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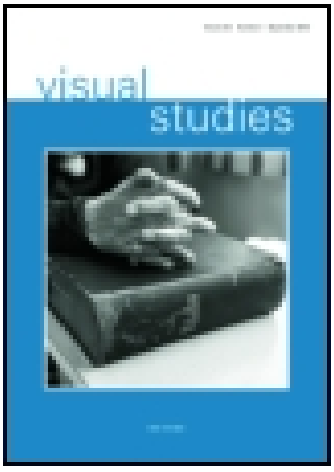


Visual Sociology
Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rvst19

# Documentary Images: Visual Information Made to Order

Kenton S. Hyatt [a]
[a] Member of the speech communication department , Humboldt State University , Arcata, CA, 95521
Published online: 03 Jul 2008.

To cite this article: Kenton S. Hyatt (1992) Documentary Images: Visual Information Made to Order, Visual Sociology, 7:1, 68-79, DOI: 10.1080/14725869208583695

To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14725869208583695

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*Visual Sociology*, 7 (1), pp. 68-79 © International Visual Sociology Association, 1992

# Documentary Images: Visual Information Made to Order

*Kenton S. Hyatt*

This paper discusses the nature of documentary images, which appear to be inherently true, self evident visual statements. However, a degree of visual literacy is required of viewers before appropriate image understanding can occur. The nature of the image as icon, index, and as symbol combined to provide a powerful reinforcement of historical and current assumptions regarding documentation. Image construction and understanding are both prescribed by codes which may introduce additional meaning into the photograph. The work of Walker Evans, and other documentary photographers are used as examples of the multiple messages that are imbedded in documentary images. Finally, contemporary image technologies, scanning and digitizing are discussed within the documentary context. the use of such technologies raises questions about the ethics and credibility of photographic information.

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Accurately documenting a part of the world, at a particular moment, results in a record that has traditionally been regarded with great value and historical importance. Documentary images, most often consisting of portraits, landscapes, social landscapes and the like, were among the first applications of photography. That content indicated a cultural value addressed by visual records. However, the first documentary photographs were novel only in terms of a new medium, not in content or presentation style. Western cultures have long strived for realism in painting and drawing to achieve a quality of documentation comparable to human perception. Photographs appeared to provide that documentation. In Western tradition, the broad applications of visual communication have been: documentary, to record interesting and/or important events and individuals; aesthetic, for the expression and appreciation of beauty; and persuasive, to influence the behavior of viewers. The objective of this paper is to investigate the nature of documentary images to the end that our understanding of documentary, visual literacy is improved.

Visual literacy has been defined by Messaris (1991) as, "knowledge or awareness of the conventions through which meaning is created in visual communication." Another definition, offered from Rice (1989) is somewhat more viewer pragmatic, "knowing what to do in front of an object that is made or displayed just to be looked at." Both assume or imply sets of codes that govern image understanding. Rice also indicates that visual literacy is not a set of isolated skills as can be identified in formal criticism or analysis, but includes familiarity with

Kenton S. Hyatt is a member of the speech communication department at Humboldt State University, Arcata, CA, 95521, where he teaches courses on intercultural and visual communication. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Speech Communication Convention, Atlanta, Nov. 1991 as part of the Visual Communication Commission program.

cultural, historical, and aesthetic codes and contexts. Documentary photographic images emphasize particular visual qualities which may be understood to allow the image to provide the viewer with more accurate information than most other types of representation, but knowing what to do with image information is often assumed to be available and operative in viewers' knowledge and awareness.

Realistic depiction can be traced to Greek and Roman traditions, however, in the fifteenth century, Renaissance art, especially painting and drawing, systematically developed critical, visual techniques of perspective, lighting, and detail, sufficient to imitate human vision. Concurrent with that development came the development of technical devices to aid the production of images, the camera obscura, camera lucida, and various other devices to aid accurate perspective and foreshortening drafting. That technology was widely used, and eventually was developed into the mechanical and optical technologies needed for the invention of photography. The knowledge of photographic chemistry necessary for useful images was more problematic, but soon followed the optical and mechanical development (Pelfrey 1985). Photographic images did not come into being in a technological void, nor were the subjects of images necessarily novel. Early documentary images were the extensions of types of paintings that had already been popularly accepted, portraits, genre paintings, landscapes, etc., all of which shared a priority for accuracy (Scharf, 1986).

The date for Photography's invention is set at 1839. Almost immediately the denotative power of the image was recognized, and with that recognition came a recognition that seperated image function, photographer intent, and, governing ethics. By 1844, photography had been declared an art form by Henry fox Talbot, one of its inventors (Lyons 1982). That declaration, and others like it, began a debate that continues to the present time about the basic nature of photographic images, and in particular their ability to portray, and accurately document. The two schools of thought involved were the Pictorial and the Naturalistic perspectives. The Pictorial point of view identified the photographic medium as being any one of several artistic media that might be subject to artist manipulations. Photography was primarily and essentially a nondocumentary medium, but communicative in terms of aesthetic expression.

In the Naturalistic perspective, the image was thought to be the direct result of the optical, and chemical processes of light on photosensitive material. Photographic images were inherently objective, and primarily documentary. Avoided, if not eliminated were the human limitations that plagued drawing and painting (Borcorman 1974). Of such impact was the photographic image that the painter, Paul Delaroche pronounced his famous statement, "Henceforth, painting is dead" (Gardner 1975). The credibility of photographic images was unquestioned in the Naturalistic perspective (Grady 1982).

The daguerreotype, a one-of-a kind image on silver, invented by Louis Daguerre, possessed a wide tonal range, and excellent detail, making its documentary capabilities self evident. The Calotype, invented about the same time, by Henry Fox Talbot, was a reproducible image, but used a paper negative which contributed to poor image quality. In spite of Talbot's declaration that the medium itself was an art, his own initial efforts were to improve image quality, not to exploit the aesthetic soft focus images that the calotype produced (Scharf 1986). The daguerreotype remained popular for portrait images, but exposure

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times were very long and processing was difficult. When the colodian, wet plate process was introduced in 1851, it replaced both its predecessors. The glass plate negative produced a much sharper print than the calotype, and was comparatively much more light sensitive than either of the previous processes. Technological improvement of the medium allowed greater mobility, and immediately photograpers took advantage of that mobility to document important events. With the calotype, Roger Fenton had documented the Crimean War , and Maxime Du Camp had documented Egypt, in the 1850's. In the 1860's Matthew Brady and his crew were heavily involved in documenting the Civil War. Photographers began to visit familiar and remote places in the world with their cumbersome equipment. The documentary tradition was well established by the middle of the Nineteenth century (Newhall 1982).

The applications of and expressions about photographic images are indications of the attitudes and assumptions that were in operation in regard to the interpretation of photographic images and their ability to document. Due to the nature of the medium, the verisimilitude of the image remained so powerful, explains Lyons (1982)that "...when fraudulent spirit photographs were introduced in 1861, they were accepted as truth solely on the basis of their being photographic." The qualities of the image itself lend support to those attitudes, so the identification and understanding of those qualities is essential to a working knowledge of visual literacy.

## Image Description

The establishment of a descriptive vocabulary is a fundamentally important step in the development of visual literacy. Compositional elements are commonly discussed in photographic literature, Crawford (1979) identifies some of these as syntactic, being the description used to discuss the formal, iconic, characteristics that lie within the frame, including: form, line, tone, contrast, texture, balance, rhythm, center of interest, detail, and sharpness. However, other characteristics that might be overlooked are minimally discussed: film sped, film size, aperture and corresponding depth of field, selective focus, and shutter speed. (With the continuing technological sophistication of camera and lighting equipment this list could be made much longer.) When a print is made from a negative many of the same photo taking processes are repeated in the darkroom, in addition print size, paper texture, and mounting or display are also important considerations. In addition, a particular professional field may use a jargon specific to itself, which introduces additional terms.

An emerging electronic technology, one that will eliminated silver based film, has introduced additional, and new terms. As this new technology becomes available its accompanying vocabulary will be necessary for visual literacy. This technology will include traditional camera terms, computer terms and additional terms like "charged-coupled disks" which will replace film, and understanding of pixel rating to describe image sharpness. The implications for this technology are great. Images can now be recorded electronically, transferred by cellular phone via modem, and "processed" on a computer screen (Kobre 1991).

More familiar terms are used to describe and discuss perceptual organization,

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particularly the Gestalt principles: figure-ground, proximity, continuity, and closure. And while these concepts that describe perception in general, visual applications are often used to describe them. They are useful, and do form part of the description that contribute to visual literacy. For example, Dondis' well known text, A Primer of Visual Literacy, (1973), is essentially a text in Gestalt principles applied to visual media. However important a familiarity of terms may be, visual literacy is a more broad, and complex concept, which includes describing the image in term of signalic functions, icon, index, and symbol. The identification of a vocabulary is essental to an understanding of visual literacy.

## The Iconic Nature of Documentary Images

The quality of the image that is perhaps its most powerful, is its iconic nature. The icon immediately begins to account for the great credibility of photographic, documentary images. The ability of photographic images to accurately depict is the essence of documentation. The representational relationship that photographs share with their referents is direct, and necessary. To qualify as icon, an image must possess a recognizable degree of referential resemblance. Very early in the history of photography, photographs achieved a highly accurate, albeit an approximation of human optical perspective, a wide range of tonal quality (and/or color), and sufficient detail to approximate human vision. This identification is not a complete description of photographs as icons, but it lies at the core of the photographic icon. The denotative qualities of the image cannot be over emphasized. Those qualities provide a check on the validity of the documentary information within the frame, furthermore, the denotative qualities of the image combine with the symbolic power of the image to produce an image that seems to naturally mean what we think it means.

To speak of iconic qualities is it immediately speak of content, which may capture so much attention so as to obscure our understanding. While the iconic aspect of documentary images is undoubtedly a major source of credibility and power, to communication studies, the image as index is at time at least as revealing as the icon.

## The Indexic Nature of Documentary Images

The index is that type of sign that results from direct causal forces. Documentary images can be described as indexic in at least three ways. First and most obviously, the images is a direct result of the optical, mechanical, and chemical operations in the photographic processes of picture taking (film exposure) and picture development. The documentary perspective looks to these processes as a basis for objectivity. Both exposure and development can be totally automated, where the image is, without question, a result of physical law. Like iconic qualities, the high visibility of the technology involved in these processes may focus a disproportionate amount of attention on this indexic aspect of the image.

Second, the photographic image acts as a record of a moment in time. The ability of the image to capture a particular instant, its instantanity, is "proof" that the photographer was there, the camera was in operation, the image was

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made, the event recorded. Usually, evidence of the photographer, e.g., a shadow, is not available to the viewer. The photographer's role must be assumed from such evidence as angle of view, and lens distortion, from which photographer distance and position relative to the subject may indicate a degree of influence on the subject.

The record of the instant, as proof of history, may lead the viewer to speculate, and perhaps project into the image. Questions of interpretation, "What was it like to be there?" "Should someone ought to have been watching?" begin to suggest themselves. There are critics of the photographic medium, based on these and similar questions, that roundly condemn photography, and specifically documentary images. Both Kozloff (1975) and Sontag (1973) criticize the voyeuristic potential of documentary images. Kozloff in particular describes photojournalistic images as "...hit and run photo thefts." It is the documentary image as index that allows such criticism. Literacy of photographic images requires an understanding of this sometimes subtle indexic influence, before such harsh criticism can be understood.

Finally, influence introduced into image content can originate from a cultural, and/or professional source. The origins of these influences are identified in the third type of index.

We are fond of stating that communication does not occur in a vacuum, and the saying is true of images as well as verbal massages. Cultural, social, professional, even family patterns, habits, and expectations make themselves known within the frame, not as single factors, but as systematic patterns which form codes of image use.

## Indexic Image Codes

While the relationship between icon and referent is direct, the actual manner in which the images is used is the result of a relationship that exists between image producer and viewer. The relationships that allow images and verbal symbols, indeed, any language use, are rule bound and active in all cultures. The implicit and explicit, rule bound procedures and decisions that make themselves indexically manifest in the image, are the codes of use. Eco (1976) equates "code" with "langue," but prefers "code" in reference to images because of increased ease in including a variety of prescriptions. Code identification and description as essential to visual literacy. The codes that govern the making and presenting of images are an active ingredient in the development and understanding of meaning. Such codes are an active agent to meaning, prescribing and indicating to the image maker how to select, frame, and compose, and likewise to the viewer, what should be seen, and how it should be understood. In essence, the prescriptive code tells us how to be literate. However a code may facilitate visual literacy, it is a double edged dynamic. Codes carry implicit, unrecognized, and value laden information. Further, visual codes do not seem to act exclusively to one another, for example the documentary image is also aesthetic and persuasive, and is simultaneously subject to those image codes as well. Literacy requires an attempt to identify the influences of such codes so as to maintain the integrity of the visual communication process rather than defaulting to

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simple image acceptance. Eco (1976) provides a typology of codes that is useful in helping to identify potential active influences that govern images: perceptive, recognition, transmission, tonal, iconic, iconographic, taste and sensibility, rhetorical, stylistic, and unconscious. While, for example, photojournalistic images are primarily created for presentation in a particular format (transmission rules apply), with particular assumptions about the definition of news, and news images in operation (stylistic codes), where the compositions elements are arranged (iconic codes), according to some sense of aesthetic proportion (taste [aesthetic] codes), with some particular intent, e.g., establish credibility, provide minor premise information in an argument, (rhetorical).

Photojournalism stands as a venerable application of documentary images and their governing codes. Recently I found that a standard photojournalism text offered as "Principles of Judging Photographs: What Makes a Good Picture?" a chapter showing "Fifty Memorable Pictures of the Last Half-Century," from a photographic exhibit at a major school of journalism. The images were accompanied with some explanations and technical information, but the student was left with the clear, but implicit message to imitate. (Edom 1980). Imitation of previous successful images is and effective was of training new photographers, and it is also an effective way to transfer the professional code that identifies visual news documentation. But imitation does not facilitate, describe, or expand visual literacy.

Curl (1979) reviews basic compositional elements in terms of technique and suggested meaning. The result is an explicit code of composition. For example, a vertical format and angular or jagged diagonals will suggest height and action. A horizontal format with "sensuous S curves" suggest rest, quiet, and peacefulness. More specifically, commonly accepted and taught compositional "rules" are identified (his emphasis):

1. Use a single, *dominant* center of interest.
2. Place the center of interest according to the rule of thirds. Avoid compositional symmetry.
3. Keep the horizon level.
4. Keep the subject tonally separated from the background.
5. Fill the frame with the subject.
6. Minimize extraneous details.
7. Don't amputate parts of main subjects at awkward places.
8. Avoid distracting shapes at the edge of the frame.
9. Place facing or moving subjects *into* the frame.
10. Strong diagonal lines suggest action or conflict.
11. Strong vertical lines suggest height and dignity.
12. Strong horizontal lines suggest peace and rest.

More recently, Kobre (1991) describes for the photojournalism student the principles of news images. For example: "Overall shot sets the scene, medium shot tells the story, and the close up adds drama." Framing, compositional, and cropping strategies are indicate to increase clarity and drama, and image sequences or series as opposed to contrasts are suggested. Taken together, these

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descriptions become a set of instructions of 'how it is done,' which begins to articulate a code of image making and understanding. Image codes operate in a manner similar to the restricted cultural and subcultural languages described by Bernstein (1966), where messages may be understandable by those with minimal (visual) literacy, but their construction and effective application is understood only by insiders who share experiences, perspectives, and values. Since image application codes are not exclusive, their combined operation can produce image structures that viewers may find powerful, but that they may be unable to completely decode, unless they can describe the codes in operation.

The above prescriptive suggestions are not the result of creative authors. They are simply the identification of some of the rules that govern the creation of acceptable photojournalistic images. Further expansion of visual literacy, in that context, requires that the viewer be aware of a definition of news information. Stephens (1986) identifies major qualities that define newsworthiness., historical importance, human interest, controversy, the unusual, and proximity. These characteristics describe a set of criteria for both verbal and visual information. When operationalized, they further describe the indexic qualities found in news images.

## The Symbolic Nature of Photographs

The symbolic function of images as symbols is no less important, and in many ways similar to verbal symbols. Nevertheless, the iconic and indexic qualities of the image combine, and qualify the symbolic functioning of the image. Wood's (1982) characteristics of symbols as arbitrary, abstract, and ambiguous are useful here.

First, the verbal symbol does not posses any necessary relationship to its referent. It is said to be arbitrary. The image, however, does not enjoy that degree of freedom. The visual, documentary symbol is never free from the immediacy of its icon, and the icon carries a direct representational relationship to the referent. A totally arbitrary relationship to the referent is simply not applicable when discussing the documentary image. By definition, the documentary image must possess recognizable, denotative characteristics of the subject. The symbolic quality of an image may qualify and enhance the icon, but not operate independently of it. For example, a photo of the President is symbolically important, above the image of the person, but it must resemble a person. Furthermore, the indexic image also qualifies the symbol in terms of referential meaning. An image of an apple can never be totally free from potential cultural influences, an image of an apple may be symbolic of religion or education. Again, the symbolic nature is somewhat predetermined.

The degree of abstraction that documentary images possess is also lessened by its iconic qualities. As a function of representational equivalence, pictures of apples are not just apple symbols. They are necessarily identified as apples. Documentary images represent the referential category with the essential qualities so as to be commonly be named as the thing itself, 'That's an apple,' rather than 'That's a picture of an apple,' (Mitchell 1986). With that identification, a reduction in abstraction that the documentary symbol possesses occurs.

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The ambiguity of photographic images is legendary. by comparison to verbal description, visual documentation simply provides a great deal more information. However, the great ambiguity of the visual, in contrast to the verbal, symbol can also be partially accounted for by the difference in image construction. The vocabulary introduced above describes a series of decisions that must be made to use images to communicate. With each decision point, sender intent is introduced into the frame. Viewer interpretation must then become correspondingly complex. The meaning of documentary images is deeply tied to our perception and familiarity with the denotative qualities identified within the frame.

## Credibility and Social Documentation

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In the Nineteenth century, early documentary photography was significant in effecting social change but the credibility of visual information was called into question because the technological limitations of the channel required greater intervention to construct an intended message (Snyder and Allen, 1975). In spite of that, documentary images had little trouble establishing a foundation on which to build, where credibility, apparent objectivity, and representation are directly linked together. What is it about photographs that allows these assumptions? The technical limitations imposed by long exposure requirements required the careful posing, if not restraining of subjects and use of intrusive, if not dangerous, artificial lighting.

The documentary photographers of the 1930's and 40's also built on the objective information tradition. The work of Walker Evans has long been identified as important. Early in his career Evans was identified as a dispassionate, visual historian. These identifications, made by himself and others, were indications of the basic assumptions about the information provided in his photographs. Travis (1987) quotes Evans summarizing his own approach to his documentary work, "There is a deep beauty in things as they are." Since the 1930's Evans' work has been praised as having the factual, objective qualities that transcend the photographer, and the act of making pictures. They are often described in terms of actuality (Kirsten, 1938). The assumptions about the factual qualities of visual documentation were translated into a code of photographic ethics, and were expressed by Evans himself. When he discovered that the composition for a famous photograph of a cow skull had been arranged by Arthur Rothstein, the director of various photographers who worked for the Farm Security Administration. Evans' statement (Stott 1973) was that any manipulation, any influence by the photographer of the image was "...a direct violation of our tenants...you don't touch thing." Evans explicitly attempted to get the personal intent, style, and influence of the photographer out of the photograph. His work has long been considered a model for documentary emulation, according to Kirsten (1938), being described as factual, being void of photographer intrusion, showing social reality, "...the facts of our homes and times."

And finally, Puckett (1984) describes Evans' work as not arranged, not falsified "... for any purpose, He adds nothing to what was there originally, and takes nothing away... His is a formal, static, objective, and subtle vision."

The above descriptions are indicators of some of the basic principles of the

documentary code of visual documentation which includes both photojournalism and visual anthropology. This approach also focuses on the iconic, denotative qualities of the photographic image to insure the validity of the information in the frame. The above approach employs the first aspect of the photo as index, that of being a direct result of nonhuman exposure and development processes, to insure the objectivity of the image. However it ignores the second two indexic functions, those that account for the instantaniety of the image, what happened at the time of the picture taking, and the cultural, professional, or other restricted code influences.

The well known work of Walker Evans provides an example with which to discuss, and expand visual literacy. One such discussion is particularly significant here; Curtis and Ganner (1980) provide a harsh analysis of his work showing more than a little evidence of artistic manipulation. Particularly in cases where comparative analysis was possible, they have shown quite conclusively that Evans intentionally arranged the physical environment he recorded by carefully positioning compositional elements, chairs, beds, tables, and the like. Their conclusion is that Evans' objective was clearly not only to document what he saw but to portray what he saw through strong aesthetic and persuasive photographs. Evans was guilty of clear violations of his own explicit code of ethics, and of the assumptions of documentation that the image has bypassed human influence. Although he obviously favored the straight image, he did manipulate the subject and the final image through compositional and printing manipulations. The resulting images are no less important, or successful. However conclusions about the explicit visual information must be qualified in terms of credibility.

Evans is not a lone example of the difficulty, if not impossibility of creating totally objective documentary images. Hunter (1987) provides ample evidence for bringing essentially the same case against Evans, Dorthea Lange, Margaret Bourke-White, and the entire Farm Security Administration's documentation of the economic difficulties in rural America during the depression. The photographers were directed by Roy Stryker's "shooting scripts" "...which defined the significant and visually useful in considerable detail. Stryker directed the photographers to 'search for ideas to give the sense of loneliness experienced by the women folks who helped settle this country. This idea might be developed around an abandoned dwelling on a plains homestead.'" Finally, Arthur Rothstein, who's moving of the cow skull was criticized by Evans, is reported by Hunter to intentionally seek for, and direct his subjects to assume expressions of worry or sadness, and directed apathetic gestures.

To be fair to the FSA photographers, on the door of Dorthea Lange's darkroom was a quote from Francis Bacon, "The contemplation of things as they are, without substitution or imposure, without error or confusion, is in itself a nobler thing than a whole harvest of invention" (Hunter 1987), and again, Walker Evans' ethic of "You don't touch a thing," are expressions of ethical, intentional purpose. Nevertheless, a clear objective to document reality has been shown by several authors to be vulnerable to aesthetic and persuasive concerns. For my purpose, it is sufficient to show that documentary image is susceptible to damaging, if not destroying influences. From the operation of other codes that are difficult for even the photographer to identify and control or contain. That such

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influence could occur in the face of an explicit intent, by professionally trained photographers, to produce an objective image, indicates the power of the verisimilitude of the image. Jackson (1978) summarizes this problem. "The deceptive aspect of documentary photography is in the looker; it is deliciously easy to convince yourself that you are responding to information about the world." Sekula (1976) states, "The only objective truth that photographs offer is that somebody, or something ... was somewhere and took a picture. Everything else is up for grabs."

What is being documented? At a minimum, the subject, photographer intent, professional expectation, and aesthetic decisions are all documented and represented in the image. Recognizing that the technology documents itself includes an addititional host of cultural values and dymanics.

## Credibility and Digitized Images

Photographic, documentary images are a function of the technological development that marks our culture and history. It is ironic that the image that has used its technological qualities to support unprecedented credibility in itself, is now being subjected to technological influence that strikes at the core of image credibility. The ability to scan images and store them digitally in a computer allows a tremendous opportunity to manipulate the content of the image. The manipulation of visual information is as old as its aesthetic and persuasive applications. Documentary images however, invoke the ethical code of no image manipulation or influence, even though it has been shown that is not absolutely possible. Through the use of existing technology in increasing use, the components of images can be drastically changed, moved, colored, or textured, and combined, further increasing the possibilities of manipulation. After a desired composition has ben achieved, film printers can generate a first generation negative, one not distinguishable from a silver negative produced from traditional equipment and methods.

The February, 1982, issue of National Geographic carried a now famous photo of the pyramids in Egypt. Unfortunately the original image did not suit the proportions of the cover. The image was scanned, and the "pyramids were moved" to fit the format of the cover. The cover image looked very much like a typical Geographic cover, that is, it met the viewer code and literacy level. However, it violated the National Geographic Society's commitment to visual geography and anthropology, using visual documentation as a primary means of information dissemination. (The Society's policy has since changed to avoid similar, future problems.) Another well known documentary effort was also subjected to digitized image manipulation, that of A Day in the Life, published by Collins, which documented the efforts of several photographers, carried a similarly manipulated cover photo. Kobre (1991) cites additional photojournalistic examples, examples, where well known newspapers have increased the color saturation of a sky, eliminating an extraneous soda can, and changing the color of a wall of a mayor's office, all to enhance the aesthetic and/or persuasive functions of the original "documentary" image. In such cases the operation of one code, rhetorical, has superseded the documentary code of an objective image, unmanipulated,

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and of "guaranteed" credibility. In spite of these problems, documentary photographs continue to remain admissible evidence in courts of law.

Hamilton (1990) discusses the issues of this technology that printers, and color labs face in terms of image ethics, ownership, and credibility. He compares digitized image manipulation to retouching, which is a widely accepted manipulation used to clarify and beautify images. However, the production lab does not operate under the documentary code of image credibility. Production labs do most of their work for contract advertisers, where the image is primarily rhetorical, and aesthetic. The documentary perspective has already embraced the technology, but has not dealt with the implications of credibility or its ethicalimplications of new technologies as of yet.

## Conclusion

Visual literacy, knowledge of the conventions that govern meaning, knowing what to do when confronted with an image, begins with an understanding of the nature of images and the concepts of representation, but the use of images is a contextually, rule governed system, not an isolated act based in technology alone. Visual literacy of documentary images includes a knowledge of the historical traditions and assumptions about iconic representation that have led to a stubborn attitude toward the image that insists on assuming an objective image. Conventional image consumerism takes the icon as a representational equivalent of the subject resulting in an unquestioned credibility, but codified influences acting on photographers and images may, and perhaps should hamper that credibility. Visual literacy includes the identification of those codes, and allows greater viewer control and better image understanding. However, as the academic community is articulating the nature of the image, and its governing codes, a technology has appeared that may preclude discussions of credibility based on iconic representation and indexic cause-effect validity. Visual documentary literacy must include a careful consideration and inclusion of electronic image technology and codes as they develop. The new technology places greater ethical pressure on the producer's of images not to succumb to the temptations of manipulation, and greater pressure on the viewer to know what to do while standing in front of the image.

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