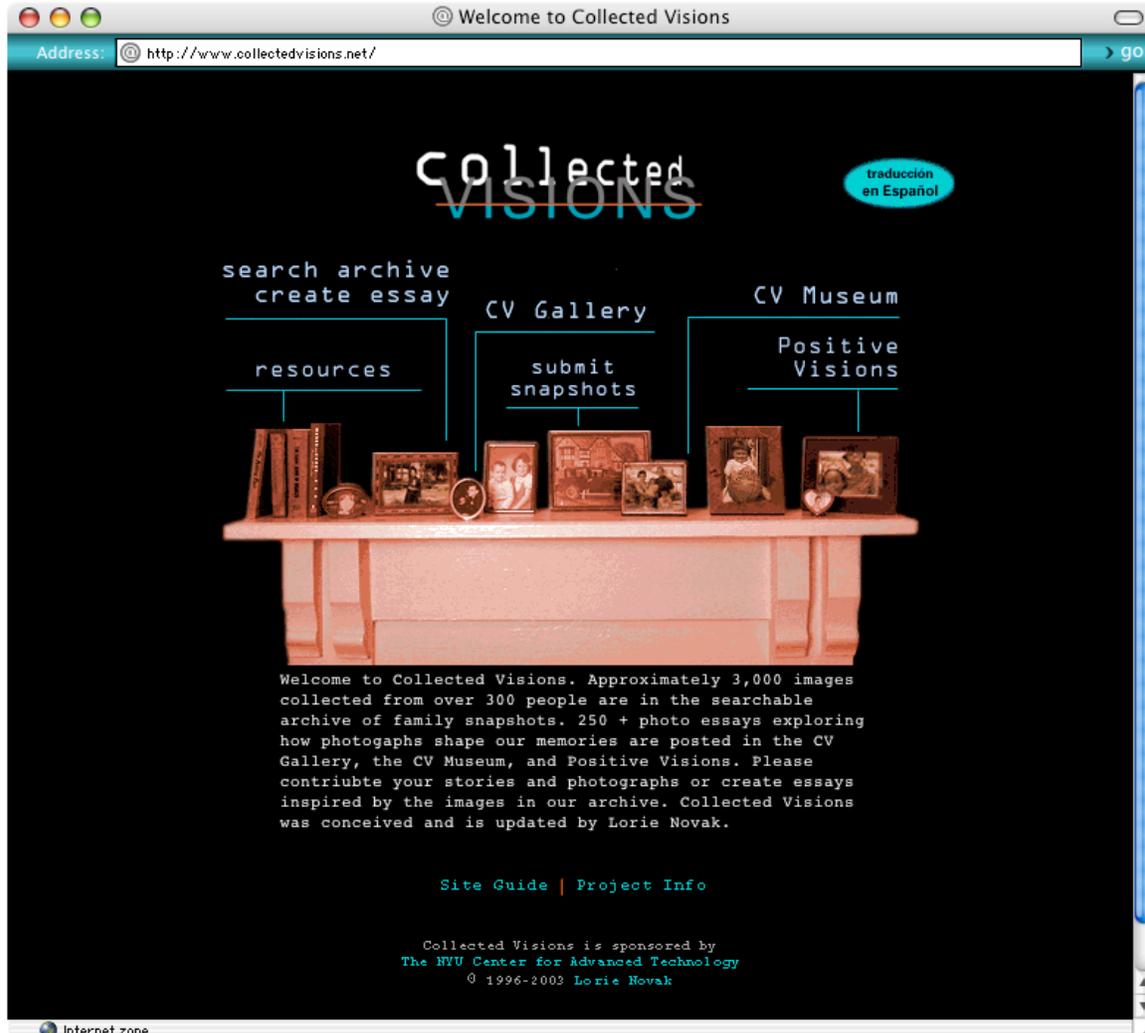
placed playfully or defiantly on her hips reads quite differently from one where the same smiling girl has clenched fists or hands politely folded on her lap. Enough women gave me photographs that are not stereotypically feminine so that, strategically placed, they penetrate the many smiling faces and cute poses found in the majority of the images. To further emphasize the complexities of representation, I overlay several of the snapshots with photographs of my hands holding one of several open books by and about women including A Room of One's Own, Little Women, Talking Back, and Writing a Women's Life. With young girls' faces seeming to peer through the pages of the books, the resulting hybrid images propose alternate narratives from the traditional ones conveyed in so many of the photographs.

As I travel with my installations, people always talk to me about their family photographs. Their stories reveal so much about photography's relationship to memory and the family. I knew I had to include some of these narratives in my next piece. I also realized that I wanted to enlarge the scope of the piece to include images from men and boys as well as from women and girls. I began collecting snapshots from men as I was installing *Collected Visions I* in Houston in May 1993. With the focus no longer solely on girlhood, I could take a broader look at the cultural significance of family photographs. I had thousands of casual snapshots and posed portraits depicting home life, familial relationships, celebrations, rituals, vacations, children at play, awkward adolescence, and much more. What I saw in these photographs were the dreams, disappointments, joys, tensions, and stereotypes of modern culture. Without realizing it, I was laying the foundation for what would become the *Collected Visions* website.

The mixture of images, music, and voices that I envisioned for this new project demanded a time based medium more sophisticated than the slide installation. Digital and video technologies appealed to me because of their potential for flexible recombination of image and sound. I would also have the ability to create a digital archive of my growing snapshot collection. Conceptually, these technologies were a logical next step, since television has become a new medium for the family album. Transferring old slides and 8mm films to video, using home video cameras, and digitizing images onto photo CDs are increasingly becoming commonplace practices.

An invitation in the spring of 1995 to propose a project to the Center for Advanced Technology at New York University came at a most opportune time. Through sponsorship by the Center, I teamed up with sound designer Clilly Castiglia, web designer Betsey Kershaw, and programmer Kerry O'Neill to create the *Collected Visions* website. Coming from different fields, we were able to ask questions and push the project in ways that none of us could have achieved simply working on our own. *Collected Visions* was launched in May 1996 in conjunction with the "Family Pictures: Shapes of Memory Conference" at Dartmouth College.

www.collectedvisions.net



A mantle with framed photographs is the navigational base of the site. *search archive / create essay* brings visitors to the growing database of photographs. After choosing images (their own or those of others), visitors to the website are provided with tools to write, design, and submit a photo essay for exhibition in the *Collected Visions Gallery*. The *CV Gallery* showcases selections of submitted essays with changing exhibitions every 4 to 8 weeks. The *Collected Visions Museum* is an archive of the essays from past exhibitions. The *resources* section contains an interdisciplinary bibliography dealing with family photographs, memory, and similar issues as well as related Web links. *Submit snapshots* gives instructions for contributing photos to the archive via the Web or by mail. *Positive Visions* is an archive of essays and images about people infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS. It was launched on December 1, 1996 in conjunction with the 8th Annual Day Without Art and World AIDS Day.⁹ The mantle also links to a selection of QuickTime movies I created with sound designer Cilly Castiglia using images from the *Collected Visions* archive and collected audio recollections.

The most significant aspect of *Collected Visions* is the ability it gives people to submit images to the archive and to create photo stories. As of January 1998, the archive contained more than 1,200 photographs submitted by approximately 300 people. The site's archive can be searched by various categories—who is in the photograph, genres of photographs, time period, or donor of the images. (See *Collected Visions Search Form* below.) The parameters for searching are determined by the content of the photographs. The search form is designed so that new categories can be added when they present themselves as more photographs from a larger audience are contributed to the archive. As the result of recent contributions, the categories "funeral," "at work," and "altered snapshot" have recently been added. When the photographs fall into multiple categories, all applicable classifications are checked. I have also been obtaining additional information about the submitted images, including the country in which the photograph was taken, the age of children in the photograph, and the type of setting (urban, suburban, rural) as well as any interesting story or facts associated with the image.

Netscape: Search CV Archive

Back Forward Reload Home Search Netscape Images Print Security Shop Stop

Location: http://cvisions.oat.nyu.edu/scripts/db/search_snapshot_page.idc?from=create What's Related

Search collected visions archive

PLEASE NOTE

You may choose as many boxes as you want in each section.

Checking multiple boxes within a section gives you more images.

Choosing boxes in more than one section limits your search and gives you fewer images.

Who is in the photograph?

<input type="checkbox"/> girl or woman alone	<input type="checkbox"/> sisters
<input type="checkbox"/> boy or man alone	<input type="checkbox"/> brothers
<input type="checkbox"/> mother and children	<input type="checkbox"/> brothers and sisters
<input type="checkbox"/> father and children	<input type="checkbox"/> pets
<input type="checkbox"/> parents and children	<input type="checkbox"/> friends (all female)
<input type="checkbox"/> extended family	<input type="checkbox"/> friends (all male)
<input type="checkbox"/> couple	<input type="checkbox"/> friends
<input type="checkbox"/> grandparents and grandchildren	

What categories of photographs do you want to see?

<input type="checkbox"/> dressed up (in formal clothes)	<input type="checkbox"/> school picture
<input type="checkbox"/> fantasy dress up / Halloween	<input type="checkbox"/> in photo studio
<input type="checkbox"/> graduation	<input type="checkbox"/> posed portrait
<input type="checkbox"/> celebration / holiday	<input type="checkbox"/> at home - posed
<input type="checkbox"/> birthday party	<input type="checkbox"/> at home - candid
<input type="checkbox"/> family reunion	<input type="checkbox"/> playing music
<input type="checkbox"/> wedding	<input type="checkbox"/> holding camera or telephone
<input type="checkbox"/> religious ceremony	<input type="checkbox"/> posed with trophy or school project
<input type="checkbox"/> at the beach or pool	<input type="checkbox"/> newborns / child's first steps
<input type="checkbox"/> on vacation	<input type="checkbox"/> in uniform (scouts, army, sports, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/> at work	<input type="checkbox"/> playing outdoors
<input type="checkbox"/> children with toys	<input type="checkbox"/> altered snapshot
<input type="checkbox"/> people with animals	<input type="checkbox"/> hands by side or on hips
<input type="checkbox"/> holding guns	<input type="checkbox"/> crying or pouting
<input type="checkbox"/> sports	<input type="checkbox"/> funeral / memorial
<input type="checkbox"/> wearing sunglasses	

Do you want to limit your search by the time period of the photograph?

<input type="checkbox"/> Before 1920	<input type="checkbox"/> Early 1950s	<input type="checkbox"/> Early 1980s
<input type="checkbox"/> 1920s	<input type="checkbox"/> Late 1950s	<input type="checkbox"/> Late 1980s
<input type="checkbox"/> Early 1930s	<input type="checkbox"/> Early 1960s	<input type="checkbox"/> Early 1990s
<input type="checkbox"/> Late 1930s	<input type="checkbox"/> Late 1960s	<input type="checkbox"/> Late 1990s
<input type="checkbox"/> Early 1940s	<input type="checkbox"/> Early 1970s	<input type="checkbox"/> Early 2000s
<input type="checkbox"/> Late 1940s	<input type="checkbox"/> Late 1970s	

Do you want to see photographs you submitted?

Donor Last name:

Donor First name:

After searching the archive, choosing images, and writing a text, participants are asked to choose colors for the text and background before submitting their essay for possible exhibition in the *Collected Visions Gallery*. Currently, I am curating all gallery exhibitions. I look for essays that use photographs as springboards for recollections, question the meaning and veracity of the images, and talk about images in ways that have never occurred to me. It is essential that the gallery contain multiple voices and points of view. I check for submissions daily, looking forward to the influx of new and diverse stories with great anticipation.¹⁰

The majority of the people submitting essays have written about photographs that are not their own. As exemplified in the following excerpts from selected submitted essays, some authors write about photographs of others as if they were their own, while others confess that the photo could have been theirs but is not.

This is a photo of me and my younger sister. No, not really. But if it were, I'd be the pediatrician, like our father, and she'd be the patient my dad would have to leave dinner to visit at the hospital.

—excerpted from the essay *Will She Get Better?*

I picked this picture because it looks like my school portrait from third grade. I had a similar hairstyle, one that my mother prided herself on because she cut it herself and the blunt cut was perfectly straight.

—excerpted from the essay *She looks like I did then*

This is me and my sister Alex, last Thanksgiving.¹¹ She is always after me to make something of my life, she doesn't respect the choices I've made.

—excerpted from the essay *I hate the Holidays*

I have a photo of my mother that is almost identical to this image. It was taken in the 40s by her mother.

—excerpted from the essay *Are You My Mother?*

For me, this identification with the images of others is the strongest validation of the site. Even authors who contribute images of their own usually choose to relate a personal story to or project their feelings onto anonymous images.¹²

Maybe writing about the resonant images of others frees authors from the personal baggage surrounding their own photographs and allows them to be more revealing. Our

own images are often tied up in family legend with conversations about family photographs frequently accompanied by embellishment and invention. Photographs and the narratives they inspire can become substitutes for memories of actual events. Anyone that has posed for a happy group snapshot at a stressful family event understands how photographs can be fabricated, and in time, alter memories.

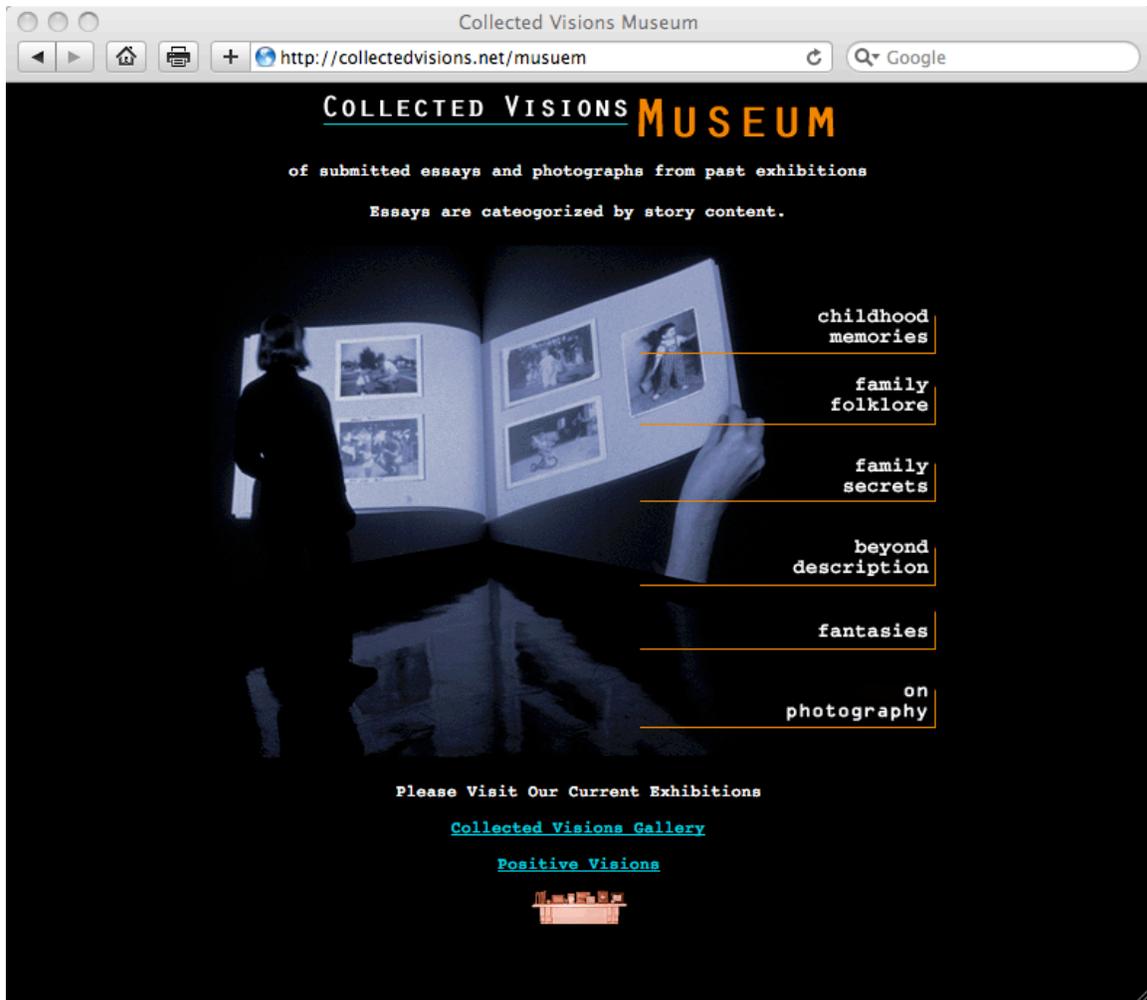
Calvin: This is what I like about photography. People think cameras always tell the truth. They think the camera is a dispassionate machine that records only facts, but really cameras lie all the time! Select the facts and you manipulate the truth! For example, I've cleared off this corner of my bed. Take a picture of me here, but crop out all the mess around me, so it looks like I keep my room tidy.

Hobbs: Is this even legal?

Calvin: Wait, let me comb my hair and put on a tie.¹³

When people talk to me about their memories of their family photographs, they often go into great detail about snapshots they can no longer find. Some question if these photographs ever really existed. The *Collected Visions* archive allows visitors to find images that evoke memories of their own family events that were never photographed. Memories associated with these "lost" images are often more vivid than the ones in the family photo albums. Perhaps this explains part of the lure of writing about the images of others.

As exhibitions in the gallery change, the essays are archived in the *CV Museum*. Much like departments in a traditional museum, the *Collected Visions Museum* is divided into sections. The categories include: "childhood memories," "family folklore," "family secrets," "beyond description," and "fantasies." Using the essays excerpted above as examples, *Will She Get Better?* and *Are You My Mother?* can be found under "family folklore," *She looks like I did then* under "childhood memories," and *I hate the Holidays* under "family secrets." Like the rest of the site, this structure can be adapted when the need arises.



Interspersed throughout the site are rotating quotations about photographs and memory drawn from the wealth of writing about family photographs. For example, as you enter the gallery you might come across Calvin and Hobbs's dialogue about photography or, a quote from Susan Sontag ("A family's photograph album is generally about the extended family—and often, is all that remains of it"),¹⁴ or one from bell hooks ("Although my sisters and I look at this snapshot and see the same man, we do not see him in the same way. Our 'reading' and experience of this image is shaped by our relationship to him, the world of childhood and the images that make our life what it is now."¹⁵). If you choose a combination in your search query that produces no photographs, the following quotation from Annette Kuhn appears: "What happens, then, if we take absences, silences, as evidence?"¹⁶ The sources for the quotations are referenced in the extensive bibliography in the *Resources* section. The quotations are used in a manner similar to the overlay of

open books in *Collected Visions I*—to raise questions about how we think about family photographs in particular and photography and representation in general.

Realizing this complex project in this new medium has been extremely stimulating as well as frustrating. The non-linear quality of the Web and the ways pages can be linked together is unlike any installation or exhibition I have ever designed. The ability to continually change and expand the site is exciting but time-consuming. With continual technological advances, there is always the lure of improving the site. As a visual artist, I am used to determining exactly how my work looks. On the Web, appearances change depending on how many colors a monitor can support, the power and speed of the computer, the type of Web browser, etc.

In conjunction with the website, I am exploring the possibilities of a large-scale projected video installation using digital video-editing software to combine the collected snapshots and audio recollections. The fluid and ephemeral nature of projected video, the juxtaposition of images, and the overlapping of spoken words and music will work together to create an experience that conveys the emotional and psychological power of memory. Here, unlike the website, I can have complete artistic control. Again, I am collaborating with Elizabeth Brown and Clilly Castiglia to create the audio component. Clilly Castiglia and I have been recording children and adults speaking about their memorable snapshots and the power these images hold for them, and lamenting unphotographed events from their past. We have already used fragments of these recordings to create audio essays and QuickTime movies on the website. With these stories, we are creating an audio component that not only explores the power of family photographs but also examines the truths and fictions behind them.

After experiencing the installation, viewers will be able to explore the website at a computer kiosk. An attached scanner will allow visitors to contribute images to the website and to future sequences of the installation. I envision computer kiosks containing the website and a scanner installed not only at museums but at public venues such as libraries, historical societies, and shopping centers. At some sites, a recording station will be set up to collect audio recollections. I feel it is crucial to expand the audience for *Collected Visions* beyond those people who have access to computers, scanners, and the

Web, in order to have a real dialogue about the power of family photographs. To encourage diversity, I am inviting others to organize exhibitions for the *Collected Visions Gallery* that are culturally, historically, or regionally specific.

Collected Visions is now in its second year. The eighth exhibition of essays debuted January 1, 1998, and over 100 essays are posted throughout the site. In 1997, 3,000 to 5,000 people visited each month. "Surfing the Web," however, dominates real participation. At this point, the number of essays submitted range from three to twenty a month. This ratio of passive to active participation is frustrating—it is not the global discussion about family photographs I envisioned. The view of a World Wide Web fostering interactive dialogues may be a myth, in keeping with the older myth of the connected family. I also question what the effect is of viewing all these snapshots out of context on a computer screen. I hope that the numbers and variety of photographs in the archive, the database information, and the site's interactive component will work together to provide context for the photographs and information about the different roles family photographs play in our lives.

Collected Visions will remain on the Web through the turn of the century, giving it time to grow and become more inclusive. I see it as a fitting millennium project. The still photograph has been the dominant pictorial document of this century and most likely will not be of the next. In all likelihood, as the family photograph is replaced by new forms of record keeping, it will be even more romanticized than it is today. The accumulation of stories on *Collected Visions* will confront this romanticism and help to penetrate the narrow view of the family that so many snapshots suggest. With submissions via the Web and computer kiosks over a five-year period, *Collected Visions* and its archive will serve as a testimony to the multiple visions of how we view the snapshot and family photographs at this time in history.

Collected Visions can be found @ www.collectedvisions.net

—My thanks to The Rockefeller Foundation for the time to reflect and develop this essay during a residency at The Bellagio Study and Conference Center in 1997.

¹Patricia Holland, "History, Memory, and the Family Album," in Family Snaps: The Meanings of Domestic Photography, ed. by Jo Spence and Patricia Holland (London: Virago, 1991) p. 1.

²Simon Watney, "Ordinary Boys" in *ibid.*, p. 30.

³I use the terms "snapshot" and "family photograph" loosely. I am interested in images that are either posed or candid, and that define an individual both within and separate from the family. Family to me includes all loved ones—friends as well as pets.

⁴*Critical Distance* was commissioned by Independent Curators Inc. for the traveling exhibition *The Presence of Absence: New Installations*, 1989–93, curated by Nina Felshin.

⁵*Traces* was commissioned by the University Art Museum at California State University, Long Beach, and exhibited there as *Centric 42*, January–March, 1991 and at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, IL as *Options 43*, December 1991–January 1992. Brochures with an essay by Diana duPont were published in conjunction with both exhibitions.

⁶*Playback* was commissioned by The Southeast Museum of Photography in Daytona Beach, Florida for the traveling exhibition *Betrayal of Means/Means of Betrayal*, accompanied by an exhibition catalogue with an essay by curator Janie Cohen.

⁷*Collected Visions I* was commissioned by the Houston Center for Photography in Houston, Texas, and exhibited there in May 1993. A revised version was shown in the exhibition *Imagining Families: Images and Voices* at the National African American Museum Project at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., Aug. 1994–Feb. 1995.

⁸ Excerpt from Elizabeth Brown's artist statement in the exhibition catalogue *Imagining Families: Images and Voices* (Smithsonian Institution, 1994), p. 42.

⁹ *Positive Visions* links to the *Day Without Art* website (www.creativetime.org/dwa) which contains an extensive list of links to HIV/AIDS resources all over the world.

¹⁰ The section of the site where essays are submitted is secure, only accessible by password.

¹¹ The two women in the photograph are actually my own sisters Karen and Patricia.

¹² Although I know which writers submitted stories about their own images and which have not, the author's relationship to the photographs is not disclosed.

¹³ An excerpt from a Calvin and Hobbs cartoon by Bill Watterson in The Days Are Just Packed: A Calvin and Hobbs Collection (Kansas City: Andrews and McMeel, An Universal Press Syndicate Co., 1993), p. 148.

¹⁴ Susan Sontag, On Photography (New York: Dell Publishing, 1977), p. 9.

¹⁵ bell hooks, "In Our Glory," in Picturing Us: African American Identity in Photography, edited by Deborah Willis (New York: The New Press, 1994), p. 44.

¹⁶ Annette Kuhn, Family secrets: acts of memory and imagination (London: New York: Verso, 1995), p.13.