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# PHOTOJOURNALISM:
# A critical analysis of training and practices in Southern Africa for training purposes

by

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A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements for a degree of Master of Arts in Fine Arts.

Johannesburg, 2000.

## Declaration

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Masters of Arts in Fine Arts in the University of the Witwatersrand. Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

Margaret Vieille (Name of Candidate)

31 day of March 2000

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# Abstract

My thesis examines current photojournalistic practice in Southern Africa. In this examination, I introduce ways to improve existing training initiatives by incorporating critical practice into an otherwise technical education. I use 'photojournalistic' occasions as a way of showing how a critical understanding of a situation can change the way photographs are taken and, later, read.

Three specific aspects of critical practice are introduced to organise the examples into a creative and relevant learning experience. Firstly, visual literacy is introduced as a basis for learning how to read the many possible meanings of a photograph. Representation is the second aspect of critical practice. Here, the discussion focuses on specifically representations of race. Further discussions include gender and 'culture'. Thirdly, ethics emphasises the notion of 'right action' and the (highly contested) responsibilities associated with critical practice.

My contention is that photographers will be better equipped to understand and photograph the transformation processes of Southern Africa if their education incorporates a familiarity with, and articulation about, critical practice. Thus, photographers can be more active participants in the creation of a debate-based democratic society.

**PHOTOJOURNALISM:**
**A critical analysis of training and practices in Southern Africa for training purposes**

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**Introduction**

Photographers in Southern Africa have produced many extraordinary photographs that have passed into collective memory.[1] The photographs made in the then Bopututswana in 1994 of the killing of AWB 'soldiers', are a case in point (Illustration 1). These particular images were deep-etched into the minds of South Africans on the eve of the country's first democratic elections. By using a critical approach, photographers can usefully explore and better understand the impact of such photographs on the reading public. I believe such an approach is one "which stresses the act of interpretation of the image through focusing on the reading, rather than the taking, of photographic representations" (Wells 1997:37). Yet photojournalism is still taught with a primary emphasis on the technical aspects of taking photographs and with little concern for the complex ways in which photographs produce meaning.

My project is to present ways in which photojournalism training can integrate both technical competence and critical awareness. I argue that an integrated training experience will better equip photographers to deal with the complex environment of Southern Africa and with the coming of the new information technologies. The fundamental premise of my project is that critical thought encourages the development of a democratic state and photographers, like all citizens, have a role to play in this process.

The practical component of my research project has been the production of a training manual for adult readers.[2] This manual considers both the technical and the critical aspects of photojournalistic practice.

In the dissertation component, I critically explore the influences on and style and content of the manual; specifically its attempt to integrate a critical approach with photographic

[1] The general term 'photographer' is used in this dissertation rather than 'photojournalist', because most of the photographers contributing to the manual also do general commercial photography. However, my focus in this dissertation is specifically on their photojournalistic practice.

[2] Waller, Margaret (2000) A bigger picture: A manual of photojournalism in southern Africa (CapeTown, Juta)

technique. One unique feature of the manual is the incorporation of photographs made in Southern Africa which I also foreground and explore the need for and implications of this local content.

In Chapter One, I briefly describe the training experience in Southern Africa and argue for a more integrated and comprehensive approach to photojournalism training. The training manual is a contribution to such an approach. My approach is informed by some key principles of 'learner-centred' adult education and by specific innovations in photographic training. I then identify three principal aspects of critical photographic practice; namely visual literacy, representation and ethics all of which feature in the manual.

Chapter Two addresses and discusses in greater detail the first major aspect of critical photographic theory introduced above, visual literacy. Visual literacy refers to the complex sets of skills required to interpret and analyse photographs, and, as such, forms the basis for discussion of the other aspects of photographic theory that follow in later chapters. The discussion opens with a comparison between linguistic and visual literacy so as to clarify the concepts, followed by a description of the skills associated with visual literacy as they relate to photojournalism. These skills range from basic to advanced and the discussion focuses on different levels of competency. Photographs, mostly from the manual, are used to illustrate the points of discussion in this chapter.

Theories of representation are briefly outlined in Chapter Three. Because this is a vast subject, my treatment is necessarily partial and limited to aspects relevant to critical practice. How we choose to represent people in photographs provides an insight into how we think about those people. Central to representation is the issue of power; questions such as who photographs whom and why form the focus of discussion. In photojournalistic practice in Southern Africa, representations of race have been the subject of heated, painful, yet informative debate. I present summaries of some of these debates in a way that emphasises their value to the photographer.

The chapter also touches on representations of gender and culture.

Ethics is the last of the three aspects of critical practice with which I engage in this dissertation. Chapter Four briefly outlines some ideas of right action while avoiding any rigid notion of 'rules' applied to photojournalistic practice. Selected ethical questions are discussed, using specific ethical dilemmas faced by photographers in real situations. The intention here is to provide the reader with an opportunity to consider what their course of action might have been in each particular situation. This provides an opportunity to think through possible scenarios before they occur, and hence it can prepare photographers for the times when our responses need to be quick and decisive.

Perhaps this is an appropriate place to state one premise which influenced the way I have structured the debates around photographic meaning in both the manual and this dissertation. Simply put, this premise asserts that photographic meaning is not 'found' but 'constructed'. Photographs are thus not mere reflections of the world but interpretations of it. They both mirror and constitute the world. This dual function is made possible by, for example, the physical qualities of the subject and how that subject will be treated in terms of the conventions of composition. The photograph is then further processed by writers, editors and design artists for publication. The result is a highly structured image which transmits specific meanings, some specifically intended, some not.

## Chapter One

# A description of the process of producing a training manual in photojournalism for Southern Africa

1) Background and rationale for the style and content of the manual

2) How new trends in adult education have influenced the style and content of the manual, with specific reference to photographic education

3) Three areas of critical investigation: visual literacy, representation and ethics

In this chapter I describe the motivation informing the production of the training manual. I begin by positioning myself in the field of photojournalism based in Southern Africa. I describe how photographers operate in a difficult work environment with minimal training opportunities specifically in the field of photojournalism. These limitations are exacerbated by the lack of any locally produced training materials during the 1990's. During this period, there were enormous political shifts impactive on photojournalistic practice.

This first chapter also introduces trends in adult education elsewhere, trends which emphasise the needs of the learner and which consider learners' existing knowledge as crucial to any learning experience. Thus the training manual uses the experiences and work of local photographers extensively to develop relevant and exciting material. In this chapter, I go on to identify three key critical photographic discourses which have informed local and international debates and which, I argue, are crucial to critical photojournalistic practice. These cover the issues of visual literacy, representation and ethics. The topics, only introduced here, are then considered in more detail later.

**1) Background and rationale for the style and content of the manual**

To begin: I am an Australian photographer and trainer, working mostly in the field of photojournalism with 18 years experience in Southern Africa.[3] During the 1980's, I wrote two training manuals on photography as part of a collaboration between the Division of Mass Communication at Harare Polytechnic and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation.

Since completing the second manual in 1988, I have conducted 16 workshops for photographers in Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Participants came from government news agencies, government ministries of

[3] The Southern African region consists of Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe

information, the United Nations and non-governmental organisations[4].

Some general observations from my experience are useful here. Managers of these government agencies or information departments generally consider two- or three-week photography workshops as a self-contained and adequate education rather than seeing workshops as part of a larger, ongoing education process. The skills required of the photographer are often not fully appreciated by management and therefore the training required is routinely underestimated. Managers tend to think of photography as the 'point-and-shoot' profession. Therefore training, comprising camera and darkroom skills, is expected to 'take' only a couple of weeks.

Most of the photographers I have taught in these workshops have received minimal higher education and (in the main) poorly-conceived professional training through in-service programmes run by senior photographers. The majority (25 out of 44) of photographers interviewed for this manual have only ever attended short training courses offered by a number of small training initiatives across Southern Africa (see Appendix A).

This inadequate training is exacerbated by professional isolation. Our work is by nature largely solitary. Photographers also tend to work with clients, editors and writers more than with other photographers. Learning often happens through trial-and-error, which can be both expensive and ineffective. Thus, photographers are often positioned at the lower end of their professional spectrum.

Added to this background of erratic training and low status in professional environments, there appears to be no photojournalism training manual written specifically for Southern Africa in the 1990's. The need for a manual of the type I have produced thus seems clear.

Three primary concerns motivated the production of the manual. Firstly, the manual

[4] These include the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), Lesotho News Agency (LENA), Malawian News Agency (MANA), Namibian News Agency (NAMPA), Nordic-SADC Journalism Trust (NSJ), UNICEF (United Nations Childrens Emergency Fund), Zimbabwe News Agency (ZIANA).

seeks to address specifically Southern African photographers with examples collected from local sources. Secondly, it incorporates, for the first time, some salient critical aspects of photojournalistic practice. Finally, the manual considers some of the innovations in information technology that have begun to affect radically the very photographers work and the way photographs appear in the media. The manual thus supports my core premise that critical training can effectively be combined with technical training to assist photographers working in the field of photojournalism. I will now discuss these three concerns in greater detail.

My first concern was that photographs from Southern Africa should be selected in a way that addresses the reader's experience. By incorporating familiar material, the manual becomes a more appropriate and effective training resource. Since 1980, a number of photographic publications have featured the work of individual or groups of local photographers.[5] These books are extremely useful references, providing examples of photographs from one specific historical period or on specific local themes. Undoubtedly, photographers have found inspiration and motivation for their own work through exposure to these publications. However, unlike these books, the manual is designed to be a teaching tool and teaching resource. It engages the reader in debate. Different opinions are presented to encourage critical debate concerning the many possible interpretations of a photograph. Such debates can assist photographers in developing their own critical practice; a skill which is becoming more important as new challenges appear in the field of photojournalism.

Specifically, in South Africa in the 1990's there was a call for a new visual inquiry. The transition to democracy precipitated a shift away from, for example, showing material manifestations of the injustices of apartheid. Rory Bester and Katarina Pierre (1998), argue that

th[illegible]s for social, cultural and economic identity and freedom, by different

[5] South Africa: A Cordoned Heart (Gallery Press, CapeTown,1986), Karingana ua Karingana (Coop. Italy,1990), Mandela: Echoes of an Era (Penguin, South Africa,1990), In Afrika (Marino Verlag, Germany,1993), Namibia (Revue Noir, CapeTown,1994) and The Structure of Things Then (Oxford University Press, CapeTown,1998).

> groups and alignments in South Africa, are more varied and contested than ever before, making the roles of, for example, documentary photography altogether more complex. Representational practices have to negotiate the varieties and contradictions of contests over democratisation (14)

Critical practice (involved in documentary and, more broadly, photojournalism) assists photographers to understand both the complexities and the possibilities of photographic meaning. Such practice involves the use of conceptual tools to take new kinds of photographs of, for example, transformation in South Africa. Both experienced and inexperienced photographers need to engaged critically in new ways of seeing within such complex and conflicted environments, not only in South but also in Southern Africa.

For example, at the time of writing, Angola is still experiencing civil war and has done so since its elections in 1992; Lesotho, in 1998, saw post-election riots and experienced a South African invasion. Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia have had difficult transitions from single to multi-party rule. Zimbabwe in the late 1990's is undergoing increasing civil unrest. Critical skills can assist the photographer in constructing insightful and thoughtful photographs even in environments that are, at least initially, unfamiliar.

The Southern African region is an extraordinarily diverse and dynamic environment for photographers. If as photographers we are encouraged to think critically about what we see around us, we are more likely to take photographs that have the capacity to inform, raise awareness, celebrate or warn our readers. It is worth repeating here that critical thought can support the development of a society that respects democratic values. As Maxine Green suggests, the act of critiquing becomes "a search for a social vision of a more humane, more fully human, more fully pluralist, more just, and more joyful community" (1995:61).

This changing environment is also a creative and professional challenge to photography educators. As in many other areas of professional practice, these educators work in hugely under-resourced conditions. Research by Dr Charles Okigbo (1994), for example, has shown

that across Africa, "the formal training arrangements in universities and polytechnics have crumbled beyond repair" (15). He ascribes this, in part, to "the complete absence of indigenous teaching materials". To support this last point, Okigbo quoted a 1988 survey conducted by UNESCO/IAMCR[6] in 35 communication schools, which said that 93% of all textbooks used were published in the West. Since 1988, he believes "the situation has deteriorated further" and concludes that "without well-designed and culturally sensitive media training programs, the use of communication for social development must be extremely limited" (15-16). Okigbo offers an important connection between the lack of locally-produced training material and the ineffectiveness of training initiatives in media education across anglophone Africa. Okigbo's concern over the predominance of unfamiliar training materials calls for, in the field of photojournalism, the incorporation of relevant illustrations that speak to the materials' reader out of a specific social environment.

Su Braden (1983) also recognises the importance of carefully chosen training material and relates this directly to questions of power: "the illiterate become literate only when they recognise the relevance to their individual lives of the printed word or image. The massive influx of irrelevant material contributes to their repression and confusion." (105) Braden sounds a warning that inappropriate educational material can become part of the learner's repression.

Both Okigbo and Braden thus raise concerns that should inform educational initiatives in Southern Africa today. This view is supported by Lewin and Lloyd (1994). These two authors look specifically at media training in the region and note the need for updated and locally-produced communication training materials at both basic and refresher levels (19). It is clear that educators producing training manuals should make the selection of locally relevant material a primary concern. With this research in mind and my experience mentioned above, the manual incorporates the work of 44 photographers working in the Southern African region.

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[6] IAMCR is the International Association for Mass Communication Research.

This brings me to the second concern of the manual, namely that links need to be made between individual photographs and broader critical theory addressing the construction of photographic meaning. This is crucial if issues such as power and powerlessness, and democratic values are to be addressed through photographic representations. Susan Sontag's On Photography (1977) arguably marked the beginning of a particular style of critical writing on photography which challenged the peculiar social status frequently enjoyed by photographs. Sontag warned that our way of being in the world was increasingly dependent upon photographic images because "our very sense of a situation is now articulated by the camera's intervention" with the result that "time consists of interesting events worth photographing" (11).

If the authority of the camera is this powerful, how can it be channelled? The answer may be to consider ourselves as critical readers rather than passive consumers or producers of photographs. Graham Clarke (1997) describes a photograph as a site of "a series of simultaneous complexities and ambiguities" (28), and argues that "we need not only to see the image but also to read it as an active play of visual language" (28-29). The fact that the viewing public (and photographers) can and do 'read' photographs in different ways should be considered by photographers when making images for publication. There is a need, therefore, to incorporate a measure of critical awareness and practice into training initiatives.

Finally, the third concern relates directly to the way new information technologies will increasingly impact on photojournalistic practice. In the 1990's, digital technology offered faster methods of image manipulation (e.g. Adobe Photoshop), image storage (on disc or CD) and transmission (via the Internet). Future training initiatives should thus ideally include a practical and critical approach to the new technology now entering the workstations. The educational challenges arising from developments in digital technology are immense and becoming increasingly complex.

These new technologies and their impact on photojournalistic practice are not discussed

here as fully as the first two concerns motivating the production of the manual. This is because the application of these technologies is relatively new within Southern Africa with no consistent or long-established practice to access. Workplaces seem to be applying digital technology unevenly and constrained by local conditions. Yet both practitioners and theoreticians are beginning to examine the impact of the way photographs are digitally altered and later 'read' by a viewing public.

Thus these three concerns have motivated and shaped the manual. In the next section, I examine those new trends in adult education, and then specifically in photographic education, which have influenced the style and content of the manual. The trends are linked to the concerns raised above and deserve consolidated and detailed attention in their own right.

**2) How new trends in adult education with specific reference to photographic education have influenced the style and content of the manual.**

In this section, I indicate briefly how aspects of learner-centred education principles shaped the content and form of the manual. Four pertinent aspects of active learning are discussed. I first look at the participatory educational approach, acknowledging that learning begins with existing knowledge from which new ideas can develop. Secondly, I examine how work from 'masters' in the field can motivate trainees to make their own contributions to the Southern African photographic archive. Thirdly, I consider the careful use of plain English to address learners. Fourthly and finally, I focus on the importance of making photographic education more interdisciplinary in order to prepare photographers for working in diverse and changing environments. All these aspects of a learner-centred education relate to my main concern that a critical, relevant and active education promotes the values of a democratic state.

There has been a growing call for adult education programmes to be more open to the world around us. Maxine Greene (1995), for example, argues for

> the opening of wider and wider spaces of dialogue, in which diverse students and teachers, empowered to speak in their own voices, reflect together as they try to bring into being an in-between. ... They may through their coming together constitute a newly human world, one worthy enough and responsive enough to be both durable and open to continual renewal. (59)

This "newly human world" requires that a society engage in the empowering education of its citizens and that adult educationists participate in the search for this "in-between" or linked consciousness. Central to these developments is the idea of 'learner-centred' education.

The manual as a whole can be described as learner-centred, or as Derek Rowntree (1990) puts it, "learner-oriented" (39). This orientation is complex and can only be outlined here. However, one principal feature is the requirement that educators recognise learners' "existing knowledge and experience" (39). This recognition informs the content and style of the entire manual. The first chapter acknowledges that many learners may have already used a camera. Basic cameras are described in detail, starting with familiar or recognisable features like the lens, the shutter and the aperture. With some common knowledge of basic cameras, comparisons are then made between the basic manual cameras and the more recent auto-focus, auto-exposure models. Finally, a comparison is made between these film cameras and the new digital cameras.

Similarly, critical practice (in Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine of the manual) is introduced via a familiar route, in this case the locally produced photographs themselves. The reader's attention is attracted through a layout that normally uses a large, single photograph on a page. The photograph is linked to three different types of texts on the opposite page.

The first - and arguably most accessible - text comes from the photographer herself. In it, she describes some significant aspects of the image from her perspective. The emphases in these first texts vary from consideration of the situation in which the photograph was taken to the way the photographer may choose to describe lighting or specific compositional elements.

The second kind of text may be less familiar to many readers. This text typically

originates from a critical writer on photography. An example from the manual would be a text from Susan Sontag on portraiture, positioned beside Gisele Wulfsohn's portraits of Adelaide Tambo (Waller 2000:104).

The third text is my contribution as author of the manual. In this text, I link the different texts or raise points that may not have been raised in the manual. In the first portrait of Adelaide Tambo, for example, I draw attention to the urn that seems irrelevant to the portrait, the side lighting and the angle of the sitter's head (Illustration 2). All three points impact on the possible ways readers can make sense of these portraits.

Having on average three texts associated with each image doubtless does many things, the one which is immediately clear is that it confirms the complexity of photographic meaning. What is important here is that the reader can enter into the discussion though the most familiar route, notably the voice of the photographer. From here, other complexities of photographic meaning emerge and are engaged.

The 'learner-centred' approach also highlights the understanding that information operates inside a socio-cultural framework. Information which has no connection to the lives of a reader is almost meaningless. According to Servaes and Arnst (1993),

> unless a fact, idea or technique makes sense or is applicable in a particular social, cultural, and economic framework, it remains mere information. Hence, while information can simply be disseminated, knowledge or meaning cannot. They must be created (44).

To create conditions for effective learning, information must, wherever possible, be connected to the lived experience of the reader. The material in the manual is thus intended to be directly connected to the reader's social knowledge, which can in turn assist in developing a critical understanding of her photographic work.

Directly linked to this knowledge is concern with the second aspect which is the 'voice' of the photographer. The point here is that there is value in analysing the knowledge, skills and

attitudes displayed by those Rowntree (1990) calls, "master performers" in the field. Some of the photographers featured in the manual, for example Alf Kumalo, Jurgen Schadeberg and Ricardo Rangel, are well-known both in Southern Africa and further afield. The works of these experienced professionals are positioned beside those of emerging young photographers, encouraging a sense of shared professionalism developing out of different experiences, from different practitioners, across national boundaries. These diverse contributions clearly offer much to the active reader.

The third aspect involves the use of plain language. This issue is especially complex in Southern Africa; potential readers of the manual are often second - or even third - language speakers of English. This is an enormous topic, best covered here only by making those few observations directly relevant to my project. Reading academic English can be an inpenetrable barrier for trainees and professional photographers who wish to familiarise themselves with current practices and debates. As far as possible, the manual uses plain English. Academic language as used in quotations, is handled in two ways. Where possible quotes are kept short, encouraging the reader to re-read the passage to assist comprehension. Sometimes I also rephrase a complex text into a simpler form. In this way, I hope to present readers with fewer obstacles in accessing current critical thinking and debate. Readers may also enhance their own critical skills.

The fourth and final aspect moves the focus away from a general discussion on improved adult education techniques to a discussion specifically on developments in photography training. A growing number of photography educators in the USA and in Britain have been calling for an end to the rigid separation between critical theory and technical training. Such a separation is common in formal higher education institutions, with universities usually more concerned with critical theory and technical colleges tending to emphasise technical skills.

One critic of this divided and divisive system is Simon Watney. Watney rejects "the assumption that the photographer is a purely visual individual" (1986:58). This notion of a "purely visual individual" points to common misconceptions that photographers take or make photographs without much forethought or analysis. Watney calls for training to be directed towards "the establishment of a debate-based photographic culture" in which the "intellectual field" might include psychoanalysis, semiology and discourse analysis (58). A more integrated and interrogative approach, Watney suggests, is required for photography education programmes to assist learners in developing their critical practice. Watney has outlined important educational possibilities that I have adopted in the promotion of a "debate-based" photojournalism training culture. Su Braden (1983) also believes in an interdisciplinary and integrated critical syllabus. She advocates a more radicalised photographic education developing out of "a much more fluid relationship between school and university and technical training and the world outside" (117).

Paul Martin Lester (1995) implicitly supports Watney and Braden when he criticises the inhibiting professional environments in which photographers work;

> visual reporters - as professionals and students - are stereotyped by writers, editors, students and faculty members as reporters with their brains knocked out. The reason for this stereotype is because traditional photojournalism courses, textbooks, and magazines and newspaper photo departments stress camera operation, assignment completion, and printing issues - and not visual literacy, research and writing, political assertiveness, cultural and critical meaning, ethical and moral responsibilities, sociological and psychological factors. (http://www5.fullerton.edu/les/vis_reporting.html)

An unbalanced education neglecting, for example, "political assertiveness", equips photographers poorly for work in the field of photojournalism. Lester also calls for a more integrated education which prepares photographers for the complex and changing world in which we practice. Thus Lester's position implicitly supports my argument for a more critical practice that can be promoted through training.

It is difficult to imagine a more challenging environment than Southern Africa in the early twenty-first century. In the manual, TJ Lemon's series of photographs of attempted theft from cars in downtown Johannesburg provides an interesting example (Illustration 3). Lemon, noting increasingly frequent attacks on motorists, researched the locations in the city where these crimes took place. He then made photographs which were published in a local newspaper. A week later the then MEC for Safety and Security, Jessie Duarte, visited the area and increased the police presence there. Of many possible issues to be raised here, I stress Lemon's self-motivation, preparation and use of cultural and local knowledge to produce the photographs that appear in the manual. The example has further significance because it demonstrates how photographs can display "political assertiveness".

As explained, the manual is a response to the clear need for appropriate training material for photographers facing manifold challenges in Southern Africa. In this section, I have focused on new discourses around adult education generally and then moved on to the specifics of innovation in photographic training syllabuses. These debates have significantly influenced the style and content of the manual. In the next section, I consider the content of the chapters in the manual with a special reference to photographic theory.

**3) Content of the manual with reference to the three areas of critical theory**

The learner-centred approach described above influenced both the technical and critical practice parts of the manual. In this section, I outline the content of the manual's critical practice chapters only. The first part of the manual deals with camera and darkroom techniques, the second with three major aspects of the construction of meaning in photojournalistic practice, namely visual literacy, representation and ethics (see Appendix B). These topics are introduced here and later discussed respectively in Chapters Two, Three, and Four of the dissertation.

To begin: the technical chapters deviate from other conventional technical manuals in

two ways. Firstly, as mentioned earlier, they use examples from the Southern African region so that learning can be facilitated by using familiar and relevant photographs. Secondly, where possible, I make cross-references between photographs in the technical section and photographs appearing in later, more conceptually focused, chapters. In this way, camera techniques become linked to critical practice. It is these chapters that require more detailed examination here, as they highlight the uniqueness of the manual, notably in that photographs from Southern Africa are linked to broader critical debates locally and elsewhere, and thus lay out a basis for critical practice.

Visual literacy, a principal aspect of critical practice is introduced here and discussed in detail in Chapter Two of this dissertation (and Chapter Seven of the manual). In a sense, the other two topics, representation and ethics depend on, and are conditioned by, the skills associated with visual literacy. It is thus appropriate to address visual literacy first.

A photograph's complex meaning is often masked by its iconic qualities, or, as Walker and Chaplin (1997) put it, "photographs resemble their referents" (114). Visual literacy in education can deepen our "understanding of the mechanisms by which meaning is communicated in art and mass media" (Walker and Chaplin 1997:114). This enhanced understanding will assist photographers to become active and conscious communicators in their field.

Visual literacy can primarily be identified with a set of fundamental skills needed by the photographer (and the readers) to understand how meaning might be constructed and conditioned in an image. These skills may originate from a reader's previously developed ability to interpret the three-dimentional visual world, which contributes to her capacity to read two-dimentional images (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996:121).

Several components of visual literacy impact on the reading of an image, and here specifically of photographic images. One such is composition. The visual structuring or

composition of a subject is directly influenced by a number of factors including, the size of the subject depicted, the direction of a person's gaze, and the principles of spatial perspective (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996:121-153). A sound understanding of composition allows the photographer greater control of the many layers of meaning stimulated by an image.

However, the composition of a photograph is obviously not the only factor impacting on meaning. Photographic meaning is also profoundly influenced by, for example, the layout, the captioning and text framing a photograph.

Meaning is further affected by the reader's prior knowledge and cultural background. Roland Barthes (1990) emphasises these and other factors in specifically the reading of news photographs. Barthes sees meaning operating at different levels. The first or denoted level, is the "message without a code" or the "literal reality" (17). The second, or connoted, message operates less literally, according to Barthes, so that

> the press photograph is an object that has been worked on, chosen, composed, constructed, treated according to professional, aesthetic or ideological norms which are so many factors of connotation; while on the other hand, this same photograph is not only perceived, received, it is read, connected more or less consciously by the public (1990:19).

Photographs are thus highly complex constructions, whose meanings are directed and conditioned by many factors. Photographers clearly need to understand and be able to work with these factors determining photographic meaning if we are to develop critical skills and awareness. In particular, photographers need to re-consider the notion that photographs transmit 'objective truths'. These points are raised in more detail in Chapter Two of this dissertation.

It is my contention that photographers with a clear grasp of the analytical skills associated with visual literacy are more likely to engage in thoughtful, critical and effective photographic practice than their less visually literate counterparts. They will also have greater ability to engage critically with other practitioners, clients and consumers in the general field of information production and dissemination.

If photographs are, as Barthes and others suggest, constructions, how does this constructedness relate to meaning? Any coherent answer requires engagement with the second area of critical debate, representation. Stuart Hall (1997) argues that it is the process of representation that links images to possible meanings (19).

Representation is an extremely complex concept linked directly to notions of power and powerlessness. For example, in Southern Africa's recent history, race and photographic representations of race have dominated (and will probably continue to dominate) social relationships and our way of seeing those social relationships.

A key example here is Steve Hilton-Barber's 1990 photo-essay on North Sotho initiation practice, which provoked not only heated debate but also political action (Illustration 4). This particular debate is included amongst others in the manual as one accessible route for readers to learn about representation. Different viewpoints are included to articulate some of the highly contested areas of 'who photographs whom and why', and the importance of this kind of inquiry is made clear.

Other power relations embodied in photographic practice and represented through photographs, specifically gender and culture, are also introduced and discussed. These two additional dimensions of representational practice were identified from the contributions made by the photographers themselves. The complex but crucial dimensions of race, gender and culture form the focus of Chapter Eight in the manual. A detailed consideration of representation is the subject of Chapter Three of the dissertation.

The power central to discussions of representation appears directly connected to questions of rights. These questions are explored in the last of the three topics, namely ethics. In the manual, this exploration takes place in Chapter Nine where photographs and interviews provide a learning framework. The reader is encouraged to imaginatively place herself in an 'assignment' situation, to decide on her probable course of action and then to consider the wider

ramifications of that action. There is also an opportunity for the reader to compare her choices with those made (sometimes in a split second) by the photographer at the time. This allows for often fraught and complex ethical decisions to be carefully explored and considered, not least in anticipation of similar situations arising in the field. A more thorough investigation of ethics appears in Chapter Four of the dissertation.

This concludes the introduction to the three aspects of critical theory relating to photographic practice dealt with in the manual, and subsequently in this dissertation. I discuss my method of collecting interviews and photographs in Appendix C. Over a two year period, I presented my work-in-progress on the manual to university staff, media workers and colleagues. A brief outline of my presentations and their influence on the content of the manual appears in Appendix D. The process of funding the manual and the involvement of the publishers is described in Appendix E.

In this chapter, I have outlined the motivation and influences that shaped the content and style of the training manual. My experience as a photographer and trainer, as well as my relationships with colleagues, have made possible the acquisition of the over 200 photographs used to illustrate and focus on both technical and critical theoretical issues. Most of the Southern African photographers I interviewed in this process, seem to have attended short courses as their only form of training and this reinforces my contention that a training manual can assist in the on-going education of both experienced and inexperienced practitioners.

New developments in adult education (and specifically in critical photographic theory) have also been major influences on the style of the manual. As a result, the manual adopts a learner-centred approach addressing wherever possible the knowledge and experience of the reader. Critical theory has been introduced here but will be expanded in separate chapters: visual literacy in Chapter Two, representation in Chapter Three, and ethics in Chapter Four.

One of the younger contributing photographers, on seeing the 'proofs' of the manual,

said that this publication has "put him in good company", by placing his work beside that of more recognised photographers. His comments suggest that the manual may achieve two of its objectives, firstly to acknowledge the richness of experience within the community of photographers, and secondly to transform this richness into a valuable learning tool. The pleasure and enthusiasm expressed by this photographer's words also suggest that sense of agency and responsibility necessary for effective critical photojournalistic practice.

## Chapter Two

# Critical practice emphasising Visual Literacy

1. Skills associated with visual literacy

2. Context and photographic meaning

3. Information technology and critical photojournalistic practice

> Literacy in more than one medium will be required if people are to deal critically and intelligently with demagogues, call-in shows, mystifying ads, and news programmes blended with varying degrees of entertainment (Greene 1995:13)
>
> ... must not the photographer who cannot read his own pictures be no less accounted as illiterate? (Benjamin 1990:256)

It is difficult to imagine a day without seeing a photograph. They are everywhere. In this chapter, I consider some ways in which photographs, specifically in photojournalism, are made and read through a kind of literacy called visual literacy.

In Section One, visual literacy is introduced as a set of skills possessed by the reader. These skills are of increasing complexity and range from simple recognition of elements (for example people, buildings, trees etc.) to interpreting the wider significance of these elements in the construction of photographic meaning. I present these skills as composite skills, adopted from two different disciplines - visual artistic conventions and linguistics - and then applied to photographic practice (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996:2-3).

Section Two extends the investigation to include the way context impacts on photographic meaning. The discussion begins with the immediate visual context of the printed page and then extends outward to a discussion of context in the wider terms of the social and cultural environment where photographs are consumed. Our visual literacy skills need to include a critical awareness of the ways in which photographic meaning is influenced by the immediate and wider contexts.

The third section briefly discusses on the importance of visual literacy to photographers facing the challenges of the rapidly developing new information technologies. Throughout this chapter, specific skills associated with visual literacy are applied to photographs from the manual to demonstrate the connection between visual literacy and critical practice, and its relevance to photojournalistic work.

**1. Skills associated with visual literacy**

The photographs we see daily in newspapers and magazines present complex information about our world. In a sense, these photographs are not just seen, they are read (Clarke 1997:27). We read photographs using skills that assist us in recognising the objects imaged (Wright 1992:26) and in building interpretation on that recognition.

Visual literacy is therefore discussed here first as the recognition of elements within a photographic frame. From this recognition, readers can develop an appreciation of certain pictorial conventions; that is, the way these subjects and objects are arranged within a photographic frame. Paul Messaris (1997) importantly suggests that these skills constitute a kind of 'visual' literacy which is necessary because "many pictorial conventions involve notable departures from the appearance of unmediated reality" (137). Messaris makes an important distinction here between visual representation and the 'phenomenon represented'.

Secondly, visual literacy develops beyond the recognition of subjects and objects to the analysis of possible larger and more complex meanings within the frame. It is this analysis of many possible meanings that allows photographers and readers to be aware of the connotative as well as denotative messages present in an image.

Pictorial conventions are described by Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen (1996) as "inventories of major compositional structures which have become established in the history of visual semiotics" (1). There are more inventories than there is room for adequate discussion in this chapter. However, I will introduce some relevant key elements from these inventories here and then apply them briefly to photographs. Later in the chapter, additional elements will be introduced and also applied to photographs.

To begin: one major element of compositional structure involves the choice between the close-up, medium or distant view (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996:130-135): in other words, the proximity between the photographer and the subjects and objects in the photographic field.

Another important element when photographing people is the direction of the gaze of those photographed (122). The direction of gaze can cover either the person in the photograph looking directly at the photographer or any other the direction in which the person photographed is looking. The gaze of a person inside the photographic frame can draw the reader's attention to someone else, to an object or to an event.

The photographs selected here to show both elements of distance and direction of gaze are two portraits of Adelaide Tambo (Illustrations 2 and 5) by Gisele Wulfsohn from the manual. Wulfsohn describes her technique thus: "as with all portraits, I ask subjects if they have a preference where they would like to be photographed and to choose what they would like to wear". Wulfsohn continues,

> after shooting Mrs Tambo in this navy robe, I asked her if she had anything else she would like to show me. She brought out this magnificent white satin beaded dress and head-dress. She looked so regal - I much prefer it to the original outfit. It also stands out from the sofa. I went in closer - I could see she felt more beautiful and confident in white (Waller 2000:104).

This description incorporates a number of pictorial conventions. Wulfsohn moved closer to Tambo for the second portrait (Illustration 5). The first is a 'wide' shot and the second, a 'medium' shot. Tambo appears remote in the first portrait. By getting in closer for the second portrait, Wulfsohn has 'filled the frame' with the principal subject, making Tambo dominant in the composition as compared to the first, wide shot. In that first photograph, she seems to compete with other compositional elements (particularly the furniture) for the reader's attention. Another, more formal, way to describe this compositional element is by identifying the principal feature in a frame as 'the figure' and the setting in which 'the figure' resides as 'the ground'. When we compare the two portraits, the figure/ground ratio has increased in favour of the principal figure in the second portrait and so a preferred relationship is achieved - resulting in powerful portrait.

The second visual convention mentioned above is direction of gaze. Tambo directs her

gaze in the first portrait at the camera, through half-closed eyes and her head tilted back. In the second portrait, her gaze remains with the camera, but she addresses the camera more directly with open eyes and her head leaning attentively forward. These portraits of Tambo provide us with an opportunity to observe how emphasis is achieved using different compositional elements.

Other pictorial conventions referring specifically to photography can be applied here. TimeLife (1973), for example, mentions shape, pattern, texture and form (22-34) which can all be discussed in reference to the Tambo portraits. In the second, more successful, portrait for example, the "shape" of Ms. Tambo becomes more defined (as the photographer notes) because her white dress is clearly differentiated from the dark tones of the sofa. Messaris (1997) makes the point that shape is one of the most important details we use to recognise an object both in real life and in reading images (138).

The second element mentioned in TimeLife is "pattern". In the second portrait, the lighter tones draws the viewer to the 'pattern' of the cloth (TimeLife 1973:34). This pattern adds rich detail to the second portrait, whereas the dark tone of the dress in the first portrait merge with the tones of the sofa and thus fail to draw the reader's attention to the figure.

The second portrait is also highly "textured", demonstrating the third element mentioned in TimeLife (1973:24). In this photograph there are comparable textures in the satin dress, the sofa upholstery and the subject's skin - giving the portrait a certain tactile sense. Here, also is a strong example of how the relationship between figure (Tambo) and ground (the room) is emphasised by light tones in one portrait and de-emphasised by dark tones in the other.

Finally, 'form' (or three-dimensional information) can be suggested by the use of directional side lighting (Langford 1986:133-139 and TimeLife 1973:26). The light and dark sides of Tambo's face give a sense of depth (roundedness) in the two-dimensional photograph. Lighting can thus emphasise certain features and de-emphasise others (TimeLife 1971:26). In

the first portrait the light streams across the room, drawing attention to the urn on the far right. By including the urn in the frame and emphasising it with light, the portrait arguably becomes confusing, with distracting information or 'noise'. This noise largely disappears in the second portrait when Wulfsohn moves in closer, effectively removing the urn from the composition. While confusion may be desirable in certain photographs, within the conventions of this style of portraiture, clarity is essential.

The discussion thus far has centred on some of the obvious pictorial elements whose recognition constitutes some of the basic skills associated with visual literacy. Yet an awareness of these conventions within the photographic frame is only a small part of visual literacy skills.

Visual literacy attempts to encompass a wide range of skills in much the same way as the term 'literacy' embraces a range of skills around reading and writing. But the analogy is not perfect. Messaris (1994) describes visual literacy as a "kind of pictorial sophistication" which

> consists of a heightened sensitivity to the pictorial use of types of information that the viewer regularly encounters in reality. This sophistication does not involve the learning of a set of arbitrary connections between symbol and meaning, and in this context, therefore the term 'literacy' should not be taken to imply anything more than a very loose analogy to the characteristics of language proper (70).

Messaris' assertion that the use of the term visual literacy is only "a very loose analogy" in relation to linguistic literacy, rests on his contention that the relevant skills do not require the viewer to learn similar rules of combination, structure and selection for example to those of linguistic literacy (that is syntax, grammar etc). As a loose analogy, visual literacy is something of a contested term, but it has moved into common use in much the same way as the term 'computer literacy' (Messaris 1994:2-3).

However loose the analogy, it nevertheless seems worth comparing linguistic literacy and visual literacy to help define more precisely what visual literacy entails. A person who is 'literate' in the conventional linguistic sense has a more or less measurable level of knowledge

of and skill in reading and writing; this literacy enables her to function effectively in society (Barrow and Milburn 1986:160). According to the International Encyclopedia of Linguistics (1992), "what literacy means to different societies ... has been bound up with the popular sense of its worth" (337). It is this popular sense of literacy which offers an opportunity to relate some of the skills we understand is associated with literacy, to the skills associated with visual literacy. This encyclopedia describes literacy as "a [illegible] of skills necessary to store and retrieve information in written form" (337). It may be useful to consider visual literacy as a similar set of skills necessary to store and retrieve information in visual form.

Renee Hobbs (1997) expands the notion of literacy in a way useful in both the linguistic and visual senses. She describes four "processes that constitute a new vision of literacy that provides a powerful frame in which to consider how people develop skills in using language and other forms of symbolic expression" (Hobbs 1997:166). These processes or abilities are to "access, analyse, evaluate and communicate" (Hobbs 1997:166). If these abilities are indeed part of an expanded sense of literacy then they can be recruited into developing and understanding more complex visual literacy skills to interpret photographs (as "forms of symbolic expression").

It is the use of these traditionally linguistic abilities for non-linguistic expressions that forms the basis of semiotics (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996:5). Semiotics is, as Liz Wells (1997) describes it,

> premised upon the contention that all human communication is founded in an assemblage of signs, verbal, aural and visual, which is essentially systemic... The sign proper has two aspects, signifier and signified. The signifier is the material manifestation, the word, or pictorial elements. The signified is the associated mental concept; that is, conventionally associated with the specific signifier. Whilst separate for analytical purposes, in practice the signifier and the signified always go together. (295)

As signs or combinations of signs, photographs can be analysed in terms of their signifiers and their signifieds to advance the task of interpretation. Photographs can be considered iconic signs

when they resemble their subjects (Wells 1997:25). Kress and van Leeuwen refer to C.S. Pierce's three classifications of signs: iconic, indexical and symbolic signs. All silver halide photographs are indexical: that there is a causal relationship between the sign and its referent (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996:7). Later, I will discuss an example from the manual in terms of a symbolic sign.

Because photographs can 'look like' their referents, they are 'motivated' signs; that is the photograph will have an appearance related to (at least in part) the physical attributes of the subject being photographed. Words, on the other hand are generally considered 'arbitrary' signs because their appearance and their meanings are mediated through linguistic conventions and not because of any physical or optical similarity to the subject (Burgin 1987:61).

Readers of photographs may easily recognise the depicted scene in a photograph if that scene is familiar to them. Even when scenes depicted in a photograph are unfamiliar, readers can draw upon their visual experience to extrapolate meaning from the photograph (Messaris 1994:61). Hence, readers will be able to retrieve information from a photograph without having to learn a set of arbitary codes such as those required in language-based literacy.

Signifiers and signifieds can be discussed in relation to the portraits of Adelaide Tambo. The signifiers denote a woman sitting on a couch. They denote the direction of her gaze and her proximity to the camera emphasising such details as shape, pattern, texture and form. The signs connote ideas of womanness, black womanness, wealth, isolation and, perhaps, power. Roland Barthes (1990) describes photographs as "polysemous", in that "they imply, underlying their signifiers, a floating chain of signifieds" (39). Every society employs techniques "to fix the floating chain ... the linguistic message is one of these techniques" (39). When the caption 'Adelaide Tambo' is placed with these portraits to identify the subject, to some extent the signifieds become fixed. The signifieds are no longer generalised ideas of womanness but become anchored in the persona of Adelaide Tambo, who was married to the then president of

the ANC, and who was planning to return to South Africa after more than two decades in exile.

Hence photographs are on the one hand easily read, and at the same time deceptively complex. Barthes (1990) described this paradox as the "coexistence of two messages, the one with a code ..., the other without a code" (19). The message without a code "comes from the trace a photograph carries of the subject", and is called the denoted message. The "connoted (or coded) message develops on the basis of the message without a code" (1990:19). Barthes noted that it is this connotative level where cultural and ideological messages operate (1990:17). Readers 'read' the Tambo portraits with particular cultural and ideological attention, and in that sense, the meaning of the portraits becomes contextualised.

Not all photographs are easily recognisable. However the kinds of photographs that concern us here, namely photojournalistic photographs, rely on considerable familiarity. Readers find meaning in a photograph when they recognise resemblance between subjects in the physical world and their photographic representations.

Through another example from the manual, a portrait of Stephen Motingoa, the mayor of Krugersdorp (Illustration 6), I will explore further the photograph as a sign. The portrait denotes a young man wearing a gold chain with old photographs in the background. Like the second portrait of Tambo, this is a medium shot but, unlike Tambo, Motingoa does not look directly at the camera but slightly above the photographer's line of sight.

Key signifiers are therefore, the dominant position Motingoa occupies in the frame, the gold chain and the old photographs. These signifiers point to what is being signified, namely a cultural, historical and ideological moment of transformation in the 1990's in South Africa. Motingoa is large in the frame and the connotation is that he occupies a commanding position in his community. The background photographs are iconic signs in themselves alerting us to the changing political order. These old photographs show the previous generations of men who once occupied this position before Motingoa. The gold chain signifies authority, the mayorial chain

being a symbol of civic authority.

As Margaret Iversen notes, readers need to "know the rules" (1986:89) to find the symbol meaningful. The "rules" are, in this case, certain cultural conventions that condition meaning, namely that the chain symbolises the position of mayor of a town council. With the requisite visual competency, the reader is likely to read this photograph both denotatively, as a man wearing a gold chain standing in front of other photographs, as well as connotatively, as a young powerful black man disrupting white privilege.

Applying these analytical tools (the connotative-denotative messages, the signified-signifier relationship and the different types of signs) to photographs allows the reader to engage in critical discourse analysis. This kind of analysis seeks

> to show how apparent neutral, purely informative discourses of newspaper reporting, government publications, social science reports and so on, may in fact convey power and status in contemporary social interaction (Kress and van Leewven 1996:12-13).

Using examples from the manual, pictorial conventions have been described here to highlight specific signifiers in visual communication. These signifiers are not 'neutral' but value-laden. The clear need to develop our visual literacy exists because photographers and those who read photographs need sets of skills to understand how signs communicate on many levels.

Before finishing this section, it is important to mention other skills associated with visual literacy.. Messaris (1994) believes that advanced visual literacy requires "some degree of explicit awareness about the processes by which meaning is created through the visual media" (135). This awareness can extend to some kind of medium-specific expertise, that is to say an expertise around, in this case, how photographs are made. This kind of expertise can lead to the creative process whereby the reader of photographs also becomes a producer of photographs. This issue of expertise is extremely important and will be reappear in the next chapter on representation. In the earlier example of the portraits of Adelaide Tambo, I showed how her

name conditioned the reading of the photograph (for those who did not recognise her). An awareness of this conditioning is one kind of medium-specific expertise: a sensitivity to the ways in which text and images fix meaning. The relationship between text and images will be discussed further in the next section.

Another more advanced skill is the "ability to make a competent judgement about the presence of intentionality" as a mark of the sophistication of the reader (Messaris 1994:138). For example, the label 'photojournalism' itself suggests to the reader a 'truthful' depiction of events by the photographer. It is then up to the reader, depending on the quality of her visual literacy, to analyse those depictions and compare them to her own experiences. Put more generally, this kind of analysis becomes "an awareness of manipulative intent" (Messaris 1994:154).

In the two cases discussed above, we have seen how the photographers guided their subjects during a portrait session in order to depict that person in a certain way. Both Tambo and Motingoa were, in a sense, encouraged to adopt a certain pose. In Tambo's photo session, she was asked if she had another dress she would like to wear for the session. In Motingoa's portrait, he was asked to stand in front of the old portraits. Arguably, these forms of guidance did not so much falsify the situation as enhance a particular reading. These examples demonstrates how the intention of the photographer had a profound effect on the way the subjects appeared in the final portraits, and thus in some way guided the reader's interpretation.

This analysis has so far demonstrated that photographs are as much constructions and interpretations of the 'real' world as they are reflections of it. We are reminded here of Roland Barthes' (1990) description of a news photograph as "an object that has been worked on, chosen, composed, constructed, treated according to professional, aesthetic or ideological norms which are so many factors of connotation" (19). If news photographs are constructed as Barthes suggests, then they can be critically de-constructed with the assistance of visual literacy skills some of which have been discussed here.

In conclusion, I have approached visual literacy in two ways. Firstly, there are pictorial elements that point to the way readers recognise certain features within the frame. Yet simple recognition (usually denotation) is merely the start of an appreciation of the sets of skills associated with visual literacy. We can, secondly, draw upon analytical tools originally derived from linguistics and semiotics, to explore complex photographic meaning. Photographs denote and connote meanings and these meanings exist simultaneously. History, politics and ideology tend to operate more powerfully within the area of connotation. Awareness of the connotative and denotative constitution of meaning allows the reader to consider and, in some measure, access the layers of possible meaning contained within the photographic frame.

Barthes (1990) recognises the role of the reader in the production of meaning when he says, a news photograph "is not only perceived, received, it is read, connected more or less consciously by the public" (19). In the next section, I take up this point and consider how readers make sense of photographs in the immediate context of the printed page and in their broader cultural and ideological context.

**2. Context and photographic meaning**

Up to now, I have discussed visual literacy largely as a set of skills used to recognise and interpret meaning, generally within the photographic frame. Yet visual literacy also entails considering how meaning is influenced by factors outside the frame. This point was mentioned earlier in specific reference to the ways in which ideology tends to operate at the level of connotation. Now, with photojournalism in mind, I will discuss how context can condition meaning, firstly the immediate context of the printed page and secondly the wider cultural and ideological context.

The first context is confined to the way in which photographs, captions and text are arranged into a meaningful whole. Wilson Hicks (1972) touches on some important aspects

involved in arranging pictures and words on a printed page,

> the important point is that pictures and words not only are read in different ways, but also in different times, however close together those times may be. The picture is almost invariably read first: the common habit is for the readers's eye to move back and forth from the picture to the words and back again to the picture until the meaning expressed in each medium is completely understood (20)

Hicks here raises points mentioned in the last section, notably that words and photographs are read using different kinds of skills. His contribution here is the observation that photographs are almost invariably read first, then conditioned by a circulating process of linguistic and pictorial readings. However, it is arguable whether "the meaning expressed" is singular and complete understanding ever achieved.

If it is common practice to read the photograph first, then much basic information can be provided at a glance. Such information may be who or what the basic story is about or where the story is located, and then text would specify more complex details. A photograph may also shock us or make us curious, and thereby encourage us to study the text for more clues. Following from that first glance, further information is then sought elsewhere.

Allen Sekula (1986) makes the important observation that "photographs are fragmentary and incomplete utterances. Meaning is always directed by layout, captions, text and the site and mode of presentation" (155). My interest here is the way meaning is produced at the "site of presentation" (photojournalism) and the "mode of presentation" (photography). I will now briefly examine "layout, captions and text" because they demand visual literacy skills to appreciate how they impact on photographic meaning.

For layout, I have selected one example (Illustration 7) from a Johannesburg newspaper (from the front page of the Saturday Star, Johhannesburg, 30th January, 1999). The headline "Caught Red-handed" refers to a man in the photograph who has his hands on railway sleepers which he is (allegedly) stealing. At the same time, his captors have their hands on him. This

moment was photographed in medium/close-up with all the subjects facing the camera. The headline stretches across the text column and into the photograph. The words "red-handed" are in red. The headline effectively stamped the text and the photograph with the sense that here was both the moment of the crime and the moment of capture.

As such a moment is almost impossible to record, and as the static pose of the people suggests, this scene was a reconstruction and not a record of the moment. This is disturbing, as it seems overtly manipulative. The situation is compounded when we discover, on reading the accompanying story, that the man was coerced into stealing by his employer. Only belatedly does the writer introduce some possibility of the man's innocence. Both the headline and the photograph had already criminalised the unfortunate man.

An earlier point of "manipulative intent" applies here, as the writer and photographer attempt to label the man as a criminal. Readers with developed visual literacy skills will recognise the lack of fit between the headline and the photograph. They will also recognise the crudeness of the obviously posed photograph. I use this example although it does not appear in the manual, because it dramatises some of the contradictions which can occur between text and photograph. This contradiction becomes apparent when we call upon our visual literacy skills and implicit critical faculties to realise that such a moment was not caught on film. In the next edition of the newspaper, a week later, the editor published an admission that the photograph was in fact a reconstruction, and that the publication had erred in its professional responsibility (Illustration 8). The writer and photographer were on 'site' waiting for the 'crime' to happen. This later response strongly suggests that the editorial decisions about the photograph were not made under pressure, but were an abuse of power.

Another example, this time from the manual, demonstrates the power of the caption (and not the headline) to anchor and direct meaning to a photograph. Louise Gubb's photograph (Illustration 9) of Nelson Mandela which appeared in Time magazine can illustrate this point.

Nelson Mandela was visiting a private boys' school in Johannesburg in 1993. In the South African edition, the caption reads "Amid a sea of frowns, one proud face", while in the international edition the same photograph is captioned "At the gateway to democracy: Mandela addresses a class of whites and blacks". In the international edition caption, the first part establishes the photograph as an image of democracy in process.

What is more important here is that the local caption demonstrates how effectively a caption can direct the reading of a photograph; one forceful message is that white people are unhappy about being addressed by Mandela and that only black people are proud of it. This example demonstrates how the meaning of a news photograph is conditioned by the text around it; as Barthes warned "today, the text loads the image, burdening it with a culture, a moral, an imagination" (Barthes 1990:26). This one photograph appears extremely "burdened" with two captions, each one carrying different ideological implications. As Gisele Freund (1980) notes, "few people realise that the meaning of a photograph can be changed completely by the accompanying caption, by its juxtaposition with other photographs or by the manner in which people and events are photographed" (149).

In these examples from a newspaper and a magazine the meaning of the photographs have been profoundly conditioned by the surrounding text.

Other important considerations in understanding how meanings are affected by the printed page, such as the effect of colour, nearby advertisements, choice of typeface and the relationship between one story and another, are also relevant, but detailed examination is beyond the scope of this discussion.

The second, and broader context in which photojournalistic photographs are viewed are "those wider social, political and historical circumstances and conditions within which certain actions, processes or events are located and made meaningful" (O'Sullivan et al. 1983:53). When our photographs appear in the public domain, they impact on a wide audience. Here, a critical

photojournalistic practice will assist photographers to understand how our photographs are made meaningful by diverse audiences in differing social and political circumstances. The example from the manual selected for this discussion was made by Kevin Carter during 1993 in Sudan.

Carter won a Pulitzer prize for his photograph of a desperately distressed Sudanese child; the photograph became an icon of the war and the famine in the region and by implication, Africa (Illustration 10). It appeared in the Weekly Mail (March 26 - April 1, 1993), the New York Times and Time magazine, and later, was used by non-government agencies including 'Save the Children Fund'(U.K.). The same photograph re-appeared in South Africa in August 1998, as a magazine 'scratch' advertisement for a local television current affairs programme (Illustration 11). In this instance, Carter's image was re-contextualised with the words "you have a right to see it all", a reference to the page surface which could be scratched by the reader to reveal the child underneath. In re-contextualising the photograph, the advertisers effectively removed the original story of a child suffering in a civil war and famine, and transformed the child into a spectacle of non-specific horror to promote a product - a television programme. This example shows how easily the meaning of photographs can be changed in different contexts. Some of the ethical implications of this advertisement are discussed in Chapter 4.

In considering the social context in which photographs are read, I will now briefly examine the complex matter of readership. Estelle Jussim (1989) suggests how the public may read photographs for,

> we decode a picture the only way we can: through our visual enculteration, interpreting images by means of our idiosyncratic backgrounds including socio-economic class, political bias, education levels, religious affiliations or spiritual inclination, competence with symbolism and other aspects of iconography, and a multitude of other vital influences. Of these none are more important than how we relate to our own status and history in the hierarchy of family relationships (183).

Some of these points overlap earlier discussions on the complexities of visual literacy. In the

portraits of Adelaide Tambo, readers could become aware of connotations of wealth and power by drawing on their own knowledge, based on political and class sensitivities and education levels. The mayoral portrait was made more meaningful by a "competency with symbolism", that is, being able to recognise the importance of, amongst other things, the chain of office. Jussim's "enculturation" is a complex personal and social matrix, a matrix which also includes religious or spiritual beliefs.

Readers from different cultures 'decode' according to culturally specific influences. So it seems likely that "cultural barriers do erect some barriers to cross-cultural understanding of images" (Messaris 1994:168 and 1997:152). However, it is difficult to identify the extent of those barriers and their precise impact on the way a reader makes sense of a photograph. Some unfamiliar images can be 'decoded' by drawing upon existing visual knowledge as this chapter begins by suggesting. For example, a person who has never seen a baobab tree will probably recognise a photograph of a baobab as a representation of a tree of some sort by applying her visual experience of other trees she has seen. Recognition relies on how closely the new, unfamiliar, image can be connected to familiar related objects.

We begin to 'decode' photographs when we recognise specific objects and subjects in the frame. It is however, in the area of connotation that Jussim's "enculturation" comes forcefully into play, powerfully conditioning the reading of an image. To illustrate this point, I have selected one historical image, Robert Frank's New Orleans trolley (Illustration 12) showing racial segregation on public transport.[7] During my training sessions, I showed this photograph to participants, many of whom had little formal history education. Interestingly, many participants were able to draw from their own experience or knowledge of South Africa's apartheid history, and transfer their knowledge to analyse this photograph. African-Americans and black South

[7] Photographs from outside Africa were not included in the manual. This example, though, is particularly relevant and grew out of discussions during workshops in the Southern African region.

Africans had both experienced segregation on public transport. Thus, it seems that the participants had sufficiently common social history to allow them to tranfer their experience and understand a photograph of an unfamiliar scene in the southern states of the U.S.A. in the 1950's.

Photographers in Southern Africa operate in broad cultural and ideological contexts which seem especially complex in the current transition. These contexts include changes from autocratic to democratic governments, from rural to urban living, from operating in colonial to post-colonial frameworks and from subsistence to industrial and technological systems of production. Such transformations require the consolidation of existing knowledge and skills and their combination with new knowledges and skills, so that citizens can cope with and in some way participate critically in those changes. In this regard, calls are being made to expand the concept of literacy to include what Costas Criticos (1997) describes as "skills that enable a person to act as a creative, moral and critical citizen in a democratic state" (231). This notion of an expanded literacy informs the kind of critical photographic practice I advocate. This kind of practice is one that can support the development of a democratic state in which readers and producers of photographs can engage in a participatory and active dialogue about our shared future. Encouragingly, the South African education department's paper 'Curriculum 2005 - Discussion Document' (1997) mentions visual literacy as part of a communication subject to be incorporated into school curricula (166-171). This document acknowledges that visual literacy can encourage students to be critical readers, and also producers, of pictures that propound a society in transformation.

This section has identified [illegible]n which context can limit and also condition photographic meaning. Some other limits to photographic meaning are relevant. On the one hand, photographs can communicate details beyond the range of linguistic (verbal and written) text. Barthes (1990) noted that to describe a photograph "is literally impossible" because of the

nature of the analogical detail in the denoted message and because the connoted messages are constructed, aesthetic and ideological (18-19). On the other hand, words can communicate certain details and nuances beyond the range of photographs. The shortcoming of a photograph is not its lack of detail nor its lack of complexity, it is the fact that a photograph cannot speak. It is this muteness (Sontag 1977:24 and Hiley 1983:23) within the richness of detail that renders photography in some ways a less precise language that its oral and written counterparts.

If photographic communication is thus an incomplete language, photographs cannot for instance, analyse, nor can they abstract. Messaris (1994) emphasises this factor as a major difference between linguistic and visual literacy where linguistic

> analysis... often deals with general categories rather than individual items, and it is characterised by a focus on causality, contingent relationships, hypothetical, estimates of likelihood and so forth. For all these aspects of meaning, verbal language contains conventions that indicate explicitly what kind of statement is being made. In the case of images, however, such conventions are almost totally lacking. (22)

A photograph can give a sense of what was there but it does not show why the situation looks the way it does, nor does it explain the past, nor can it predict. For these details, we turn to words and concepts. Robert Frank's photograph of New Orleans could not explain why racial segregation existed in the United States, but the photograph does give a very powerful sense of what institutionalised segregation looked like at that time. In a sense, a photograph

> cannot simultaneously contain the image of the problem and the solution to the problem. A photograph, therefore, would seem to be able to pose the question, to imply a situation for which some other medium might be needed to provide the answer (Jussim 1989:158).

Hence, Carter's photograph poses many questions, but for information about famine and civil war, we need words.

Rather than emphasising the limits of photographic meaning, it might be more useful to emphasise that words and photographs work differently to construct complementary (and sometimes contradictory) forms of information. Whatever the case, where words and

photographs are combined, the result can undoubtedly be a powerful and effective form of communication capable of feeding into the development of a democratic civil society

In this section, I have discussed how photographic meaning can be conditioned by context. Context was examined in two ways. The first 'context' refers to the immediate environment - which in the field of photojournalism is the printed page. The surrounding text and captions can influence and even change a photograph's meaning. The second 'context' considers the broader social and cultural environment in which photographs are produced and read. In this environment, photographic meaning is influenced by individual and community knowledges and sensibilities. A basic appreciation of how these two contexts work is part of those visual literacy skills which assist the reader and producers of photographs in understanding how photographic meaning is constructed and also how malleable this meaning might be. If we consider how culturally, racially and economically diverse the population in Southern Africa is, we gain a sense of the complexity of the social context in which photographs are read.

In summing up, it is possible to say that, words and photographs taken together are extremely effective communicators. Visual literacy skills have thus far been considered by examining aspects of how meaning is constructed inside the photographic frame as well as in the environment outside the immediate frame. In the next section, visual literacy skills will be briefly applied to those new photographic techniques ushered in by information technology.

### 3. Information technology and critical photojournalistic practice.

Information technology has entered the world of photography through, amongst other things, the invention of digital cameras, scanners and Internet transmission facilities. In response, visual literacy skills need to encompass an understanding of digital imaging techniques.

The way we have learned to read and think about photographs has in part been based on

the way an image is produced. Traditionally, light from a subject exposes a light-sensitive emulsion which is then chemically enhanced to become visible. Now, photographs can be produced by computer image-generating programmes that require the physical presence of neither subject nor object to make an image. As mentioned earlier, all silver halide photographs are indexical signs. Yet digital photographs may no longer be indexical signs because the relationship between the subject or field and the resultant image has been ruptured.

Darkroom techniques have offered opportunities for significant image manipulation since the nineteenth century. The significance of these new techniques is that digital photography allows the manipulation of photographs to be faster, more seamless and more profound. The current rapid rate of developments make it is difficult to predict the full impact of this new technology on professional practices.

Information technologies are therefore making new demands on our visual literacy skills. Fred Ritchin (1990) believes changes in image recording and transmission will force photographers and readers of photographs to abandon go of popular myths about photography being a 'mirror on the world', something that has always been a particular issue in photojournalism. Ritchin writes that "we have come to that historic moment at which it is increasingly urgent to reject the myth of the photographer's automatic efficacy and reliability, particularly when that myth is soon to be punctured" ('990:81). If critical analysis cannot break the public's faith in photographic 'realism', digital hotographic techniques will certainly undermine that faith. Photography will come to be seen as a medium that is "highly interpretative, ambiguous, culturally specific and heavily dependent upon contextualization, by text and layout" (Ritchin 1990:81). In a sense, digital techniques emphasise the constructedness of the photographic image and in doing so, give us an opportunity to explore the interpretative nature of critical photojournalistic practice.

Perhaps the earliest, most publicised use of computer manipulation appeared on the

cover of National Geographic in 1982 (Ritchin 1990:14). In this example (Illustration 13), the pyramids were brought closer together to fit the cover format. Some readers complained when they realised that this view was physically impossible (Mitchell 1994:16). Such a reader response recalls my earlier point about readers' cultural or personal knowledges being used to read images and pick up manipulations and contradictions.

The manual contains is an example of the digital alteration of a front page news photograph from Die Burger newspaper (Illustration 14). Photographer, Henk Blom described how his front page photograph of then President Mandela releasing a dove at City Hall was digitally altered (Waller 2000:306). Although the alteration was not substantial, Blom felt that the image was no longer his. Steffanie Heffer, the night editor responsible for the alteration, was surprised that Blom was offended because she saw the alteration as 'minor' (Waller 2000:307). This debate did, however establish within this particular newspaper a protocol about the level of manipulation that is 'acceptable' to the editorial staff (Waller 2000:307). As a result of the incident, editorial staff must now consult the photographers if manipulation is considered. Furthermore, a by-line should indicate to readers that this image has in some way been changed. It seems that each newspaper will develop its protocols through its own experiences, although much can also be gained from the experience of other publications.

The challenge is not just for institutions to understand the nature of this new visual medium of digital imaging. Information technologies are also challenging photographers to develop computer 'literacy' skills linking to, and support skills associated with visual literacy. The specific challenge here is for photographers to acquire skills to maintain appropriate control of the image at the scanning, editing and transmission stages.[8] Without these skills, Ritchin

[8] In 1998, Paul Velasco became the photo editor at The Sowetan newspaper in Johannesburg. He instituted a policy whereby every photographer must learn scanning and transmission techniques. By March 1999, all photographers were able to use basic computer image programmes and Velasco plans this training to be on-going. (From an interview, August 1999)

(1990) warns that "a photographer may become like a third world country, counted on only as a supplier of raw materials - photographs - to be somehow 'refined' by those who control the production" (68).

The alternative to photographers being only primary producers, is for us to interact critically and practically with the new information technologies that impact on and derive from the making of our images. This interaction can range from the selection of images to their reproduction. Once photographers develop stronger visual literacy skills and connect those to computer skills, we may find ourselves changing from the state of "a semi-mechanistic transcriber to one in which [we] serve in a more openly interpretative, multi-faceted role as witness" (Ritchin 1990:113). Photographers working in the field of photojournalism in Southern Africa, are routinely 'witnessing' news events. The role of "witness" under a critical photojournalistic practice expands, to promote and be part of a debate-based democratic culture.

This section on the coming of digital imaging techniques poses the fresh challenges now facing photographers and dramatises tensions already latent in photographic practice over the last 100 years. Information technologies that have ushered new photographic techniques may succeed where critical analysis failed in dislodging the popularly held belief that photography is still a 'mirror on the world'. Image manipulation is now easily achieved. It is still too soon to tell whether these new techniques will allow the photographer to enjoy a "multi-faceted role" as witness or whether photographers in the newsroom will be narrowly defined as visual "primary producers". Visual literacy can assist photographers to be aware not only of the complex readings available from a photograph but also of the challenges and opportunities posed by information technology. Thus the skills associated with visual literacy are both political and professional issues.

In this chapter, I have explored aspects of visual literacy as it relates to photojournalism.

I began with a description of certain pictorial conventions that assist in the recognition of objects within the frame, mainly matters of denotation. More complex readings were made by applying certain linguistic tools including the functions of concurrent denotative and connotative messages contained within a visual sign.

From there, I discussed how context can condition photographic meaning. Context was seen firstly as the printed page, specifically the relation between the caption and the photograph; and secondly as the wider social and cultural environments in which photographs are produced and read.

Digital imaging techniques extend the experience of 'constructed' meaning since they bring enhanced abilities to alter photographs (moderately or radically) simply and quickly in the computer. Visual literacy skills can assist in negotiating the challenges posed by the new information technologies at a time when the familiar relationship between the subject and its referent becomes increasingly precarious.

Visual literacy skills give readers and photographers the means to develop an active reading process characterised by a heightened critical awareness of the construction of photographic meaning. This awareness is part of the broader social and political climate of critical thinking associated with and necessary for the formation of a democratic society.

## Chapter Three

# Critical practice emphasising Representation

1) Representation definitions

2) Representation: in the manual and in photojournalistic critical practice

> ... perhaps a greater sensitivity to the complexities of "speaking for" and "speaking of" is now required. (Allen 1999:35)

The conventional view of the world has been that people, things and events have meaning independent of the way they are represented (Hall 1997:5). Representation merely reflects what is already there. The human and social sciences have turned this notion around (Hall 1997:5). In the previous chapter, I introduced the notion that photographs have the capacity to both reflect and constitute the physical world. In this chapter, I examine how photojournalism is a representational practice that constitutes or constructs meaning, rather than discovering meaning, as is commonly perceived.

While other practices deeply involved in representation may have embraced this 'cultural turn' of constructed meaning, photojournalism seems still to be caught somewhere between a 'constructionist' approach and the older 'reflective' approach in representational theory.

In the chapter on visual literacy, semiotics provided a way to examine 'how' photographic meaning is constructed inside and 'beyond' the photographic frame. If semiotics are useful in describing 'how' representations are constructed, another consideration particularly relevant to photojournalistic practice is the consequences of meaning being constructed. This paper thus moves from 'how' photojournalistic meaning is constructed to the 'why', and to the effects of that construction. Critical photojournalistic practice requires this understanding of the effects of the constructed meaning for photographers to become active participants in a dialogue encouraging democratic values.

The first section of this chapter is a general discussion of representation and necessarily limited to the focus of my own study. I then explore the significance of the constructedness of meaning and of the resultant knowledge that is produced. Power underlies these constructions.

The various ways in which power may operate are examined and related to photojournalistic representations.

In the second section, I then apply the concept of the constructedness of photojournalistic meaning to specific examples from the manual. Three social categories, namely race, gender and culture, will be used to help organise the discussion. Race representations, more than any other category, have been and continue to be fiercely contested in Southern Africa. Historical and current inequalities between the races, between men and women and between different cultures involve stereotyping and misrepresentation. The photographs in these three categories have been selected from the manual because of the level of debate generated by them.

**1. Representation definitions**

In this section, I discuss representation as oriented to my study of photojournalism training, and then I explore how different representational practices work. According to Stuart Hall, representation may be understood as a process whereby meaning is produced using different language forms, for example; writing, speech, performance and the visual arts (1997:1). If meaning is constructed, then so too, is knowledge. Power intervenes to make meaning and knowledge 'truthful' within a particular socio-political environment. Representational practices are facilitated or impeded by power formations. Two theories (one from Michel Foucault and the other from Antonio Gramsci) are useful here in helping us to understand the possible the ways in which power operates. In each case, I discuss the specific ways in which power operates to make photographic representations 'true' or at least believable.

Representation, as Stuart Hall (1997) proposes, is "the production of meaning through language"(28). It is the way language in its linguistic, oral and visual forms, is used, that produces meaning; when meaning is expressed, this expression involves acts of representation.

Hall connects meaning and representation, "it is by our use of things, and the way we say, think and feel about them - how we represent them - that we give them a meaning" (1997:3). Representation can therefore be described as a bi-directional connection between 'things' in our world, the thought of those things and the language form used to describe them.

Power is implied in the construction of meaning and the production of knowledge. Power is considered here as

> the means by which certain individuals and groups are able to dominate others, to carry through and realise their own particular aims and interests even in the face of opposition and resistance. (O'Sullivan et al. 1983:177).

Power thus enables individuals and groups to achieve their goals even in the face of opposition. The incorporation of power relations in to investigations of representation provides an opportunity to go beyond the 'how' of the constructedness of meaning, to include a more "historical and 'worldly'" dimension (Hall 1997:47).

Two notions of power are relevant here. One is that which rejects the notion of 'ideology' and another is that which accepts ideology as a useful framework for considering how power operates. I use Stuart Hall's review of Michel Foucault to introduce the first notion of power.

Foucault rejects the use of "sociological theories of ideology, especially Marxism" as a way of identifying class interests and the way that those class interests may be "concealed within particular forms of knowledge" (Hall 1997:47-48). In a departure from ideological frameworks in general and Marxism in particular, Foucault believes all political systems are agents in the production of their own knowledge and the inevitable power that comes with it. In so doing, he rejects the picture of Marxist 'truths' trying to gain ascendency over bourgeois 'truths' (Hall 1997:47-48).

Power, as understood by Foucault, is not purely juridical or negative. He states that it would be incorrect if "one identifies power with a law which says 'no'" (1984:61). Instead,

power can operate in a productive way:

> What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted is simply the fact that it transverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body (Foucault 1984:61).

Thus, power can in certain circumstances be an enabling force. Foucault creates a particular 'discourse' that draws attention to the mechanisms through which power is exercised. 'Discourse' is considered here not just as passages of connected speech or writing, but as a broad concept that includes both language and practice. Allen Sekula (1987) defines discourse as

> an arena of information exchange, that is a system of relations between parties engaged in communicative activity. In a very important sense the notion of discourse is a notion of limits. That is, an overall discourse relation could be regarded as a limiting function that determines the very possibility of meaning (84).

Thus it is the way a discourse produces and contains knowledge that allows specific meanings to be constructed and developed, while repressing or excluding others

Two aspects of power are particularly relevant to representational practices. Firstly, when knowledge is linked to power, power can make knowledge truthful. Foucault describes this formation as a "regime of truth":

> ... truth isn't outside power, or lacking in power, truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint ... Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth, that is, types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true (1984:72).

'Truth' and 'falsity', therefore function in a social and political environment and are, in effect, articulated by those socially acknowledged as 'knowing' or experts. My concern in this dissertation is the way photojournalistic representations are also seen as "regimes of truth". As John Tagg notes,

> ... what gave photography its power to evoke a truth was not only the privilege attached to mechanical means in industrial societies but also its mobilisation within the emerging apparatuses of a new and more penetrating forms of the state (1988:61).

Photojournalism has occupied a position of evidentiary authority for most of the twentith century. The notion that photography could effectively record history relied on us accepting the existence of a "regime of truth": specifically, that photographs 'don't lie'. However, this "regime of truth" is being debated and challenged, and examples of this are presented later in this chapter. As Graham Clarke points out, the evidential force of photographs is extremely limited as "it ignores the entire cultural and social background against which the image was taken" (1997:146).

Secondly, power, as I have mentioned, does not only operate 'top-down'; it circulates through institutions by, what Foucault (1984) calls, the "microphysics of power", where

> ... microphysics presupposes that the power exercised on the body is conceived not as a property, but as a strategy; that its effects of domination are attributed not to 'appropriation', but to dispositions, manoeuvres, tactics, techniques, functions ... In short this 'power' is exercised rather than possessed; it is not the 'privilege', acquired or preserved, of the dominant class but the overall effect of its strategic position - an effect that is manifested and sometimes extended by the position of those who are dominated (174).

Power, then, is not a property that can be possessed, nor does power reside exclusively in the hands of the powerful. It is a strategy which involves the powerful and/or the less powerful.

An example from the manual is a photograph I produced of a men's conference on domestic violence in Alexandra Township, Johannesburg, in 1997 for a weekly newspaper (Illustration 15). Only one of the 36 frames submitted to the editors pictured a white person. The remainder showed young black men who had been perpetrators of domestic violence in discussion groups, the point of the story being these men are 'part of the solution' and that some are beginning to heal themselves and each other (Waller 2000:227). The sub-editor chose the frame with a white woman which suggested enlightened patronage. It was not the case here. I

would argue that sub-editors selected the image with which they identified - which showed someone like them - and not what I photographed (generally) and not the emphasis of the story accompanying the photograph. My power as a photographer to depict a scene the way I understood it, was compromised by an more powerful editorial system.

These two aspects of power as described by Foucault, the formation of a "regime of power", and the operation of power not only in a 'top down' direction, but as a circulation, are complex and highly contested. They are introduced here as a framework to consider specific representational practices described later in this chapter. Most relevant here, and in Chapter Eight in the manual, is that power can call upon different knowledges to represent a member of a given race, gender or culture. This process is interwoven with those historical and institutional processes that have traditionally used photography (Hall 1997:46).

Photography has been a useful tool in producing knowledge because it fixes the institutional 'gaze'. Foucault adopts the term 'gaze' to describe a strategy used to convert what is seen into knowledge.

> [S]ide by side with the major technology of the telescope, the lens and the light beam, which were an integral part of the new physics and cosmology, there were the minor techniques of multiple and intersecting observations of eyes that must see without being seen; using techniques of subjection and methods of exploitation, an obscure art of light and the visible was secretly preparing a new knowledge of man. (1984:189)

Included among Foucault's 'observatoires' are, for example, hospitals, prisons and mental asylums, which provide information about illness, criminality and sanity respectively. Here photography's position as a document of evidence and its role as 'witness' assists in the production of both knowledge and 'truth'. Involved here, as David Green (1985) notes, is

> not the discovery of pre-existing truths which the camera so meticulously revealed but the construction of new kinds of knowledge about the individual in terms of physiological features by which it is possible to measure and compare each individual to each other (9).

Photography was and remains one of many methods of recording social and scientific

observations that formed the basis of the newly created knowledges. John Tagg's research explores the emergence of a photographic discourse called 'documentary' in the late nineteenth century, that became a guardian of knowledge production (1988:80). Tagg's history of documentary photography explains, in part, why current practices still enjoy this guardianship role. Liz Wells, like Tagg, tracts the source of photography's documentary status:

> Photographys' direct link to the physical world made it a useful empirical tool in nineteenth century colonialist thinking. Victorians invested faith in the power of the camera to record, classify and witness. This meant that the camera was also entrusted with delineating social appearance, classifying the face of criminality and lunacy, offering racial and social stereotypes (1996:26).

Photography in the nineteenth century, played its part in confirming what Europe needed to believe about the 'rightness' of its own culture and therefore its 'duty' to conquer other parts of the world (Edwards 1992:5). Significantly, "the body became the object of the closest scrutiny, its surface constantly examined for signs of its innate physical, mental and moral inferiority" (Green 1985:9). Still today, the photographic 'gaze' claims a privileged connection to reality (Mitchell 1994:24 and Kember 1998:34-35). I will return to this point later.

In concluding this essentially Foucauldian discussion of power, I have pointed to the fact that photography, as a representational practice has been used to support the creation of meaning that makes certain knowledges 'true'. I will now move on to the second notion of power that is relevant to photojournalistic practice, namely that described by Antonio Gramsci.

There seems to be some common ground between Gramsci and Foucault. Both understand the possibility of power to be both an enabling and a disabling force, and both describe power as operating through consent as well as coercion. However, Foucault proposes power as a strategy operating through institutional structures, whereas Gramsci believes power operates "between classes" (Hall 1997:261). Gramsci introduced the notion of 'hegemonic' power, understood here to mean the way "the dominant classes ... exercise social and cultural leadership, and by these means ... to maintain their power over the economic, political and

cultural direction of the nation" (O'Sullivan et al. 1983:92). The power of the dominant classes is not solely expressed by force. Gramsci (1994) observes that

> in historical-political activity, stress falls exclusively on that historical moment in politics that is called the moment of 'h gemony' of consensus, of cultural direction, to distinguish it from the moment of force, of coercion, of legislative, governmental, or police intervention (169).

This understanding of the mechanisms of power can usefully be applied in the analysis of colonisation, although coercion is never absent from the colonial experience.

Earlier I mentioned the construction of European knowledges that supported a belief in Europe's superiority. I will now expand the point drawing on the work of Edward Said. Said (1978) uses Gramsci's model to look at the ways in which Europe colonised other parts of the world. Western expansion was motivated, according to Said, by the West's own sense of racial and cultural superiorty in relation to the oriental other.

> It is hegemony, or rather the result of cultural hegemony at work, that gives Orientalism the durability and the strength ... Orientalism is never far from ... the idea that Europe, a collective notion identifying 'us' Europeans as against all 'those' non-Europeans, and indeed it can be argued that the major component in European culture is precisely what made that culture hegemonic both inside and outside Europe: the idea that European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures (1978:7).

Colonization, imposed by coercion and by hegemonic power, resulted in the oppressed as well as the oppressor articulating beliefs in European superiority.

Specifically, colonial photographic practice produced evidentiary knowledges about racial superiority. It is important to recall here the earlier point that power is both an enabling and a disabling force. In this regard, photographs have, to some degree, the power to enable or disable. As Allen Sekula (1993) notes, photographs wield "repressive and honorific" power (342). He remarks on the "honorific" possibilities in the new genre of photographic portraiture in the nineteenth century. This new genre was an opportunity for other classes, not only the upper classes, to obtain positive and inexpensive representations of themselves. Max Kosloff

(1979) writes that such portraits "displayed people who looked to be in continuous, secure relationships with the world, and who occupied a respectable, given place in it, located by their clothes and manners" (53). The middle classes that could not afford to commission paintings of themselves, could now afford the comparatively cheaper form of photographic portraiture.

This form of portraiture has been embraced by the African urban classes since the early 1990's (Elder 1997:80, Mofokeng 1998:109, Monti 1987:7-8). Portraiture assists in establishing or affirming identity and supports the individual in positioning herself within a culture, 'culture' here being "a set of practices ... concerned with the production and exchange of meaning" (Hall 1997:2). Thus, portraiture has specific meaning when it is shared within a cultural landscape. As Hall (1997) suggests, representation functions like a dialogue and "what sustains that dialogue is the presence of shared cultural codes" (10). Portraiture is one example of how critical photographic practice can be an enabling force within a culture that promotes democratic values.

As Southern Africa emerged from colonial rule at the end of the twentith century, a number of critical photographic representational practices marked the process of decolonisation. For example, in an introduction to one photographic exhibition called, 'Black Looks, White Myths', Octavio Zaya and Tumelo Mosaka (1994) identified some of the damage of racist representational practices. They argue that

> images and representations have been a formidable tool of domination that invariably have helped construct, legitimise, promote, and perpetuate a privileged and institutionalised white culture with its in-built racism at the expense of the diversity and plurality of its subjects; a powerful tool that has been able to prevent awareness, self-sufficiency and resistance through the homogenisation of experience, thoughts and feelings (11).

This exhibition was an attempt to reclaim photography's discursive space as a site of heterogeneity and difference. Significantly, the work of black, white, local and foreign photographers contest assumptions of power in and by oppressive representations. These works "contribute to a narrative of critical intervention and resistance to racist exploitation and control

in the process of decolonisation of our minds" (Zaya and Mosaka 1994:12). A more recent example is the exhibition 'Democracy's Images - photography and visual arts after Apartheid' (Johannesburg Art Gallery, January, 2000), which is presented as a conglomerate articulation of 'socio-political struggle' in a new South Africa.

Critical photojournalistic practice necessarily requires that representations of the changing political and social landscape are made by a diverse group of photographers, in a way that challenges oppressive form of power. Photographers have the power to create images that encourage a debate-based culture within a democratic state. Our challenge is to understand our power and use it, not as a repressive force, but as a progressive one.

In this introductory section, I began by defining representation as "the production of meaning through language" (Hall 1997:28). If meaning is constructed and not found, then so too is knowledge. Power intervenes to make knowledge 'truthful'. I then looked at two possible ways of understanding how power operates within a culture. Discourses on power, as understood by Foucault, Gramsci, Said and others have provided a number of useful critical tools to understand how photographic representations and the knowledges they produce can be regressive or progressive. This understanding raises our awareness of the ways in which colonial oppression operated, specifically in Southern Africa. Such an understanding also points to the need for a critical photojournalistic practice that will support the emergence of a debate-based democratic society. In the next section, I apply these discourses to examples from the training manual.

**2) Representation: in the manual and in critical practice**

The manual links the theoretical concerns about photographic representations raised above to photojournalistic practice in Southern Africa in the 1990's. One example has been selected from each section mentioned in the introduction: 'race', 'gender' and 'culture', to

demonstrate how critical appreciation informs or, alternatively, limits practice. It might be useful to restate my position here: photographers, by engaging in critical practice, can be conscious and articulate producers of images that are part of a cultural landscape where democratic values are a shared goal.

The examples provided in this section show how photographic representations construct meaning, which becomes knowledge, then truth. "Truth itself is already power, bound to the political, economic and institutional regime that produces it" (Tagg 1988:94). Photographers have a great deal of power when we go into the 'field'. That power comes from a number of sources; for example, it exists in our media institutions, our race, our gender and our culture. Our power tends to institutional and non-coercive. We can also exercise our power progressively by consciously choosing to make photographic representations that are part of a greater progressive landscape promoting democratic values. In the following examples, questions of power are central to the discussion. The section on 'race' is longer than the sections on gender and culture, reflecting the dominance, in my view, of racial discourse over the other two here and now.

Race

The photographs selected for the discussion on 'race', are those of Steve Hilton-Barber on North Sotho Initiations, exhibited at the Market Gallery in Johannesburg in December 1990 (Illustration 4). Although the exhibition won the Staffrider Photography Award, it simultaneously received widespread criticism from members of the black community and some academics.

Briefly, the debate centred on whether the public exhibition violated the sacredness of initiation as a cultural practice. Opposition to the photographs also focused on the fact that the photographer was white and the subjects were black. What follows is a summary of the different perspectives beginning with the photographer's point of view. Hilton-Barber states his

photographs were "a factual documentation of a particular cultural practice" and that he "attempted to record this ritual as accurately as possible" (Hilton-Barber 1991:39). In this regard, Hilton-Barber has aligned himself with what Hall describes as the 'reflective' approach to representational practices. In this approach, "meaning is thought to lie in the object, person, idea or event in the real world, and language functions like a mirror, to reflect the true meaning as it already exists" (Hall 1997:24).

Hilton-Barber's stated position is heir to a long tradition of documentary photography that began in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Tagg 1988:12-13). One of its tasks was to record, "for those with relative power about those positioned as lacking" (Tagg 1988:12). Colonial photographs, as mentioned in the first section of this chapter, functioned to define notions of a superior race 'rightly' dominating inferior ones. (Edwards 1992:5). As such documentary photography becomes "both a conduit and agent of ideology, purveyor of empirical evidence and visual 'truths'" (Solomon-Godeau 1995:170). The question about the 'truth' of this photographic record is not whether the ceremony took place or not. The pertinent questions of 'truth' and 'evidence' are whether these photographs are one interpretation of a cultural practice or are voyeuristic intrusions masquerading as evidence for the 'enjoyment' of those outside North Sotho culture. The value of the photographs as a "factual documentation" is now taken up in detail.

The hostile response to this exhibition from some members of the public may have been triggered by a very deep resentment about white photographers photographing culturally private black ceremonies. The past colonial (and current economic) imbalances of power, have created a legacy of "mainly white, middle class, first world men who photograph everybody else".[9] Ivor Powell suggests the hostility expressed in the Market Gallery visitor's book was a deeply felt

[9] This quote forms part of the title by Rory Bester and Barbara Buntman from their unpublished essay on photographs of the San.

bitterness against what seemed like expressions of white control over black bodies. The oppositional voices in the exhibition's visitors book which took the form of

> sexual insults ... give access to what is really the point of the objections of the Market Theatre's black staff to the portfolio: namely the long history of blacks being objectified and rendered as specimens by the ruling white classes (Powell 1990:18).

Powell links current photographic discourse to its historical roots in colonial representational practice. In Hilton-Barber's article (1991), he responds to a number of criticisms but not to Powell's linkage between colonial photographic practices and the hostile responses to his work in the 1990's.

The land on which the initiations take place and where the photographs were taken, is a farm owned by Hilton-Barber's father (Hilton-Barber 1991:37). Hilton-Barber also denied that land ownership could have pressured the principal of the initiation school to allow him access to his initiates. According to Hilton-Barber (1991), the principal granted

> permission to photograph the ceremony and publish the photographs. I did not mislead, manipulate or deceive anyone at any stage. Both the initiates and the organisers knew exactly what I was doing ... Not only is the principal of the school a proud man of integrity but I in no way exploited the power relations in our society in order to gain access (38).

He acknowledges power imbalances but says he did not exploit them. Rhoda Rosen (1992) does not accept his statement.

> Most importantly this arrested, de-contextualised moment fails to narrate that this jungle journey that Hilton-Barber made on our behalf was actually a trip home to his father's farm in Tzaneen where the initiation took place...The photographer surveys the land; he owns the land while the camera possesses the subjects (8).

Whatever his avowed intention, the issue of the ownership of the land was key in raising the level of suspicion over Hilton-Barber's access to a private occasion. Gramsci's notion of 'hegemony' is relevant here. Whether it was an hegemonic power through consensus or coercion, it appears as an abusive of power from the land-owning class over the landless class.

Further suspicion was raised when the photographs appeared in different places in different contexts. Firstly, the work appeared at the Market Gallery in Johannesburg. Then it appeared as a feature in different newspapers and magazines. Finally, some images were reproduced as postcards. Colin Richards (1995) takes issue with the packaging of the work and the way captions change according to their display.

> Shifts in captioning across especially the first three contexts are worth noting here. In the exhibition, for example, one figure was captioned 'the initiates eating pap and maroga (porridge and spinach)'. In the rather more sensational Sunday magazine this caption was included within the image field with the addition of the words 'they must "close the anus" while eating'. When reproduced in Staffrider (after the controversy erupted), the caption was reduced to 'eating' (170).

Richards believes that captions have the power to "condition, anchor, direct, even legislate the meaning of an image" (169). The caption changes do seem to be a response to the style of the publication and mark a departure from Hilton-Barber's stated aim "... to help educate, enlighten and broaden understanding of different cultural practices" (Hilton-Barber 1991:36). These aims are surely the aims of an anthropologist, yet Hilton-Barber asks that his work be assessed by the standard of his photography, not as 'a cultural anthropologist'.

It seems naive that in such a politically volatile and racially charged time (1990) a white photographer could expect a largely black audience to believe he did not exploit his 'whiteness' in producing photographs that clearly offended many black viewers. It would also seem naive to suggest that if Hilton-Barber had more exposure to representational discourse, he would have made different pictures or would have used the discursive spaces of the gallery and various published forms differently. It could be argued, and indeed has been, that he arrived at the scene of the initiations more as the boss's son than an anonymous photographer seeking permission to photograph. From a Foucauldian point of view, Hilton-Barber's exhibition, within the institution of documentary photography, bestows on him the power to represent and create knowledges about 'others'.

In my informal discussions with Hilton-Barber in 1997, he seemed ambivalent about the criticisms. He appeared satisfied with the portfolio's technical quality and unmoved by the academic and public critiques about his work. By including extracts from oppositional voices and Hilton-Barber's response in the training manual, I identified some key issues that might alert photographers working in the documentary genre to some of the contested spaces particularly within a discourse of race.

In presenting this debate in the manual, I became aware that I was in danger of establishing a strong case against Hilton-Barber, with many authors critical of his work and none defending his position. I sent Hilton-Barber the rough text in August 1998, that included the debates outlined above with a request that he write a final response. His flippant response, "I am a walking, talking, working contradiciton" appears in the manual (Waller 2000:200). At least the "last word" provides a glimpse into Hilton-Barber's retrospective analysis of the debate. At best, the "last word" may alert photographers to the benefits of being conversant with and responding to the critical debates.

The issue of whether 'outsiders' (in a racial sense) can make 'legitimate' photographic representations is also an ethical issue to be raised again in the next chapter. At this stage, a debate is presented within the discourse of representation laid out in the first half of this chapter. It may benefit white photographers to consider the criticisms directed at Hilton-Barber, as they photograph the 'other'. The photographer's status as an insider or outsider is conditioned by many factors, including her relationship with and understanding of the subjects and her knowledge of historical experiences and the current situation. This status, like photographic meaning itself, slides along a continuum between fixed and free-floating.

In the case of black photographers, the discourse around culturally and racially sensitive subjects inside their own cultural or racial identity, is another enormous topic. As an observation, I think it is possible that black documentary photographic practice could be one that

mimics (outsider and sometimes racist) practices. Alternatively, the 'insider' view could be seen as a self-representational practice that to some extent reduces the power imbalances and cultural ignorance experienced by their white counterparts. The example used in the manual was selected from work-in-progress by Siphiwe Sibeko on Xhosa initiations (Illustration 16). These subjects were of his friends in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. I showed these images to black and white participants in a workshop (at the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism, Johannesburg, May 1999). Some Xhosa viewers were offended by the images. They felt certain cultural ceremonies should not be for a "general viewing". The issue, it seemed, became not so much about racist representational practices, but about whether certain cultural practices should remain private. Another comment suggested that this photographer may have exploited his own culture for his own professional or monetary gain.

This debate on photographic representations of race offers a challenge to photographers to consider critically the way we make photographs, our relationship to the subjects and the consideration we give to contexts of publication and viewing. Documentary photography has a history which must be acknowledged: like general photography, it is "a discourse [producing] (through representation), a form of racialised knowledge of the 'other' deeply implicated in operations of power" (Hall 1997:260). A heightened sensitivity towards the history of colonial photographic practice, from which current practices have evolved, and an awareness of the power relations that exist between us and those we wish to photograph, can lead to new kinds of images; images that explore what it means to belong to a society that respects racial identities and democratic freedoms.

Gender

Racism and sexism are linked discourses in contested photographic representations in Southern Africa. Just as racist representations have been sharply contested so to have sexist

representations of women been interrogated (the report of the 'Gender in the Media' Symposium by the Commission on Gender Equality, Johannesburg, September 1997). Joan Solomon (1995) suggests that feminist photographic strategies can be conscious and multi-directional:

> what we can do with images we make is to vigorously interrogate desire, fear, shame, anger, sexuality, motherhood, class, love and so on. In other words we can deconstruct. We can explore all our societal and relational connections in an attempt to break down the fiction presented as woman. (10)

The photograph selected for this section is one which raises complex questions about the photographic portrayal of women in the region. Unlike Hilton-Barber's work, this photograph does not have the benefit of a written debate between critics, viewers (readers) and the photographer. Photographer, Victor Matom took this photograph of a woman in her room in a hostel near Johannesburg (Illustration 17). The photograph provides an opportunity to 'unpack' multiple representations of women within a single frame.

As author of the manual, I wrote the following comments to link Matom's background story, articulating one possible reading;

> As readers of images, we have to take time to examine the layers of meaning within a frame, recorded by the photographer to make us think. Matom has found in one frame, three major representations of women; the underwear queen, the Madonna and the real woman. The woman occupies the left side of the frame but we only really see her as a reflection in the mirror. That mirror is broken. Light streams through the window onto her face. Although small, her reflection provides a focus for us to understand the photograph and position her against the other competing images of women (Waller 2000:219).

As the woman looks into the mirror she sees herself. The mirror image of the woman is small but central to the entire meaning of the image. She is framed in the lower left corner with her back to us, the readers, here effectively voyeurs.

The juxtaposition of these three images, emphasises the contradictory messages women receive about the nature of the 'ideal' woman. One 'ideal' is the virtuous woman symbolised by Mary in Christian mythology. The other 'ideal' is the sexualized woman, undressed and seductive. The extremes of 'ideal' and one woman's moment of self-observation, places a lived

experience and fictionalised extremes disturbingly beside each other.

This photograph problematises visual representations of women, specifically within a black feminist discourse. This discourse is one that develops out of black women's experience of "multiple interrelated oppressions including ... racism/ethnocentrism, sexism/homophobia and classism (James 1994:2). According to Matom, the woman in the photograph had selected these images to decorate her living space (Waller 2000:219). Her gaze is returned not only by her mirror image but also by the religious icon and by the 'underwear queen'. Thus many messsages are on offer. It is the juxtaposition of all of them that give this picture its power and serves to emphasise the highly constructed nature of both Christian and sexist iconography. In this way, photograph's like Matom's serve to highlight the absurdities and extremities of images of woman, and this particular woman's own selection of these. Matom's polysemic image is 'a place of work' where fictional images of women, as Solomon (1995) argues, sit alongside the woman as she gazes at her reflection.

This extremely brief discussion on photographic representations of gender does not fully reflect my interest and concern in this area. The brevity is in part due to the underdeveloped photographic discourses on gender in the field of photojournalism in Southern Africa and also determined by the limits of this context (the dissertation).

Culture

As introduced in the first section of this chapter, culture is defined by Stuart Hall as "as set of practices ... concerned with the production and exchange of meaning" (Hall 1997:2). The photograph selected from the manual to raise some issues of cultural representation is 'the farmer's suit' by photographer, Calvin Dondo (Illustration 18). I have selected this example because Dondo is a black Zimbabwean photographing within his culture in Mashonaland, Zimbabwe. He was on assignment for a Southern Africa-based current affairs magazine whose

editor was a white Canadian. Dondo describes his experience in photographing an old Zimbabwean farmer who was to be resettled back to his ancestral land in 1990. The magazine editor refused to accept the original portrait because the farmer wore a suit for the photo session. Dondo was told to 'reshoot' the farmer in his work (tattered) clothes. One principal issue here is the amount of power that subjects have, or believe that they have, to determine how they will appear in the mass media. For the manual accompanying this thesis, Dondo wrote,

> [the editor] asked me to go back and photograph the farmer in some old clothes, which, I suppose, was meant to sensationalise the story ...You are stripping the farmer to the bones, cobbing everything including the little humanity he still has left. These restrictions are suffocating the truth, creativity and breeding an uninformed universal opinion. The editor's bias has become a reflex which was bred by misinformation about the Third World and Africa in general. This should be stopped before we confuse the next generations (Waller 2000:232).

Dondo was frustrated by the editor's request but did not discuss the issue further. As frequently as this type of situation occurs, photographers seem unwilling or unable to convince their editors of the subtleties and possibilities of such compositions.

Similar concerns are noted by photographer Jean Mohr (1982) in his documentation of a Eurc, ·an farmer called Marcel. Marcel chose to be photographed "wearing a clean, freshly ironed, black shirt. His hair was carefully combed. He had shaved" (Mohr 1982:36). Mohr recorded the voice of the farmer "'now my great grandchildren will know what sort of man I was'" (1982:37). Interestingly, Marcel wanted to be remembered (represented) a certain way, describing his well-prepared appearance as the sort of man he was. He had represented himself in much the same way as Dondo's farmer had in Zimbabwe.[10]

The direct look of the subject, which editors often reject, may be result of a dialogue with the photographer. There may have also been some participation by the subjects in composing that image. Pierre Bourdeau (1990) lists some the features of address in a portrait:

[10] John Berger's essay,"The Suit and the Photograph" in About looking (1980) gives this discussion an historical dimension, reaching back to 1913.

> people face on, in the centre, standing up, at a respectful distance, motionless and in a dignified attitude. In fact to strike a pose is to offer oneself to be captured in a posture which is not and which does not seek to be 'natural'... Striking a pose means respecting oneself and demanding respect(80).

In such a composition, the photographer and the reader of the photograph are forced to address the subject, and thus they too become, in a sense, 'visible'. Solomon-Godeau (1995) also believes the photographer should in some way be 'visible'. She considers "an authentic political photographic practice" would be to make a photograph obviously a 'set-up' and also to make the use of compositional techniques detectable to the reader (182). By using compositional techniques, like direct 'address' or other markers of the photographer's presence, the photographer can engage in the kind of critical practice I am advocating.

There were a number of cultural factors at work during Dondo's photographic 'shoot' with the farmer. Firstly, Dondo knew very well why the farmer had changed his clothes, as this practice of 'dressing' for a photograph is common in rural Zimbabwe and indeed, many Southern African countries. Secondly, their discussion took place in the local language, ChiShona, which means there was a closer communication between the two than would have been the case with an 'outsider' photographer. Thirdly, I believe that Dondo also followed the farmers' wishes out of respect for his 'elders'. These were some of the cultural dimensions of this exchange, which the editor - knowingly or otherwise - negated in pursuit of a stereotyped view of Zimbabwean peasant farmers.

Before concluded the chapter, it is important to acknowledge new critical documentary practices, to which the debates above may belong. Abigail Solomon-Godeau (1995) notes that such a practice considers

> issues of audience, reception and address accompanied by a concomitant conviction that a politically instrumental form must work against passive contemplation or voyeuristic consumption of the images (Solomon-Godeau 1995:182-183).

This call to readers and producers of photographs is a plea for an active interrogation of highly

constructed images and not a passive reading that is based on photographs seen as reflective and apolitical. Critical photojournalistic practice of the type I am advocating, requires some degree of 'political instrumentality' that joins the urgent task of 'de-colonising' our minds and sustaining a dialogue towards a more open and democratic society.

In this chapter, I began by defining representation as a process whereby meaning is constructed through various language forms. Power is always present and capable of producing meaning and consequently 'truth'. Two different theoretical models, from Foucault and Gramsci were then examined to explore the possible ways in which power operates.

I used three examples of photojournalistic representations that appear in the manual, one from each category, namely 'race', 'gender' and 'culture'. The first category was discussed in far more detail that the other two because of the dominance of racial discourses in Southern Africa. There also exists useful documentation on the debate specifically on Hilton-Barber's photographs. The other two categories from the manual, gender and culture, were then presented and discussed briefly. In each case, the photographic examples were selected either because of the public debate raised at the time of publication or because the contributing photographers wanted to raise some of their own concerns that had been ignored until now.

By expanding the possibilities of visual language, we as photographers will produce more challenging and insightful images of a changing social environment. Then, I believe we can enhance our participation in a dialogue concerned about the emergence of a new democratic Southern Africa.

## Chapter Four

# Critical practice emphasising

# Ethics

1) The photographer and photographed: the scene in Sudan

2) Reception I: the photograph in the public domain

3) Conflicting roles: photographer as citizen

4) Reception II: manipulation of the image in mass marketing

5) Codes of Ethics in the Media

In previous chapters, I have raised different and intersecting issues relevant to developing a critical, pro-democratic practice within photojournalism in Southern Africa. In Chapter One, I outlined the importance of a learner-centred education that can encourage debate-based photojournalism training. In Chapter Two, I discussed visual literacy as a set of skills used to make and read photographs. Discussing representation, the subject of Chapter Three, I considered ways in which power operates within our socio-historical environment to allow us to take photographs that then become invested with certain potentially 'truthful' meanings.

In this chapter, I develop selected questions concerning ethical dilemmas in photojournalism in general, but focus on a specific example in the manual. The reason for raising such questions lies in the belief that they may inform choices between different possible actions in the future. More than other forms of journalism, photojournalistic images generate the most heated debates around 'responsible reporting' both in the newsroom and between the media and the public (Black et al. 1999:206). What happens in the 'field' and later, when a photograph enters the public domain, becomes a highly instructive vehicle through which photographers can approach questions of ethics.

The structure in this chapter is different from the previous chapters in that a specific photograph from the manual is examined in detail first before the discussion opens out into more extended discussion of ethics.

The photograph central to this discussion is Kevin Carter's Sudanese child (Illustration 10), already mentioned in Chapter One. There are many reasons for this choice. This photograph is well known - arguably one of the most powerful photographs of the 1990's. It first appeared covering half a page, in The Weekly Mail (March 26 - April 1, 1993). The New York Times used it on its front page (Taylor 1998:135), while over a year later, it was published across a double page in Time magazine (September, 12 1994). Along with its frequent reproduction,

much has also been written about this image to help us clarify ethical questions. Carter received a Pulitzer Prize in 1994. Months after receiving the award, Carter killed himself. Many questions remain concerning his suicide.

I explore five specific aspects of this photograph in an attempt to organise the ethical issues triggered by its publication. Firstly, I discuss the relationship between the photographer and the subject of the photograph, no matter how fleeting or sustained. The second aspect is the impact that a photograph has when it enters the public domain. The dual role of the individual as citizen and as photographer is the third aspect. Fourthly, I discuss the significance of recontextualising the photograph as a marketing tool (Illustration 11). The formulation of a media code of ethics is the fifth and final aspect of this chapter. I will attempts to specify what constitutes a 'good relationship' between the photographer and the subjects photographed and also between the photographer and prospective readers. These are difficult matters, but no less important for being so.

As already suggested, photographers can benefit from the experiences and dilemmas of other practitioners. Discussions on ethical decision-making provide an opportunity to develop and articulate what kinds of photographers we are or might be under specific circumstances. Rick Beckman (1996) described this process as developing a template that can, to some extent, shape our actions under stressful situations when there is 'no time to think'. This template may be formed by a conscious and creative process of thinking about, articulating and even writing about what our reactions might be in specific situations. In this way, this template-forming process can be influenced by a kind of role-play using past experiences as a learning tool.

**1) The photographer and photographed: the scene in Sudan**

It is almost impossible for those of us unfamiliar with the combined effects of civil war, drought and famine, to imagine this particular scene in southern Sudan. I attempt to establish the

scene by using accounts from three different sources; firstly, from a story written by Carter himself in The Weekly Mail (Carter 1993:10), then Scott MacLeod's story in Time magazine (MacLeod 1994:54), and finally from an article by Charlotte Bauer in The Weekly Mail (1994:18). The scene is re-constituted, albeit in a restricted sense, to understand what Carter's relationship with the girl who appears in the photograph may have been. From there, I move into a general discussion on the nature of ethics. This section thus begins with the specific scene and then opens out onto a broader ethical terrain.

Doing so is not a grisly re-visiting of the horrific scene for voyeuristic purposes, nor is it an effort to judge Carter. Rather it is an opportunity to imagine and consider what we as photographers would have done, or could have responsibly done, in this situation. Such an exercise is consistent with my fundamental premise that it is possible to engage with debate-based critical practice that informs and is informed by a progressive democratic culture.

The first account then is Carter's story (1993) written just weeks after returning from the village of Ayod in Sudan. His account of this specific photograph is quoted here in full to establish the scene from Carter's chosen point of view.

> The heat, causing sweat to run in rivers and attracting scores of flies, the constantly shifting dust, and the horror of the famine victims were driving my mind into overload. I wandered into the bush. Two or three hundred metres from the centre, I encountered a lone toddler trying to make it to the feeding centre. She was too weak to manage more than a few steps at a time, periodically collapsing on to her haunches and covering her head with her skeletal hands, helplessly trying to fend off the searing sun. After a while, she would struggle to her feet, and try again, whimpering in a high-pitched little voice. Again I withdrew into the mechanics of photography, shooting the scene with grim resolve. Suddenly the girl fell forward from her former position on her haunches, and lay prone on the ground, face down in the chalk-fine dust. Then I noticed a blurred form walking into my viewfinder. It was a vulture, moving in on its prey. I looked up. Overhead, more vultures were circling. I shooed the birds away and left, my head exploding. When I turned back, I could see the child no longer, lost among scores of other, equally emaciated children. (10)

Carter's description shifts from the general scene to the specific place where the photograph was taken. His description is the key text in setting the scene. I do not know of any account from the

girls' point of view.

The second account was written by Time magazine reporter, Scott MacLeod (1994) over a year later, and it tells a very similar story. Yet there are additional details about Carter's considerations at the time: MacLeod writes; "as he crouched to photograph her, a vulture landed in view. Careful not to disturb the bird, he positioned himself for the best possible image. He would later say he waited about 20 minutes, hoping the vulture would spread its wings." (1994:54). According to MacLeod, Carter watched this scene for 20 minutes, waiting for the vulture to open its wings. MacLeod wrote that after Carter photographed, "he chased the bird away and watched as the little girl resumed her struggle. Afterwards he sat under a tree, lit a cigarette, talked to God and cried" (MacLeod 1994:54).

Charlotte Bauer, journalist for The Weekly Mail at that time, describes Carter's state of mind in the third account. She notes that Carter swung from being severely distressed to "professional mode" as the scene unfolded.

> [He] was already half out of his mind with the horror of "dozens of wailing babies, alone and dying". But when the vulture suddenly landed and entered his frame, he said "I recognised the symbolic elements of the shot, went into professional mode and did what I had to do". Afterwards, he sat under a tree and for "a long time ... smoking cigarettes and crying" (1994:18).

Bauer adds more detail of Carter's actions and observations after taking the photograph. From Bauer, there is a sense that Carter from the beginning was disturbed by what he saw. He then temporarily went into "professional mode". After photographing, Carter seemed to retreat into his own thoughts.

However, John Taylor (1998) includes a brief discussion of Carter's photograph, now five years after the photograph was taken. Taylor is sceptical about Carter's actions.

> The picture was so brutal that the editor of the [New York] Times, mindful of readers' sensitivities, published a note on the fate of the girl: "Mr Carter said she resumed her trek to the feeding centre [and] he chased away the vulture. This seems wishful thinking and indeed, a piece in the Guardian reported no such intervention (135).

Taylor's criticism suggests that Carter may have fabricated the part where he chased the vulture.

These different accounts have only one witness, that is Carter. In spite of the weakness of a single voice, it is possible to imagine the scene. Carter was alone when the girl appeared. She was staggering. He watched her slow progress for up to 20 minutes through the viewfinder of the camera (MacLeod 1994:54). During that time, a vulture landed in the background apparently seeing the child as carrion. After photographing this scene, Carter may have chased the vulture away. He then watched the girl continue her journey, and sat under a tree reflecting on the scene and his life.

Joao Silva, an Associated Press photographer and close friend of Carter's, accompanied him to Sudan and was near the scene of this photograph. Silva asks a crucial question, "could he have helped the child in any way? The harsh reality is NO!" (Waller 2000:260). Silva's position was that there were many children near death at this feeding camp, and it was impossible to help one. The logic here is that if we cannot help all, then we cannot help any one. Yet Carter contradicts Silva's defence when he describes how he did, in one way help the child by chasing the vulture(s).

As mentioned in the introduction, the relationship between photographer and subject and photographer and readers is informed by broad questions of ethics; ethics being considered here as a study principally constituted by notions of "goodness" and "right action" (Audi 1996:244).

Applying notions of "goodness" and "right action" to Carter's action, it could be said that one aspect of "goodness" that comes out of Carter's photograph was the production of 'knowledge' about the dire conditions in south Sudan in 1993. According to his and subsequent accounts, Carter deviated from his professional task to intervene. He could have chased away the vulture, or picked up the child, or he could have done both; he allegedly chose the first option. A key question for a photographer on location is when to photograph and when to

intervene. This question is not solved but informed by notions of "right action" when ethical considerations are linked to critical practice.

**2) Reception I: the photograph in the public domain**

Since its first appearance in The Weekly Mail (March 26 - April 1, 1993) and the New York Times (26th March 1993), this photograph circulated widely in the public domain (MacLeod 1994:54). This section looks at ways in which the photograph (and many like it) may contribute to a reader's knowledge outside their own experiences or may become merely a voyeuristic opportunity. Therefore, the discussion here focuses on the nature of the relationship between the reader, the photograph, and what is being depicted.

Editors or those responsible for selecting this image over thousands of others made in Sudan in 1993, have done so because it tells an 'old' story in a new way. A new 'angle' becomes essential when the "vast photographic catalogue of misery and injustice throughout the world has given everyone a certain familiarity with atrocity" (Sontag 1977:20). The power of this photograph enabled it to float to the top of this "catalogue". Certainly the vulture is a new and shocking element within the theme of 'starving Africans'.

John Taylor (1998) suggests that photographs from Africa are thematic and one principal theme is refugees. Refugees are "lumped together with those other 'native' products and all are presented as natural, endemic and unfathomable" (1998:136). In a sense, this photograph fits the specific refugee theme and a more general theme of 'victims'. The use of 'victims' in the mass media, according to Brian Winston (1988:43), became a recurring theme to underpin particular ideological imperatives. Dominant ideologies condition the mass media in general and photojournalism in particular, to produce news that makes African wars and the associated social disruptions appear 'natural'.

Vast inequalities of wealth and opportunities lie at the heart of the wars that exacerbate

these 'famines' and other 'natural' disasters. John Taylor (1998:136) implicates the richer countries that profit from war through the international arms trade and then accuse the poorer countries of corruption and inefficiency. Western discourse around the existence of refugees and victims is fuelled, according to Taylor, by "the Western need to perceive relative order in liberal democracies and chaos everywhere else" (136). The girl threatened with starvation and the predatory vulture suggests a profound type of chaos. She lies slumped, isolated and abandoned. There is nothing in the photographic frame to suggest any social fabric, culture or economy; she lies exposed to the brutal nature of this strange landscape.

Martha Rosler (1993) sharply criticises the approach of some photographers in documentary practice; a critique that also applies to photojournalism and to this scene. She believes that some photographers go to 'difficult' places because it testifies "to the bravery or dare we name it, the manipulativeness and savvy of the photographer, who entered a situation of physical danger, social restrictedness, human decay, or combinations of these and saved us the trouble" (308). Rosler implicates both the photographer and the reader in the production and consumption of these sorts of photographs. She believes that seeing photographs of people under stress, may become a substitute for bearing 'witness' directly to these dire circumstances. Looking at photographs is a kind of "knowledge at bargain prices" (Sontag 1977:24) and as such may have less urgency.

Abigail Solomon-Godeau (1995) accuses documentary practice of re-victimisation and her accusation can also be directed towards photojournalistic practice. To photograph a victim becomes "a double act of subjugation", according to Solomon-Godeau; "first in the social world that has produced its victims; and second, in the regime of the image produced within and for the same system that engenders the conditions it then re-presents"(176). This 'social world' produces the victims it then photographs. For Solomon-Godeau, this double act of subjugation appears 'natural' through a discourse of dominant capitalist ideologies. The process of

'naturalising' ideological strategies was raised in Chapter Three on representation, and will be explored further here. One strategy encourages stereotypes that separate us from those we do not understand, notably those we call 'others'.

Africans become 'other' by way of their perceived poverty, violence and dependency. The 'other' here refers to, in a generalised way,

> anyone who is not I - the Other actually 'defines' me because it is the ultimate signifier of everything I am not. Because the phallocentrism and Eurocentrism of Western philosophy and other cultural discourses are so entrenched, the Other has been defined as "Woman" or African or Asian - and hence the Other is what is feared, what exists to be conquered (Childers and Hentzi 1995:216).

The Western readers of Carter's photograph may see the Sudanese child as the 'other' and so project stereotypes onto this image. 'Splitting' is at the core of this projection. Stuart Hall (1997) describes the strategy of 'splitting' (1997), thus:

> It divides the normal and the acceptable from the abnormal and unacceptable. It then excludes or expels everything which does not fit, which is different ... [This practice] symbolically fixes boundaries and excludes everything which does not belong (258).

Thus a boundary is fixed to differentiate between 'self' and 'other', to define those who belong to liberal western democracies and those who do not. As Taylor mentioned earlier, the latter represents chaos. Frantz Fanon (1969) identifies Western anxiety about 'Third World' countries. This anxiety constructs false perceptions; for example that citizens from the 'Third World', or 'natives', are characteristically "insensible to ethics; [they] represent not only an absence of values, but also the negation of values" (Fanon 1969:32). The Western stereotype, according to Fanon, is of the 'native' who becomes "the depository of maleficent powers, the unconscious and irretrievable instrument of blind forces"(32)

Where stereotyping becomes a particular frame of reference, images like Carter's, support Westernised stereotypic values about Africa. Yet Carter's photograph can also be 'read' beyond the stereotypic or fearful view of Africa. Another way to read this photograph is to see it

as a site of interrogation, a site where the reader asks crucial questions about about fairness and exploitation in Africa and elsewhere.

John Berger (1980) suggests two responses to seeing disaster photographs, analogous to what I had just noted;

> we are seized by them. As we look at them, the moment of the other's suffering engulfs us. We are filled with either despair or indignation. Despair takes on some of the other's suffering to no purpose. Indignation demands action. We try to emerge from the moment of the photograph back to our lives. As we do so, the contrast is such that the resumption of our lives appears to be hopelessly inadequate response to what we have just seen (38).

Berger warns the reader against despair as an emotional cul-de-sac. Indignation, he hopes, could raise awareness and lead to action.

An early example of the use of photographs to raise awareness comes from the South African Boer War (1899-1902). During this war, the British imprisoned Afrikaner civilians in concentration camps where thousands of women and children died. Humanitarian campaigner Emily Hobhouse used a photograph of an emaciated eight year old girl, Lizzie Van Zyl, to show the conditions under which the British forced civilians to live (Balme 1994:442). Mary Price (1993) notes in another more recent example, that "the broad response to the 1980's famine in Ethiopia was activated by photographs" (17). Beyond awareness and aid, we may ask more structural questions; for example, 'what political and economic system has allowed such a scene to develop?'

John Taylor argues that we would remain ignorant unless 'horror' events were reported with due 'horror' because the

> use of horror is a measure of civility. The absence of horror in the representation of real events indicates not propriety so much as a dangerous poverty of knowledge among news readers. What else can it mean when reports are polite in the face of atrocity and war? (1998:11).

In developing this idea of 'civility', Taylor (1998) believes we must not fail to bear witness to distant events:

> [T]he presence of imagery and reports means that forgetting about them or refusing to see them becomes a deliberate choice, a conscious act of citizenship: then people are choosing ignorance above knowledge. There is a big difference between never finding out or choosing to forget: the latter involves recognition and then spurning, of unwelcome information. Body horror provides this unwelcome material for service in public spheres of controversy, with photographs relaying evidence of what-has-been for people to judge for themselves (195).

From this reading then, Carter's photograph can be of "service" by providing disturbing and even unwanted information. This information is crucial in developing our ethical relationship with the 'other', although such a relationship will remain ill-defined and unstable.

An appropriate ethical relationship with the 'other' is one that would, for example, reject oppressive Eurocentric and stereotypic notions of Africa. Such a relationship would then ask why particular conditions exist. Kelly Oliver's (1993) account of ethics informed by the writings of Juliet Kristeva gives a good sense of what is at stake here. She notes that

> we need to conceive of the relation between subject [self] and other as a relation of difference ... [U]ntil we can re-conceive of the true relation between the subject [self] and the other, we cannot conceive of ethics. We cannot conceive of obligations to others (1).

Oliver emphasises the possibility of an ethical relationship with the 'other' based on an appreciation of difference. Our obligation to this girl as readers of this photograph may be the challenging of our own ignorance which contributes to the existence, and photographs, of starving African children.

Before moving to the next section, I would like to position myself in relation to Carter's photograph. I have two conflicting reactions. One reaction is a sense of relief that it was Carter who made that excursion and not me. I have also benefited from knowing this photograph, thus avoiding what John Taylor describes as "a moral sleep" (1998:6). The opposite and simultaneous reaction is one of immense fury that he did not carry the child to the feeding tents nearby. Carter had established some emotional connection to her because his distress at the scene is a recurring point. All three narratives mention his tearful reaction to what he had

witnessed. There remains a persistent instability for me between these two powerful and opposite reactions.

I asked six photographers what they would have done if they were there. Four said that they would have photographed the child and then assisted her. One said he would have done the same as Carter. The sixth photographer said she could not have made that image at all. She would have immediately 'rescued' the child.

In this section, a discussion of the reception of the photograph has been considered in the context of its mass circulation. Of specific interest is how this photograph fits into an archive of images of the 'third world' circulating in the 'first world'. One challenge for readers of this image is how best to develop a profound kind of 'knowing' about our world and therefore what kinds of relationship we can have with the 'other'. This chapter in the manual does attempt to raise photographers' awareness of the various ways the public (and photographers) may process images of the 'other'. Such images can, to some extent, contribute to the readers's knowledge of a specific event and also adds to their general knowledge. The issue is whether consumption of these sorts of images can lead to action or simply reinforces passive stereotyping.

**3) Conflicting roles: photographer as citizen**

Carter won a Pulitzer Prize in 1994 for this photograph (MacLeod 1994:54). The first two sections of this chapter have focused on the relationship between the photographer and the subject and then the relationship between the photograph and the reader. Four months after winning the Pulitzer Prize, Carter took his own life. This dramatic event gives us an opportunity to consider our own often conflicting roles as photographer and as citizen.

Joao Silva gives some insight into Carter's state of mind after he became famous, largely as a result of this particular image. Silva describes the many pressures experienced by Carter at that time. According to Silva,

> [his] guilt mounted as the picture gained fame and reached its pinnacle with winning of photography's most sought-after prize, the Pulitzer. Again this guilt was not the reason for Kevin's suicide, but with certainty, the many images of death, the emotional torment added to the substance abuse and the pressure of his newly-assumed professional role as Pulitzer Prize winning photographer, were major factors in bringing about his self-inflicted demise. There are possible dark side-effects which this profession can have on a photographer (Waller 2000:260).

From Silva's perspective, there were many complex crises in Carter's life. He suggests that Carter experienced a sense of guilt and overwhelming pressure specifically associated with winning the Pulitzer for this photograph. Silva also emphasises a cumulative emotional burden of "many images of death". It is important to understand that this photograph is one of hundreds of photographs Carter made of death and violence during the late 1980's and early 1990's.

According to Mike Nicol, in early 1994 Carter was also in a "manic swirl of sex, drugs and rock 'n roll" (1998:123). Silva added that Carter "suffered from recurring nightmares", something mentioned in his suicide note:

> I have come to the point where the pain of life overrides the joy, to the point that joy does not exist ... I am haunted by the vivid memories of killings and corpses and anger and pain ... of starving and wounded children ... of trigger-happy madmen.[11]

Clearly, Carter was suffering from repeated exposure to people in traumatic situations, the accumulation of which 'haunted' and overwhelmed him. Silva adds "Ken's (Oosterbroek, another photographer) death in the townships months before had deeply affected Kevin". Oosterbroek, a friend of Carter's, died in crossfire between hostel residents and the National Peace Keeping Force in Thokosa, Johannesburg in April, 1994 (Nicols 1998:123). These were some of the many factors that had contributed to Carter's suicide.

This tragedy was unique but there is an opportunity for more general debates around Carter and his famous photograph. In the various environments where we photograph, there may be contradictions between our roles as photographer and as citizen. Whether we are acting as an

'anonymous' professional photographer or as a member of a community, some fundamental ethical considerations remain the same; I believe these would include our understanding of the nature of "goodness" and "right action". These notions are linked to the discussion in the last section on an ethical relationship with the 'other'. The 'other' may be the subject photographed or those who read our photographs in mass circulation journals. An ethical relationship with the 'other' thus involves certain responsibilities consistent with a critical photojournalistic practice which, as stated before, is a key motivation for progressive training initiatives in general and for the production of the manual specifically.

Carter's guilt and emotional torment, mentioned by Silva, may have led him to photograph events that would possibly reform himself and/or his world. Was Carter hoping to assuage some guilt he felt in the role of photographer or was he hoping to contribute to correcting the wrongs of the world in his role as citizen? We can only speculate both. As he said in an interview "if you want to go to a hell hole, you'll always find someone to send you" (Bauer 1994:18). This suggests he wanted to go the "hell holes" that ranged from violence in Thokoza township to famine in south Sudan. Repeatedly, Carter put himself in extreme situations to produce photographs of violence, death and poverty, only to be haunted by them later. There seems something self-destructive in Carter as photographer and Carter as citizen.

So far in this chapter, I have looked at the relationship between photographer and subject, then between the photographer and reader and in this section at the individual's dual role as photographer and citizen. In each situation, I have been concerned with the ethical nature of certain responsibilities, which is based on, as Jean Graybeal (1993) describes,

> truly recognising, of deeply accepting in a very personal way, that not only one's own life or self is complex, weighty and real, but that other beings too have that same experience of their own existence (38).

In appreciating this profound existence of the 'other', we may be "capable of being in the place

[11] Joao Silva quoted Carter's suicide note in his written contribution to the manual which he gave me in July 1997.

of the other" (Graybeal 1993:38). Imaging ourselves in the position of the 'other', may be one way to develop ourselves as citizens and as photographers. This position may be idealistic but it can provide a strategy for forming a critical photojournalistic practice that is part of a society based on respect and diversity.

Through the many contributions to the chapter on ethics in the manual, readers have an opportunity to confront the nature of their desires, responsibilities and power. On this score, Giyatri Spivak (1996) asks the powerful in society to critically engage with their privilege. She speaks of "doing ones homework in the interests of unlearning one's privilege" as marking "the beginning of an ethical relation to the Other" (Landry and Maclean 1996:5). Such a relation attempts to counters the unjust power of dominant western ideologies, specifically those around race, class and gender. These ideologies have bestowed on photographers an authority to represent the 'other'. It is an authority with awesome responsibilities.

An individual playing the dual roles of photographer and citizen is sometimes faced with conflicting demands. Carter was affected by what he saw and photographed. We can now only speculate here on the nature of his relationship to the 'other'. Some photographers choose the role of a dispassionate observer. A photographer may find the role of dispassionate observer, although an option, untenable if she also sees herself as a citizen. Any ethical relationship with the 'other' is extremely complex, demanding a fundamental acceptance of the 'other's' profound and complex existence. In constantly changing conditions, this ethical relationship can only ever be 'work-in-process' and it is key in developing a properly critical photojournalistic practice.

**4) Reception 11: manipulation of the image in mass marketing**

In this section, the discussion focuses on the re-appearance of Carter's photograph in an advertisement five years after it was taken (Illustration 11). I will outline the stated position of M-Net, the television company that commissioned the advertisement. With each aspect of the

advertising strategy, I will identify specific criticisms. I focus on this advertisement as a key case of ethics and photojournalism within a specifically marketing context.

Now, six years after the photograph was made, Carter is dead and the fate of the child is still not known. The war in Sudan that converts drought to famine, still rages. Symga Picture Agency (New York), who owns copyright over this photograph, collects a minimum of US$100.00 per use.

As mentioned in the visual literacy chapter, the photograph re-appeared in 1998 in mass circulation magazines as a scratch card advertisement for a television programme, Carte Blanche on the television channel, M-Net. The silver scratch surface covers the child. No caption informs the reader of the circumstances surrounding the taking of this photograph. Carter is not credited. The only text is the M-Net logo and a slogan for their programme Carte Blanche: "You have a right to see it all".

Jean Thomas of M-Net Marketing outlined the company's rationale for using Carter's photograph in their advertising campaign in a fax to me (14th August 1998). She makes three points about the scratch advertisement. I will discuss each one in turn. The first point is, "it is symbolic of the way that Carte Blanche scratches below the surface to reveal the truth, no matter how devastating or controversial that truth may be".

As no caption accompanies the photograph, it is unclear what "truth" is being told. The photograph is partially covered. Once scratched, the photograph reveals the obscured element, an emaciated child. In a sense, it is not a truth at all but a scene set to tell a story. It may be that Carte Blanche strives to make stories 'truthful', but it remains highly questionable that this photograph reveals hidden 'truths' or holds any testimony to the programme's truthfulness.

Thomas's second point was that the advertisement was "interactive and involving" suggesting the idea that "no viewer remains untouched by what they have seen on Carte Blanche". The act of scratching the image does involve action by the viewer to reveal the child,

and possibly even causes some emotion in the viewer From another perspective however, it may also be seen as yet another 'assault' on the child. Furthermore, the idea that a 'scratch' is an interactive experience is debatable; the surface of an image may change in the same way a television screen may change its images when the channel is changed, but neither action is 'interactive'. The level of 'interaction' is, I would argue, extremely simplistic and trivial.

In Thomas's final point, she states that the altered image "deals with the unexpected. The initial visual appears to show one aspect, but once the silver area has been scratched off, the unexpected is revealed and the full context is shown to the reader". The full 'visual' context revealed to the viewer, in Thomas's terms, is a child and a vulture. The context has come to mean, then, the 'unexpectedness' of a child dangerously near the vulture. Following from the discussion on context in Chapter Two, I believe "full context" should reveal, to some degree, how this scene (war, drought, famine) was created.

Thomas concludes by stating that the advertisement "reflects the way Carte Blanche breaks assumptions and perceptions and reveals the truth....". Far from any notion of 'revealing truth', this advertisement severs the photograph from south Sudan, or from more general information about conditions in 'trouble spots' in Africa, and converts the image to a singular chunk of shock value that is then a useful tool for advertisers trying to attract the attention of an image-weary public.

By adding new text, other meanings adhere to the image. Stuart Hall (1997), adding to the discussion in Chapter Two, notes that

> it is the caption which selects one out of the many possible meanings from the image, and anchors it with words. The 'meaning' of the photograph, then, does not lie exclusively in the image, but in the conjunction of image and text (1997:228).

Thus the power of the accompanying text has unhooked this image from the scene in south Sudan to now promote an investigative reporting television programme that (according to

executive producer of Carte Blanche, George Mazarakis) did not report on south Sudan at that time.

It is noteworthy that this advertising campaign aroused opposition from within M-Net itself. The producers of Carte Blanche rejected the campaign. Mazarakis, said that

> [a]ll the producers were unanimous: this would be riding the coat-tails of some ..e else, it would be exploitative and unethical ... M-Net marketing went ah.. ad regardless. It is a profoundly shocking image, we were quite speechless and tried to stop it (Waller 1999:15).

The advertising department overrode the decision of the producers and chose to proceed with the campaign. Linda Ferreira, from Ogilvy and Mather, the company that designed the campaign, said that of 1.2 million viewers who watch Carte Blanche, there were "two or three letters disapproving of the campaign". Ferreira assumes, falsely perhaps, that the "two or three letters" constituted all those who took offence to the advertisement. I have a sense that there were many more who were offended by the advertisement strategy. The absence of critical engagement was, in part, to do with the inexperience of both photographers and readers of photographs in articulating and writing about their responses to the mass media in general and photographic representations in particular. With a more critical photographic community, empowered to articulate and write about our professions and related issues, I believe that a more active and progressive debate would have emerged after the appearance of this advertisement.

Sygma Picture Agency president Eliane Laffont sent a fax to PictureNet Photo Agency who distribute Carter's photographs to clients. She acknowledged that "editorial usage was one thing but when promotional rights are involved it's a different issue. As long as it is OK with the Carter family, it is OK with me". Laffont does not elaborate on what she considers to be the difference between "editorial usage" and "promotional rights". Both the advertising company and Sygma Picture Agency which holds copyright, mentioned that Carter's father, Jimmy, had approved of the use of the photograph in this way. If Jimmy Carter had disapproved (like

Mazarakis) would the photograph still have been used? Jean Thomas states that Carter's father was 'happy' that his son's memory would live on through the re-use of the photograph. He may have thought that Kevin Carter's name would appear somewhere on the page.

Those who control the reproduction of photograph (Sygma and M-Net) have moved the photograph from one context (reportage) to another (promotion). As John Taylor mentioned earlier, in the West refugees are a theme in the mass consumption of images of Africa. As such, each image runs the risk of stereotyping individuals, cultures and events in the creation of the 'other'.

Many questions arise from this appropriation. What can we deduce about the assumptions made by the controllers of that image? Caroline Brothers (1997) notes that the meanings of a photograph are bound up with "the matrix of culturally-specific beliefs and assumptions" (23). The beliefs and assumptions held by those working at Sigma and M-Net are difficult to imagine. One important point to note is that all the M-Net staff I spoke to who were involved in selecting this photograph, were white, yet the image of horror they chose was of a black child. Could the white advertisers have selected an image of a white person in similar dire circumstances for the same promotional purpose? In posing this question, I suggest that some choises are made seemingly unconsciously but these choices can in fact reveal deeply held beliefs about the 'other'.

Martha Rosler (1993) strikes at the heart of this sort of appropriation of photography. She warns that photographs torn from their historical context and put to work for very different purposes, disengages photography from "social cause to a connoisseurship of the tawdry" (318). In this case the photograph moved from the "social cause" of war and famine to the tawdriness of a marketing campaign. The controllers of the image seem to lack any profound sense of the existence of the girl, in anything like what was described earlier as an ethical relationship with the 'other'. This lack explains how such an image could be so easily be appropriated as a

promotional device.

**5) Codes of Ethics in the Media**

The questions raised in this chapter highlight the importance of articulating and improving useful ethical guidelines for photographers and other media workers. Martin Bell (1998) believes that journalistic ethics is based on

> the idea of virtuous conduct, facilitating the democratic process and serving the public interest. Cynics will say this is myth-making and that there is no reality behind it. The less cynical might say that it is an ideal of what ought to be, and a long way in advance of what actually is, although we might aspire to make some further progress towards that ideal (11).

Bell raises three important points that I believe are relevant here. The first point is concerned with a description drawn from ancient notions of 'virtue'. Virtue is the one quality that is central to an ethical life as "the excellences that concern ethical theory are in fact the (moral) virtues: they are standardly justice, courage, wisdom, and self-discipline" (Becker and Becker 1992:330).

These features of virtue are connected to the second point, namely "facilitating the democratic process". For example, "justice" is fundamental for democracy to progress. This point is key to my previously stated position, that photographers can have a role to play in establishing and supporting a democratic state. The principles of journalistic ethics provide guidelines for our daily work practices and more generally about our role in society.

The third point, "serving the public interest" emphasises the role of the media to inform the public on matters that do or may interest them. Interestingly, Bell puts this point third, suggesting that "public interest" should not outweigh virtues nor the "democratic process". Questions of ethics are always present regardless of whether they are recognised or answered.

Kenny Irby, Associate, in the Department of Visual Journalism at The Poynter Institute, USA, has developed ethical guidelines specifically in photojournalism which complement Bell's

work (illustration 19). These considerations include,

1) a sound knowledge of the situation being reported,

2) understanding of the public interest or 'right to know value' of a photograph,

3) "the political and cultural norms, the ideological climate of society" (Johannesen 1975:14),

4) possible immediate and long-term impact of such an photograph on readers,

5) consideration of possible harm that may be inflicted on the subject or relatives or community recognisable in a photograph.

These considerations can assist in debating specific photographs or issues as well as formulating ethical protocols in the newsroom or photo-agency.

Irby emphasises that an ideal situation would be informed by the following question; "How can I include the voices of other people, with different perspectives and diverse ideas, in the decision-making process?" (illustration 19). This notion of inclusion is more achievable in geographically-specific newspapers where photographers are able to build on a relationship with their communities over time. The situation is obviously far less manageable for wire-service photographers and freelancers; already the Internet and cable television have begun to complicate the terrain further. Yet no matter how brief the encounter, photographers often have the possibility to engage productively with their subjects. This code of ethics implicitly supports my call for a more critical photojournalistic practice that contributes to and values an informed and responsible citizenry building a democratic state.

The photographer tends to be in a powerful position, coming to the scene as she does with the credentials and high status of the mass media. Reference was made earlier to Spivak as she called for society's power elite to recognise the power culturally bestowed on them by virtue of race, gender and class. Sontag (1977) uses an interesting analogy of the privileged photographer as hunter:

The view of reality as an exotic prize to be tracked down and captured by the

> diligent hunter-with-a-camera has informed photography from the beginning, and marks the confluence of Surrealist Counter-culture and middle class social adventurism. Photography has always been fascinated by social heights and lower depths. Documentarists (as distinct from courtiers with cameras) prefer the latter.[12] For more than a century, photographers have been hovering about the oppressed, in attendance at scenes of violence - with spectacularly good conscience. Social misery has inspired the comfortably off with the urge to take pictures. The gentlest of predators, in order to document a hidden reality, that is, a reality hidden from them (54).

Sontag challenges the culturally-embedded notion of the photographer as the great hunter/seer. In her description, she suggests a more cynical side to the profession, the powerful and rich outsider hovering around the dispossessed, swinging into action and often profoundly 'missing the point'. The attitudes and motivations behind the construction of the advertisement, as articulated by Jean Thomas can be described as a kind of 'gentle predation'.

Some photographers may fit this description.[13] Through her criticism of photographers who photograph in circumstances they may not understand or who understand in a professionally distanced way, Sontag forces us to position ourselves; either as "adventurists" of sorts or in opposition to that description. In so doing, we can articulate why we take such a position.

Fortunately we photographers are a heterogeneous group. Kevin Carter, like most of us, belongs somewhere between the "hunter-with-a-camera" and the 'concerned' photographers as exemplified by Rossler. The latter prefer to work carefully within a community to involve subjects in the photographing process or at least providing subjects with sufficient information. 'Concerned' photographers describe how they took an ethical/political position that brought them into photography. Yet all photographers have to work within the logistical, structural and economic constraints of the profession.

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[12] This reference to 'Documentarists' can also apply to photographers working in photojournalism.

[13] John Liebenberg described to me a scene in Rwanda where photographers were photographing dead bodies heaped along the roadside. In one instance, a cry came from underneath one heap and no other photographer would help to find the source of the cry. This interview took place in August 1997.

Only one of the 44 photographers who contributed to the manual, entered the profession with specific political motivations. William Matlala came from a trade union background and took up photography to show the conditions under which workers live and work. The remainder (myself included) describe more general motivations ranging from the role as 'witness' to broad notions of contributing to making the world a fairer place.

Some newspapers attempt the reduce the frequency of falsehood, defamation or harm occurring. There are protocols or guidelines in some newspapers and magazines in South Africa. Peter Sullivan, the editor of The Star newspaper lists "responsibilities", "accuracy", "integrity" and "honesty" as the four pillars of that newspaper's protocol (1997:7).

Under the pressures of deadlines or through 'professional slippages', these ethical guidelines are not easily maintained. When a part or parts of a protocol are broken, internal mechanisms can then be triggered to address the situation. Obviously, newspapers and magazines cannot be left to monitor themselves. South Africa has a non-government organisation, the Media Monitoring Unit, that collects data on the media's representations of individuals and groups. This data is available to member of the public and advocacy groups.

Once formed, these guidelines can be called on by the public or staff to support allegations of perceived breaches. While fraught with difficulties, the process of formulating these guidelines (and revisiting them from time to time) can assist the photographer to heighten her awareness of concerns not often comprehensively considered under the pressure of deadlines. A code of professional ethics is a necessary part of a critical photojournalistic practice of the type I am advocating.

Carter's photograph and its uses have left us with many profound questions and some lessons. In this chapter, I have followed the sequence of events to organise these questions and lessons into a meaningful learning exercise.

The circumstances surrounding that scene in Sudan are speculative; it has been re-created from different sources with different emphases. We do know that Carter was affected by what he saw. He then responded in a way that some defend and some abhor. To review this scene offers us an opportunity to examine our relationship with the 'other'.

Are there responsibilities for the reader who has seen such photographs? Certainly, it is difficult to imagine not being moved in some way. To be moved may mean that we consider why this girl, Sudan and the continent face such crises. We may feel that having seen such a photograph, we should ask questions about cyclical violence and war. We may even try to imagine ourselves in the girl's position. These responses may mark, or begin to form, an ethical relationship with the 'other'; and they may also provoke action.

Fame and fatalism seemed to consume Carter. The months leading to his suicide have been described as a collision course. The weight of winning the Pulitzer and the accumulation of memories of so much death and violence were only some of the many battles that appear to have enveloped Carter. He kept an uneven professional distance between himself and his subjects, and perhaps that very unevenness exposed him to recurring nightmares and a growing sense of guilt.

When the photograph is re-contextualised years later to advertise a television programme, further issues are raised about photographic representation. Construction of photographic meaning (as mentioned in Chapter Two) occurs through compositional factors inside the frame and also the context outside the photographic frame. No matter how powerful and specific a photograph may be, it can be appropriated to perform different functions. In this case, the public is encouraged to watch Carte Blanche because of the shock factor of the scratch advertisement.

Finally, the chapter identifies some ethical codes from media institutions that also relate to the individual practitioner. These codes are informed by the definitions of certain moral

qualities, namely truth, honesty and minimising harm. All these need to be constantly measured against the public's right or need to know.

This discussion on professional ethics has been motivated by broader social concerns about critical photojournalistic practice and its role in forming a debate-based, progressive democratic society.

# Conclusion

I have attempted to describe and analyse important aspects of current photojournalistic practice in Southern Africa. These practices provide an appropriate and relevant learning tool that can support training aimed at developing a truly critical photojournalistic practice.

In the first chapter, I positioned myself as a foreign photographer and trainer working in the field of photojournalism in Southern Africa since 1982. Training generally consists of short in-service courses which are often ill-conceived and inconsistent. Elsewhere photography education has attempted to incorporate both theoretical concepts and technical aspects of photography into more interdisciplinary syllabuses. An inter-disciplinary approach is, for me, a means to the end that of critical photojournalistic practice. In writing this training manual, I integrated camera and darkroom techniques with specific critical frameworks namely visual literacy, representation and ethics. Chapter One outlines the reasons why these frameworks were used to connect particular practical examples to broader critical concerns.

The three critical frameworks were then developed in separate chapters. Chapter Two introduced the primary topic of visual literacy. Here I showed how visual literacy is the basic tool from which other critical approaches grew. I began by drawing a very loose analogy between literacy and visual literacy to show that visual literacy is a set of skills required to understand how meaning operates on different levels for different readers. Roland Barthes linguistic application to 'reading photographs' was used to show some of the denotative and connotative levels of meaning contained within photographs appearing in this chapter. The idea of the photograph as a sign was developed further by applying C.S. Pierce's less linguistic classification of the icon, the index and the symbol to specific examples. In that way, readers of the manual are encouraged to develop their own critical practice by applying

these analytical tools.

Having established in Chapter Two that the photograph is, as Victor Burgin suggests, "a place of work", I examined issues of representation in Chapter Three. Photographic meaning is not fixed and is greatly affected by the context in which photographs are shown and who are the readers. In this chapter, I considered how photographic meaning is produced and how that meaning acquires 'truth status'. Central to representation are notions of power. Power intervenes to make a photograph a document of evidence rather than a view by someone of something. Stuart Hall notes two strategies through which power may operate.

One way as described by Foucault, is institutional power working for example through medical, legal and educational institutions. The second way that power can be considered is (as Antonio Gramsci suggests) that power may be exercised through coercion or consensus. In this case, ideology becomes the matrix through which power operates and the oppressor or the oppressed may exercise power. It is valuable to consider which class(es) in Southern Africa has the power to make certain photographs 'truthful'. I applied debates of power and the construction of meaning and truth to a well-publicised exhibition by Steve Hilton-Barber. There are also discussions concerning photojournalistic representations of gender and 'culture'. I did not cover these topics as extensively as representations of race which, I argue, appear to be the most contested representational issue in Southern Africa at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The critical understanding of how power intervenes to make some representations 'truthful', relies to some extent on visual literacy as described in Chapter One. Thus, by the end of Chapter Three, I attempted to consolidate my argument about the need for a critical photojournalistic practice to assist photographers to be full participants in the formation of a society that values diversity, fairness and debate.

The final chapter deals with ethics. I selected only one photograph to develop the different aspects of ethical considerations in photojournalism. Like Hilton-Barber's work,

Kevin Carter's photograph of a Sudanese child was selected because it is well known and much has been written on this photograph, so many voices contribute to the debate. I explored five specific stages in the story of this photograph. The first one was the scene in Sudan where the photograph was taken to try to understand in some way Carter's connection with the girl. The second was the publication of the photograph. Here I was interested in how a mostly 'First World' audience deals with seeing such a scene. Third came the period when Carter's fame and his own position in the world shifted as a result of his winning the Pulitzer prize. His suicide asks us to consider why he chose and we choose to photograph so many "hellholes". The fourth stage was the re-use of the photograph five years later as a advertisement for an unrelated current affairs television programme. This discussion tied in with earlier concerns about how the context of a photograph can completely change its meaning. The chapter concluded with a discussion of codes of ethics formed by media workers and how these codes are only ever guidelines, potentially subject to improvement according to specific conditions.

The manual evolves from basic to more complex visual literacy to establish the notions of simple and multiple photographic readings. If photographs can have several meanings, how do some meanings become 'fixed'? In the chapter on representation, I show how power works in different ways to make some photographs 'truthful'. The ethics chapter was the final one because it draws on ideas raised in the previous chapters and also because the ethics chapter asks more of the photographer and the reader. Specifically, this chapter asks personal questions about what could or should be our relationship with our subjects and with our readers. In the manual, these questions are raised but not answered, to promote a dialogue within the community of photographers working in Southern African photojournalism. My belief is that a dialogue that is informed, expansive and interdisciplinary will result in the production of more challenging, diverse and thoughtful

photographs that reflect the true dynamism of this region.

After this Masters programme, my intention is to produce a companion CD-Rom of the manual. This has not been part of this project because the manual itself became very large and I did not have access to the technology required for the CD-Rom. The publisher of the manual, Juta Publishers, Capetown, have reserved the rights for a digital version of the manual in the contract. They have also agreed to release these rights to me if they choose not to proceed.

I think that the visual as well as discursive nature of the book lends itself well to a CD-Rom version. One alternative digital form would be the production of a manual-related website. The production of the digital form of the manual will evolve from the 'hard copy'.

The production of the manual proved to be extremely valuable process of transforming photographs, from many photographers, into a basis for critical learning. I will encourage fellow trainers to develop their own training materials to supplement any shortfalls in the manual. Thus, I see the manual as an organic product that will evolve with use in different locations and by different users.

Maxine Greene (1995) describes the kind of learning I believe is crucial for photographers to become critical practitioners: "once they are open, once they are informed, once they are engaged in speech and action from their many vantage points, they may be able to identify a better state of things - and go on to transform" (59).

# APPENDIX A

# Photojournalism Training Programmes in Southern Africa

Photojournalism is taught through a number of community-based training initiatives in various southern African countries. Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa are described in some detail because they have established training centres. In each case, I interviewed administrators, trainers or directors. Other smaller training opportunities in Malawi and Zimbabwe are also mentioned. To my knowledge, the remaining Southern African countries do not have training programs and tend to rely on South Africa for training.

The centres I have focused on provide training to those learners unable to attend polytechnics or universities due to a lack of financial support or lack of educational opportunities. The manual is intended primarily to assist the learners and trainers at these centres.

## 1. MOZAMBIQUE

(from interviews with Kok Nam, editor of Savana newspaper; Joel Chiziane chief photographer, Media Coop; Ricardo Rangel, director of Centro de Formacao Fotografica, August, 1996)

Mozambique is a remarkable country in the Southern Africa region in terms of photojournalistic practice. It is one of the poorest countries in the region and yet in Maputo there seems to be a culture that embraces photographic work. There is a photographer's gallery in central Maputo and a school of photography which has an impressive standard of graduate portfolios.

The photography profession was controlled by the Portuguese before independence (1975) leaving a void in the profession when most of the skilled Portuguese photographers left. Very few experienced photographers were able to teach trainees entering the profession.

In the 1980's, photojournalism was the key form of photographic expression in Mozambique due to the demands of their devastating civil war. Most photographers were working for the government news agency and the government-owned press, photographing the infinite expressions of the war. Most employees had received in-service training.

Since the peace accord of 1992, many photojournalists have moved to non-government agencies, to commercial photography, or to other media-related fields like video production or have left the profession. Antonio Sopa and Joaquim Salvador comment on the environment in Mozambique after the war and the de-regulation of the economy.

> The environment that photographers now find for their professional fulfilment is limited to the Mozambican Photographers Association, which sponsors some collective and individual exhibitions, the Franco-Mozambican Cultural Centre, with some photography exhibitions of significance and merit, and the Centre of Brazilian Studies, which is aimed more at exhibitions in the plastic arts, but holds a photographic exhibition every now and then.

> One should also mention that the new economic reality of the last ten years has allowed some commercial establishments to develop. The diversification of supply has spread to the area of advertising again, with the creation of agencies who, as always, are using photography as a publicity prop ... (Sopa and Salvador 1996:9-10).

There is a Photographer's Gallery in the centre in Maputo organised by the Association of Mozambican Photographers. With the rising costs of materials and shortages of funding, fewer photographic exhibition are appearing. The exhibition space is currently being used for painting and sculpture. Joel Chiziane, the deputy president of the Association of Mozambican photographers, estimates that there are about 250 photographers in Maputo both professional and semi-professional.

1.1 The school of photography (Centro de Formacao Fotografica)

Mozambican photographer and trainer, Ricardo Rangel was asked in 1983 by the Minister of Education to start the Centro de Formacao Fotografica (the school of photography). The School was established to supply skilled photographers to service the needs of various government ministries. Until 1991, only government employees were admitted to the school. The centre ran full-time courses for one year. This programme has been shortened to 6 months to accommodate other short-term courses throughout the year.

Since 1991, the school has developed a business department contracting their services to private institutions. The School also has a commercial photo archive. Since 1991, the Danish NGO, Mellemfolkelig Samvirke (MS) has assisted in establishing and running the archive. The building of a national photographic archive is seen as an essential part of Mozambique's visual memory. The photo archive has provided a significant income to the CFF.

Free courses have been run for former Renamo and Frelimo soldiers in the hope that they will be able to set up small businesses when they return to their communities.[14] Courses have also been run for street children.

In 1996, the Nordic-SADC Journalism Centre in Maputo sponsored the first regional photojournalism workshop within the centre. Twenty photojournalists from 8 Southern African countries attended the three-week programme. This workshop was also seen as a trial to test the suitability of the centre for further regional training programmes.

In 1998, CFF introduced a year timetable of short courses including basic photography, black and white darkroom techniques, pre-visualisation, photojournalism for beginners and professionals (see CFF timetable for 1998).

1.2 Newspapers

The Maputo daily newspaper Noticias, has six full-time photographers and one printer. With the high cost of photographic film and paper, sometimes as little as one roll of film per photographer will be used in one day. For example, in May 1998, a roll of black and white film was four times more expensive in Maputo than in Johannesburg This meant that 3 to 4 film frames per assignment are used leaving little opportunity for creativity. Domingo, the Sunday newspaper has three photographers and one printer.

Savana newspaper is part of the independent news agency, Media Coop where the senior

[14] RENAMO is an acronym for Resistance Nacionale de Mocambique.
FRELIMO is an acronym for Frente de Libertacao de Mocambique

photographer is Joel Chiziane, formerly from AIM.[15] Three other photographers work on a part-time basis.

Tempo is a monthly magazine with three photographers. Training in the workplace is minimal partly due to the high cost of film. There seems to be a prevailing attitude that photographers will receive training at CFF at some point in their career.

### 1.3 The Mozambican News Agency -AIM

AIM has three full time photographers. AIM had a five year programme in the 1980's, to train beginners through to senior photographers. Now, in-service training seems to be less structured and trainees are occasionally sent to CFF.

## 2. NAMIBIA.

### 2.1 The Photography Centre of Namibia (PCN)

The Photography Centre of Namibia is coordinated by Djunior Svane and Howard Buis. The centre started as a Photo Unit in Katatura township, Windhoek in 1992 with the assistance of Ibis (Denmark) and MISA (Media Institute of Southern Africa). It has run training programs for unemployed, youth and ex-combatants. Specialist courses have been designed and implemented for those employed in government ministries and the private sector.

Full time courses are run for three levels of expertise (beginner, intermediate and advanced) each running for six weeks. They have well-designed darkroom and classroom facilities that can cope with training possibilities 'beyond its existing national scope' according to Howard Buis. The staff run outreach workshops in Ovamboland and Swakopmund.

The centre is governed by a board of five trustees; four trustees come from the mainstream media and one from Ibis (Denmark). Approximately 25 students are trained at the centre each year. Some graduates have found full time employment with government ministries and with local photography shops.

The centre is preparing for the withdrawal of their major funders in 2000. Alternative funding initiatives are being pursued. These include providing courses for the university and polytechnic, photo safaris, weekend and night classes, hiring of facilities and assistance to outside photographers.

### 2.2 The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB)

There are three full time photographers at MIB. Their training has been mostly through workshops in Namibia although some have attended short courses in Europe. Most of their work is done in black and white and they process and print themselves. The colour photography is all done on slide, then processed through commercial laboratories.

In 1992, UNESCO sponsored a training workshop to revise their skills. Photographers from NAMPA also attended. In 1994, another workshop took place concentrating on re-organising the photo library in MIB. Since then, photographers from the ministry have attended workshops at the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism in Johannesburg.

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[15] AIM is an acronym for Agencia Informacao de Mozambique

2.3 The Namibian Press Agency (NAMPA)

In NAMPA, there are two photographers. Joseph Nyakeya, a SWAPO ex-combatant, was trained in Zambia and in Sweden during his period in exile; he also participated in UNESCO training programs after 1990. In 1994, a training initiative focused on the possible market opportunities for images in the Nampa image library.

The darkroom facilities are very poor compared with the rest of the Agency. The department has a Reuters computer terminal that receives photographic images from London but NAMPA cannot transmit to them.

## 3. SOUTH AFRICA

Johannesburg

3.1 Market Photography Workshop (MPW)

(from interviews with Candice Blaise, Administrator, January, 1999)

MPW is situated at the Market Precinct, Newtown in downtown Johannesburg. It was started by David Goldblatt in 1989, as a community-based photography training centre. From the beginning, MPW has had a bias towards documentary photography and photojournalism. This is probably due to the kinds of trainers who worked there and the influence of David Goldblatt. According to the fundraising document;

> the workshop continues to train those people who are interested in learning about photography but have been 'historically disadvantaged' under the Apartheid period. The workshop is run on a tight budget under the curatorship of the Market Theatre Foundation. Its reliance on funds from donors is partially offset by income from fees and sundry income (forty percent in 1996).
> (from the fund-raising document from MPW, July 1998)

There has been a shift of away from documentary to more commercially-oriented work. This shift seems to be a response to participants concerns about future job prospects. The MPW appointed Cedric Nunn as new director in March 1998 after Jenny Gordon had been in the position since 1993. There are five trainers who coordinate courses at different levels, from beginner through intermediate to advanced. Each course runs for eight weeks. Beginner courses offer three hours instruction a week. The intermediate and advanced courses have five hours of instruction per week. Some other courses such as lighting, black and white printing, portraiture, advertising photography and life skills courses are run when the demand arises and the specialist trainers are available.

In recent years, a bursary system has been implemented. The MPW document states that "it is the policy of the MPW that no student shall be turned down for admission to a course due to the inability of the student to pay fees" (from a Bursary and Payment Policy document, May 1998). A negotiated payment schedule is worked out per student and work in-kind is offered to those who cannot enter into a fee payment agreement.

Since 1989, 1025 participants have been trained. Former students have found full-time employment in newspapers or working on a freelance basis. Award winning graduates include Ruth Motau, chief photographer at the Mail and Guardian, and Themba Hadebe at The Star newspaper, and Jodi Bieber, freelancer.

In December 1998, some members of staff, together with intermediate students began a small portrait studio in the foyer of the Market Theatre as a commercial venture and also as an opportunity to develop business skills.

3.2 'PhotoTeach'

(from an interview with Michael Goldblatt, co-director, October 1998)

'PhotoTeach', in Johannesburg began in 1985 by Michael Goldblatt and Adele Gordon. Originally the classes offered were short modular courses on specific aspects of photography for example, portraiture, and were held at Goldblatt's home. In 1986, 'PhotoTeach' started running training courses for unemployed people for the then Department of Manpower. These courses ran for three weeks (full time). This programme continued until 1993. Approximately 1000 people were trained.

In 1990, 'PhotoTeach' acquired a permanent campus at 50 Joel Road, Berea, Johannesburg. This house was renovated specifically for training purposes. The costs of these courses were borne by the Department of Manpower (from 1986 to 1993). In 1994, 'PhotoTeach' ran a series of seven-week basic photography courses for members of the public. By that time, 'PhotoTeach' had discontinued their training courses for the Department of Manpower.

In 1996, Victor Matom joined 'PhotoTeach' as co-director. Modular courses are now offered. According to Michael Goldblatt, 'PhotoTeach' gives photographic training to the public relations departments of certain companies specifically on corporate photography. Each course runs for six weeks. Michael Goldblatt said that one private course is run approximately every six weeks (Saturdays for two to three weeks). Darkroom courses are five evenings in duration.

Training includes aspects of colour and black and white photography including darkroom techniques. Participants are usually working photographers who are looking for specific technical training in, for example, lighting and portraiture. 'PhotoTeach' charges fees to pay for the course trainer and the facilities. The minimum class sizes of six (maximum 10) guarantees profits are made.

Non-commercial outreach initiatives provide training to disadvantaged members of the community. For example, children from Power Park, Soweto participated in a photography workshop and produced and exhibition called "Sifikile" (August 1997).

3.3 Institute for the Advancement of Journalism (IAJ)

(from interviews with Peter Mckenzie, Photography trainer, November 1998)

The IAJ was established in 1992 by Alistair Sparks in Parktown Johannesburg as a training centre promoting independent press structures through training in South and Southern Africa. The IAJ does accept participants on workshops without formal qualifications if they are employed professionally in the field of journalism. Peter McKenzie and Gwen Ansell coordinated the first photojournalism course for one week in August 1996. In 1998, he was employed on a permanent part-time basis to develop photojournalism training at the Institute.

Since 1996, the Institute has run two courses per year specifically on photojournalism. McKenzie believes that many photographers attending IAJ courses are being exposed to some formal (professional) education for the first time. McKenzie's courses usually consist of a number of invited specialists who present two to four hour sessions. Some of the photojournalism courses have been coordinated by Kenny Irby, from the Poynter Institute, Florida, USA.

The IAJ also offers a visual literacy course called "Working with Pictures". This course is designed to turn writers whose primary focus is on words, into sub-editors who can also "think in pictures". In 1998, a decision was made to include at least one teaching session (2 hours) on photojournalism in all relevant print courses (for writers or editors).

The IAJ has initiated a series of train-the-trainer workshops for the Southern African

region. A planning workshop (29th June to 1st July 1998) brought together seven experienced trainers from Namibia and South Africa. At the end of three days, the participants produced a curriculum for two train-the-trainer workshops for be run in 1999. The first of those two workshops took place in March 1999. Participants attended from five Southern African countries.

Future projects being discussed include a 'Resource Centre for photojournalists' and the development of photography training in schools.

3.4 Durban Centre of Photography

(from an interview with Moses Kubisa and Rob Brien)

The DCP was established in 1996 to promote a "better understanding and awareness of photography". As a non-profit organisation, the DCP provides access to photographic training to disadvantaged sections of society. The centre offers a provincial focus for photographic training initiatives.

The DCP is based at the Natal Arts Society Gallery in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. According to a DCP document the aims of the centre are as follows:

1. To promote and develop a cultural awareness of photography as a powerful medium.
2. To stimulate, educate and develop public interest in photography and to encourage participation in the creative activity of photography
3. To provide support and services to those people involved in photography in South Africa, with special emphasis on those photographers disadvantaged by lack of basis training and access to facilities and equipment.
4. To promote and encourage photography amongst non-photographers.

Co-directors Paul Weinberg and Angie Buckland work with four other lecturers to run beginner, intermediate, advanced and master classes. The duration of the courses varies from 2 to 20 hours.

An exhibition space is available for local and international photography.

Cape Town

Geoff Grundlingh has set up the South African Centre of Photography through the Michaelis Arts School, University of Cape Town. A number of informal training initiatives have been initiated by Jenny Altschuler and Tracey Derrick. Some of these initiatives have fallen under the centre's umbrella.

Other training initiatives

4. MALAWI

In Malawi, a group of photographers have formed a professional association in Blantyre in 1998. Fletcher N'gong and Chris Osler started the association, PHOTAMA to advance the standards of professional photographic practice. Part of their work has been fund-raising proposals to develop training initiatives. PHOTAMA funded a workshop, directed by Ruth Motau of the Mail and Guardian in June 1999. N'gong attended the first train-the-trainers course for photographers at the IAJ in March 1999.

## 5. ZAMBIA

The Zambian Mass Communication Institute (ZAMCOM) is an independent training institution for media management, print and broadcast journalism. The director, Paul Dagga said in 1996 'no course are beirig run on photography because of a lack of trainers'. A photojournalism subject is offered by Bill Nyunika at the University of Zambia as part of the journalism degree.

## 6. ZIMBABWE

Outside the Harare Polytechnic, two small training initiatives began in the 1990's. The larger one is the Southern African Media Services Organisation (SAMSO) and a smaller programme run by Fidelis Zvomuya from The Herald newspaper.

### 6.1 SAMSO

SAMSO was started by Trevor Davis in 1992 to be a professional photography service to government and the private sector as well as a training centre. In November 1998, SAMSO hosted two workshops. The first was the World Press Photo workshop for 15 Zimbabwean photographers, with facilitators from Holland, Germany and Kenya. The second was a regional workshop for Southern African women photographers. SAMSO has an office in Speke Avenue in downtown Harare with Internet access and image-scanning facilities which makes this organisation ground-breaking in terms of its technical infrastructure.

### 6.2 Individual Initiative

A much smaller training initiative has been started by Fidelia Zvomuya, a senior photographer from the daily newspaper The Herald. Zvomuya runs a weekend workshop for those interested in learning photography. He runs his programmes from a single room in an city office. Zvomuya's training programme is very under-resourced and runs on an informal basis.

Appendix B

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## Appendix C

# Collecting photographs and conducting interviews

The selection of locally relevant material is crucial in assisting in the learning process. Therefore, the effectiveness of the critical practice presented in the manual relied on to a significant degree the content and appropriateness of the photographs and interviews. In this appendix, I describe how I collected photographs from a range of practicing photographers.

Seventeen years of working as a photojournalist and trainer in Southern African has given me valuable professional relationships with colleagues in many countries in this region. I invited some colleagues to contribute photographs and interviews to the new training manual. Each photographer would receive a copy of the manual on publication. The gender, race and geographical breakdown of the 44 contributing photographers is as follows;

male [32] - women [12]
black [26] - white [18]
South African [28] - SADC[16] [13] - non-African [3]

There do not seem to be any statistics that identify the racial, gender or geographic[illegible]ation of photographers in Southern Africa. However, the work appearing in the manual could arguably be considered a reasonable reflection of work done in the region in the 1990's.

Recent work from older photographers (specifically Alf Kumalo and Jurgen Schadeberg) was included and drawn upon to acknowledge their still growing contribution to photography history in Southern Africa. I consciously placed the work of the young professionals beside that of older, well-known photographers to establish a sense of continuity and community among photographers in the region.

What follows is an outline of the crucial process of collection. The request for contributions was verbal and presented in a very broad way. I asked photographers for 1 to 6 photographs (colour or black and white) in print, slide, negative or disc form. Photographers were requested to select images that were important to them and to consider how their contributions could become a learning opportunity for readers. During informal interviews with each photographer, I began by asking why they made their particular selections. Their answers began a dialogue around specific images and sometimes led to a discussion on more challenging general issues.

My initial request for interviews and photographs produced a very slow response. The reason for the delay was probably due, in part, to the unusual nature of the request and to the fact there was no 'serious' deadline and no payment. Photographers were generally excited about contributing to a training manual but often appeared unable to see their pictures as learning resources. Typically, the photographer would come to the interview with a box of 'favourite' prints and ask me to select. This inability by photographers to see their own images in educational terms suggests that they (we) may not been sufficiently exposed to an education that has used photographs in this way. While the photographers had seen some photography books

[16] SADC is an acronym for the Southern African Development Community.

by 'famous' photographers, they were not familiar with the notion of turning their own experiences and photographs into a format that can help trainees learn.

As the collection of photographs and interviews was vital to the effectiveness of the manual, the interviewing process had therefore to acknowledge and take up issues raised by the photographer. We discussed images to establish why some were the 'favourites'. As the interview progressed, the photographer's thoughts on composition, subject matter, lighting or events around that image would emerge. The interview seemed to provide an occasion through which photographers could realise and develop their own critical skills. If that was the case, the interview, the editing stages and the published product each serves to validate a photographer's contribution to the broader education process. The questioning process proved to be very enlightening. The images would often trigger detailed accounts that would clearly benefit a learner or a colleague. I would then suggest to him or her that the image and story were important for specific reasons and ask if that picture could be used in a particular context in the manual.

The interview technique allowed the photographer to select their own images as learning tools in a way that gives the manual 'many voices' within a coherent structure. Often photographers would say they did not like talking about their work, yet very useful material emerged from the interviews. This unwillingness or unease in discussing photographic meaning relates back to an earlier section on the education. Of major significance is that photographers who have been narrowly defined as "purely visual" beings (and sometimes see themselves as such) can, with encouragement, recognise their valuable contributions to photographic education and their participation in discussion around the nature of photographic meaning.

After each interview, I transcribed our exchange. Only two photographers actually wrote their own accounts of their images. The vast majority preferred me to give them typed notes I had prepared, to which they would make corrections and occasionally add more detail. Generally, photographers were confident in correcting my record of their stories. For some photographers it seemed that typed stories had somehow validated their comments. I believe that the less experienced contributors gained some confidence about their ability to contribute both words and pictures to the manual. For myself, the interview process confirmed my faith in the importance of photographer's contributions to our own educational experience.

This interview process and my interactions with the photographers and their texts directly relates to Participatory Action Research (PAR) methods as described by Peter Reason (1994). These methods are based on us seeing "human beings as co-creating their reality through participation: through their experience, their imagination and intuition, their thinking and their action" (Reason 1994:324). In common with PAR objectives, my aim was "to produce knowledge and action directly useful to a group of people ... and to empower people ... through the process of constructing and using their own knowledge" (Reason 1994:328). This research process was in line with notions of a learner-centred approach to adult education discussed earlier. The training manual aims to be an expression of these aims specifically through the major contributions from the photographers ourselves, in both images and text, towards our own educational experience.

## Appendix D

# Presentation of work-in-progress

The collecting of images and interviews yielded some extraordinary material. The next stage was to organise that material roughly according to the three topics; visual literacy, representation and ethics. During 1997 and 1998, I presented work-in-progress to different groups to test the content and form of these chapters. Here I give a brief account of selected comments from these presentations which significantly influenced the form and content of the manual.

The earliest presentations were to staff, students and invited photographers at the Department of Fine Arts at the University of the Witwatersrand (6.5.97 and 25.7.97). On both occasions there was an appeal from the audience for me as author to intervene more in the links between the quotes from different authors and the words and images of the photographers.

As the author, I found that negotiating an educational space between the writers on photographic practice on one hand and the contributing photographers on the other, was very difficult. As one senior lecturer noted, there was a danger of setting up a situation for "the reader to look at an image in a certain way and not see anything else". For the manual to be successful, a situation should be created where the readers could find their way constructively into multiple and even contradictory readings.

Critical comments came not only from academics but also from contributing photographers. One photographer said that there was a "danger of setting up binary and simplistic divisions in the issues of representations of race". He also warned that being black should not automatically give a photographer privileged access to people and customs not commonly in the public eye. Obviously, for this photographer, exploitative or offensive images can be made by black and white photographers alike.

Other opportunities to present work-in-progress included a Photojournalism Conference at Rhodes University (9.9.1997), numerous training sessions at the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism, and one training session through the Commission on Gender Equality (26.9.1997). Again, the comment concerning "leaving space for multiple reading" from different contributors under very different circumstances was made, and has been a very valuable. Comments from these different sources have influenced my writing style, layout, and to some extent, content of the manual.

I have touched on how the work-in-progress was presented. Many of the suggestions arising from these presentations have been influential to the re-working of certain sections. Practising photographers also made requests for topics to be included. Again some of these suggestions have been incorporated. As the manual reached completion, I approached potential funders and publishers, and a very brief mention of this process is made in Appendix E.

## APPENDIX E

# Funders and publishers

The costs of producing the manual make it commercially unviable for three reasons. Firstly, the manual is expensive to print. It is extensively illustrated, containing over 200 photographs from six southern African countries by 44 photojournalists. The diversity of photographers and their photographs reflects my intention to produce a southern African manual that is relevant, informative and familiar. The final number of pages using an A4 format was estimated at 260.

Secondly, the quality of reproduction needed to be high. An inexpensive publication (using newsprint for example) would result in low resolution images without full grey scale tones for the photographs. High resolution reproduction will result in the reader seeing the highlight and shadow detail recorded by the photographer. Readers will need to see fine detail and a broad tonal range to 'read' the photographs.

Thirdly, the manual will have a small print-run. The initial publisher (Maskew-Miller-Longman Publishers) wanted to make the first print-run as small as economically feasible because they were unfamiliar with the size and buying power of the market. The target group are adult learners in a specialised field. The readership, therefore, is extremely small compared to school textbook sales. The print-run would be 1500 which adds to the high unit cost of the manual.

Maskew-Miller-Longman Publishers originally accepted the idea and developed a quote. This quote was presented to Ibis (Denmark) with a proposal. Funds were then made available to assist in the printing costs. When MML rejected the project, I resubmitted the manual (and funding), and was accepted by Juta Publishers. Work began in February 1999 and the publication launch date is 12 April 2000.

# Appendix F

# List of Illustrations

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| 3 | 16 | Attempted car robbery in central Johannesburg | TJ Lemon |
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| 17 | 63 | Woman in hostels Johannesburg | Victor Matom |
| 18 | 64 | The farmer's suit | Calvin Dondo |
| 19 | 88 | Ethics in photojournalism | Kenny Irby |

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# Illustration 6



*Mayor* Stephen Motingoa, the first black mayor of Krugersdorp 1995

**Louise Gubb**

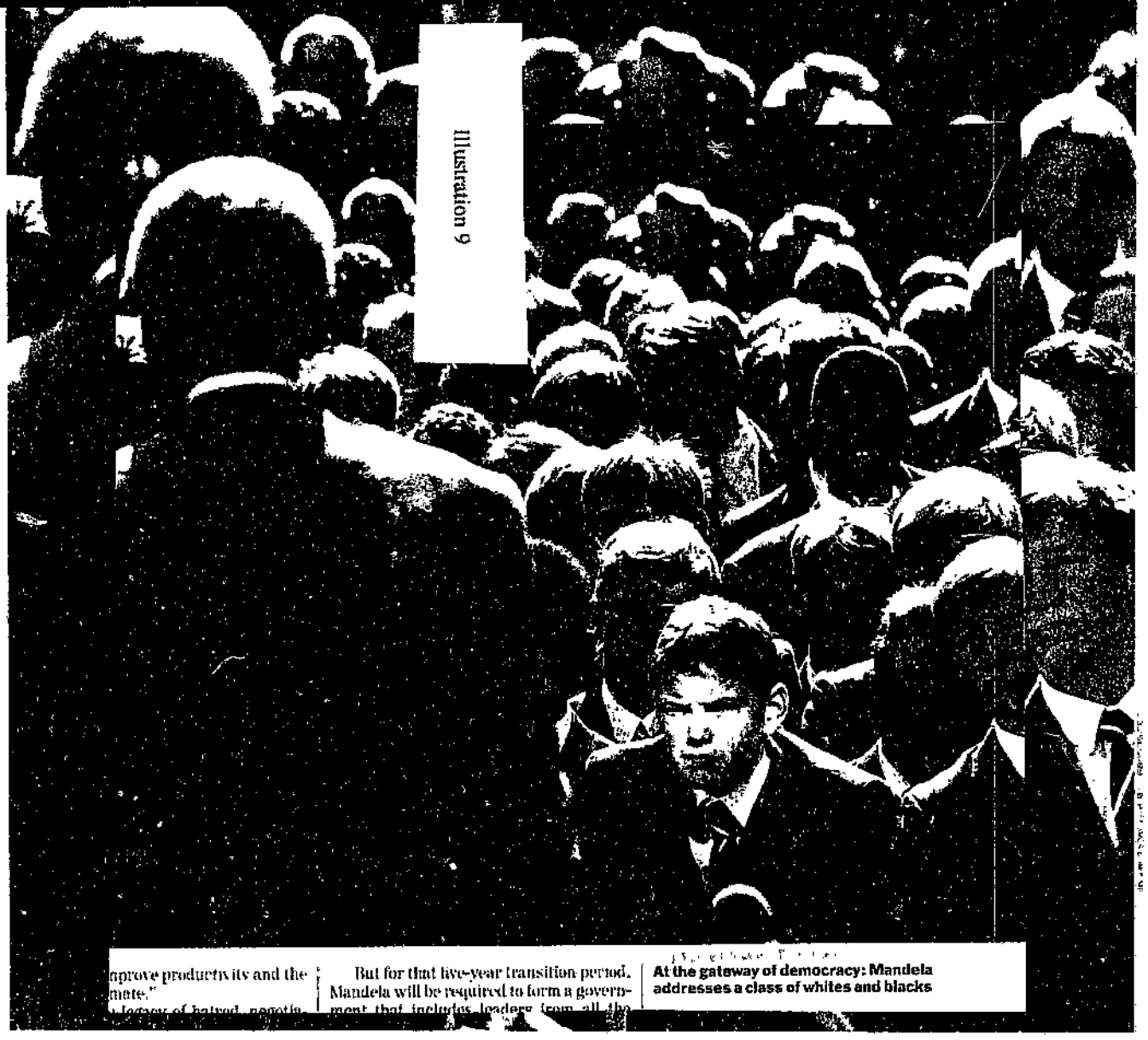


Illustration 9

**At the gateway of democracy: Mandela addresses a class of whites and blacks**

defense came down to a basic truth that men have fought to defend since the American Revolution. "I consider myself neither legally nor morally bound to obey laws made by a Parliament in which I have no representation," Mandela argued. "I am voteless."

That brave repudiation of a regime bent on perpetuating white hegemony in South Africa earned Mandela a near lifetime's incarceration, while his jailers pressed on with their megalomaniac construct called grand apartheid. Yet it just as surely—if terribly slowly—launched South Africa on the road to democracy. Last week the country took what seems to be an irreversible giant step toward freedom for all its citizens. In Johannesburg black and white political leaders announced that at last every citizen of South Africa will be able to vote to choose his or her own government. After centuries of oppression and bloodshed, a free election will be held next April 27.

The announcement came at the end of a tension-filled day in the talks among 26 parties that began in December 1991. Agreeing to let dissenters return to the issue again, a majority nonetheless provisionally settled on a poll date to bolster the hopes of blacks impatient for more rapid change. Afterward, African National Congress secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa rushed to a previously scheduled gala dinner to receive a Man of the Year award jointly with government negotiator Roelf Meyer. To the cheers of 400 guests, who represented all the country's races, Ramaphosa declared, "We now stand at the gateway of the democracy that so many of us have worked so hard for and so many have died for."

For the country's 28 million blacks, the elections will bring to an end the humiliation, injustice and injury of the past four decades. They will complete the dismantling of apartheid, that pervasively dysfunctional experiment in political and social en-

**Amid a sea of frowns, one proud face as Mandela addresses a mostly white school**

nprove productivity and the mate."

But for that five-year transition period, Mandela will be required to form a government that includes leaders from all the

# Illustration 1





*AWB* Afrikaner resistance movement in Bophuthatswana, 12 March 1994

**Victor Matom**

Illustration 2



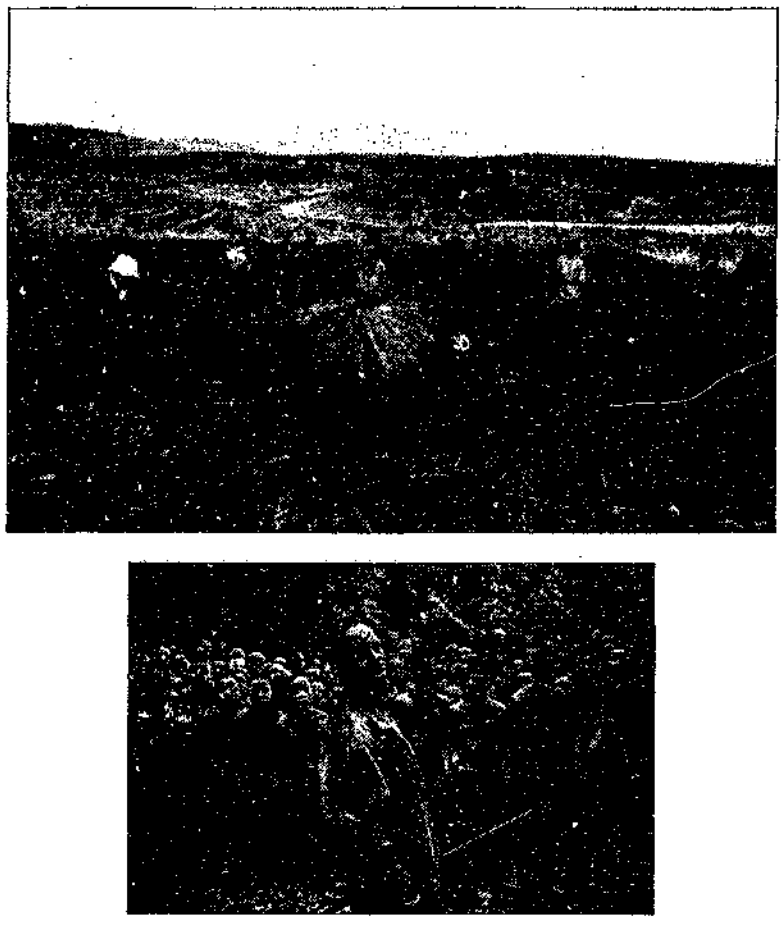
# Illustration 3



*Theft* Car thieves in Bree Street, downtown Johannesburg October 1996

**TJ Lemon**

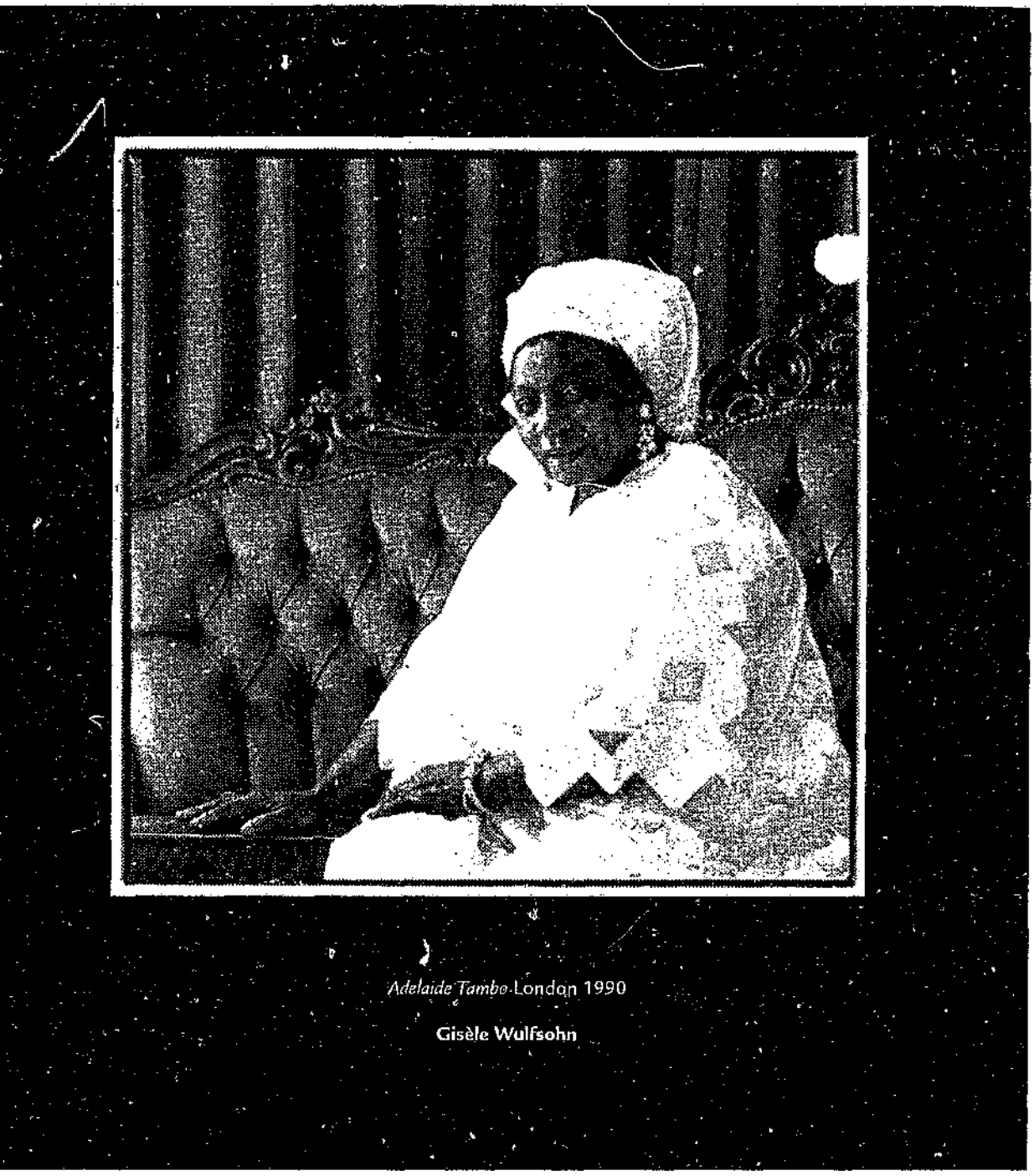
# Illustration 4



*North Sotho Initiations* 1990

**Steve Hilton-Barber**

Illustration 5



*Adelaide Tambo* London 1990

Gisèle Wulfsohn

# CAUGHT RED HANDED!



FALL GUY: This young man was arrested soon after his two companions fled while surprised "at work" lifting railway lines and sleepers. He said he sle in the open and was desperate for an kind of work. He did not seem to understand he had committed a crime Photograph

## Tracks, sleepers stolen from active railway lines

Acting on a tipoff, the *Saturday Star* this week helped to bust a gang who have allegedly brazenly stolen steel tracks and sleepers worth more than R600 000 from active railway lines in Johannesburg.

The tracks were stolen from lines between Booysens and Village Deep, and their lifting could have posed a serious risk to railway commuters – trains could have been derailed if they had been diverted onto the pilfered lines. The gang managed to steal about 3km of track before being stopped.

Dramatically, on Thursday the *Saturday Star* was present when Metrorail officials and police confronted three members of the gang hard at work, lifting tracks. Two ran away when we approached, the third was arrested.

"I'm just doing a job," the man insisted.

The gang was allegedly employed by a nearby cable manufacturing company, some of whom blew the whistle because they had not been paid for the thefts.

A group of protesting employees – who were allegedly ordered to steal the lines – phoned Metrorail and informed it about the "organised" theft of Metrorail property by company bosses.

Huge piles of sleepers and steel rails were visible from the main gate of the company.

Workers (whose names are known to the *Saturday Star*) claim that on January 12 the manager of the cable company approached workers with a list and "instructed" half the shift to go behind the factory and to dig out and steal lines and sleepers.

The majority refused to participate. Six men were coerced to do so. They claim they were threatened with dismissal. Desperate for work, they obeyed the order to steal.

Using nearby fire torches, connected by long extension hoses to a nearby factory – the men cut the railway line into manageable pieces and transported them into the factory.

Thulani "OT" Mdlangu of Metrorail estimates that five rail sleepers worth R853 000 were stolen.

Workers involved in the scam said they had been promised a bonus of only R50 each for the whole operation. The "boss" failed to pay them and the workers decided to inform Metrorail and police.

The arrested worker told the *Saturday Star*: "I sleep in the open and do not have a proper job and rely on piece jobs people offer me. I was walking past here one day and a guy named Dave offered me a job to cut the sleepers and rail behind factory. He said he would pay R2 000 for the whole job. But at end of that week he gave me o R40. I was very angry because h cheating me."

To Page 2

Illustration 7

Caught red-handed ripping up railway lines

# Railroaded into a setup

Your main front-page photograph last week (January 30) deceptively suggests an extraordinary moment when the alleged thief had his hands on railway sleepers at the same time as the law enforcers had their hands on him. More likely, this is a reconstructed photograph set up to tell the story.

My objection is two-fold. First you have re-victimised an unfortunate man, who according to the story was unfairly coerced into stealing by his employer, by again coercing him into this degrading pose.

Secondly you deceive the readers by inferring that the photograph was taken at the moment he was caught and not something you had crudely and abusively composed later. You have failed to leave this man any dignity and you insult your readers' intelligence.

**M Waller**
**Johannesburg**



**DRAMA REPLAYED:** The offending picture

■ *The photograph was a reconstruction of the arrest of the man, as witnessed by our reporter. We accept that we erred in not making that clear to our readers from the outset, but we stand by the photograph as an accurate depiction of events. We also take your point about the re-victimisation of the man caught stealing: he is not the real criminal here*

**The Editor**

S. STAR 6.2.99 pg 10

Illustration 8

# Illustration 10



*Sudanese child* 1993

**Kevin Carter**

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO SEE IT ALL.

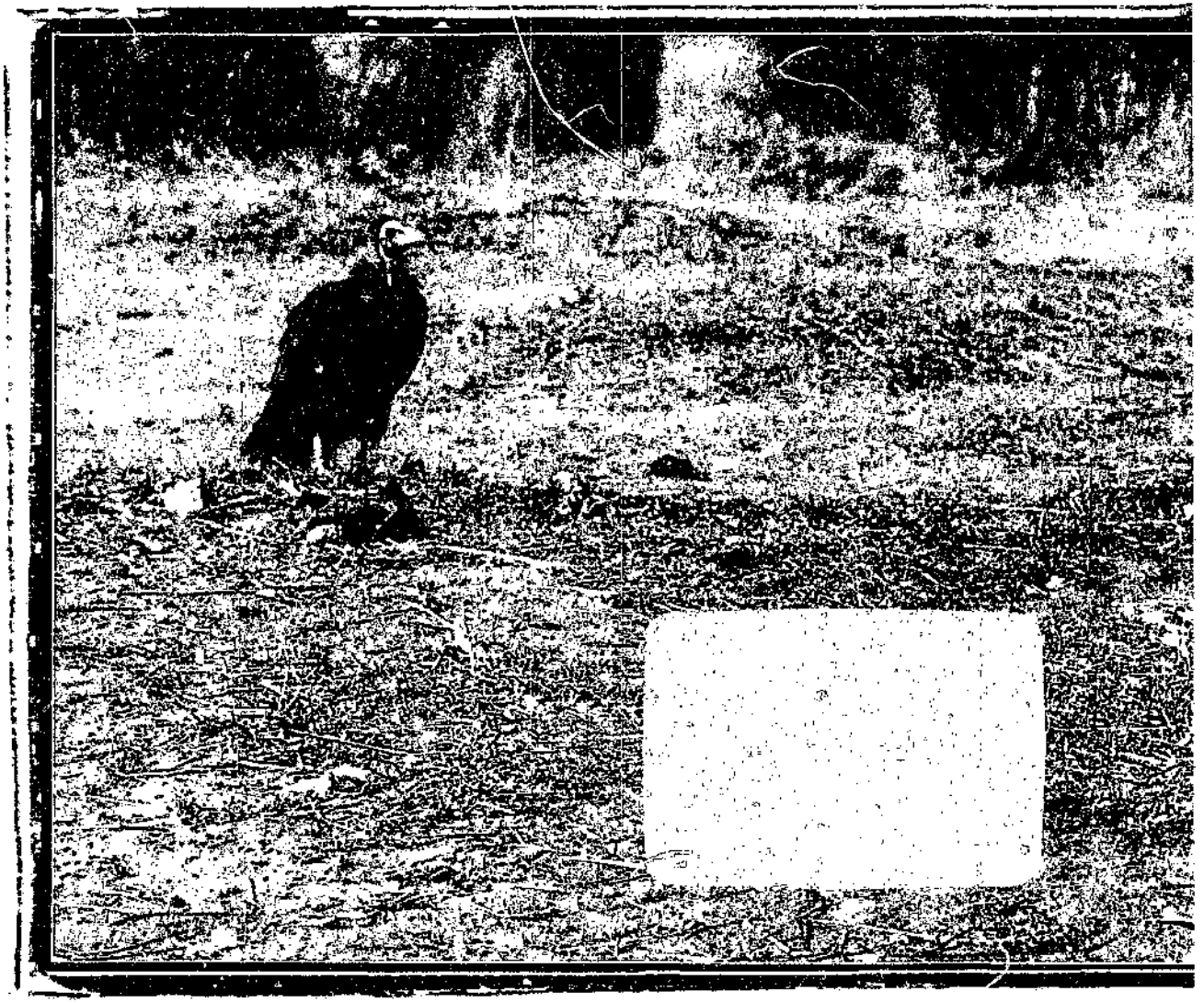


*Illustration 11*

From horror to humour, from corruption to human kindness. For 10 years our viewers have seen it all. **EVERY SUNDAY AT 7PM.**

Illustration 12

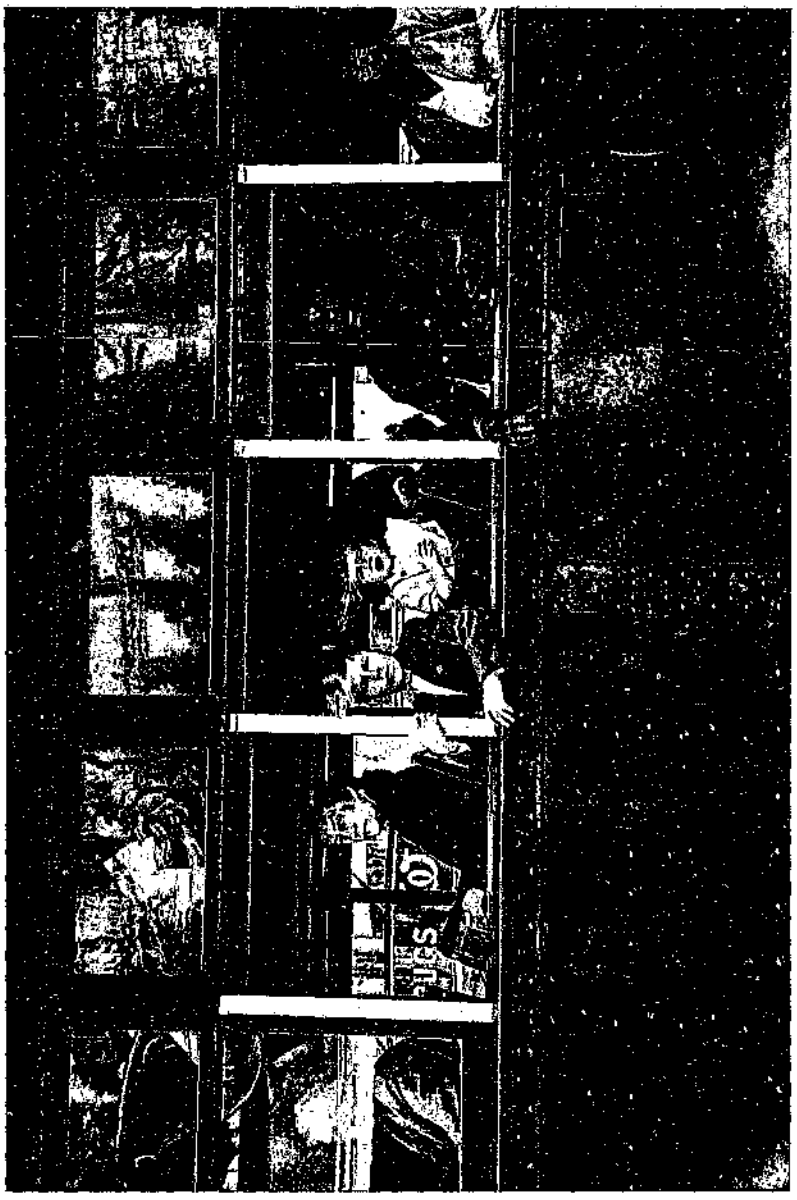


Illustration 13

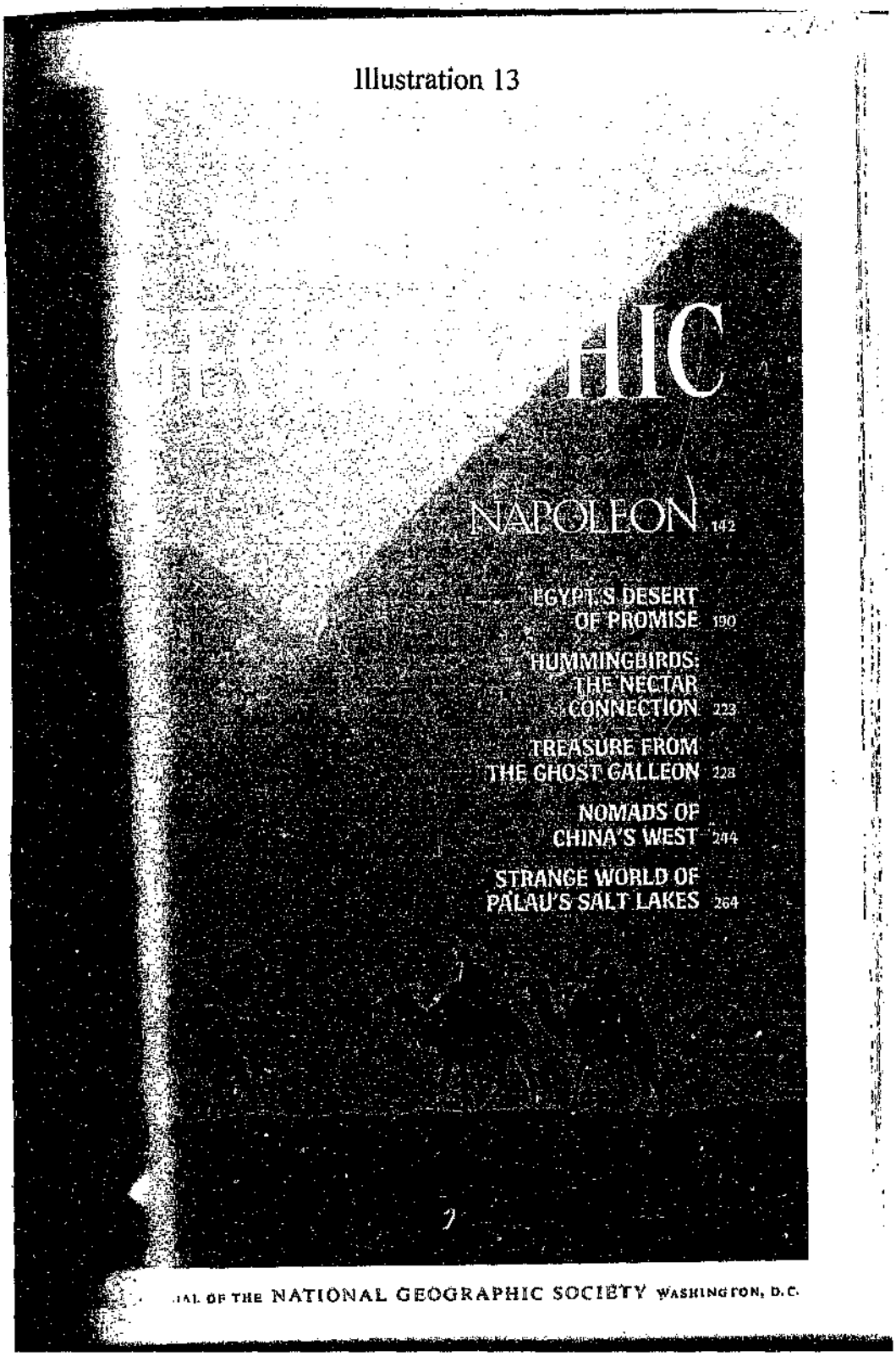


Illustration 14

delete

rescan



Front page image



Full frame

*Mandela with dove*, front page *Die Burger*, May 1994

**Henk Blom**

# Women resort to mob violence as biased system lets rapists go free

*Yesterday the world marked International Women's Day. But in South Africa women continue to suffer 'an epidemic of sexual crimes'*

BY CHRISTINA STUCKY

I suspect a group of East Rand women seized the alleged rapist of an eight-year-old girl in their neighbourhood. They pulled his pants over his head and lowered his trousers. With a sharp instrument they severed his penis. The next day the man expressed his gratitude towards the doctors who had reattached his organ.

That same day, Tuesday last week, 250 pupils at a school in Atteridgeville held a young man hostage. Four years ago the man was convicted of rape. Six months later he was released from prison. The angry pupils claim that the man has been harassing the same girl and threatened to rape her again. The police were able to rescue him.

Both reports mention the gratitude and relief the men accused of raping and sexually harassing the young women felt towards the doctors and police. No mention is made of the kind of care – if any – their alleged victims received, nor is the question raised: why did the women of the East Rand and the pupils in Atteridgeville resort to mob violence?

A seminar organised by the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, child psychologist Alan Wieczorek and independent researcher Lisa Vetten to discuss sweeping changes in South African sexual offences legislation, is the latest in a series of seminars and workshops on the issue. But there is still no proper report on the subject available to the public and even the police have only a limited understanding of the problem.

Based on research done, however, by Vetten, police officers I spoke to and by the Rape Crisis Centre in Johannesburg, it is clear that the problem is huge.

She makes this statement with particular reference to the prosecution and conviction rates of sexual crimes. Based on her research drawn from data supplied by the South African Police Service and the Central Statistical Service, rape has one of the lowest conviction rates of all serious crimes, despite the consistent rise in reported rapes. According to the SAPS a rape is committed every 35 seconds but only one in 36 cases is reported.

In her comparison of reporting, prosecution and conviction rates, Vetten found that of the 15 816 rapes reported in 1986, 61 percent were prosecuted and 32 percent led to a conviction. By 1993, the number of reported rapes had increased steadily to 27 834, but the prosecution rate had dropped equally steadily to 32 percent and the conviction rate to 16 percent.

One explanation for the drop in prosecutions is the freezing of prosecutors posts since the late 1980s, she says.

Similarly, the halt on police recruitment and "an exodus from the SAPS" has diminished the time spent on all crimes, including rapes, and the quality of investigations.

A comparison of the prosecution and conviction rates for the period from 1984-85 and 1993-94 shows that around 50 percent of all prosecuted rapes lead to convictions, while the conviction rate for indecent assault averages 72 percent. Vetten explains this discrepancy by pointing to what several South African researchers have described as a system bias operating within our legal system which protects rapists.

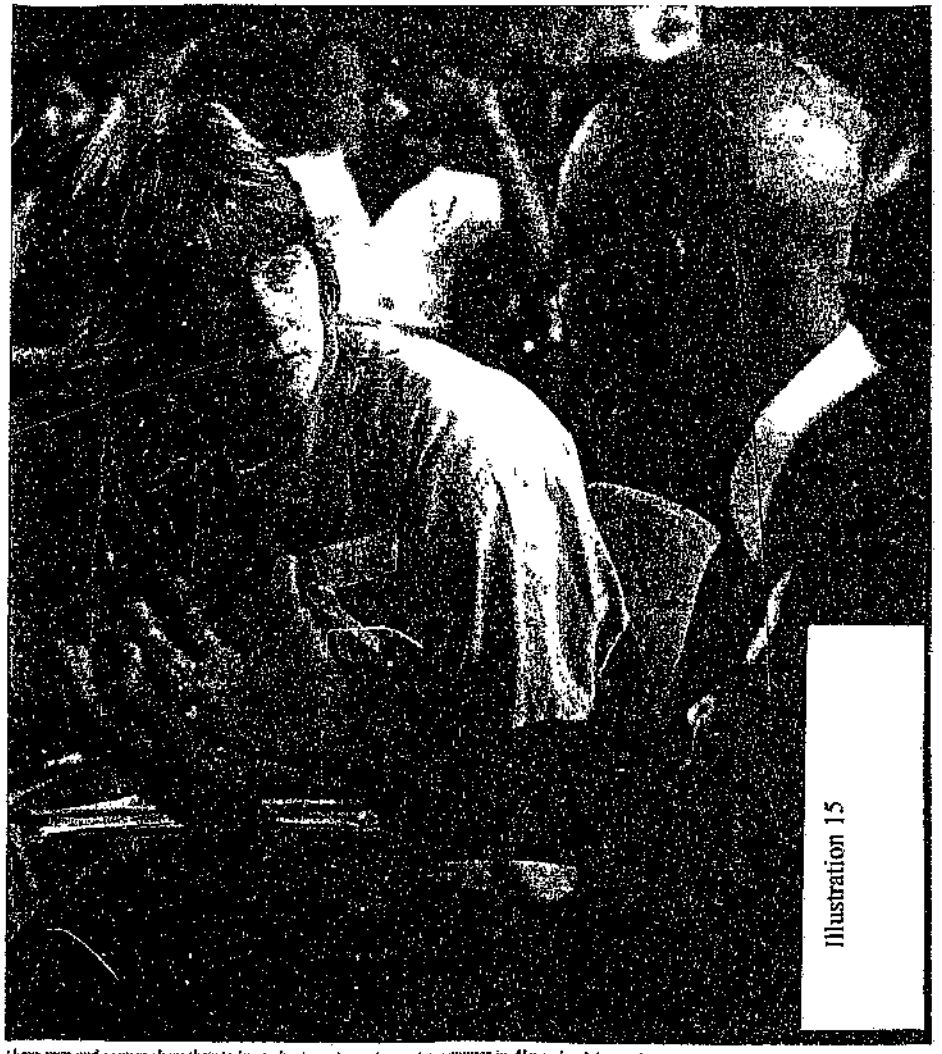


Illustration 15

*Hope: men and women share their feelings about gender patterns at a seminar in Alexandra, Johannesburg* PHOTOGRAPH: MERCELIA WEISS

## Men join in to become part of the solution

BY FIONA LLOYD

The story of Mdidaba must be told against a common one.

I was brought up by men who were bearing grain from the fields and who grew up in the townships and came to work underground. He [my father] was serving me coffee in bed. I remember seeing my cousin in bed with Uncle [redacted].

"But soon after my dad [redacted] with my girlfriend I thought – he was serving coffee [redacted]. I couldn't be sure then I just started hating. At first it made me feel better. After a while I had [redacted] was inside myself. But I couldn't stop."

Mdidaba says some things helped him to break the cycle of violence and he plans to help other men who are caught in the same trap.

He is one of a number of men taking part in a gender conference in Alexandra, Johannesburg, titled "Confronting violence against women: men as part of the solution".

The conference, organised by Agenda, Domestic Abuse Prevention and Training, celebrates the greatest [redacted] of Africa's rural traditions [redacted] some of whom have been involved in [redacted] relationships with women.

Adapt's founder and director Mamphela Mabedi says healing and reconciliation is the way forward. She knows. "I was sitting at a table [redacted] after the worst attack I'd ever experienced. I was so angry. I had thoughts of the [redacted] I was sitting [redacted] and I had a choice and I [redacted] path."

With the support of her family, Mabedi left her husband to join Adapt. Later she went to work [redacted] Dublin. She now [redacted] Formerly a [redacted] activist, [redacted] counsellor.

At one point the [redacted] she says: "I thought I was [redacted] the height of my [redacted] I knew [redacted] I could [redacted] and [redacted] the men [redacted]."

Dumisani [redacted] joined the [redacted] to "do something". Adapt [redacted]

## Police force gets a lesson in sensitivity towards sexual violence

# Illustration 16



*Xhosa Initiates* Xhosa Initiation, Cofimvaba, Emzantsi, Eastern Cape, June 1995

**Siphiwe Sibeko**

# Illustration 17



*The mirror* Helen Joseph Hostel 1992

**Victor Matom**

# Illustration 18



*The suit picture* 1990

**Calvin Dondo**

October 20-31, 1997

# DOING ETHICS For Photojournalists

WHEN YOU ASK GOOD QUESTIONS, YOU MAKE GOOD ETHICAL DECISIONS

1. What do I know? What do I need to know?
2. What is my journalistic purpose?
3. What are my ethical concerns?
4. What organizational policies and professional guidelines should I consider?
5. How can I include the voices of other people, with different perspectives and diverse ideas, in the decision-making process?
6. Who are the stakeholders—those affected by my decision?
7. What if the roles were reversed? How would I feel if I were in the shoes of one of the stakeholders?
8. What are the possible consequences of my actions? Short term? Long term? Are we sacrificing truthtelling for technical quality?
9. What are my alternatives to maximize my truthtelling responsibility and minimize harm?
10. Can I clearly and fully justify my thinking and my decision? To my colleagues? To the stakeholders? To the public? To myself?
11. Is the photograph being presented as editorial reporting telling or illustration.

## Key Considerations

- **Is the photograph what the photographer saw in the viewfinder?**
- **Is the photograph being changed in ways beyond basic image quality corrections?**
- **Is the illustration clearly obvious to the reader/viewer?**
- **Is it necessary to place the image in context with additional text for disclosure?**

Kenny Irby Associate,
Visual Journalism
*The Poynter Institute*

**Author:Waller M.**
**Name of thesis:A critical analysis of training and practices in Southern Africa for training purposes**

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