

Abstracts

Alexander Godulla: Authenticity as a Premise? Morally Legitimized Actions in Press Photography

More than ever, photography has become a mass phenomenon: Professional photographers compete with amateurs in the battle for attention and exclusivity. Therefore, normative aspects of press photography should be considered, in order to achieve a functional use of the medium. This essay selects two aspects of the discussion thereto. How conflicts and catastrophes are dealt with is analyzed in the context of the aestheticization of the photographic image. Postulates, such as objectivity and authenticity have been selected as examples for premises of action. Further, this essay discusses various options of modern photo editing and their influence on photography's veridicality from a scientific point of view.

Melanie Verhovnik: Burnt-in Images. Issues Concerning Media Photo Coverage by Example of School Shootings

School shootings, often designated by the media as “rampages”, are events of enormous consequence for all involved. The findings presented in this article, based on a comprehensive study regarding media coverage of school shootings, verify the scope and quantity of images related to school shootings, what content they show and how they are judged. Conducted in parallel, group discussions with school and university students document as well, that a numerically relatively small segment of the photo coverage itself dominates this and that in particular, emotional and emotionalizing content it is deeply remembered by the recipients.

Michel Penke: Dared, Printed, Rebuked. The Variance of Ethical Decisions in Journalism

Reliably – and in light of ever increasing media scandals – the calls for more ethics in journalism grow louder. Ethics are numerous. What one forbids the next allows. The guiding ethics in journalism – contained in the press code – are, however, neither the only nor the best possibility to introduce morals into the everyday practices of journalists. The press code, as an “a posteriori”, synthetic theory, does not obtain the same input-legitimacy as other ethics. Even on the part of output-legitimacy, others are leading from the front. In this paper, the decision-making tenets of the press code, deontology, teleology and Kantian practical reasoning are directly compared with each other by means of two case studies. The media systems arising from these ethics diverge greatly from one another. They range from the dysfunctional to the superior, depending on which ethics are considered.