

# PRACTICES OF MANIPULATION BY PROFESSIONAL PHOTOJOURNALISTS

by

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(Under the Direction of Leara Rhodes)

## ABSTRACT

In 2002 the three awards given to Patrick Schneider, of *The Charlotte Observer*, in a photography contest by the National Press Photographers Association were revoked. Contest officials ruled that the editorial content of photos had been altered when portions of the photographs had been darkened digitally (“Awards taken away,” 2003). During the days of the darkroom, photographers were allowed to heavily dodge and burn photographs, but it appears that standards have changed with digital technology. The main question being addressed is: Have photojournalists with experience working for American newspapers become more cautious to preserve the content of a photograph with new digital technology than they were in the darkroom, in terms of the steps they take to prepare images for publication?

INDEX WORDS: Photojournalism, Digital Press Photography, Digital Manipulation, Darkroom Press Photography

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## DEDICATION

I would like to thank my family and friends for all of their love and support.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

In 2002, the three awards given to Patrick Schneider of *The Charlotte Observer* in a photography contest sponsored by the National Press Photographers Association were revoked. Contest officials ruled that the editorial content of the photos had been altered when portions of the photographs had been darkened digitally. (“Awards taken away,” 2003) In the case of Schneider’s photographs, some of the images had been altered to the point where no backgrounds were present. In a world where technology is constantly changing, photojournalists around the country struggle to answer the question of how much a photograph can be altered and still be seen as a truthful representation. Though most photojournalists agree that altering the content of a photograph is rarely acceptable, Schneider is not the only photographer whose work has been called into question. On April 1, 2003, the *Los Angeles Times* fired photographer Brian Walski. Walski, who was covering the war in Iraq, made an image by combining two images together (Irby, 2003).

The choices photojournalists make reflect more than their personal values. Examining the professional habits of photojournalists is important because the integrity of all American newspapers has been called into question based on the actions of a select few. Incidents of photographers misrepresenting the events that they are covering cause the credibility of the photojournalism profession to suffer (Chapnick, 1994). The trust between the media and the public always remains an issue and incidents, like the ones mentioned, continue to erode any trust the public has in the media (Chapnick, 1994).

The question of how much a photograph can be altered in an ethical manner has crossed the minds of many photojournalists working at newspapers across the country,

especially in an age when digital computer programs replace darkroom procedures making manipulation easier. The question is important because the integrity of a newspaper rides on accurate and truthful accounts of documenting history (Chapnick, 1994). The question has prompted many newspapers to establish various policies and procedures in the form of a code of ethics to ensure the quality of work.

Photojournalists have admitted in this study that during the days of film, techniques such as dodging and burning photographs, lightening or darkening areas of photographs, were commonly practiced. Those developing film in the darkroom did not think twice about burning in an image to get the audiences' eyes to go to a specific area of the photograph. However, photojournalists working in the industry have grown more cautious with the new technology than they were in the past, especially in light of the public scrutiny when a photo has been altered. Howard Chapnick, a photojournalist and author, says, "This new technology has prompted concern in the photojournalistic community that we are at the frontier of widespread abuse that will deeply affect the credibility of journalistic photography" (Chapnick, 1994). Therefore, photojournalists might be doing a better job of representing the truth than the public is even aware because of the increasing concern within the photojournalism profession.

Therefore, the questions of this research are:

R1: Have photojournalists with experience working for American newspapers become more cautious to preserve the content of a photograph with new digital technology than they were in the darkroom, in terms of the steps they take to prepare images for publication?

R2: Has the switch to digital technology impacted the way photojournalists think contests should be judged?

R3: Are photojournalists taking the time to discuss levels of acceptable manipulation at their newspapers?

Kenneth F. Irby, visual journalism leader for The Poynter Institute, says that protecting the creditability of images in newspapers requires discussion about photojournalism practices (Irby, 2003). This project seeks to move the profession one step closer towards that goal.

The research first examines the ideas of John Stuart Mill about the ethical theory, utilitarianism, to gain a perspective of moral decisions as they apply to photojournalism. John Stuart Mill suggests that the purpose of morality is to guide people into actions that produce a better world, or to do those things that will best benefit humanity. Mill's theory can be directly related to ethical policies and practices used by photojournalists. Photojournalists have a responsibility to humanity and their community to accurately document situations in their communities so the public can make informed choices about the world (Kobré, 2000). The public is purchasing the product expecting that efforts have been made to show the truth. Photojournalists should accurately document society and tell the truth about events and situations in order to provide a contribution to humanity and to maintain readership. The concept of utilitarianism can be further explained by examining the concept of truth analyzed by Sissela Bok. In her book, *Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life*, Bok examines the concept of truth by looking at what the concept means, if truth can be obtained and the role truth has on various professions.

The concepts can be directly applied to understanding how photojournalists go about making ethical decisions.

Subsequently, the research provides an examination of photojournalism history as it relates to manipulation techniques. The literature review about photojournalism practices and history will examine both work in the darkroom and digitally. It is important to understand photojournalism techniques in the darkroom, so the techniques can be directly compared to the techniques used with digital technology. Examples of early manipulation help illustrate how the role of photography has evolved.

Next the researcher, using the constant comparative technique, asked questions of photojournalist working at American newspapers and people photographing for newswire services, who have had experience with both digital and film photography. The constant comparative technique allowed the researcher to examine cases about the operational practices of photojournalist. The data was analyzed to gain an insight into how digital photography has impacted the profession. Figures were compiled to see the percentages of people who have manipulated images in the darkroom and to see what concerns exist within the profession. The combination of information should provide a better understanding of the manipulation practices that have been deemed acceptable among the profession at different points in history.

#### Glossary of Key Terms as Used in this Study:

- **Burning**-making an area of a picture darker than it would be with a single exposure of the camera
- **Cropping**-changing the borders of an image, usually to fit the space in a newspaper or to create a desired impact

- **Cloning**-using a tool in Photoshop™ to copy pixels and put them on a new part of the image, usually where there are dust spots. However, the tool can be used to eliminate content from a photograph.
- **Color Balance**-a tool in Photoshop™ used to fix imperfect color balance in the image.
- **Contrast and Brightness**-a tool in Photoshop™ that adjusts the range between light and dark tones in the image and the brightness tool adjusts the shades in the image.
- **Curves**-allows manipulation of the amount of the primary colors in an image in Photoshop™
- **Darkroom**- the area where film is processed chemically and prints are made.
- **Despeckle**-a tool in Photoshop™ that helps mask dust spots in an image
- **Digital Darkroom**-the computer program, such as Photoshop™, that has tools to replace those previously used in the darkroom.
- **Dodging**-making an area of a picture lighter than it would be with a single exposure of the camera.
- **Hand of God Technique**- using tools to dodge and burn in the area around the print to make the audience focus on a specific aspect of a picture first.
- **Healing Brush**-clones pixels in Photoshop™, so they match the background.
- **History Brush**-restores an image from one saved in Photoshop™
- **Hue and Saturation**-a tool in Photoshop™ that can change how colors look in an image.

- **Layers**-keeps track of different changes that are made to an image in Photoshop™
- **Levels**-used to adjust the contrast of primary colors of the image in Photoshop™
- **Manipulation**-any type of alteration that is made to a raw digital file or used to alter the results of what was captured on a film frame.
- **Mood**- the feeling the audience perceives a photograph to portray
- **Photojournalist**- an individual who has experience working as a photographer or photo editor at an American newspaper and those working for newswire services that provide images to newspapers.
- **Photo illustration**- any image where the content of the photograph has been altered.
- **Sharpening and Unsharp mask**- tools in Photoshop™ that help increase the sharpness of an image
- **Sizing**-adjusting the size of the image

## CHAPTER 2

### UTILITARIANISM AND TRUTH: A LOOK AT THE THEORY

#### How Utilitarianism Applies to Photojournalism:

The theory of utilitarianism can be directly applied to the profession of photojournalism. First, utilitarianism is an ethical philosophy expanded upon by John Stuart Mill. He says that morality guides people to do things that best benefit humanity. Mill says, that right and wrong can be measured when laws are applied to a specific situation and then applied in general (Schneewind, 1965). Therefore, the theory of utilitarianism is about doing what will best benefit humanity. Mill says, “The creed which accepts as the foundation of moral utility, or the Greatest-happiness Principle, holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness” (Schneewind, 1965). This statement is the main idea of the theory. In this respect Mill was concerned with making the world a better place, such as by truth telling. If people do not know the truth about problems then they cannot be changed.

The theory can be applied to photojournalism in the following ways. Newspapers constantly consider the costs of benefiting society over how someone will feel about having his or her story published in the newspaper. Newspapers make ethical policies to set standard practices based on theories about ethics. Kenneth Kobre, author of *Photojournalism: The professionals' approach*, says that photojournalists use the frameworks of ethical theories to make ethical decisions every day. Kobre says one of the frameworks photojournalists use is the utilitarian principle. “The utilitarian position recognizes that photojournalism provides information critical to a democratic society.

Photography might show the horrors of war, the tragedy of an accident, or the hardship of poverty. Therefore, it is right to take and publish pictures” (Kobré, 2000). Kobré says taking such pictures could promote change within society. Since presenting people with images helps people make informed decisions about the world around them, it is important to present people with photographs that accurately represent situations.

People have to have accurate information in order for a democracy to work because accurate information allows people to hold leaders accountable for their actions. It is important for photojournalists to tell the truth. The fact that journalists are in the business of telling the truth to the community, gives photojournalists a responsibility to accurately document the world around them. Altering images digitally or in a darkroom does not always allow the public to view a true representation of a situation. Therefore, altering the content images cannot provide a benefit to humanity or allow the public to see the truth. Altering an image could be better for society, only if it more accurately represents the situation being depicted than what the photographer was able to capture. Some might argue that it is better for people not to know the truth because then people would not be exposed to imperfections within society. American media are often criticized for the harsh realities they show, but if the American media were taken away the world could be in trouble if no one stepped in and showed corruption or wrong doings in society. Telling the truth holds people accountable for their actions.

According to Henry R. West in *An introduction to Mill's utilitarian ethics*, utilitarianism is about more than just distinguishing between right and wrong or between the truth and a lie (West, 2004). West's work says that lying is wrong because of the consequences associated with it. These ideas could be examined in many different



professions. The consequences of lying to readers in the case of photojournalism would be the loss of credibility among readers and a disservice to the community by not documenting an accurate account of a situation. Arthur Rothstein, in his book *Photojournalism*, discusses ethics in terms of an editor's responsibility to publish pictures. Rothstein says, "Ethics is made up of three things common to everyone: One is education, another is sensibility, and the third is morality. Ethics is the kind of belief and principle that directs one's behavior and sets a pattern for judging the behavior of others" (Rothstein, 1979). He is saying that editors use ethical theories as tools to decide what photographs will appear in a newspaper.

Mill recognizes within his work that many people are opposed to the concept of utilitarianism. Mill says, "The remainder of the stock arguments against utilitarianism mostly consist in laying to its charge the common infirmities of human nature, and the general difficulties which embarrass conscientious persons in shaping their course through life" (Schneewind, 1965). Mill is saying that most people tend to obey rules to avoid the embarrassment of having not done so. In the case of photojournalism, not following the rules of accurately representing a situation, could result in a photographer being fired, such as Brian Walski of the *Los Angeles Times*, or having an award revoked, such as Patrick Schneider of *The Charlotte Observer*. However, many photographers in the study pointed out the fact that Schneider was not the only photographer to burn in an image, and many photographers say he was singled out and used as an example. When one photographer makes a mistake, it embarrasses the entire profession, and the entire profession has to work to regain public trust.

Mill points out there are different interpretations of the theory. However, Mill is convinced that people should continue to do what will best benefit humanity no matter what the sacrifice and that human sacrifice has been a strong virtue of man. In his work Mill says, “Though it is only in a very imperfect state of the world’s arrangements that anyone can best serve the happiness of others by the absolute sacrifice of his own, yet, so long as the world is in that imperfect state, I fully acknowledge that the readiness to make such a sacrifice is the highest virtue which can be found in man” (Smith & Sosa, 1969). In photojournalism many photographers risk their lives to cover conflicts such as war. They sacrifice their own life for the public good of giving other people information.

The work, *Utilitarianism for and against*, helps define some basic terms associated with the theory. The work begins by defining the difference between act-utilitarianism and rule-utilitarianism. “Act-utilitarianism is the view that the rightness or wrongness of an action is to be judged by the consequences, good or bad, of the action itself. Rule-utilitarianism is the view that the rightness or wrongness of action is to be judged by the goodness or badness of the consequences of a rule that everyone should perform the action in like circumstances” (Smart, 1973). In the case of photojournalism, it is not whether or not the photographer gets caught manipulating images, but whether the photographers are benefiting humanity by accurately documenting society.

The different ideals allow utilitarians to debate over the disagreement between average happiness versus total happiness. Some utilitarians think average happiness in humans should be maximized, while others believe total happiness should be maximized (Smart, 1973). These concepts contribute to the understanding behind the theory about why people make choices for a better the world. If photojournalists are being more

cautious and establishing new policies to help document situations accurately, as determined by this study, then they are making the world better by giving readers an accurate view of a situation for the public good.

Smart helps define some other terms associated with the theory. For example, the book helps to explain the rightness and wrongness of actions concept that is embedded within the theory. The rightness or wrongness concept basically says that humans tend to make the choices that best benefit humanity. (Smart, 1973). However, not all people do. Negative utilitarianism can be seen as a slightly different view of utilitarianism. Negative utilitarianism says that the theory should be less concerned with maximizing happiness and more about limiting the amount of suffering (Smart, 1973). Sir Karl Popper founded the negative utilitarianism concept. For example, accurately documenting a poverty-stricken area could prompt people in the community to do something to promote changes to benefit those suffering.

*Individual Conduct and Social Norms* by Rolf. E. Sartorius, helps define another term associated with utilitarianism. Sartorius says the Utilitarian Generalization is “Act x is right if and only if it is a kind of act everyone’s doing which under similar circumstances would have consequences at least as good as the consequences of everyone’s performing any alternative act” (Sartorius, 1975). Basically, if all photographers are truthfully portraying situations than images will have a greater believability because credibility has been built up by readers who can then accept a newspaper as containing truthful images.

### Bok's Concept of Truth As Applied to Photojournalism:

Sissela Bok's book, *Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life*, examines the concept of truth. Throughout her book, Bok compares the concepts of truth and utilitarianism. Bok says, "For utilitarians, an act is more or less justifiable according to the goodness or badness of its consequences" (Bok, 1978). She questions how utilitarians understand the concept of truth and how it fits into the theory. She says, "Utilitarianism simply requires an evaluation of courses of action, be they deceptive or not" (Bok, 1978). In the utilitarianism theory, some scholars might argue that the best benefit to humanity could be to not tell the truth. However, in the profession of photojournalism it is the practice of telling the truth that best benefits humanity because, while the truth may not always be pleasant, citizens need to be able to draw accurate conclusions about the world in which they live to make educated decisions about their world (Kobré, 2000). According to Bok, Bentham, an early founder of utilitarianism, says that most of the time lies have unhelpful results.

Bok's book helps to explain the concept of truth. The concept of truth can be applied to understanding how photojournalists go about making ethical decisions. Bok studies the concept of truth by asking if the "whole truth" can ever be obtained. She says, "The whole truth is out of reach" (Bok, 1978). The comment can be valuable to the photojournalism profession. For example, when a photojournalist covers an event, the audience is seeing the photographer's interpretation of that event. This comes from what pictures the photojournalists chooses to make, the angles they choose to use when taking pictures, the photographer's experience in photographing similar situations and, ultimately, which photograph is picked for publication in the newspaper to represent the

event. The photograph a photographer chooses to use could change the mood of how the audience looks at an event. Many photojournalism policies at newspapers are based on ethical standards that require photojournalists to accurately represent the situation that they are covering, but those policies still leave room for interpretation. Bok points out that, “The moral question of whether you are lying or not is not settled by establishing the truth or falsity of what you say. In order to settle this question, we must know whether you intend your statement to mislead” (Bok, 1978). In the photojournalism profession, a photographer could mislead readers by the photos he or she selects to run in the newspaper or by deliberately manipulating an image for readers. Bok defines her idea of truth as being any statement that is not intended to deceive people. She illustrates this concept by examining what the courts mean by the “whole truth.” She says something is not the truth if it is an “intentional manipulation of information.” For example, when an entire background is darkened and information of a crowd is taken from a background then information was intentionally taken from a photograph, which means the photographer intentionally misguided the readers. Bok continues to say, “When we undertake to deceive others intentionally, we communicate messages meant to mislead them, meant to make them believe what we ourselves do not believe. We can do so through gesture, through disguise, by means of action or in action, even through silence” (Bok, 1978). Readers could be misinformed when not told information, as well. What a photojournalist did not show readers could be as important as what he or she did show. Bok further discusses the issue of deception. When photojournalists manipulate images, in a way that alters the content of a photograph, they have deceived readers.

Bok continues her discussion by looking at the topics of “truthfulness, deceit and trust.” Bok says, “There must be a minimal degree of trust in communication for language and action to be more than stabs in the dark. This is why some level of truthfulness has always been seen as essential to human society, no matter how deficient the observance of other moral principles.” There has to be a level of trust in the media in order for newspapers to maintain readership. A similar trust has to be established in the images people see in newspapers, or people would not believe any of the pictures they see. This is why the issues of manipulating a photograph are so important. If photographers keep lying to readers in the photographs, people will stop trusting news photographs. Bok says, “While we know the risks of lying, and would prefer a world where others abstain from it, we know also that there are times when it would be helpful, perhaps even necessary, if we ourselves could deceive with impunity” (Bok, 1978). For example, one photojournalist said in an interview for this study that he thought some manipulation was acceptable. He thought, even though some photojournalists would disagree, that it would be acceptable to remove a blemish from a teenagers’ nose to avoid embarrassment to the teenager. The photojournalist said this is where he would draw the line of manipulation. However, some might think if he would remove the blemish, what would stop him from manipulating in a different situation. Removing the blemish is altering the content of a photograph and could be considered an untruthful account of a situation. Bok mentions this when she addresses the concept of lying to avoid harm. She says, “Just as lies intended to avoid serious harm have often been thought more clearly excusable than others, so lies meant to do harm are often thought less excusable” (Bok, 1978).

Bok examines what it is about human nature that prompts some individuals into lying. She says, “Thus, the cub reporter who will lose his job if he is not aggressive in getting stories, or the young politician whose career depends on winning an election, may in principle be more sorely tempted to bend the truth than those whose work is secure; but this difference may be more than outweighed by the increased callousness of the latter to what they have come to regard as routine deception.” Actually, this statement helps explain why some photojournalists manipulate photographs. For example, competition with other photographers may have motivated the *Los Angeles Times* photographer to combine two images into one picture to represent the war in Iraq.

#### Concluding Thoughts:

The profession of photojournalism has been based on photographers making appropriate ethical decisions. The theory helps explain why some photographers follow the rules, while others do not because not everyone believes in doing what will best benefit humanity. Utilitarianism further emphasizes the need for photographs that accurately illustrate the circumstances of a situation. In order for photojournalists to benefit humanity, they have to give people accurate information to make informed decisions about what is happening in the world. People need to know the truth about what is happening in the world because, while the truth is not always pleasant, at least people have an accurate view of the world. If people do not know about the world around them, then nothing will ever get changed. Photojournalists walk around on a daily basis with cameras documenting the world and often give people a chance to see what they might never see for themselves. In order for these images to mean something to society, the images have to represent the truth of what is going on in the world. When people can see

truthful accounts of history, they can put pressure on leaders to think about the policies established in America and to focus attention on problems that need to be addressed and discussed. Therefore, when photographers truthfully document society, utilitarianism is achieved because the benefit for society is for people to see the truth about their world.



## CHAPTER 3

### HISTORICAL REVIEW OF PHOTOGRAPHY LITERATURE

There is growing concern among professional photojournalists about the digital manipulation of images. However, many of the same techniques used today to manipulate images on the computer are derived from techniques used in the darkroom. Many scholars and authors have written about the ways photographic content has been altered both in the darkroom and on the computer. The following chapter will examine techniques for darkroom and digital manipulation to explain where the technology is going and to show how such manipulation techniques were derived. An understanding of manipulation techniques could make the public more aware about when images are manipulated and how. There is also a growing concern among journalists about media credibility. These works help provide some insight about truth telling in terms of photojournalism.

#### Photo Manipulation:

Photographs can be manipulated in a number of different ways depending on the medium used to produce the image. Some photographs are manipulated chemically, while others are manipulated through digital files and a computer. Walter Benjamin, in his work, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, says, “From a photographic negative, for example, one can make any number of prints; to ask for the ‘authentic’ print makes no sense” (Benjamin, 1969). Benjamin’s work points out that long before photojournalism was done digitally, photojournalists could alter film in the darkroom by using techniques such as dodging, burning or cross processing film. Benjamin’s work examines how art has been reproduced over the years. Julian H. Scaff,

in an article called, *Art & Authenticity in the Age of Digital Reproduction*, critically reviews the work done by Benjamin. Scaff says, “Although mechanical (especially photographic) reproduction forever changed our notions of authenticity and perhaps destroyed the ritualistic nature of art in our society, these notions may not even apply at the simplest level to the digital reproduction” (Scaff, 2004). Scaff is saying that not all authenticity of photographs has been ruined. Digital reproduction of an image does not necessarily mean the image has been altered. These works both illustrate the power of manipulation over photographic content.

The ability of anyone to manipulate images has caused a growing concern among many scholars and photojournalists. Many photojournalists, who are in the profession solely for the purpose of documenting history, detest what some professionals have been able to do in the way of manipulating images. Many of authors that have written about photojournalism ethics tend to agree. Howard Chapnick in his book, *The Truth Needs No Ally*, explains the responsibility that photojournalists and editors have in representing the truth. Chapnick asks, “How can we expect the readers and viewers to believe a Holocaust, a Vietnam or a Watergate if they know that a local event has been staged or manipulated for the camera? Every time a photographer takes a false picture, every time an editor publishes an untrue picture, our believability goes down the tube” (Chapnick, 1994).

Chapnick believes images in a newspaper must accurately depict a situation, person or event. In his book, Chapnick quotes a meeting of the NPPA (National Press Photographers Association), where the board of directors decided that, “We believe photojournalistic guidelines for fair and accurate reporting should be the criteria for

judging what may be done electronically to a photograph. Altering the editorial content of a photograph, in any degree, is a breach of the ethical standards recognized by the NPPA” (Chapnick, 1994). Chapnick says that The Associated Press, which has been a leader in digital darkroom techniques, has very strict guidelines about the manipulation of photographs. According to Chapnick, the AP guidelines are, “The content of a photograph will NEVER be changed or manipulated in any way. Only the established norms of standard photo printing methods such as burning, dodging, black-and-white toning and cropping are acceptable. Retouching is limited to removal of normal scratches and dust spots” (Chapnick, 1994). These distinctions are important because they clearly outline what can and cannot be done to a photograph.

Paul S. Voakes appears to agree with Chapnick. Voakes’ *Public Perceptions of Journalists’ Ethical Motivations* looks at how journalists and the public assume journalism ethics are determined. This is similar to what Chapnick was saying about believing the Holocaust or Vietnam. Voakes’ surveyed journalists who said they made their ethical decisions for covering news by examining news organizations policies, knowing the law and using their own reasoning in some situations. In addition, the study recognizes that without public believability the organization will suffer. Voakes says, “Public perceptions have been found to be important components of media credibility, which in turn play a pivotal role, not only in media’s audience retention, but also in public support for freedom of the press” (Voakes, 1997). The study about the public perception of the media can be directly applied to photojournalism, because the issues about manipulation of photographs involved public trust of the credibility of the media. Voakes says, “A heightened understanding of the public’s attitudes toward journalism

ethics may help avoid public outrage over ethical issues in the first place” (Voakes, 1997). The credibility also keeps the public buying the product. Therefore, these credibility standards will continue to be important in the digital age.

Authors who have written about the ethics of photojournalism, such as Thomas H. Wheeler and Paul Lester, are of the same opinion as Chapnick. In *Phototruth or Photofiction?: Ethics and Media Imagery in the Digital Age*, Thomas H. Wheeler, says, “Most photographs seen in news magazines and newspapers with substantial circulation are either created by digital processes or converted into digital data during production. What makes this ethically significant is an essential quality of digital data: its susceptibility to easy, unlimited, and virtually undetectable manipulation”(Wheeler, 2002). In the same book, James D. Kelly writes, that it has been about 20 years since computers were first able to process photos, and since the first day photojournalists have been concerned about what the computer can do (Wheeler, 2002). Kelly says in the days of chemical photography, photography was easy to understand and that it was reality and a scientific document. He says, “Now, at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, photography has passed from the confident realm of chemistry to the ethereal world of electronics” (Wheeler, 2002).

However, Wheeler says that manipulations in photography tend to run deeper than a chemical process; he says photos are a manipulation from the time they are shot. Wheeler writes that, “Any discussion of ‘manipulated’ photography must begin with the recognition that photography itself is an inherent manipulation—a manipulation of light, a process with many steps and stages, all subject to the biases and interpretations of the photographer, printer, editor or viewer” (Wheeler, 2002). For example, changing the

aperture or shutter speed could affect the mood of a photograph. The author says some critics do not recognize photography as having any objectivity at all (Wheeler, 2002).

The author considers that photo manipulations were done with chemical development. Wheeler says, “Photos were faked long before the development of imaging software. In fact, the first counterfeit appeared within a year of the invention of photography itself” (Wheeler, 2002). The author continues with a discussion about the impact that the manipulation of photographs has had on journalism. Wheeler says, “People making decisions about how or whether images should be manipulated are increasingly part of what might be called computer-graphics culture and are not steeped in the traditional values of photojournalism, or journalism of any kind” (Wheeler, 2002).

Paul Lester’s *Photojournalism: An Ethical Approach* examines some of the same issues that Wheeler explores. Lester says a long tradition of photojournalism has been in its truthfulness. He says that the impact an image has on a viewer comes from a belief by the viewer that a camera captures the truth (Lester, 1991). However, a camera is only a machine. “As a machine, the camera faithfully and unemotionally records a moment in time. But a machine is only as truthful as the hands that guide it” (Lester, 1991). Lester continues by saying that photo history has many examples of photographs being manipulated including photographs that have won the Pulitzer Prize. He says, “Photographers and editors learned early in photography’s history that economic and political gains can be made by photographic manipulations because of a naive and trusting public” (Lester, 1991). However, Lester’s work fails to examine how trusting the public is of the images that they are presented.

Lester says that in the computer age that the topic of manipulating images should be a top priority of discussion among photojournalists. He says, “With all the other ethical issues photojournalists should be concerned about, picture manipulation, especially through the use of computers, is a topic journalists are most concerned about. The threat to the credibility is irreversible if the public starts to mistrust the integrity of the news photograph” (Lester, 1991).

#### The Darkroom and Manipulation:

Before scholars, professionals and the public can even begin to understand what is happening today with digital manipulation, it makes sense to understand how film was processed in the darkroom and the history behind darkroom technique. According to Lester, the first faked photograph and caption was done in 1840 by Hippolyte Bayard, a French artist, who later became a photographer. He made himself look like a corpse in the photograph by combining several different negatives (Lester, 1991). At the time, the professions of art and photography overlapped, and many people thought of themselves, as artists were actually photographers. Therefore, the idea of experimenting with the making of prints did not seem wrong to those working in the use of photography.

Later, photographers such as Oscar Rejlander, Henry Robinson, and Cliff Edom created images through posing subjects and combining several negatives together (Lester, 1991). Photo manipulations continued on into the era of the Civil War. Many images held by the Library of Congress by Mathew Brady were set up, and many of the images were not actually taken by Brady but by other photographers out in the field (Lester, 1991). Lester says one of the reasons many photographs were set up during the Civil War

was because slow speeds of the camera forced some photographers to create their own dramatic action.

History is filled with examples of photographs that do not truly represent content. Stefan Lorant, who was doing a book about Abraham Lincoln, found that the picture of Lincoln that was used on the five-dollar bill was actually created in the darkroom. A picture of Lincoln's head was placed on top of John Calhoun's body to create a full-length portrait of Lincoln (Lester, 1991). It is interesting that such a widely published photograph is merely a manipulation.

Another example of early manipulation of photographs is with the photographs taken of Franklin Roosevelt. The images were usually cropped so that his wheelchair could not be seen (Lester, 1991). However, cropping is accepted by Associated Press rules. The rules do allow photographers to make someone appear different than they are. The rules allow cropping so that photographers can make their images have an impact. Other famous manipulations include, "Three famous photographers, Robert Capa's moment of death of a Republican soldier during the Spanish Civil War, Arthur Rothstein's skull on parched South Dakota land, and Joe Rosenthal's raising of the American flag over Iwo Jima, have all been reported to be photographic manipulations. These three images have a cloud of uncertainty that surrounds each photographer's reputation" (Lester, 1991).

Leonard Gaunt wrote a book, published in 1982, called, *Film and Paper Processing*, which says that the basis for developing film in a darkroom are having complete darkness and knowing what chemicals and temperature levels for processing are required. "Experience can lead to the application of special procedures to overcome

faults in camera operation, or to obtain a particular kind of result, but the actual process of putting the film through the various chemical solutions is routine” (Gaunt, 1982). The text takes the reader through the chemical processes of making a print. The text goes through step-by-step techniques of darkroom development.

Andres Feininger, author of *Darkroom Techniques* published in 1974, says that a photographer could, using the same negative, create prints with different contrasts, different crops, different sizes, and make the prints lighter or darker (Feininger, 1974). Feininger says the knowledge of how a print differs in content from a negative can only be answered by the photographer who shot the picture (Feininger, 1974). Feininger’s book takes the reader through the materials and procedures necessary for developing film and making prints in the darkroom. He explains how to make a print sharper, bigger, lighter or darker. For example, making a print lighter or darker depends on exposure time (Feininger, 1974).

Feininger says that there are different levels of acceptability of control among different photographers. He says, “Techniques and effects that some photographers regard as legitimate forms of control are dismissed as faking by others. There is, of course, no way to draw an objective line between straight and controlled photography, since even the most elementary decisions like, for example, f/stop or shutter speed to use, are in last analysis a form of control, since they influence the extent of depth of the sharply rendered picture zone or decide whether a subject in motion will be depicted sharp or blurred” (Feininger, 1974). Therefore, the complexity of darkroom techniques and manipulation are the reason why many media outlets have set up strict guidelines when it comes to photography.



Feininger says that using techniques such as filters, dodging or burning can have legitimate purposes. He is saying tools such as filters or dodging or burning can sometimes create a more accurate depiction of a situation than the camera actually was able to record (Feininger, 1974). Feininger goes on to question whether other techniques, such as a drop of milk caught frozen in the air, are legitimate representations, since the human eye could never see it happen. Feininger also discusses multiple printing (Feininger, 1974). This is when someone makes a print by combining at least two negatives. Feininger says these prints can appear to look natural.

John Hedgecoe's book, *Darkroom Techniques*, is similar to the work composed by Feininger. However, Hedgecoe's book goes more in depth into different techniques for making prints from negatives. Michael Langford's book, *The Darkroom Handbook*, devotes an entire chapter to basic manipulations. Langford says, "Basic manipulations of 'dodges' were an essential part of nineteenth-century photography. Most of them were required to improve the performance of the elementary material available" (Langford, 1981). However, today the same techniques are being called into questions in terms of acceptability of dodging being used to enhance an image.

Kenneth F. Irby, visual journalism group leader for The Poynter Institute, in an article called *A Photojournalistic Confession*, says that before there was a digital photography revolution, darkroom techniques were used "to adjust tonal range, contrast, and color saturation." Irby confessed to having used techniques such as dodging and burning. He says such techniques have the ability to alter the mood or meaning of a photograph. Irby says, "Most, maybe all, of the great photojournalists have employed the technique of dodging and burning: Gordon Parks, W. Eugene Smith, Stan Grossfeld,

Carol Guzy, and John White, to name a few” (Irby, 2003). He says the techniques for adjusting photographs did not begin with Adobe Photoshop™ but that the program has made the process much easier.

In his article, Irby, begins to explore where the line of manipulation should be. He says, “Any time you remove or destroy visual content—in the background or foreground—you have crossed the line” (Irby, 2003). Irby says it is unacceptable to use the “Hand of God” technique in extreme measures. He says the technique is “using traditional or digital means to increase the intensity of light. The reverse process of dodging could also eliminate detail, although the practice is less common.” Irby does not offer a clear line where manipulation should stop. However, the article does provide a starting point for discussion about the subject.

In the article Irby interviewed Stan Grossfeld, associate editor for the *Boston Globe*. Grossfeld, who has won the Pulitzer Prize twice, is seen as one of the most proficient users of the “hand of God,” technique. Grossfeld says in the article, “One must first understand that film (or digital) does not record the scene the way the human eye sees it. The human eye goes to the lightest part of the picture. That is a fact, and sometimes the highlight is not where I want the person looking at my work to focus” (Irby, 2003). Grossfeld goes on to say, “Burning is really to redirect the eye to the center of the image, not to eliminate content. You have to be true to the reader about what you witnessed” (Irby, 2003). According to the article, being true to the content of a situation seems to be the key to understanding what is acceptable.

## The Digital World and Manipulation:

Frank P. Hoy wrote a book called, *Photojournalism: The Visual Approach*, which examines the way the role of the photojournalist has changed with the adaptation of the computer. Hoy says, “Once on the editor’s computer screen, digital images can be manipulated by keyboard and mouse in the electronic version of familiar photographic methods: burning, and dodging, cropping, editing, retouching and color correction. All of this can be done out in the newsroom, by a picture editor, instead of in a separate darkroom by a photojournalist” (Hoy, 1993). This point illustrates that in some cases it may not be the photographer manipulating images but someone else in the newsroom. Therefore, discussions about manipulation will be crucial to everyone involved in producing the news.

Hoy says he thinks that teamwork between editors and photographers will be improved with the invention of digital technology because both editors and photographers will get to participate in more aspects of the process of talking and editing photographs (Hoy, 1993). He says while the technology has potential to improve teamwork, that the technology can create some problems, mainly undetectable manipulation. He says, “One of the biggest threats to the public’s trust comes from the potential of altering photographs on computers. Extensive digital manipulation of news photographs could cause the public to reject all photographs as unreliable” (Hoy, 1993).

There are quite a few recent examples of manipulations in photographs. For example, National Geographic digitally altered a photo of the Giza pyramids in 1992 in order to make the photograph fit the vertical layout of the magazine. The image was defended by the director saying that the same image could have been created by the

photographer, had the photographer changed the position of the camera, according to *Photojournalism: The Professional Approach* by Kenneth Kobre. The book goes on to cite the following incidents in newspapers where manipulation occurred:

- *The St. Louis Post-Dispatch* removed a Coca-Cola can from a portrait of its Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer.
- *The Louisville (Kentucky) Courier-Journal* extended a stripper's sweatshirt when her high kick proved a little too exciting.
- *The Orange County (California) Register* increased the saturation of the blue sky in some of their prize-winning Olympics pictures.
- *The San Francisco Examiner* once changed the color of a wall behind the mayor to enhance the appeal of a front-page picture. (Kobre, 2000)

Kobre says, "Some newspapers have used the computer to remove small distracting items from a picture, others to change the background color of the picture" (Kobre, 2000). The debate continues about what is acceptable.

The author examines many different ethical situations and examines different studies done about ethics in photojournalism throughout the text of the book. Kobre says, "In fact, photojournalists' ethics are changing" (Kobre, 2000). He says that what was once seen as being acceptable in the 1960s, such as recreating an event for the camera, were seen as being unacceptable by the 1980s. However, he says some ethical ideas have

been questioned with a recent use of the computer. Kobre says, that inaccurate photos that surfaced in the 1920s re-appeared in the digital darkroom that emerged in the 1990s (Kobre, 2000). Therefore, the standards photographers will accept have been questioned. Kobre says, “While few photographers object to dodging and burning a negative in the darkroom, most are outraged at digitally retouching of a person into or out of a news picture” (Kobre, 2000).

John Russial and Wayne Wanta in a study called, *Digital Imaging Skills and the Hiring and Training of Photojournalists*, conducted a national survey to try to find out the need for digital skills in newsrooms. The researchers concluded that the digital skills that are necessary, such as understanding digital cameras and the digital darkroom, were not being taught in many journalism programs that still teach only chemical processing techniques (Russial & Wanta, 1998). This could create a problem of understanding how digital technology should be used within the newsroom.

In 2001, Edgar Shoahua Huang, conducted a study called, *Readers’ Perception of Digital Alteration in Photojournalism*. Huang conducted an experiment to see how many readers of newspapers and news magazines trust the images they see in those publications. The study concluded that readers wanted to be informed of images that have been altered. Those surveyed suggested that when possible no alterations should be made, that ethical standards should be raised, the publications should identify altered images and publications should try not to alter hard news photographs.

Huang’s work is based on current journalistic practices, ethical standards and public perception. Huang found that, “The respondent’s biggest concerns about digital-imaging alterations were that media would enhance or distort an image without informing

readers that an image had been altered” (Huang, 2001). Once again, the article points out that media credibility remains a huge concern. The question Huang did not ask was how these interpretations compared with how professional photojournalists feel about the alteration of images. Huang’s work neglected to address the occupational practices that are established within newsroom across the country today.

On Aug. 15, 2003, *The Charlotte Observer* ran an article about one of their photographers, Patrick Schneider, having three of his awards taken away. According to the article,

NCPPA president Chuck Liddy says Schneider violated the code of ethics of the National Press Photographers Association. The code says, in part: ‘In documentary photojournalism, it is wrong to alter the content of a photograph in any way (electronically, or in the darkroom) that deceives the public.’ (“Awards taken away,” 2003).

Libby said that burning was an acceptable technique used by photographers to lessen the appearance of a background. However, in one of Schneider’s photographs that had been called into question the background was entirely gone.

In the article, Schneider was quoted as saying, “In two of the pictures, I used darkening techniques that photographers throughout the profession have used for decades, and continue to use at many reputable newspapers today. Unfortunately, the rules for how much a background can be darkened in order to improve a picture’s visual impact have never been clear” (“Awards taken away,” 2003). Schneider says hopefully

the critique about his work will create dialogue in the photojournalism profession about what levels of manipulation are acceptable. In response to the incident Chuck Liddy, president of the NCPPA, said, “As journalists, we believe that credibility is our greatest asset” (“Awards taken away,” 2003).

In 2003, Brian Walski was fired for manipulating images of the war in Iraq. He combined two images, according to the article, *L.A. Times Photographer Fired over Altered Image*,” written by Kenneth Irby (Irby, 2003). Again, the article examines the issues of credibility, and how the mistake of one photographer affects the credibility of everyone in the profession. These sources illustrate how techniques of manipulation can happen both in the darkroom and in the digital darkroom. The main concern with many of the sources lies in the preservation of media credibility. The sources also illustrate how standards of acceptability of manipulation differ between professional photojournalists working in the industry.

The literature about photojournalism and photography listed in this literature review help provide a framework for understanding how the profession has changed. The results of this study help explain how press photographers have handled the switch from darkroom to digital technology. The literature provides some basic knowledge about darkroom photography, so that readers of this research have a background to understand the questions used in the survey. Because digital cameras and software are so easily accessible to today, the public tends to know quite a bit more about digital photography than they do about darkroom technology. Therefore, this literature review provides information about techniques that have been used in press photography to provide a starting context for understanding this study. The literature review brings together some

discussion about what photojournalists think are acceptable standards for digital manipulation.

#### Literature Review and Question Formation:

The research questions being addressed in this research have been formed by examining works about journalism ethics, studies about photojournalism, real-life incidents where photographers manipulated photographs, and from an understanding of how the switch to digital photography has impacted the profession. The questions were further decided by examining the role journalists take in society, which essentially comes from Mills theory, utilitarianism. Bok's theory about truth helps illustrate how truthful information impacts society and why photojournalists have an obligation to society. These frameworks provide a context for understanding motivations of photojournalists with experience working at American newspapers. Whether photojournalists are taking time to discuss issues in the newsroom or discussing how content should be judged, the questions are important because many questions involving the standards of photojournalism are being defined as technology is still going through the process of changing.



## CHAPTER 4

### METHODOLOGY

Chapter two explains the theories of Mill and Bok and has provided a framework for understanding why the topic of digital manipulation is important to the photojournalism profession and society. If people provide truthful accounts of a situation, they are benefiting their community and helping to ensure the existence of democracy. In Chapter three the literature review about photography manipulation has combined the understanding of film and digital manipulation into one work. These ideas are important because they help provide a context for understanding changes that have taken place within the profession as more and more photographers are relying on digital techniques, rather than the darkroom. The research strategy used in this research was both qualitative and quantitative. This method allowed for a flexible approach for questioning professional photojournalists about their habits in the darkroom and today. In addition, the qualitative approach allowed time for research about photojournalism, including darkroom techniques, an understanding of theories, and an understanding of how the photojournalism profession has changed over the years through photographers personal experiences.

The researcher began by asking questions of photojournalists working at American newspapers. The questionnaire was approved by the University of Georgia Institutional Review Board Human Subjects Office. The database for this research is the National Press Photographers Association headquartered in Durham, N.C. The researcher contacted the NPPA about interviewing members for the project. The organization sent out a mass email to the members through an email listserv. The organization sent out the

email to the 7,305 still photography photojournalism members of the National Press Photographers Association.

The researcher explained in the letter that she was looking for photojournalists working at American newspapers. The researcher gave those emailed a web address where they could view a consent letter and a copy of the questions. All of this information can be viewed in the appendix section. The researcher gave the participants the option of viewing the questions and sending an email to the researcher with a time and phone number where they could be contacted to record all responses, sending an e-mail attachment back to the researcher with the questions filled out, or sending the questions back by mail. This allowed people to participate who might not have time for a full telephone interview.

The questions asked about darkroom and digital techniques. The researcher used the constant comparative technique. The strategy is cited in *Mass Media Research: An Introduction* by Roger D. Wimmer and Joseph R. Dominick. According to those authors, the strategy consists of the following steps: “1. Comparative assignment of incidents to categories. 2. Elaboration and refinement of categories. 3. Searching for relationships and themes among categories. 4. Simplifying and integrating data into a coherent theoretical structure.” This method allowed free response questions to be categorized. The free response questions were categorized by examining each response for a specific theme; those that had similar responses were placed within the same category. The researcher was then able to determine how many themes were present for each free response question. Then overall themes for all the questions were determined to see which topics

were mentioned in multiple questions to draw some concluding thoughts about what the photojournalists were able to share from their experiences.

The strategy allowed the researcher to examine cases about the operational practices of photojournalists, and allowed the researcher to look for similarities among those working in the profession. The data was then analyzed. Figures were analyzed to see the percentages of people who have manipulated images in the darkroom and if the strictness of the profession has been impacted with new technology. The combination of information should provide a better understanding of the manipulation practices that have been acceptable among the profession at these two different points in history, with darkroom and digital technology. An appendix with the percentage of people who responded to each multiple-choice question has been included with this research along with a list of responses to the free response questions. The identities of all respondents that participated are confidential, meaning the names of the photojournalists were not used.

The survey questions used in this study help answer the overall research questions for this research. The research questions being addressed in this research are:

R1: Have photojournalists with experience working for American newspapers become more cautious to preserve the content of a photograph with new digital technology than they were in the darkroom, in terms of the steps they take to prepare images for publication?

R2: Has the switch to digital technology impacted the way photojournalists think contests should be judged?

R3: Are photojournalists taking the time to discuss levels of acceptable manipulation at their newspapers?

The researcher was able to analyze the multiple-choice and free-response questions to develop some overall arching themes in terms of these research questions.

The multiple choice questions allowed photographers to be compared with other respondents, while the free response questions allowed photographers to share their own experiences about working in the profession. Both of these methods of gathering data help answer the fundamental question of this research, which is, “Have photojournalists with experience working for American newspapers become more cautious to preserve the content of a photograph with new digital technology than they were in the darkroom, in terms of the steps they take to prepare images for publication?”

Of all the emails that went out to the 7,305 still photography photojournalism members of the National Press Photographers Association, 167 people emailed and said they would be interested in participating in the project. Approximately 2.29 percent of the population said they would be interested in participating in the project. However, not all of those who responded had newspaper experience, experience with both digital and film photography and were available when contacted. There were 103 people who had newspaper experience, experience with both film and digital photography, and the researcher was able to get in touch with them. The 103 participants make up 1.4 percent of the National Press Photographers Association sample population. According to Wimmer and Dominick, “Researchers often use samples of 50, 75 or 100 subjects per group” (Wimmer, 2003). While the number of people that participated does not provide enough responses to generalize the information across the profession, the information is

still valuable because this is the first time anyone has examined these issues among photojournalists. The results of the questions illustrate the way the photographers interviewed in this study feel about the darkroom and digital mediums for producing newspaper images. The free response questions are especially telling of how photographers view the darkroom verses digital photography. A complete list of results from all questions can be found in the Appendix.

## CHAPTER 5

### RESULTS OF SURVEY AND INTERVIEWS

The results of these multiple choice and free response questions help examine the different practices that existed in the darkroom as compared with new digital technology. Tables 5.1 and 5.2 illustrate some basic demographic information about those who participated in the project. Of the 103 people who participated in the study, a majority, 66 percent, is currently working at American newspapers. One hundred percent of those that participated have experience working at American newspapers. In addition, 100 percent of participants have experience with film and digital technology and are using a computer to replace the darkroom because these were the criteria for participation in the study.

Table 5.1

<b>Demographics</b>	<b>Currently Working at Newspaper</b>	<b>Have Newspaper Experience</b>	<b>Age of 35 to 55</b>	<b>Experience with film and digital</b>	<b>Uses Computer darkroom</b>
Yes Responses	68	103	56	103	103
Percentage	66%	100%	54.4%	100%	100%
No Responses	35	0	47	0	0
Percentage	34%	0%	45.6%	0%	0%
Total	103	103	103	103	103

The average age of the 103 respondents was 42.7 years old, and the median age was 43.5. The participants had an average of 17 years of newspaper experience and have worked at on an average of four newspapers. The average year for switching to a computer darkroom was 1996, however, some people still use a darkroom presently from time to time.

Table 5.2

	<u>Age</u>	<b>Years of Newspaper Experience</b>	<b>Number of Newspapers Worked</b>	<b>When Converted to Digital (Years)</b>
Mean	42.7	17	4	1996
Median	43.5	17	3	1997
Mode	47	10	3	2000
Range	19-74	1-55	1-25	1988-2004

Results for Multiple-Choice Questions:

The following examines multiple-choice questions from the study. The responses are used to compare how different photographers feel about different aspects of photojournalism. The first question examined asked respondents if they think the profession has become more or less strict about manipulating images as compared with film. This question is particularly important to this research because it addresses the question of whether photojournalists who have worked at American newspapers are being more cautious to preserve the content of an image than they were in the darkroom. The question specifically addresses the issue of digital manipulation to determine if the photographers think that the standards of the industry have become stricter.

**Q15. Do you think that the photojournalism profession has become more or less strict about manipulating digital images as compared with film?**

Chart 5.3

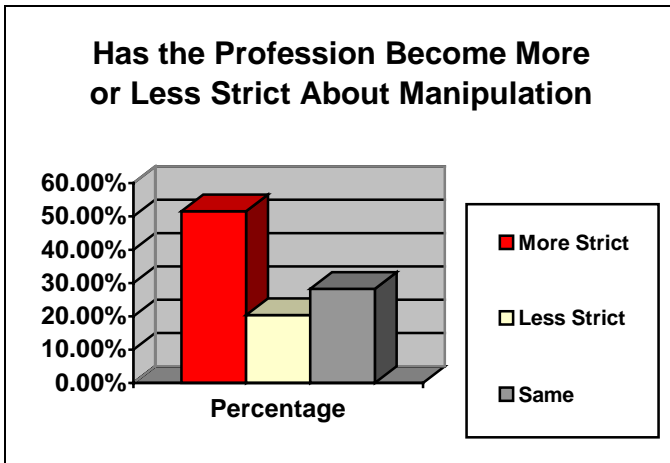


Table 5.3

	Number of Respondents	Percentages
A More	53	51.5%
B Less	21	20.4%
C Same	29	28.2%
No Response	0	0%
Total	103	100%

When participants were interviewed and asked if they thought the photojournalism profession has become more or less strict about manipulating digital images as compared with film, 51.5 percent thought that the profession had become stricter, as compared with 20.4 percent of people who thought the profession had become less strict. About 28.2 percent of those interviewed thought the profession had stayed about the same in terms of strictness. However, this means that 79.6 percent of people believe that the profession is at least as strict as it was in the day of the darkroom, if not stricter now. The research question: “Have photojournalists with experience working for American newspapers become more cautious to preserve the content of a photograph with new digital technology than they were in the darkroom, in terms of the steps they take to prepare images for publication?” seems to be answered by this question because a majority of respondents interviewed, 53 respondents, think that the profession is more strict. However, it is clear from chart 5.4 that almost all photojournalists think it is acceptable to do at least some type of manipulation. Question 11 asked specifically about dodging, burning, cropping and making color adjustments, and respondents had the option of choosing all options that applied.



**Q11. In what instances do you currently think it is okay to manipulate photographs by dodging, burning, cropping or making color adjustments? (The option was given on this question for multiple answers.)**

Chart 5.4

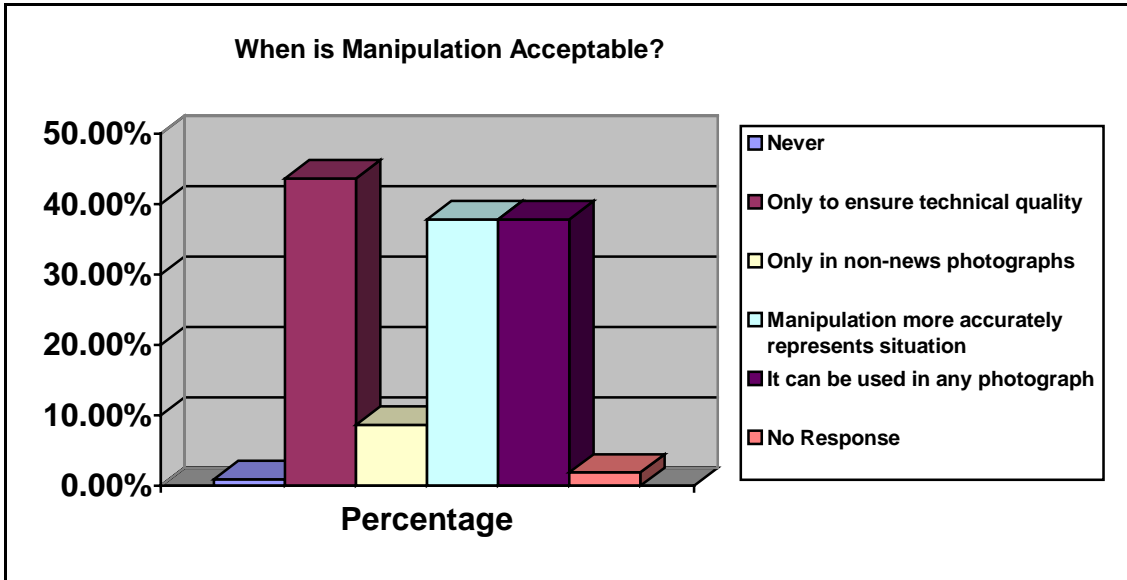


Table 5.4

	Number of Responses	Percentages
A Never	1	.97%
B Only to ensure technical quality	45	43.7%
C Only in non-news photographs	9	8.7%
D Manipulation more accurately represents situation	39	37.9%
E It can be used in any photograph	39	37.9%
Blank	2	1.9%

The idea about making manipulations only to ensure technical quality received the most responses, 43.7 percent of participants selected that option as a time for when those specific manipulations were acceptable. Approximately 37.9 percent of people thought that it was acceptable to do those specific techniques to any photograph or when the manipulation more accurately represented the situation being depicted. The reason that respondents were able to pick more than one response was because it gave the photographers an opportunity to justify why they picked a specific category. The idea that more than one answer could apply made photographers want to justify their answers for

the researcher. The next set of questions looks specifically at dodging and burning techniques.

**Q12. How often do you currently use dodging and burning techniques?**

Chart 5.5

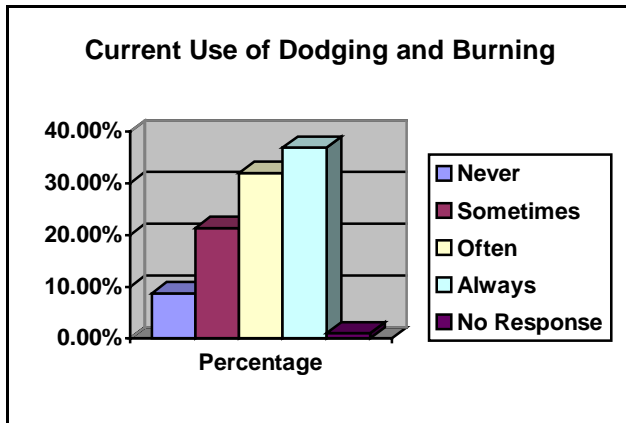


Table 5.5

	Number of Respondents	Percentages
A Never	9	8.7%
B Sometimes	22	21.4%
C Often	33	32%
D Always	38	36.9%
No Response	1	.97%
Total	103	100%

Question 12 looked at how much dodging and burning techniques are used today. The study showed that 8.7 percent of respondents never use dodging or burning, that 21.4 percent of respondents sometimes dodge and burn and that 32 percent of respondents sometimes dodge and burn. The survey asked a similar question about dodging and burning in the darkroom.

Question 19 asks how often respondents used dodging and burning techniques in the darkroom by asking them to estimate the amount they used the techniques in terms of a percentage. According to the results of the survey, 10.7 percent of respondents used dodging and burning techniques “25 percent” of the time. Approximately 19.4 percent of respondents used the techniques “50 percent” of the time, 24.3 percent of respondents

used the technique “75 percent” of the time and 41.7 percent of respondents used the technique “100 percent” of the time.

**Q19. How often did you use dodging and burning techniques when developing photographs in the darkroom?**

Chart 5.6

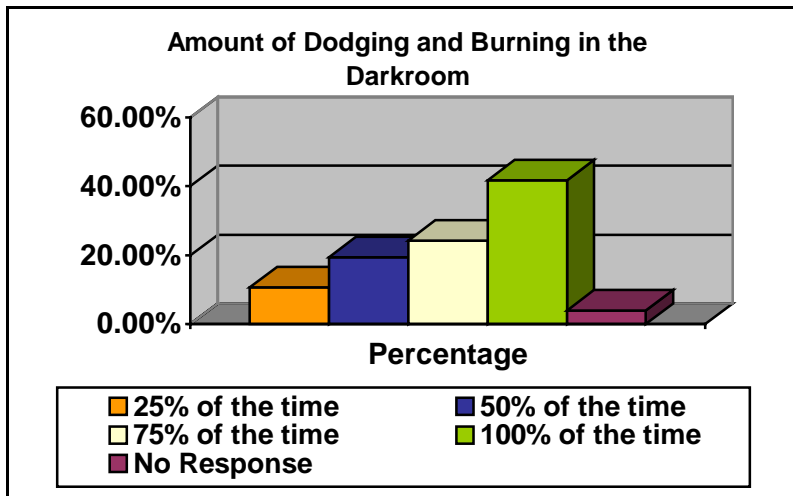


Table 5.6

	Number of Respondents	Percentages
A 25%	11	10.7%
B 50%	20	19.4%
C 75%	25	24.3%
D 100%	43	41.7%
No Response	4	3.9%
Total	103	100%

The results of the study show that 36.9 percent of respondents said they “always” use dodge and burn techniques with digital. The statistic is interesting when compared with the amount of dodging and burning in the darkroom. Approximately 41.7 percent of photographers said they dodged and burned “100 percent” of the time when in the darkroom (charts 5.5 and 5.6). These are the only two statistics that can be compared from these questions because “always” and “100 percent” are the only values that mean the same amount. However, the two statistics illustrate that dodging and burning is used less frequently than it was in the darkroom. The finding is important because 80.6 percent

of respondents in that age group thought that dodging and burning could significantly affect how the audience views the mood of a photograph (chart 5.7). The fact that people are using dodging and burning techniques less, illustrates the impact that manipulation can have on a photograph.

**Q13. Do you think that altering a photograph by dodging and burning can significantly affect how the audience views the mood of a photograph?**

Chart 5.7

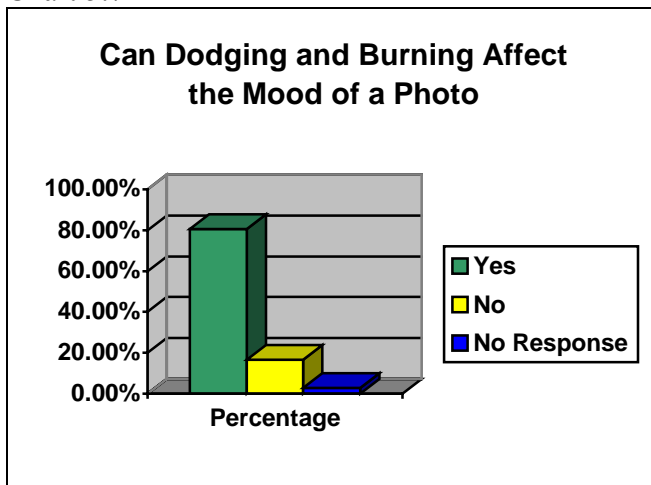


Table 5.7

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
A Yes	83	80.6%
B No	17	16.5%
No Response	3	2.9%
Total	103	100%

Many photographers pointed out when interviewed that the mood or response of a photograph is only altered when dodging and burning techniques are applied excessively on a photograph, but some photographers had trouble defining the word excessive. Simple dodging and burning techniques, such as lightening a shadow under a hat to see someone’s face, some photographers said, would not necessarily alter the mood of the picture. Photographers seem to view the acceptable level of manipulating a photo to be on a case-by-case basis for each specific photograph, as long as the content of an image

was not altered. The next question was asked in comparison with how much dodging and burning the photographer did in the darkroom.

**Q20. Is this more or less in relation to the amount of manipulation you do today, than with developing film in the darkroom?**

Chart 5.8

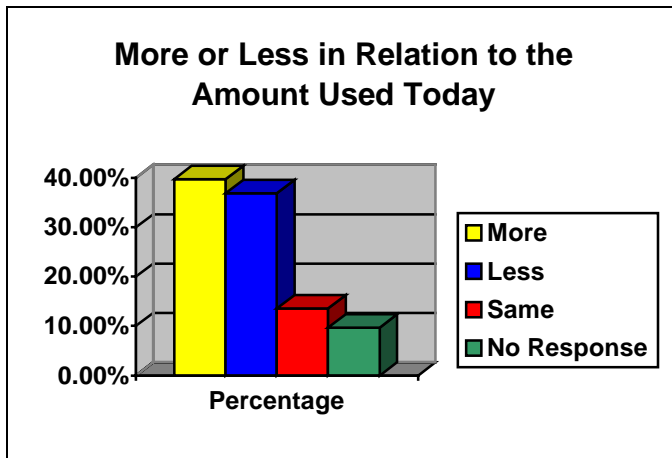


Table 5.8

	Number of Respondents	Percentages
A More	41	39.8%
B Less	38	36.9%
C Same	14	13.6%
No Response	10	9.7%
Total	103	100%

About 39.8 percent of people said they manipulated more in the darkroom than they do today, versus the 36.9 percent of people that said they did less in the darkroom than they did with digital. The finding may be due to the fact that some photographers do not think that their ethics have changed over the years. About 13.6 percent of people said they manipulate about the same amount (Chart 5.8). The next chart (Chart 5.9) shows similar results where photographers said they darkened and lightened photographs more in the darkroom than today.

**Q23. Did you darken or lighten photographs more in the darkroom than you do today?**

Chart 5.9

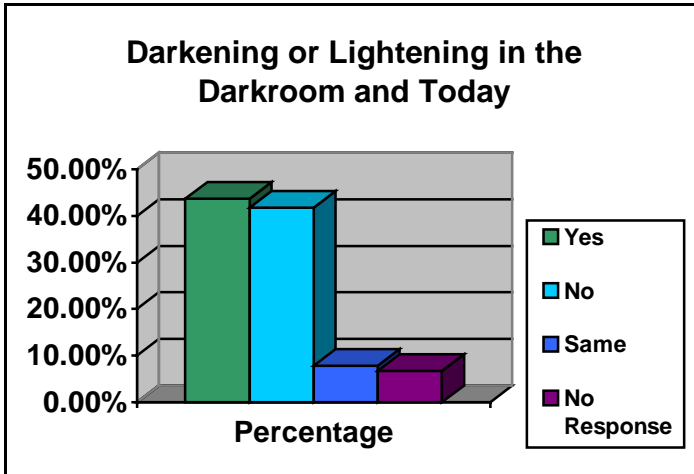


Table 5.9

	Number of Respondents	Percentages
A Yes	45	43.7%
B No	43	41.7%
C Same	8	7.8%
No Response	7	6.8%
Total	103	100%

Most photographers were familiar with the “hand of God” technique. In fact 75 of the 103 participants said they were. The “hand of God” technique is dodging and burning in an area around a print to make the audience focus on a specific part of a photograph.

**Q17. Are you familiar with the “hand of God” technique?**

Chart 5.10

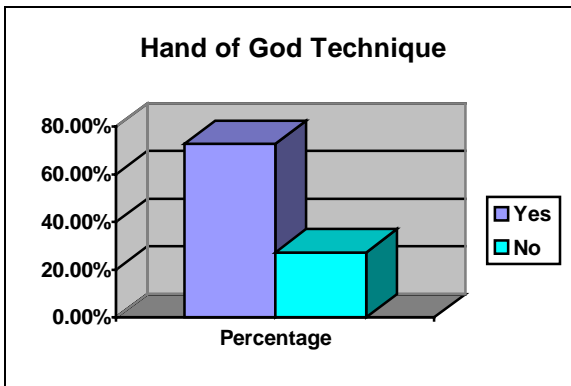


Table 5.10

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
A Yes	75	72.8%
B No	28	27.2%
No Response	0	0%
Total	103	100%

However, the photographers had different ideas about what the term means. In a free response question, photographers were asked to define the technique in their own words. One photographer said it was “heavy burning in an image with a hand in the middle.” A photographer defined it as the “intentional burning in of a portion of a photograph. The technique was often used to make the sky look darker and not just white.” The photographer was referring to black and white photography. One photographer defined it as the, “burning down or darkening of an image where you take away visual information, usually a cluttered background, to enhance the impact of the foreground.” Another photographer said, “It is a burning technique to bring out one part of the image to control the viewer’s eye. It is guiding the viewer to a specific part of the image.” There appears to be many different ways to define the “hand of God” technique, but it is clear from the results of the question that it is a well-known technique and used in the day of the darkroom, not by all photographers, but by some photographers who responded.

The next question asked respondents what they thought about awards given to Patrick Schneider being taken away. The National Press Photographers Association took Schneider’s awards away because contest officials ruled that the editorial content of the photos had been altered when parts of the photographs had been darkened digitally. The question asked if respondents thought Schneider’s awards should have been taken away. Of those that responded, 49.5 percent thought the awards should have been taken away

(chart 5.11). About 25.2 percent of respondents thought that the awards should not have been taken away and the rest of the respondents were unsure. The response to this question further illustrates how the profession is becoming more cautious in terms of digital manipulation when compared with the fact that most people thought the awards would not have been taken away during the darkroom era.

**Q21. Do you think the association acted correctly in revoking the awards?**

Chart 5.11

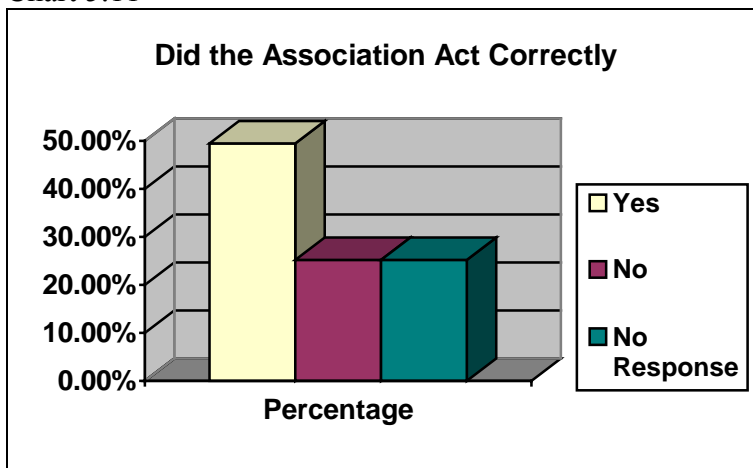


Table 5.11

	Number of Respondents	Percentages
A	51	49.5%
B	26	25.2%
Blank	26	25.2%
Total	103	100%

In addition, it is interesting to compare this question with what respondents said would have happened during the days of the darkroom (chart 5.12). One photographer said, “I did not understand how they could have revoked the award, since some were burned or dodged to that extreme in the darkroom.” Of all the photographers interviewed 62.1 percent said they thought the awards would not have been taken away during the days in of the darkroom.



**Q22. Do you think that the awards would have been revoked during the days when film was processed and prints were altered only in the darkroom?**

Chart 5.12

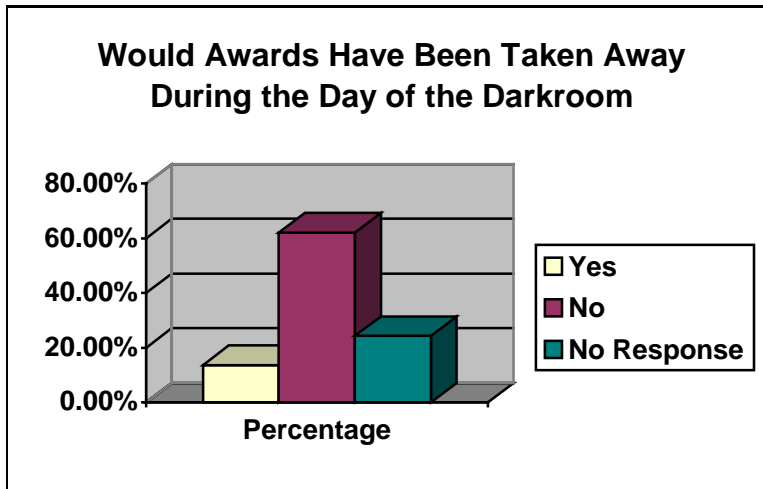


Table 5.12

	Number of Respondents	Percentages
A Yes	14	13.6%
B No	64	62.1%
No Response	25	24.3%
Total	103	100%

This question illustrates how photojournalists are expected to do less manipulating and more to ensure the technical quality of the image, while not altering the content of the image. These two questions help illustrate the research question about whether the switch to digital technology has impacted the way photojournalists think contests should be judged. It is clear from these two questions that it has had an impact.

The next question examined if photographers' ideas had changed over the years, in terms of manipulating photographs. The majority of people thought their ideas about acceptable manipulation had not changed over the years (chart 5.13).

**Q24. Do you feel your ideas about manipulating photographs have changed over the years?**

Chart 5.13

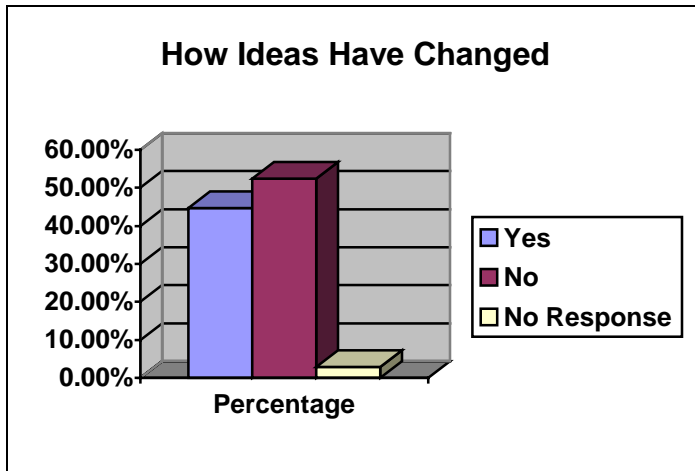


Table 5.13

	Number of Respondents	Percentages
A Yes	46	44.7%
B No	54	52.4%
No Response	3	2.9%
Total	103	100%

A photographer said, “I was still ethical 20 years ago.” Another photographer agreed and said, “I always tried to make something that would reproduce to show readers the truth.” Another photographer said, “I have always felt it is wrong to alter the content, but every picture is manipulated in some way, starting with how it is shot.” The photographer was referring to elements such as lens choice or angles used. Those who thought their ideas have changed have different ideas. One photographer said, “I think it’s just an evolution of thought. There were many things that were deemed acceptable in the past which are no longer acceptable.”

The next question helps answer the third research question about whether or not photojournalists are taking the time to discuss levels of acceptable manipulation at their newspaper.

**Q26. Does the photo staff of your news organization ever have meetings to discuss what level of manipulation is acceptable?**

Chart 5.14

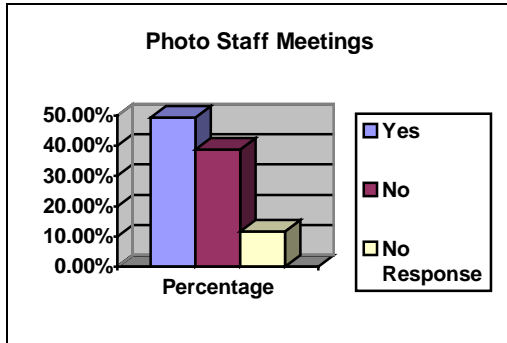


Table 5.14

	Number of Respondents	Percentages
A Yes	51	49.5%
B No	40	38.8%
No Response	12	11.7%
Total	103	100%

Question 26 asked photographers if their photo staff ever had meetings to discuss what level of manipulation was acceptable. Approximately 49.5 percent of respondents said their news organization had meetings to discuss what level of manipulation was acceptable. These meetings are important because they set standards and provide discussion about what levels of manipulation are acceptable. Photographers have a chance to ask questions and get feedback from their peers when issues are discussed.

**Q27. Do you think there are various levels of acceptability among the photo staff?**

Chart 5.15

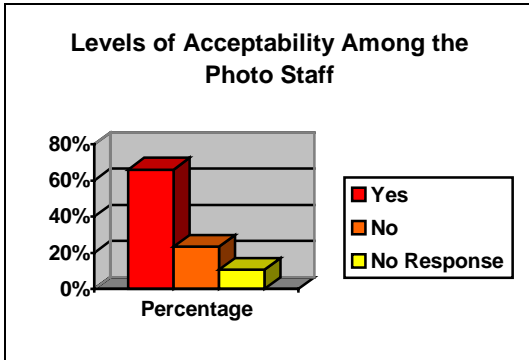


Table 5.15

	Number of Respondents	Percentages
A Yes	68	66%
B No	24	23.3%
No Response	11	10.7%
Total	103	100%

These meetings for discussion are especially important given the fact that the majority of photographers, 66 percent, thought that there were various levels of acceptability for manipulation among their photo staffs (charts 5.15). The question illustrates that there is a need for photographers to discuss what level of manipulation is acceptable, since there are various levels of acceptability among staffers working at the same news organization. The question illustrates that perhaps the level of acceptable manipulation with digital photography remains somewhat unclear.

Results for Open-ended Questions:

The first free response question examined what tools photographers commonly used when editing images. The most common tool listed was the unsharp mask tool in Photoshop™. Many photographers explained that digital cameras do not record images as sharply as film cameras do. Other tools mentioned were the cloning tool for dust, hue and

saturation, cropping, sizing, layers, levels, curves, the history brush, contrast and brightness, despeckle, burning, dodging, the healing brush and color balance. Any of these tools could be over used to alter the content of the image. A definition of these terms is located in the glossary of chapter one.

The next free response question asked respondents if they thought the profession has become more or less strict about manipulating digital images as compared with film, and what has influenced their thinking about what level of manipulation is acceptable. The themes drawn from this free response question were truth, ease of computer use, fear, credibility, education, evolving standards, and a need to follow darkroom standards. The same themes were drawn from question 25 that asked what caused the photographer to change his or her ideas about acceptable manipulation in photographs. Out of the respondents that choose to discuss these themes, about 12 percent discussed truth, about 32 percent discussed ease of computer use, about 6 percent discussed fear, about 15 percent discussed credibility, about 8 percent discussed education, about 21 percent discussed evolving standards, and about 11 percent discussed a need to follow the darkroom standards. These percentages include participants that discussed more than one theme in these open-ended questions. Those respondents that listed truth as a reason discussed ethics or lack of ethics that exist within the profession because while the majority of people thought the profession had become stricter about what level of manipulation was acceptable, there were some people that thought the profession has become less strict.

Many respondents said they feel that they have always been ethical. Many respondents discussed the ease of computer use. They say that Photoshop™ makes it

easier to manipulate photographs and that sometimes the manipulation was even undetectable. Other respondents said that improved technology has brought better presses and less has to be done to an image.

Fear was a theme among some respondents. Those that listed fear discussed the fear of potential abuse among those in the profession, the fear of going too far and the fear of getting caught. Credibility was another theme discussed among respondents. They listed issues such as public scrutiny and said readers' trust was important in selling a product. Education seems to be another theme that has influenced their thinking. Some photographers said they learned where the line should be through the published accounts of others getting punished. These respondents also discuss issues with peers and attend photojournalism conferences.

The next free response question examined the rationale behind how the photojournalists answered the question of whether Patrick Schneider's awards should have been revoked. The themes of these responses were about altered content, perception or mood, darkroom standards, rules, contest conduction, and ethical concerns. The other respondents felt they could comment better had they seen the photos. Some photojournalists felt uncomfortable about answering the question because they had not viewed the work in question; 23 percent of respondents discussed the theme of needing to view the work.

Other photographers, 36 percent, discussed that the content had been altered which changed the perception, mood or reality of the photograph. Many thought the photos were over manipulated to the point that they did not show reality. Some photographers said that the darkroom allowed such techniques and that the award should

not have been taken away, while others said it was not approved of in the darkroom. Some felt it was an overreaction to modern technology. About 17 percent of respondents discussed the darkroom theme in relation to this question.

Another theme that was discussed was the idea about rules. Twenty percent of respondents discussed this theme. Respondents listed reasons such as the fact that they thought he followed the rules because prior to this incident there were unclear guidelines and that prior standards were different. A different theme dealt with how contests should be conducted. These photographers, 6 percent, thought that contests should be based on how the images appeared in the newspaper and that awards should not be taken away after they are presented. There were also ethical concerns among 9 percent of participants about the importance of truth mentioned.

On a similar question about if the awards would have been taken away during the time of the darkroom, many similar themes were given as rationale. The main themes respondents included in this question were that photos need to be viewed, acceptability at the time, ethics and credibility, harder to do in the darkroom, and past contests as examples. Many people thought the photos would have been accepted at the time. Fifty four percent of participants discussed this theme. They gave reasons such as standards being stricter today, the technique is unaccepted now, and that bad presses made it a necessity.

Another theme found among respondents was that of ethics and credibility; about 17 percent of participants discussed this theme in relation to this question. They said there are more ethical concerns today, that changing content is a breach of ethics, that the public was not as aware of what could be done and that reality and content were changed.

Many respondents, 22 percent, thought what Schneider did would have been harder to do in the darkroom. These photographers said that Photoshop™ has more tools than the darkroom had, that it would have been more noticeable in the darkroom, and that it might not have been possible to do what he did. Other respondents, 8 percent, discussed past contests. They said many people won doing what Schneider did, but that heavy dodges and burns would not have won. Some thought most people did what Schneider did for this contest in the darkroom; others thought he would have never been given an award in the first place.

#### Overall Results:

The three research questions asked in this study can easily be addressed by looking at the multiple choice and free response questions of this study. The questions used in this study have illustrated the way technology has changed the profession. The answers to the research questions are as follows:

R1: Have photojournalists with experience working for American newspapers become more cautious to preserve the content of a photograph with new digital technology than they were in the darkroom, in terms of the steps they take to prepare images for publication? **Yes**

R2: Has the switch to digital technology impacted the way photojournalists think contests should be judged? **Yes**

R3: Are photojournalists taking the time to discuss levels of acceptable manipulation at their newspapers? **Yes**

The results of this study illustrate how photographers feel about the changing technology. It is clear from the study that people are talking about the issues more within the



profession and that it seems most of these photographers are being more cautious with new digital technology than they were in the darkroom. It is apparent from the free response questions that many different ideas about acceptable manipulation exist among photographers. Some photographers will do little to a photograph beyond cropping, while others use techniques such as dodging, burning and color corrections. However, what is important is that news organizations are taking the time to discuss and define what level of manipulation is acceptable. It will be interesting to see if the boundaries change as the technology continues to evolve.

## CHAPTER 6

### DISCUSSION

While, the questions can be clearly answered from the study, the free response questions indicate that there are shades of gray among photographers when defining acceptable manipulation. For example, one photographer pointed out that the fact that photographers show up at an event has an impact on how the situation is depicted. And what about the photographer who felt it was acceptable to remove a blemish from a teenagers nose? Some photographers would agree that it is acceptable to remove the blemish, while others would not. The idea of shades of gray illustrate why Mill's theory is important. Mill points out that what goes in a newspaper should be what will best benefit society and not one individual. When photographers alter even minor content it causes all photographers' work to be under scrutiny. Therefore, a clear set of guidelines needs to be established for all photographers to follow as a general guide, in terms of what is an acceptable level of manipulation for news photographs.

It is evident from the free response questions that most photographers think that ethics is an important aspect of the job. Many realize that information has to be accurate in order to provoke some type of change within society. Some guidelines have been established by the National Press Photographers code of ethics. However, while a code of ethics cannot account for every situation that might come up, the code does give some overall guidelines for photographers to follow. Mill would argue that photographers should do whatever will best benefit society. The best benefit to humanity is for photographers to be as truthful as possible with the images they present. Therefore, some

editing might have to take place to make the photograph represent the situation as accurately as possible.

Some overall themes can be drawn from the different open-ended questions and from question 28 that allowed the respondents to write additional comments on the subject. The themes that appeared over and over again in respondents' answers were truth, credibility, changing standards of acceptability and changes in technology. For example, one response that illustrated the theme about truth said, "I like to think you should be able to look at the published image and answer an immediate yes to the question-Are you telling the truth?" The theme of truth helps provide a line of what is acceptable to do to a photograph because after any manipulation has taken place the truth of the image should still stand out. The theme follows Bok's concept about truth. She says that truth is any statement that is not intended to deceive someone else. The theme illustrates utilitarianism in that if photojournalists misguide readers then those readers are not able to make informed choices about the world in which they live. If readers were never told the truth than corruption would prevail and democracy would not. Over 90 percent of respondents that participated in the free response questions mentioned the themes of truth or credibility in at least open-ended question, including the space for additional comments at the end of the survey.

Credibility was another theme that was prevalent throughout the open-ended questions. One photographer said, "The credibility issue concerning digital images probably made our photo department more cautious than ever about any sort of 'manipulation' once we converted to digital for good." Journalists provide a service to their communities by providing them with accurate information, if people stop believing

the product then the news media will go out of business. News organizations are important because they help record history so that others can learn from past mistakes. While all history is subject to interpretation, it is important to make images that reflect the community as accurately as possible.

Another theme discussed among the different open-ended questions was the idea about changing standards of acceptability. About 71 percent of respondents that participated in the open-ended questions mentioned this theme in at least one question on the survey. For example one respondent said, “We are far more aware of ethical concerns than we were then.” He was referring to the darkroom verses today. It seems from this theme that many photographers look to standards that were created for the darkroom and continue to try to improve them. The changing standards are important because it allows more people to see truthful accounts about the communities in which they live. The theme goes hand-in-hand with the last major theme that was discussed across all the free response questions, which are changes in technology. Many photographers, 48 percent, talked about the technology theme in the survey. One photographer said, “It is easier to make changes than it used to be. It took a high amount of skill in the darkroom, and it’s just easier to make changes now.” Because the technology has made it easier to manipulate, it does not mean that images should be manipulated. Images do not benefit society if they do not tell the truth. People need to know what is happening in the world because people are able to learn from each other.

In a telephone interview, Kenneth F. Irby, visual journalism group leader for The Poynter Institute, said that those organizations that do not follow ethical standards risk losing a trusted place in democracy. He said that on general news photographs the

profession has become much more stringent largely because of the digital impact. He said that ethical standards are higher in the digital age and that one of the reasons is the American media has gone through major scrutiny based on the actions of different individuals working at different news organizations. He said these actions have caused a reexamination of ethical standards, when he spoke with the researcher.

Even though there was a low response rate in proportion to population size for this study, the data is valuable because it illustrates that at least this particular group of photographers are being more cautious with how they manipulate images today, as compared with the darkroom. The free response section located in the appendix of this research also provides some interesting thoughts about the subject of photo manipulation and the importance of truth. For example, some photographers say that one of the reasons that there is less manipulation is not necessarily because people are being more cautious, but because the color production presses are much better than the black and white. One photographer said some burning was necessary on areas like white skies, so they didn't look blown out, during the days of black and white.

Other photographers took the time to share personal experiences. One photographer said, "In high school I had the opportunity to work with an older photographer, which I admired for his ability to photograph baseball and softball action. Through the summer I became fed up with his poor habit of working in a very dirty darkroom, so I figured I would be the good intern and clean up for him. When he returned from a ball game he panicked and screamed. Apparently, I had thrown away his "baseballs" and "softballs," small scraps of paper he would ball up and place on the print, leaving a white ball that in the old days would reproduce like a baseball in the press run.

Early on I learned that was cheating.” Sharing personal experiences, such as the one just mentioned, allows photographers the opportunity to learn from each other. Formal or informal staff meetings give photographers an opportunity to discuss important issues and set boundaries within news organizations.

Photographers have had different influences over their thinking about what level of manipulation is acceptable. They say factors such as it is easier now to do things on the computer, the fact that they have become more educated, the fact that some fear the term manipulation and the fact that others just want to be ethical and honest have influenced their thinking about what level of manipulation is acceptable. It is attention grabbing that some photographers used the words “fear” and “paranoid” to describe how people were reacting to the new technology because many are afraid they will cross the line unintentionally. Many photographers also factor that credibility remains an important issue with the public. There is also a fear that digital manipulations are more likely to go unnoticed than something that was manipulated in the darkroom. Something going unnoticed would go against Mill’s theory of benefiting society because in order for a photograph to be useful to society it has to represent the truth, otherwise change cannot take place.

This project has been useful in gaining an understanding of how strict the photojournalism profession is by examining the responses of various photographers. Their responses are important because these are the photographers who are documenting history throughout the world on a daily basis. The photographers interviewed in this study are important because they have been through a change of technology, and they will be the photographers that will continue to be apart of establishing the rules that are

acceptable in terms of digital manipulation. Their opinions are useful now, and their opinions could be useful in the future when technology changes again.

The photographers offered some suggestions for other areas for this research. For example, one respondent pointed out that the role of the photo editor has changed with technology, while photo editors used to be able to look at an event through a roll of film to gain an entire perspective of an event, today the editor cannot always see the entire event covered because a photographer could delete frames out of their camera. The participant pointed out that just like editors who read stories, editors should be editing the photographs. It would be interesting to interview photo editors to find out how their role has changed, since most photographers now use digital cameras at newspapers.

Other photographers pointed out that a study should be conducted on the manipulation of photos during the time it is getting ready to be printed in the production phase. One photographer noted that sometimes a beautifully lit morning sky often gets color corrected for noon. Also, sometimes contrast or sharpness is increased in photographs. Yet, this is usually not done by someone who knows what the photographer saw. Therefore, sometimes photographs are altered and manipulated by someone other than the photojournalists. Irby said, in the telephone interview, this is a quality control issue and it is important to implement ethical guidelines across everyone involved in presenting the news. He says those visual journalists should be held accountable and held to the same standards as everyone else.

Irby said during a telephone interview that photography contests should also be examined in future research. He said a big issue is that photographers lose credibility among professional media peers because the photographers are often rewarded for

unpublished work. He said that photographers often celebrate unpublished work against published work. He said this means that the photographers are not operating at the highest level. A reason for this could be that the best photo does not always run in the newspaper. Photographers usually choose the photo that tells the story the best. However, he said something is not journalism until it has been published with the purpose being to learn something from or to be enlightened by something.

The photographers who participated in this study provided a great deal of insight into how technology has impacted changes in the process of how photographers prepare photographs for publication. Their thoughts are valuable because they provide evidence that the profession is becoming stricter than it was during the days of the darkroom, in terms of what is acceptable manipulation for a news photograph. Through personal experiences and stories, the photographers are able to illustrate how both the theories of Mill and Bok help photographers make choices to show readers, to the best of their ability, a truthful depiction of an event. It is clear from the themes of the free response questions that utilitarianism and truth are underlying themes photographers use to establish ethical standards. One photographer ended by saying, “Computers give us the ability to lie with our images if we choose to do so. As a professional it’s a simple question, ‘Are you a moral person?’ Chuck Scott, photo editor/educator, said ‘if you give the public the right to doubt any of your photographs, you give them the right to doubt all of your photographs.’ What is so desperate about someone who would lie with his or her work? Do they want fame? You certainly won’t get fortune in photojournalism.” It seems in the photojournalism profession, when professionals make inappropriate decisions that they face consequences similar to Schneider and Walski, being fired or publicly



reprimanded. It is the hope of the researcher that this study promotes discussion among photojournalists about how the profession has changed and where the rules should be set in the future, so photographers do not have to fear the new technology but be able to embrace it.

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## APPENDICES

### Letter Sent to Photographers by Email:

Dear National Press Photographers Association Member,

I am Melissa Booraem, a graduate student at the University of Georgia. I am doing research about how digital technology has changed the profession of photojournalism. Howard Chapnick, a photojournalist and author says, "This new technology has prompted concern in the photojournalistic community that we are at the frontier of widespread abuse that will deeply affect the credibility of journalistic photography (Chapnick, 1994).

I am interested in finding out how photojournalism has changed concerning what levels of manipulation were acceptable in the darkroom compared with what level of acceptability is considered appropriate today, especially, concerning the techniques of dodging and burning.

Examining the professional habits of photojournalists is important because the integrity of all American newspapers have been called into questions based on untruthful representations by a small number of photographers. Incidents of photographers misrepresenting the events that they are covering cause the credibility of the photojournalism profession to suffer.

I have attached a copy of my questions and a consent letter to a web page: (<http://www.arches.uga.edu/~mbooraem>). If you could please email me a time and a phone number where I could contact you, I will call you and record your answers to the questions. I am looking for photographers that have experience with the darkroom and digital equipment.

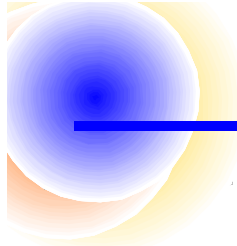
If you choose to send responses by email or mail, please include your name and phone number, so I can contact you if something is missing. The questions can be downloaded as a word document on your computer.

Your identity will be kept confidential in this research. Please respond by Sept. 24, 2004 at 7 p.m.

Thank you for taking the time to participate! I know your time is extremely valuable, and I appreciate you sharing your experiences in the profession with me.

Thank you,  
Melissa Booraem  
5216 Ashford Court  
Lilburn, GA 30047  
(770) 921-0467 home  
(404) 644-0702 cell  
[mbooraem@uga.edu](mailto:mbooraem@uga.edu)

## The Web Page:



### Practices of Manipulation by Professional Photojournalists

Please respond by September 24, 2004 at 7 p.m.  
([link to questions at bottom of page](#))

Dear National Press Photographers Association Member,

I am Melissa Booraem, a graduate student at the University of Georgia, from the Department of Journalism at the Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication. I am conducting research that may be published on the practices of manipulation by professional photojournalist and would like to know more about digital and darkroom photographic manipulation. My phone number is (770) 921-0467, and my email address is [mbooraem@uga.edu](mailto:mbooraem@uga.edu). My advisor's name for the project is Dr. Leara Rhodes, of the Journalism Department. Dr. Rhodes can be reached at the University of Georgia, 235 Journalism, Athens, Ga. 30602 or at (706) 542-5025.

The purpose of this research is to learn how digital manipulations performed by professional photojournalists today compares with what was done in the darkroom when photographers shot their pictures only on film and developed those pictures only in the darkroom. The questions should take about 15 minutes.

Attached to this web page is a copy of the response questions for you to be able to look at as I ask you questions. If you could please email me the best time to contact you, I will call and ask you these questions. I will be responsible for recording all responses to the questions.

Your participation in this research is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time without penalty. You can choose to skip any questions that make you feel uncomfortable. You can simply let me know if you want to skip a question or don't want to participate.

All of the data that I collect will be kept confidential. I will know who you are, but I will keep all of the recorded responses confidential. However, I must make you aware that, while I am keeping your name confidential in my write up of this research, research records may be obtained by court order.

If you have any questions do not hesitate to ask now or at a later date. You may contact me using my contact information. Thank you for your time and participation.

Sincerely,  
Melissa Booraem  
5216 Ashford Court  
Lilburn, GA 30047  
(770) 921-0467  
[mbooraem@uga.edu](mailto:mbooraem@uga.edu)

Additional questions or problem regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to Chris A. Joseph, Ph.D., Human Subjects Office, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602; Telephone (706) 5423199; EMail Address [IRB@uga.edu](mailto:IRB@uga.edu)



Questionnaire  
Click Here



Verbal Consent Script for Telephone Interviews:

I am Melissa Booraem, a graduate student at the University of Georgia, from the Department of Journalism. I am conducting research on the practices of manipulation by professional photojournalist and would like to know more about digital and darkroom photographic manipulation. This interview should only take about 15 minutes.

The purpose of this research is to learn how digital manipulations done by professional photojournalists compares with what was done in the darkroom when photographers shot their pictures on film.

I will ask you questions and record your responses. Do you have any questions?

Let me assure you that any information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. In final research products your name or identifying information will not be used. Your participation in providing me with information on the subject of digital and darkroom manipulation of photographs is completely voluntary, and you may discontinue our interaction at any time or skip any question you don't want to answer.

Do you agree to participate?

Yes.....Go to Questions

No.....Good Bye

End of questions will provide them with my name and email address.

Melissa Booraem, [mbooraem@uga.edu](mailto:mbooraem@uga.edu)

Questionnaire:

**Practices of Manipulation by Professional Photojournalist**

**Part I: Background Information**

1. Are you currently working at an American newspaper?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
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2. Have you ever worked as a photojournalist for an American newspaper?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
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3. Are you between the age of 35 and 55?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
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4. How old are you?

5. If you currently work at a newspaper, what is the circulation size?

6. How many years of newspaper experience do you have as a photographer?

7. How many different newspapers have you worked for?

8. Do you have experience with both film and digital photography?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
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9. Are you currently using a computer to replace techniques used in the darkroom?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
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10. When was the last time you used the darkroom in the newsroom? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Part II: Questions about professional practices**

11. In what instances do you currently think it is okay to manipulate photographs by dodging, burning, cropping or making color adjustments? (Circle all that apply)

- a. Never
- b. Only to ensure technical quality
- c. Only in non-news photographs
- d. In instances where the manipulation more accurately represents the situation being depicted
- e. It can be used in any photograph

12. How often do you currently use dodging and burning techniques?

- a. Never (zero times a week)
- b. Sometimes (two or less times a week)
- c. Often (five or less times a week)
- d. Always (in just about every photograph)

13. Do you think that altering a photograph by dodging and burning can significantly affect how the audience views the mood of a photograph?

- a. Yes
- b. No

14. What other techniques do you commonly use when editing? (Examples: layers, cloning, unsharp mask, etc.)

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15. Do you think that the photojournalism profession has become more or less strict about manipulating digital images as compared with film?

- a. More
- b. Less
- c. Is about the same

16. If you said more or less strict, what do you feel has influenced your thinking about what level of manipulation is acceptable?

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17. Are you familiar with the “hand of God” technique?
- a. Yes
  - b. No

→If yes, continue to question number 18 if no, skip to number 19.

18. In the space provided please explain what the “hand of God” technique is:

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19. How often did you use dodging and burning techniques when developing photographs in the darkroom?
- a. 25% of the time
  - b. 50% of the time
  - c. 75% of the time
  - d. 100% of the time

20. Is this more or less in relation to the amount of manipulation you do today, than with developing film in the darkroom?
- a. More
  - b. Less

**Please read the following before responding to the next few questions:**

In the 2002 the three awards given to Patrick Schneider, of The Observer, in a photography contest by the N.C Press Photographers Association, were revoked. It was ruled by contest officials that the editorial content of photos had been altered when portions of the photographs had been darkened digitally.

21. Do you think the association acted correctly in revoking the awards?
- a. Yes
  - b. No

Why?

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22. Do you think that the awards would have been revoked during the days when film was processed and prints were altered only in the darkroom?
- a. Yes
  - b. No

Why?

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23. Did you darken or lighten photographs more in the darkroom than you do today?
- a. Yes
  - b. No

24. Do you feel your ideas about manipulating photographs have changed over the years?
- a. Yes
  - b. No

25. If yes, what do you feel has caused you to change you ideas about acceptable manipulation in photographs?

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26. Does the photo staff of your news organization ever have meetings to discuss what level of manipulation is acceptable?
- a. Yes
  - b. No

27. Do you think there are various levels of acceptability among the photo staff?
- a. Yes
  - b. No

28. In the space provided, please feel free to write additional comments about the subject, including any personal experiences or stories. (Feel free to use the back or attach additional comments)

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29. Do you mind if your responses are used for the write up about this research?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
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Responses:

(Note: Not all participants wanted to answer every question)

Q.1 Are you currently working at an American Newspaper?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	68	66%
No	35	34%
Total	103	100%

Q.2 Have you ever worked as a photojournalists for an American newspaper?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	103	100%
No	0	0%
Total	103	100%

Q.3 Are you between the ages of 35 and 55?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	56	54.4%
No	47	45.6%
Total	103	100%

Q. 4 How old are you?

47	42	47	43	55	47	55	47	40	24
45	35	54	54	49	35	38	42	54	19
54	51	37	38	47	38	49	48	39	58
46	47	45	44	48	50	40	55	48	28
46	43	44	48	40	39	36	37	51	56
45	42	35	39	55	42	42	-	45	60
23	61	24	56	21	32	21	32	28	27
23	67	25	25	49	28	57	61	58	34
34	63	74	33	32	56	65	32	25	29
25	57	50	23	21	56	34	22	68	73
24	57	22							

Q.5 If you are currently work at a newspaper, what is the circulation size?

I decided not to use this as a factor for several reasons. Some people gave estimates.

1. Not all photographers knew the exact circulation size.
2. Sunday and weekly circulation sizes vary
3. I wanted to include those that have recently retired or do freelance work.
4. I didn't want to limit the research to a specific newspaper size because the issues are important across the profession.

Q.6 How many years of experience do you have as a newspaper photographer?

19	10	25	23	9	25	17	7	28	10
18	24	32	11	6	21	22	10	23	32
15	24	28	17	23	3	22	25	10	1
13	19	17	27	10	10	35	9	27	15
2	20	23	20	18	30	15	10	17	30
17	30	30	24	3	1.5	20	15	2.5	5
3	40	-	-	6	15	3	10	8	10
6	40	3	3	29	5.5	38	32	18	9
20	30	55	12	11	28	37	10	1.5	8
8	27	2	2	3	35	6	4	42	49
5	11	3							

Q.7 How many different newspapers have you worked for?

3	6	3	3	2	4	2	5	5	3
11	6	3	6	8	1	3	7	5	2
3	5	4	4	2	3	3	1	3	4
4	4	5	1	9	4	4	4	3	3
2	2	3	4	3	2	2	2	25	1
2	1	6	4	6	8	3	1	2	2
4	3	-	-	5	12	4	5	4	8
4	4	3	10	7	5	3	12	2	1
8	2	2	3	4	6	2	7	6	2
5	5	1	2	2	4	3	1	4	2
5	3	1							

Q. 8 Do you have experience with both film and digital photography?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	103	100%
No	0	0%
Total	103	100%

Q.9 Are you currently using a computer to replace techniques used in the darkroom?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	103	100%
No	0	0%
Total	103	100%

Q. 10 When was the last time you used the darkroom in the newsroom?

(The photographers responded either by the last year they used the darkroom or by the number of years ago.)

2000	1998	1988	1998	1998	1997	1993	2001	2000	1999
1994	1993	1991	1998	1999	1998	2000	1998	1995	-
1996	2000	1995	1994	1996	-	-	1991	2004	1996
1995	1995	1994	1990	1990	1999	1996	2000	1996	1994
1991	1997	2001	1999	1998	1994	2000	2001	1997	1994
2000	1996	2002	1996	-	-	1992	2000	1977	1997
2001	1985	-	2003	2000	-	2004	1996	2000	1995
2000	1999	2002	2001	1997	2001	1994	2000	1999	1996
1993	1992	1994	1997	2002	1995	1998	1998	-	2000
1997	1997	-	1999	-	1990	1995	2000	1993	1991
2000	1998	-							

Q. 11 In what instances do you currently think it is okay to manipulate photographs by dodging, burning, cropping or making color adjustments?

(The option was given on this question for multiple answers.)

	Number of Responses	Percentages
A	1	.97%
B	45	43.7%
C	9	8.7%
D	39	37.9%
E	39	37.9%
Blank	2	1.9%

Q. 12 How often do you currently use dodging and burning techniques?

	Number of Respondents	Percentages
A	9	8.7%
B	22	21.4%
C	33	32%
D	38	36.9%
Blank	1	.97%
Total	103	100%

Q.13 Do you think that altering a photograph by dodging and burning can significantly affect how the audience views the mood of a photograph?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
A	83	80.6%
B	17	16.5%
Blank	3	2.9%
Total	103	100%

Q. 14 –Free Response:

What other techniques to you commonly use when editing? (Examples: layers, cloning, unsharp mask, etc.)

- Unsharp mask (at times), cloning for dust spots
- Unsharp mask, toning, cropping, levels-The colors don't always look like they were when you shot the picture.
- Unsharp mask (always), quick mask for spot toning. For news photos always corrects to make it a true representation
- I use cloning to remove dust spots, and I use layers. All of these tools come with boundaries for how they should be used.
- None
- Unsharp mask, cloning for dust specs, fix extreme light situations
- Dodge, burn, color correct, occasional unsharp mask, lasso tool
- Unsharp mask, increase contrast mainly for reproduction purposes so the image doesn't look flat

- Cloning, hue and saturation, curves, levels
- I use layers, masking, cloning, etc. to better render shadows and highlights in both documentary and news pictures on a regular basis. The degree varies depending on the intended use. For news images, my goal is only to account for the limitations of the process, to bring shadows and highlights to levels that more closely resemble what the eye can see. For some documentary (not news) images, I will combine sky and foreground exposures to extend dynamic range, occasionally to surreal levels-and acknowledge readily this manipulation. I similarly combine images into documentary panoramas. For a few documentary images (not news) I have cloned out out-of-focus highlights and shadows in the background that have distracted the eye. I do not believe in harsh burns or dodges that eliminate documentary images. As a portrait photographer (when not serving news clients), I regularly retouch blemishes, stray hair, and age lines, but even then, I lean toward the natural, believable, rather than the false look of perfection. A 55 year old under my healing brush might look 45 or 50, not 30 or 35.
- Levels, curves, clone, despeckle, texture, selective color, hue/saturation
- Color correction, and cloning to remove sensor dirt are almost every picture correction
- Cropping, sizing, change DPI resolution, color adjustments (It does not always come out right on digital.), I make it representative of a scene. Unsharp mask, and sometimes saturation
- Curves, levels, layers, quick mask
- History brush is the most common, unsharp mask only used on black and white images, cloning only used to clean up dust marks.
- Unsharp mask, dodging, and burning, levels and curves, color corrections in layers by using levels in the proper color channel to correct for fluorescent lighting, cropping
- Cropping, burning, dodging, adjustment layers, some color corrections, never sharpening
- Auto levels, curves
- Sharpening, cloning out dust etc., color balance and cropping
- Unsharp mask to a small degree, color balance, color saturation, levels
- Cloning to remove dust spots, color correction, sharpening is done in pre-press



- Highlight/shadow, curves, levels, layers, unsharp mask
- Unsharp mask is helpful to add a bit more sharpness to digital
- Unsharp mask, hue and saturation, curves, levels smudging, lasso, cutouts
- N/A only use increase brightness, auto enhance and increase contrast
- Unsharp mask, cloning dust spots
- Perspective control, unsharp mask, despeckle, cloning
- We use unsharp mask on every photo. We also use many of the color correction options of Photoshop™ to ensure better color reproduction.
- All of the above if it is only to remove a dust spot or scratch, sharpen a scan, or help with burning/dodging
- None
- History brush tool for dodging and burning, unsharp mask, cloning for spotting, combining layers for properly exposing backgrounds and the sky.
- I use layers for burning or dodging but never to change the reality of a photograph, rather to clean up the image, but never for manipulation. Unsharp mask is frowned upon at the company where I work. Also, I use a Nikon D-1 camera, which has a slight cyan cast to it. I use levels, hue and color balance to try to achieve a true white and normal skin tone. I never remove things to make a photo cleaner: i.e. a telephone pole coming out of a person's head or a tree branch sticking out of a person's head. Cloning is used to remove dust on the CCD.
- With the digital cameras a little sharpen is needed
- Cloning for dust, we use a consistent unsharp mask on all photos (for press purposes)
- None that don't have an analog ancestor from the wet darkroom days
- Cloning of dust spots
- Unsharp mask, history tool
- I use unsharp mask.
- Unsharp mask 100% of the time

- Unsharp mask, levels
- Cloning for dust and scratches, unsharp mask, hue/saturation, applying images, selective color levels
- Occasional unsharp mask
- I use levels and curves to set contrast range and color balance. I use the history brush tool, not dodge and burn (a technical preference), but for essentially the same purpose, though almost always only to a dodge. On very rare occasion, I use hue/saturation.
- Levels, curves, hue/saturation, selective color
- I usually crop an image. I will dodge and burn, but I use almost nothing else.
- Cloning only to remove dust or scratches. I will remove redevye in the rare time it happens. I go by the rules. “If you couldn’t do it in the darkroom, you can’t do it in Photoshop™.
- All those mentioned plus shadow highlights
- Layers, unsharp masking, paint to history color corrections, etc. cloning
- At the paper, we are requested not to do any Photoshop work on our images. Our lab techs do it all.
- Layers and cloning
- Very few, I limit this to dodging and burning, etc. unless it’s a photo illustration and clearly identified as one, Unsharp masking is done by my production for reproduction purposes only.
- Cloning for dust, unsharp mask all the time.
- Unsharp mask, cloning for dust spots
- I use unsharp mask to ensure the image shows up sharp in the paper. I also use brightness/contrast because some of the detail in the photo can be lost through the printing process at our paper. Usually by adding about +30% to the photo in the contrast area. I also use HUE SATURATION to bump up the color of the photo since my camera shoots color rather than flat.

- I use dodge, burn, history tool, lasso, brightness and contrast, and only sometimes do I saturate the colors for when I think that the colors I have in raw were unlike the ones in the original scene.
- When shooting journalism assignments, I do very little. I don't see the difference between dodging and burning digitally as I did in the darkroom. Or lighting a subject before or during a shot. Perhaps a little dodging would bring out more detail in a subjects face and add more detail to the newspaper/magazine reproduction.
- Unsharp mask, despeckle, color balance, hue/saturation
- Adjustment layers only for curves/levels adjustments, unsharp masking, and cloning only to retouch dust on film during scanning.
- All of these tools assist the technical delivery of visual information and reproduction. Writers use mechanical spelling and grammar tools and a thesaurus to improve their reporting. Photographers use digital tolls to improve visual reporting. Can these tolls be abused, yes. Can traditional reporters abuse their talent? Yes. Ask Jason Blair.
- Unsharp mask and the history brush are the most common tools I use in Photoshop™. I also change levels and curves to help achieve a better quality image, but only to improve the quality for reproduction purposes.
- Use cloning, healing brush, levels, brightness, contrast, color balance as needed.
- Crop, color correction, dodge, burn
- Fixing color balance-the digital camera doesn't accurately record all scenes.
- Sharpening, cloning
- Cloning for dust spots (never for altering content), color balancing
- Unsharp mask, color corrections
- Layers, saturation, brightness/contrast, cloning, image sizing, unsharp mask, color adjustment
- Unsharp mask, color balance, crop
- Color correction, brightening, improving to show detail
- Personally, I use unsharp mask, and cloning tools, however, it's mainly used to rid of dust spots.

- History brush, Photoshop™ CS to highlight shadows, levels for shadows, contrast, color correct, skin tones to be true to what was shot, curves
- Unsharp mask, cloning artifacts such as dust etc. away
- Unsharp mask, layers, curves
- Cloning to remove film spots, scratches or digital flaws (never to remove something actually there); levels and curves for clarity; color saturation for printing processes and USM for bringing out edges and detail-all to give the viewer a clear image.
- Unsharp mask, auto color correction, Photoshop™ has made it easy.
- Cloning, unsharp mask, dodging, burning and cropping
- History brush, unsharp mask, rubber stamp, levels, curves
- I don't use Photoshop™. I use a different program that is better for editing and weaker for manipulation. I adjust white balance sometimes.
- Auto levels, cloning to reduce spotting
- Layers, cloning, unsharp mask, history brush, cropping
- Unsharp mask
- Unsharp mask, clone tool, curves, levels, hue saturation, color balance, crop
- Variations, unsharp mask, contrast, brightness, color balance, curves, levels
- Definitely unsharp mask. Also, curves, levels (or auto levels) and despeckle (to reduce noise in shadow areas). I use the hue/saturation tools as well as the aforementioned cropping, dodge and burn, and color balancing tools.
- If there is debris on the CCD panel, I will use the cloning stamp to take out the dust spot, much as I would use spot tone to remove dust or scratch that transferred from a negative onto the print in the darkroom. I only use layers to add caption information to a photograph before posting it on our web site, although we are about to update our automated system so that too will be a thing of the past. I never manipulate the image by adding or subtracting content of the photo. I will dodge and burn to the same extent that I worked with the print film on deadline. My ethics, my practices remain unchanged since switching to the digital medium. I am much more conscious of my actions since switching to the digital medium. I am much more conscious of my actions since switching to the digital medium. I

am much more conscious of my actions since switching to digital, whereas I don't remember worrying so much when printing and using film.

- A little unsharp, color balancing using several different methods.
- Unsharp mask, add saturation, history tool-to basically do anything I used to be able to do in a traditional darkroom and that does not in any way alter or manipulate an images content.
- Cloning for spot removal, unsharp mask on every photo, cropping when required to eliminate unnecessary or unrelated info.
- I will use the healing brush or clone tool only to clear spots that may appear in the image.

Q.15 Do you think that the photojournalism profession has become more or less strict about manipulating digital images as compared with film?

	Number of Respondents	Percentages
A	53	51.5%
B	21	20.4%
C	29	28.2%
Blank	0	0%
Total	103	100%

Q. 16-Free Response

If you said more or less strict, what do you feel has influenced your thinking about what level of manipulation is acceptable?

- People use to do crazy things. It is just about being ethical and being honest.
- It is so much easier to change things on the computer. It is easy to take things out or put things in or even put two photos together.
- If you go look at any images from the 1970's you see it done a lot. Today, people are more sensitive about it. However, you can do a lot with a lens that you could do with a computer like blurring a crowd. Its it wrong to do something on a computer you could do with a lens? I don't know.
- I suspect the same amount of manipulation goes on, but we talk about it more within the profession. Plus, it used to be a more accepted practice.
- It is so much easier now to do it so people take more liberty with it.

- The fear that it can be done. There are instances of it because it is easier to do. By in large, most photographers don't do it. There also is not a lot of time for it because of the rush to make deadlines.
- Dodging and burning used to be common, but today everything is questioned.
- It used to be harder, but it still happens. The bigger concern is that people are becoming less professional. Nowadays, it is easier to cheat.
- Fear of the word "manipulation"
- The key influence is public perception that digital images are more malleable and less reliable, as well as the fact that image manipulation is easier and quicker with digital tools. Moreover, we witnessed key abuses (such as the famously moved NG pyramid) when these technologies first became available. On many other fronts, truth is under assault. As a profession we value our credibility, and we have swung hard toward practices aimed at preserving it.
- The ease and undetectability of manipulation has allowed for more changes in the content of the images. This, however, doesn't make it a correct or ethical practice. The governing law of journalism is to NOT LIE. One may, as before, change the image to overcome the technical limitations of the medium with respect to the reproduction of the scene. No more, no less.
- Anybody that does this kind of work knows it is not worth it. It is better to have a bad photo than get caught.
- There's really a divide. Serious news organizations take it MUCH more seriously because it's a credibility issue. Some organizations, particularly magazines and especially advertising, are a lot more lax because the ethics and expectations are different.
- Back in the old days, boundaries were not set like they are today. You did what you wanted to. In talking to older photographers they did stuff to make photos better aesthetically. It is easier to do most of the same stuff today, but the ease has yielded more of a concern.
- Gross manipulation, subbing heads into bodies or places.
- I think more manipulation is done because of the ease of doing it on a computer. It's tough to get everyone to agree on where the limits exist. I like to think you should be able to look at the published image and answer an immediate yes to the question-Are you telling the truth?

- Seeing people create a picture better than reality because of their computer skills not photographic skills.
- Is less strict as an industry. Where I work, however, we're pretty strict about manipulation. I've always thought manipulation is only acceptable when it makes the image closer to what I saw with my eyes.
- Compared to 20 years ago, photojournalists have become more concerned about the manipulation of images because manipulation is now possible. We used to use excessive burning and dodging in the old print days and no one thought twice about it. Manipulating an image now can be done in the computer, by adding or removing things, baseballs, power lines, tree branches, etc. However, photographers have always been able to manipulate a photograph simply by the lens choice, the subject, they choose, the background, the shutter and aperture choice, direct flash, fill flash or no flash, the tilt of the horizon, bringing treats to entice the cat (Clinton's cat "Socks"), asking a kid to wave the flag again, etc. I believe altering content in a photo is no different than altering a quote. However, altering the look of a photo to enhance the subject is acceptable as long as it isn't excessive. The trouble is defining "excessive."
- It is okay to change the photo as long as the content is not altered and the subject is not misconstrued.
- Digital manipulation has taught us how easily we can change the meaning of an image-whether through digital means, while making the photo, or during editing and layout.
- I go by the guidelines set forth by the Associated Press.
- Recent criticism of over burning of contest photos and combining photos in the field by photojournalists and the quest for better reproduction of photographs have driven newspapers to set guidelines that are very restrictive. Discussion boards (like sportsshooter.com) and the NPPA have been very influential in this area. The obvious response is the matter involving the LA Times photographer and also OJ Simpson for Time magazine (or was it Newsweek). Since these items were such abomination of manipulation, journalists everywhere are making a great effort to distinguish themselves apart from that unrealistic approach. A photographer can change the meaning of a photo by burning and dodging to mislead the reader, however, there are ways to burn and dodge without changing the content. If you look at the photo after the burning and dodging have been completed and you ask yourself, did I change the content of the photo or mislead the reader? And ask others around you the same questions, the answer must be no. Also, a camera can accurately record a scene but once it hits the presses, it becomes muddier and darker. Sometimes you have to compensate for this process. Presses are getting better in today's world and the presses are more true to the original image than they were in the past. A photographer does not have to

compensate as much these days. I also feel that a photographer can sometimes mislead a reader just by the direction he or she points her or his camera. A true photojournalist has many responsibilities in conveying a story properly to her or his readers; photo manipulation is just one of many.

- I believe that manipulation was always something that could be done by those who thought of it as okay, even when altering is definitely not. It has always been an offense of the photojournalism code of ethics, whether digital or print.
- Newsrooms are under ever-increasing pressure to produce a saleable product. This has produced a steady erosion of manipulation standards. Indeed, the term “manipulation” has XXXX near lost its negative connotation as applied to journalistic responsibility.
- The credibility issue concerning digital images probably made our photo department more cautious than ever about any sort of “manipulation” once we converted to digital for good. You should also recognize there are different workflows around the profession. Here we crop in the photo department and perhaps lighten up an underexposed image, but the rest of pre-production is taken care of by others. We are asked not to mess with the image files beyond cropping.
- Before on film it was not as easy to alter an image. It is so much easier today to alter images on the computer that the concern is greater. In the film days it was more difficult to remove a line or something from a photograph.
- I think people mean to be as strict as they were before, but because digital manipulation is so easy, some people have become lazy and fix their pictures in Photoshop™ rather than being careful when they actually shoot the pictures. In fairness, some digital cameras lack certain image quality and the pictures you shoot with them need some “cleaning up,” a problem that you didn’t have with film (i.e. static “noise”).
- There have been more instances of people cloning out things and there is a greater degree of suspicion. I think we are more aware now that it is simpler to do. There have been instances that have made people more critical of it. It is important to only clone out dust and make sure you show what you got when you shot the picture.
- Some of the practices that have been prevalent in years past, mostly “hand of God” burning are no longer tolerated. The well-publicized digital sins committed by Brain Walski and Patrick Schneider has led to greater scrutiny of the post-production part of image making.
- I think because it is so much easier to manipulate images now. There have been many highly publicized cases about these issues and people have become more vigilant about it.



- Stricter because it's so easy now to manipulate, and I feel it's my job to hold up the ethical standards.
- Probably the examples I have seen such as the OJ Simpson photo or others where the content was changed. Anytime you alter integrity it is not a good thing.
- It is still in transition. Everybody has a different set of rules. I don't think that any alteration is okay. Dodging and burning with the OJ photo was too much. Things are stricter because we don't know the rules yet until it kind of settles down. The important thing is that we don't lie to our readers, that is what I tell everyone I hire.
- I don't feel that any level of manipulation beyond what is possible in a darkroom is acceptable. Therefore, if a pole is sticking out of the top of a person's head in a photo I would leave it there. I would never remove it. Same thing with objects that could be inappropriate to the photo like beer cans. They would stay. I would crop around them since that could be done in a darkroom, but if it would greatly alter the photo, I would never do it.
- I would have to say that since Photoshop™ is such an easy program to become literate with and the amount you can do with Photoshop™, the ethics and rules have to shift to tougher due to the amount of manipulation that is possible.
- Color correction, toning and some lighting manipulation is necessary. Since digital photography makes it possible to alter the content....NOTHING that alters the content can be done to a news photograph.
- I believe that digital manipulation should be limited to the equivalent of what was acceptable in the darkroom. For example, burning a background down to black (to eliminate the background entirely) would not have been acceptable at either the digital or the film level, but burning down washed-out highlights or lightening a face to make it more readable were considered acceptable practices in the darkroom, and I think that should translate to digital as well.
- I have not changed my practices. However, others have been influenced by the ease of making changes in Photoshop. Although, there was overdone "Hand of God" burning in the 1970's.
- I've heard people say that the only acceptable manipulation is that which could have been done in the darkroom, but I believe that even in a darkroom, a skilled photo-finisher could alter an image to a harmful degree. I think that because the industry has come under scrutiny, many photographers, including myself, are taking a look at how much they have altered images and are asking themselves if these alterations impact the reality that we as journalists are trying to share with our readers.

- It is every photojournalist's responsibility to present his or her product as accurately as possible, just as in writing text. The problem with digital photography, it is so much easier to add and subtract to make the picture attractive. Making a picture attractive is for the feature and fine art presentations. Some manipulation may be necessary because the flash was too bright, close or not enough to light the subject. Therefore, some adjustment must be made so that the picture can be printed in the newspaper. We need to think in terms of what we did in the darkroom. It is up to those of us to teach the new photographers what we did in the darkroom and relate it to digital manipulation. It's a tough call, but we must also be ethical in what we present to the public when we are reporting an event. I also "spot" my pictures if there are "dust marks."
- Patrick Schneider was in trouble.
- I think it is about the same, only because I use only techniques such as dodging and burning...in the event of a bad exposure and then cloning to get rid of scratches.
- Groups like NPPA are talking about manipulation more and setting strict guidelines, because digital manipulation is so easy now. When the general public can alter a picture on their home computer, some assume that we do it. We as a profession need to be very careful or we will lose all credibility.
- Recent manipulated photos and how they effected the profession. Better software, which can more easily alter a photo to a greater degree.
- You never want to use Photoshop™ to change the photo entirely. You only want to tweak the image for the presses you're using for publication. If you have to use Photoshop™ to get the image you wanted, you shot the situation on the wrong camera settings. Digital manipulation is less constricting-many take out telephone lines in images and save over the original image-no one would ever know it was actually there. More trust has been mandatory among editors and the public. I think there should be more ethics demanded by our editors and the public.
- There is too much temptation to diddle with the digits and too little oversight by editors, who in many locations expect the photographer who took the picture to do the digital prep for publication.
- The fact that practices that were used in the darkroom are only now being considered manipulation by some papers.
- It is strict. It is different when you color correct. I don't believe in altering any content.

- Many, many newspapers once had a retouching department. When I started in the 1970s they had one that touched up every photo for separation of subject to background and whatever else they thought needed to be done. They did more damage with ethics than most photographers since they would take great liberties that photographers often would not or could not. At my current paper's files we have a photo of a famous local person who had been photographed in a thin strapped gown. I found the photo with a blazer cut from a separate photo and pasted over the surface of the original so she appeared to be wearing a jacket. Just one of many many examples. If you want to know find a newspaper and search the print files from 1980 and earlier.
- Since I retired I still freelance for several medias, and I have conversed with them about toning the pictures I send, and they agreed it was ok, but limited to toning only.
- I would never say acceptable, only that the ease of digital manipulation and lack of ethical values makes it more possible and done more often. For instance, if the "hand of God" technique you refer to below is the additional or removal of objects or persons to a scene or blending two images together (except for editorial illustration) without full disclosure, then it would be unethical.
- Recent things such as I have seen some guys have been fired.
- The digital age has give photographers the tools to make the image have more impact. There is now an entertainment aspect of photojournalism that allows a lot to happen.
- The ease of which a photographer can change reality. An extremely skilled darkroom photographer could never achieve some of the results a digital manipulator can create. That is great for a graphic designer, but for those of us who work in the reality of news (even if it is a choreographed PR event), there is no room for lying.
- I am recalling that 15-20 years ago when they would develop in the darkroom the group was more into contest at that time. In today's world none of that would be acceptable. Sensitivity seems to change.
- There are so many things that you could do, but it is important not to abuse them. We could do so many things now, so many things are possible that it is subject to potential abuse. There is more of an awareness than before. You can modify a picture without changing basic elements. You have to be careful not to be reckless.
- It is easier to make changes than it used to be. It took a high amount of skill in the darkroom, and it's just easier to make changes now.

- If you could do it in the darkroom, you can do it in Photoshop™. It is just a different way to do it in Photoshop™.
- An accumulation of professional experiences, NPPA and other workshops, being a university instructor for three decades, watching and listening to my peers, my audience, my students.
- When I say more strict, I am referring to a continuing evolution of ethical standards in the profession, moving from Eugene Smith’s darkroom manipulations and staging of photographs to our current higher standards to document that which we see, and to minimize our presence both during the actual shooting and subsequent production work in PhotoShop™. I think the irresponsible and unethical actions of a few in our profession have made all photojournalists become more accountable for our actions. It has undermined a trust in photography held by the general public, and I have to answer questions like, “Can’t you just airbrush my wrinkles (or blemishes)” when I am shooting a subject who is uncomfortable with their appearance. I think they are asking in a half-joking tone, but I also think they want to know the parameters of my actions. I always tell them no, that only gets done in fashion magazines and the occasional Time Magazine cover of OJ Simpson.
- I think it’s just easier to “clean up” a picture to an extent that may have been impossible to do at the scene where you shot the image. Sometimes you can move yourself only so much to get a decent background. I feel that few photogs in the professional realm manipulate the content of a photo to change what actually appears to be happening but many edit for technical reasons, generally to unclutter or enhance a photo, ie. Aiming for more contrast of values because of shoddy newsprint techniques.
- People are being caught and “drummed out” they are then blackballed forever.
- Manipulation was much more difficult to do with film/prints-now the tools such as Photoshop™ are readily available-to almost all photographers. With the insertion of the digital photography into the newsroom-there has been very little to No education given to the photographers on its dangers and potential for abuse.

Q. 17 Are you familiar with the “hand of God technique?”

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
A	75	72.8%
B	28	27.2%
Blank	0	0%
Total	103	100%

Q. 18-Free Response Question

In the space provided please explain what the “hand of God” technique is:

- Heavy burning in the image with your hand in the middle
- A dodging technique used in order to see details. Burns were done especially in black and white photography.
- Excessive dodging and burning
- Intentional burning in of a portion of a photograph. The technique was often used to make the sky look darker and not just white.
- Over burning or dodging. People used to use their hand so that the image was black on part of it. I have gone through old images and seen hundreds of them.
- It used to be done in the darkroom. It is basically dodging and burning.
- It is when you take an image to an extreme to the point where modifications become apparent. It is an extreme dodging or extreme burning.
- Burning down the edges or parts of the photograph in order to direct the viewer to the focus of the photo.
- I was a young shooter as Jerry Gay won photographer of the year with a stack of pictures that had black halos around the subjects. I learned early to burn the corners of my prints with additional, sometimes multiple exposures following an initial enlarger blast. I knew that some people would even remove the negative from an enlarger to make the hand of God stronger, but I also learned that the best B/W(and that’s all we did at the time) prints showed no signs of manipulation, and that manipulation should never change the meaning of what was in front of the camera. These are lessons that have stuck with me. As a news photographer, my role is to show what was there, to the best of my ability with the tools available. Film, Paper, Ink and Pixels have limits to their dynamic ranges and characteristic curves. I manipulate them to make those limits more realistically show the scene that was in front of my camera.
- Heavy darkening of the area around the main subject.
- In the “good old days” of my youth, the technique was used to darken any portion of the image, usually the sky to draw the reader’s attention to the unaltered portion of the image.
- Excessive burning in of a photo—essentially rendering any extraneous part of the photo as unreadable in order to focus attention on the main subject of the photo.

- Heavily burning down the areas around the main subject of a photograph, creating a halo effect or “hand of God” look.
- Burning or darkening to create a preserved aesthetic value.
- It is the obvious darkening of an area of an image that is done to a degree that it is noticeable.
- Burning a sky and or background beyond reality to emphasis the subject matter.
- Excessive burning or dodging to direct the eye to the subject or eliminate a distracting background.
- Severely darkening the corners of a print by burning in.
- Hand of God is burning the background down so much so that the subject is the only focus in the photo. This was popular, but it is clearly excessive now.
- “Hand of God” technique is burning each corner of the image to create a slightly dark halo around the image to keep a viewer’s eye from wandering off the photo. It was used in the darkroom to keep the viewer’s attention on the photo.
- The hand of God technique basically means that the photographer wants the viewer to see the photograph as they saw it; not necessarily how it came out in film or print. When you are at a scene, it is sometimes difficult to get a good photo while including some of the ambiance of the moment. For instance, I photographed a burning taxicab in NYC and the heat coming off the cab was immense. How can you transfer that “heat” to the photograph and convey how hot the air was without the smoke obscuring the photo?
- Using your hands to burn in the surrounding background area of the main subject matter. This makes the viewer focus on the subject instead of the background.
- Heavy burning of edges to direct the eye to the subject.
- It is burning the edges of a photo to eliminate all or nearly all of the background distractions in the image. It is a technique that we didn’t use with film and do not use digitally.
- Burning around a key subject in order to darken the background, make distractions less obvious, make subject stand out. It used to be used frequently for dramatic effect, particularly with relatively poor (85-line screen) newspaper reproduction. Now unless it is extremely well done and subtle, it looks fake and contrived, especially if the lighter area around the subject is too light, resulting in a halo effect.

- Hand of God is a burning technique that darkened large areas of an image to focus the attention of a reader to the most significant area of the photo. This heavy-handed manipulation was common practice in the 70s and 80s in black and white printing.
- The hand of God technique is usually meant to describe a burn that is so severe, and obvious that only the hand of God could have created that kind of visual in the real world. It is so “unreal” that the reader surely knows that it was a severe burn to draw attention to the subject of the photo.
- The expression of the “hand of God” technique often referred to the technique of over burning around the edges of a black and white print. This is something we also most always noted with prints done at the University of Missouri photojournalism program. Many others picked up with this style during the late 1970’s and 1980’s.
- Burning or dodging selected areas, (most commonly background distractions, until they are unseen. Often only the primary subject of the photo is recognizable.
- The hand of God is the over burning of the background to provide a contrast for the main subject of the photo. Your eye is drawn to light...make the main subject lighter than a background and it pulls the viewer to where you want them to look. It is this “over burn” that puts a halo around the subject giving it a saintly look.
- It was a technique used by old timers to produce a halo technique around the subject visualized by a black halo. Usually this compensated for the crappy presses and screening techniques of the time that was better suited for line art. Some held on to the technique because people are creatures of habit, and they feel comfortable with what they know and it’s just XXXX easy not the control the flow of light and make a big black circle. It never represented reality and was a necessary evil of early publishing, but remains a cherished “art form” by some.
- Caricatures of photos.
- Heavy burning of the background of photos to focus the eye on what the photographer wants you to see.
- “Hand of God” is over-burning to emphasize a certain aspect of a picture. It is meant to steer the viewer’s eyes to a specific part of a picture (or steer their eyes away). It is sometimes used to clean up a very cluttered or sloppy background.
- A way of dodging and burning.
- Heavy burning (and dodging) to “guide” the viewers eyes to the area of the photo you want to showcase or highlight.

- Burning down or darkening of an image where you take away visual information, usually a cluttered background, to enhance the impact of the foreground.
- Over use of dodging and burning, usually burning techniques. It really changes the content of photography.
- Depends on how you define it, it's probably different for each photographer.
- It is a burning technique to bring out one part of the image to control the viewers eye. It is guiding the viewer to a specific part of the image.
- Altering a photo so much that it goes from a photo to a painting.
- The "hand of God" technique is a technique used with levels and curves in Photoshop™. A number of photographers have been guilty of this, as well as me. However, a "halo" or noticeable darkened edge of the frame would also classify as the "hand of God."
- Rather than a technique, I have always thought it was when the dodging of a subject (or burning-in of the area around the subject) was so pronounced that it gave the appearance of a halo or an aura around the subject.
- Overdone obvious heavy burning of the background especially the sky to emphasize foreground action.
- This is a darkroom technique using dodging and burning to vignette the edges of an image to assist the impact of a picture and the images reproduction. This is associated technique was part of the photographic style of visual journalism seen in the works of Jerry Gay, Stan Grossfield, and Pat Crowe. However, there are other historic images that pre-date these acclaimed NPPA award winners.
- I've heard people say that computer manipulations allows photo-finishers to play the role of God in that they can easily alter an image that completely changes the meaning, composition, feel or overall tone of an image. Something as simple as clearing up acne on a persons face or enhancing features, to adding people or other elements to an image that didn't exist in the real situation in which the image was made. The "hand of God" is much more extreme understanding of photo manipulation than traditional darkroom techniques.
- A poor way to draw the viewer into the photograph it should not have to be used if the photographer would shot a good image.
- Burning down the background of a photo to get rid of distractions-some think this changes the meaning of a news photo-but sometimes a sports photo needs some help-however, I don't use this technique.



- When you burn down the background of a scene to full black, the subject ends up looking like they are lit “by the hand of God.” While it was acceptable years ago, it is totally unacceptable and unethical today.
- I have been taught that it is when you burn or dodge something out to see details.
- Over-dodging or burning that blacks out what should be highlights, or the sky—a black line around an object that has obviously been overexposed and then “burned in.” Evidence of someone manipulating the image in some way in the darkroom. It is less likely to happen with digital photos, but it may be just as prevalent.
- Burning the edges to black or near black to create a halo around the subject to be emphasized.
- That’s a term from way back when many photogs in the darkroom enhanced their pictures with dodging and burning, especially sky, and sun effects.
- Severely dodging. People won awards with it, but I never did it because I thought it looked stupid.
- It is an old technique that allowed people to dodge and burn a large area. The technique is real apparent.
- Burning down the edges of a photograph, around the subject, to a very dark tone. Often used as a derogatory term commenting on the quality of the burn job. Though this technique was sometimes acceptable use by some newspapers, opinions were (and still are) mixed.
- Burning down distractive elements.
- Burn an image so much that the basic image would be different. It is okay as long as it doesn’t take away from the basic integrity of the subject.
- When a certain part of a photo is burned to emphasize and de-emphasize parts of an image.
- Extensive burning/dodging to isolate thru selective darkening of the main subject. Typically involves very dark sky, corners and edges until only the desired subject “shows through.” Might involve taking areas of a photo to actual black to concentrate viewers’ attention only on subject, even to the point of obliterating “extraneous” detail or information.
- The “hand of God” technique was used by photographers to dodge the faces usually shot against a background containing sky or sometimes a dark wall and there would be a halo effect around the head. It was an extreme post-production

response by the photographer to adjust the exposure of the image. There are several reasons this might have happened, either fill-flash techniques were not enough of an exposure, or the camera/film/situation conspired to render the image differently than the photographer wished. By and large, I believe the method was a last resort to get the photograph in condition to be printed at a time when presses were not as forgiving as they are now, and our equipment would fall short of our vision. I rarely resorted to the hand of God, preferring to keep the image as “natural” looking as possible, but there were situations like spot news at night or an underexposed negative that made that dodging technique a necessity in order to reproduce the image in the paper.

- Extreme burning of the sky or background in a photograph-to the point where the part that has not been dodged appears to “glow” or pop out of the image....the practice equates to taking the dodging and burning angle TOO FAR.

Q. 19 How often did you use dodging and burning techniques when developing photographs in the darkroom?

	Number of Respondents	Percentages
A	11	10.7%
B	20	19.4%
C	25	24.3%
D	43	41.7%
Blank	4	3.9%
Total	103	100%

Q. 20 Is this more or less in relation to the amount of manipulation you do today, than with developing film in the darkroom?

	Number of Respondents	Percentages
A	41	39.8%
B	38	36.9%
C	14	13.6%
Blank	10	9.7%
Total	103	100%

Q. 21 Do you think the association acted correctly in revoking the awards?

	Number of Respondents	Percentages
A	51	49.5%
B	26	25.2%
Blank	26	25.2%
Total	103	100%

Q. 21 Continued-Why?

- I would have to see it.
- I saw the originals, and they were altered quite a bit.
- It was a news event. The pictures were altered for the contest. Press contests should be based on how the images appeared in the newspaper.
- I am unsure how excessive it was. However, I think it is a good thing someone has made a stand.
- You can look at the past NPPA photographs and see examples of winning photographs where the same thing was done.
- I think they overreacted more than they would have 15 years ago. It was an overreaction to modern technology.
- The content of the photos were altered. The emotion was there without altering the photo. He didn't have to do what he did. It is foolish what he did. I agreed with what the NPPA said. It is easy to get tempted but you have to remember to pull yourself back.
- My answer is based on more information than you have provided: I have seen the pictures, while Patrick did not violate rules of his paper or clearly violate contest rules, his actions should have and the rules have changed. His manipulation did not merely darken the background to lead the eye; they essentially obliterated it. Adding a false drama to the image, he changed the scene.
- Only one of the images was questionable in my opinion-that could be revoked. The others were not over the top and the punishment was just adding to the situation.

- I have not seen the originals and the manipulated images. If the content of the image was changed, then that by definition, is an unethical change to the picture, and thus, disqualified from award consideration.
- It depends on how excessive it was.
- His burning in of his photos was beyond excessive, to the point where it ceased to be burning—he basically eliminated parts of the photo.
- Without knowing the exact amount of “darkening” it would be hard to comment, but merely darkening an annoying bright area in a photograph is just a tool used to draw the readers eye toward the main subject and is no different from “flashing” photo paper to bring down contrast or burning down in darkroom work.
- In at least one case, he significantly changed the content of the image by totally removing the background. In two other photos, he really didn’t change the content much. Thus, only one image was troublesome, but that was more than enough.
- I never approved of that technique in a darkroom. I only approve of it when it is used purely in an illustration and the illustration is clearly labeled. It is called the Schneider technique or old hand of God technique, and I don’t approve of it.
- In one instance, he went too far on the firefighters photo, the rest were just in keeping with standard dodging and burning techniques.
- I don’t know the whole story about this incident, but if the darkening was in the realm of what you could have done in the darkroom, then it’s okay. Now, if the contest rules said no digital manipulation at all then those are the rules. Once again, look at the images—ARE YOU TELLING THE TRUTH?
- The photographs had impact exclusively to catch the eye of judges. General public knowingly sees a false reality.
- If the rules state such manipulation isn’t acceptable, then his photos don’t qualify.
- Imaging software should be used to make images match the original scene by adjusting them to the specifics of the reproduction system being used, not to modify the scene to be more pleasing to look at than the real-life situation was.
- This is a tough one because I do not believe that a clear guideline or industry standard was established at the time. I think Schneider was the straw that broke the camels back. The discussion that has resulted because of this incident was long over due. It is unfortunate that Schneider was singled out because I’m sure he was not the only photographer using a similar technique.

- I never saw the photos, but Schneider must have manipulated his photos to the extent it was obvious to the judges that the photos had been grossly over manipulated. Responsible photojournalists do not over manipulate their photos, unless it is a photo illustration and clearly marked as such. “Photojournalists” who desire to over manipulate their photos should slide on over into the world of photo art, not journalism.
- Because the guidelines apparently weren’t clear. The photographer was submitting a piece of art, which happened to be in the form of a photograph. You cannot separate photography and digital enhancement techniques.
- Apparently Schneider went too far in altering the photograph. This changes the perception of the image. When done in the darkroom manipulation was obvious when done. Digital photography lets the photographer change the image without noticeable changes.
- Don’t know...can’t decide whether or not it was ethical until we see how the picture was altered.
- While I don’t think it is a good practice to use extreme burning it has been a common and accepted practice at newspapers for many years prior to the digital revolution. Unless the Observer has a specific policy against such manipulation he was unjustly suspended. I would be even more interested to see archives of the organizations winners. I’m sure we would find more examples of the practice.
- I would have to see comparative images (before and after) in order to answer the question.
- I’m only aware of the situation, but never saw the photograph(s) in question, so I can’t give an opinion on this.
- There were no standards that had been set for this contest, and I have seen both the before images and the after images. They are/were within the standard we currently use today. I know Patrick personally and trust him to show the truth. Only one of his photos was burned beyond the point where I would consider normal standards today, The background in the tight funeral photo was excessively burned down.
- I did not see the photograph(s) that were manipulated by burning and dodging, but if they were to enhance the photo digitally, then that is manipulating the photo to the extent that a photographer is changing the editorial content of the photograph. I would agree in this instance that the awards should be revoked if the content was changed. If the burning and dodging did not change the content, I would disagree.
- Having not studied those shots, I’m not sure what Patrick did to enhance those images. I did hear about it but at the time didn’t research it. In earlier days a black

and white print might be past over because the printed was poorly done. In digital I feel that many don't know how or understand the limit of toning with their work.

- After studying the offending photographs, we (my staff of photographers) determined the one image (firefighters at a memorial) clearly and obviously altered the reality of the event. The other images, however, we felt were just better adjusted to relate the reality of the scene.
- I cannot respond to this one, because I have not read enough about the case to have an informed opinion. If the content of the image was indeed altered in a way that mislead readers as to the image's content and purpose, then the award revocation was justified.
- Photojournalists are artist and photo reporters mixed in one. Any image needs impact to be used at all. If the reader sees the photograph, he looks at it because it caught his eye, and he might read the story or the caption that will complete the process. Even the best photos need words, to help explain the story used his double truck spread. Using long lens or super wide ones, also distort reality, should we throw them away, or use them as the important tools they have become? Photography is two dimensions trying to bust out into three. Even though it is close to reality, it really is just someone's personal perspective through the magic of the camera lens.
- He passed the point of making the photos closer to reality and altered the original content.
- I don't have enough info to respond.
- Too much manipulation changed overall content of photographs. He should have been disqualified if the images were done in the darkroom. (He is an outstanding photojournalist, however).
- I'm not familiar with the images, so I will say in general I find burning obvious in digital images and therefore capable of raising questions about credibility.
- I keep the Poynter articles about this incident book marked. I think the firefighter-grieving photo deserved to be revoked, due to over manipulation. The other two I think are acceptable toning techniques.
- I would have to see what he did.
- Judges shouldn't take away awards after they are presented. I don't always agree with how judges judge contests.

- You can darken a background to enhance a picture by cleaning up clutter in the background, but if you darken too much you change the actual content, making it seem as if the image was shot in front of a clean background.
- I did not understand how they could have revoked the award. Since some were burned or dodged to that extreme in the darkroom.
- I believe Patrick Schneider became the sacrificial lamb for many photographers who have used the burning down technique in the past. Schneider was probably singled out because he went a bit too far, by removing information instead of de-emphasizing it.
- I thought they might have gone overboard. I don't agree with what was done, but it has been done before. They used him as an example.
- The same thing could have been done in the darkroom. How it was shot could have resulted in the same thing.
- I am torn about it. If I were his editor I wouldn't have let him run it. He is an honest guy that wouldn't lie to a reader. He did it to cover up a mistake. I can't say for sure, but I think it was still a great photo.
- First, I have not seen the photo in question, but based on the simple fact that he altered the content from the statement provided I would say he crossed the line. By crossing the line I mean darkening portions of the photo so that they were seen as not to be there. If the area in question was darkened to the point that you could see what was happening but the photo still read then I don't think he should have had the award taken back.
- Because of the manipulation allowed ethically was far less than that of what Patrick produced. Dodging and burning are acceptable not only in the darkroom but in Photoshop™. The exceptions to these however are the amount you burn or dodge a photo. When you darken a photo to an extent of making the subject "Pop" that is different than darkening it to loose distracting elements.
- Well. I haven't seen the photograph to tell you why, but merely darkening the photo could have helped the viewer to understand the content. As long as it didn't alter the content... Why not?
- The photos in question were darkened to an extreme amount, eliminating the background entirely. As I mentioned above, dodging and burning are acceptable to lighten faces or darken a washed-out highlight. The job of the photographer is to use his/her skills to make a compelling photograph, and each photographer strives to find the right light, composition, framing, focus, etc. If these conditions do not exist then it's up to the photographer, not software, to come up with a

solution. Neither dodging/burning, nor other manipulation techniques whether with film, digital or otherwise, should be used to correct faulty photography.

- The photographs submitted were overly manipulated and were not the documentary presentation they were represented to be.
- I am a North Carolina photographer, and I have followed the issue closely. A before and after alteration comparison shows significant changes were made. While the majority of the alterations were simple burning techniques, the entire mood and feel of the image changed, and therefore, the reality of the image was compromised. As a young photographer, I looked up to the work that Patrick did. He has an amazing eye for composition and for many other tenets of photography, but when he altered an image to the point that the reality of the situation was blurred, he stepped beyond his role as an unbiased journalist who was hired to depict reality and into a role of artist who chose real-life situations as his canvas.
- If the photographer is to report an event, it should be presented as such. If we burn in too much, then the immediate response of the viewer is to disregard that part of the picture. If the portion which has been burned in a lot is relevant to the story, then the excess burning in is not ethical! If the photograph is to be presented in a feature or fine art format and one part of the photo is to be lighter, then so be it. We photographers must always use good judgment in presenting an image of a news event!
- It sounded like it may have been an issue of jealousy.
- If it was to change the mood then yes, but if it was just because of a bad exposure on a face or other subject then I think it is completely fine.
- The amount of burning in those photographs changed the content of the picture. That is the same as cloning out an unwanted element, and is unethical.
- Although I'm not familiar with photos, the alterations must have changed what the photo was saying.
- This is not an art class. We are visual journalists. We're here to record the truth of events, places and people. If he wanted a darker background he could have altered camera settings a little to help him out.
- The photographer manipulated the images, and in my view, the unsullied version of at least one of the pictures was superior.
- Photographs are constantly being manipulated, whether in the camera, or in the darkroom or now the digital darkroom. Nothing has truly changed in photography, practices are the same, and should remain just that practices.



- There needs to be a demonstration by the gathered “experts” ie. Judges that there is a point that is too much manipulation.
- Well, it depends. If to make the picture dramatic to draw the viewer’s eye without changing the facts, it should have been acceptable. On the other hand, if a bright or clear day became stormy, then the image is unacceptable.
- Based on one of the photos they should have.
- Just from knowing the work, I don’t think they should have taken the awards away.
- Huge amounts of information were removed, or subdued, I should say. If the backgrounds were that bad, then the photographer should be good enough to rely on his own photographic technique to shoot around the problem. He lied. In my judgment, his blackening, not just darkening, of the background was out of step with what is acceptable in the industry. That would probably be a friable offense at our paper.
- You have to take into consideration that there was a really disturbing background. Might be a good case that he over stepped because it helped set the limits of what would be acceptable.
- The alteration of the photo was “to excess”
- I am conflicted by this question for two reasons. First, I barely remember the images in question. Second, I think it is possible to find yourself in a situation that causes you to walk a fine ethical line when trying to produce an image on deadline. It is always a question of degree. If you had asked about the LA Times reporter who digitally cut and pasted two images to make one, thus creating an image that does not exist, then the clear answer is that he acted in an unethical fashion and deserves to be fired. If a photographer dodges and burns an image, that image would exist whether he or she chose to dodge or not to dodge. I always try to accurately represent what I saw at an event, since I am the eyes and ears for readers who cannot be present. I want those readers to trust me to print and reproduce what I see. If Mr. Schneider was changing the content of a photograph to the degree that it did not accurately or truthfully tell the story he was assigned to cover and printed it in his newspaper, then I believe the panel was correct in their judgment. If the panel is faulting all photographers for cropping and toning a photograph because the photographer didn’t have the right equipment or conditions to capture what he/she saw, I think that is excessive.
- I feel that digital imaging has not reached a point yet where the level of contrast is the same or even close to the same as one would see in film. Many photogs grew up and were trained with film, and many try to mimic what a film representation of the view would look like, instead of a digital view (and there are marked

differences!) All in all, we want to show the scene that we saw, not what the camera recorded, and it can be a frustrating thing to try and recreate.

- I have seen the photos in question, and I only found one photo to be altered in a way that was unacceptable, and for that photo he should have been kicked out, but others were common practices. (If this is the incident I am thinking of with the photos of the firefighters with a black background-that is the photo I had a problem with) As for color balancing I believe imagers sometimes make adjustments that would differ from what the photog would do. In my recent work I had an imager crop a ball out of a photo, if I were to enter that in a contest I would enter a version with the ball in it.
- Yes, Mr. Schneider burned backgrounds down to the point of eliminating them- therefore he was altering the content of the news photograph.
- I vaguely recall the controversy, and I can't recall how much he changed the images...seems that it was a firefighter's funeral or policeman's funeral and it seems that he completely eliminated some things from the photo creating a degree of despair and loneliness that didn't reflect the real situation. In fact the photo editor probably should have sent them back to be corrected before publication.

Q. 22 Do you think that the awards would have been revoked during the days when film was processed and prints were altered only in the darkroom?

	Number of Respondents	Percentages
A	14	13.6%
B	64	62.1%
Blank	25	24.3%
Total	103	100%

Q. 22-Why?

- I don't think it would have happened at that time.
- I just don't think it would have been a big deal then.
- It was harder to do that kind of stuff in the darkroom. At the time the hand of God technique was an accepted part of the business.
- Tons of people won that way. I don't agree with it. It was too much.
- At that time it would have been more obvious and harder to do what he did.
- Again, I have seen the picture, and in this case, folks had seen the difference between what was published in the paper and what he entered in the contest. It

took a while for the impact of such high-impact printing to settle in during the 1970s. We all liked the ball-grabbing effect, but we became uneasy as it went to extremes. I am confident that heavy hand of God techniques became out of fashion because contest judges stopped rewarding it. Indeed, I'm sure that many images were never awarded prizes specifically because they featured obvious, extreme corner/background burning. In this case, the burning was so extreme and so slick that it appeared to be "real." It wasn't.

- Standards have become much stricter.
- We are far more aware of ethical concerns than we were then.
- It seems that "hand of God" was tolerated more during the days of b/w darkroom work.
- If those awards would have been revoked in the past, and I don't ever recall hearing about such a thing happening for those reasons, why should they be now?
- Again, when you change the content of the photo, it's a clear breach of ethics.
- Common practice, look at Eugene Smith
- I've judged many contests and when something was over done, it was simply tossed to the out pile. The judges simply said you would not win with that kind of technique. Today of course, you can do it so perfectly that the judges may have felt they were being tricked.
- Because the "real" photo is what we strive to achieve. It is not real if it is created in the darkroom.
- The "hand of God" was a common sight among contest winners in the days of gone.
- I don't think that heavily dodged/burned images would have won, back in the day of hand-made prints.
- Because it was common and accepted practice at least in the Boston area where I worked at the time.
- Darkroom manipulation did not have all the tools available that Photoshop can handle.
- Because there are certain circumstances where the photo needs to be altered in order to highlight certain features or defocus others. The photographer or "artist" is the one who decides what is to be conveyed through the photograph.

- That was the standard practice in photojournalism.
- No, in those days, the hand of God burning was acceptable. These days, the photojournalism world is much more sensitive to these issues.
- Altering the image is wrong, totally, but dodging and burning to help the image look more like it did when it was shot has to be more flexible. The sky was blue with clouds, not washed out and pale.
- It's less the digital manipulation, and more electronic media. As newspapers use web sites, and more pictures are distributed over more news networks. Judges are many times more likely to have seen the photo in its original version. Once a photographer makes a clear print, it should remain the same.
- Heavy dodging and burning were much more common, especially with black and white photos.
- I have seen photos in contests that were very God-like in presentation. The judges knew that they were burned down. It was not a major deal. They understood the intent of the photographer. Digital should be judged in the same way. Was it the photographer's intent to deceive the viewer? If it was, toss it and the award.
- Manipulating anything too much is not ethical in my opinion. Too much, however, is a vague description and is up to the community of editing, readers and judges to determine. This "line" that should not be crossed has remained pretty consistent over the years because of the credibility of the people in the industry.
- Probably not, but again, I'd have to see how egregious this was. Certainly heavy-handed burning was allowed at some operations, though not always condoned by peers.
- The era of "hand of God" burning, I think, has passed. I don't think it is as acceptable now, either ethically or aesthetically. His burn technique on the firefighter-grieving photo was so heavy, and seemed to rely on the computer so much; I don't think he could have pulled it off as well in the darkroom (unless maybe if he used a mask). The other two photos seem to have only been changed within acceptable darkroom (either wet or electronic) standards.
- It depends on the photo.
- In the days of the darkroom it would have been more the norm. During that time more things were setup. Plus exposures were not always right and you have to judge everything to get it to look right.

- I would hope so, but only if the content was blatantly altered. I have no problem with some dodging and burning, but I can't accept making a cluttered background totally dark to cover it up.
- I think people are hypersensitive now. Some degree of creative artistry has been taken away.
- For some reason darkroom manipulation was and is considered as part of the artistic process, while digital manipulation is considered unethical.
- I think most did some of that for contests.
- But only because I believe that the photos would not be able to be altered to the extent that is feasible by the technology that is available.
- Again, as long as the content was not altered, Why Not?
- I think it would have been just as bad for the photographer to do this back then; however, I believe it would have been harder to do in the darkroom.
- Probably not because "hand of God" burning won awards. However, I thought it was wrong then and I believe it is wrong now. It is not realistic or true to the situation.
- I don't think that the issue was as widespread because altering an image successfully was a much more complicated task and few would ever suspect it. Do I think the awards SHOULD have been revoked? Yes, if, as in the case of Patrick Schneider of the Charlotte Observe, reality was altered in the changes that were made.
- If the burning in is excessive where it changes the credibility of reporting what actually took place, the picture has been removed from straight news reporting to fine art. The image has been "editorialized," the photographer is making an editorial statement and not reporting straight news.
- We didn't have idiots like the National Geographic, Rick Smolan and a certain LA Times Photographer completely changing the content of photographs.
- Everyone corrects their image to print better for the reader to see.
- That type of manipulation was more common then. Many years ago, newspaper presses were so bad, that hand of God burning was almost required so the picture could be seen clearly on newsprint.
- Harder to prove, and we are more strict now that so much can be done.

- When in the darkroom-it is very easy to tell a lot of manipulation. In Photoshop™- it's different. There are so many things possible with new technology-lying can become easier.
- I don't think people realized what all could be done in the darkroom.
- I've been a judge in various photo competitions, national and regional, and if the tinkering was obvious I'd always vote not to consider the entry.
- Because burning and dodging were considered normal practices, and digital is supposed to be perfect. However, when you are working with light nothing is "perfect."
- Because the standards for printing varied enough to allow for extreme dodging and burning.
- Burning and dodging, contrast control and visual brightening were tools to balance the press product to viewers perception. For instance, darkening the corners with sky created an edge on a picture that other wise would have had no boundary.
- I don't think he would have been given an award during that time.
- No, I think there is currently a "hyper-awareness" of digital techniques. The sheer mention of digital manipulation is a hot button, knee-jerk topic. In the film days, I would, and did, give those photos a chuckle, thinking what poor technique, or hey, they're mimicking some east-coast paper. It is too bad some photographers think they need the extra helping hand of technology to elevate their otherwise lame images.
- It probably would have gotten more give and take, but probably would have ended with the same result.
- Times were different, morays were different. Then it was "artistic" and acceptable, even desirable and often the technique was tacitly approved or even encouraged by seeing the winners in various contests.
- For the same reasons that we still consider Gene Smith a great photographer, the times and ethics were evolving, and there wasn't as much discussion in those days about the (forgive the pun) gray areas of post production in photojournalism. I think it is an encouraging sign of progress that we are having these discussions, that we are held to a high standard in our profession. Not that I compare us to the legal profession, but a parallel argument can be made-whether you are to fault the courts for upholding a law 50 years ago that we have since changed and now consider to be wrong or unethical, like certain states banning inter-racial marriage or denying female U.S. citizens the right to vote during the suffragist movement.

- In the darkroom, unless you had years of experience, it was hard to make many prints that all looked the same. Indeed, one could work for hours until he or she achieved the perfect image...and then they would be hard-pressed to make a second copy. I think that these efforts were taken into account as part of the necessary job back then. Now, everyone assumes that since the cameras are “better” (a subjective opinion) that a photog shouldn’t have to do as much editing because it’s done in the camera (say in the issue of white balance vs. toning in the darkroom).
- Although it depends on when, in earlier eras of photography it was acceptable, but more recent times, before the advent of film I would say yes they would have been revoked.
- At that time people were not thinking about such issues and many just expressed their dislike of the “hand of God” technique-and also people who employed such a technique never seemed to take it to the extreme that Mr. Schneider.
- The degree of manipulation wouldn’t have been possible in a darkroom without it looking amateurish and unreal and therefore the awards wouldn’t have been given for those photos in the first place.

Q. 23 Did you darken or lighten photographs more in the darkroom than you do today?

	Number of Respondents	Percentages
A	45	43.7%
B	43	41.7%
C	8	7.8%
Blank	7	6.8%
Total	103	100%

Q. 24 Do you feel your ideas about manipulating photographs have changed over the years?

	Number of Respondents	Percentages
A	46	44.7%
B	54	52.4%
Blank	3	2.9%
Total	103	100%

Q. 25-Free Response

If yes, what do you feel has caused you to change your ideas about acceptable manipulation in photographs?

- I was still ethical 20 years ago.
- Because people don't realize how easy it is to manipulate. It is easy to change something real quick. Photo illustrations are a good example. Today, it is easier to manipulate without altering the overall image. All photo illustrations should be marked.
- I firmly believe news photos should stand on their own merit.
- I have been very ethical since the beginning. Today there is easier potential for photographers to change a picture and remove a pole out of someone's head.
- I think at a newspaper, photojournalists should never alter anything that would cause their credibility into question. Manipulation doesn't have to happen in a darkroom. For example, the use of a wide-angle lens could make someone look bigger. The important thing is to keep it accurate.
- My boss has a magazine approach versus a newspaper approach. He will pull people aside if something goes too far.
- Changing standards of ethics.
- The state of the art has improved over time so that less manipulation is required today to overcome the limitations of the medium.
- I never thought about doing it.
- The level of manipulation possible with a computer and software is far and above what was possible in the old days in the darkroom.
- As a young person, I played around with content more, but as I matured, I realized the danger of setting bad precedents. Any ethical problems I had were done in the darkroom.
- It is very important to maintain the trust of the readership.
- I have realized that my pictures my eyes see need to match the print.
- The "hand of God" looks stupid when used on a color photo.
- I think it looked better in black and white to have darker and white whites. Black and white photography and the hands on developing process just made it easier to



do. With the widespread use of color pictures, there is a different sense of “art” to the photo. Color adds more to the photo, some might say more distractions, but regardless, color, I believe, needs less processing.

- Digital allows more opportunities to manipulate data. Photojournalists need to be aware of viewers who will believe a photograph whether it has been altered or not.
- The hysteria over photo manipulation and the lack of a single definition of what is acceptable.
- I am much more aware of the many ways photographers can manipulate the content of an image, during the making of an image, during production and during editing/layout.
- Photographs reproduce much better in the newspapers I work for now and extremes are not needed in reproducing a story telling image.
- As I have gotten older and have attended more conventions and seminars, I have learned that what was acceptable in the past is no longer acceptable. The responsible photojournalist adheres strictly to the idea of not tainting a scene. The further a photographer delves into the philosophies of not tainting the scene, the more a Pandora’s box is revealed. For instance, just the mere presence of a photographer on the scene can change the way individuals act in that particular scene. Here is an example of what I mean. I was photographing a rally and nothing was really happening. I did not pick up my camera because I was waiting for something to happen. I was the only “obvious” media person at the event. Then the television cameras rolled on the scene. All of a sudden the sign holders got very verbal and were very loud and protesting at the TV camera. Clearly here is a scene that was tainted by the presence of a camera. Does this mean that the actions taken by the protestors would have never have happened if the TV cameraman had not shown? Or does this mean the simple presence of the TV camera merely prompted the eventual action to take place sooner? These kinds of rhetorical questions can drive one mad.

Let me bring to light another example. What if a person performs a given act, let’s say, giving blood once a month. You are doing a story about how this person gives blood every month, but due to circumstance, this person is not giving blood this month. Is it accurate to take a picture of this person giving blood at your paper’s prompting? In other words, is it accurate to take a photo of this person giving blood, even though no plans were set for this person to give blood for this particular month? The answer is no, but I see TV cameras stage stuff all the time because they are on a time deadline. They need the shot that would normally occur, in their opinion without their prompting, the only problem is that because of their time deadline, they are not able to get the “real” act, i.e. donating blood and rather, prompt their subjects to do what would normally take place. The

question then becomes, what if the subject does not give blood every month, but rather, it is an exaggeration? Or what if it is a plain lie? Who would know the difference? In this case, you could ask the blood bank to see the log of blood donations and figure it out; but what if no such log existed? How would you know? This example could be examined to death and in great detail. You could argue that the donation takes place every month according to the logs and this is one month out of the ordinary. My argument is this: Why not wait until the blood donation actually takes place without your prompting? Reschedule the assignment and shoot only when the real event is taking place. This is easier said than done, and I will tell you why. Believe it or not, the general public is NOT as particular as the true photojournalist. I cannot tell you how many times the subject has been perturbed because I have cancelled photo assignments because the act was being done for our benefit. I get compared to TV all the time. The subject will say something to this effect: “Why can’t you take a picture of my doing this, I normally do this, and TV did.” The best thing possible is to educate the reporters who normally make the photo assignments to accurately reflect their stories. Many times I have had to educate a reporter on this procedure. Never has it been a pleasant experience. This could be a very long conversation so let me wrap up. In my world, there are so many variables that could affect or taint a true journalistic photo. In my opinion, giving weight to burning and dodging is important, but if you are going to give weight to this, you must give equal weight to many other factors that could taint a journalistic photograph.

- I stick with my original goal of attempting to produce an image as close to the reality, as my human eye saw it. Most burning and dodging is an attempt to return an exposure to what a human eye actually saw. What changes is our approach with different mediums. Chromes, Negative, Digital and early digital (with a ton of noise, and pixalation). All require different levels of manipulation to produce clear readable images. I often think of an old college professor who believed we were unethically altering the reality of a scene when we introduced a flash, and the debate it caused with editors that demanded reproducible images.
- “Acceptable manipulation” continues to grow because newsrooms and their managers continue to lose influence over content. This is not a new phenomenon.
- I used to dodge and burn much more to pull the subject out from the background.
- I say yes, but you should not assume minimal burning and dodging to deal with highlights and shadows constitute overt “manipulation.” I realize what you are trying to do, but the heavy-handed darkroom printers who disgusted me were few and far between, and such techniques were frowned upon where I worked.
- I always tried to make something that would reproduce to show readers the truth.
- I’m more “paranoid” about it then before because of the digital ease in which you can do it.

- I think the manner of doing it has changed. I am happy editing on the computer, and I still follow rules of the darkroom. Some principles translate down.
- I think it's just an evolution of thought. There are many things that were deemed acceptable in the past which are no longer acceptable.
- I have always felt it is wrong to alter the content, but every picture is manipulated in some way starting with how it is shot.
- Having joined the NPPA has exposed me to different guidelines.
- I guess because I have seen other people lie to the readers. The rules have tightened so others don't have that opportunity.
- The ability we have to be able to go in and change parts of the photo so that it reads differently has changed my idea about photo manipulation. It's simply too easy to cross the line and not think about it when dealing with dodging and burning.
- Because there is a visual quality to having more available technology to alter a photo ethically. With digital, information that is recorded through the camera is not always shown to such a forgiving degree as film. So being able to dodge, burn history tool and lasso, are tools that help a photographer depict what the event really looked like.
- Some people don't think anything about using Photoshop™ to remove a soda can or tree branch sticking out of people's heads. They figure they're not changing the editorial meaning of a photo or misrepresenting the subject. Even I used to believe that. But now I think that once you cross a certain line, it goes too far-and if you ask three photographers what the line is, you'll get three different answers. I think it's far better and safer to adopt a manipulation policy that errs on the side of too strict.
- The controversy over what is acceptable has lead me to consider my own practices, and how I alter an image impacts the overall story that the picture tells.
- I'm older and wiser and I feel stronger about good ethics when it comes to reporting the news. People do want to be misled. It's dishonest! Sure, a photograph may look awesome with a lot of burning and dodging. What we all must be aware of: What is the purpose of the photograph? Is it reporting of an event or is it fine art or feature...an editorial statement, if you will.
- Photography is enough of a subjective practice without purposely changing the content.

- Several high profile papers and magazines and their shooters getting caught altering pictures. I've always held myself to a high ethical standard. I don't alter content in a picture for my own credibility.
- Seeing and hearing about the abuse photojournalists have made with manipulation of images. Trust is our job is mandatory. If people don't trust us, we cannot do our jobs and get the access we need for great images.
- I'm getting older and see the eldest and how photos can change things. There are also so many more ways to change photos that the line needs to be drawn earlier.
- I just became more educated.
- Never acceptable in a 'news' picture. You take liberties with food, fashion and furnishing and nobody is harmed, though you label it photomontage or photo illustration. But you don't tinker with a news photo, altering reality, or you're down slippery slope.
- I have become more purest. Editorial photos can't be altered, I feel strong about that. I have become more aware by working in the profession.
- With computers and Photoshop™, I don't feel that we manipulate the photos as much as years in the darkroom, and at my former newspaper, they absolutely forbid major manipulation other than levels and sharpen.
- The era of film has more to do with time management and cost than capability. Almost anything possible in digital could have been done in film photography, but it would have taken much more time and material. I do a lot more to my images now to make them look good-bringing out the color, defining the edges, popping the contrast-because it's quick and easy and all on screen. I commit to print only the very best.
- I still wouldn't do anything that is unethical. I have high ethical standards. I only lighten or darken if I need to save the exposure.
- Because computer programs have changed the way things are done today. Ethical standards are better with Photoshop™.
- The ease and effort it takes to manipulate images, coupled with the growing number of impressionable youth. Photographers now must understand integrity and truthfulness and the consequences of not having either at a younger age because technology has made it easier at a younger age to alter the truth. I'm sure I was much older when I learned any unacceptable techniques, and by then I was old enough to understand wrong from right.

- I have always had the attitude that the picture should speak for itself. I think I have become more rigid because technology has allowed things to be done undetected.
- Probably, with digital I don't manipulate as much because we are asked not to do a lot by photo editors.
- It is easier to improve technical quality in Photoshop™.
- An accumulation of professional experiences, NPPA and other workshops being a University instructor for three decades, watching and listening to my peers, my audience, my students.
- I can do more fine-tuning of what I do, and if I screw up, I can start over with little wasted time.

Q. 26 Does the photo staff of your news organization ever have meetings to discuss what level of manipulation is acceptable?

	Number of Respondents	Percentages
A	51	49.5%
B	40	38.8%
Blank	12	11.7%
Total	103	100%

Q.27 Do you think there are various levels of acceptability among the photo staff?

	Number of Respondents	Percentages
A	68	66%
B	24	23.3%
Blank	11	10.7%
Total	103	100%

Q. 28

In the space provided, please feel free to write additional comments about the subject, including any personal experience or stories.

- The thing you didn't talk about is that you could use light or a filter to do the same thing. There is more manipulation that way than dodging and burning. Manipulation is anything that changes reality. People often win awards for those sorts of manipulations.

- I had a kid come up to me and ask if I would look at his work. The pictures looked strange, so I asked what kind of film they were shot on. He had put the photos into Photoshop™. I said that before putting a photo into Photoshop™, you have to make sure the photo is there. The exposure has to be correct. There has to be a photo there before playing with it in Photoshop™.
- I think this topic is something we discuss a great deal. For example, is moving a wastebasket from a portrait somehow distorting the truth? We have to tell the truth. The mere fact that we show up distorts events. You might go to take an environmental shot of someone, and it might be the first time they have taken a shower in a month. Reporters have more latitude in how they quote people. We have to be realistic and fair. I don't think that by removing the wastebasket in that situation that we are distorting reality.
- Today, it is easier to manipulate but being creative can very destructive. We have to be careful that as the business changes that photographs still show a backbone.
- Digital photography is not always sharp like film photography was. It often requires some sharpening of the image.
- Manipulation was worse in the darkroom because of the heavy dodging and burning. It no different than faking a story. I believe in communicating we sometimes overreact, but I don't feel like there was an overreaction with the LA Times photographer. It was a friable offense because he changed the reality of the image completely.
- The younger staff, with digital technology, is more lenient. They don't remember how it was done in the darkroom. There is always a move forward with technology. You shouldn't be doing things that alter the truth, otherwise credibility is lost.
- I have more concerns with reproduction than before. I used to have time constraints where I didn't worry about presentation as much. Today, I do it to increase what reproduction looks like to try to account for flattening that happens. I think among our staff those that are freer with manipulation tend to be younger and those with ethics that are not as strong. My boss holds us to a high standard. I did internships at places that affected my approach. Some photo editors are stricter than others. Manipulation is not unusual; it has become easier to do. People are more aware of what is being done, which causes them to be more skeptical. The idea of the truth right in front of you has been questioned.
- My personal view of ethics is simple-if it feels funny in your gut, then it isn't ethical. I have followed that rule for more than two decades and have no regrets for anything I've done. That isn't to say that I have not done things in the past that I wouldn't do differently today, but given the standards of the times I have no

qualms that I have maintained a contemporary ethical standard throughout my career.

- It is vital that all of us preserve the little credibility that our profession retains. Don't lie just to make better pictures. We're in the truth business, not the photography business.
- If you need to manipulate a photo something has to be there first. You can't make something out of nothing.
- The survey only dealt with techniques of burning and dodging. While those were the most common and easily learned methods of photo manipulation, they were by no means the only ones. I mentioned "flashing" above. That was a technique used to lower the contrast of an extremely light area on your print by having your paper in the easel and quickly turning on and off the light in the room or exposing the paper with no negative in the enlarger for a few seconds. There was also the fairly widespread use of potassium ferro cyanide solution as a bleaching agent. I knew photographers who routinely used PFC on a toothpick or q-tip to bleach out the whites of a subject's eyes. Finally, at the Register in the 80's, one of our photographers was doing a story on a little boy who was flying a private airplane across country or across the state, I forget which, but the lede picture was the little boy on the tarmac of the airfield throwing a paper airplane into the wind. The picture was a wonderful moment and was plated at 3 columns by 11 inches. Only after a few hundred copies were run on the press did someone discover the little boy's fly was unzipped. The decision was made, by management, to alter the photograph in the color lab, essentially zipping up his fly, and to re-plate the whole page. The reason given was that the photo, as shot, would cause undue humiliation to the boy. Times change, but the truthfulness of our profession should not. We should strive at all times to be credible and not compromise ourselves just to make a better photograph.
- While there is greater temptation today because of the ease of manipulation, there is also greater care at better news organizations. There is a divide between serious organizations and ones that are more ethically challenged. Many professionals come from art schools or other programs or disciplines in which they are not exposed to ethical issues faced by publication. The greatest problem is the lack of knowledge and lack of awareness and training for professionals. So many people have access to the technology today, but too few have real ethical training.
- You have to be careful how you approach the term photo manipulation. Film doesn't register light the way the human eye does. Sometimes manipulating is done to try to bring details back. My aim is to try to render the photo so it as I saw it with my eyes. This gives readers more information.
- Computers give us the ability to lie with our images if we choose to do so. As a professional it's a simple question, "Are you a moral person?" Chuck Scott,

famous photo editor/educator, said if you give the public the right to doubt any of your photographs, you give them the right to doubt all of your photographs. What is so desperate about someone who would lie with his or her work? Do they want fame? You certainly won't get fortune in photojournalism. And what's with the fame thing? Half the young shooters today don't know who Robert Capa was...etc. Your character and self respect matter, not fleeting fame.

- I have seen all too often the picture on the screen and in the paper look nothing a like reality. Only to learn contests have a huge impact on how people print and crop their photos.
- As I said in question 25, the transition from black and white to color, long before digital, really changed a lot of manipulation techniques. The “hand of God” techniques that made cool looking black and white photos, looked stupid in color.
- Bad captions do as much or more to erode the credibility of newspapers and newspaper photos than do faulty or unethical image manipulations, and are far more prevalent and tolerated. The fault of captions lies equally with photographers who are lazy about gathering complete information on the scene, and with copy editors trying to impact some emotional or factual inference that they may have gotten from the story text, whether it is appropriate to the picture not.
- Any technique that compromises the credibility of the photo, the photographer and the photojournalism profession should not be used in photojournalism. During a world cup in DC last summer, we noticed that Sports Illustrated cloned out a player's leg in the photo to clean up the picture. The image was shot by a Getty photographer, and moved out with the unseen players leg on one side. The SI graphics department thought the extra leg was distracting and cloned it out. No mention was made on the photo about this manipulation. If any “reader” would have seen the two different versions, I'm sure the photographer would have been blamed. However, only SI made the change. I believe incidents like this are the larger issue than too much burning. The SI incident was similar but different from Brian Walski, formerly of the LA Times, who was fired for piecing two photos together.
- Most photogs seem to have forgotten what the purpose of ethics is in regards to picture manipulation. There isn't a set of rules on what is okay and what is not okay. The bottom line is, if a person who was at the original scene looks at a manipulated photo and can say, “that's what I saw or could have seen,” then the manipulation is probably okay.
- Digital manipulation is the least of our worries when it comes to issues of truth, accuracy and fairness in visual reporting. The responsibility of a visual journalist to represent the world to itself in as authentic a manner as humanly possible is more important. Also, critical, however, are that editors and designers understand



their own responsibilities and roles in this regard, and that viewers/readers learn to question visual representation of a news story in a photograph. Manipulating a news image in any way except for minor technical corrections is just plain wrong- and it is easy to describe what is wrong. Writing policy that established ethical guidelines for preventing the manipulation of ideas through less-obvious means is quite difficult and is harder to implement.

- I am a freelancer. I shoot for the Associate Press, USA Today and others. I go by the guidelines they've shown me.
- Newspapers and journalist need to guard against the loss of credibility that has come with the ease of manipulation of photographs. Any smart 12-year-old kid can and will create some of the most wildly manipulated photos and disperse them throughout the web. Normal burning, dodging, color correction and sharpening to represent the news in its most truthful form all the guidelines needed. Education of these methods to journalist varies and needs to be reinforced on a regular basis.
- I'm not against lightening the face of a baseball player in the afternoon sun with a baseball cap on to get some detail in his face or expression. I would not add a well-lit face of the same player to the original photo just to be able to see him better. Altering a photo, to me, means taking something out or putting something in. Changing a color of color or altering things different then the way they were when the photographers took them is wrong. Dodging or burning an image to the point it is not obvious is permissible.
- In high school I had the opportunity to work with an older photographer, which I admired for his ability to photograph baseball and softball action. Through the summer I became fed with his poor habit of working in a very dirty darkroom, so I figured I'd be the good intern and clean up for him. When he returned from a ball game he panicked and screamed. Apparently I had thrown away his "baseballs" and "softballs," small scraps of paper he would ball up and place on the print (like a photogram), leaving a white ball that in the old days would reproduce like a baseball in the press run. Early on I learned that was cheating.
- The main reason I left the field was that it ceased to be a responsibility and became merely a job. "Image manipulation" has only become a digital function recently.
- I don't think you can take a black and white (pardon the pun) stance when it comes to photo manipulation. There are shades of gray that need to be talked about with peers. Your main goal should be to be honest with your readers. Everything from the lens you choose to fill flash to what you choose to include or exclude in your photo will have an effect on the reader's perception. Just that fact that you are there taking pictures can have an effect. Dodging and burning and color manipulation can be used to give a more accurate account of reality, but as with everything in life it can be taken to extremes. It is up to us to make that

judgment call on what is too far and that debate will continue as long as there are photojournalist.

- I really don't think this subject has been very well addressed in the professional media. I wonder what photojournalism schools are teaching in the way of ethics. I just cannot imagine cloning another person into or out of a photo just to improve the composition. But then I also use the clone tool everyday to remove dust specks from my images. I would also do this in my darkroom prints. I can't imagine turning in a digital photograph without some color correction, cropping or sharpening. I guess that all depends on the quality of the pre-press department. They have no idea the color of the dress the woman was wearing or that the light was beautifully warm in the late afternoon so they "correct" it to high noon. You just have to have a moral center that disallows false witness to an editorial situation.
- Whatever I feel I could do in a darkroom to dodge and burn a photo, I do with Photoshop™. I think it is a simple rule for myself but everybody is different. Good photojournalists do technically sound, ethical work. The best photos never need much work done to them; they are already well exposed and full of compelling content from the start.
- Too many people fear new technology. Abuse has always been around and there will always be immoral people. Creating a lot of rules to clamp down on the creative resources by purists hampers creativity. Personally, I always thought black and white horizontal frames and potato masher flashes were unethical because it is not the reality most people see.
- The temptation for over manipulation is great with Photoshop™ at our fingertips. It is so critical, however, that we resist to maintain the integrity of our profession. I was coming out of school during the "hand of God" era, where it was acceptable common practice-especially for contest prints. In retrospect, I can't believe we though it was acceptable. When computers were first introduced, the discussion was whether it was okay to get rid of a telephone pole in the background (NO!). Now, I think it is appropriate that we are discussing more delicate distinctions of manipulation. I think I find myself trying to enhance the existing light already captured to ensure quality reproduction. There are times that I stop and wonder if I have gone too far. I ask myself, "Could I have done this in the wet darkroom?" If I feel comfortable, I leave it. I think as long as you have not altered the essential truth of the image, it is ok. That is a fairly vague standard, but you know at the end of the day whether you have told the truth with your image. Remember, it is just as easy to falsely report by how you shoot a story as it is by how you dodge and burn.
- I think it is so important that we don't do alterations. If we alter things, we are altering the truth for our readers. Also, digital cameras are not as good as eyes.

Sometimes it takes slight modifications to make how we present something the same as how we saw it.

- As far as I am concerned I am happy with the computers. They are more efficient in terms of both time and waste products that use to be produced with chemicals. I think concerns are overblown. People are and have always been capable. It isn't technology that is responsible for bad journalism; it's the bad journalists that are responsible. There has also been a turn around, when digital was first introduced it wasn't good quality, but technology has gotten better.
- It's really not a yes or no question as indicated in some of the questions. It is so much easier these days; we really have to be careful not to lose credibility.
- We have an ethics policy and all understand the policy.
- I see the difference with old guys. I think they would act lax about more things. Today everybody has gone above and beyond to try not to do anything.
- I'm glad the industry is paying more attention than they did in the past. In the 1950's anything seemed to go. The industry is recognizing the integrity of the business.
- I think the subject is important because our readers don't trust us as it is. They have digital camera with Photoshop™ like programs. They can do a lot and probably realize that we can do more. People joke and ask me if I can make them look better. I tell them I could, but I don't. They are always a bit surprised because they think we do that kind of stuff all the time. We need to make sure they know we can do that kind of stuff but we don't. Only time is in photo illustrations. I stroke stuff as much as possible, If we have to dodge something that is okay. Moving heads around, moving a coke can or power lines is lying to the reader, but adjusting color balance is not.
- A lot of times I am told that I should darken or lighten a photo so that it will read better. Personally, I have found that I am not very good at it and that I don't think that with the technology that newspapers have today it's worth too much time the paper I work for has a really bad pressroom and the contrast and colors never seem to do the photos and justice. Therefore, I usually let the photos stand by themselves as they are normally. Now if a hand in the shadows gets lost when I increase the contrast, I usually will not bother to try and bring it out.

As I have stated before, I have had photos were things were coming out of someone's head, and I have left the photo that way simply because that is the way it happened. I feel very strongly about my position as to the authenticity of my photos and argue even when I have had photos run on a commercial level where there is no journalistic integrity to consider that everything be left in the frame.

- Digital manipulation really depends on the photographer's personal ethics and the publication that they are employed. I work for a student newspaper, and the amount of manipulation they allow is far greater than of my current newspaper. Factors for that may include the fact that we ran color on a day to day basis at the first newspaper, where at the second paper everything is black and white and the amount of manipulation with photos decreases when the medium falls into a restricted visual application. What I mean by that is, with black/white photo manipulation is almost the same as the darkroom manipulation, it is just faster with Photoshop™, and you don't have to stink to high heaven of chemicals. Where with color you have a lot more tools and techniques to use in Photoshop™.
- I have been a photographer for over 30 years, 20+ as a journalist. I am now working as a still photographer in the motion picture industry. Hollywood is ALL "smoke and mirrors," and I love being able to manipulate the photographs I make on the set. I feel more like an illustrator rather than someone whose job is to report the facts.

I still do occasional newspaper assignments and, since the news media MUST maintain its credibility, I will never manipulate a photograph the same as I would for a movie still. We make photographs, not snapshots. The news photograph must tell a story as factually as possible. A news photograph, as a matter of credibility, should not be manipulated to change the content. Cropping, dodging, burning, color correction are ALL part of the photographic process. These "manipulations" should be used in order to emphasize the content.

I make so many photographs, on the fly, resulting in awkward positioning of objects such as telephone polls and trees. I would love to "clone them out," not altering the content, but this type of manipulation would bring up more credibility issues. Anyone familiar with the scene would recognize the manipulation and could question the truthfulness of the photograph.

One form of manipulation I did in the darkroom was "burning-down the edges," which toned down the edges so the photograph wouldn't bleed into the background when it was reproduced in the newspaper. I still do that in the computer using masks and gradients.

- I do not think it's just related to digital photography. For years photojournalists have been setting up scenes, staged photos that they missed, said, "hey, do that again!" If they missed the big shot. It always happened and there is a photojournalist doing it right this instant, most likely. But if setting up staged photos becomes a common practice then how are we ever to look objectively at a news photo again? Readers have to have faith that what they are reading and seeing in their newspaper or newsmagazine is real, and that's getting harder and harder to do.

- I believe standards are more often violated by combining photos or cloning out distractions. However, I believe standards are tighter for overdone burning.
- I don't have a lot of real-world experience in the field, but photography (especially documentary photography) is something that I have a strong passion for. I studied photojournalism at UNC-Chapel Hill, which has been noted as one of the best journalism schools in the country and have discussed such issues at length with colleges and peers.

Ultimately, I think that there is no real defined line as to what is acceptable, nor do I believe that there ever will be. I think that it is just the nature of an ever-changing technological world. A journalist's always tells the story he or she sees through his or her lens. In that sense, we alter reality from the beginning because we are unable to tell the full, unbiased and complete truth in a single frame. That is something that no amount of regulation will ever be able to change. What we can change, through education and practice, is the idea that computers are our enemies and can only be used to change images in a way that blurs and distorts reality. Computers and technology are amazing and can, in so many ways, be used-if not misused-to benefit the news profession.

- When I have used heavy burning in, it has been for a feature art photo. When I have dodged, it has been to correct poor lighting, either from flaws or existing due to my own shortcomings. Only to present an image that would successfully print in the paper to report the event.
- The fine art community thinks photography is not dead but presenting representational photography is dead. As a matter of fact, the only true believers of photojournalism as a truth telling technique are photographers. Just look at the situation with embedded photographers. I am sure to the average Iraqi they are pretty biased. Where one chooses to point the camera and when they choose to push the button is a manipulation of reality from the beginning. This is why having an educated and humanistic person behind the lens is so important. If you read about photographers like W. Eugene Smith it is their pathos that makes their work great, but pathos seems to be in short supply these days and technology doesn't make great photojournalism. W. Eugene Smith spent hours burning and dodging his photos as did Ansel Adams.
- Burning and dodging have always been part of the craft of printing-in the darkroom and now on a computer. I do a little of both in almost every picture I turn in. But when any action changes the content of a picture, our whole profession is at risk of losing believability. It's ok to darken a background slightly to make a subject stand out more. However, it is completely unacceptable to blacken a background because the shooter didn't pay enough attention while taking the picture to see that its not distracting. The ethical rule is to never do anything that changes the content of the negative film or raw image file.

- Dramatic photo manipulation should be saved for graphics, illustrations, artistic tab covers, etc. There is no place in the day-to-day work of the photojournalist for over manipulation. Color corrections, photo contrast and density should be altered for the press you use. That is the extent of manipulation for the daily journalist.
- The survey does not touch on another aspect of digital photography, the elimination, at some places, of a vital piece of the puzzle-a photo editor. We once sat down with photographers at a light table, film uncut, and went through rolls of film talking about the frames we picked and those we didn't.

A true picture editor could, through the photographer's film "see" the event and determine which photos to use. It was part of the communication process that reduces dumb mistakes, and is an ongoing education for both the photo editor and the shooter. Today, the photographer can shoot what he/she thinks is "needed," and either not shoot or erase before returning to the office the frames deemed "not needed." Without intervention of anyone else-a dangerous practice, in my view.

An editor going through film finds an electrifying frame to print, but can see how the situation progressed that produced the picture, giving a hint of whether it was staged or not. With photographers editing in the camera and then simply providing the two or three digital images they thought the paper "needed" you cheat the employer and you cheat the reader, because it assumes that the photographer can also edit intelligently, or isn't lazy. Some shooters are good editors of their own work; many are improved by editing.

There are several historical examples of editors making photographers look good by, in effect, re-photographing their photographs-finding a tiny part of a 35mm frame that, with the enlarger to the ceiling and easel to the floor, produces a memorable image, such as the Stanley Steans, UPI, shot of John-John Kennedy saluting his father's casket was carried past. The salute photo was pulled out of a general view by legendary UPI photo editor, Ted Majeski, and Stan Tretick (both now deceased) was forever grateful.

- I have overworked some photos in traditional photography and some in digital. Since there is no absolute standard sometimes you don't know where you are until you end up with something unacceptable and revert to previous versions.
- Simply, the ability to alter images has always been there, just not as easy or difficult to monitor. Film provided a base of record. To investigate an image alteration was fairly easy. Digital images can be altered and tracks can be covered far more easily than with film. Tracing the changes depends entirely on how expert the photographer is versus the editor in using the software photo-editing program. That's not to say that a film image couldn't be staged or manipulated before exposure. A photographer might shoot an honest image and turn it in to an editor who uses it in a way that reverses the truth of the situation. I've heard of a newspaper publisher and editor who staged his own arrest in a photo to embarrass

a public official. The only thing that keeps us all honest is pressure from our peers and competition between news organizations to present the best presentation of the facts. When the public understands they've been rooked by a news source, they go to another source. Witness CBS news loss of audience after the recent faked documents scandal.

- *This respondent asked me to keep the details confidential, but this respondent shared with me details of someone that the respondent considers to be a well-respected photojournalist in the industry that the respondent has known to manipulate images by adding or taking away elements to photographs.*
- Here, if you digitally manipulate beyond the standard toning, to actually change reality and content, then you are fired. Dodge and burn, even dodge and burn very poorly, and it is okay. But clone, rubber stamp-then you are in trouble. What we have to deal with today is not too different from in the past when it comes to the subjective view of what is appropriate dodging, and more importantly, burning. There are those who think the "hand of God" is cool. Just look at sportsshooter.com and aphotoaday.com or org. Both sites seem to feed upon themselves as placed to put heavily toned images without much content for the fact of showing off eye-candy. These places are great photo communities, but I think fester the ideas of borderline manipulation to the point where it slowly becomes acceptable. The line in the sand may be redrawn toward more heavy-handed toning. Technology has allowed much more accurate toning with more ease. I can burn along the outline of a person with little effort today. This same act would have taken years to perfect and many minutes in the darkroom to complete.
- In the past black and white photos had to be contrasted to come out in print. I wasn't a matter of altering the content. With the color it is more content oriented because we could get the quality with just plain reproduction.
- Our staff is pretty much on the same page. We tend to only make minor adjustments to photographs such as color balance. Ninety-nine point five percent of the time we don't do a whole lot to a photograph.
- I get ragged on a lot because I spend a lot of time editing my photos, but I want them to look good. If I can do that without changing the photo's pertinent content, than I feel it's justified. Also, I try to tone my pictures so that they will look good even after the lousy printing common with most of the publications that I work with. I suppose it is very subjective, as far as how much is too much and what is ok. We're all looking for clean, well-lit images that easily communicate a story, idea or event. There are a few photogs out there who cross the line with what they add in or remove, but they are the exception and not the rule.
- It's pretty clear to me that in general-there is a lack of formal education in the photojournalism profession-most photographers go through various types of "apprenticeships" not formal education-and therefore the lack of standards, rules or guidelines in the photo-j world is not all that surprising. Most editors and

managers seldom focus on such issues as well-they often seem more concerned with keeping up with the day's news than they do in "talking about photography." I think it would be wise for the NPPA to offer up a "guideline" on what is-and is not acceptable in their view. Something all photographers could refer to.

Q. 29

I only included responses from those that did not mind if their ideas were shared with others.