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PAUL MARTIN LESTER

VISUAL JOURNALISM

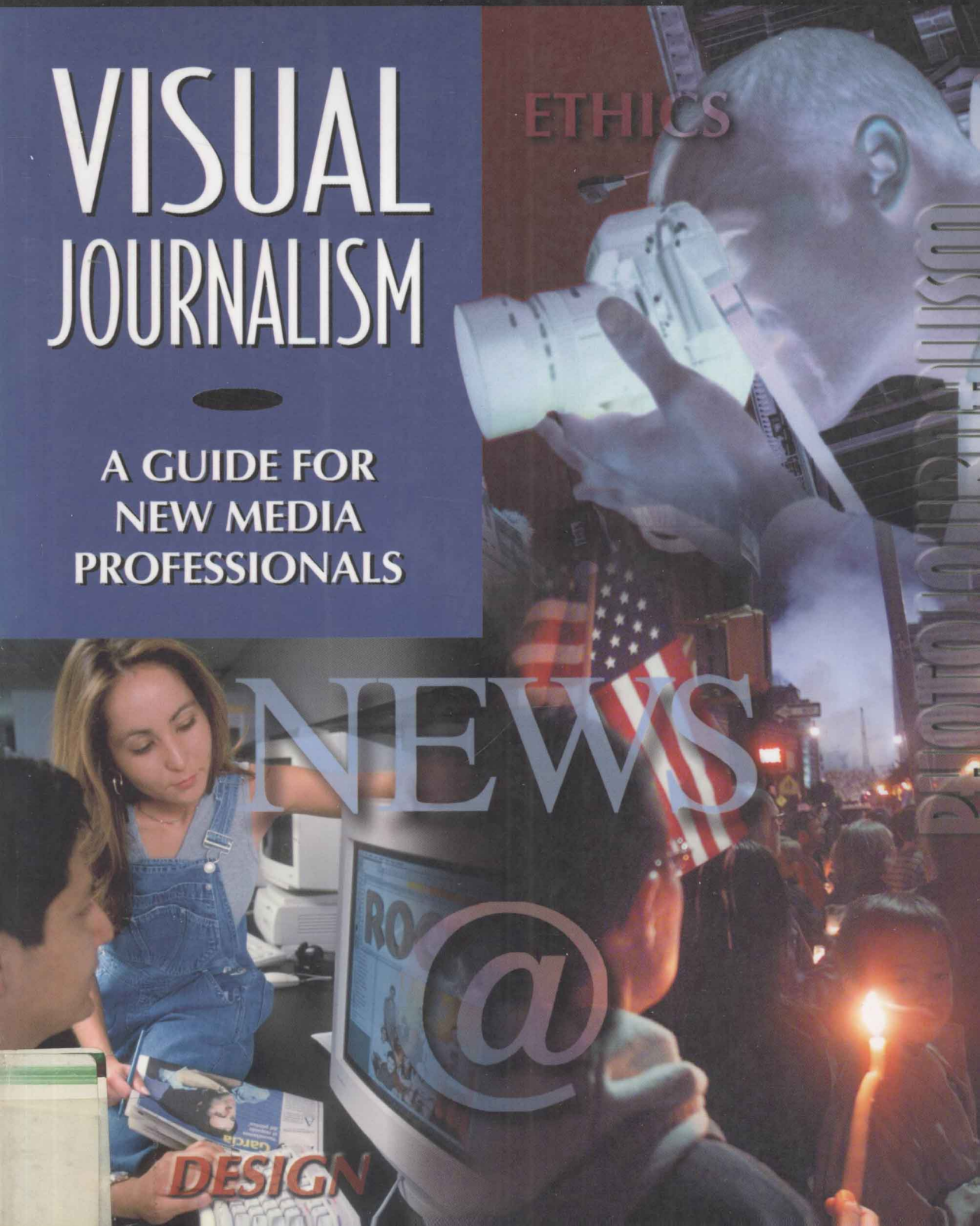
A GUIDE FOR
NEW MEDIA
PROFESSIONALS

ETHICS

NEWS

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DESIGN



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Visual Journalism

A Guide for New Media Professionals

Christopher R. Harris

Middle Tennessee State University

Paul Martin Lester

California State University, Fullerton

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P R E F A C E

Visual Journalism: A Guide for New Media Professionals is the first textbook to examine in depth the field of visual journalism. The discipline of visual journalism evolved through combining photojournalism with reporting, writing, and graphic design. The merging of these components has been the result of continual changes and advances in technology and interaction with other media.

Putting text and audio together including still and moving images, informational graphics, and graphic design for print and interactive multimedia presentations for the World Wide Web is the direction of mass communication. With new technology and practices, storytelling has never been so complex nor has offered the potential for such a visual and complete rendering of a story.

Visual Journalism is a textbook not only for journalism educators, professionals, and students but for anyone engaged in the field of mass communication. But, more important, it is a guide for creating and maximizing media convergence successfully. Practitioners in advertising, film, public relations, television, multimedia production will benefit from learning how to develop and produce visual messages that communicate as well as how to work with professionals within the field itself. It is vital that photojournalists know how to work with reporters and graphic designers, that reporters know how to communicate with photojournalists and designers, and that those who produce presentations for print and screen media know how to talk with photojournalists and reporters.

Features of the Book

- Each chapter and sidebar (called Visual Perspectives) written by recognized educators and professionals from various media
- A clear, concise writing style explaining visual reporting practices and procedures

- Over 100 photographs and illustrations that are both practical and aesthetic
- High quality typographical and graphic design presentation techniques
- Two 4-page, 4-color inserts which highlight the importance of the use of color, shape, and form to enhance visual messages.
- Ideas and assignments for further study at the end of each chapter
- A Website (<http://commfaculty.fullerton.edu/lester/abacon>) including syllabi, additional articles, assignments, web links, new images to be updated on a regular basis
- Detailed bibliography

Organization of the Book

Visual Journalism is divided into six sections that cover visual history, visual literacy, and ethics; photojournalism, reporting, and writing; typography and graphic design; informational graphics, audio and video production; and multimedia production and presentation. No other textbook combines this number of concepts and practices required for mass communications professionals.

The color plates in the inserts illustrate techniques explained in the text. Bringing attention to these particular images in the insert format gives the viewer an opportunity to study them on their own and to understand why they work. The first insert includes material from Chapters 1–5 and 11. The second insert includes material from Chapter 6.

Introduction: Digital and Convergence and the Age of the Visual Journalist

Visual Perspectives: Dirck Halstead, Senior White House Photographer, *Time*

Comment: Combining words and images honestly and respectfully is vital for telling stories—from a flyer to a presentation on the Web.

Storytelling has in a sense become complicated but at the same time filled with potential and usefulness for a large range of viewers and readers.

Section One: Using Visuals

Comment: What are the historical links of the visual journalism field? Why is it necessary to have technical expertise? What are the most important skills in visual journalism? How do ethics impact the field?

Chapter 1: Visual Journalism: Past, Present, and Future

by Paul Martin Lester

Visual Perspectives: Paul Martin Lester**Comment:** A tour of how visual journalism evolved from telling stories in caves to telling stories via virtual reality.**Chapter 2: Visual Literacy** by Paul Martin Lester**Visual Perspectives:** Gregory Veen, University of Washington**Comment:** Color, form, depth, and movement are all visual cues that we utilize to perceive the world and that visual journalists utilize in various combinations to make presentations. How those cues can be used to educate, entertain, and persuade are detailed.**Chapter 3: An Ethical Approach** by Paul Martin Lester**Visual Perspectives:** Deni Elliott, Director, Practical Ethics Center, University of Montana and Paul Martin Lester**Comment:** New media tools require ethical behavior.**Section Two: Using Photography****Comment:** Review of production of still images including technical requirements and assignments that range from non-manipulated (documentary) to manipulated.**Chapter 4: Technical Considerations** by Christopher R. Harris**Visual Perspectives:** Sherri LaRose, Staff Photographer, Columbus (GA) Ledger-Enquirer**Comment:** Instructions in using cameras, lenses, lighting, and film.**Chapter 5: Documentary Assignments** by Christopher R. Harris**Visual Perspectives:** James K. Colton, Former Director of Photography, *Newsweek***Comment:** News and picture story assignments, emphasizing documentary style.**Chapter 6: Manipulated Assignments** by Christopher R. Harris**Visual Perspectives:** Will Crocker, Photo Illustrator**Comment:** Manipulation of people and pictures to create an aesthetic image.

Section Three: Using Words

Comment: A visual journalist needs to know how to find stories, interview subjects, and write a compelling narrative about a complex world in simple everyday language.

Chapter 7: Reporting by Steve Doig, Arizona State University

Visual Perspectives: Alan Schwarz, Senior Writer, *Baseball America*

Comment: How to focus on stories that will interest viewers and how to collect the facts.

Chapter 8: Writing by Gerald Grow, Florida A&M University

Visual Perspectives: Bryan Grigsby, Photo Editor,
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Comment: Telling a story with words that complement the images.

Section Four: Using Design

Comment: How to combine words and images for print and screen presentations and how to use informational graphics and other visual messages when images take precedence over words.

Chapter 9: Typography by Jean Trumbo, University of Missouri

Visual Perspectives: Julia Ptaszniak, Editor, Visual Arts Trends

Comment: How typography enhances not only appearance but meaning and a reader's understanding.

Chapter 10: Graphic Design by Jean Trumbo, University of Missouri

Visual Perspectives: Brian Callahan, Web Graphic Designer,
Clocktower Books

Comment: Detailing designs through graphic principles of contrast, balance, unity, and rhythm.

Chapter 11: Informational Graphics by Paul Martin Lester

Visual Perspectives: Dennis Cripe, Franklin College

Comment: Infographics explain and illustrate complex data visually, thereby enhancing text and pictures.

Section Five: Using Motion

Comment: Media convergence: How to use motion, sound, and interactivity to tell stories.

Chapter 12: Visual Motion by Douglas Mitchell,
Middle Tennessee State University

Visual Perspectives: Larry Burriss, Middle Tennessee State University

Comment: How to control the medium of motion.

Chapter 13: Audio and Motion by Douglas Mitchell,
Middle Tennessee State University

Visual Perspectives: Lisa Horan, Freelance Writer

Comment: How to develop high quality sound to enhance and not distract from the message being communicated.

Chapter 14: Interactive Multimedia by Marc J. Barr,
Middle Tennessee State University

Visual Perspectives: Paul Martin Lester

Comment: How to produce interactive presentations that give users control over how they want to read a story.

Section Six: Using Computers

Comment: How to use the World Wide Web as a research tool from initial conception to final presentation.

Chapter 15: Internet Research by Robert Spires,
Middle Tennessee State University

Visual Perspectives: Robert Spires

Comment: How and why to use the World Wide Web for credible research.

Chapter 16: Computer Applications by Larry Burriss

Visual Perspectives: Larry Burriss

Comment: Proficiency in computer programs and media convergence is mandatory for visual journalists.

Conclusion: Visual Journalism Awaits You

Visual Perspectives: Tom Kennedy, The Washington Post-Newsweek
Interactive Web site

Comment: Applications of the disciplines that a visual journalist needs to
produce stories filled with content and compassion.

Acknowledgments

When I first met Chris Harris in New Orleans way back in 1976, I never thought he would amount to much of anything. I was as green a photographer as you can get, fresh out of journalism school at the University of Texas and he was a seasoned, but slightly seedy-looking, internationally known photographer. Think of the photojournalist played by Dennis Hopper in *Apocalypse Now Redux*, but with a Southern accent, and you know what I mean. Although a brilliant photographer (as you can tell by his many wonderful photographs included in this book), he pushed himself so hard that I thought he was on a fast track to being the subject—and not the recorder—of a second-line New Orleans funeral march. We lost track of each other for several years. But amazingly we both ended up in academia. What a country! And then Chris came to me with this wacky idea: Let's write a textbook about what we know deep in our bones is absolutely vital to teach in this age of new media convergence—visual journalism. And so, with the help of many, many friends and strangers, here it is in your hands.

I'd like to thank all the folks at Allyn & Bacon, the reviewers who believed early on that this book was necessary, all of the collaborators on chapters and sidebars, and my friends and family in such diverse places as California, Hawaii, Montana, and Texas—Cindy, Coral, and Tony, Tom and Evie, Glenn, Mike, and Johnny, and my mom and family. And as always, my heart always sings because of Denison and Allison—the two suns in my life.

And one more quick thing: working with Chris in any capacity is a joy and a life-long learning experience. Chris—let's do this again.

Paul Martin Lester
lester@fullerton.edu

After twenty-five years as a photojournalist I returned to university to get an advanced degree in order to teach photojournalism on the college level. Doing research for my thesis, which involved ethics and law, I came across the name of an old friend, and fellow photographer. But, instead of articles about him, these were

articles authored *by* him. They were about research into stereotypes and ethics, and the new concept of Visual Communication. They had a bright new approach to the emerging new media and the concerns they created. They were academic, yet written for someone to read. And they were important to me. We soon made contact, and renewed our friendship brought about from working in the same town, covering the same news subjects. Paul Lester, the “shooter” for the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* newspaper was an academic of the first order. He was the leading author of new and bold initiatives in the staid old profession of journalism. And he let me come along on one of the finest experiences of my life. He became my author mentor. This book is about Paul. It is about thoughts of applying oneself to the many channels of visual communication that have come about in this modern age. Not since the invention of movable type, followed several hundred years later by the ability to reproduce photographs utilizing the halftone, has such a quantum leap in visual communication come about. I take great pride in my personal and working relationship with Paul Lester; it’s not often we can stand with those who have led the awareness of new communication methods. And he has been kind to this neophyte. Paul, Les, yes even Carlos, these are all names I know him by . . . but I often just resort to an old New Orleans name and phrase that sums up my feelings. Bro, you’re ‘da best!!

The folks at Allyn & Bacon have worked their miracles massaging our words through wonderful copyediting, designing an easy to read layout, and searching out the marketing information to make this whole endeavor work. Kudos to all. But it is to Karon Bowers, my initial editor, and editor Molly Taylor to whom I owe the most thanks. In spite of harried e-mails from me, often seeking obscure information, or seeking some kind of reassurance, they have kept a cheerful attitude. They have done everything possible to lessen the burden felt by this novice textbook author. They have always been gracious, and thoroughly professional. I have no doubt that we worked with the “A” team.

While the above mentioned guided this book to its fruition, there are countless others that helped in other ways. The guidance provided by Julian Feibelman, along with the support and assistance of Bob Spires, Doug Mitchell, Marc Barr, and Larry Burriss from Middle Tennessee State University, allowed me to concentrate on what was important to me, writing and researching. Our thanks go to reviewers: Robert Heller, University of Tennessee, Knoxville; Andrew Mendelson, Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville; C. Zoe Smith, Missouri School of Journalism; and Susan Zavoina, University of North Texas. It was John Vivian who unselfishly introduced me to Karon Bowers, and thus started this whole process. Thanks my friends...I hope I can some day be as important to you. Louis and Will, thanks for

letting me show your fine work. And Deni, thanks for making Carlos so happy. My family has always been there for me. To Anne, I dedicate this book to Ed's memory. He always supported my desire to be a photographer, as did you. My eternal thanks for letting me get into this always exciting field. To my wife and son, Kathy and Stephen, thanks for letting me talk, often to myself, about the work—and not reporting me to the authorities. And thanks for giving me the time to work on this project. Yes, I owe you big-time.

Lester, you are a delight to work with . . . and to have as a friend. Hey, I've got an idea . . .

Christopher R. Harris
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Visual Journalism

C O N T E N T S

Preface xvii

Introduction: Digital Convergence and the Age of the Visual Journalist 1

A New Role for Journalism—The Visual Journalist 3

Ideas for Further Study 5

■ **VISUAL PERSPECTIVES:** Revisiting the Death of
Photojournalism by Dirck Halstead 6

Section One Using Visuals

CHAPTER

1

Visual Journalism: Past, Present, and Future 11

by Paul Martin Lester

Visual Journalism: 30,000 B.C.E.–0 11

Visual Journalism: 1–1,000 C.E. 13

Visual Journalism: 1001–1500 14

Visual Journalism: 1501–1800 14

Visual Journalism: 1801–1850 16

Visual Journalism: 1851–1900 17

Visual Journalism: 1901–1950 18

Visual Journalism: 1951–1983 19

Visual Journalism: 1984 and Beyond	21
Conclusion	22
Ideas for Further Study	22
■ VISUAL PERSPECTIVES: Virtual Photojournalism—A Fictional Look at a Possible Future by Paul Martin Lester	23

CHAPTER 2

A Visual Literacy Primer 27

by Paul Martin Lester

Light	28
Eyes and Brain	29
Physiology of the Eye	30
Physiology of the Brain	30
The Visual Cues: Color, Form, Depth, and Movement	30
Color	31
Form	32
Depth	33
Movement	35
Theories of Visual Literacy	35
Gestalt	35
Semiotics	37
Cognitive	38
Conclusion	40
Ideas for Further Study	40
■ VISUAL PERSPECTIVES: Digital Images and the “New” Visual Literacy by Gregory Veen	42

CHAPTER 3

An Ethical Approach 45

by Paul Martin Lester

Study the Six Philosophies	45
The Categorical Imperative	46
Utilitarianism	47

Hedonism	47
The Golden Mean	48
The Golden Rule	49
The Veil of Ignorance	49
The Five Chief Ethical Concerns	50
Victims of Violence	50
Right to Privacy	51
Picture Manipulation	52
Stereotyping	54
Advertising, Public Relations, and Journalism Blurring	55
Ethics and the Future of Visual Reporting	56
Conclusion	57
Ideas for Further Study	57
■ VISUAL PERSPECTIVES: Ethics Matter: From Great Tragedy, Humanity Is Found by Deni Elliott and Paul Martin Lester	58

Section Two Using Photography

CHAPTER 4

Technical Considerations 63

by Christopher R. Harris

Preproduction	64
Equipment	65
The Camera	65
<i>Film-Based Cameras</i>	66
Single-Lens Reflex	66
Twin-Lens Reflex	67
The Rangefinder Camera	67
The View Camera	67
The Lens	68
<i>The Wide-Angle Lens</i>	68
<i>The Normal Lens</i>	68
<i>The Telephoto Lens</i>	70
<i>Special Purpose Lenses</i>	71

Supplies	72
Film	72
<i>Spectral Sensitivity</i>	72
<i>Film Speed</i>	73
<i>Contrast</i>	74
Miscellaneous Equipment	75
Light Meters	75
Lighting	76
<i>Strobes</i>	76
<i>Tungsten Lighting</i>	77
Equipment and Camera Bags	77
Travel Logistics	78
Currency	79
Local Customs and Business Needs	79
Customs Registration of Photographic Equipment	79
After the Assignment	80
Conclusion	82
Ideas for Further Study	82
■ VISUAL PERSPECTIVES: A Life in Photojournalism	
by Sherri LaRose	83

Color Plates 1–10

CHAPTER 5

Documentary Assignments 87

by Christopher R. Harris

Photographic Credibility	90
Photojournalism Ethics	91
Computer Manipulation of Pictures	92
Documentary Styles	94
Spot and General News	94
<i>Spot News</i>	95
<i>General News</i>	96
Human Interest and Pictorial Features	99
<i>Human Interest</i>	100
<i>Pictorial Features</i>	101

Sports Action and Features	102
<i>Sports Action</i>	103
<i>Sports Feature</i>	103
Picture Stories	104
Conclusion	105
Ideas for Further Study	105
■ VISUAL PERSPECTIVES: An Olympic Moment	
by James K. Colton	106

CHAPTER 6

Manipulated Assignments 109

by Christopher R. Harris

Subject Manipulation	109
Scene Manipulation	111
Illustration	112
Mug Shots	114
Environmental Portraits	115
Editorial Illustrations	116
Advertising Photography	117

Color Plates 11–21

Annual Reports	119
Public Relations	120
Lighting	121
Types of Lighting	121
<i>Strobe</i>	122
<i>Tungsten or Incandescent Lighting</i>	122
Quality of Light	123
Light Modifiers	123
<i>Reflectors</i>	123
<i>Umbrellas</i>	124
<i>Soft Boxes</i>	125
<i>Snoots and Scrims</i>	125
Number of Lights	125