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The significance of the photographic message

Fuller, David Wayne, M.A.
The University of Arizona, 1989
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PHOTOGRAPHIC MESSAGE

by

David Fuller

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the
DEPARTMENT OF ART
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
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WITH A MAJOR IN ART EDUCATION
In the Graduate College
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1989
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Photographic realism is an effective framework for communicating meaning. In other words, the purpose is to convey an idea — not, for example, to depict a landscape. Misuse of photographic images may arise from a photographer's deliberate attempt to imbue an image with the meaning he or she desires. Thus, we might question photography's objective nature, although this should not be confused with realism. The latter refers to the imitative or representational quality of the subject, the former refers to scientific validity or truth. The issue of objectivity suggests useful concepts for art education. First, this paper considers photographic realism -- technique is not a primary concern. Second, procedures that can alter realism are made evident. By understanding and using these methods, a student can more successfully comprehend and alter the photographic message.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Photographic realism is an effective framework in which to communicate meaning. The imagery is so believable that other media do not compare. Photographic images lack hand painted lines or roughly handled chisel marks. Instead, the picture is elaborate with details -- containing a rich variety of shadings, appearing more mechanical than if done by hand (Radar 208). The problem arises in the broad acceptance of photography as an imitation of reality. As Edmund Feldman states, "...we are less conscious of the fact that the camera also changes reality" (Feldman 421).

Photography offers many benefits in understanding the visual arts. One advantage is that a photograph stops time and movement. Unlike motion pictures and television, a still image can be studied at great length, its frozen relationships yielding further complexity upon examination. In contrast, movie film must be kept simple, becoming more intricate through time and sequence (Craven 133). In photography, the film's emulsion is receptive to delicate details within the scene. The whole technical process should eliminate any discrepancy to hinder the photographic message -- or so it would seem.

The slightest shift in the camera's viewfinder can
also shift the meaning of an image. Experience in
composing or framing the environment is most valuable in
understanding how the context in which an object is viewed
can change meaning -- objects can be prearranged and
previsualized before photographing to heighten an effect.
In addition, an analysis of a photograph's realism teaches
much about how a photograph can be used to convey
information.

Photographs are unique in their power to persuade.
The fact that photographs can be both believable and
distort truth brings up a vital issue: Any photograph's
scene or meaning can change according to the photographer's
intent. Skillful manipulations by social vehicles -- such
as propaganda and tabloids -- can make such distortions
more difficult to identify (Berger 153). Consider, for
example, a scandalous photograph of President Bush and Mia
Farrow holding hands at a party. However, the photographer
may have cropped out Mrs. Bush at the President's right.
Such a situation illustrates the shifting principle -- the
way a scene can be cropped inside the camera can imply
something that is not occurring (Feldman 428). Many photo-
journalists justify visual lies in order to portray what
they perceive to be true. By some universal law, facts do
not matter as much as the 'Truth' (Craven 145-146).

The ability to manipulate meaning in imagery is not
limited to questionable purposes. The power of altered meaning may be likened to two sides of a leaf: On the lower (or shady) side is the power to change vital information for a person's or group's benefit -- i.e. propaganda, company newsletters, political affairs, etc. On the top side of the leaf, we find that the same power gives us versatility in making more interesting statements. Examples can be seen in advertising, magazine covers, fine arts, and so forth. This side tries to refine or change what nature or present situations fail to accomplish. Floating trees, blue horses, and eight armed bandits are all subjects of this domain. This side of the leaf is more playful, and often lighter in intent.

"The Photographic Message," by Roland Barthes, may be a short paper with a short title, but it is a work of incredible explorations. From Barthes' work stems the direction -- as well as the title -- of this thesis. Since linguistics is, to a great extent, the study of meaning, Barthes sought to find a relationship between linguistics and the visual arts. A linguistic relation both justifies and clarifies how visual messages can be read. Barthes' approach introduces two terms: Denotation or the explicit level, and connotation or the implicit level. These terms help explain photography's message sending capabilities. Connotation deciphers the photographic message, using
denotation -- or realism -- primarily as a backbone to communicate meaning. In analogy, the quality of a letter or font is less important than the message. His approach suggests that realism through photography contains a completeness that painting, drawing, and other media fail to emulate (Barthes 3-20). Therefore, in the classroom situation, the message becomes more important than the photographic technique.

Since the photographic medium is only 80 years old in its perfected form, this paper is subject to certain intrinsic limitations. Most literature neglects photographic aesthetics (Feldman 421), and the history of photography emphasizes technical aspects. However, because aesthetic inquiry is philosophically based, the inquirer is forced to take a certain approach regardless of limited literature on the subject.

This study includes a series of photographs illustrating the illusion of photographic objectivity. In addition, the photographs will examine the roles of composition, color, posing, and other technical considerations on content and meaning. The main focus of the study is based on philosophical assumptions that not only broaden students' sensitivities concerning realism, but allow them the necessary tools to begin creating their own frameworks of exploration.
CHAPTER TWO

LEVELS OF REALISM

Although realism may be viewed in many contexts, this chapter addresses only the aesthetic aspect of realism. Aesthetics make inquiries into the nature of art, asking what it is about the art object that attracts the viewer's interest (Honer and Hunt 127, Crawford 227-228). But what exactly is realism? Monroe Beardsley states that an art object that does not distort or abstract the subject is realism (Beardsley 285-287).

Many times, moods and formal properties are said to represent certain things. In realism, shapes can represent flowers in a vase, but those shapes cannot represent moods. For example, blue cannot represent coolness, but can only imply. Frequent misuse of "representation" allows "depiction" as a more literal and objective term (Beardsley 269-271). Instead of stating X represents Y, a more accurate statement is that the design X depicts an object Y:

**DEPICTION:** "The design X depicts an object Y" means "The class of Y's is a vital class, and X contains some area that is more similar to the visual appearance of Y's than to objects of any other vital class" (Beardsley 271).

Beardsley describes three kinds of depiction: Formal, vital, and portrayal. *Formal classes* are the basic elements of an image, i.e., shapes, lines, colors. Out of these
elements are built the vital classes -- examples are a stick-figure man, or a simple house composed of a triangle and square, or other non-specific images. Portrayal concerns a specific person, place or event:

**PORTRAYAL:** "The design X portrays the object Y" means "X contains some area that is more similar to the visual appearance of Y than to any other object" (Beardsley 271-273).

Although a vital class might include a figure of a person, a portrayal forces recognition. In photography, a photo may contain a figure of a woman, but not as any specific woman (Fig. 2-1). This photo may be classified as a vital class depiction. A photo of the actor, George Takei (Fig. 2-2), on the other hand, is more descriptive, and lends itself to a more literal realism, i.e., recognition of the actor yields a portrayal. Compare Fig. 2-1 with 2-2.

As stated earlier, depiction and representation are not synonymous. It should also be noted that representation does not necessarily mean realism. Varying degrees of recognition, whether formal, vital or portrayal, can satisfy the requirements for realism.

Abstraction, on the other hand, is seen only as a matter of degree (Beardsley 286). The image must depict something which is recognizable even to the smallest extent. Nonobjectivity, which is often confused with abstraction, promotes design over recognition.
FIG. 2-2. "George Takei" by Craig Spooner.
Clearly, realism can have its problems, as E.H. Gombrich illustrates with his rabbit-duck analogy (6):

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One can easily see a duck or a rabbit. But if a duck is not recognizable, then its shape was never experienced by the viewer. Gombrich states that we do not paint or draw what we see, but what we know. As an example, he points to well-known artists who have studied the works of earlier artists. These artists misrepresented horses as having eyelashes on their lower lids (Gombrich 82-83). Even Leonardo DeVinci made similar mistakes: "Apparently he drew features of the human heart which Galen made him expect but which he cannot have seen (Gombrich 98)."

Within figure 2-3, outlines of two figures are identifiable as children. We do not stop to think that they might be cardboard cut outs. Our previous perceptions blind us to this possibility. The rest of the structure is abstract, but perceived as a building. The only recognizable features we have to go on are the children, which further imply that the parallel lines are railings.
FIG. 2-3. Untitled. Photo by Craig Spooner.
Knowledge changes our perceptions. As a seeming paradox, photography freed painters to explore other means of expression. Manet, among others, actually used photos as he would a sketch book (Sharf 85). Sometimes rather surprising truths were revealed.

For centuries, artists painted galloping horses with all of their legs leaving the ground in hobby horse fashion (Newhall 84). Eadweard Muybridge spawned a whirl of excitement with his photographs of running horses. His process, using several cameras, was innovative: A horse moving past the lined up cameras would trip the shutter releases, capturing the horse's true movements, sequentially, in previously unrecorded detail. Newhall recalls that at one point, all the legs moved on the ground, later "bunched together under the belly" (84). Furthermore, none of the photographs had the front and hind legs in midair, as shown in traditional paintings (Newhall 84-86). Such observations established the camera as an indispensable tool for scientific analysis.

Photos such as Muybridge’s horse sequence change Gombrich’s concept considerably. Gombrich’s work is still valid to a great extent, but he did not write within the photographic context. A photographer is sometimes forced to depict things he may not see, while painters must often be limited to what they know. A painter's hand and mind
affect how the subject will be depicted. With the camera, the subject -- not the photographer's hand -- creates the image (Levine 180). Fox Talbot wrote that his house was the first to "have drawn its own picture" (Maynard 158).

In relation to the last statement, Maynard wrote that "there are two independent aspects of image 'authenticity' one related to causality, and another to information or content (Maynard 158)." Photographic authenticity and realism are synonymous descriptions for what the camera captures.

Instead of photographing what we know, the camera forces a compromise with the unknown. Through photography, we see, learn, and later build upon that experience. Whether the photographic image depicts the object is not the issue. Through camera-depiction, the subject is the cause for the literal appearance of the image. The image, being so closely associated with the object, is the reason many people accept a picture of an apple as the apple itself (Craven 6).

If the apple can also be seen as the image, then photographic realism would be different from painterly realism. Assuming the last statement to be true, photographs would be invariable mirror-images (Feldman 421). Painterly realism can be manipulated more easily. However, if one tries to create a painting which appears
photographic, then the artist is attempting to do what photography can accomplish much more easily. Nor should a painting be like a photograph, for its role is free from the tiresome chores and restraints of realistic portraiture.

The aesthetic discipline resolves many problems concerning the nature of photographic realism. When a viewer asks why an image attracts his attention, he is raising an aesthetic question (Crawford 227). Although there are many types of aesthetic responses such as, emotionalism, formalism, intuitive, etc. (Lanier 38-39), this chapter will consider the imitative response. Imitation theories help explain why a viewer is attracted to realistic art. Lanier writes, "whatever its particular emphasis, each of the imitation theories is primarily concerned with the content of the work of art, the area in which verisimilitude or the accurate representation of life can best be portrayed" (38).

These theories also define levels of meaning in relation to realism. These levels can be broken down to simple, ideal and essence (Lanier 38). Simple imitation is representation in its literal meaning. A tree would be imitated as closely as seen by the naked eye. A normal lens would be used since a wide angle lens would distort the image. The Ideal is the refinement of the tree's
image. For instance, distracting branches would be cropped out of the frame, and yellowed leaves made green through special filters. *Essence* attempts to go beyond the ideal to depict the 'Truth.' This last statement may seem confusing, because would not the simple approach give the truest image? However, simple imitation allows only literal interpretation: "This is a maple tree." The ideal imitation displays what a tree should be rather than what it really is: "This is a perfectly symmetrical maple tree, under beautiful azure skies, surrounded by an immaculate lawn." The essence of the tree might be captured with a pair of "before and after" photos. The first photo may show a strong, healthy tree -- the second, a tree dead and leafless. This pair might represent decadence: "Trees are not perfect, they can be diseased or burned!"

The three types of mimetic theory show levels at which realism can be used. A person may be attracted to one, two, or all three mimetic aesthetics. Photographic content is associated with essence. The nature of this level will be clearer after connotative aspects are explored (chapter 3).

In figure 2-4, four pictures display a typical transformation of an object for an advertisement. The recorder is photographed on black velvet and then back-lit to create a silhouette. This dark image is sandwiched with
2-4a to form a **mask**. 2-4c. The mask allows the recorder in 2-4b to fit within 2-4c like a puzzle piece. When 2-4b and 2-4c are rephotographed onto one negative frame, 2-4d emerges. The result is a **glamorized or ideal image**. If 2-4a were of a third-world culture, portrayed in starvation, the recorder would have a background questioning technology. The **ideal** would then be replaced by the **essential** level.

**FIG. 2-4a, b, c, d. Masking Example.** Photo by the Author.

The following table shows how some photographic types relate to the mimetic classifications:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SIMPLE</th>
<th>IDEAL</th>
<th>ESSENCE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>medical</td>
<td>advertising</td>
<td>propaganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forensic</td>
<td>fashion</td>
<td>documentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>natural science</td>
<td>portraiture</td>
<td>fine art</td>
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Some of these photographic types may fit under more than one classification. A medical depiction can have essential meaning to a doctor who knows what he is looking for. Also, portraiture can be approached in radical ways — the realm of essence — as shown by various art photographers: Cindy Sherman, Duane Michaels, Diane Arbus, etc. But in terms of understanding levels of realism, the above table could prove quite valuable. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SIMPLE</th>
<th>IDEAL</th>
<th>ESSENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>woman</td>
<td>madonna</td>
<td>loner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>street corner</td>
<td>corner of Empire</td>
<td>site of labor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State Building</td>
<td>union protest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These classifications can be employed within a classroom situation. Given a 'simple' subject, students are asked to give examples of the 'ideal' and 'essential' levels of realism. This exercise is to help prove a point: Realism is a surface quality, a denotation (Barthes 31-35). At its essential level, a message can begin to be implied. Realism, at this level, is used to state some significance to the viewer. But in order to elaborate further on the essential level of a photograph, photography's relation to language must be clarified. The reasons for this begin on the next page.
CHAPTER THREE
PHOTOGRAPHY AND LANGUAGE

Photographic images are a visual language. However, a viewer can interpret and process an image in many ways. Considering photography as a language can help in understanding what messages a viewer may receive. Linguistic rules can then be applied to the semantic and rhetorical structure of the "image" (Guiraud 1-7). Towards this end, a vocabulary is needed to eliminate any ambiguity which may arise in the discussion of the photographic language. The vocabulary's success would be measured by the extent to which the concepts are understood and later evaluated objectively (Clark, Day and Greer 155).

Ontology is the study of words and their relation to meaning (Brazin 148) -- but not really including the visual arts. Semiology attempts to fill in this void. Semiology pertains to both visual and audio (i.e. music) 'signs' and how they could be decoded as language (Guiraud 8). Roland Barthes was a pioneer in this field. One of his interests was in how photography relates to a rhetorical message.

Two types of signs are the signifier and the signified (Burgin 53). The object and the viewer are two important components within the decoding process (Lanier 83-84). If there were no object or image, then a signal
could not be transmitted. Without the viewer, nothing could be signified, or communicated. Such is the purpose of signs. If the photographer's intention is satisfied, then his signifiers relate to the proper signifieds.

To elaborate further, signifiers are the formal properties of the signs, i.e., the shape, composition, color, boldness of line, and so on. The signifieds are the meaning which can be conveyed within the signifier's structure (Burgin 53). Roland Barthes used a more precise dichotomy: Denotative, and connotative (Petrucc 188-192).

The terms can be paired with the two signs: Denotative/signifier, connotative/signified. Denotative refers to the specific meaning, whereas connotative implies it. But since visual media has no words, how does linguistics equate? Barthes explains this most eloquently. In language, denotation occurs as bare words (symbols). Connotation is the meaning derived from these symbols. The photographic image is seething with realism. No other art form comes close in matching the ease with which photography represents nature. But this completeness is what Barthes refers to as an "uncoded" message (Barthes 5-8). At the denotative (or elemental) level, Barthes did not believe that photography could be adequately expressed. Therefore realism by itself does not make a message.

However, Eco believes that denotation is "coded" more
than the antethesis, and he appears to be correct. Umberto Eco stated that the act of perception itself is an act of decoding. He continued that it is possible to recognize "a zebra from a distance without noticing the exact shape of the head or the relation between legs and body. It is enough to recognize two pertinent characteristics - four-leggedness and stripes" (Eco 33). Shapes, lines, and grain can be identified as such: Circles can be "circles" and lines as "lines."

Painting and drawing, Barthes writes, have characteristics and styles that the photograph does not have. Their barest skeletons can carry coded signs that can be read as messages below the connotative level. Photography's bare words at the denotative level signifies nothing else but the objective quality of "realism". That is why connotation should be the most significant means of viewing the photographic image. This is the level of "interpretation" (Barthes 35-40).

The painting or drawing artist has a disadvantage here, for a flaw in realism or technique can call attention to itself. The photographer, on the other hand, can devote a greater amount of his concentration to the act of creating meaningful images. This is because the technique is built largely into the camera, and the medium is intrinsically realistic.
It is for the above reasons that Eco based his research on iconic signs. An icon refers to the importance of a higher classification (Eco 32). For instance, we recognize an approaching animal to be a greyhound. Notice that the term "greyhound" is much more descriptive than "dog". Therefore an iconic sign is more important than a mere word; it is an utterance, or seme (Eco 32). Semes are closer to what a photograph conveys. "The image of a horse does not mean horse but a minimum a horse stands here in profile." By now, the distinction should be clear.

Eco's codes present approaches to iconic signs ranging from the simple (formalism) to the complex (contextual). "Codes" refer to certain features of the things (objects, persons, places, creatures) that can be perceived. Eco states this more concretely as "codes of recognition (Eco 33)." But for our purposes we will focus on only five of his ten approaches -- notably codes of taste and sensibility, iconographic, rhetorical, stylistic, and the unconscious. These codes fall into the contextual domain (Eco 37-38).

Iconographic codes are signs connoting dominance or stature. A woman could be a "madonna," or a well dressed man "a man of means". Codes of taste and sensibility go a step further. The madonna then becomes the "ideal of female perfection," or the man of means "an elitist".
Taste refers to favorable or valued connotations. Sensibility refers to the senses: i.e., cerebral, sexual, or a hungering attraction. These connotations are based on the situation or upon the cultural significance. As Eco has stated, "Thus one kind of actress in one historical period connotes grace and beauty, while in another period she looks ridiculous." Unlike the iconographic codes, codes of taste and sensibility are more specific to the situation at hand — if it exists at all (Eco 37).

Rhetorical codes take in account figurative relations, such as metaphors, hyperbole, repetition (see fig 4-1), moods, and staged scenes or dramas. Figurative relations are interesting in their identification. As Burgin states:

The rhetoricized image in its immediate reading, is heir to the fantastic, the dream, hallucinations: Metaphor becomes metamorphosis, repetition = seeing double, hyperbole = gigantism, ellipsis = levitation, etc. On the occasions when a realistic 'justification' is given for the image, unreality is not eliminated, but only displaced. For example, the suggestion of a divided personality contained in the double-image (de'doublement) of the model in a swimsuit advertisement is 'justified' by the incongruous presence of a mirror on a beach (Burgin 71).

A subset of the rhetorical code, "moods", implies serenity, nostalgia, frustration, anger, and so forth. Mood is easily identifiable by a facial expression, a gesture, or other such indicator. Moods are experienced daily within the "living creature" (John Dewey 3-19). It was Degas who referred to man as the highest form of art.
Therefore, it is mankind that we relate to most easily.

Staged scenes and dramas are also easily interpretive. **Dramatic stills function as a story** (even in one image) more successfully than a candid photograph can. Roland Barthes was attracted to this type of imagery. An actor’s face and actions vividly capture a moment. A photographer always strives for the “right moments” that the actors achieve in the process of acting. This dramatic interplay happens before the photographer presses his shutter (Barthes 59-62). Arrangement of actions and ideas can be preconceived, but we will get back to this within “structural” approaches (chapter 4).

**Stylistic codes** are historical references. In other words, certain ideas and characteristics relate to a certain time period (i.e., Photo-Succession 1920). Each decade has many viewpoints and ideas that change our perceptions. Photography is not immune to these changes. During **impressionism’s height** (1889-1900s) photography emulated this painters’ movement through **pictorialism** (Snyder and Allen 71). Photographers slightly blurred their pictures on purpose and manipulated printing techniques to emphasize the grain (Newhall 103,108). This pointelist, and soft-touch had a painterly appearance. Likewise, **documentation is a style incorporating candid shots of people and events** (Newhall 58-65). **Straight**
photography abandoned pictorialism to display qualities that painting could never hope to achieve (Williams, Brash, and Horan 144-145). Equivalence was a metaphorical style to emphasize inner feelings by symbolising moods (Lacayo 68). Conceptual photography emphasizes the idea over the image (Craven 158-159).

Stylistic codes are "deterministic solutions" (Eco 38). Styles are about accepted perceptions. Stylistic codes do not always mean they are documented. New perceptions always displace older ones, and this process will continue. Nevertheless, "deterministic solutions" are important educational models. Such models help in evaluating whether a student understands a concept, and if he is capable of going beyond that concept. Can a student recreate pictorialism, or equivalence? Can he emulate a photographer's style? Will other students recognize that emulated style? Activities such as these will stimulate classroom discussion and participation.

Codes of the unconscious are the most important. This label signifies the psychological, and rightly so. Codes of the unconscious relate to the influencing of the viewer's behavior. Eco writes that they are "held to be capable of permitting certain identifications or projections, of stimulating given reactions, and of expressing psychological situations. The use of these codes
Propaganda and advertising have their favorable and negative sides. They can both display and hide truths. Propaganda can be political, and the gathering of public support takes priority — even if it means distorting the truth. Berger relates that black and white film is preferred to color in war photos. Although black and white often accentuates details, the opposite is true when used with war themes. The sanguinary realities of battle are subdued, and the images used to popularize the war effort. This is an example of favorable propaganda (Berger 153).

Advertising’s goals are similar to those of propaganda. Only, advertising emphasizes the future rather than the present (Berger 130), and attempts to instill materialistic values. True, there may be values of higher virtue, but people respond to advertising nonetheless. Some people get so involved in the materialistic, they often forget about the social and political issues of the day. The codes of the unconscious are indeed powerful.

Eco’s five codes apply to the visual interpretation of photographs. A photograph of itself cannot be 'literary' any more than a novel can be 'visual', but they can IMPLY in DIFFERENT ways! Novels can illustrate many situations, but no two events are truly identical, and the same event
can be perceived differently by each individual.

The relation of Eco’s Codes to connotation and denotation can be shown as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DENOTATED CODES</th>
<th>CONNOTATED CODES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>figures</td>
<td>iconographic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>signs</td>
<td>taste, sensibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>semes</td>
<td>rhetorical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>stylistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>unconscious</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Different cultures may have trouble decoding all American perceptions, but some codes are interpretable. Those codes which cannot be decoded, due to some lack of common ground between cultures, depend on art history or anthropology to guide them. These other disciplines aid in our understanding, and should be included within the decoding process.

If we equate denotated to implicit codes and connotated to implied, it then becomes necessary to establish relationships between these codes. Relationships between various codes can best be explained through a linguistic concept known as syntax. Syntax is the relationship between signs (Riffaterre 47). It stipulates what is read first (the dominate) and last (less dominate). The sentence “that person is standing” can be read in different ways. Denotatively, a person is specific, and nothing else can be implied, except that he is standing.
In syntax, the person and standing could be equal, since nothing more interesting draws one's attention. Let's change the sentence to "that transient is staggering!" Denotatively, that is a 'person,' and he is still 'upright.' Connotatively, a transient implies a lower class, an unworthy vagrant supported by the fact that he is "staggering" (loss of control). In syntax, the staggering calls attention to the transient, and points to his way of life more insistently. If a transient were in control of his life, he might stumble, but certainly he would not stagger. Say we illustrate the situation in a sequence of five pictures: First, group of passerbys; second, a blur; third, all heads turn; forth, people back away from a transient about to fall (in a stumbling fashion); five, he is on his side trying to get back up. In syntax, we were forced to see the first picture before the second or last. Sequences are 'linear,' read from left to right (Burgin 55, Smith 48). Single images can have similar qualities, but a sign must have predominant importance to be read in a chosen order (Smith 41, Barthes 13). When the order is non-linear, they cannot be read as a language in sequence, "but as a kind of musical variation on a single motif" (Riffaterre 144).

Figure 3-1 displays a more visual resource. Within the above image, a man is seen lying on the ground. The
lower image depicts a large boulder, displayed at an offset angle. The huge rock appears to be ready to fall off the earth. Since both images are so close to each other, a syntactical relation is being implied. The man's face takes on a similar texture with the boulder's. The viewer wonders if that person's predicament is somehow similar to the stone's. The reading is much like a cartoon series.

Taking syntax into account, we may expand our table related to the reading of images:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DENOTATED CODES</th>
<th>CONNOTATED CODES</th>
<th>SYNTACTIC RELATION OF CODES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>figures</td>
<td>iconographic</td>
<td>dominance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>signs</td>
<td>taste, sensibility</td>
<td>predominance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>semes</td>
<td>rhetorical</td>
<td>paradigm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>stylistic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>unconscious</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

'Dominant' and 'predominant' relations are sometimes difficult to determine within the single image. This can happen when a person is attracted to a signifying code that relates to a personal experience. In a classroom situation, such experiences are important, but they should be set aside when separating dominant from predominant qualities. Barthes calls these same qualities the obvious and the obtuse (45-59). The obtuse lends to secondary qualities that give the obvious more of its meaning. But for our purposes (in education), we will use the terms 'dominant' and 'predominant'.

Paradigmatic relations exist when a code can be
FIG. 3-1. "Syntax." Photo by the Author.
substituted to change a visual message. Victor Burgin explains as follows:

A particular linguistic unit is said to enter into syntagmatic relations with all the other units with which it is actually associated in a spoken or written chain. It is said to enter into paradigmatic relations with all the other units which might potentially replace it at its particular position in that chain. Thus, 'by virtue of its potentiality of occurrence in the context /-et/ the expression element /b/ stands in paradigmatic relationship with /p/, /s/, etc.; and in syntagmatic relationship with /e/, /t/'.

Moreover, these relations obtain at every level of linguistic description, so 'by virtue of its potentiality of occurrence in such contexts as a. ..of milk, the word pint contracts paradigmatic relations with such other words as bottle, cup, gallon, etc., and syntagmatic relations with a, of, and milk.'

The paradigm concept is easy to understand in language. The sentence "artist in the trenchcoat" changes in meaning if artist were substituted for "criminal." But how does the paradigm relate to the visual image? One will find the concept a valuable concept in decoding images. The problem is learning to recognize when paradigmatic conditions exist and to what degree. This concept is subtle in the still image, but more identifiable within sequences.

Take for example, an image of the moon. Western culture children look at the earth's largest satellite and see "the man in the moon." As a straight forward depiction, this is incorrect; it is simply an image of the moon. However, an Japanese child might say, "that is not a
man, that is a hare." Japanese children are told the story of a rabbit which offered itself to a king for dinner, and the king held up the great gift for all the world to see (Dennys 1971, MacKenzie 1923). "The man in the moon" of the Western culture is the "hare" of the Far-Eastern. A paradigmatic instance has occurred. The perception of the moon has changed according to the culture viewing it.

If the above observation were displayed in a sequence of images, the paradigmatic instance would occur again. But such a project would be troublesome, unless words were used to guide the viewer. If the artist in the trenchcoat were seen in one image -- paintbrush in one hand, and a gun in the other -- a paradigmatic event has transpired! The paintbrush is being substituted for the gun in one image. The artist sad is turning to crime; he is becoming a criminal. This kind of interpretation may be subtle, but once practiced, easier to identify.

Figure 4-2 displays an interesting sequence taken of the reflection on the side of a bank building. The bus is cropped and seen from different angles. A pedestrian is seen twice within two of the squares. Since the grid of images must be read as a group, a reading from left to right does not work well. The image of the pedestrian could be substituted anywhere within the sequence -- even aboard the bus. The group of images creates different
associations, almost cubist. The bank building has succeeded in fragmenting our perceptions, as well as altering our method of decoding them.

So far, we have explored the denotative, connotative, and syntactic concepts. These can be used as the basis of a system for understanding images (with a semiotic emphasis). Such a model can be considered as a semiotic criticism, or "photographic decoder". The second term, being less scary, is recommended for the
purposes of education. The model may be constructed as follows:

PHOTOGRAPHIC CODES

1) Explicit Codes (denotative)
Identification of figures, signs, and semes.

2) Implied Codes (connotative)
Identification of Eco's Codes (iconographic, taste, sensibility, rhetorical, stylistic, and unconscious)

3) Relation of Codes (syntax)
Identification of structural relations such as dominant, predominant, paradigm, theme, and conflicts

4) Critical Analysis of Codes (evaluation)
Identification of the success of codes to transmit information in relation to its semiological framework. This can also include Broudy's recreative, historical and judicial approaches to criticism (see appendix).

The above criticism was introduced to display the unity of the concepts explained. An example of its use is shown in chapter five: Concepts in Education.
A photograph has many qualities that distinguish it from other media. Photographs not only transcend time and space, but retain an illusion of objectivity. The picture is very believable, looking exactly like Rene Magritte's pipe or Newton's apple, only existing on a two-dimensional plane. It is the nature of this image that so influenced Edward Weston (second only to Ansel Adams in the technical-perfection of his images) to note its unique characteristics: Subtle gradations of middle tone; tiny grain versus line; precision and high quality of detail (Weston 208).

As remarkable as these characteristics are, they can also be altered like pigment on a canvas. The procedures are of course different, as inherent to the photographic medium's qualities. Roland Barthes suggested that there are connotative procedures that lend themselves to the photograph's meaning. His work identifies six, but there are clearly more -- fourteen are to be examined here. Barthes did not intend these procedures to be translated to structural terms. He was concerned more with techniques, not units (Petruck 192). Barthes takes such powerful procedures too lightly. These approaches do not only lend themselves to the photograph's meaning, they can change
meaning as well! Prior to exploring these altering devices, "technique" and "structure" will be compared.

Webster defines structure as "something made up of interdependent parts in a definite pattern or organization" (Merrian-Webster 678). Units are more easily assigned to literary forms such as poetry -- its structure being composed of stanzas, rhyme schemes, poetic devices, and so forth (Engle 1-18). Understandably, Barthes preferred "technique" to compensate for photography's lack of literary form.

Technique is defined as "the manner in which technical details are treated or basic physical movements are used" (Merrian-Webster 701). Technique controls only the choice and treatment of materials. In photography, examples are choice of paper, chemicals, temperature, exposure latitudes, and so forth. But the concept of technique as being a neutral type of structure is a fallacy. Musical notation is written without words using patterns, dynamics, and refrains. Its abstractness is layered with mathematical structures. How can such an abstract vehicle have such framework, and not photography? The key is in that term "framework."

In the most basic sense, the "frame" is the photograph's structure! Like the poetic stanza, the photographic frame draws our attention to a specific
viewpoint. Musical notation and poetry have a beginning, a middle, and an end. The photograph’s beginning is caught within the frame, and ends at the edges! The image also transforms what we see because it is a window which edges exclude the rest of the actual scene. Les Levine, photographer and art critic, once stated that what is caught within the frame of the camera is art, but what is outside the frame and not recorded on the film is life itself (Levine 129). Arguably then, the rectangular format is photographic structure at its simplest. Let’s look at some more complex examples.

A cinquain is five lines with or without rhyme, forming a poetic structure known as a stanza. Each stanza is like a paragraph, only creating its message within a stricter format. Leave one line out of the stanza, and the overall meaning suffers. Similarly in art, a triptych makes up three paintings, placed together to form a message. Take one away, and the body of work loses some of its meaning — as with the stanzas. Structures such as these are known as sequences. In semiology, they depend on syntactic relationships, as discussed in Chapter 3.

Paradigmatic relations show that substituting one picture for another can alter the meaning of a sequence (Burgin 55-56). Keith Smith illustrates this concept with a sequence of four photos made up of a door, a hand, the
lower part of woman's face, and a knife (Smith 42-45). The implied message with photos in the above order is as follows: "A door is opened, revealing a hand. The woman is the owner of the hand and she is reaching for the knife." By simply altering the sequence, we can change the message. For instance, we transpose the image of the face with that of the knife: "The woman is about to be stabbed by an unknown intruder from behind a door!"

Smith's example shows that changes in photographic structure can alter meaning. If a single image were used to tell the above story, the suspense would be lessened. The sequence of events would not be as evident. The whole effect of the woman getting stabbed would be different!

The same is true if written text were provided with the imagery. If a word were paired with each image, then the image's meaning would change again (Berger 27-29). What if the words were: Discussions with policy makers. The images would become metaphorical. The knife would be a literary usage against a woman, a supposed policy maker. In the classroom, an example such as this could be used to show how easily photographs can distort the truth: Images are being used to illustrate ideas they were not originally intended to represent by the simple addition of words.

As the "knife sequence" illustrates, literary equivalents can be found for photographic approaches.
Learning to perceive images in this way can make students more discriminating viewers.

Often structure and technique can be difficult to separate. A multiple image may be strictly a technique — specifically, a special effect. But when an image depicts three identical people, each connoting past, present, and future, multiple imagery is fused with structure — repetition with figurative relations (refer to Eco's rhetorical codes, Chap. 3). Also, three identical people in one room is startling. Five is unlikely, but a photograph makes it believable. We will list these
structures or techniques as devices that alter content:

1) TEXT: Words with images. Words can either illustrate, or imply a message within a picture (Petruck 196-195). The picture within fig. 4-1 displays a woman eating a donut, made by the shop's owner. Without a text, she may have been perceived digesting a bagel.

2) CROPPING: Editing or cutting off parts of an image. An image may be enlarged within a smaller rectangular format, excluding unwanted information (Upton 190). Fig. 4-2 illustrates the same woman cropped three different ways. The first incorporates her as part of a shadowy design. The last is an emphasis to the woman's eye, looking onward. The middle frame infers that elements within the frame can crop an image as well. The woman appears isolated in an almost tranquil state. For the rest of her to be included would not have the same effect.

FIG.4-2. Example of Cropping. Photo by the Author.

3) DECISIVE MOMENTS: Term first used by Henry Cartier Bresson. Involves capturing chance-like events at their
most potential and expressive moment. A picture of a woman dropping an object while another sneezes, would be more interesting than simply a woman retrieving an object (Newhall 283-287).

4) ARRANGEMENT OF OBJECTS: Prior tampering with the scene before the exposure. This can be compared with the painter who alters his work before he chooses to let the paint dry (Barthes 11). Figure 4-3 shows a pizza with paper hand cut-outs pointing towards the center. A piece of the rotting fruit at the right may have been placed at the pizza's center. The round shapes playing off the

FIG. 4-3. "Object Arrangement." Photo by the Author.
rectangular shapes can be most effective when the photographer plans their compositions.

5) POSING: The way a person may be represented is related to arrangement of objects. This device is separated since it is restricted to living creatures, notably human beings. One does not pose a chair, he positions or arranges it. A subject who may sit on the chair can transform any gestures, feelings, moods, and other complexities. The chair is a supplement, and at times, also an emphasis (Barthes 10-11).

FIG. 4-4. "Twins/Twins=Eins." Photo by the Author.

6) MULTIPLE IMAGES: Illusion of two or more unlikely
objects, persons, or events existing in one photograph. Examples include: Five identical people; a swimming pool in the middle of the desert; floating trees; and so on. Achievement of such imagery is through masking and slider techniques (see figure 4-4).

7) DOUBLE EXPOSURE: Related to multiple imagery, but with one difference: Overlapping images. Fig. 4-5 displays this difference quite adequately. In the picture, the tabletop with the rose and lettering was given one half the exposure. The film was not advanced, allowing an additional exposure (1/2) of the marred and scrawled human

FIG. 4-5. "Plague." Photo by the Author.
subject. Together, both exposures give the complete range of tones expected from the usual single exposure.

8) MONOCHROME: Any scene rendered in one tone or color. Color differences do not exist, so tonal variations are more dominant. Any emphasis of subjects and moods are accomplished by means of contrast. Monochromatic realism can also be an altered realism. Colorless images such as black and white address some statements more vividly than distracting colors. John Berger illustrated a contrary view that realism can be calmed down through black and white imagery, especially in war themes.

9) PHOTOGENIA: Technical qualities inherent within the camera’s mechanism and optics. Depth of field is determined by the aperture opening, effecting how far an object will retain its focus. Low shutter speed can attribute to blur (see figure 4-6). Faster shutter speeds can capture and freeze action. Long lens focal lengths flatten perspective. Shorter focal lengths distort and widen perspective. Many more qualities exist, refining or allowing expressive freedoms that rely heavily on technical data and photographic processes.

10) AGING: When a photograph is first created, it may not have appeal since many objects are too familiar within a certain time period. Susan Sontag took notice that many photographs became valuable when time detached viewers from
FIG. 4-6. "Self-Portait #2" by Jannelle Weakly.
this familiarization. Images became nostalgic. It is for this reason that photographers should not worry if certain objects may not carry a certain attraction to viewers; they someday will (Schwartz 94-95).

11) GRID: This is a structural device to force viewers to associate a body of images with each other. Figure 4-7 contains several frames of reference. The walking legs and pointing finger suggests that the gentleman, in profile, if undecided which direction to travel. It is not necessary to read from left to right or backwards. The images work in a cluster, reading the same way regardless of order.

FIG. 4-7. "Lanier Grid." Photo by the Author.
12) PROCESSES: No one will question that photography has a technical side. Exposure, film, paper, and type of chemistry all affect how the image is going to appear. Like other art forms, photographs do not possess everything that was actually seen at the scene! For example, if an exposure were based inside of a house next to an open window, everything inside would be represented adequately. Outside the window, blazing blasts of whiteness would dominate. If the exposure were read directly from the window, the outside would appear fine, but the inside would be as dark as black velvet (Horenstein 8).

13) MIXED MEDIA: Any manipulations that involve drawing, painting, or anything else non-photographic (refer to fig. 4-5).

14) SEQUENCE: (symphonic and prosody): Sequences can be arranged in a mutiplicity of ways. We will look at two approaches, although many more exist. Keith Smith's work arranging images within books offered important examples: Symphonic and prosody. Symphonic form is like four movements of a symphony. If structured within a four chapter book, the first chapter would state a theme, the second the variation, third is recapitulation, and lastly the finale. "The four movements of a symphony could suggest various tempos, rhythms, motives, and pacing for the four chapter book" (Smith 1984, 69).
Smith defines prosody as "the systematic study of metrical structure, including varieties of poetic feet and meters, rhymes and rhyming patterns, types of stanzas and strophes, and fixed forms." If pages were designated as: 0=blank page and X=page with image, then a 0 would imply a pause, or would contribute to the rhythm. Study the bottom examples as representing pages of a book. The left variable would be the left page:

OX=iambic  X0=trochaic
XX=spondaic  00=pyrrhic

Smith goes on to say, "Metrical units, or feet, are in a line and numbered by 1 monometer, 2 dimeter, 3 trimeter, 4 tetrameter, 5 pentameter, 6 hexameter, 7 heptameter, 8 octameter." Iambic pentameter might be displayed in this fashion: OX+OX+OX+OX+OX (Smith 102-103).

Besides structural, there are also aesthetic, stylistic and figurative devices. Student assignments can employ illustrations of mimetic transformations between simple, ideal, and essential levels (demonstrated in Chap. 2). The mimetic assignment can be accomplished two ways. Firstly, any snapshot is a candidate for the simple. Any cropping or refinement would be within the ideal. Essence is approached by captions or rephotographing the same image or theme repeatedly using different people and sets. The result would be a comment on the prior mimetic theories.
A second method would make use of pictures or slides to demonstrate the different levels of meaning each mimetic approach offers.

Figurative devices such as hyperbole, metaphors, symbols, repetitions, ellipsis, personifications, allegories, and allusions do not only exist for the literary forms. Using a wideangle lens to exaggerate a person's head is a visual hyperbole. Allegories can be an image in form of a mural or story. For a personification, an animal or still life could be arranged or dressed to emulate a human being. Refer to Burgin's examples in figurative relations (Burgin 71, Engle 1-17).

Photography, being of youthful stature, is not as easily categorized into art movements as are painting and sculpture. When one tries to separate these into labels, one finds a great deal of overlap. It has become necessary to base the historical context more on major photographers and less on movements. The stylistic devices below are not absolute or definite, but are adequate for instructional purposes:

A. Pictorialism: Starting in the 1860's, photography emulated painting. Representative of this style are Julia Margaret Cameron, Henry Peach Robinson, and Oscar Gustave Rejlander.

B. Naturalism: Evacuating the ideas of pictorialism.
Since the human eye does not see everything in focus, the camera image was slightly blurred. Examples include Peter Henry Emerson, Edward Steichen, and Robert Demachy.

C. Straight Photography: Just as the name implies. Absence of retouching or manipulations are heavily encouraged. Examples include Alfred Stieglitz, Paul Strand, Edward Weston, and Ansel Adams.

D. Equivalents: Concept consists of equating outside imagery with inside moods or feelings, e.g., abstract expression. Examples include Alfred Steiglitz, Paul Capinigro, Edward Weston, Aaron Siskind and Jerry Ulesman.

FIG. 4-8. "Untitled Light Shapes" by Stan Willis.
E. Formalistic: Formal design in abstraction and non-objective imagery. Formalism also includes distortions of realism. Figure 4-8 is more about shape and design than about recognizable subjects from our surrounding environment. Example include Man Ray, Moholy-Nagy, Alvin Langdon Coburn, and Ducas Du Hauron.

F. Documentary: Photo Journalism resides within this style. Photographs became records of the human condition. Examples include Paul Strand, Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange, Henry Cartier-Bresson, and Robert Frank. See figure 4-9 about a Korean movie-goer. The surrounding bare stemmed
folaige stand opposite to the poster's message about different fantasies and escapes any spectator can expect to see. The Korean subject becomes an advocate to this view.

G. Conceptual: The idea becomes more important than the image (Craven 158-159). Examples include Duane Michaels, John Baldesari, Lew Thomas, Keith Smith, and Arthur Tress.

H. Post Modernism: Images that comment on media and other images. Critic Richard Lacayo commented "the essence of postmodernism is the belief that in advanced societies reality is a secondhand experience, a slippery substance filtered through a ghostly scrim of media images. Movie stills, news pictures, advertising -- the world is a deck of pictures; the artist's job is to shuffle and deal, making images that comment upon images." Examples include Cindy Sherman and Boyd Webb (Lacayo 67).

Although all the above mentioned devices can alter content, their use displays realism as a perception. True, most people see in color, but that is no reason to exclude people who have trouble in that area. Color blindness is a fact, and so is near and far sightedness. If we were to see a photograph displaying a scene as a color blind person perceives it, we would be experiencing color blindness -- a different reality, but a realism that does exist. In a sense, the act of perceiving anything, no matter how
outlandish, can become its own sort of realism.

FIG. 4-10. "Snow Ducks." Photo by Mike Davidson.

Take a photograph of ducks in a pond (see figure 4-10). At first there may be nothing to make you doubt what you are seeing. On closer inspection, however, you will note the ducks are not ducks at all, but snow on twigs. Not only has a paradigmatic event occurred, but your perception of what you see has been changed. Suddenly, the saying "distant men have not eyes, distant trees have no branches" takes on a significant meaning. It does not matter how much detail one sees, but of what he expects to see! Realism is not a definite realm, it can change all
time. For this reason, structural devices, as well as figurative, stylistic and aesthetic, are used to examine the inconsistent perception of realism.
Disciplined-Based Art Education encourages use of four disciplines: Studio, aesthetic, critical, and historical. Greer advocates that these disciplines lend to a more complete understanding of art (Clark, Day and Greer 171). In context of this paper, photographic realism may be approached within education as follows:

**studio:** photographs, in nature, yield realism

**aesthetic:** mimetic theories: simple, ideal, and essence

**critical:** semiological

**historical:** deterministic solutions

The above disciplines are limited to a main concept: The perception of realism is inconsistent. Content of single or serial photography can be altered to convey different messages. This is not to say that realism is inadequate, but rather, realism can misinform seemingly objective information. The study of the documentary style is representative of this issue.

However, manipulations of imagery has a positive side. Pictures that can be changed, teach much about the making of a message. A change in the order of a serial or caption arrangement contribute to important linguistic relationships (Riffaterre 47). Styles can also have a transitory relevance. For a realistic picture to move into formal or abstract terrain, one merely has to blur, or enlarge a small portion from a larger study. When students
emulate certain photographic styles, they are exercising "deterministic solutions (Eco 38)." Such solutions have previous thought out trials within a historical basis, but not necessarily roads thoroughly traveled. When a student tries to change a stylistic approach, he is going beyond such solutions. The creation of unique messages is not this paper's purpose, but rather to understand the variables that can make or change a message. Creation is only a by-product of this understanding. Four types of devices (from chapter 3) can serve as ideal activities to illustrate many approaches a picture may be altered:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRUCTURAL (studio)</th>
<th>FIGURATIVE (critical)</th>
<th>AESTHETIC (aesthetic)</th>
<th>STYLISTIC (historical)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>text</td>
<td>hyperbole</td>
<td>simple</td>
<td>pictorialism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decisive moments</td>
<td>metaphor</td>
<td>ideal</td>
<td>naturalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>multiple images</td>
<td>symbol</td>
<td>essence</td>
<td>formalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>double exposure</td>
<td>personification</td>
<td></td>
<td>straight photog.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arrangement of objects</td>
<td>allusion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>posing</td>
<td>repetition</td>
<td></td>
<td>conceptual equivalents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monochrome</td>
<td>allegory</td>
<td></td>
<td>post-modern documentary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The four main disciplines parallel each of the devices. An example of a curriculum, using these concepts, are within the following pages. A unit overview and four week matrix is shown first, followed by a handout example of a structural device: photogenia.
UNIT OVERVIEW

I. TITLE - ADVANCED PHOTOGRAPHY: The Visual Message

II. TIME BUDGET - Four weeks (twenty days, meeting for one hour each).

III. OBJECTIVES

A. Perceptual Skills

1. The students will understand the difference of a photograph from other medias since:
   a. the images are caused through mechanical and optical methods.
   b. they appear more real, having the nature of scientific validity.
   c. three dimensionality is inferred more powerfully than other two dimensional medias.

2. Sharpened perception and visual skills will be enhanced from:
   a. learning to select and compose within the viewfinder.
   b. experiencing differences that types of film, lenses, shutter speeds, and light contributes to the image.

B. Expressive Skills

1. a sense of believability will be produced by two reasons:
   a. objectivity caused through photographic realism.
   b. photography freezes moments in time, contributing to a different view of the world we live in.

2. various devices allow students to alter their photographic content:
   a. structural devices allow students to change the sequence and order of photographic reading.
   b. figurative devices allow different levels of meaning in a theme or subject.
   c. aesthetic devices determine what level of realism will be used. Each level affects the degree that content will convey a message.
   d. stylistic devices are deterministic solutions, allowing students the opportunity to experience solutions that other photographers have already used in their own images.
Students are required to have their own cameras, film, and paper. Chemistry will be taken out of required lab fees for the entire course.

2. Portraiture is the emphasis for four weeks. Styles are examined at a historical context the first two weeks. Pictorialism and documentary will be compared and contrasted. Students are asked to emulate key qualities in these styles within their portraiture.

B. Second Week

1. Students are given one more style: Straight Photography. They will be asked to research Alfred Stieglitz, Paul Strand, and Edward Weston's work. Questions concerning documentary's relationship will be an issue.

2. Simple, ideal, and essence will be used to compare and analyze these styles. Mimetic theories will continue to be employed throughout the entire course work.

C. Third Week

1. Class will be introduced to masking and slider techniques to start distorting or change the appearances of their portraiture.

2. Structural devices such as masking, double and multiple exposure, and posing will be elaborated.

3. Students will only work with portraiture and one subject to discover how many approaches can lead to different appearances and images.

D. Fourth Week

1. Students are expected to get copies of various types of magazines: Fashion, political, scientific, and so forth. In class, they will cut out various pictures (within the portraiture realm) and group them according to simple, ideal, and essential levels. A discussion and class assignment will evolve.

2. The assignment consists of photographing an ideal portraiture, and then altering it within another photograph. The changes must tell something about the person as well as the surroundings. Any structural devices may be used.

3. A film is shown to the students. This supplement is called Koyaanisqatsi directed and produced by Godfrey Reggio. The students are to discuss and write a short description of the many structural devices used to both illustrate and transform its message. In addition, the film will help explain the essential level of realism.
C. Historical/Cultural Skills - students will be able to:

1. identify differences between photographers.
2. compare and contrast between historical styles: pictorialism, documentary, equivalents, conceptualism, post-modernism, formalistic and straight photography.

D. Aesthetic Analysis - students will be able to:

1. understand imitation theory to support why they respond to photographic realism.
2. be able to distinguish and apply three levels of realism from the imitation theory: simple, ideal, and essence.

E. Visual Analysis

1. Various slides of the actual environment will be shown in relation to its level of realism. The images will progress at the simple, ideal, and essential levels. The differences occur at a denotative comprehension.
2. Other slides will consist of the same subject matter, changing its meaning during application of structural, figurative, and stylistic devices. Such devices occur at a connotative comprehension.

F. Critical Analysis

1. Semiological criticism will be employed. Explicit, implied, syntactical, and critical relations will be discussed. Such criticism makes use of Umberto Eco's photographic codes (iconographic, taste and sensibility, rhetorical stylistic, and the unconscious.) The purpose is to relate photography as a language and thereby breaking it down into codes and units. The use of units can be rearranged to study changes in content and the photographic message.
2. Broudy's recreative, judicial, and historical criticism are additional supplements toward a more complete understanding of photographs.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. First Week

1. Class will be given an overview of course.
These four weeks will be an antecedent towards understanding photographic codes, to be discussed during the next few weeks of instruction.

V. MATERIALS FOR INSTRUCTION

- Slide projector
- Synchronizer and dissolve unit
- One box of 5X7 Ilford Multigrade (glossy, fifty sheets)
- One box of 8X10 Ilford Multigrade (glossy, fifty sheets)
- Polaroid camera with 24 unexposed B&W and color film
- One box of 5X7 Kodak Ektaprint
- Five Beseler enlargers with filter drawer for polycontrast and color
- Eight 8X10 trays
- Eight 4X5 trays
- 15 one gallon light proof containers
- Six red safelights
- Five enlarger timers
- Five gallons of developer, indicator stop bath, fixer and hypoclear
- Photoflo
- Five gallons of color developer, bleach fix, and stabilizer
- Two fifty gallon drums for waste management
- Five extra enlarger bulbs
- Five sets of burning and dodging tools
- Three sets of polycontrast and color filters
- Five sets of 35mm, 2 1/4, 4X5, and 6X7 negative holders
- Two glass negative holders
- Two 8X10 sheets of glass
- Five 8X10 saunder easles
- 2'X5' light table
- Three sets of 50mm, 80mm, 150mm enlarger lenses
- Drums to process 4X5, 8X10 color prints
- Motorized base to agitate drums
## WEEK ONE

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S1=studio    St=struct. devices SI=simple imitation
C2=critical  Sy=stylistic " " II=ideal imitation
A3=aesthetic AD=aesth. devices EI=essential imitation
H4=historical FD=figurative " " SC=semiological crit
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### WEEK FOUR

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| xxEIIxxx | xxxxxxxxx | essence | xxxxxxxxx | xxxxxxxxx |

| H4xxxxxxx | xxxxxxxxx | apply | xxxxxxxxx | xxxxxxxxx |
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| xxxxxxxxx | xxxxxxxxx | with | xxxxxxxxx | xxxxxxxxx |
| xxxxxxxxx | xxxxxxxxx | styles | xxxxxxxxx | xxxxxxxxx |

S1=studio  St=struct. devices  SI=simple imitation  
C2=critical  Sy=stylistic  " "  II=ideal imitation  
A3=aesthetic  AD=aesth. devices  EI=essential imitation  
H4=historical  FD=figurative  " "  SC=semiological crit
PHOTOGENIA-HANDBOOK

Photogenia: Technical qualities inherent within the camera's mechanism and optics.

A. Aperture: The aperture determines how much light can be allowed to reach the film, e.g. F/32 is smaller than f/8. Wide apertures can blur the background while retaining foreground detail.

B. Shutter Speed: The shutter speed controls the speed of the focal plane shutter, moving over the film. Both aperture and shutter speed affect the exposure. The water faucet presents a good analogy. Aperture compares with the size of the faucet opening. Shutter speed is the amount of pressure released through turning the knob.

C. Depth of Field: The aperture affects the amount of detail seen related to changes in distance. The smaller the aperture, the greater the depth of field. F/32 can guarantee sharpness from five feet to infinity. F/8 may only cover five feet to fifteen feet. This can be determined by the scale on the aperture ring.

D. Type of Lens: also affects how much the perspective is flattened or distorted. 28mm lenses on a 35mm camera widens perspective, but distorts images as they approach nearer the camera. 50mm is considered a normal lens. 85mm is ideal for portraits, allowing a photographer distance from artificial light sources. 200 to 500mm flattens perspective, making for objects to appear nearer to the middle ground than they actually are. Wide-angle lenses can distort, providing emphasis and visual hyperbole (exaggeration). Soft focus lenses lend to a ephemeral mood (and take out wrinkles).

E. Fast shutter speeds: capture action. 1/500 to 1/2000th of a sec. are ideal.

F. Slow shutter speeds: Cause moving objects to blur, providing the camera on a tripod. 1/30 to 1/8th of a sec are good settings. Blur infers motion, time, and overlapping of images.

G. Film: low A.S.A. settings are fine grain. A higher A.S.A. will increase in grain, appearing impressionistic.

H. Paper: Type of paper can determine cold and warm paper tones.
Within the last pages that follow is a photographic codes worksheet to be used with figure 5-1. This worksheet has many similarities with aesthetic scanning (see appendix). However, the purpose of semiological criticism is used to interpret pictures of a photographic nature; it will not replace aesthetic scanning.

Figure’s 5-2 and 5-3 represent pictures that reflect the third of the four week matrix’s activities. Both figures only skim the possibilities. Figure 5-4 is a triptych displaying how one person can be transformed (or transfigured). These pictures were taken within a three minute interval.

Figure 5-5 displays another kind of portraiture students can experiment with: two people as one. The man and woman in this photograph were not related to each other. It is even more remarkable that the two were chosen at random at a photographic workshop. This image compares and contrasts two people’s features much more accurately if not memorably.

The purpose of teaching photographic realism in this fashion emphasizes qualities that otherwise would be very subtle. Oscar Wilde’s observation that impressionism taught people to notice impressionistic qualities in the environment is an excellent example (Radar 25-26). Since Muybridge’s horse experiments, we have learned to see
horses running quite differently. If such experiences are
learned daily from photographs, it would not be out of
place to say we also see photographs in our environment.
If a student were to notice an isolated street resembling
an Atget photograph, then he would also be approaching the
heart of the photographic message.
PHOTOGRAPHIC CODES WORKSHEET
(TO BE APPLIED TO FIGURE 5-1)

INSTRUCTIONS: Write or type the following information concerning the photograph in question.
Name of artist: John Low Title and date of work: Untitled 1884

1) List the explicit codes. At the denotative level, these would be figures, signs, and semes.
   FIGURES: Upper portion of triangular shapes and high-contrast. Bottom half is much darker. Whole image appears symmetrical, monochromatic.
   SIGNS: Tree, person, clouds, leaves.
   SEMES: Reflection of a person's side. Upper portion does not reveal the person. Tree is reflected and seen in the same image.

2) List the implied Codes. At the Connotative level, this would be one or more of Eco's Codes, e.g., iconographic, taste and sensibility, rhetorical, stylistic, and the unconscious.
   STYLE: can be compared with equivalents.
   RHETORICAL Metaphor: absence of person signifies isolation, an everyman in its ambiguity.
   Repetition: reflection of tree, connotating memories, and time passages.
   Moods: dark, somber, and nostalgic.
   TASTE AND SENSIBILITY: Relies more heavily on rhetorical codes. The intention is personal in nature, lending to some subjective observations.

3) What are the relationships of the above codes? At the syntactic level, what are the dominant, predominant, and paradigmatic relations?
   The sparseness of the above half is very isolated compared to the bottom half, filled with a more varied vintage. The image of the man without its counterpart signifies memories or the passage of time. The mood is very somber, lending to its dark rendering of tones. The lack of identity can almost be a metaphor as Chaucer's Everyman.

4) In your own words, how successful were the above codes in transmitting the information? Could the message have been improved?
   The image's ambiguity may lend to some diverse responses. Meanings may not correlate with the photographer's intention. However, its mood of somberness and isolation is dominate enough to be interpreted as the main message.
FIG. 5-1. "Untitled." Photo by the Author.
FIG. 5-2. "Kathi." Photo by the Author.

FIG. 5-3. "Self-Portrait." Photo by the Author.
FIG. 5-4. "3 States + One." Photo by the Author.

FIG. 5-5. "Anima/Animas." Photo by the Author.
APPENDIX

AESTHETIC SCANNING (taken from Silverman 116).

SENSORY PROPERTIES (qualities which can be seen or felt)

Identify the nature of elements such as shapes (square-round), lines (thick-thin), values (dark-light), textures (coarse-smooth), colors (dull-bright), size (large-small), space (deep-shallow), etc.

Second, respond to ways in which sensory properties are organized within an object or event by identifying the character of its

FORMAL PROPERTIES (try to answer the following questions as the work is experienced)

- How is a sense of unity achieved? What is the nature of the movement (actual or imagined) from one part to another? How is the sense of unity maintained even though elements may vary, achieving unity through variety?
- Are there some elements which are more dominate than others, a hierarchy of elements? Which elements appear to be most dominate thereby contributing to the major theme? How is variety achieved in the repetition of these elements which results in thematic variation?

Third, reflect upon both the nature of the existing sensory properites and the ways they appear to be organized and then speculate about the possible meanings of an object or event by identifying its

EXPRESSIVE PROPERTIES Aesthetic objects and events possess presentational (faces, trees, environmental sounds, familiar movements, etc.) and/or metaphorical-symbolic characteristics which evoke responses from one's storehouse of images and, when combined with sensory and formal properties, translate into pervasive qualities such as:
- Mood Language—nuances of feeling describable in terms such as somber, menacing, frivolous, etc.
- Dynamic States—arousing a sense of tension, conflict, relaxation, etc.
- Idea and Ideal Language—interpretations of social or physiological events and beliefs, and/or expressions of courage, wisdom, etc.

Finally, one can also be attracted to an object or event and attempt to identify how it was created because of the significance of its

TECHNICAL PROPERTIES Attending to the extraordinary surface texture created by an extra heavy application of paint with a painting knife or the clarity of contrasting planes in a carefully welded steel sculpture are examples of reacting to the technical aspects of art forms. Knowing how something is made is often important to aesthetic perceiving, however, aesthetic responses and judgments can be made without close attention to technical properties if all the other properties are considered.
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