



BASIC PHOTOGRAPHIC ARTS

T+R 9-10:50am HFAC314

INSTRUCTOR: Z Comer, Associate Professor of Art
OFFICE: HFAC 311
HOURS: T+TH 2pm - 4pm or by [appointment](#)
CONTACT: enz001@marietta.edu | 740-376-4694

GRADED ITEM #1: PHOTOGRAPHABLE QUESTIONS

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For my Intro to Basic Photo Arts class, I introduce the final assignment on the first day of class. I realize this may seem strange, but I have found that it is a great way to address concepts and praxis from day one. Many intro level studio art courses are focused solely on skill building, but I believe addressing concept and meaning making is equally important for students even at the intro level. I think this is perhaps even more important for the general education students, who may not have another studio arts experience in their time in higher ed. Because this class is mostly composed of gen ed students from various majors with little to no art making or photographic experience, it felt appropriate to find ways to merge concept and praxis early on for my students. By introducing the final project on day one of class, and scaffolding exercises to build towards the final project all semester, it creates momentum and focus with an end goal in mind: a photographic series themed around a big question or concept that also demonstrates technical proficiency.

To start this off, on day one of the class I begin with an ice breaker exercise called "I Wish Mine Would". I have the students create a list of the top 5 things they want to learn about photos or photography during the semester. This requires the students to start thinking about the technical aspects they will explore in the class, and gets them excited to incorporate these new skills into their work. The students share some of their list of goals in small groups, and then as a class we discuss the commonalities they discovered in the exercise.

I follow up this ice breaker with a short screening of the TedTalk: "[How Photography Connects Us](#)". This short video photographer David Griffin, of National Geographic fame, shares some of his favorite photographs and discusses how these images are tools for communicating important narratives. He posits that prioritizing stories is an important way that humans seek out and share connections. We spend some time as a class discussing some of our favorite stories or photographs from the video. I find that the images are approachable and relatable to students who are not yet comfortable unpacking photographic work.

After some lively discussion (nearly every semester students are particularly moved by the series about the elephants and the leopard seal) I give the students their first homework assignment: 10 Photographable Questions. Using the story aspect of David Griffin's TedTalk, I ask the students to think about their own interests and perspectives, and how they might explore those topics or questions through photographs. I explain this will be the prompt for the final assignment in the class and that we will spend time throughout the semester returning to the theme of how photography can ask, and answer, important questions about our world.

For the final assignment, students have approximately 3 weeks to propose and shoot a photographic series of 5-10 images themed around a concept or question. They are asked to demonstrate technical skill as well as conceptual skill in this series. Students must consider not only the images they create, but the presentation of those images in a printed sequence. Much of this project is self-directed with opportunities to check in with me and their classmates as needed. The final work is shared via class critique. For this project I usually give video feedback so I can annotate on the screen and point them to specific parts of their image or their sequence to consider. Below I've attached the exercises mentioned above, as well as the assignment sheet and an example of student work.



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"I WISH MINE WOULD..."

What is the difference between a snap shot and a professional photograph? We all 'know it when we see it', but how can we describe the difference between something that looks professional and something that looks amateur?

Spend a little time thinking about the photos that you really like. What do they have that you wish your photos had? Are there specific skills, techniques or approaches you would like to explore? List below:



I WISH MINE WOULD...

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.



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PHOTOGRAPHABLE QUESTIONS

Questions are a way that as artists, we can start to help our minds think creatively. The most important part of art making is **asking questions**. As new photographers, it is important to think about and explore what most interests you. If you care about your subjects, you will photograph them better and make more interesting work. This exercise is designed to help kick start your photographic journeys, and give you an opportunity to begin to consider why photography interests you.

BRAINSTORMING

- Write 10 questions that you have about yourself, your community, and/or the world. These questions can be very broad, or very specific. I want you to think about the issues, ideas, and/or areas that really concern or intrigue you.
- In parenthesis beside each of your 10 questions, type at least 5 keywords that come to mind when you ponder that question. Don't overthink it, but allow your brain to start making connections. Try to come up with at least 5 for each question, but you are welcome to explore more as you brainstorm.
- Next, pick one question from your list and write about why it is of interest to you. Include what you already know about this question, and what you would love to discover or explore. This can be brief, but it is important that it is honest. Why does this topic interest you?

Example "photographable" questions

Please consider your OWN questions carefully. Remember there is no right or wrong way to complete this assignment or create these questions, but this is a guide that may help you get started:

- **How do time and light change the same object?** (night, morning, sunny, dark, mood, tone, memory)
- **What is "beauty"?** (perception, attraction, physical appearance, uniqueness, difference)
- **Why are humans obsessed with technology?** (connection, relationships, loneliness, iphones, gadgets, isolation)
- **What makes an "athlete"?** (physical fitness, training, strategy, determination, grit, competition)
- **How do the seasons change how we see plants?** (nature, photosynthesis, color, cycles, weather)

Make sure you have this typed out and printed for our next class, as we will work in groups to explore ideas and workshop them into possible photographic projects. You will want to hold onto this assignment, as we will come back to it multiple times throughout the semester. Your final project in this course will be a photographic series centered around a photographable question. While your ideas may change and evolve over time, (and you certainly do not have to create your final assignment based on THESE questions) you will be asked to reconsider these questions this semester as your understanding of photography and the visual arts expands. This process is a great springboard for coming up with creative ways to engage with your budding photographic practice.

DUE 1.14



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FINAL PROJECT PHOTO SERIES: PHOTOGRAPHABLE QUESTION

PROJECT OVERVIEW:

For your final assignment, you will be combining all the wonderful new photography skills you've developed this semester in a series of images that explore a "Photographable Question". This is your time to shine and make images about what really excites you! Now is the time to refer back to your photographable questions assignment that we have been discussing since the beginning of the semester and see which of those topics resonate with you. Now that you have learned more about photography, have your ideas and interests changed? Remember your idea does not have to be formatted as a question, it can be a topic or an idea.

Your photo series will be assessed on the concept, technical skill, and overall creativity as well as how they work together in a sequence. Think about the topics we've discussed so far in the semester, and choose one that you think directly inspires or compels you as an artist. The final images need to be turned in via Moodle. (instead of printing, given the COVID19 issues) We will have a class critique of the final work on THURSDAY 4.23 at 10am via ZOOM.

PROCESS:

Choosing A Topic: Your image series should have a central topic, theme, idea, or "question" that ties it all together. If it helps to generalize rather than think of it as a question, that is fine. But it is important to have a theme or idea to plan your images around

Choosing A Photographic Style: We worked in a lot of styles and approaches this semester. After you have selected a topic it helps to choose a style or approach that you want to explore with your work. Think about style or approach what



Student Work Example: "Who is the Real Me?"
by Parker Saenz

makes sense for your idea/theme/question. You can combine approaches or techniques, or you can research other ways of working.

Perhaps you will want all your photos to be macro texture. Or maybe you will make a series of Joiners. Or you may decide to do some portrait work along with still life photos. It is up to you, but I want your decision to work in conjunction with your theme or topic.

Planning: After you have a theme and an idea about approach, it will be time to come up with a plan to execute your images. You will want to build in time for shooting, editing, and possible re-shooting. Make sure you consider these issues as you work on your project proposal. A timeline template is included here for your convenience.

Shooting & Working: Be careful to think about what you will need and have access to as you plan for your project. Give yourself time for re-shoots in case things don't work out like you expected.

REQUIREMENTS:

- 5-10 photographs that are related conceptually, thematically, or visually.
- 1-3 Page Self-Assessment: This should address the following:
 - A brief explanation of your work, and your goals for the series. This is a good place to discuss your inspiration, artistic choices, and your creativity in the assignment.
 - Challenges you encountered in the assignment and how you overcame them.
 - An assessment of your work. How well did you meet the requirements of the assignment? What grade would you assign yourself and why?
- Project Proposal - format and template attached to this assignment sheet
- Digital Files: all of your images should be turned in as .jpgs or .psds (if you edit them in Photoshop) for the assignment as well as a .pdf of your Self-Assessment uploaded to Moodle
- Please name your files using the following convention:
 - "yourname-final1" - "yourname-final5"
 - "yourname-final-writeup.pdf"



Student Work Example: "What does it take to be an athlete?"
by Braelen Bader

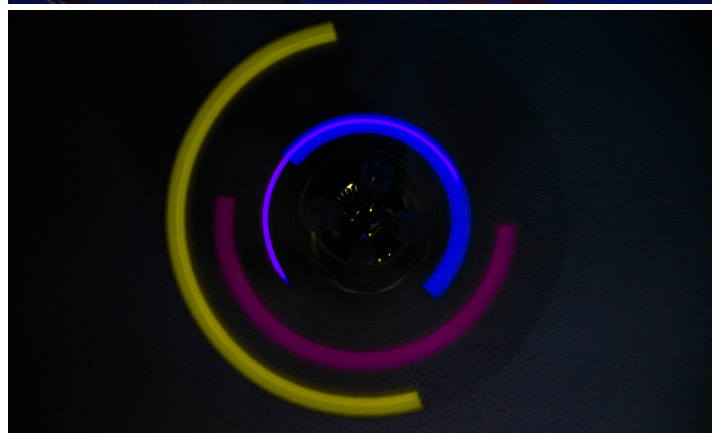
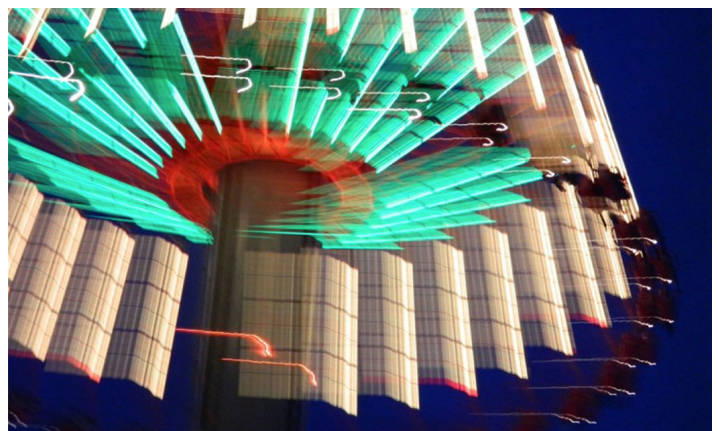
TIMELINE:

- 4.7 - Introduce Assignment
- 4.16 - Submit Final Project Proposal online via Moodle
- 4.23 - Final Project due online via Moodle by 10am. We will have an in class zoom critique of the final work during that time. We will also do a brief final exam review
- 4.28 - FINAL EXAM

RUBRIC:

20	Project Proposal + Timeline
20	Met project requirements above
20	Self-Assessment
20	Creativity + Clarity of Theme
20	Overall Quality of the work

100 POINTS TOTAL



Student Work Example: "Light Over Time"
by Nate Lundsford

PROJECT PROPOSAL + TIMELINE TEMPLATE

PROPOSAL OUTLINE:

Your proposal can be bulleted answers to the questions below, or it can be written out in paragraph form. Please make sure to address all of the topics below. It will help you make stronger work if you take your time on this step, and carefully consider your ideas and themes before diving into making your work.

Please address the following:

1. What is your theme or concept for your photo series? What is the series ABOUT? (think back to those photographable questions we discussed at the beginning of the semester)
2. How will the viewers understand your theme? Thinking about sequencing, will your images need to be viewed in a specific order?
3. What style of photography are you planning to work with? (macro, portrait, etc.)
4. What type of post processing work (if any) are you planning?
5. What sorts of support will you need to complete your work? Think about locations, models, props, etc.

TIMELINE:

You can create your own timeline, or use the one below to plan for your project. These squares represent the dates we have remaining in class this semester. Please fill in what you plan to work on, and when. You can add additional dates or revise this as you see fit. I am looking for a clear outline and plan for how you want to approach your final project in the time we have remaining. This timeline is designed to help you stay on track and not wait until the last minute to get started.

T 4.7 INTRO TO FINAL PROJECT	R 4.9	EXTRA DATES THIS WEEK:
T 4.14	R 4.16 PROPOSAL + TIMELINE DUE	EXTRA DATES THIS WEEK:
T 4.21 CHECK IN WITH Z	R 4.23 PROJECT DUE	T 4.28 FINAL EXAM



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FINAL PROJECT: FEEDBACK

ASHTON

97 out of 100

20 out of 20	Project Proposal + Timeline
20 out of 20	Met Project Requirements
20 out of 20	Self-Assessment
17 out of 20	Creativity + Clarity of Theme
20 out of 20	Overall Quality of the Work

VIDEO FEEDBACK

Great work Ashton! Let me know if you have any questions! As I mention in the video feedback, two of your photos were a little repetitive, and perhaps would have been stronger with a different image swapped in, so you lost a few points there. Your overall quality of work was wonderful and I am very pleased with this project. I hope you will submit some of these pieces to the student show. Nice job. Very personal and brave work here!

Ashton

ART 240

Professor Zerbe

December 3, 2019

For the final assignment I decided to have an overarching theme of “Something is wrong, why does no one believe me?” My goals for this assignment was to capture the struggle of someone going through an illness even though doctors and other medical professionals believe the person is fine. I wanted to mirror my experiences that frustrated me this semester dealing with various conditions that have inhibited my ability to function at in class, at softball, and in social settings. I wanted to make these photos as personal as possible and try to give the audience an insight into my life, not to receive sympathy or pity from them, but to bring awareness to some illnesses that are not well understood but affect people in detrimental ways.

As touched upon above, this semester has just been a series of unfortunate events for me in terms of my health. I had been showing more than half of the common symptoms for Hypothyroidism throughout the summer months and well into this semester. I had gone to several doctors, who all ran blood tests and determined that my levels were normal and that I just needed to ride out the symptoms. However, I knew something was not right and continued to see more doctors. I was eventually put on medication after midterms and I am now starting to finally see positive results. I had also been passing out from our conditioning and endurance workouts throughout the fall, so I have finally been referred somewhere to undergo stress testing to rule out any cardiac issues, which I have been fighting to get for some time. After all

this had happened, I went to the ER and found out that I was passing kidney stones, so I was put on more medication and sports restrictions from that. By this time my frustration was at a high point and I thought that this assignment would be a good creative outlet for me to express my feelings through a medium that I love.

I wanted to make these photos as personal as possible, because I thought they would resonate with the audience more, so I decided that I needed to be in the photos. Every photo in the series has me in it in some shape or form. I also chose to make them all blue-tinted because the best way that I can describe how I felt through this whole process was depressed and 'blue.' I felt like this filter made everything look dark and somewhat stressed and unnatural, which also described my process this semester well.

The biggest challenge was directing my mom on how to take the photos, what angles, how the lighting would work, everything. I think we reshot some photos 2 more times after the first round. She was definitely growing impatient with me but we made it through and got images that I liked. Another challenge would be having to work around our puppy, Bentley. He's not quite a year old yet and was so excited to see me that he didn't really want to leave my side at all. He would also try to mess with the props which made the process longer. However, I did get a really cute picture with him that I thought about using (I put it on the next page).

I think I stuck to the requirements of the assignment well. I have a cohesive theme throughout the series and I stuck to a similar, non-standard, self-portrait style of photography. I did not technically click the camera button for any of the photos but I staged each one and directed my mom on how I wanted each one to look. Overall, I would give myself an A on this assignment for meeting the requirements but also being creative on how I portrayed the

different frustrations in a way that was personal but also vague enough that hopefully my audience can relate to them.

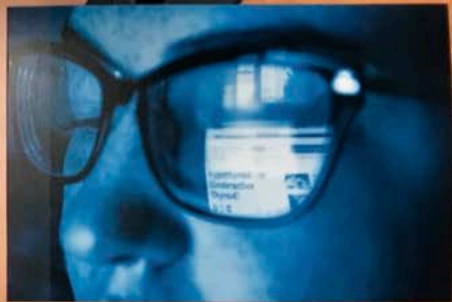
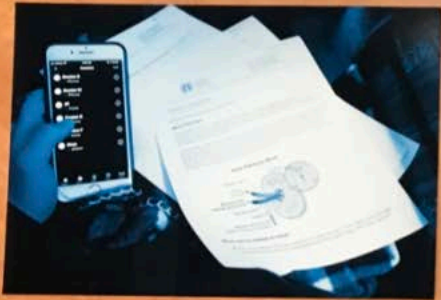
Some side notes below:

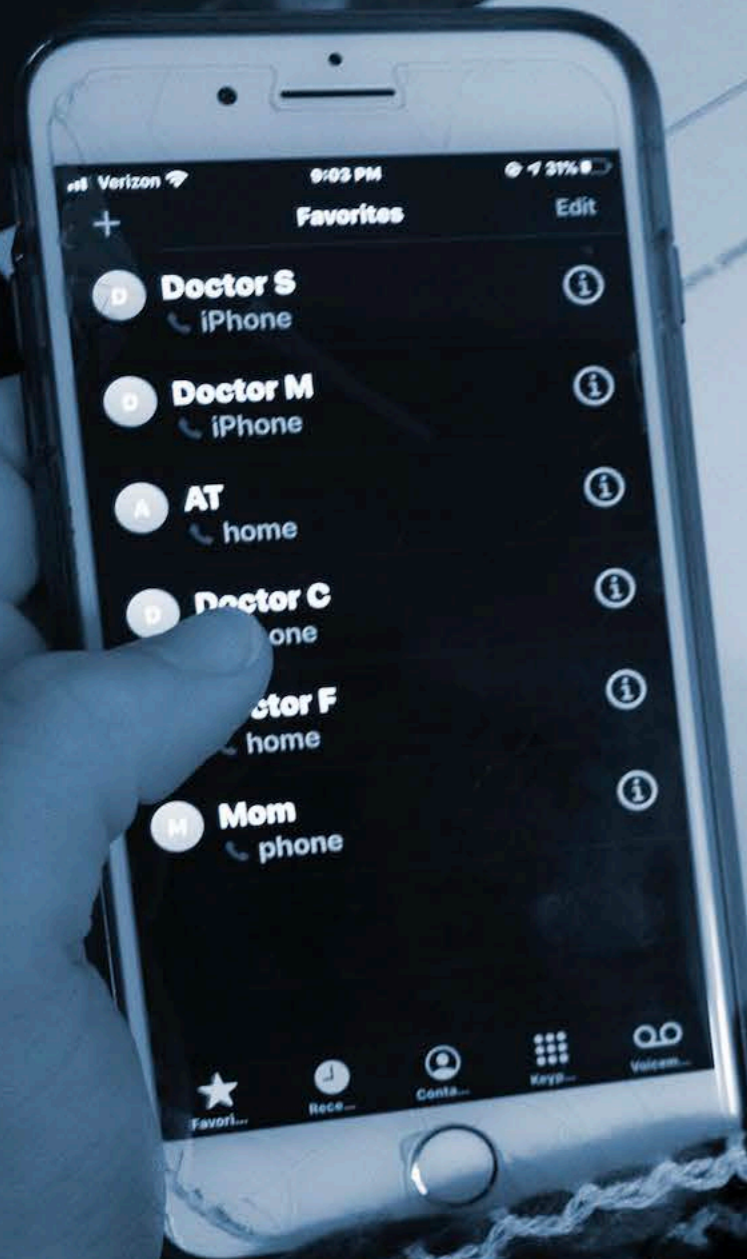
As promised here is the picture of Bentley and I:



Here is kind of how I wanted the photos to be set up to be viewed. I know it would be hard to see when I turn them in but this is what I envision in my head:







Patient Education

Kidney Stones Discharge Instructions

About this topic

The urinary tract is made up of the kidney, ureters, bladder, and urethra. The kidneys make urine and it drains down into tubes called ureters. These ureters are connected to the bladder. The bladder then squeezes out the urine and it exits the body through the urethra.

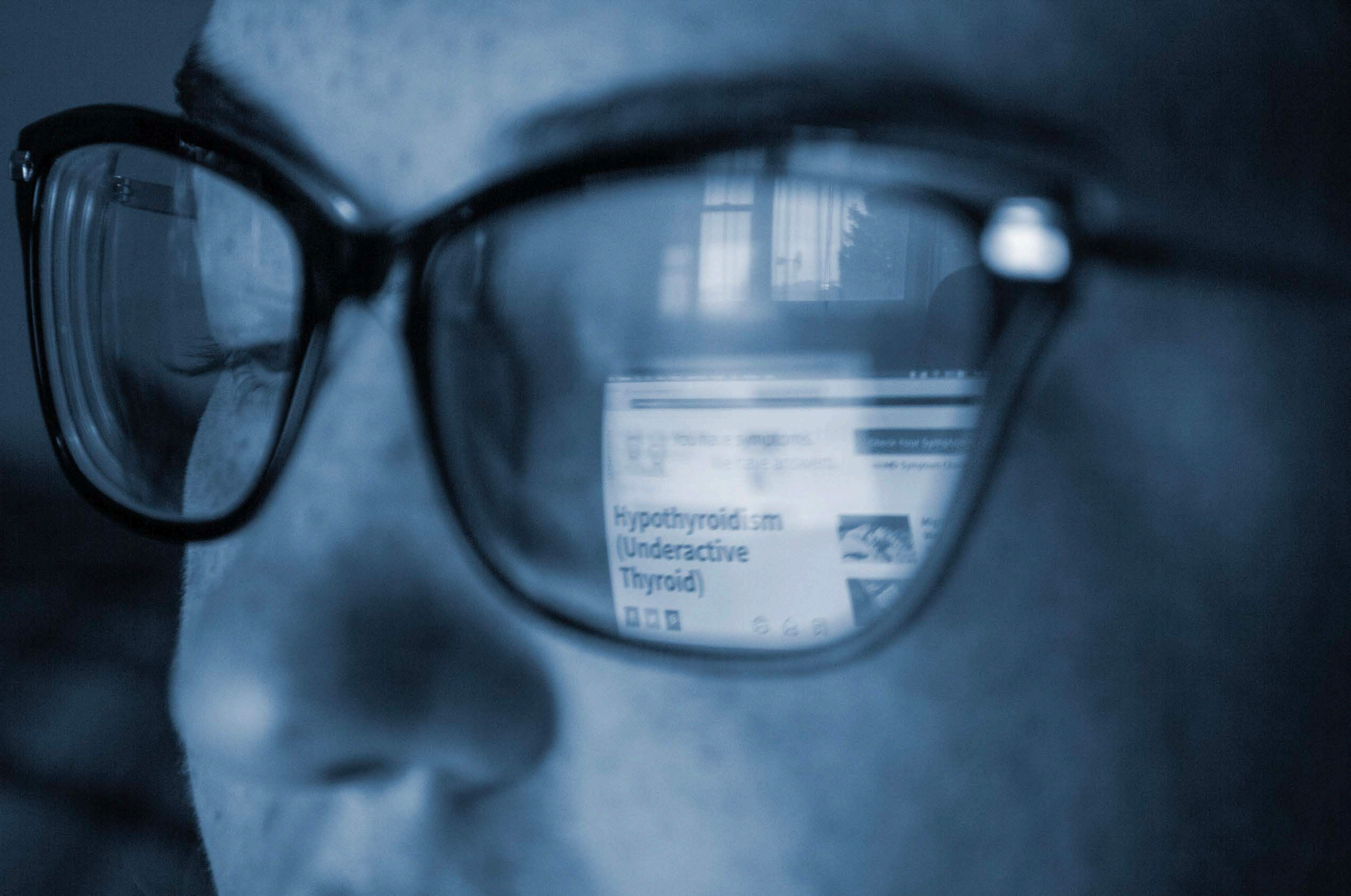
Sometimes, salts and minerals in your urine build up and form stones. The stones are hard and can get stuck on their way out of the body. Some stones are too large and block the flow of urine. Others cause bleeding and pain. They may damage the kidney. Treatment depends on the type of stone, size of the stone, and where it is along your urinary tract. Your doctor may send the stone to a lab to learn more about it and how to best treat you.

How Kidneys Work

The diagram shows a cross-section of a kidney. A renal vein carries clean blood away from the kidney. A renal artery carries blood with waste products to the kidney. The waste products are filtered and exit the kidney through the ureter, which carries waste products with urine to the bladder. An inset shows a magnified view of the internal structure of the kidney.

What care is needed at home?

- Ask your doctor what you need to do when you go home. Make sure you ask questions if you do not understand what the doctor says. This way you will



You have symptoms.
We have answers.

Check your symptoms
with Symptom Checker

Hypothyroidism (Underactive Thyroid)

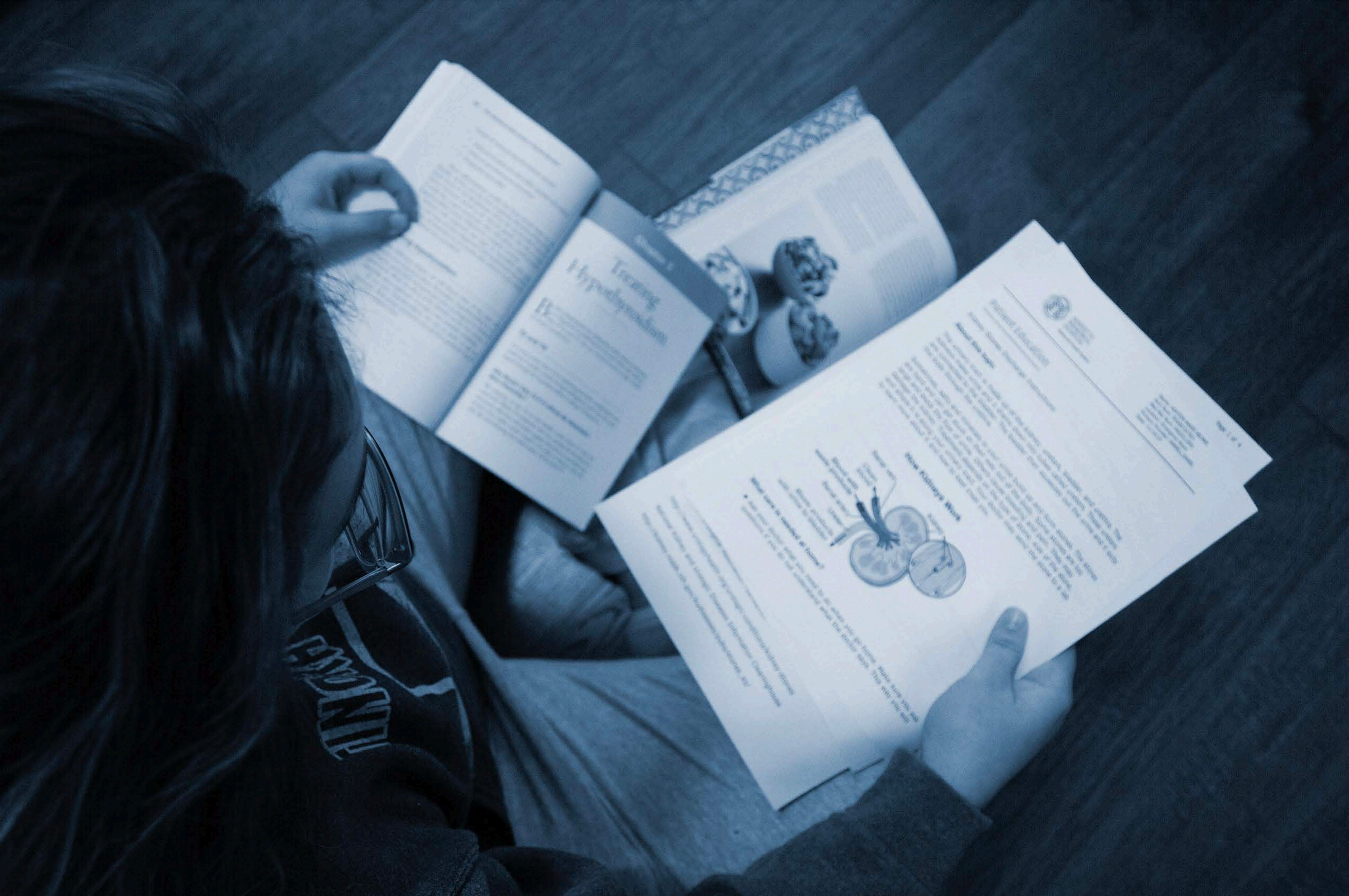
High
BP

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QUEST
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ET BY MOUTH ONCE
INE 50 MCG TABLET
Pt. FRITZ, MELINDA
QTY: 90
RPH: GDN
SUNTIL 11/10/2020
Store DEA# AR2183729
Date Filled: 11/11/2019
Orig Rx Date: 11/11/19



...the most common cause of hypertension is a combination of factors, including genetics, diet, and lifestyle. ...

Treating Hypertension



...the most common cause of hypertension is a combination of factors, including genetics, diet, and lifestyle. ...

How to Manage Your Blood Pressure

...the most common cause of hypertension is a combination of factors, including genetics, diet, and lifestyle. ...

