

INSIDE JOURNALISM

Volume 1, Issue 3

‘Good Picture’

Not Merely an Attention Getter, the Newspaper Photograph Strives To Tell Readers the Who, What, When, Where and Why—Some Can Even Overwhelm You



FILE PHOTO/DAYNA SMITH—THE WASHINGTON POST

D.C. firefighter Johnathan Sneed, center, is comforted at the scene of a fire in a corner grocery store at 4th and Kennedy streets NW that killed one of his fellow firefighters in 1997. The image by Dayna Smith won a firefighter's award and White House News Photographers award.

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Photographer

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Cutline

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The Ethics of Photo
Manipulation



An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

The News

KidsPost Article: "The Photograph"

The INSIDE Journalism curriculum guide provides information and resources that can be used on many grade levels and in many subject areas. Here are a few suggestions for using the material in this guide.

Think About It

Do you like to show pictures from trips you have taken? Do you have birthday party and family pictures? What do photographs add to your stories and memories? Have you ever used the computer to change the photo quality? To add, change or delete items from photographs?

Read and See

Read " 'Good Picture': Newspaper Photography and The Washington Post." Joe Elbert, the assistant managing editor for photography at the Post, says that photos should "attract the reader's attention" and support the stories. Now turn to the front page of The Washington Post. What do photographs add?

"A good picture wants to draw you in to the article so you can learn the answer by reading," says Elbert. "It makes you curious." Do students have questions about what is pictured? Are they "good" photographs? Who is pictured? What do students think is happening?

Meet the Photographer

Dayna Smith gives a glimpse into the life of a Washington Post photographer. Give students "Meet the Photographer." Use the second page (page 5 of this guide) of it to discuss the ethics of taking photographs when the subject is grieving or in a sensitive situation.

How does having a telephoto lens assist the photographer? What questions does the photograph stimulate? What information does the cutline provide? What do we learn about being a firefighter through this photograph? Do students think this photograph should have been taken? You might tell them that professionals, such as the Associated Press and the Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild, gave her many awards for this photograph. She also won a firefighter's award for it.

Write a Cutline

Read "Pictures by the Numbers" to learn more about the 30 staff photographers at the Post. They shoot about 60,000 rolls of film each year. These photographers are expected to take good photographs and get the information needed to write cutlines. They each have about 450 photographs published in a year. Think about the amount of information they have gathered—most of which will not be used. Give students "How to Write a Cutline."

In addition to having students read and evaluate cutlines in The Post, give them photographs for which they are to write cutlines. Also, give students a magnifying glass to view the dot pattern that composes halftones. Ask them to record what they see in gradations of black and size of dots first with their eyes alone, then under the

Visual Ethics

On the Web

➤ <http://www.nppa.org/services/bizpract/eadp/eadp8.html>

Ethics in the Age of Digital Photography

An excellent source for examples of photo manipulation that distorted reality. Includes National Geographic's pyramids and Time's O.J. Simpson covers as well as lesser known examples. Bibliography provides many print resources.

➤ <http://www.fno.org/may97/digital.html>

Digital Photography: A Question of Ethics

An artist and educator discusses the use and ethics of photo manipulation.

➤ www.youthsource.ab.ca/teacher_resources/ph_lesson6.html

Manipulating Photographs: Can You Trust Photographs?

A Youth & Heritage learning source provides seven lessons on photography.

➤ <http://www.newseum.org/berlinwall/index.htm>

The Berlin Wall

The entire cybermuseum exhibit is worth a visit, but focus on "The Commissar Vanishes." See visual proof of Stalin's attempt to change history using airbrush strokes and ink spots.

➤ <http://www.journalism.bsu.edu/classes/pfarmen/ethics.html>

Digital Photography & the Ethics of Photofiction

University of Oregon journalism and mass communications professors offer four tests for "assessing the reader's qualified expectation of reality." They include many examples of digital manipulation as well as guidelines. Good teacher resource.



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magnifying glass. Contrast this to a black-and-white photograph under a magnifying glass. You may also compare black-and-white halftones to full-color halftones.

Think About Ethics

Read “The Rules.” When may Post photographers manipulate or change the photo image?

Give students “Should They Manipulate Photographs?” The answers to the activity on Page 7 are: Photo D is the only appropriate photo manipulation. This photo has been toned for appropriate levels of contrast, and it has been sharpened so that it will be more in focus when it’s published on newsprint, which tends to dull a photo. The other photos distort reality, or truth, which is what newspapers try to avoid.

Give students “The Ethics of Photo Manipulation: Does the Picture Help Tell the Story?” This You and Your Rights activity is written by Trevor Rose, a Marshall-Brennan fellow. Background on photo manipulation is provided for older students and teachers.

Write About Photo Manipulation

This lesson has provided information on when professionals do and do not use technology to change the photo image. Ask students to take a stand: Write an essay on the ethics of photo manipulation. Ask students to think about policy: Work in groups to write a policy for your school’s publications. For the latter, you may wish to share models of policies from the Journalism

Education Association (jea.org/about/statements.html) as well as those from The Washington Post.

Enrichment

1. Use “Timeline” to discover the history of The Washington Post from 1901-1916. Select discussion questions, activities and research projects from “A Changing Community, A Changing Role.” Learn more about journalism and understand more about the social, economic, and political changes in D.C. and the country.

2. The Clifford Berryman political cartoon of Teddy Roosevelt and the bear can be used to discuss sportsmanship as well as to talk about TR’s attitudes or inspiration in American business.

3. “More About Photography” sidebar provides resources for lessons about taking better photographs.

4. “Visual Ethics” resources give more examples and lessons on the ethics of manipulation.

“A Good Picture”: Newspaper Photography and The Washington Post” can be found at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/education/kidspost/A32923-2002Dec9.html>

“The Rules” can be found at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/education/kidspost/A32946-2002Dec9.html>

“Pictures by the Numbers” can be found at

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/education/kidspost/A32944-2002Dec9.html>

More About Photography**On the Web**

➤ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/education/kidspost/A25774-2002Nov7.html>

Now You Know: Say ‘Cheese’

KidsPost article explains how cameras capture images on film.

➤ <http://www.kodak.com/US/en/corp/magazine>

Kodak eMagazine

The online magazine provides feature stories and tips. Be sure to click on “Kodak’s Guide to Better Pictures” for an introduction to 35mm photography. Learn to manipulate shutter speed and depth of field.

➤ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/education/kidspost/A28578-2002Dec8.html>

Pretty as a Picture: Satellite Images**Become Abstract Artwork**

KidsPost report about out-of-this world pictures.

➤ <http://www.poynter.org/subject.asp?id=29>

Photojournalism

Stories include latest trends, winners and links to help you be a better photojournalist.

➤ [http://www.newseum.org/pulitzer/Capture the Moment: The Pulitzer Prize Photographs](http://www.newseum.org/pulitzer/Capture%20the%20Moment%20The%20Pulitzer%20Prize%20Photographs)

See the images and meet the men and women who have won one of photojournalism’s top awards.

➤ <http://www.newseum.org/womenphotographers/index.htm>

National Geographic’s Women Photographers

Flash is required to view this gallery of international images.



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What is your typical day?

The evening before work, a photo assignment editor faxes or e-mails the assignments to photographers, or calls to discuss the details if the assignment needs explanation, the story line needs to be discussed or the importance of the assignment in relation to the day's news needs to be stressed. If the assignment has front page potential, the photographer knows to put forth that extra effort in planning and execution.

On a typical work day, the photographer arrives at the assignment well informed about the story line so he or she can augment the written story with pictures and further draw the reader into the words. Some photos are so compelling that they tell the story on their own. ("A picture is worth a thousand words.") After shooting, photographers return to the office to develop their film. A picture editor then goes over the film. With input from the photographer, a selection is made and the pictures are scanned into the computer and sent to the picture desk.

There is nothing more gratifying than noticing someone studying the picture you took the day before on the front page of The Washington Post. I remember a day when I was covering U.S. intervention in Somalia. I was on an airplane flying back into Somalia after spending the night in Kenya. The man sitting next to me opened his newspaper and there on the front page was a picture I had taken the day before of a Somali girl applauding as a U.S. troop convoy arrived in her impoverished town. It was five columns wide! The Associated Press had picked the photo up from my newspaper and distributed it worldwide. It was the first time I had seen the picture because I had sent my film back to our bureau in Mogadishu with our reporter. The wire service with which we had a contract

**Meet the Photographer***Dayna Smith*

had developed my film, edited the picture and transmitted it back to the Washington Post while I stayed in the countryside to work on the story.

What do you think photographs add to news coverage? To features?

A news photograph adds the element of immediacy to a story, but can also stand as an icon image of a particular event or time. The good news picture gives you the basics: who, what, where when and why in a compelling way. In contrast, a feature picture takes the ordinary or commonplace and shows it to you in a new way.

Do you think the photographs that are printed in the paper influence how people view events and people, including politicians?

Yes, I think photographs can influence how people view events and subjects. The slew of photos of then-President Ford stumbling come to mind.

Do you or the photo editor ever edit for emotional emphasis?

We often edit for emotional impact. Perhaps we use emotion as a crutch, but what sets us apart from other living things is our ability to emote. It is a human characteristic that is both unique to us as humans, and is universal to us as a species. It is what binds us and gives us a connection regardless of geography, situation or

culture. When deciding what to publish, first of all, the picture **MUST** be honest. Beyond that, composition, content and impact are the factors we use in our decision

How closely do you work with reporters?

Sometimes we are together at a shoot, pointing things out to one another but often we go separately. It really depends on the situation and the reporter.

Do you write the captions?

We write the who, what, where, and when, but copy editors rewrite that information for the paper.

When dealing with people who have experienced a great loss or sorrow, is it difficult to do your job? Are you intruding on them? Are there some pictures that you think you ethically should not take?

Each situation is different. Sometimes the people involved welcome you because they want their story told, or they want the public to feel their pain or outrage, or perhaps they want to tell the world how wonderful the person was who has just died. To get a picture and not be intrusive, you can use a telephoto lens and be discreet. On the other hand, if individuals do not want to be photographed and they are not in a news situation, photographers should respect their privacy.

Have you ever risked your life to get a photograph?

In my career I have traveled on many national and international breaking news stories and there is always an element of risk involved because as a photographer you must be where the action is. There is an adrenaline high you get when working so closely in life and death situations. At some point in your career an assessment has to be made about why you are doing what



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you are doing and whether you are there for the rush or to cover the news. When I decided to have a family, I turned down those risky assignments.

Are there shots you regret not getting?

As a beginning photographer, I shot everything indiscriminately and still managed to miss a lot of moments. When I go into an assignment, I first analyze the light. I try to place myself at the angle that gives the most interesting light or I place the subject in the most interesting light. Secondly, I think about angle and composition. And lastly, I look for the moment. I've learned to anticipate the moment because if you wait until it happens, you have often missed it.

What is most rewarding about your job?

Meeting people from all walks of life

and introducing them to one another through pictures. We are all from the same family, the "family of man" and the better we understand one another, the better our prospects for surviving on this planet.

Smith has been a staff photographer at the Washington Post since 1985. Her assignments have varied widely and have included numerous incidents of domestic and international strife. The struggle for independence by Albanians in Kosovo in the fall of 1998 earned her the coveted World Press Photo of the Year in 1999, the most prestigious award in all of photojournalism. She covered aspects of the civil wars in Central America in the 1980's, as well as the cholera epidemic in South America. She has been to Southeast Asia numerous times including covering Cambodian refugee camps in Thailand, the

Vietnamese offensive that sent the Khmer rouge into exile, and the 10-year anniversary of the fall of Saigon.

Her three-month photo study of conditions in Washington's most drug-riddled housing project in 1991 prompted a New York Times editorial on the subject. The following year her editors chose her for three tough and dangerous assignments: The Los Angeles riots, Hurricane Andrew, and the conflict and famine in Somalia. Her work has won numerous national prizes and she has been nominated for three Pulitzers by her editors.

Smith, 48, was raised in Texas and South Dakota, where she became an expert horse-woman and dairy herd inspector. She graduated with a BA in communications from Kent State University, and worked at the Palm Beach Post and the Washington Times before coming to the Post. She is married and has two sons.

Seeing the Moment

In 1997, Smith was sent to photograph a fire in Washington, D.C. The fire was under control, but one firefighter was missing.

From a corner across the street, Smith noticed a group of firefighters who were upset about their missing colleague, so she took out a camera with a telephoto lens, one that would take a photograph from far away.

Experienced photographers, Smith says, know automatically when an important picture is coming.

"You can see a moment intuitively," she says. "You can see the elements coming together and shaping themselves into a composition that's dramatic. A seasoned photographer takes a picture based on what's about to happen, not what has been happening."

In Smith's photo, the firefighter in the middle raises his tear-filled eyes as two colleagues stop him from going back in the building to look for his friend.

Post photographers, says Joe Elbert, the assistant managing editor for photography,



are told to keep a "respectful distance" from the people they are photographing, rather than walk up and stick a camera in their faces. And unless it's a news situation, photographers get permission from their

subjects.

"People will tell you with their eyes or their actions if it's okay," Smith says. "If a hand goes up in your face then you know that it's not all right."



How To Write a Cutline

A baby, barbed wire, hands

When Carol Guzy took this picture, thousands of people were leaving their homes in the Kosovo region of Serbia. Many Kosovars wanted their own country and the Serb government responded by sending its army against them. Hundreds of people were killed and thousands abandoned their belongings and fled to Albania. The United Nations set up refugee camps, but families got separated. Readers learned this and more by reading the article with this photo.

The cutline tells about one family reunited.

Even the best photograph is enhanced by adding a cutline or caption. A cutline in a few words tells readers the who, what, where, when, how and why of the photograph.

Guidelines

- Be brief. Concisely give accurate information in one to three sentences.
- Be specific. Who is helping whom do what. If it is a crowd, tell why they gathered.
- Don't state the obvious. Everyone can see Sue smiling or the player running with a football. Put the action into perspective. For example, "Sue Song hangs posters for Peace Action" or "Daunte Culpepper runs for second TD as Vikings snap 16-game road losing streak."
- Use a present tense verb.
- Be sure to get names, correctly spelled, of those pictured. If only two people are in a photo, identify one:

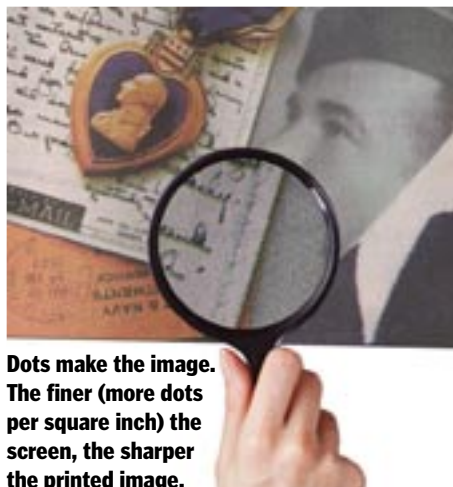


FILE PHOTO/CAROL GUZY—THE WASHINGTON POST

Agim Shala, 2, is passed through a barbed wire fence as members of his family are reunited at a refugee camp in Kukes, Albania.

"Caroline Kennedy, left, shows a copy of the 1963 Nuclear Test Ban Treaty to Sergei Khrushchev, son of the ex-Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev."

Review the A section of today's newspaper. Look at each photograph. What do you think is happening? Read the cutline. Were you close? Are you given helpful information?



Dots make the image.
The finer (more dots per square inch) the screen, the sharper the printed image.

Vocabulary

Caption: Short explanation or description accompanying an illustration or photograph

Cutline: See caption

Graphics: Any artwork on a page that is not part of the body copy; this includes graphs, tables, photographs and illustrations

Halftone: Screened image prepared for printing. The printed image or photograph is a halftone. Take a magnifier and hold it over any picture in the newspaper. You should see a series of dots composing the picture.

Photographer: A person assigned to take photographs for the newspaper to accompany news articles

Rule: The thin or thick lines used to designate and separate columns of text or enclose a photograph or ad or other visual or textual components



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Should They Manipulate Photographs?

Rules for Credibility

Readers trust photographs to be an accurate recording of an event. Credibility is essential to a healthy relation between a newspaper and its readers. If readers can't believe that the photographs they see in a newspaper are real, why should they believe anything else?

Here are some rules that photographers at The Post must follow.

1. Photographers are not allowed to alter their photographs in a way that misleads the reader.
2. Photographers should not pose photographs. They should capture the candid action.
3. Do not digitally delete a stray hair, telephone wire or other distracting feature.
4. Photographers may enhance for reproduction: Adjust the colors slightly so they will print better on the newspaper's presses or crop the photo, selecting a portion of the whole picture to print to give the most impact.
5. If a photographer creates a humorous illustration by manipulating photographs, it must be identified as a "photo illustration."

Should They Manipulate the Photographs?

Look at the four photographs above. Which photo manipulations are allowed? Why the other manipulations are not allowed?



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A Changing Community, A Changing Role

During the Civil War, weekly newsmagazines sent artists to sketch battle scenes. Although Mathew Brady had photographs, none were published because the halftone process hadn't been invented. It was 1879 before the first visual image accompanied news stories in The Washington Post. Technology would continue to determine whether the image was a pen-and-ink drawing or wood block print, black-and-white or color halftone.

In 1879 the first news picture ever to appear in The Washington Post showed a proposed design for the unfinished Washington

Monument. Compare the proposed Washington Monument as pictured in 1879 with the Washington Monument that was built on the Mall.

2. On December 19, 1903, a small article appeared on The Post's front page. Here is its lede:

NORFOLK, VA., DEC. 18—It is reported here that a successful trial of a flying machine was made yesterday near Kitty Hawk, N.C., by Wilbur and Orville Wright, of Dayton, Ohio. It is stated that the machine flew for three miles in the face of a wind blowing at the registered velocity of twenty-one miles an hour, and then gracefully descended to earth at the spot

selected by the man in the navigator's car as a suitable landing place. The machine has no balloon attachment, but gets its force from propellers worked by a small engine.

a. Did the first flight by the Wright brothers take place on Dec. 17, 18 or 19?

b. Rewrite this lede in today's style.

3. John R. McLean, the owner of the Cincinnati Enquirer, bought The Washington Post to serve his interests rather than the public good. McLean had used his money and power in Ohio to influence Democratic politics. For him, the Post was another tool to exercise power. The newspaper changed. Felix Morley, a Post

editor in 1937, said, "... in rather intangible ways, The Post began to deteriorate spiritually under the McLean ownership."

McLean's presence in D.C. and his business interests were apparent then and now. The impressive McLean house at 1500 I St. N.W. was used for entertainment. At one party 1,000 people danced in its ballroom. McLean and his family lived on Wisconsin Avenue. Wealthier residents escaped D.C.'s summer heat by going to the Virginia countryside. McLean was a major investor in a



The Washington Monument proposal of 1879.

Washington Post Timeline

1902: When President Theodore Roosevelt refuses to shoot a helpless bear during a hunt, Post cartoonist Clifford Berryman draws the incident. The cartoon, which appeared on page 1, quickly starts the teddy bear craze and the cub becomes the cartoonist's emblem.

1905: John Roll McLean, 57, owner of the Cincinnati Enquirer, purchases 270 of the 600 shares of Post stock from Beriah Wilkin's widow and sons for \$469,800. He becomes managing editor. Later he buys 50 more shares to gain majority control.

1911: McLean drops the price of the daily Post to two cents. Circulation immediately rises from about 20,000 to about 30,000.

1916: John McLean dies. According to Post reporter and historian Chalmers Roberts, "McLean was The Post's proprietor, in the business office sense, while also setting the general course for ... editorials and for news handling." The robust newspaper he took over in 1905 is now sensationalistic and second-rate. It will only get worse under his spoiled, alcoholic son, Edward "Ned" McLean.

project to extend a trolley line into Fairfax. A new community named McLean began near the struggling settlements of Lewinsville and Langley. During WWII the estate that was owned by the heirs of John R. McLean became McLean Gardens, apartments and dormitories for defense workers. Washington's first Hot Shoppes was housed in one of these buildings.

- Find the locations of places associated with McLean on a map.



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A Changing Community, A Changing Role

Teddy Bear First Appears in The Washington Post

On Nov. 16, 1902, a bear being restrained by a rope appeared on the front page of The Washington Post. In the political cartoon by Post cartoonist Clifford Berryman, Teddy Roosevelt magnanimously turns his back on this easy target.

This cartoon is an example of the juxtaposition of several events. Roosevelt, an avid sportsman, went hunting in the South in 1902. After he had shot nothing, hunting companions tied an adult bear, appearing to be singed by a forest fire, to a tree. Considering the bear an unfair target, Roosevelt refused to shoot it. Such an action would have been unsportsmanlike. The title "Drawing the Line in Mississippi" refers to the border dispute that Roosevelt hoped to resolve and Roosevelt's refusal to shoot the tethered bear.

The cartoon by Berryman inspired Morris Michtom who created two toy bears. A Russian immigrant, Michtom was familiar with Mishka, the bear who appears in Russian folklore. On the first day Michtom displayed his bears in the window of the novelty and stationery store that he and his wife owned in Brooklyn, 12 orders were placed for the bears.

As interest in his bears continued, Michtom wrote to President Roosevelt for permission to name the bears after him. Roosevelt responded:



"Dear Mr. Michtom, I don't think my name is likely to be worth much in the toy bear business, but you are welcome to use it."

The teddy bear industry was created. As demand grew, Michtom produced hundreds of teddy bears and established the Ideal Toy and Novelty Company. In Germany in 1902, Richard Steiff, an art student, turned his drawings of bears at the zoo into a mohair bear with movable limbs. He and his aunt, Margarete Steiff, the following year sold 3,000 to an American buyer at the Leipzig Toy Fair.

Senator Strom Thurmond and the teddy bear celebrated their 100th birthdays in 2002. Thurmond left the Senate as its longest serving and only senator to reach 100 while in office. The teddy bear remains, adored, forever young.

Bear Facts

ON THE WEB

➤ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/education/kidspost/A41194-2002Nov11.html>

"The Teddy Bear's Birthday"

Learn about the teddy bear market in KidsPost.

➤ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/education/kidspost/A41195-2002Nov11.html>

"Post Inspires Toy Sensation"

Learn about Berryman and the teddy bear in this KidsPost article

➤ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/education/kidspost/A51905-2002Nov13.html>

"Teddy Bear Tale A Wholly, Woolly Washington Affair"

Post columnist Marc Fisher celebrates the hundredth birthday of the teddy bear by telling its true origin center top of the front page of the Nov. 16, 1902, Washington Post.

➤ <http://www.kytales.com/cberr/cberr.html>

Kentucky Tales: The Teddy Bear Man

A short biography of Clifford Berryman

IN PRINT

Mullins, Linda. The Teddy Bear Men: Theodore Roosevelt & Clifford Berryman.



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YOU and YOUR RIGHTS*The Ethics of Photo Manipulation: Does the Picture Help Tell the Story?*

What is truth and where do you find it? Answering these questions is a difficult endeavor and is becoming more difficult as our society becomes more technologically advanced. Some of the information we receive today, especially visual information, has been manipulated in some way. Photography is an especially powerful form of communication. It is also a form of communication that is easily manipulated. Anyone with access to a computer with video-imaging capabilities can manipulate photos—and the truth.

This raises important ethical questions about when photos should and should not be manipulated. These ethical issues are amplified when photojournalists manipulate photographs as representations of reality. Photojournalists have a commitment to report the news truthfully. If there is one clearly ethical standard of journalism, it is that journalists should not intentionally deceive their audience. Misleading photo manipulation, however, is becoming more prevalent in reporting as technology that allows the practice becomes more ubiquitous.

Photo manipulation is not a new practice. In fact, photographing a completely objective representation of what the author is observing is close to impossible. Since the technology of photography was invented, photographers have used techniques to create more captivating images. For example, special lenses can alter a subject, objects can be viewed from different angles and times of exposure can be manipulated to enhance



In darkening the tone of a 1994 O.J. Simpson photo, right, Time magazine editors said they justly transformed a regular police mug shot into art. Many people said the alteration was unethical.

the reality that the photographer is observing. As Edward Steichen said in 1903, “every photograph is a fake from start to finish, a purely impersonal, unmanipulated photograph being practically impossible.”

Not all forms of photo manipulation are misleading or are intended to deceive. There has been a broadening of what is considered legitimate in photojournalism. What distinguishes acceptable photo manipulation from the unethical is the intent of the photographer. A photographer acts unethically when he intends to deceive his viewer by holding out as true a photo that has been manipulated. The photographer can manipulate a photo to illustrate a point, but that intent should be made clear to the reader. If the photographer’s intent is to report,

as opposed to illustrate, the photo should accurately represent what the photographer observed. If the photographer intends to make a point by manipulating an image, she should disclose that intent. An illustration is not a news photo and should be labeled appropriately.

Digital manipulation of still photographs was pioneered in the 1970s. Advertisers have been using photo manipulation for years to enhance the appearance of products. But advertisers using these techniques don’t always communicate reality to customers, nor do they intend to. This has not caused a substantial uproar of moral indignation, nor should it, but these same practices cause problems when applied to news images.

The only safeguard against manipulation of news images is the



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risk of losing credibility with the audience. If readers are looking for news, they will not look for it from a source that cloaks a manipulated image as fact. This raises the major ethical question presented by photo manipulation: How much manipulation is society willing to accept? Or, what constitutes an abuse of photo manipulation? The National Press Photographers Association Code of Ethics provides some guidance on these issues.

"As journalists, we believe that credibility is our greatest asset. In documentary photojournalism, it is wrong to alter the content of a photograph in any way (electronically or in the darkroom) that deceives the public. We believe the guidelines for fair and accurate reporting should be the criteria for judging what may be done electronically to a photograph."

Photo manipulation is not only for the technologically proficient. Although high-end video imaging computers are able to manipulate images in ways that were technically impossible just a few years ago, a photographer doesn't need sophisticated equipment to manipulate images today. Anyone who has access to a personal computer with the right software can manipulate images. Thus, with the rise of this technology, more photographs can be and will be manipulated.

Photo manipulation, however, isn't always bad. Amateur photographers can use the technology to digitally "repair" family photos. Photo manipulation software can also

enhance images, making them sharper, brighter in addition to removing dust or scratches on the film negative. And with the more sophisticated technology—and a proficient user—the changes are nearly undetectable.

If photo images can be manipulated with such ease, how can we trust what we see in such pictures? This question is especially important when the photo purports to convey truth, such as a police photo or an evidence photo used in court. These issues were brought into focus in 1994, when Time magazine published a manipulated police mug shot of O.J. Simpson on the cover of its magazine.

Using computer software, the tonal levels of the photograph were changed so that Simpson's face was darkened. The effect made the photograph *appear* more ominous than it actually was, and the extent of the manipulation was clear when compared with a Newsweek magazine cover, which showed the same, unaltered mug shot.

James Gaines, the managing editor of Time magazine, argued that the manipulation of Simpson's mug shot was defensible. "The harshness of the mug shot—the merciless bright light, the stubble on Simpson's face, the cold specificity of the picture—had been subtly smoothed and shaped into an icon of tragedy. The expression on his face was not merely blank now; it was bottomless. This cover, with the simple, nonjudgmental headline 'An American Tragedy,' seemed the obvious, right choice."

Many did not share Gaines'

sentiments. Several major news organizations and black journalists argued that Time's manipulation was racist because it made Simpson look more sinister and guilty. Others argued that the mug shot should not have been altered at all because it was a news photo. Gaines responded by noting that altering news pictures is a risky practice, since only documentary authority makes photography of any value in the practice of journalism. He also noted that photojournalism has never been able to claim the transparent neutrality attributed to it and that every major news outlet routinely crops and retouches photos to eliminate minor, extraneous elements, so long as the essential meaning is left intact.

Gaines concludes that the manipulation lifted a common police shot to the level of art, with no sacrifice to truth and that no set of rules will ever cover all cases of photo manipulation because it is a matter of subjective judgment. The Simpson case raises many of the important questions surrounding photo manipulation, making it a good case study to use in the classroom.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Trevor Rose is a second-year law student at American University's Washington College of Law. He teaches Constitutional Law at Woodrow Wilson Senior High School in Washington, D.C., and is conducting research on the "No Child Left Behind Act of 2001." Rose is currently a judicial intern for Judge C. Philip Nichols, Jr. of the Prince Georges County Circuit Court. Please direct questions and comments to Trose1000@yahoo.com.

YOU and YOUR RIGHTS

The Marshall-Brennan Fellowship Program at American University's Washington College of Law trains talented upper-level law students to teach a unique course on constitutional rights and responsibilities to hundreds of students in Washington, D.C. area public high schools. For more information about the program, please contact Michelle Carhart, program coordinator, at mcarhart@wcl.american.edu. For curricular information or information on how to get involved, please contact Maryam Ahranjani, academic coordinator, at mahranjani@wcl.american.edu.



An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

YOU and YOUR RIGHTS*The Ethics of Photo Manipulation: Does the Picture Help Tell the Story?***Objectives: Students will . . .**

- Learn the power of visual imagery and history of photo manipulation, why it is an important topic, and exercise their critical thinking skills in discerning what are ethical and unethical uses of photo manipulation.
- Observe prominent examples of photo manipulation and grapple with the ethical questions they present.
- Learn not to accept everything they see at face value and become more informed viewers of news media. They will be able to apply the ethical lessons they learn to their own lives when creating pictures for the school newspaper, the Internet, or their own class work.
- Learn that different individuals, as well as ethnic and social groups, interpret images in original ways.

Grades: 9-12**Time Frame:** Two Class Periods

Materials Needed: June 27, 1994 covers of Newsweek and Time depicting two versions of the same mug shot of O.J. Simpson; photographs of prominent historical figures and important historical events; 3x5 index cards.

Class 1: Pass out 3x5 index cards to the students. Start off by showing the class different pictures of prominent historical figures and important historical events. Ask the students to write down the first three things that come to their mind as you display the different pictures. At the end of the demonstration, write the

students' responses on the board under the images displayed. Briefly explain the picture and its historical significance. Engage students in a discussion on the different words that are listed on the board. Ask students how the pictures make them feel, what they communicate and what the photographer was trying to communicate. Discuss the students' reactions to the pictures. Ask why the pictures elicited different responses in different students. Ask what photographic image has had the most profound effect on society.

Homework for Class 1: Ask students to write a one- to two-page essay that talks about the photograph that has had the most profound effect on society. They should explain why they chose the picture and why the image is powerful. Have them articulate the story the picture tells. What was the photographer trying to say with the picture? What message was the photographer trying to convey, if any?

Class 2: Collect homework from the last class and discuss the students' submissions. Pass out 3x5 cards and display the Newsweek cover depicting the unaltered O.J. Simpson mug shot. Ask the students to list the first three things that come to mind. Then, display the manipulated photo on the cover of Time magazine. Ask the students again to list the first three things that come to their mind. List the responses under the respective photos and talk with the class about the students' responses. Explain the

circumstances behind the photos and the controversy surrounding the manipulation of Simpson's mug shot. Explain the difference between an illustration and a news photo. Ask them whether the Time cover is an illustration or a news photo and what the photographer's intent was in manipulating the photo. Discuss whether manipulating the photo is insensitive or racist. If manipulating the photo was defensible, have the students explain why. Ask an open-ended question about the ethical implications of photo manipulation at the end of class.

Homework for Class 2: Ask students to write a one- to two-page essay discussing the ethical issues surrounding the manipulation of Simpson's mug shot on the cover of Time magazine. Students should:

- Discuss what the magazine was trying to communicate with the image.
 - Was the manipulation racist or insensitive? Why or why not?
 - Was the manipulation ethical?
- Discuss the ethics of altering photos.
- Develop a model list of ethical standards governing photojournalists' manipulation of news photos.

Follow Up: Discuss ways different members of society interpret images. What role do students' race, religion, ethnicity, and socioeconomic background play in terms of interpretation of images? Explain the power of photographs to effect social change.