Photograph Analysis Tool

Who(m)?

Who created it?

Richard Olsenius, 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?

“Home or the Range,” a photograph of a small, white dog sitting on an ornate cushion in a lavishly decorated room

What about it stands out?

The room, especially the lavishness of its decorations and their symmetry—the dog’s humans must be very wealthy and care a lot about their home’s appearance

Where?

Where was it created?

In a lavish room with a couch, rug, table, and numerous decorations

Where can it be viewed?

In the January 2002 issue of National Geographic and online

When?

When was it created?

January 2002 or earlier

When can it be viewed?

January 2002 or later
Why/How?

*Why may it have been created?*

Possibly to inform its viewers that some dogs live in as much comfort as, if not more comfort than, many people.

*How can you tell it was created for this reason?*

Olsenius’s decision to include the couch, rug, table, and decorations suggests that he wants viewers to think about the dog’s environment.

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

*I think that Olsenius’s decision to include the couch, rug, and table is evidence that he views dogs as animals whom some people treat very well. That being said, his inclusion of so many of the room’s decorations suggests that he may think the dog is being treated better than necessary.*

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

*I think that seeing the dog sitting on such an ornate-looking cushion in such a lavishly decorated room may cause viewers who don’t live with dogs to see them as worthy of good treatment. That being said, it might also cause viewers to question the need to treat this particular dog as well as his humans do.*

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, Olsenius’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)*