

PHOTO EDITING:

Photo editing requires skills, art and a lot of attention. Like news story editing, editing photo is also important in a newspaper. Pictures are inevitable part of a newspaper. Like visuals on TV, photos on a newspaper speak. Photos thus have to be relevant and placed appropriately. Photos need editing like a story and they need be resized because of the space constraints.

WHAT IS PHOTO-EDITING?

The photo editor may cut or resize a photo to fit in the layout of the page. A competent photo editor's job is to see that the picture is not taking unnecessary space and accordingly he trims the pictures keeping its essence intact. For example, a photographer has given the photo of the newly appointed ministers. The photo editor might use only the heads of the ministers and cut off the rest of the portion due to space limitation.

Readers may be interested on a narrow strip of the faces of ministers and they will not be interested on the dress they have put on. The photo editors also crop the pictures, bringing out the emphasis of the photographic message as effectively as possible. To improve the look of the newspaper, the photo editor might opt for vertical or horizontal pictures depending on the layout of the page.

The photo editor selects the best photograph which tells the story on its own. As per the space on the newspaper page, the photo editor edits the photo without destroying its essence. The photo editor should have aesthetic sense to fix the photo on the page which should look good in design. In case of any doubt or if the editor wants to crop a major portion of the photo, he should talk to the photographer. The photo editor should also know the photographer's idea about the picture.

The meaning of photo editing is the act of altering an image, simply put. But that's oversimplifying a subject which is quite complex.

For example, some photo editing techniques are done manually, while others are conducted through automated software. Some photo editing is even done offline, on actual photographs, posters or other printed collateral.

Other terms for photo editing:

- Image editing
- Post-processing
- Image/photo manipulation
- Photoshopping
- Image/photo enhancement

What are the different types of photo editing?

There are many different types of photo editing. Some are simple and others are more complex.

You can typically execute simple photo-editing techniques fairly easily and quickly. Complex techniques and digital editing may require a software program and more experience and training.

Simple photo-editing techniques include:

1. Noise reduction: smoothing the picture out, typically accomplished by reducing the pixel size
2. White balance: the color of the light in the image
3. Contrast: higher contrast makes an image more punchy, while lower contrast makes it flatter in color
4. Exposure: the brightness of the photo
5. Lens correction: addresses any issues with the camera lens
6. Color adjustments: change the color of an item or element in the photo
7. Resizing and cropping: adjust the dimensions of the image
8. [Background removal](#): delete the background from the image, isolating the subject (this is often used for white background product photography)

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7.0 References/Future Readings 1.0 INTRODUCTION If you have agreed with me that
photographs of events and happenings add value to what you read in newspapers and
magazine, you will also agree with me that not all the photographs you are exposed to are good
(clear and not blur; relevant to the accompany story; of visible size; placed at the appropriate
positions or pages in the newspaper; having relevant captions; and themselves tell the story). If
that occurs to you, it then means that not all photographs taken in an event or on a news bit
could be published or even published the exact way they are taken. News photographs are
edited almost the same way news stories are edited. Therefore, this unit will expose you to
photo editing in photojournalism. 2.0 OBJECTIVES At the end of this unit, you should be able to:
understand photo editing• trace the origin of photo editing• explain the meaning of photo
editing• 3.0 MAIN CONTENTS 3.1 Understanding Photo Editing in Mass Media Human beings

are not like other animals. We don't take most of our food substance raw: we either refine or process the raw food items in order to make it not only consumable but also good for our health. News stories are also like food items. News stories are sent to the media houses by reporters in its crude forms. The final output, (the published news stories) are the refined forms of the crude news sent in. Similarly, photographs are also refined to meet the taste of the readers. If photographs are not well edited before they are published, the implication is grievous than that of news stories. The reason is that, it is possible to refute the interpretation of the words in a news story but it is not easy to deny a published photograph, which mirror the event. It is obvious that photographs capture a moment in time. Photos are generally regarded as "factual," as opposed to a drawing or painting, which would be the artist's interpretations. Photos tend to be trusted more, because they accurately depict what is in front of the camera at the moment the picture is taken. In journalism, photographs are supposed to be accurate in order to depict the exact incident. The essence of photo editing therefore does not mean that the pictures will be totally transform to connote a meaning other than the original meaning or shows something different than what really happened. You can now see that the essence of photo editing in journalism is neither to glamorize the event nor to beautify the object unlike the commercial photographers, whose objectives is to please their clients with beautified photos.

3.2 Origin and Definitions of Photo Editing

The concept of photo editing is almost as old as photography itself. The first photographic images were recorded in the 1820s, and one of the first widely known edited photos was a portrait of Abraham Lincoln. Sometime in the 1860s, someone took a standing portrait of Southern Congressman John Calhoun, pasted in Lincoln's face from the portrait for the five dollar bill, and created a historic photo of Lincoln on the spot. Photo editing was first experience in Nigeria during the era of the first newspaper, Iwe Irohin fun Awon Ara Egba ati Yoruba. Though, the newspaper started with only words without any image, images were later added particularly when the newspaper gave room to advertising messages. The first sets of pictures in the newspaper were art works and line drawing. As technology improved and different cameras of various functions were manufacture, the essence of photojournalism was felt and the need irresistible. As you have noted earlier that photo editing start from chosen what to shoot and which shot tells the story better, it will therefore clear to you that the beginning of photojournalism marked the beginning of photo editing. Photo editing simply means an act of making pictures fit for publication. Photojournalists take many shots from which the editor choose one or more that best tell the stories. The process of selecting the best shot that either tells or supports a story and the refine of the crude shots to meet the taste of the readers is known as photo editing. Editing is the art of adding the correct amount of lighting and sharpness to the photo. If your photo comes out too dark, you can edit it to make it lighter. Or if you'd like to crop something out of a photo, editing allows you to do that.

3.3 Reasons for Photo Editing

As we have said earlier, you as a newspaper reader may find some photographs disgusting if they are published raw without

editing. Editing is not or not only to beautify the photographs to be published, there are many substantial reasons why photo editing is a must in journalism. Let's have a look at some of the reasons:

1. Editing for clarity: Photographs to be published may not be clear enough for the media audience to interpret. It may be that the photograph is too small to be visible or so blurred that the image(s) could not be identified. It may also be that the colour of the image in the photograph submerged in the background colour, making it difficult to separate the image from the background. The reasons for taking shots that are not clear are: a. Quality of the camera b. How qualify the photojournalist and his/her experience c. Climatic condition and the angle from which the shot is taken d. Type of shot taken e.g. motion shot Compare the photographs below, which one do you consider clearer? Do I hear you say Figure 1? You have just noticed the essence of photo editing for clarity. 57 Figure 1 Figure 2
2. Editing for Specific Targets: Photo editing sometimes is done to achieve specific goals. It could be done to lay emphasis on specific parts of a photograph or to hide the parts that do not support the news story. For example in a photograph of road accident victim, photo editing could be done to lay emphasis on the injured parts and to hide other parts of the body of the victim. Consider the photographs below 58 Figure 3
3. Editing for Moral Value: Some photographs are obscene and do not conform to our moral standard and value. Any photograph that disregards human dignity and glamorizes indecency and immorality needs to be edited in order to protect our moral value. Will you consider the picture below morally okay in the Nigerian newspaper. Figure 4 59 Sun Girls: culled from Daily Sun May 11, 2014
4. Editing for beautification: Sometimes, photographs are edited to beautify the image or scene of an incident if there is need for it. If the photograph of an important figure is taken in a ceremonious function, the photograph could be beautified in a way that will not change the context but rather better portray the event. If you critically study the figure five below, you will notice that it was not well edited as you could find red-eye in the photograph (see the arrow). Red-eye defect occurs when more light than require lands on the object while taken the shot. It can be removed during editing to make picture not only beautiful but also to look as if it was not taking with the defects. 60 Figure 5 From The Guardian Thursday, April 24, 2014, Pg. 43
5. Editing for Legal Implication: Some editing are done to photographs published in newspaper to avoid running avow of law. Many of the media houses have been found guilty of publishing photographs indiscriminately without given consideration to legal implication. For example, if the photograph of a criminal is taken with some onlookers at the background, the background needs to be edited and make plain. Otherwise, it may be misinterpreted that the persons in the background are also criminals, and indeed it is libelous. Also, the faces of accused persons must be blurred by the media houses when publishing or when showing on the television until the court of law pronounces them guilty of the offence. You will find much about blurring and other editing terms in the subsequent Unit of this Module. You can see an example of the accused persons, whose faces were blurred in the figure 6 below. Figure 6 61 From The Guardian Friday,

April 25, 2014, Pg. 15 SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE Take a look at some Nigerian newspapers and comment whether the photographs on the pages of the newspapers are well edited.

4.0 CONCLUSION It is pertinent for you to note that photo editing is an important aspect of media practice which must be handled with same care and attention given to other aspects. You should also know that the reasons why photographs are edited are more than those common ones discussed above. Photo editing is a function of professionals who know the pros and cons of handling it with levity.

5.0 SUMMARY As you have noticed, this unit dwells much on general understanding of photo editing. It also gives you an insight into various definition of photo editing as well as a brief origin of photo editing locally as well as internationally. It also takes you through the reasons while media houses edit photographs before they are published.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT 1. Can you give substantive reasons while pictures must be edited before they are published? 2. What do you think are factors responsible for defective shots?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING Udeze S. E. (1995). *Essential of Photojournalism and Photography*, Enugu: Meteson Publicity Company. Stelle-Joan E. (1997). *Photojournalism: Principles and Guidelines*, Enugu: SCAN Press

The Guardian Friday, April 25, 2014, Pg. 15. Vol.30, No. 12,902 The Guardian Thursday, April 24, 2014, Pg. 43. Vol.30, No. 12,901

UNIT 2 EDITING CONCEPTS IN PHOTO-JOURNALISM (1) CONTENTS 1.0 Introduction 2.0Objectives 3.0Main contents 3.1Captioning 3.2Blurring 4.0Conclusion 63 5.0Summary 6.0TUTOR-MARKED Assignments 7.0References/Future Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION Now that you have got the foundation knowledge about photo editing in the previous Unit, this Unit will introduce you to some terms used in photo editing. Other terms shall be discussed in the subsequent Unit. It will also expand your understanding of photo editing through an elaborate discussion on how those terms are put into practice to achieve special effects on the photographs being edited.

2.0 OBJECTIVES At the end of this Unit, you should be able to: understand each of the photo editing terms• know how to put such terms into practice while editing photographs• understand what impacts the terms have on photographs•

3.0 MAIN CONTENTS 3.1 Captioning A caption is a short sentence, accompanying a photo, which provide additional information on the content of the photo and leaves no questions in the mind of a reader. John Smock (2008) agrees that a photo caption should provide the readers basic information needed to understand a photograph and its relevance to the news. It should be written in a consistent, concise format that allows news organizations to move the photo to publication without delay. He argued further that professional standards of clarity, accuracy and completeness in caption writing should be as high as or higher than any other writing that appears in a publication. A poorly written caption that is uninformative or worse: misleading can diminish the impact of a good photo and undermine its credibility. If readers can't trust the accuracy of the simple information included in a caption, why should they trust what they read in the rest of the publication? A caption is also known as a cutline. It can also be described as a written summary that briefly explains a photograph. A caption includes who, what, when, where, and sometimes

why and how of a photograph. In most photo captions, the first sentence identifies the people and place in the photograph and supplies the date and location where it was taken. The second (and perhaps third) sentence should provide contextual information to help readers understand what they are looking at. 64 From The Guardian Wednesday, July 2, 2014, Pg. 5

Caption Photograph 3.1.2 Tips for Writing Good Captions

You should have it in mind that there is no generally approved standard for writing photo caption. But a good caption must fulfil certain conditions and the person writing the caption must put some rules into consideration. Some of the rules are listed below:

- Trite writing should be avoided.** Do not point out the obvious by using such phrases as “looks on,” “is shown” and “pictured above.”
- Don't editorialize.** The cutline writer should never make assumptions about what someone in a picture is thinking or try to interpret the person's feelings from his or her expression. The reader should be given the facts and allowed to decide what the feelings or emotions are.
- Avoid the known; explain the unknown.** The cutline writer should avoid characterizing a picture as beautiful, dramatic, grisly or other such descriptive terms that should be evident in the photograph. If it's not evident in the photograph, telling the reader won't make it happen. However, the cutline should explain something about how the picture was taken if it shows something not normally observable by the human eye. For example, was a wide-angle lens used? Or time-lapse photography? Explanations also are needed for special effects, such as the use of an inset or a picture sequence.
- Reflect the image.** Cutline writers should make sure that the words accurately reflect the picture. If a picture shows two or more people, the cutline writer should count the number of identifiable people in the photo and check the number and sex of the people identified in the cutline to make certain that they match. Special precautions should be taken to make sure that the cutline does not include someone who has been cropped out of the original photo. 65
- Always, always, always check spelling.** The cutline writer should check the spelling of names in the story against the names that a photographer has provided to see if there are discrepancies. The editor also should be sure that names in the cutline are the same names used in the story. It should not be John Smith in the cutline, but John P. Smith in the story.
- “Wild art.”** Photographs that do not accompany stories often are termed “wild art.” The cutlines for wild art should provide the same basic information that a story does. Such things as the “five W's” (who, what, when, where and why) are good to remember when writing such cutlines. If you don't have all the information you need, get on the phone and get the information. Don't try writing the cutline without needed facts. Sometimes, wild art is used on a cover page to tease (refer) the reader to a story inside. But, unlike television, don't tease the reader in the cutline. Give as complete a story as possible, giving the reader the option of going inside for more details. Most cutlines for wild art also have a caption line (overline).
- Accompanying art.** If a picture is running with a story, a lengthy cutline is usually not needed. Sometimes a single line is sufficient to identify the people or situation shown in the picture and to make clear their relationship to the story. Remember that most cutline readers have not yet

read the story. Many of them will read nothing but the cutline and the headline. So the cutline must strike a delicate balance between telling enough information for the reader to understand the photo and its context while being as crisp and brief as possible. h. Shorter is better. Cutline writing triggers a temptation to use long sentences. Avoid that temptation. The cutlines that accompany Associated Press photos are notorious for their rambling sentences. They need to be rewritten into clear crisp sentences. SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE Make distinctions between a photograph with caption and another one without caption. Which one will you prefer and why?

3.2 Blurring

Blurring is a photo editing technique in which part of the image in a photograph is faded, covered or protected from the readers' view or access. The backgrounds of photographs are sometimes blurred in order to give the image in the photographs the attention it deserves. It is most often done to protect the dignity of the person in the photograph or as a means of protecting our moral value and guiding against indecency. The best Wildlife photography will always show a crystal-clear animal against a blurry background. This is done by using just the right combination of lens, aperture, and shutter speed, and really helps to make the subject stand out. If a background of 66 branches and leaves were as sharply focused as the bird in the foreground, it would be very easy to lose the bird in the background "noise."

4.0 CONCLUSION

In as much as journalists strive to paint the correct and accurate pictures in the minds and imagination of their readers, the photojournalism is not an exception. They also try to do so by using specific expressions rather than the ambiguous. As messages are imprinted more in the readers mind and visualized, that is seen, in their minds' eyes.