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Issues In Object-Level Description Of Press Photography Collections : Toward A Metadata Standard For Photojournalism

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ISSUES IN OBJECT-LEVEL DESCRIPTION OF
PRESS PHOTOGRAPHY COLLECTIONS:
TOWARDS A METADATA STANDARD FOR PHOTOJOURNALISM

By

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Abstract

The role of photojournalism archives is in a state of reinvention as physical collections move from agencies to cultural institutions. The accessibility of collections is imperative for new research focusing on recognizing the complex nature of the printed page and the various editorial, aesthetic and political forces involved in producing a publication. Researchers are using primary photographic objects along with original press materials to discover new aspects of photojournalism's history. These collections represent a unique challenge for institutions, where the multiple physical manifestations of a single image each contribute to an understanding of how photography was used by the media. Traditional cataloguing standards for image collections excel at recording image content, but there remains no standard for the description of photojournalism objects. This thesis posits a method of describing photojournalism objects by utilizing existing structural metadata standards in order to improve database browsing capabilities, thus improving research efficiency.

Acknowledgements

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<u>**Literature Survey**</u>
Research of Photojournalism

The following literature survey constitutes an analysis of current scholarship on the management of photojournalism archives and examines issues of accessibility for object-based researchers. The survey is organized into three sections. The first section constitutes a review of current trends in the research of photojournalism, and the potential of object-based research. The second section is an examination of the role of press photographs in cultural institutions by examining archival theory. Finally, the third section examines practical collections management guidelines and descriptive standards, and analyzes their usefulness in collections of photojournalism.

Research into the history of photojournalism began to shift in focus during the turn of the millennium. New research saw a rise in interest in analyzing photojournalism not merely as images, but as pictures to be understood in the context of the printed page. *Kiosk: The History of Photojournalism,* co-authored by curator Bodo von Dewitz with photojournalist and collector Robert Lebeck, represents a major milestone in this shift in historical thinking. Published in 2001, the book and accompanying exhibition of the same title were the first major survey of the "original photographic report,"[1] featuring photo-essays reproduced as they were originally understood—on the printed page. This contextualizing of photojournalism's history acknowledges the complexity of press photography as the product of the combined effort of photographers, editors, writers and numerous technical staff: an idea that endures in the research of photojournalism.

The 2006 work by academic, historian and curator Mary Panzer *Things As They Are: Photojournalism in Context Since 1955* represents an intellectual extension of Lebeck's *Kiosk: A History of Photojournalism* in understanding photojournalism not as a monolithic institution of documentation, but as a complex social practice. Bringing together over 120 photo essays from the world over, spanning the years 1955 to 2005, Panzer uses primary sources to show the complex visual and

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[1] Bodo von Dewitz, *Kiosk: A History of Photojournalism, 1839-1973* (Göttingen: Steidl, 2001), 7.

textual manifestation of press images in publication. Far from being exhaustive, Panzer expresses that her selection is a starting point from which further scholarship is required.[2] Trends in visual representation, how visual culture affects news communication and how images are constructed for narrative purposes, all represent different forms of analysis that originate in the study of the historical artefacts of photojournalism. Lebeck and Panzer developed this idea by presenting the original printed page as an object of study to be contextualized within the larger history of photojournalism.

Whereas Lebeck and Panzer produced broader surveys of the history of photojournalism in print, other researchers have turned their attention to the development of more specific images and stories. The 2009 essay "On Either Side of the Gatekeeper: Technical Experimentation with Photography at *L'Illustration* (1880-1900)" by academic and historian Thierry Gervais illustrates the ability of object-based research to open new paths of scholarship in the history of photojournalism. In analyzing a retouched print intended for publication in an 1891 edition of French picture magazine *L'Illustration,* Gervais is able to challenge the traditionally accepted history concerning the adoption of photography in the press, occurring through the development of the halftone process. The primary photographic objects studied show a combination of illustrative processes not apparent in the final printed page. Gervais illustrates how examining and comparing the various physical manifestations of the same image can illuminate an aspect of photojournalism history not apparent without research of original objects.

The 2010 Master's thesis *Photographic Retouching: The Press Picture Editor's "Invisible" Tool* by Photographic Preservation and Collections Management student Rachel Verbin applies the principles of object-based research to a collection of photographic press prints from the British Press Agencies Collection at the Art Gallery of Ontario. By surveying a large collection of prints

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[2] Mary Panzer, *Things As They Are: Photojournalism in Context Since 1955* (New York: Aperture, 2005), 9.

dating from 1930-1939, Verbin illustrates the pervasiveness of retouching in modern press illustration. The works chosen for analysis are rife with evidence of cropping, mechanical addition of detail, deletion of detail and restructuring of visual elements. By assessing the original prints before they were reproduced mechanically—and thus evidence of retouching visually diminished—Verbin is able to broach the topic of photographic retouching, which is underrepresented in the history of photography given its pervasive use in photojournalism's history.

Research projects such as these demonstrate the importance of collections managers considering the role of accessibility and the interpretation of material photographic records. When a researcher of photojournalism requires a photographic object, in what ways can an institution distinguish its historical function in the press? A consideration of the role of an institution is essential to answering this question. Mary Panzer's 2011 essay "The Meaning of the Twentieth-Century Press Archive" brings the institutional role to the forefront of the reconstruction of our understanding of press photography's history. Institutions represent the intermediary of the history of photojournalism, and it falls to their practices to ensure the information available to researchers is relevant to their needs. Thus, a practicable guideline for archival documentation of object-level information is clearly needed.

Archival Theory

Before an institution can make practicable guidelines for the management of objects, it must first understand the collection and the institution's role in its interpretation. *Fragments of the World: Uses of Museum Collections* by Suzanne Keene is a reflection on the role of large collections for research, exhibition and digitization. When a collection numbers in the hundreds of thousands or even millions of objects, how can an institution interpret them on a level that makes them intelligible to the patron? Keene believes an institution can define its role not only through its audience, but

also through the objects themselves.[3] In order to understand the objects in the collection, an institution relies primarily on research to animate meaning. In this way, researchers play a critical role in interpreting a collection. In understanding a collection's role, one must consider the nature of research being done and what the institution can do on a practical level to meet the needs of those researchers.

With the advent of digital databases, the evolving needs of the patron and new areas of research into cultural heritage, how can an institute place itself into this dynamic set of emerging relationships? The 2007 volume *Theorizing Digital Cultural Heritage: A Critical Discourse,* comprised of 22 essays from academics, museum professionals and researchers, engages with areas of archival theory affected by digital technologies. Most relevant to understanding an institution's role in making photography intelligible is Fiona Cameron and Helena Robinson's essay "Digital Knowledgescapes." In this text, the authors evaluate the documentation of digital collections and contrast it with empirical documentation (i.e. the descriptions of digital images vs. the descriptions of original objects). Cameron and Robinson ultimately give a postmodern reinterpretation of the cultural institution, whereby documentation is reinterpreted not as the "transcription of facts," but as a recognition of the "multiple layers of meaning" inherent in the material.[4] As applicable to the research of photojournalism, Cameron and Robinson touch on an aspect that is essential in communicating collection objects to research patrons: proper documentation of contextual knowledge is key to researchers understanding objects. Documentation of these multiple layers of meaning results in accessible and intelligible knowledge of the objects being studied.

When applying the theoretical framework of defining a collection through its objects to collections of photographs, Nina Lager Vestberg's article "Archival Value: On Photography,

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[3] Suzanne Keene, *Fragments of the World: Uses of Museum Collections* (New York: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinneman, 2005), 1.
[4] Fiona Cameron and Helena Robinson, "Digital Knowledgescapes: Cultural, Theoretical, Practical, and Usage Issues Facing Museum Collection Databases in a Digital Epoch" in *Theorizing Digital Cultural Heritage,* Edited by Fiona Cameron and Sara Kenderine (Cambridge: MIT, 2007), 168.

Materiality and Indexicality" offers insight into the role of archives in the material study of photographs. As research methodology shifts to object-based study, the role of photographic indexicality shifts from being image- and subject-based to "referent associated with the photographic object."[5] The digitization of photographs threatens to suppress object indexicality by recording only the image contained within the frame, and does not make intelligible the object itself. With this upheaval of archival value, Vestberg admits that paradoxically "there is as of yet no comprehensive study of the role played by picture researchers and archivist"[6] in redefining the archive's role as embodiments of object-indexical knowledge.

Cultural institutions not only preserve objects, but also interpret and provide meaning. Research is a fundamental part of providing this interpretation. When a large collection of press photography is taken on by an institution, its responsibilities include understanding the need for providing access for researchers. As meaning in photography shifts from subject-based to object-based, it is up to institutions to make aspects of photographic materiality intelligible to researchers. Defining the practical aspects of collections management in interpreting photographic archives requires a more direct survey of standards and procedures.

Collections Management & Cataloguing Guides

The 2002 Murtha Baca-edited volume *Introduction to Art Access* provides a general starting point for the issues and challenges met by collections managers on the access to information in image-based collections. As Baca states in the introduction, the works were collected together for the "very real need for practical guidelines on how to lead end-users to relevant images of art and architecture online."[7] While the work does engage the issues of metadata standards, description and controlled vocabularies, it does not relate these ideas specifically to the description and management

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[5] Nina Lager Vestberg, "Archival Value: On Photography, Materiality, and Indexicality" in *Photographies* (1:1, 2008), 49.
[6] Vestberg, 54.
[7] Murtha Baca, "Introduction" in *Introduction to Art Image Access: Issues, Tools, Standards, Strategies*, Edited by Murtha Baca (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2002), v.

of press photography. As, Christine L. Sundt points out in a later paper, with the advent of digital

databases accessible by the public, patrons are searching for images in "new and different ways,"

which the traditional subject-based relational database fails to fully capture.[8] Insofar as in the world

of art, "the work of art has a kind of object-hood and physical presence,"[9] so too does the

reproduction in the realm of photojournalism. Hence, there is a need for an object-orientated system

of description in photojournalism collections.

A more in-depth approach to the management of photographic collections is the 2006 work

Cataloging Cultural Objects: A Guide to Describing Cultural Works and Their Images (CCO)*,* published by

the American Library Association in conjunction with the Visual Resources Association. The work

represents a more thorough approach to collections management by constructing "guidelines for

selecting, ordering and formatting data used to populate metadata elements in a catalogue record."[10]

Self-reflexively, CCO asks the reader to consider that object description is not merely about

describing the object, but understanding the relationship between *how* one describes an object and

how the object is understood.[11] Like *Access to Art Images,* CCO does not directly engage with the

topic of photojournalism per se, but rather recognizes that photography itself "represents a complex

layer of information open to subjective interpretation."[12]

Perhaps one of the most exhaustive projects to describe and manage visual collections is the

Getty Research Institute's *Categories for the Description of Works of Art* (CDWA). Containing over 532

categories and subcategories of cataloguing fields, CDWA "describes the content of art databases by

articulating a conceptual framework for describing and accessing information about works of art,

architecture, other material culture, groups and collections of works, and related images." CDWA is

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[8] Christine L. Sundt, "The Image User and the Search for Images" in *Introduction to Art Image Access: Issues, Tools, Standards, Strategies,* Edited by Murtha Baca (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2002), 67-68.
[9] Sundt, 69.
[10] Murtha Baca, et al., *Cataloguing Cultural Objects: A Guide to Describing Cultural Works and Their Images* (Chicago: American Library Association, 2006), xvii.
[11] Baca, *Cataloguing Cultural Objects*, 3.
[12] Baca, *Cataloguing Cultural Objects, 4.*

ideal in that it has the ability to articulate complex relationships between both singular works in a collection as well as between groups of materials,[13] making it a suitable starting point for documenting photojournalism material.

In an effort to comprehend end-user requirements of image collections, an exploratory study was published in 2011 in the *Journal of Information Science* titled "Image Needs in the Context of Image Use." In this paper, Eunkyung Chung and JungWon Yoon present the findings of their study into the "underlying structure of image needs and uses" by examining "three categories including semantics (e.g. *ofness* and *aboutness*), non-visual features (e.g. bibliographic information) and syntactic features."[14] By analyzing image queries, Chung and Yoon conclude that image retrieval can be broken down into two categories of image usage: images used for data and images used as objects.[15] When considering the research of photojournalism, the authors observed a primary use of the image as object.[16] That is, patrons could not extrapolate the necessary knowledge from the image alone, but required contextual knowledge to make intelligible. As photojournalism requires this contextual knowledge for understanding images, the practical application of these findings requires a rethinking of object description, record structure and relational associations at the database level.

"Image Use Within the Work Task Model: Images as Objects, Images as Data" is a 2008 MA thesis by Lori McCay-Peet from the Library and Information Science program at Dalhousie University. It is comprised of original research into behaviours of end-user research into image collections. Through exhaustive study, McCay-Peet shows that assigned access points "fail to be useful to the searcher because they do not capture the wide variety of information which may be associated with an image." This is relevant to collections of photojournalism where access point

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[13] See "Ch. 20: Related Works" in *Categories for the Description of Works of Art*.
http://www.getty.edu/research/publications/electronic_publications/cdwa/21related.html
[14] EunKyung Chung and JungWon Yoon, "Image Needs in the Context of Image Use: An Exploratory Study" in *Journal of Information Science* (37:2, 2011), 163.
[15] Chung and Yoon, 165.
[16] Chung and Yoon, 174.

elements fail to provide the contextual information found in press photography materials. We can see the lack of these sorts of elements insofar as cataloguing standards are largely based on image associated data. If patrons require the communication of object-level data, then a new method to catalogue such aspects is required.

For cultural institutions, photography poses a significant challenge for the translation of visual knowledge into the textual data of a digital database. An institution's catalogue is the primary gateway through which patrons and staff can access and understand objects. For photojournalism and object-based researchers, descriptive standards provide the access points within a database. Thus, descriptive standards require a means by which to translate aspects of the objects themselves.

Conclusions

The role of photojournalism archives is in a state of reinvention as physical collections move from agencies to cultural institutions. Digital technology is redefining how institutions make intelligible and accessible these cultural objects. Concurrently, researchers are looking at new ways of redefining press photography's history, and are doing so by analyzing the production of published images through researching material objects. When Chung and Yoon stated, "one of the fundamental approaches [of an institution] is to have a rich understanding of the image needs of users, then apply these needs into … designing image retrieval systems,"[17] we can appreciate the necessity of institutions who hold collections of photojournalism to make intelligible Vestberg's "object referent associations." As an institution's catalogue and digital database are the access points for researchers and museum staff alike, they need to adapt to make an account of the material objects of photojournalism's history. By using contemporary studies in end-user image requirements, as well as building a theoretical foundation for an institution's role in research accessibility,

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[17] Chung and Yoon, 163.

collections management practices can be brought in line to practically address the needs of object-

based researchers in the study of photojournalism.

<u>**Section 1: The Role of Press Photography in Cultural Institutions**</u>

The History of Photography and Photojournalism Research

Recognizing the needs of researchers currently working in cultural institutions is ultimately a

matter of surveying current research methodologies. In understanding how researchers work within

collections of press photography, aspects of cataloguing standards can be identified as being integral

to understanding a collection's materiality. How are researchers working with press photography

now, and in what way does this differ from methodologies used in the past? This issue is intrinsically

related to the accessibility of primary photographic sources. Histories of photography written

throughout the early- to-late twentieth century were constructed under a different set of

circumstances than histories being written today, and this is directly related to the state of collections

of photojournalism in institutions. As cultural institutions take on large collections of

photojournalism from personal archives, agency archives and publication archives, the framework in

which research takes place changes. As research becomes more focused on the comparative analysis

of the primary photographic objects used in news illustration, new insight is gained into the editorial

process and role of photography in the press.

Photojournalism, until recently, has largely been treated as supplementary to a larger overarching

history of photography. To historians working during the early- to mid-twentieth century, press

photography represented one particular application, among many, of the medium since its

announcement in 1839. Although the boundaries of the definition itself have remained fluid[18],

"photojournalism" is taken here to be photography specifically produced for publication in the

printed press. During the twentieth century a whole system of photographers, picture agencies and

publications existed, disseminating news photography from the photographer to the public.[19]

Histories written during this same period failed to capture the complex relationships involved in the

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[18] Panzer, Mary. *Things As They Are*, 9.
[19] Naomi Rosenblum, *A World History of Photography*. 3rd Ed. (New York: Abbeville Press,1997), 467.

publishing of images. Instead, histories fit photojournalism into an art historical narrative in which

iconic photographers and the famous images they made were brought together to reinforce the

importance of photography in the press and to legitimize ideas of photography as the "mechanically

witness and thus ostensibly veridical reality disentangled from subjective values"[20] found in the

"straight" photographs of the press. In this way, the aspects of photojournalism that appealed to art

historical narrative—mainly "values of autonomy, connoisseurship and the protection of the domain

of high culture"[21]—were used to construct a history of photojournalism condensed into a

purportedly homogenous practice found throughout history. This can be seen in Gidal's 1973 work

Modern Photojournalism: Origin and Evolution 1910-1933, where the "photoreporter" was seen as the

"backbone of the new photojournalism."[22] Press photography was taken to be a self-fulfilling

prophecy whereby photography's inherent objective qualities necessitated a "timelessness" found in

a press photographer's ability to eschew "all aesthetic and technical trends and fashions."[23]

Beaumont Newhall brought the same notions of objectivity when writing on documentary

photography by saying: "the quality of authenticity implicit in a photograph may give it special value

as evidence, or proof."[24] This idea of an implicit authenticity to photography can be seen in how

press photography's iconic images, when used as illustration, were often not reproduced within the

context of the printed page on which they were originally encountered, but as fine continuous tone

images devoid of their contextual information. This type of constructed historical narrative served a

very important purpose in establishing photography as a diverse and respected medium—not only as

art, but as one of the most fundamental parts of modern visual culture. However, the reality of the

practice of press photography is much more complex.

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[20] Jason E. Hill, "On the Efficacy of Artifice: PM, Radiophoto, and the Journalistic Discourse of Photographic Objectivity" in *Etudes Photographiques* (26), 74.
[21] Jennifer Tucker, "The Historian, the Picture, and the Archive" *ISIS* (97:1), 113.
[22] Tim N. Gidal, *Modern Photojournalism: Origins and Evolution, 1910-1933* (New York: Macmillan, 1973), 14.
[23], Gidal, 30.
[24] Beaumont Newhall, *The History of Photography: from 1839 to the present* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1982), 235.

Photojournalism has been far from a homogenous international practice, but rather is constituted by a whole system of publishers, editors, writers, artists and photographers with varying goals, beliefs and attitudes towards photography. Although there are common elements in photojournalism that make it a unique practice, its usage by the illustrated press has "invariably remain[ed] local."[25] Just as there was no standard use of press photography, there "cannot be one single history of photojournalism for there is no single goal shared by all photographers, publishers and readers."[26] The "histories" in photojournalism are found within the relationships between photographers, editors, agencies and publications. Our access to this history is found within the physical traces left behind in the form of both photographic and non-photographic artefacts. Before the adoption of digital, images produced in analogue processes necessarily required a physical surrogate by which to be transmitted from one place to another, be reproduced for the printed page and stored for later retrieval. Photographs represented the "raw illustrative material that constituted an acceptable final composition" on the printed page.[27] To understand photojournalism in the twentieth century is to understand the context of publication in the form of the intermediary work of technical staff and editors. The intermediary objects—the work prints, agency file photographs and the contact sheets—all have physical traces of usage that tell a part of the story of the "system of production in which [the photographic object] was generated and disseminated."[28] The paper prints themselves served as carriers of the images, physically transporting the image from place to place.

Photojournalism as it was understood by the public was not through the singular detached images found in history of photography books, but on the printed page of a publication.

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[25] Panzer, 10.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Thierry Gervias, "On Either Side of the Gatekeeper: Technical Experimentation with Photography at L'Illustration (1880-1900)" in *Etudes Photographiques* (23), 51.
[28] Vestberg, 53.

Photographs were altered visually and syntactically through the interplay of text and images—a dichotomy that depended on the image to "perform its objectivity function if the partisan textual rhetoric that accompanied it was to maintain its authority."[29] As "raw illustrative material," photographs were "credited with an inherent authenticity, but equally a mute visual detail with an obscure meaning that requires interpretation by editors," hence requiring an analysis beyond image content alone.[30] It is in understanding the printed page as a dynamic value-laden visual arrangement that we understand photography as only a part of the story. With few exceptions, journalism is a commercial enterprise and the printed page has a "commercial necessity for dramatization and editing" that blurred the lines between historical fact and historical fiction.[31] The physical publications and raw photographic materials used in constructing them are necessary in an account of photojournalism's history as "it reveals so much about … how viewers initially encountered and understood the image."[32] In redirecting focus onto the context of publication, and away from isolated photographic images or stories, the history of photojournalism necessitates an analysis of "the role of editors in chief and art directors, [who] construct the narrative of current events in images."[33] Ultimately, through recounting the editorial process, historians will begin to grasp what influenced the arrangement of text and images in print journalism, and posit photography's role in that process.

Thus, with the understanding of photojournalism as not merely the production of images, but the construction of visual narrative, image-text dynamic and systems of information dissemination, photojournalism research has turned from image-content-based to object-based. In this way, photographic indexicality has been reconceived as "referent associated with the photographic object,

[29] Hill, 76.
[30] Gervias, "Witness to War," 382.
[31] Donald G. Godfrey, "Broadcast Archives for Historical Research: Revisiting the Historical Method," Journal of Broadcast & Electronic Media, 46:3 (2002), 495.
[32] Martha A. Sandweiss, "Image and Artifact: The Photograph as Evidence in the Digital Age" in *The Journal of American History,* 94 (June 2007), 199-200.
[33] Gervais, "Beyond the Page," 3.

as opposed to the photographic image."[34] In researching photographic objects, researchers are in a sense lifting the veil of production and showing "how layers of information and creative dramatization were created."[35] It is only through analyzing the raw materials and the final printed page that the histories of photojournalism can be understood. In analogue photography, images are necessarily "time-bound physical objects, produced by a particular technology and circulated in a particular way."[36] Each object has its own history to be understood, and each part contributes to an understanding of the whole of photojournalism. In bringing together material manifestations of images, historians are capable of tracing the image through its objects and discovering the relationships found in its publication. As photojournalism's uses remained local and culturally embedded, it is up to researchers to ensure press photography is "contextualized and made to resonate with broader social and cultural issues."[37] It is only through the various iterations of an image, or sets of images, that we can understand this social context.

Contextualizing press photography within the broader understanding of visual culture is not limited to iconic images. Just as important are the study of the "lesser" anonymous images utilized in the press. Each photographic object is recognized as valuable to the history of photojournalism because of its unique contributions to aspects of photographic production "that are usually disavowed in the context of the museum or gallery"[38]: The ephemeral markings, the editorial notes and the hand-typed captions all contribute to an understanding of the object's function in the publishing industry.[39]

A new, localized and socially contextualized history of photojournalism is possible due to the complete adoption of a digital workflow as a professional standard in photojournalism. This "digital

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[34] Vestberg, 49.
[35] Godfrey, 500.
[36] Sandweiss, 199.
[37] Gervais, "Beyond the Page," 4.
[38] Vestberg, 51.
[39] Panzer, "The Meaning of the Twentieth-Century Press Archive," 49.

turn" has fundamentally altered how photojournalists produce images, how images are stored and how they are understood by publications, as well as shifting the public's perception of the news image.[40] Whereas during the analogue period of photography images required physical surrogates that accumulated the markings of continued use, digital allows "images to go directly to press without ever appearing as a print."[41] This is integral to understanding the newfound academic interest in material photography. The "dematerializing affect"[42] of digital necessitates a new perspective on the usage of material photographs during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This has brought about a heightened awareness of the archive, wherein the "archaeological impulse" has motivated scholars to delve into the primary materials of press production to uncover an account of photojournalism "as it really was."[43] In this way, the same forces that have ended the use of analogue material have given them a "second life" as research materials.[44] Press photographic objects have been transformed from functional items used in the publishing of images to historical documents whose value "may yet prove even greater than its workaday function: an enduring accessible record of what and how photographers saw for nearly a century."[45]

Cultural institutions are receiving large press collections that provide new access to primary photographic objects, fostering an object-orientated form of research. Large archives of photographs—the Black Star agency collection at Ryerson, the British Press Agency Collection at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Magnum Archive at the Harry Ransom Centre and many personal archives including the Werner Wolff Archive at the Ryerson Image Centre— are all shifting from objects used in the business of publishing photography, to objects now held by institutions to be

[40] Kristen Lubben, "Introduction" in *Magnum Contact Sheets* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2011.
[41] Fred Ritchin, "Close Witnesses: The Involvement of the Photojournalist" in *A New History of Photography*, Edited by Michel Frizot (Koln: Konemann, 1998), 609.
[42] Lubben, 14.
[43] Gervias, "Beyond the Press Page," 7.
[44] Alan Trachtenberg, "Picturing History in the Morgue" in *The Tumultuous Fifties: A View from the New York Times Photo Archives* (New Haven: Yale University, 2001.
[45] Lubben, 14.

studied. But how can institutions understand these artefacts? Knowing the objects becomes a case of knowing their individual history.

<p style="text-align:center">The Institutional Context: Ryerson Image Centre</p>

The Ryerson Image Centre (RIC) provides an institutional context for analyzing the complexity of material photojournalism and the challenges inherent in articulating object-level knowledge in a photographic collection. As a part of Ryerson University, the RIC supports the "study, teaching, research and exhibition of photography and related media,"[46] thereby placing the centre at the heart of the university's aims of fostering "scholarly research and creative activities in the area of digital media, communication and information technology" as outlined in the 2008-2013 Academic Plan.[47] In 2005, the RIC acquired an estimated 291,249[48] prints from the Black Star photo agency. This vast and intricate collection provides a new foundation for research into photojournalism's history through the framework of an agency that produced some of the most iconic images of the twentieth century alongside the workaday illustrative images by now anonymous photographers. With the acquisition of the personal archive of Black Star staff photographer Werner Wolff in 2009, the collection gains new dimensions with the addition of the contextual materials of a working photographer.

Beginning in 1948 as a "post-war experiment in education"[49] Ryerson University was founded as a training institute for the civilian population in emerging Canadian industries, as well as the Canadian military returning after the Second World War. Photography was one of the founding departments of the institute, with a career-focused academic program concentrating on the technical aspects of the medium. Ryerson was far from a traditional post-secondary school, but rather filled a

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[46] "About Us," Ryerson Image Centre, accessed June 8, 2012, http://www.ryerson.ca/ric/about.html.
[47] "Shaping Our Future: Academic Plan for 2008-2012," Ryerson University, accessed June 12, 2012, http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/academicplan.pdf
[48] Estimate as of June 2012, according to Collections Curator Peter Higdon.
[49] Claude W. Doucet, "A Brief History of Ryerson," July 2007, http://www.ryerson.ca/archives/ryehistory.html

perceived gap in education between apprenticed tradespeople and professional degrees found at universities.[50] Combining theory and practice, Ryerson's School of Photography provided a foundation for photography students looking to enter the professional field.

A turning point for Ryerson came in 1969 when an influx of new faculty brought photography academics from both Canadian and American institutes where photography was "taken seriously as an expressive medium" under such figureheads such as Beaumont Newhall and Nathan Lyons.[51] The curriculum underwent a significant change, shifting focus from the technical aspects of photography to a more aesthetic and expressive approach. Faculty members Don Dickinson and Phil Bergerson began collecting photography from professional photographers to serve as reference material when they noted students lacked a concept of the aesthetics of a properly processed print, due to a lack of exposure to primary photographic materials. The collection at Ryerson from the very beginning was a teaching aid valued for not only its aesthetics, but its materiality as well. Instructors used prints as visual aids in the classroom setting, as well as provided students access to the objects for study and research. Given its usage as a scholarly resource, the collection's mandate from its earliest iteration stressed a desire to represent the breadth of the history of photography in all of its material forms. Photojournalism was always a part of this collecting impulse, but positioned itself at the forefront with the acquisition of Black Star in 2005.

The Black Star photo agency began 1935 in New York City, founded by Ernest Mayer, Kurt Safranski and Kurt Kornfield—three German Jews who had fled Nazi Germany. In 1929, Mayer had founded the Berlin-based agency Mauritius, which supplied German magazines with photographs, eventually "becoming one of the primary sources for stock and news images in the Berlin press."[52] At this time, Berlin was central to a new experimental form of photojournalism that

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[50] Ronald Stagg, *Serving Society's Needs: A History of Ryerson Polytechnic University* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1996), 1.
[51] Interview with Ryerson Image Centre's Collections Curator Peter Higdon, June 22, 2012.
[52] Richard Pitnick, "The Black Star Archive: Preserving History," *B&W Magazine* (June 19 2012), 34.

would "revolutionize 20th-century magazine publishing."[53] With the adoption of small format cameras, emphasis on candid images and experimentation in multi-photo layouts, European publications differed greatly from their American counterparts, which favoured one-shot coverage of events. Given the greater emphasis on the sequencing of multiple pictures, not only did the role of a photo-editor become more crucial to photojournalism, but the agencies—the institutions that mediated between photographers and publications—"became almost as important to the course of photojournalism as the photographer."[54] To the course of the development of American photojournalism, few agencies were as important as Black Star.[55]

Black Star became a success not only because of its stock of photographs available to publishers, but because of the international connections available through the agency's founders. When Mayer fled Germany in 1935, he brought with him both the 5,000 images that represented the "core of the Mauritius Picture Agency"[56] and his long-standing connections with freelance photographers, editors and publishers in Germany, garnered through his work with *Berliner Illustrirte Zeitung*, *Münchner Illustrierte Presse* and other European publications.[57] Fellow Black Star founder Kurt Safranski convinced Mayer to emigrate to the U.S. by expressing the need for a picture agency in the American magazine industry, and brought his experience working as a manager at the Ullstein publishing company as well as professional connections to England through the Hearst Corporation.[58] Black Star's third founder Kurt Kornfeld not only brought his European contacts, but also the agency's most lucrative account: *Life Magazine.* Black Star formed at a serendipitous moment when Henry Luce and Time Inc. began publishing their picture magazine, and they forged

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[53] Ibid.
[54] Rosenblum, 467.
[55] Cynthia Zoe Smith, *The History of Black Star Picture Agency: Life's European Connection* (Gainesville: Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, 1984), 1; Hendrik Neubauer, *Black Star: 60 Years of Photojournalism* (Koln: Konneman, 2002), p. 9.
[56] Pitnick, 36.
[57] Smith, 6; Neubauer, 14.
[58] Smith, 14.

a relationship early on that would last decades.[59] In this way, Black Star was the gateway through which European-style photojournalism entered the United States. Not only is the collection at Ryerson a history of photographs, but it is also a history of the business of publishing press photographs itself.

As picture magazines declined in the 1970s, and with the growth of television media during the '80s, Black Star began scaling back on news photography and began to concentrate on stock and commercial photography. With the digitization of the collection for use in sales, the print collection became an obsolete method of storing and transporting the images. Once agencies have virtual copies of file photographs, there is "no longer a need for the physical prints to take up valuable space in expensive office locations."[60] This was true in the case the Manhattan-based agency, and the print collection was sold in 2003 to an anonymous Canadian collector who "recognized the singular historic and cultural value" of the archive.[61] Donated to the Ryerson Image Centre (then the Mira Godard Study Centre) in 2005, the print collection came with a gift of $7-million to expand and update the Image Arts building, to bring storage vault conditions to museum standards, expand office and research space and add gallery space to support future exhibitions. Interestingly, the original sale of the collection did not include reproduction rights, which have been retained by Black Star and the respective photographers.

Fundamentally, the value of the Black Star Collection is in the history of the physical objects themselves and their contribution to the understanding of the role of photography in the press. The images still have commercial value, and Black Star maintains an interest in representing reproduction rights on behalf of the photographers or their estates. The physical prints are objects of value to be understood within their historical context. The movement of Black Star into an academic research

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[59] Pitnick, 36.
[60] Vestberg, 51.
[61] Pitnick, 36.

institution such as the RIC is part of an ongoing trend of material photojournalism undergoing a transformation from a commodity held by photo agencies to a scholarly resource held by cultural institutions.[62] As these collections' institutional contexts change, scholars' ability to reinterpret their significance changes dramatically. Ryerson University, with its long history of photographic scholarship, recognizes the value in these primary photographic objects as artefacts that contribute to "new insights in the history of photojournalism and the important historical role of photographic press agencies in the 20th century."[63]

The Ryerson Image Centre built upon the contextual material of the Black Star Collection with the acquisition of the archive of Werner Wolff, a professional photojournalist who worked with the agency for the great majority of his career. Whereas the Black Star Collection contains only file photographs held for use in sale, the Wolff archive fills the gap in understanding the individual photojournalist's working methodology. Like the founders of the agency, Wolff was critical to Black Star's development as he provided a conduit for fellow German photographers to immigrate to North America and become a part of the American press industry.[64] During the original turnover of the agency to digital, much of the contextual information—the records of sale, captions and ephemeral artefacts related to the print collection—was discarded as it no longer held value to the agency's business.[65] At the same time as this initial purge of material, Wolff's negatives, contact sheets, work prints and typed caption sheets from assignments working for Black Star were returned to the photographer's heirs. This material adds a contextual dimension not found in the print collection itself, allowing researchers new access to the breadth of photo shoots, the textual

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[62] A forthcoming paper on the Magnum press print collection moving to the Harry Ransom Center has been written by Alison Nordström and will be published in 2013 by University of Texas Press.
[63] Ryerson Image Centre Director Doina Popescu as quoted in Pitnick, 38.
[64] Interview with Ryerson Image Centre's Collections Curator Peter Higdon, June 22, 2012.
[65] Ephemera that survived the move to Ryerson is being processed as of June 2012.

materials related to images found in the Black Star Collection and insight into the personal life of a photojournalist.

In sum, the Ryerson Image Centre has a fundamental role in the care and interpretation of a large collection of photojournalism. Aside from being vast and diverse in their material, the RIC's collections are historically rich scholarly resources that require contextual material to grasp the meaning of their usage. Being the archive of an agency's file photographs, they only tell part of the story of the use of photography in the press. Ryerson is building this contextual material with the raw primary photographic artefacts from photographers such as Wolff, as well as the final publications in which many of the images appear. As a critically important acquisition, the entire run of *Life Magazine* was gifted to the Ryerson Image Centre in 2011. As the photo agency was the intermediary between these two spheres of photojournalism, uniting these related worlds allows historians to compare and contrast the functional objects that made photojournalism possible. These collections offer new opportunities for the reinterpretation of history by allowing new access to the artefacts used in constructing the printed page. In this way, "the Black Star archive offers great potential for the study of how political and cultural meaning is constructed through the editorial manipulation of photographic imagery in the press."[66] In order to grasp how an institution can communicate this contextual knowledge, it is necessary to examine the nature of the objects existing in the collections themselves. In doing so, it will be possible to identify object referent knowledge to be translated into catalogue terms.

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[66] Department Chair of Ryerson Image Arts Don Synder, as quoted in Pitnick, 34.

In order to analyze the framework for the communication of object-level information by an institution, a survey of the objects themselves is required. Even though photojournalism by its nature is a subject-orientated photographic practice, it is not enough to communicate merely image content. As researchers require a grasp of the breadth of photographic material contained within a collection, outlining some of the variations found in photojournalism objects can provide a starting point for identifying aspects of the object that require description. By considering the history and usage of the objects, and their relationship to the larger collection, three abstract concepts that require communication by an institution are authorship, function and relationship. Authorship is a concept that acknowledges the multiple creators involved in the production of each object. Function goes beyond understanding the materials themselves to identify how the objects were used in practical terms. Finally, relationship considers the connections that can be made between objects and quantifies this relationship using concepts of authorship and function.

Although the Black Star Collection numbers 291,249 photographic prints in total, the material is far from homogenous. Functionally, the objects that came to Ryerson are black and white file photographs—images held by the agency to be reproduced in print at a later date. 5,000 of these images are from Meyer's Mauritius agency, smuggled out of Germany during the move to New York City in 1935. The bulk of the collection—at around 250,000 prints—are fibre-based gelatin silver black and white photographs, size approximately 8x10-inches and, less commonly, 11x14-inches. These were the commodity of the picture agency: held in hanging files and manila envelopes to be retrieved for clients, shot through a halftone screen and subsequently mass-produced in magazines, newspapers or books. A small percentage of file photographs are Resin Coated (RC) prints, which were produced primarily in the 1980s.[67] A very small portion—approximately 50 in number—are

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[67] Pitnick, 40.

colour prints "reflecting the period before colour transparencies became the standard source of colour reproduction."[68] As colour photography was more widely adopted during the latter half of the twentieth century, Black Star amassed millions of slides which functioned in much the same way that the black and white print archive did, but in a much more compact manner. These slides were not a part of the original sale of the collection, and aside from the 50 or so colour prints, Ryerson holds the black and white prints from ranging in date from the 1910s to the mid-1980s.

The photographs held in the Black Star Collection need to be understood as objects that were created with a specific goal in mind and used for a specific purpose. Each photograph is a unique object, with a unique history made visible in the accumulated stamps, annotations and markings found on the verso of the print. Each time one of these photographs was retrieved, shipped to a publication, handled by countless printers, layout designers, caption writers and editors, it gained another physical trace of its usage. These markers not only bear witness to their history, but also contribute evidence for the authenticity of their cultural value.[69] With the purge of information related to the black and white archive at the time of original sale of the collection, the context for many of the prints in the Black Star Collection has been lost. This is most evident in the 60,000 prints with no attributable photographer. In the cases where a photographer is known, it is still unclear who made the print. Many Black Star photographers did not develop their own film, but either dropped off or couriered their film directly to the agency in order to get photographs to print as quickly as possible.[70] For all the levels of authorship within a single file photo, it nevertheless remains that these objects are in some way identifiable within the operations of a specific institution. Although the image itself can be understood in many contexts, the physical artefact has a specific understanding within a specific time. A scholar's understanding of an 8x10-inch gelatin silver print

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[68] Ibid.

[69] Vestberg, 52.

[70] Black Star photographer Dennis Brack describes this process in "The Black Star Collection Lives On" *The Digital Journalist* (December 2008), http://www. http://digitaljournalist.org/issue0812/the-black-star-collection-lives-on-.html

produced by the Black Star agency differs greatly from a virtually identical 8x10-inch gelatin silver print produced by a photographer. In this way, authorship is one of the fundamental aspects of the object that requires identification—a task more complex than simply identifying a photographer.

The issue of understanding materiality becomes more complicated with the survey of the Werner Wolff archive. Whereas the photographs held by Black Star were for the specific purpose of storing images, the Wolff archive contains all the material that made some of those photographs possible. Containing some 1,226 files of photographs—with their contents ranging anywhere from one photograph per file, to over 1,200 photographs per file[71]—the Wolff archive is representative of the output of a photographer working for Black Star. Furthermore, the archive holds invaluable ephemera related to assignments, such as Wolff's original typed captions and notes, correspondence, press passes and contracts. Given the variety of assignments, changes in technology and the plethora of equipment used by Wolff during his career, the photographs themselves vary from shoot to shoot. Both colour and black and white material are present in the archive, with a majority of images either gelatin silver or colour transparency—unsurprising given Black Star's own use of these materials for reproduction. The physical format of Wolff's film adheres to the most widely available formats of the mid-to-late-twentieth century: 35mm, 6x6cm medium format, 4x5-inch large format and even an example of 8x10-inch sheet film. Correspondingly, prints come in the form of standard sizes of 8x10-inches and 11x14-inches, as well as smaller trimmed prints from contact printed negatives.

The function of these materials requires identification, given that the context of production varied throughout Wolff's archive. In what way are prints created by Wolff different than those of the same image printed by Black Star? Photojournalism is produced within many contexts—on the printed page of a publication, one the gallery wall, stored within the archive of an agency—all of

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[71] Note: for full description of the Werner Wolff archive see: Sara Manco, *Finding Wolff: Intellectually Arranging the Werner Wolff Fonds at the Ryerson Image Centre* (MA Thesis: Ryerson, 2012).

which contribute to a different appreciation of the object itself. Each object had a specific purpose in bringing that image from the event being photographed to the public. Film negatives are the raw image material captured by the photographer in the field; however, they require development and printing in order to become usable positive images for reproduction. Contact sheets facilitated this for an entire roll of 36-exposure 35mm film or 12 exposures of 6x6cm medium format by placing the negatives in contact with photographic paper, exposing to light and processing. In illustrating the entire sequence of photographs in analogue photography, the contact sheet was "so ubiquitous as to seem an inevitable and inextricable part of the process of photographing … a record of one's shooting, a tool for editing, and an index to an archive of negatives."[72] Marked in grease pencil for image selection, sequencing, cropping and retouching, the contact sheet affords a view into the working methods of photographers, editors and agencies. More than simply a positive view of a roll of negatives, the contact sheet bears the physical trace of each context it was made in: a critical aspect of photojournalism research.

In the same way that an 8x10-inch print held by a photo agency differs in understanding from a print from the same image made by a photographer, the working materials of an image need to be placed within the context of their functional role. Contact sheets offer one of the prime examples of objects that functioned differently within each sphere of publishing images, but this example can be taken further with the use of work prints and copy photographs. The final photograph that went to print required a number of remedial steps before publication. An enlargement provided a detailed view of an image and allowed for finer control of tonality, cropping and, in the case of some images, manual retouching using ink and whitewash. In the case of agencies that required multiple copies of highly sought after photographs, multiple instances of negatives, slides and prints were made in order to meet high demand. All of these types of objects have a

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[72] Lubben, 9.

specific place in history and as such require identification by an institution if researchers are to understand the function of certain materials.

Given the multiple instances of a single image, as well as the multiple physical forms a single image can take, the relationship between various press photographic objects requires a system of quantification. Relating objects within a collection, or between collections in a single institution, is a complicated matter, but of the utmost importance if researchers are to understand the context of the object in the overall collection. The most obvious relationship between objects would be objects of the same image. If a negative, contact sheet, print, file photo and publication all have an instance of the same image it can help to bring together contextual material for the study of that one image. Only by comparing objects can a researcher draw conclusions on the transformation of photographs for illustrating the press.

Objects of the same images may not readily be accessible, whether split within the collection itself or spread across several collections, as is the case at Ryerson. Take, for example, a single assignment by Werner Wolff in 1948 to document the 88th birthday of American folk painter Grandma Moses. In file 2009.0676 of the Wolff archive there are a total of 96 photographic images[73] in the form of six strips of 6x6cm medium format gelatin silver negatives, four strips of 35mm gelatin silver negatives, one 4x5-inch black and white gelatin silver negative, six medium format contact sheets, two 35mm contact sheets, one 4x5-inch contact print and a hand typed sheet of captions. In the Black Star Collection, there are 28 file photographs from the negatives found in Wolff's archive. In addition to these photographic materials, the Ryerson Image Centre also has the October 25, 1948 issue of *Life Magazine* in which three of Wolff's photographs from this assignment can be found on pages 76 and 77 (figure 3).

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[73] At Ryerson, each frame on a roll of negatives is considered an "item."

Figure 1: AG02.2009.0676:0059-050
120 Format Gelatin Silver Negative
12.6 x 6.2 cm
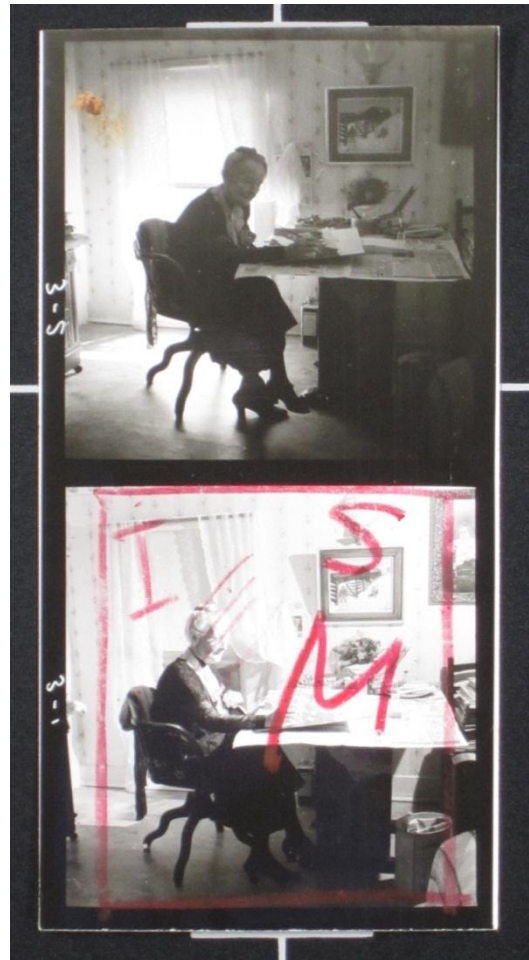© The Estate of Alice E. Wolff

Figure 2: AG02.2009.0676:048
Gelatin Silver Contact Print
12.65 x 6.2 cm
© The Estate of Alice E. Wolff

Given the relevance of all of this material in understanding the working method of Wolff, the selection process for file photographs by Black Star and the editorial decisions of *Life* magazine, these objects have an interwoven history that the historian can analyze. Take, for example, the lead photograph featured in *Life Magazine* for the story "Grandma Moses has a Birthday."[74] In the magazine the image is produced in full colour, and yet the corresponding negative (Figure 4:

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[74] See figure 3 on previous page for layout.

2009.0676:042), contact print (Figure 5: 2009.0676:064) and file photo (Figure 6: BS.2005.0114:699) are all black and white. Was the image originally in colour? Was a black and white image colourized for the printed page? Why did Black Star choose to store the image in black and white? These are questions that can be answered, but only if the breadth of this material is brought together and comparatively analyzed by a researcher. In this way, relating objects across collections can increase accessibility for researchers and answer the questions raised by the seeming incongruity of these objects.

Figure 3: "Grandma Moses has a Birthday," *LIFE Magazine*, October 25, 1948, p. 76-77.

Figure 5: AG02.2009.0676:042
Gelatin Silver Negative
13.1 x 9.75 cm
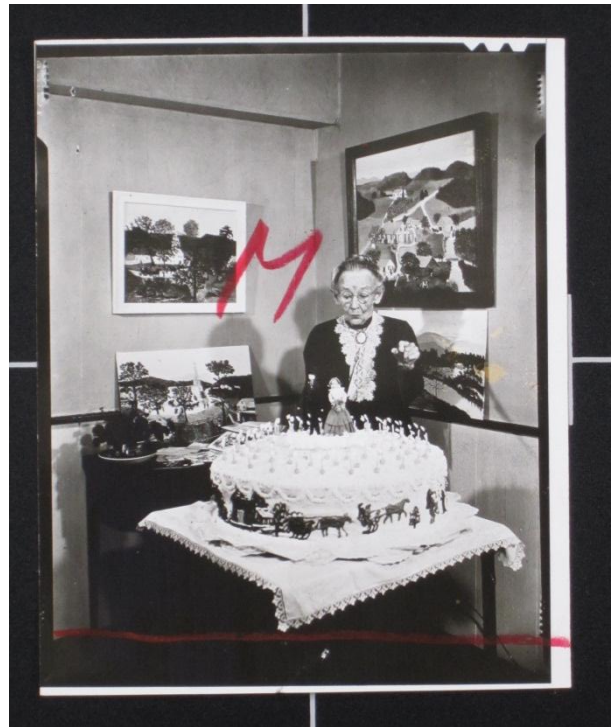**© The Estate of Alice E. Wolff**

Figure 4: AG02.2009.0676:064
Gelatin Silver Print
12.7 x 10.3 cm
© The Estate of Alice E. Wolff

Figure 6: BS.2005.0114:699
Gelatin Silver Print
19.3 x 20.7 cm
© The Estate of Alice E. Wolff

In conclusion, objects found in photojournalism collections are complex, numerous and difficult to decipher. However, there are three questions that can be asked about each object, which, when answered, can give researchers great insight into the nature of the collection. These are: "Who made this?" "What was it used for?" and, "How does it relate to the rest of the collection?" To answer these questions an institution must communicate the authorship of an object, the function of an object and the relationship it has to other relevant objects in the collection. The framework from which this task can be analyzed is within the context of cataloguing and how digital databases are forging new methods of photographic description.

Section 2: Cataloguing Aspects of Material Press Photography

Access and the Digital Database: a Means of Connecting Researchers and Objects

Knowing the needs of object-based researchers and recognizing the types of materials residing in a collection necessitates a study of how institutions can provide meaningful access to collections of photojournalism. The increasing complexity of digital database systems and new standards of descriptions can provide the access points and arrangement necessary to meaningfully identify and relate photographs in a collection. However, unlike more standardized metadata structures such as those found in library systems, the description of photography remains idiosyncratic from institution to institution, "lacking uniformity and conformity to any standard."[75] Insofar as institutions maintain custom database structures, there is an opportunity to adapt standards already in place to better suit the transcription of knowledge in press photography collections. Given the relative infancy of institutions processing large collections of photojournalism, it is critical that issues of descriptive standards are addressed early, so as to provide a solid foundation for future development.

The catalogue record of museum objects has undergone a major transformation with the advent of digital databases. What were once static entries in card catalogues or ledger books have become dynamic, malleable and complex records of knowledge. Far from merely a record of an object's existence within a collection, a digital database can contain a plethora of contextual knowledge related to the object. In the age of digital record keeping, "to preserve the artefact is to preserve the information associated with it."[76] In collections of photography, the level of detail can be expansive, given the various layers of meaning, historical usage and social contexts: "photographs may be stable objects, but they have unstable meanings, shaped by their makers and their subjects,

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[75] Christine L Sundt, 67; also reiterated in: Pugh, M. J. *Providing Reference Services for Archives and Manuscripts.* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005).

[76] Peter S. Graham, "Long-Term Intellectual Preservation" in *Going Digital: Strategies for Access, Preservation and Conversion of Collections to a Digital Format,* Edited by Donald L. DeWitt (New York: Haworth, 1998), 81.

their immediate audiences and their subsequent viewers."[77] Substantial effort has been undertaken to create thoroughgoing vocabularies for the identification and recording of image content in both photography and other visual culture, such as the Getty's Art and Architecture Thesaurus,[78] Thesaurus of Geographic Names,[79] the Union List of Artist Names,[80] the Library of Congress' Thesaurus for Graphic Materials[81] and Iconclass.[82] These are vital resources being developed for the access of photography by its subject matter, but there is "no consistent standard by which different institutions transfer information about the original physical object to the online record associated with the digitized image."[83] In order to make such aspects of a photograph intelligible, it must be translated and made available through an institution's catalogue. Because of the complexity of this kind of information in photojournalism, metadata standards are of the utmost importance if information is to be "understandable for a designated community over an indefinite period of time."[84]

Given that the digital database is the main means for accessing and recording object relational data, it is logical to survey the structural standards already in place. Photographic authorship, object function and relationships between objects are not concepts that are abstract enough to require a novel methodology of cataloguing. Instead, existing cataloguing fields, with the help of a controlled vocabulary for description, can provide the means of recording object-referent data.

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[77] Sandweiss, 202.
[78] http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/aat/index.html
[79] http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/tgn/index.html
[80] http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/ulan/index.html
[81] http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/tgm1/
[82] http://www.iconclass.org/
[83] Sandweiss, 198.
[84] Benoit Habert & Claude Huc, "Building Together Digital Archives for Research in Social Sciences and Humanities" *Social Science Information* (49:3), 426.

In 2009, the Getty Research Institute published the *Categories for the Description of Works of Art* (CDWA), a metadata standard for describing "works of art, architecture, other material culture, groups, collections of work, and related images."[85] Comprised of 532 categories and subcategories, CDWA is an exhaustive system of description for any visual collection. There are thirteen "core" categories, which are covered in greater depth in *Cataloguing Cultural Objects*, the standards used at Ryerson for item-level description. An institution can adopt as much or as little of CDWA as is relevant to its collection, modelling field and sub-field structure after categories and sub-categories. CDWA is also highly adaptable given its ability to be mapped to other metadata standards, such as the Library of Congress' Machine Readable Cataloguing (MARC)/Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules (AACR2), or the Visual Resource Association (VRA 4.0 XML) cataloguing standard.[86] In the context of describing photojournalism objects, authorship, function and relationship can be understood through the categories "Creation," "Object/Work" and "Related Works." Through the use of these categories, using a specific language to describe aspects of photojournalism objects, object-referent knowledge can be recorded.

The critical aspect of recording photojournalism materiality is the use of a controlled vocabulary to quantify and describe the nature of the objects being recorded. Where the categories pertaining to photographic description exist, the language of description by and large does not. The "data values" (words used in description) and "data content" (formatting of words)[87] for photojournalism need to be developed by institutions. Using CDWA categories as a starting point,

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[85] "Introduction," *Categories for the Description of Works of Art*,
http://www.getty.edu/research/publications/electronic_publications/cdwa/introduction.html
[86] For more see: "Metadata Standards Crosswalk," *Categories for the Description of Works of Art,*
http://www.getty.edu/research/publications/electronic_publications/intrometadata/crosswalks.html
[87] Baca, *Cataloguing Cultural Objects,* xi.

the following examples provide a starting point for developing this language by confronting the complex nature of photojournalism objects.

Authorship: Dealing with Multiple Creators

In the case of most photojournalism material, there are multiple individuals who are responsible for the creation of the object itself. Although the primary author of any photograph is the photographer themselves, there are printers, manual retouching artists and editors who all contribute to the final product. CDWA has devised the category "creation" in order to record the persons or groups involved in the design, execution or production of an object. The authors recognize the complexity of any artistic process involving multiple individuals and state that "if appropriate, record individuals and corporate bodies even if they are not artists per se."[88] In the case of a file photo from the Black Star Collection, this would include the photographer as well as the corporate body. In order to differentiate between the role each creator had, a qualifying term should be utilized. In this instance, it would be "photographer" for Wolff, and "printer" for the unknown printer Black Star employed to create the file photo. Being that technical staff in most cases remain anonymous, a generic term ought to be devised in order to express the corporate entity of Black Star, while maintaining a separate authority from the photographer. In cataloguing terms this would appear within the database as:

Creation: Photographer: Wolff, Werner ; **Printer:** Black Star

This terminology acknowledges the complex issue of photographic authorship, as well as separates roles involved in the creation of the specific object being described. In the case of a tearsheet from a publication, the photographer, layout designer, writer and editor could all

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[88] "4.1: Creator description," *Categories for the Description of Works of Art,*
http://www.getty.edu/research/publications/electronic_publications/cdwa/14creation.html

potentially be acknowledged within the context of "creator," given the influence of each on the appearance of the image on the final page. Even if none of these roles can be quantified with an individual's name, inputting these roles is valuable nonetheless. Databases can change as new discoveries are made, and having the terminology and field structure in place allows this information to be amended easily and succinctly.

Two aspects of the creation of photojournalism objects require a vocabulary: creators and creator titles. In a relational database structure, maintaining authority records for artist names strengthens end-user browsing capabilities in instances where multiple works by a single author are present in a collection. Maintaining a list of names to link to multiple records goes beyond individual names but can include group and corporate names. The anonymous technical staffs performing various functions in the production of photojournalism objects are nonetheless associated with a corporate body, such as a photo agency or publication. Identifying these separate roles maintains an object-orientated description of photojournalism by acknowledging the creation of an object as involving multiple individuals.

Function: Understanding Photographic Object Usage

Insofar as a photographic image required multiple physical manifestations to facilitate dissemination and reproduction, photojournalism's objects have a distinct functional role to be expressed in cataloguing terms. Identifying only the material used in making the photograph does not communicate the object's intended purpose. CDWA's category "Object/Work" provides the necessary data structure to express this information by allowing for a vocabulary to be implemented in describing the work "type." "Object/Work" requires at least two fields: one being an indication of the cataloguing level being described (a collection, file, item or part) as well as a repeatable field for "Type," which uses terms "referring to the work's physical form, function, or media."[89] For the sake of specificity, objects can have multiple terms for work type. In this way, describing the object can go from the general (say, "photograph"), to the specific "gelatin silver print," to the function "Photographer's Contact Sheet."

Expressing the function of a photograph is in essence describing the usage of the object within a historical context. Terms such as "contact sheet" or "file photograph" require a further delineation between the contexts of creation. Photographs that are physically identical may have been used for different purposes, and hence require a further term to differentiate them. In a sense, this is an extension of describing an object's authorship as discussed above. Unlike authorship—which aims to name the specific photographer, agency or publication—work-type can utilize generic terms.[90] For an object such as Werner Wolff's portrait of Grandma Moses held by the Black Star Agency (Figure 6:) the catalogue entry may appear as such:

Catalogue Level: Item ; **Work Type:** Photograph / Gelatin Silver Print / Agency File Photograph.

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[89] "1.2: Object/Work Type" *Categories for the Description of Works of Art*, http://www.getty.edu/research/publications/electronic_publications/cdwa/1object.html#Objectwork-Type
[90] See Figure 7.

Variations of a Single Image		
Photographer's	Agency	Publication
Negative	Copy Negative	Copy Negative
Contact Sheet	Contact Sheet	Contact Sheet
Proof Print	File Photograph	File Photograph
Exhibition Print	Copy Print	Copy Print
Tearsheet	Wire Transfer Photograph	Wire Transfer Photograph
Ephemera		Separation Transparency

Figure 7. Functional Terminology

This simple table provides a basic conception of developing a terminology for types of photojournalism objects. Terms listed under the three generic spheres of production and a work-type vocabulary could be derived by combining the relevant author with a functional term. Hence, "Agency Contact Sheet" differs in meaning and understanding from "Photographer's Contact Sheet"; "Agency File Photograph" differs in meaning and understanding from "Publication File Photograph"; and so forth.

Similar to authorial roles, a functional terminology requires a controlled vocabulary in order to link multiple objects of the same type and ensure a proper method of describing objects. Building a vocabulary such as this requires time and effort by institutions to identify the variations found in collections, agree upon terms for these types of objects and develop a proper cataloguing vocabulary. Developing such a terminology would require a detailed survey of multiple collections, and the involvement of information professionals in varying institutions dealing with these types of material. However, the benefit of developing such a terminology is that the efficiency of research can increase, given the improved understanding of a collection's objects without the need to physically handle or view each object.

Relationship

The final, and in practical terms, most complex aspect of describing photojournalism objects, is describing relationships between objects both within, and across, collections. Although straightforward in the practice of linking catalogue records within a relational database, helping to increase researchers' grasp of the scope of a collection requires a quantification of those relationships. In CDWA, the category "Related Works" suggests that "it is important to record works that have a direct relationship to the work … being catalogued, particularly when the relationship may not be otherwise apparent from other categories."[91] This is most obvious in objects that feature the same image: such as those found within a negative, on a contact sheet and as a print. Connecting records for each object is important in the case of objects that are separated physically within the institution, but can also provide a link between related objects that do not share a proper title. Unlike art photographs, press photographs rarely have a conventional "title" and it therefore remains important to alert researchers to related objects that may not be produced through a title, author, or subject search alone.

Using the vocabulary of terms developed for describing function, relationships can be quantified within the "related works" field with a phrase such as "For X see Y" where X is the type of related object and Y is the link expressed as the accession number. This type of documentation requires a reciprocal relationship, meaning one link requires two different terms. Using the Werner Wolff photographs of Mother Moses, if we wanted to connect the negatives (Figure 1) to the contact sheet (Figure 2) the negatives would require the entry:

Related Works: For Photographer's Contact Sheet See: AG02.2008.0676:048

Whereas the catalogue record for the contact sheet would require the entry:

Related Works: For Photographer's Negatives See: AG02.2008.0676:049-050

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[91] "20.0: Related Works," *Categories for the Description of Works of Art,*
http://www.getty.edu/research/publications/electronic_publications/cdwa/21related.html

Connecting records for objects of the same image is a logical first step in recording relationships between objects, but the task can potentially be extended to objects of the same shoot or event. This level of complexity requires a substantial commitment by information professionals working in photojournalism collections, and this level of cataloguing may only be applied to objects deemed valuable enough. However, for the ease of the end-user, as well as providing researchers a clear understanding of the scope of a single image, event or shoot, it can be invaluable to invest the time to establish these relationships within a database.

Section 3: Conclusions

The state of photojournalism research is directly associated with the accessibility of primary photojournalism materials. Research is increasingly utilizing comparative analysis to discover new aspects of the history of the medium, and institutions need to adapt to meet these needs. As analogue photography is abandoned as a professional practice, material collections are shed by photographic agencies, publications and photographers. An increasing number of these collections are entering cultural institutions and require proper preservation, documentation and interpretation. Institutions have a responsibility to support research and develop strategies for providing access to their collections. Preservation is not limited to the physical objects, but the historical context associated with them. Research aids in this goal by discovering this history, and thus supporting these activities should be a concern of any institution and not just those that hold photojournalism. In addition to digitization, exhibition and providing physical access to the collection, developing thorough catalogue records are a fundamental way of increasing intellectual access to collection objects. With the increasing complexity and malleability of digital databases, standards already in place can be adapted to suit the needs of the institution. As photojournalism objects require an object-level interpretation, cataloguing should reflect the complex layers of meaning found within the collection. Three fundamental object-orientated concepts can be identified: authorship, function and relationship. Researchers and institutions must work collectively to understand photojournalism—its makers, its uses and its connection to modern visual culture. The imperative is to begin considering these issues now, in the early stages of photojournalism's reinterpretation as an important field of scholarly pursuit, in order to lay the foundations for future understanding.

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