

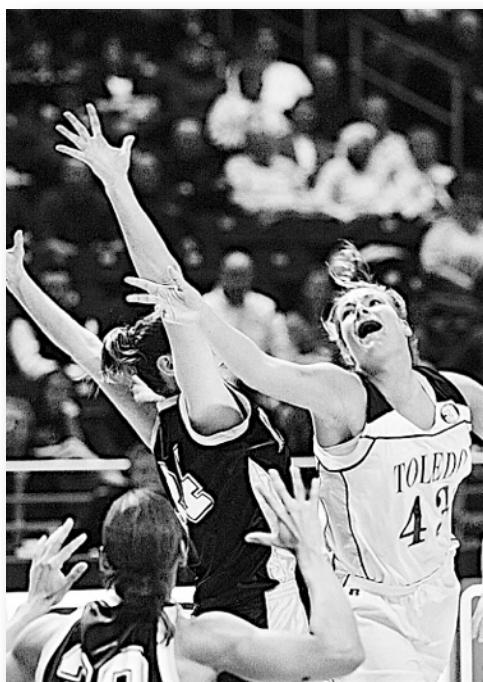
Editorial Photography

Editorial photography purports to be a representation of “real” events or real people photographed as they actually appear when seen through the photographer’s lens. It also assumes the photograph represents a “real-time” event, captured at the moment it happened.

Photographer Alan Dietrich of the *Toledo Blade* was fired in 2007 after it was discovered that he had photoshopped some 233 of his 947 photos taken for the paper.



In this shot, he removed the legs behind the banner



In this one, he added a basketball.

A photo of golfer Matt Bettencourt was pulled from their file offerings after the photoshopping was pointed out to getty images.



Tests for ethicality in editorial photography

Viewfinder Test

- Viewers do not expect that an editorial photo is reality, only that it corresponds in some sense to reality,
- They expect that the objects it portrays are no more or less than those that were seen through the viewfinder.

The Process Test

- Choice of f-stop, the use of a fish-eye or black and white film, etc. pose no threat to credibility.
- Consumers know that a fish-eye is a "special effect," and that reality is not black and white.

Technical Credibility Test

- In the PRE-digital world, creating seemingly coherent composites was difficult, equipment intensive, and labor intensive.
- In other words, it was much harder to fake it in the old days.
- When the level of technical credibility no longer tips off viewers as to a material alteration, a failure to disclose it risks a loss of public confidence.
- In other words, it's much easier to fake it today.

The Qualified expectation of reality test

QER is Based on an audience's expectation of the degree to which a photograph represents reality.

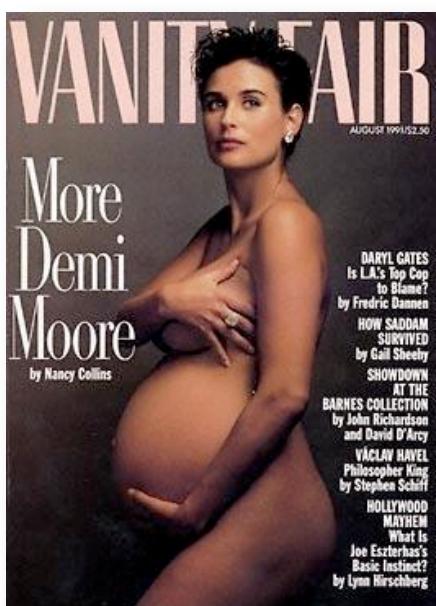
QER includes 3 tests

1. ask yourself whether the fictional content is immediately obvious.

- The degree to which audiences recognize this fiction is one measure of its ethicality.
- If reasonable people identify the fiction, then no one is fooled and the photograph is ethical by default.

"Pregnant Bruce Willis" Test

Is the fiction immediately obvious?



Reasonably well-informed readers know a visual joke when they see one.



2. If the fictional content is not immediately obvious, ask yourself whether you think that people can identify the fiction based on the context

- For instance, tabloids suggest photographic alteration.
- Reasonably well-informed readers will understand that some formats imply photo manipulation, so their expectations are qualified.

3. If the context does not suggest fiction, supply disclosure sufficient so that no reasonable person would be deceived.

- Sometimes fine print is insufficient.
- If photo-fiction is not immediately obvious and is the essence of the image or accounts for a substantial portion of its meaning (especially if consumers have to read fine print to discover it), then they have been misled.

In summary...

- If your audience expects it to be real (either by the obvious fiction of the photo or by context), it should be real.
- If they don't expect it to be real, they're not being fooled.
- If it's not obvious or clear that it's photo-fiction, they're being fooled.
- If you're in doubt, use a disclosure.
- Remember that the ultimate test is one of honesty and perception:
- Do we mislead our consumers?
- Do they think we mislead them?
- When in doubt, err in favor of the public trust.

Webster University Journal Policy for the Ethical Use of Photographs

Generally Allowed:

- Brightness/contrast control
- Burning & dodging to control tonal range
- Color correction
- Cropping a frame to fit the layout
- Retouching of dust & scratches

Never Allowed:

- Adding, moving, or removing objects within the frame
- Color change other than to restore what the subject looked like
- Cropping a frame in order to alter its meaning
- Flopping a photograph (left/right reversal)
- Printing a photograph in other than "true" orientation

Special concerns that may require further discussion when their use is being considered:

- Any images that are staged or fundamentally altered will be prominently labeled as Photo Illustrations, and will be credited following the format.
- Photo Illustrations will never be represented as news photographs.
- Color-enhanced photographs (e.g., duotone printing of monotone images) must be prominently labeled as Photo Illustrations.
 - Color enhancement should never alter the meaning of the picture. Photo Illustrations should be used sparingly.
- Archive photos should be clearly labeled and credited following the format,
 - "Photo by W. Eugene Smith/Journal File Photo."

- Archive photos are previously published pictures, and should be used sparingly, e.g. when an earlier event is again in the news.
- A photograph that was taken significantly prior to publication, but was not previously published, must be clearly labeled through the caption. (Captions must always accurately reflect the content of the photograph.)
- Overlapping of photographs should be avoided in a layout unless absolutely necessary, and even then must never alter the meaning of a picture.



This cover photo of Lance Armstrong was digitally manipulated to include lettering on his originally blank T-shirt. Armstrong was not happy with the resulting cover.