

The design requirements for converting the press photo into a documentary image with metrics for aesthetic preference for their treatments

Associate. Prof. Dr. Amr Mohamed Galal Mohamed

Assistant Professor, Department of Media - Faculty of Al-Asun and Media - Misr International University

amr.galal@miuegypt.edu.eg

Summary:

The image is one of the oldest methods of communication known to the human in its different eras. Like other methods, it has its history, character and uses in various media fields.

Since the dawn of history, the image has played a role in human education and preserving his life experiences, as man knew it at an earlier stage in the development of language. The location and position of the image changed throughout history and acquired a sacred character in the ancient era after it served religions and decorated temples and churches, then turned into the elite to decorate homes. The invention of the photograph changed the location of the image in terms of use, and it was no longer about oil paintings and drawings, as it contributed to the transmission and documentation of events, and led to the spread of portraits, which was limited to a specific class in society. The image is one of the main pillars of non-verbal language.

Our era has been called the era of the image because of its distinguished position among the means of communication. It derives its influence in the readable press thanks to its elements and as a direct sign that transmits information and news and documents events and positions to large sectors of readers, as it contributes to influencing the trends of public opinion.

Technological advances have contributed to the promotion of photojournalism and the possibility of transcending the limits of time and space.

Today, the image in publications occupies a key place in the process of clarifying ideas and information after it was used for decoration and beautification, and therefore images have become one of the basic materials of the modern press, and it is no longer an aesthetic element only, but a functional media element, and the image has become an expression of ideas and opinions, as well as it expresses news and events, and is even one of the largest tools of guidance and direction.

The press image plays a bilateral communicative role, as it is both a message and a means, as it is available to everyone regardless of their cultural and scientific levels, as it is a universal language that everyone understands despite the multiplicity of nations and peoples.

Key words:

Press photo - Documentary photo - Photo coloring - Photo in communication.

Research problem:

The press photo has a news function at the time of publication, and then becomes a historical document due to its ability to establish and record the elements of time and place. It is of a high degree of importance, as the recipient is sufficient for a cursory glance or a few seconds to look at the image to understand the subject and the news behind the publication of the image. As for

the documentary image, it requires more time than the recipient's gaze, and a large amount of contemplation, the background of the image may contain people or places or topics of historical importance, or bear connotations that the recipient is aware of, and therefore the transformation of the press photo into a documentary image requires some graphic treatments, to perform its documentary function, and from this the research problem is generated, which can be formulated as follows:

What is the effect of graphic treatments on coloring the press photo to serve the purposes of documentation and aesthetic preference?

Research goal:

The research aims to monitor the design requirements for transforming the black and white press photo that performed its journalistic function to play its role as a successful documentary image full of accurate and clear details that help scholars and researchers who carry out historical research or who take historical approaches as an approach to their research. Then the research measures the degree of aesthetic preference of those interested in image sciences for the nature of documentary images and their graphic processing methods.

Research variables:

Experimental Variables:

1 - Variant One: Graphic Processors of the black and white image to obtain the highest possible photographic intensities and grayscale to obtain the finest details in the image while retaining its natural black and white.

2 - The second variable: the graphic processors by coloring the black and white image in order to obtain the largest possible number of tones and to obtain the most accurate details of the image in a manner that makes the image in full color as if the recipient moved in time and place to the place of photography, and the image has now been photographed.

Dependent variable:

1 - The degree of satisfaction, acceptance and aesthetic preference of the audience of the recipient of the documentary image after making the independent variable on it.

Research hypotheses:

1. There are statistically significant differences between black and white photos and color photos in favor of tonal photos in terms of functional considerations and aesthetic preference for both press photos and documentary photos.

2. There are statistically significant differences between the two methods of coloring the black and white image in favor of the method of preserving the historical appearance of the documentary images.

Research Methodology:

The researcher follows the experimental method, to obtain the graphically processed images in order to achieve the experimental variable, then the aesthetic preference of their home is measured through the questionnaire as one of the research tools, which through its statistical processing we reach the results of the research.

Experimental Design:

1- Sample of black and white press photos.

2- Digitally coloring the sample images while preserving the historical appearance.

Then a questionnaire is made to find out the degree of acceptance of both images.

Introduction:

It was previously believed that the photograph is a reproduction of reality without any addition, that is, it is a message devoid of meaning. The French researcher (Roland Barthes) clarified this belief, as he confirmed that it bears two dimensions, one of which is descriptive (description of what is in the picture) and the other is implicit (what is said about the contents of the picture), and the second dimension, which is implicit, is not understood without the first descriptive dimension. And because the photograph is a living, realistic and historical recording of life, what is recorded in a moment may be immortal for a period of time, and it may be evidence and witness to many events.

Discussion & Conclusions:

A- Classification of respondents: From the data resulting from the questionnaire, we find that the majority of respondents are not only interested in press photos and their affairs, but most of them are media workers and most of them are photographers working in the field, and that most of them have experience gained from field work, so about a quarter of the respondents have experiences that exceed more than ten years, and that's a significant experience.

B - Functional considerations of the press photo: Four-fifths of the respondents believed that the press photo is of special importance within the written article and that the visual formulation is superior to the literary formulation to attract attention and suspense to follow the photographed event, whether it is formulated in black and white or colored, however, the color image is more attractive than the black and white image, and what is worthy of noting is that the image has the precious ability to form and shape public opinion. It thus constitutes with its ability a sort of pressure on decision makers who take into account and value public opinion, and among the considerations that were also clarified by the questionnaire is the precise details of the image and what surrounds the main subject of the image constitute a system of semantics that enrich the meanings values generated from the published visual text, and are transmitted to the recipient. Also, color press photos are more credible than color photos of monochrome black and white (black and white) for the target audience.

C- Functional considerations of the documentary image: By testing the saying that a picture suffices for a thousand words, the questionnaire showed its compatibility with the examinees. Carefully and examines its precise details, the visual and communicative system is rich in indications whenever it is rich in details, whether it is in the front of the image or its background. The colors of the documentary image also give it the credibility of the documented event, so it does not raise the degree of yellowing of the images and show the extent of their old credibility, as a result of the understanding of document scholars of what digital technologies can offer to the photograph.

D- Aesthetic preference for the press photo: The color has an aesthetic and expressive value in the visual text. The color in the photo has a dramatic value that cannot be overlooked. When preparing photo press reports, we use some previously published photos, and these photos are usually monochrome (black and white) while other photos the newly captured ones are colored according to the techniques of their time, and by coloring them, the images of the report are homogeneous, and the colors according to this system add more indications that the image would not have provided if it remained in black and white, as indicated by the results of the questionnaire about black and white newspaper.

E - Aesthetic preference for the documentary image: The documentary image has added to the article a dimension that makes the recipient relevant to the events, and it has also made those who are interested in looking and meditating on its vocabulary after coloring, and despite the coloring process, the fragrance and sense of the foot were preserved in the pictures, as it appeared through the questionnaire. The documentary image is highly colored, as the respondents emphasized that the coloring process is a great addition to the documentary image.

Research Results:

- 1- The research proved the validity of the first hypothesis: that there are statistically significant differences between black and white graphic processing, and color in favor of color treatments with both functional considerations and aesthetic preference for both press photos and documentary photos.
- 2- The research proved the invalidity of the second hypothesis: that there are statistically significant differences between the two methods of coloring the black and white image in favor of the method of preserving the historical appearance of documentary images. It has been proven that coloring, even if it does not preserve the historical appearance it adds modernity to the documentary image, which will increase the value of the visual document.
- 3- The image has a special importance within the article and is more important and attractive to the reader, and it is actually worth more than a thousand words.
- 4- The press image affects the decision makers.
- 5- The precise details and background of the illustrated topics are of great importance in press and documentary photos.
- 6- The color photo, whether it is a press or a documentary, is more attractive and credible than the black and white photo.

Research Recommendations:

- 1- The necessity of paying attention to coloring the press photos that were published in black and white, when they are used as documentary photos before analyzing them as a document from which research methods can be drawn.
- 2- The necessity of paying attention to the faithful color transfer of modern press pictures, as the colors of the picture are important when studying pictures from a documentary point of view because they carry many connotations that must be conveyed with great historical honesty.
- 3- The minute details of the press photo may be of limited interest when used by the press, but attention to these minute details will be extremely important when analyzing the photo as a historical document.

References:

2020. *about photography blog*. 3 27. Accessed 5 30, 2021. <https://aboutphotography.blog/blog/2020/3/27/v-j-day-in-times-square-by-alfred-eisenstaedt-story-behind-the-photograph#:~:text=It%20was%20Tuesday%20noon%20August,the%20end%20of%20the%20war.>
2018. *BBC news*. 1 29. Accessed 6 1, 2021. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-42864421>.
- Ben Goldberger, Paul Moakley and Kira Pollack. n.d. *time 100 photos*. Accessed 6 3, 2021. <http://100photos.time.com/photos/alberto-korda-guerillero-heroico>.
- Contrera, Jessica. 2019. *washingtonpost*. 9 1. Accessed 6 3, 2021. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/history/2019/09/01/one-most-iconic-photos-american-workers-is-not-what-it-seems/>.
2006. *moma learning*. Accessed 5 30, 2021. https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/dorothea-lange-migrant-mother-nipomo-california-1936/.
- Stewart, Jessica. 2017. *mymodernmet*. 6 20. Accessed 6 20, 2021. <https://mymodernmet.com/photojournalism-history/>.
- n.d. *themet*. Accessed 6 1, 2021. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/267748>.
2016. *time*. 9 9. Accessed 5 28, 2021. <https://time.com/4485344/napalm-girl-war-photo-facebook/>.
- n.d. *time 100 photos*. Accessed 6 1, 2021. <http://100photos.time.com/photos/robert-capafalling-soldier>.
- n.d. *time 100 photos*. Accessed 5 30, 2021. <http://100photos.time.com/photos/lewis-hine-cotton-mill-worker>.
- n.d. *time 100 photos*. Accessed 5 28, 2021. <http://100photos.time.com/photos/peter-leibingleap-into-freedom>.
- n.d. *time 100 photos*. Accessed 5 29, 2021. <http://100photos.time.com/photos/john-paul-filokent-state-shootings>.
- n.d. *time 100 photos*. Accessed 5 29, 2021. <http://100photos.time.com/photos/joe-rosenthal-iwo-jima-flag-raising>.
2021. *wikipedia*. 7 15. Accessed 7 20, 2021. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Photojournalism>.
2021. *wikipedia*. 2 16. Accessed 6 15, 2021. https://ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D8%B5%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%A9_%D9%85%D8%B5%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%A9.