

Richard Chalfen

Snapping and Wrapping

Personal Photography in Japan

CURATING AND INTERPRETING CULTURE

Summary

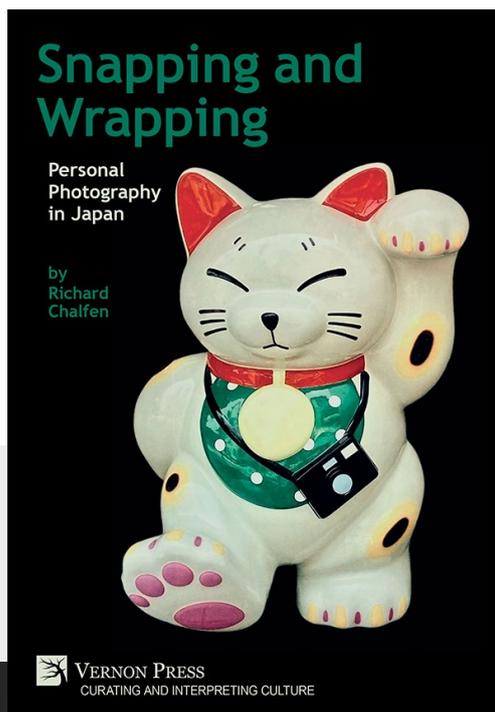
'Snapping and Wrapping' represents an original study in Japanese visual culture, pictorial communication, and photographic studies. Vernacular visual culture is highlighted, stressing ordinary people and everyday life to explore photographic expressions of Japanese family life. The theme of "how people looked" is described from two closely related perspectives: how people appeared in their own photographs, and how people looked at specific features of their own lives with analog camera technology.

The book includes unexamined material based on a qualitative study involving personal fieldwork undertaken between 1993 and 2009. The metaphor of "wrapping culture" (Hendry) is suggested for ways of interpreting relationships of personal family photographs in conjunction with acknowledged cultural influences and values of Japanese culture. Across an introduction and six chapters, the book covers a series of research topics evoked by efforts to recover, repair, and return millions of photographs to survivors following the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake. Memory, privacy and kinds of information control are reviewed as parts of strategies of sharing pictures, "presence" and the use of photographs for interpersonal interaction and communication. Throughout the monograph, emphasis is placed on understanding details of analog personal photography for potential comparisons to the intensely popular digitalization of photographic recordings and, in turn, facilitate making informed speculations for future

photographic practice. This book will be of interest to upper-level students, graduate students and scholars in the fields of media and culture, Asian Studies (especially Japanese visual culture), as well as those working on sensitive relationships of family, memory and representation.

About the author

Richard Chalfen, Ph.D., is currently Professor Emeritus of Anthropology, Temple University (Philadelphia and Tokyo). He served as Senior Scientist at the Center on Media and Child Health at Boston Children's Hospital/Harvard Medical School and held the William Valentine Cole Chair as Visiting Professor of Sociology/Anthropology at Wheaton College, Norton, Massachusetts. He taught four summer school sessions for the University of Bologna and taught visual anthropology and Japanese Visual Culture at Temple University Japan in Tokyo. Chalfen's published books include *Snapshot Versions of Life* (1987), *The Popular Press/The University of Wisconsin Press*; *Turning Leaves: The Photograph Collections of Two Japanese American Families* (1991), *University of New Mexico Press*; *Through Navajo Eyes—An Exploration in Film Communication and Anthropology* (1997), *University of New Mexico Press* (with John Adair and Sol Worth); *Visual Research Methods and Issues of Voice* (2010), *Special Issue of Visual Studies* 25(3) (co-edited with Wendy Luttrell); and *Photogaffes — Family Snapshots and Social Dilemmas* (2012), *Dog Ear Publishing*. He is past Chair of the Anthropology Department at Temple, past president of the American Anthropological Association's Society of Visual Anthropology and received the Society of Visual Anthropology's Lifetime Achievement Award.



June 2021 | Hardback 236x160mm | 232 Pages | ISBN: 978-1-64889-121-2

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