Photograph Analysis Tool

Who(m)?

Who created it?

Howell Walker, who is a photographer for National Geographic

Whom was it created for?

Readers of National Geographic, who are mostly adults interested in science

What:

What is it?

“A Diplomat Must Be Diplomatic When Feeding Potato Chips to Kangaroos!” a photograph of nine adults and two children feeding six kangaroos

What about it stands out?

The people’s outfits, the kangaroos’ size, and how calm both groups seem to be—honestly, I would be nervous feeding kangaroos, but the people don’t seem to be

Where?

Where was it created?

On a dirt lot near grass, a fence, and a building, and surrounded by trees

Where can it be viewed?

In the March 1943 issue of National Geographic and online

When?

When was it created?

March 1943 or earlier

When can it be viewed?

March 1943 or later
Why/How?

Why may it have been created?

Possibly to inform its viewers that Australians live near and interact with kangaroos, a species most Americans find exotic.

How can you tell it was created for this reason?

Walker’s decision to include the people and kangaroos suggests that he wants viewers to think about the interaction between them.

Using the photograph’s details, find evidence of its creator’s attitudes.

I think that Walker’s decision to include the people and kangaroos is evidence that he views kangaroos as animals with which Australians interact on a regular basis. Since the people are smiling and both they and the kangaroos seem calm, he probably views kangaroos as gentle and harmless, too.

Using the photograph’s details, predict its effect on viewers’ attitudes.

I think that seeing the people feeding the kangaroos may cause viewers who have never seen or interacted with kangaroos to think of them as gentle and harmless. They might also think about how they already coexist with animals native to their area, or how they could more peacefully coexist with them.

Do you have any other comments or questions about the photograph?

I would really like to know what the article connected to the photograph was about, and whether it included other photographs. Knowing that information would help me better understand the photograph’s context and, as a result, Walker’s attitudes. Right now, I’m not confident that I know them.

*Adapted from the National Archives and Records Administration’s “Photo Analysis Worksheet” (http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/photo_analysis_worksheet.pdf)