



Tutor Report Form

Student name:	Keith Greenough
Student number:	416177
Course/Module title:	PH3: Advanced
Assignment number:	5: 'Ironman Family' (Submitted as assignment '6')

Thank you for your work Keith, and I hope you have had a good holiday. Although we usually do telephone feedback, I hope you don't mind me giving written feedback only this time – I can't remember when you are back from holiday, and have a need to finish my current student feedback to get on with other pressing commitments.

Feedback on assignment

To be honest, I'm struggling to find very much by way of 'food for thought' regarding this assignment: another very well researched and resolved body of work. There are a few points that I will look at, which are mostly in response to your introduction.

The work is technically accomplished and you've got here a very strong and professional body of work which I think would be of real interest to a gallery-going, as well as an athletic audience. In terms of production, the work speaks for itself. Without knowing that you practice this yourself, you couldn't tell that these people are friends: however you directed the subject, you did it very well to get the thoughtful and unguarded poses and expressions that you have achieved.

I rarely find that it's possible to encompass pretty much the whole of the maker's intellectual intent within the actual, produced outcome, but this feels very complete, and there doesn't appear to me to be any doubt what the work is about. The diversity of the Ironmen - and Ironladies, who I think I find more interesting – is striking, and I think that this is the more challenging part of the project. How 'normal' all of these people are is striking.

Having said that you've managed to communicate all of your ideas, I should say that obsessional, addictive side of competing in tournaments isn't really evident within the work itself, as far as I can see. Perhaps we discussed something similar before, but I wonder whether the number of tournaments the subjects have completed could be put in the title. I'm assuming that the numbers that are there denotes the age categories?

There might be a case to argue for not having any details at all. The way you describe the potential installation of these as life-size prints, for the viewer to relate to as an individual, could warrant getting rid of any arbitrary personal details. You've talked before, I think, about the mental state of the ironman being just as important as their physique, so perhaps the less you 'tell' the viewer, the more they are free to work with the image of the person in front of them. I appreciate that the denoted 'profession' shows the diversity of social backgrounds, but I think you can just 'get' that, to enough of an extent, than labeling them with text. Their profession doesn't necessarily say anything about what compels them to compete time and again: That's the real point of interest here. Also, the sense of the community that you want to get across is interesting, but I wonder whether talking about occupation says more about their differences than their similarities – which is the passion that unites the community.

I think it's right, and you shouldn't be afraid of, making your own point, either in terms of the content of your images, or the way you contextualize them with your analysis. Perhaps the fact that you are competing and training, *as well as* working on this series says something about the character of an ironman, and the installation you describe – possibly with many more photographs – would get this point across even more explicitly.

I don't really have any problem with the minor discrepancies of the backgrounds etc. As you say, they were shot at different times, and I don't think there is any need for self-consciousness about that – quite the opposite: It shows you didn't just set up a conveyor belt and shoot the thing in an afternoon.

The only other thing I feel the need to bring up is what I interpreted as quite a swift dismissal of any potential suggestion that this work

might be considered a typology. It doesn't really matter to me whether it is or it isn't, but it strikes me that this is exactly what you've created! I can see why Sander's social types have negative connotations in the way that he basically reduced and classified people according to occupation, I see your portrait more in terms of the Becher's water towers: By gathering and grouping, paradoxically, you celebrate individualities and differences, rather than make a statement that everyone of them is the same. As I said, I don't think it is particularly important, but certainly worth expanding upon in a bit more depth within your reflective account.

Conclusions

The only thing I think you need to do here is to think some more about the titles of each portrait.

What you sent through for the 4th assignment is accomplished and intriguing. I look forward to some more in due course.

I've just spent about half an hour trying to find a body of which which your proposal reminded me of – pairs of very similar portraits - but I can't recall! Somebody fairly high profile I think. It will come to me, and I'll let you know when it does... It might be Bettina Von Zwehl - <http://www.bettinavonzwehl.com/main.html> see *Inhalation / Exhalation* but I think I was thinking of something else.

I expect to hear from you soon.

All the best,

Jesse

Tutor name:	Jesse Alexander
Date:	02.01.13
Next assignment due:	