

AN ANALYSIS OF DOMINANT FRONT PAGE  
PHOTOGRAPHY OF THE TULSA WORLD  
AND THE DAILY OKLAHOMAN  
1965 - 1990

By

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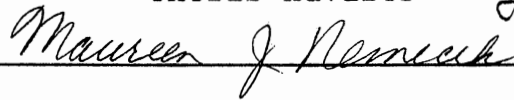
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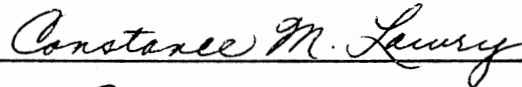
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## PREFACE

This is a content analysis of dominant front page photographs of the Tulsa World and the Daily Oklahoman over a period of twenty-five years. The study sought to assess news content to photographs and examine the two largest daily newspapers in Oklahoma for front page changes in both photographic content and design.

Many persons made real contributions to this work. I would like to express special appreciation to my thesis adviser, Dr. Charles A. Fleming, director of graduate studies in mass communication at Oklahoma State University.

I also express my appreciation to the other members of my thesis committee: Dr. Maureen Nemecek, professor of journalism and broadcasting, and Dr. Connie Lawry, assistant director of arts and sciences extension. I would also like to thank former faculty member, Elisabeth Schillinger, for her support and encouragement through much of my studies and her initial position on my committee.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### General

Of all the media that inform us daily of our world, photojournalism in the press is probably given the least amount of consideration. In a sixty-year period of Journalism Quarterly, from its first issue in 1924 to 1984, 26 of 833 articles or slightly over 2 1/2 percent were devoted to news photography. According to R. Smith Schuneman, this lack of attention is indicative of "the inactivity of communication educators and researchers toward the special area of photographic communication."<sup>1</sup>

In this study, content of the dominant photograph will be examined from the front page of randomly selected copies of the Tulsa World and the Daily Oklahoman over a twenty-five year period. The time period will include January 1, 1965 through October 15, 1990.

The study will be conducted using microfilm from the media room at Oklahoma State University library. Some difficulty due to a gap in the Tulsa World of 17 years will

neecessitate searching films through other sources or bound copies if available.

Photograph classification will be by subject matter content, source, orientation to geographic area, size and placement. Coding will also note if the photo is part of a page one story, a photo referring to an inside story, or a stand-alone photo.

It is the nature of the press to selectively use graphics, particularly photographs. How well these elements are utilized is a difficult question to address. A 1968 study by University of Wisconsin photojournalism instructor Dr. James A. Fosdick, suggests that at least to 1968, most newspapers did not "use photographs and picture layouts to creatively and dramatically report and interpret contemporary affairs for their readers." Fosdick also suggests that "editors may not consider photographs an appropriate mode for reporting the news." Fosdick goes on to comment that, "As a result, readers cluster around the tube for their visual reports of the world about them."<sup>2</sup>

The front page has been the unit of study of much research in part because of the intensity and diversity of the news it carries. It is for this reason as well this study has chosen the dominant front page photograph to examine in categories that will reflect the news usage of that photograph.

Both of the newspapers chosen utilize dominant photographs on the front page, and as is typical from studies of dailies,<sup>3</sup> both newspapers routinely use at least two front page photographs.

The photographic content of major newspapers across the country has been dramatically influenced by the heavy graphics, increased photo usage, run of press color and information art employed by USA Today since its beginning in 1982. Two major revolutions in newspaper design in the past 20 years have left the daily newspaper of traditional design in a minority.<sup>4</sup>

Papers that have stayed with their traditional layout and design have had fewer options in responding to the increased reader interest in the graphics revolution in publications of the mid-seventies, or the impact of the graphics explosion in print started by USA Today. It is this limited ability of the traditional press to respond that makes this content study of photographs of interest. Photographic usage, or at least that of the dominant photo, is going through a changing process. Where the element has been utilized previously as a quick visual eye-catcher or an amusement, and has not often surpassed soft news status, today's visually oriented audience expects much more from the dominant photograph of the daily press.

This study of the strongest visual image of the front page is expected to reveal a move toward both larger and tighter cropped photos that carry greater news impact.

Images which are expected to move, over the time frame, away from the coverage of local news toward photos of wider geographic range. This can possibly be explained by greater wire photo usage or in some instances the utilization of graphics wires or satellite transmission.

News studies of dailies have shown a steady decrease in international news since 1945 and an increase in national (mostly Washington, D.C.) news since that time, with the exception of heavier international coverage during periods of war. One such study revealed that daily newspapers with more than 250,000 circulation tended to carry relatively more international items and fewer state and local news items.<sup>5</sup>

Though no current theories in communication apply directly to photography, it is possible that some interpretive statements in regard to competing visual medium may emerge from the study.

#### Significance

The study will attempt to show by analysis of the categories, efforts both dailies have made to utilize one visual element available in their traditional design and make-up.

Two objectives of the study are to examine the news content of the dominant photographs and to examine the origination or source of the photographs. A third objective is to see if the two dailies studied have made changes in size and placement similar to those of other dailies across the country. Examination of data will also allow comparison of other factors between the two papers, such as the increase or decrease of usage of certain categories.

#### Conceptual Definitions and Assumptions

For the purposes of this study, terms used to define news will be consistent in meaning with those of previous studies of front page news content. This is done in order to facilitate the placement of photographic subject content into news categories that are both familiar and meaningful.

Previous studies of front page news content that have been examined have typically used a number of collapsed categories due to the constriction of the type of data processing equipment utilized. Although this study does not propose to extensively redesign previously proven categories, it will attempt to use a combination of those which meet the objective of coding photographs by news content. All of the photographs in the study will be coded with the aid of outlines as additional reference.

A dominant photograph in this study will be the largest photograph carried above the mid-fold of the front page. It

will at times, by design, cross that fold as a placement division. For the study, the dominant photograph will show the largest portion of its dimensions above the fold.

#### Study Limitations and Scope

A limitation of the study will be that comparison to other daily newspapers will not be appropriate since the two papers are not a representative sample of daily newspapers.

Significant information from this study will only regard the photographic news content, source, size, placement and geographic orientation of the dominant front page photographs used by the Tulsa World and the Daily Oklahoman during the time period studied, 1965-1990.

The assumption is that if news content of photographs is a conscious decision of the editors who are generally responsible for front page make-up, and also if that news content is placed in the same or similar categories as those used to study front page text, then the two newspapers will follow Culbertson's traditional journalists<sup>6</sup> by placing importance on timeliness and proximity. It is possible if the study does not show this, the two or either of the two traditional dailies may be attempting to use the dominant photo in a non-traditional fashion to carry more news of an interpretive or impact nature.

The fact that the time period largely encompasses the 20-30 years in the history of newspapers in this century

that has seen the most radical design and technological changes, will lend some interest to the scope of the study.

Possible assumptions about how these two dailies fair among other traditional and non-traditional newspapers of comparable circulations may be possible at the study's completion. A slight trend exists in the New York Times in front page news of a more interpretive nature, or news that is of less immediacy that requires more in-depth coverage.<sup>7</sup> It is not certain if this trend is also reflected in other dailies by their news or by their front page photographic usage.

This study assumes that both newspapers are working within the design limitations their particular traditions give them, fully utilizing the visual elements available. The foremost of these elements being the dominant photograph.

The study should discern any trend toward "hard news" content in dominant photographs as opposed to the typical traditional "soft news" usage.<sup>8</sup> This would also support assumptions that those making front page photographic decisions are utilizing this element either traditionally or non-traditionally.

#### Review of literature

At this point it appears that literature on the subject is very limited. Many of the studies reviewed date from the



sixties. A large portion of those studies deal with front-page layout and design of news content and not specifically photography. One study even drops the visual element from the examination of the front page, including photographs only as space allotted to their connected story.

Reference to theories that have any applicability to visual communication seem to largely fall into the area of perception. Much of the material appears to address art more than photography, and that from a rather philosophical approach.

It is apparent that photography is a difficult research area and also an area that for whatever reasons does not command much content analysis. Some study has been done of a feminist nature to verify the ratio of male versus female images in the press, as well as the professional image of women the press depicts.

#### Methodology

The study is a content analysis with the dominant photo the unit under study. Categories will be carefully selected to closely match those of previous content analysis studies of front page news content of text only. The study will utilize other categories to increase its usefulness. Those categories will allow a breakdown of source, geographic

emphasis of photo origin, and possible changes in placement and size.

Source will be delineated as staff, wire, and other (press releases, etc.). Geographic emphasis will be categorized as local (to include state), national, and international.

Placement will denote left, center, and right with the location of the largest portion of the photograph determining the category. Size will be measured in the normal column width and depth in inches. For the study, some standard size choices may be set in ranges.

Because of a severe lack of previous studies on news photographs, questions instead of hypotheses will be posed for this study. One question of the study is how has the content of front page dominant photographs undergone change in the last twenty five years in both the Tulsa World and in the Daily Oklahoman?

Secondly, do both of these traditional dailies begin to show, through any changes in news value, placement, and geographic interest of dominant front page photographs, an effort to be less traditional?

Both of the newspapers have circulation figures that would allow them to move in non-traditional directions<sup>9</sup> and follow other dailies across the country that have undergone radical front page design change.

Statistical measures such as chi-square, will allow the data to be examined to compare the two newspapers and the various categories of the study.

Sampling will be random and will be from six individual years chosen out of the twenty-five year frame. The years will be chosen to allow a look at the newspapers during the three phases of the design revolution.<sup>10</sup>

Findings in the study will be displayed in representative charts or graphs and will support the objectives and questions of the study.

The scholar's inferences from the study will be clearly noted as such, and factual information will be addressed separately.

Appropriate summary, conclusions and recommendations will be offered.

## Endnotes

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7. Christine Ogan, Ida Plymale, D. Lynn Smith, William H. Turpin, and Donald Lewis Shaw, "The Changing Front Page of the New York Times, 1900-1970," Journalism Quarterly, vol. 52, No. 2, (Summer 1975).
8. Fosdick, p. 369.
9. Utt and Pasternack, (1989), p. 627.
10. Utt and Pasternack, (1989), pp. 626-627.]

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Content Analysis of News Photographs

The study of photographs in the American press is beginning to find merit among scholars and researchers. Past neglect of the area as serious research can be explained.

Vague ideas and a severe gap in theories of visual communication have been difficult to contend with for researchers. While the visual process has been studied and concepts describing areas such as projection and perception are under continual review, a strong foundation for the visual communication researcher in photojournalism has yet to be established. But with the radical changes in newspaper design over the past decade, this deficiency soon may be remedied.

In the interim, much information is being compiled in a broad range of studies of visual communication. A number of variables encountered in visual communication lend themselves to serious study. Some of these include readership preferences, editorial decision processes,

technical execution and design trends. An ever expanding world of graphic technology adds to the study possibilities almost daily.

This study draws on the nature and variety of other studies in an attempt to assess news value of the content of dominant photographs.

Many media studies have been performed since Berelson's classic definition of content analysis in 1952 described the process as "a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communications."<sup>1</sup> Danielson later noted four key elements in an elaboration of Berelson's early definition. Those elements are:

Objective. The categories used to analyze content must be defined so precisely that anyone using them to analyze the same material would get the same results.

Systematic. The content to be analyzed must be selected in a predetermined, unbiased way. Thus, the researcher may not examine only those elements which fit his hypothesis.

Quantitative. Results are expressed numerically, such as in frequency distributions, contingency tables, correlation coefficients, ratios, percentages.

Manifest. Content is analyzed for what it says, not for the meaning "between the lines."<sup>2</sup>

In a 1972 study, Carney noted a somewhat different and refocused definition. "Content analysis," Carney said, "is any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages."<sup>3</sup>

Studies that analyze news content in the press incorporate various categories or elements. A fair number of studies, like Utt and Pasternack's<sup>4</sup>, and Bridges<sup>5</sup>, have examined front-page content only. Several of these, using American dailies of different ownership, geographical location, or characteristic layout, as well as a number of other variables, have provided valuable insight.

News value has been studied more often in work that examines the written message in communications than in the photographic image. A 1946 study of newspaper readership found size and content the most significant factors affecting newspaper picture readership.<sup>6</sup> Prior to that time, a pioneer effort by Gallup in the 1930s to poll readers of the Des Moines Sunday Register reflected high reader interest in news photographs.<sup>7</sup>

Later studies have continued to confirm that news pictures consistently win the highest newspaper readership. In her 1977 study on the nature of news photographs, Smith asked, "What is there about pictures that attracts such high readership?"<sup>8</sup> She was able to identify news values that she related to news pictures.

Other questions posed and examined in studies by MacLean and Kao (1965) determined that representative types of readers exist.<sup>9</sup> MacLean and Kao's review of earlier work in readership by Woodburn and picture preference by Swanson

supported Woodburn and Swanson's findings. The main reason for picture preference is subject matter. MacLean and Kao also determined that editorial decision makers may not have enough information about readers to judge their particular picture preferences.<sup>10</sup>

These studies assume that at some point a decision is made editorially when a news photograph is selected for publication. This can not be assured in all cases. There may be photographic decisions made based solely on factors such as the size of news hole to be filled or sheer availability of photographic material.

Smith questioned how news editors operate, even when given enough information to predict reader picture appeal:

"Do they," she asked, "in deciding which newsphoto to display, respond to their own interior like-dislike, impact patterns of preferences based on individual sets of experience? Or, do they utilize as yet unidentified 'journalistic' standards and news values?"<sup>11</sup>

Arnold, in a study of audience preference and editor selection of pictures, supported the possible existence of a system of selection values used in addition to an editor's anticipation of reader preferences. A system, Arnold suggested, that allowed each picture editor to evolve picture selection values into ordinal relationships with "super-ordinate and subordinate" values depending upon the audience.<sup>12</sup>

Arnold and Smith have built upon the research of Hans Toch and Malcolm MacLean in perception and picture



selection,<sup>13</sup> and readership studies by Woodburn,<sup>14</sup> and by Swanson,<sup>15</sup>. Arnold's work supported a system of selection values. Smith's work went further and established the possibility of similarities in the newsphoto values of editors. Smith's review of previous studies concluded that

newspaper readers tend to read what interests them in newsphoto content, and editors tend to select for publication what interests them, what appeals to their respective 'noses' for news, or what they perceive as their readers' interests.<sup>16</sup>

Using Ward's model Smith established four newsphoto dimensions. "Borrowing from the perceptions of the authority-experts" and Smith's own study, the dimensions of normality, prominence, dynamism and complexity were selected.<sup>17</sup> Smith chose these dimensions as photo values in her effort to reduce photograph values to the "simplest and most representative common denominators."<sup>18</sup>

MacLean and Hazard, using factor analysis in their Badger Village Study of women and the variables that influenced picture preferences, identified six major picture appeals:<sup>19</sup>

(1) Idolatry--a term used by MacLean and Hazard to define pictures of the successful, glamorous and wealthy.

(2) Social Problems--pictures of people involved in riots and strikes; people who are socially and culturally disadvantaged, or otherwise misfits.

(3) Picturesque--salon pictures or pictures that are moody or dynamic in nature.

(4) War--pictures dealing with all aspects of war from the gruesome results of war to pictures depicting sympathy for the victims of war.

(5) Blood and violence--pictures of people who have been killed through crime or accident.

(6) Spectator Sports--action sports photographs.

The Badger Village Study found "Idolatry--a term used by MacLean and Hazard to define pictures of the successful, glamorous and wealthy," as the first of the six interests of women studied. Spectator sports appealed least to the women of the study.<sup>20</sup>

Stephenson's introduction of Q-sort methodology in the early 1960s began to aid researchers studying preference patterns and reader types began to be identified.<sup>21</sup>

#### Perception and Communication

Toch and MacLean's study in perception reviewed the transactional approach which described perception as an ongoing process entwined with "the enterprise of living." Toch and MacLean felt the transactional approach gave "clear implications about the meaning in any communication, including pictorial communication, and an indication of the vast number of variables which might influence picture interest values."<sup>22</sup>

Thomas interpreted Toch and MacLean's results to mean that "responses to photographs are an outcome of past perceptions and a starting point for future perceptions."<sup>23</sup> Thomas added that Toch and MacLean, in fact concluded that people as "users" of perception, become a result of their perceptions.

Gordon supports Toch and MacLeans's work on perception in his 1969 study from which he asserts the functional, personal and individual nature Toch and MacLean assign to perception assists the individual in developing a visual vocabulary. This visual vocabulary functioning and depending upon "our personalities, interests, unconscious dispositions, values, and every other aspect of psychological lives," develops from our own personal photographic experiences.<sup>24</sup>

Only a visually rich setting can help a person assimilate the visual vocabulary applicable to photographs. In fact, Speigel,<sup>25</sup> in an unpublished study cites Agnes Fraser to provide insight to the confusion viewing a photograph may create for someone from a visually deprived culture:

Even pictures are hard to understand, as one realized watching an African woman standing before a photograph of a Greuze [a French portrait painter] head and gradually discovering it was a head. She discovered in turn the nose, the mouth, the eye, but where was the other eye? I tried by turning my profile to explain why she could only see

one, but she hopped round to my other side to point out that I possessed a second eye which the other lacked.<sup>26</sup>

A 1976 study by Hightower,<sup>27</sup> titled, "Readers See What They Want to See in Photographs," expressed the view that meaning in pictorial communication lies with the reader and does not transcend the one-to-one relationship of the photographer to viewer.

Efforts are still underway to define techniques involved in the making of a good photograph. According to Feininger,<sup>28</sup> "the qualities of a good photograph include Purpose and Meaning, Emotional Impact, Stopping Power, and Graphic Quality." Even Feininger's explanations of the qualities do little, however, to assist the communicator in knowing what picture appeal actually involves. Thus, perception coupled with the personality of readers or viewers, or even editors, becomes very complex.

#### Content Importance

Swanson's 1955 study showed a reader content preference for fire-disaster, war, weather, consumer information, human interest, major crime, county correspondence, accidents-mishaps, science-invention, and defense.<sup>29</sup> Swanson also noted a difference in interest between men and women with the women interested in more subject matter categories than men.

Work by Woodburn with two-column photographs classified by subject revealed men were interested in human interest, national defense, crime, servicemen's news, war news, and science and oddities. Women ranked weddings and engagements highest, followed by children and babies, women's society and club news, crime, servicemen's news, human interest and science and oddities. Men rejected pictures of women's society and club news, fashions, and food and table decorations. Sports pictures were similarly rejected by women.<sup>30</sup>

Determinations have been made of picture type by MacLean and Kao using facet analysis methods<sup>31</sup>, and respondent type by Laurent using multiple regression analysis to examine possible interplay.<sup>32</sup> Laurent's work is heavily reliant on knowledge of the viewer in order to predict picture appeal and response.

There is still reason to accept the idea that connotative referents learned in the rich visual society of the United States form a basis for a largely stable structure of pictorial interest. A supportive view of this idea can be found in the research of Walter Ward. Referring to the nature of news Ward stated:

Those involved with the present studies believe that the nature of news is more stable than the "nature" of individual gatekeepers.

Even the most fundamental exploration uncovers the sobering notion that news--like child psychology and constitutional freedoms--is a many-sided entity that

everybody KNOWS, rhetorically, but few UNDERSTAND, operationally. But the surface of news is more complex than its underlying structure. Its nature evolves from this lower-level structure which may comprise as few as five or six news elements.<sup>33</sup>

Ward, in pioneering work on the nature of news, created a theoretical three-dimensional news model. Using the model, Ward found that rank-ordering of news stories among editors studied was similar and agreement was significant among the editors on the importance of news elements.

A student of Ward's, Barbara Smith, carried Ward's work a step further by questioning, "If news values could be identified and empirically verified, why could not the same be done for news pictures?"<sup>34</sup> A picture preference study heavily utilizing Ward's news model and the work of Malcolm MacLean, was done by another of Ward's students, James Thomas. Thomas followed Q-sort methodology in investigating photographic viewers tendency to use a consistent stock of signs as referents.<sup>35</sup> News content and the "nature" of news has been studied extensively. Kalesh and Edom in 1951, identified "visible forces" which stop readers and "intangible forces" which hold the reader's attention.<sup>36</sup> They also suggested that dimensions of timeliness heightened both of these forces.

Smith, in her work, cites Charles Brown and his equation of newsphoto content values with news story values:

The criteria for judging news pictures for content are approximately the same as for evaluating news stories. They include timeliness, propinquity, importance of the

persons, significance of the event, and human interest. A picture that reaches the desk in time to be used... rates high, whatever its other defects. After interest in the event dies down, the picture illustrating it may have little news value. Local art has greater reader appeal than pictures of remote persons and places, and photographs of prominent people are more newsworthy than those of obscure ones. The magnitude and significance of the event obviously are important factors... Under human interest come pictures that appeal to our elemental concerns--home, food, clothing, shelter, love and ambition.<sup>37</sup>

Earlier work by John Whiting, in 1946, lists newsphoto dimensions as (1) impact or stopping power achieved through contrast, dramatic lightings, human interest or the unusual; (2) emphasis on specific pictorial details which help convey the photographer's intent, (3) memorableness; and (4) the quality of being "alive." By Whiting's observation, "the definitions mean something like this: A good picture makes you stop, look and think."<sup>38</sup>

Dimensions of newsphoto content are also laid out in a 1961 study by Rhode and McCall. Their dimensions, burdened by technical aspects are: (1) meaning or a story-telling function, (2) impact or stopping power, (3) unity or singleness of purpose with all compositional elements contributing to that purpose, (4) point of view of the relationship of the foreground, background and principal subject, (5) perspective, including scale and 3-dimensionality, (6) contrast and (7) format.<sup>37</sup> After identifying the seven dimensions, Rhode and McCall discount them in their statement: Words that will describe a good

news photograph are elusive. When terms are found, they will, at best, only partially describe the photographic qualities they are meant to verbalize...<sup>40</sup>

Stempel, in a 1963 study of the Paul J. Deutschmann Memorial Papers in Mass Communications, also examines the "nature of news."<sup>41</sup> In his attempt to define news values, Stempel examined 25 newspapers utilizing factor analysis. Six factors of news on which agreement was found were labeled: suspense-conflict, public affairs, human interest, specific incidents pinpointed in time, positive news and government-politics.<sup>42</sup>

#### Gatekeeping Studies

Gatekeeper studies by Gieber with telegraph editors,<sup>43</sup> and Breed of 72 newsmen,<sup>44</sup> both introduce forces outside of the editor's evaluation process or the earlier definitions of news values.

Gieber saw the newsman as "a member of a professionalized role system and subject to the newsroom bureaucracy and frame of reference which influences his decision."<sup>45</sup>

Breed placed emphasis on the role of experienced newsroom personnel and executives in influencing newer staff to conform to newspaper policy. He stressed a view that



newer staff learned to anticipate what was expected in order to be awarded or to avoid punishment.<sup>46</sup>

It is apparent that many factors and considerations affect decisions regarding photographic policy and selection. The wide range of these factors intensifies the importance of accurate and exclusive content categories for this study.

### Design Changes

It is accepted knowledge in the newspaper business that the dynamic hybrid USA Today has been a catalyst for design change in the press of America. The colorful paper dubbed as "Gannett's thunderbolt,"<sup>47</sup> was introduced in 1982.

Paul Lester in 1988 completed a comparative study of 300 front pages from 1986, of USA Today and four other newspapers--two with similar front page design formats as USA Today and two with more traditional front page make-up. Lester's findings give researchers "a more quantitative base for discussion of USA Today design characteristics compared with other newspaper designs."<sup>48</sup>

Researchers Sandra Utt and Steve Pasternack, in a 1984 study, added a third element to the definition of traditional newspaper success:

Traditionally, the emphasis on a newspaper's front page has been to report the major stories of the day. Success has been defined as getting it first and

getting it right. Today, there is a third element of success-- getting it to look nice.<sup>49</sup>

Page one, Utt and Pasternack wrote, has become a "newspaper's showcase. It represents history in its first draft and print journalism's moment in the sun."<sup>50</sup>

USA Today cannot lay claim to inspiring the early part of a continuing design revolution. A revolution of sorts, which actually began in the 1960s when many newspapers changed body type to improve readability, reduced their use of headline decks, and eliminated column rules and horizontal make-up.<sup>51</sup>

Sissors, by 1965, detected a "small, but growing movement by editors in the United States to modernize their newspapers' designs."<sup>52</sup> The "net effect," Sissors said, of these changes, which he deemed as "haphazard" has been that most newspapers (in 1965) continued to appear the way they did 25 years earlier, and were not, in Sissors judgment, "representative of a truly contemporary spirit."<sup>53</sup>

Sissors cites design influence greats, John E. Allen, former editor of the Linotype News, and author of three books on newspaper designing; Dr. Albert A. Sutton, of Northwestern University; Edmund Arnold, of Syracuse University, who followed Allen as editor of the Linotype News; and Allen Hutt of London.

The following, in essence, is a composite of these influential newspapermen's thinking on basic newspaper design:<sup>54</sup>

- 1 A newspaper should be physically attractive.
- 2 It should be legible, or easy to read.
- 3 It should be designed for simplicity, free from affectations and anything which calls attention to itself.
- 4 Any typographic device used should do the job, or it should be replaced.
- 5 The design should "increase readability and attract readers into the news."
- 6 It should arrange the news "so that readers know at a glance which are the most important stories."
- 7 It should "create recognition, to make the reader identify and want the paper as soon as he sees it."
- 8 "The whole newspaper should be packaged for maximum reader appeal and reader comfort."
- 9 A newspaper should look like a newspaper.<sup>55]</sup>

USA Today's use of color, graphics, short front page stories, and smaller more numerous (usually sports-related) front page images that do not include front page stories, but rather "tease" the reader, set it apart from other newspapers.<sup>56</sup>

The paper, no matter its substantial success, has however been criticized for its lack of in-depth reporting. Hartman, in reviewing USA Today's style and its appeal to

young adults, has termed it a "McPaper" for the brevity of both stories and visual elements.<sup>57</sup>

Utt and Pasternack cite Mario Garcia and the "center of visual impact"<sup>58</sup> used to attract readers to a page. Garcia wrote: To think graphically means to invite the reader into page with attractive, provocative and orderly use of photos, typography and illustrations.<sup>59</sup>

The early study (1984) by Utt and Pasternack yielded findings that reflected a major shift away from traditional to modern design in the daily newspaper.

Among their findings, they found:

- that a modular front page format had been adopted by 65.7% of dailies.
- Most dailies (85.5%) now use a six-column front page with varying column widths.
- Number of front page stories for 68.4% of dailies is either five or six, though many conclude on inside pages.
- Most dailies (85.6%) still have a flag that spans the front page's width, but is not always found at the top.
- Body type has become nearly universal at 9 point (77.9%), and serif (90.3%).
- Less conformity is found in headline changes with most using either sanserif (42%) or block serif (38%), with the remaining (20%) using serif headline type.
- Color, like television of the 1960s, according to Utt and Pasternack, is increasingly used by newspapers.
- One in three dailies (34.6%) regularly runs four-color on page one, while another 28.2% do so on occasion.
- An overwhelming 93.5% of dailies now utilize a front page index

- One in three (34.5%) print a front page digest summarizing content for the reader.
- Rules between stories have been abandoned by 90.9% of newspapers.
- Number of front page photographs printed for 66.7% of dailies, is two, with 96.2% using a dominant photograph.
- Placement of the main photograph varies daily in 53.4% of the papers.
- Newspapers which regularly hold the placement of dominant photographs, find the most likely positions are the upper left (20.5%) or the middle of the page (21.9%).
- Modular newspapers seem less likely than non-modular in utilizing a set placement of their dominant front page photograph.<sup>60</sup>

The later Utt and Pasternack study in 1987 and 1988 again examined graphic and design characteristics of daily newspaper front pages. Design shifts at American newspapers in the five years between the two studies "have been perhaps more radical and far-reaching than in the previous half-century combined," Utt and Pasternack stated.<sup>61</sup>

They attributed the revolution in design to three main factors: the constant parade of new graphics-related technologies, a greater concern among news people for appearance as well as content, and the trend-setting national daily, USA Today.<sup>62</sup>

The current trend, Utt and Pasternack found, "is to greater use of color, information graphics and pictures."<sup>63</sup>

In their later work, Utt and Pasternack made a comparison of newspaper design change with the adoption and diffusion theory. According to the theory, adoption of new ideas (design, in this case) has occurred in several stages ranging from the early innovators to the late or non-adopters.<sup>64</sup>

In this comparison to adoption and diffusion theory, Utt and Pasternack set forth three distinct phases:

Phase one of modern newspaper design would generally be from the 1960s until about 1981, or the "innovators." During this phase the early adopters changed column widths, experimented with moving the flag from the top of the page, and used some spot color, larger black and white photos, and four-color photos. Early adopters would have included: the Milwaukee Journal, the Minneapolis Star, and Today (Brevard County, Florida).

Phase two of newspaper redesign would roughly be from 1981-1986, or the "homogenation period." During that period, almost all papers were changed graphically. The Standard Advertising Unit was introduced, forcing newspapers to change their standard 11 pica line. USA Today's introduction into all its major markets forced local newspapers to graphically change; and more newspapers were hiring specially trained design experts.

Phase three (1986-present) could be labelled the "refinement period." Many newspapers continue to change and readjust their overall look. Larger circulation newspapers are beginning to use color because of improvements in printing techniques that allow them to replate less frequently.<sup>65</sup>

Overall, studies have presented a steady picture of change in both the content and design of American dailies since the early 1960s. Many editors are quick to either attribute this to the advent of USA Today, while others refuse even to admit that the "radical publication" is a

newspaper. It is obvious through the studies, that both design and content of many publications now reflect the stylistic and trend-setting national, USA Today.

An American Newspaper Publishers Association study published in 1973,<sup>66</sup> which examined news and editorial content in U.S. daily newspapers by subject matter and circulation in 1971, reflected the fact that general interest categories combined made up the largest content area at 37%.

This is excluding men's interest categories of sports and business-finance (21.1%), and women's interest categories of fashion-society, and food-home-garden (5.4%).

State and local news showed 12.7%, U.S. domestic government showed 6.9%, and international news, which included Vietnam and other wars or rebellions, U.S. government armaments, defense (Vietnam), and diplomatic news of U.S. or foreign nature, was reflected by 10.2% of content. The authors of the study found that "daily papers with more than 250,000 circulation tended to carry relatively more international items and fewer state and local news stories."<sup>67</sup>

In a study by Ogan (1975)<sup>68</sup> of front page content of the New York Times, a steady decline in world news since 1945 was noted.

Increases in size of dailies circulation figures brought increases in all content categories, with the

exception of Women's Interest items and Columns of advice, humor, gossip or politics, which sacrificed space for the other increases.

In an interpretation section of the study, published in Praeger Publishers Special Studies in U.S. Economic, Social, and Political Issues Aspen Institute Guide to Communication Industry Trends, several interesting points were noted. First, a statement was made regarding the task of measuring national trends in newspaper content. The author is quick to state that existing studies were "usually created to fit the particular needs of the researchers at a specific time. Thus, there are no long-term national data on newspaper content trends, and the editors are able to offer only some interesting examples of the kinds of newspaper content analysis which have been done."<sup>69</sup>



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## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### General

This is a trend study using content analysis. The focus is on dominant front page photographs used by two of Oklahoma's major daily newspapers, the Tulsa World and the Daily Oklahoman including the Saturday Oklahoman and Times.

These two papers were chosen because of their location in metropolitan areas, their circulation, and the availability of issues for study.

Media content has often been examined through content analysis because it is a "research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication."<sup>1</sup>

A study of photographic content analysis over time can reveal many changes. Much of the change can be expected as an "outgrowth of technical and social evolution in the newsroom, pressroom and darkroom, and the competitive pressures of broadcast news."<sup>2</sup> Other change can possibly be attributed to changes in editorial judgment or increasing

emphasis on the visual aspects of communications as represented by photographic usage in the press.

### Newspaper Profiles

The World was established in 1906. A morning daily, the World is the smaller of the two papers studied with a regular daily circulation in 1990 of 131,816 and a Sunday circulation of 231,473.<sup>3</sup>

Published by World Publishing Company, the Tulsa World and its evening counterpart, the Tulsa Tribune, though corporately and editorially separate, operate through a merged business known as the Newspaper Printing Company. Circulation and mechanical departments are also merged. The business, advertising, production and printing functions are performed by the Newspaper Printing Company as an agency of each newspaper.

Independent politically, the World is mechanically produced by letterpress capable of black and three run-of-press colors. A six column front page with inside sections of nine columns is usual for the World.

Associated Press wire photograph services are utilized by the World in addition to their regular photographic staff.

The oldest of the two state dailies, the Daily Oklahoman was founded in 1894. The Oklahoman is published

mornings Monday through Friday. Circulation is 242,214. A Saturday Oklahoman and Times was established in 1889, five years earlier than the Daily Oklahoman, and is still published in conjunction with the Oklahoman. Circulation for the Saturday edition is less than the daily edition at 228,551. A Sunday Oklahoman, exceeds both other editions in circulation at 336,518.

All editions are published by Oklahoma Publishing Company, using offset equipment with black and three run-of-press color capability.

The Oklahoman and Times say they are independent politically. High speed wire services and AP receiving dishes are used to augment the paper's regular photographic staff.

#### Research Questions and Null Hypotheses

Purpose of this study is to answer these questions about the photography usage on the front page of the newspapers studied for the period January of 1965 to mid October of 1990.

1. How has the content of dominant front page photographs, judged by defined news categories, changed for both the Tulsa World and the Oklahoman over the 25 year period? Are there differences in the changes between the papers?
2. Are there changes in placement or size of the dominant



front page photographs for either newspaper and do changes differ between the papers?

3. Has front page photographic content become more international in origin?

The following three null hypotheses were examined in this study:

1. Content of dominant front page photographs, judged by defined news categories, has not changed for the two newspapers over the 25 year time span studied.
2. No change is apparent in placement, or size of dominant of front page photographs for either newspaper.
3. Incidence of internationally focused photographs has not increased for either of the two newspapers during the study.

#### Definition of Terms

1) "Dominant Front Page Photograph" was defined as the most prominent photograph by size above the center fold on the front page.

2) "Source" was defined as the person or media that supplied the photograph. Sources include staff, wire services, and others (press releases, etc.).

3) "Stand Alone Photograph" was defined as a photograph that is not part of a story.

4) "Front Page Story Photo" was defined as a photograph included with a story on the front page.

5) "Inside Reference" was defined as a photograph that refers the reader to a story not on the front page.

6) "Geographic Area" was defined as local (including state), national or international in origin.

7) "Size" was defined as column width by depth in inches of the photograph. Example: Two columns wide by four inches deep.

8) "Placement" was defined as left of center, center or right of center.

9) "Violent" was defined as social and political conflicts, armed conflicts, and disasters either natural such as tornados, or man-made such as automobile accidents or industrial mishaps.

10) "Non-violent" was defined as lacking in conflict, disturbance or turmoil, and natural or man-made disaster.

Categories of content were defined according to Chilton Bush's system of categories for general news content.<sup>5</sup> Bush expanded many categories usually collapsed in other studies and defined 47 separate carefully developed and mutually exclusive categories for news content. Use of these categories for news content of photographs will also allow for double coding or the inclusion in more than one category, to increase coding reliability. The double coding also allows for combinations of categories and aides in final comparisons.

### Sampling

Three revolutionary phases of newspaper design occur during the 25 year period of the study according to Utt and Pasternack.<sup>6</sup>

The first phase, from 1960 until about 1981, saw "innovators" making changes in front page makeup and design. Phase two, from 1981 to 1986, Utt and Pasternack deem a "homogenization period" where many newspapers were attempting to incorporate overall changes as they also dealt more intently with rapid changes in technology. The third phase, from 1986 to the present is considered one of "refinement" as the daily press settles into the changes each accepts individually as appropriate to style and tradition.

Sample population was taken randomly from six separate years thought to represent points of design change in Utt and Pasternack's 1989 study. The years 1965, 1970, 1976, 1981, 1986 and 1990 were selected. Twelve issues for each year, except 1990 from which nine issues were selected for availability reasons, from the Tulsa World and the Oklahoman were randomly chosen.

### Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis was the dominant front page photograph.

### Categories of Analysis

This study follows examples of two former studies of front page news content done by Utt and Pasternack in 1984 and 1989. Since content studied was front page news, not photographs, use of Bush's extensive news content categories was applied to dominant front page photographs.

All 47 of Bush's categories were used. The fact that the categories were designed to fit news content of the 1950's indeed suggested that the study could find many categories not represented. Their usefulness in classifying news content is still applicable to the study's attempt to classify dominant photographs by news content.

The categories, left as Bush designed them, are:

- 1). PEOPLE WELL KNOWN-- Persons well known to most reader of the particular newspaper because of their fame or notoriety or particular accomplishment.
- 2). PEOPLE NOT WELL KNOWN-- Persons in the news because of their particular accomplishments or activities or position, but not well known to the usual reader of the particular newspaper.
- 3). PEOPLE IN GROUPS-- Persons in the news because they are officers or committee members of clubs, lodges, societies, fraternal organizations, Boy Scouts, and other non-governmental groups; pall-bearers, etc.
- 4). HOLLYWOOD-- Persons not otherwise well known who are associated with the Hollywood entertainment industries.

Excluded: Activities of those persons classified as "People Well Known."

5). OUR COMMUNITY, OUR REGION-- An element with which all members of the newspaper's community (or region) identify themselves because of the place of the community in the news item or the effect this news may have on the community.

6). OUR NATION-- An element with which almost all readers of United States newspapers might identify themselves as members of this nation. This does not imply that all events happening within the boundaries of the United States have this element; not does this element apply only to stories taking place within these boundaries.

7). OUR ALLIES-- During a "cold war" period, some political and economic events in a country formally and informally allied to the United States have a peculiar meaning to an American reader because they are or seem to be related to the security or welfare of the United States. Excluded: News in which American men or equipment are directly involved or in which the United States' interest is directly stated (see "Our Nation").

8). OUR ENEMIES-- Most political and economic events in the Communist-controlled nations affect the American reader in a different way than do events in other foreign countries. Such events may be threatening or reassuring.

9). OTHER NATIONS-- (a) News about happenings in foreign countries other than those mentioned in Nos. 6,7, and 8.

(b) Also those happenings in the countries included in Nos. 7 and 8 which do not directly or indirectly affect the welfare of the United States.

10). GOVERNMENTAL ACTS-- News about internal and domestic acts of a government (city, state, or national), the legislative process and the actual execution of laws, which are non-political. Not the same as: activities of government classified elsewhere (criminal proceedings, health, labor disputes, Atomic Energy Commission, price stabilization, defense measures).

11). POLITICS-- News about politics on the city, county, state, and national level; all aspects, issues, candidates, leaders, criticisms of government activities laden with political implications. Excluded: News of the Communists as a political party in the U.S.A. (see "Communism in the U.S.A.")

12). REBELLION-- News of actual armed (or at least violent) action taken against a government by a group living within the government's boundaries.

13). WAR-- Actual hostilities between two or more nations.

14). DEFENSE-- News of activities of defense departments of nations; including NATO and civil defense. Excluded: "War" and "Rebellion"; news of R.O.T.C. (see "Education").

15). ATOMIC BOMB - ATOMIC ENERGY-- News concerning atomic warfare, atomic research, atomic medicine, defense measures

for atomic warfare, and activities of the Atomic Energy Commission.

16). DIPLOMACY AND FOREIGN RELATIONS-- News of diplomatic relations between nations; including news of the United Nations, official activities of ambassadors, military and occupation officials.

17). ECONOMIC ACTIVITY-- News of business, industry, commerce, banking, finance, and trade. Excluded: News of prices or taxes which could have a direct effect on the reader (see "Prices" or "Taxes").

18). PRICES-- News about the fluctuation of the prices of consumer items or the controls of these prices; cost-of-living index.

19). TAXES-- News about the establishment, abolishment, or changes in rates of taxes which could have a direct effect on most readers (other types of taxes are included in "Governmental Acts" or "Economic Activity," depending on whether or not they have an economic implication).

20). LABOR: MAJOR-- News chiefly concerned with the conflict element of organized labor in society; strikes, anticipated strikes, plans of labor which could affect the welfare of the community of the particular reader or the welfare of the nation; when the dispute is either nationwide or directly affects a large section of the public.

21). LABOR: MINOR-- News concerned with the day-to-day activities of organized labor; elections, peaceful

settlement of contracts, grievances, etc. News which might be of interest to the reader simply because it deals with "labor," rather than the "power" of labor in curtailing production or affecting the welfare of the nation.

22). AGRICULTURE--News of farming, farm organizations, equipment, the technical and business aspects of farming, and farm prices. Excluded: Prices of items which have an implication that there might be a resultant change in the price of consumer items (see "Prices").

23). JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS: CIVIL-- News of pleadings, trials, and reviews of civil suits. Excluded: "Divorce" and "Marriage and marital Relations."

24). CRIME-- News of criminal trials, acts of crime, arrests.

25). COMMUNISM IN THE U.S.A.-- News of the activities of Communists in the U.S.A.--proven or suspected--political activities, investigations, trials.

26). SEX-- News dealing with the sex relations of males and females.

27). ACCIDENTS, DISASTERS-- News involving disasters of nature (fires, floods), explosions, transportation accidents, and accidents befalling individuals. There are three orders, as follows:

ACCIDENTS, DISASTERS: FIRST ORDER-- News stories in which there is property damage, and/or injury short of



death. Included is anticipated disaster, exposure to disaster, missing persons.

ACCIDENTS, DISASTERS: SECOND ORDER-- News stories which involve one or only a few fatalities.

ACCIDENTS, DISASTERS: THIRD ORDER-- News stories which involve a considerable number of fatalities and/or a great amount of property damage.

28). SOCIAL AND SAFETY MEASURES-- News about the social welfare and safety, usually originating in non-official organizations.

29). RACE RELATIONS-- News concerned with the segregation of and the conflict between races.

30). ALCOHOL-- News which deals with legal and illegal uses of alcohol when it is a concurrent element in the story. Included also are news stories such as those dealing with the effect an increase in liquor licenses might have on the city's well-being. Excluded: Effects of alcohol on man's health (see "Health, Personal").

31). MONEY-- News in which the amount of money involved is a separate element of interest to the usual reader.

Excluded: Prices of consumer items (see "Prices").

32). HEALTH, PERSONAL-- News of diseases, cures, epidemics with which most readers might be able to identify.

Excluded: Atomic medicine (see "Atomic Bomb-Atomic Energy").

- 33). HEALTH, PUBLIC-- News of public health, the communal or national welfare, health agencies.
- 34). SCIENCE AND INVENTION-- News from the natural and social sciences involving theory, inventions, and innovations. Excluded: News pertaining to health, atomic developments, transportation, or agriculture.
- 35). RELIGION-- News about churches and religious sects; statements by church leaders. Excluded: Weekly church page announcements.
- 36). PHILANTHROPY-- News of private benevolence, privately-supported charity, bequests to institutions, the Community Chest, United Crusade, etc.
- 37). WEATHER-- All reports and news about the weather; feature items hinging upon past (or expected) weather developments. Excluded: "Accidents, Disasters: Third Order."
- 38). NATURAL DEATHS-- News of natural deaths; obituaries. Excluded: Paid death notices, because they are a form of advertising, not news.
- 39). TRANSPORTATION-- News of commercial, industrial, and private transportation developments, or activities in shipping, aviation, railroad, and automobile, including parking problems, terminals, ports, and depots. Excluded: Military logistics (see "Defense" or "War"); wrecks (see "Accidents, Disasters:").

- 40). EDUCATION-- News of private and public schools, colleges, universities, night schools, trade schools, adult education, R.O.T.C., statements by educators.
- 41). CHILDREN, WELFARE OF-- News of the activities of the younger set, the next generation; juvenile delinquency.  
Excluded: Education of the next generation (see "Education"); the human interest antics of young children (see "Children, Cute").
- 42). CHILDREN, CUTE-- News of the cute, unexpected antics of children.
- 43). ANIMALS-- News involving animals, including pets. When, in the human interest story, the writer often attributes implicitly human characteristics to animals.
- 44). MARRIAGE AND MARITAL RELATIONS-- Non-society page news dealing with marriages, the marriage ceremony; the unusual side of marital relations, in-laws, families.
- 45). AMUSEMENTS-- News of entertainment, events, celebrations, contests, travel for recreation (not to be confused with the economic side of the tourist business), legalized gambling; radio, movies, and television on the entertainment level.
- 46). THE ARTS, CULTURE-- News of culture and cultural entertainment, involving literature, painting, drama, architecture, languages, museums--as opposed to the strictly entertainment function of movies and television today.

Excluded: News of formal instruction of any of the above (see "Education").

47). HUMAN INTEREST-- News that is more popular literature than chronicle.

### The Quantification System

Photographs analyzed were counted and listed by newspaper. Photographs were also listed by the different categories. All collected data was nominal or frequency count.

### Coding

Coding was done by the author. In order to verify procedure and estimate coder reliability, a pre-test was conducted. The pre-test analyzed dominant front page photographs of the Washington Post for a two-week period of time.

The photographs were placed in categories according to Bush's news content categories. They were also measured and their placement was noted. Origin of the photograph, whether staff, wire service, or other, such as public relations release was recorded.

The pre-test also noted whether the photograph stood alone, was part of a front-page story, or referred to an inside story or other photographs.

### Statistical Analysis

Since data to be collected was nominal, simple and complex chi-square analysis was used to examine content differences and relationships between the Tulsa World and the Oklahoman. A 95 percent confidence level was used to determine statistical significance.

## Endnotes

1. Bernard Berelson, Content Analysis in Communication Research, New York, The Free Press, 1952, p. 18.
2. "Newspaper Photographs: A Content Analysis, 1936-76," Michael W. Singletary. Journalism Quarterly, v. 55, No. 3, Autumn, 1978, pp. 585-586.
3. Gale Directory of Publications & Broadcast Media, 1991, p. 1732.
4. Gale, 1991, p. 1722.
5. "A System of Categories For General News Content," Chilton R. Bush. Journalism Quarterly, v. 37, No. 1, Spring 1960, pp. 206-210.
6. Utt and Pasternack, 1989, pp. 626-627.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS

#### Review of Methodology

For this study, randomly selected issues of the Tulsa World and the Daily Oklahoman from 1965-1990 were used to examine dominant front page photographs. The photographs selected were coded into news content categories. Other aspects such as the newspaper's usage of the photograph as part of a front page story, as a photograph standing alone, or as a photograph used to refer the reader to information on inside pages; the photograph's front page placement; source of the photograph; and the geographic origin were all noted. The photographs were also coded as violent or non-violent in content.

#### Intercoder Reliability

For the purpose of checking coder reliability in categorizing, an intercoder reliability test was conducted using a separate coder and a two week period of the Washington Post. Using the formula where  $R=2M/N1+N2$  and M is the number of coding decisions on which the two coders

agree, and N1 and N2 represent the total decisions made by coder one and coder two respectively, the intercoder reliability coefficient (R) is 0.60. On a scale of 0 to 1.0, where 1.0 is perfect reliability or agreement, 0.60 indicates a moderate reliability between coder decisions.

Simple and complex chi-square tests were used to examine the data from the breakdown of photographs into news content categories and from the additional coded data.

#### Percentage Analysis

Of 138 sample front pages, 138 dominant front-page photographs were studied. Sixty-nine of the photographs were from the Tulsa World and sixty-nine were from the Daily Oklahoman.

Table I, beginning on page 57, shows the breakdown in percentages between the Tulsa World and the Daily Oklahoman of photographs by content categories. The 47 content categories are from a study by Chilton Bush and are described in detail in Chapter 3.

For purposes of examining the possibility of front-page design trends known to have occurred over the twenty-five year period of this study, six specific years were isolated from which to draw samples. The six years selected for sampling were 1965, 1970, 1976, 1981, 1986, and 1990. These six years were isolated for study to look at possible evidence of front-page change before and after three



documented phases of front-page design change in the daily press.<sup>1</sup>

Statistical examination of both newspapers over the entire study by the 47 categories showed no significant differences at a 95% confidence level. From complex chi-square tests, the value of 30.799 was less than the accepted table value of 41.337. The significance tests are suspect, however, due to low cell frequencies.

Other complex chi-square tests also revealed no significance at the 95% confidence level when examining the newspapers individually to check for differences in categories by the six separate years. The test statistic for the World showed a P value of 0.351 with a df = 120. P values higher than 0.05 are not accepted as significant. For the Oklahoman, a P value of 0.114 was determined to also be lacking in significance.

These three statistical measures show (1) that differences between the Tulsa World and the Daily Oklahoman in the usage of the 47 categories are not statistically significant at a 95% level of confidence over the entire study, and that (2) each newspaper's usage of the categories in the six separate years of the study also show's a lack of significance in differences at a 95% level of confidence.

Table I shows the percentage of each newspaper's usage in the news content categories for the duration of the

study. A dash is used to denote the paper showed no percent to represents a category.

TABLE I  
FRONT PAGE DOMINANT PHOTOGRAPH PERCENTAGES  
BY NEWS CONTENT CATEGORY FOR THE  
TULSA WORLD AND THE  
DAILY OKLAHOMAN

Category	Paper	
	<u>Tulsa World</u>	<u>Daily Oklahoman</u>
	n = 138	
1 People Well Known	2.90%	5.80
2 People Not Well Known	1.45	10.14
3 People in Groups	-	-
4 Hollywood	-	1.45
5 Our Community Our Region	2.90	1.45
6 Our Nation	2.90	4.35
7 Our Allies	-	-
8 Our Enemies	-	-
9 Other Nations	1.45	-
10 Governmental Acts	-	1.45
11 Politics	2.90	4.35

TABLE I (Continued)

Category	Paper	
	<u>Tulsa World</u>	<u>Daily Oklahoman</u>
		n = 138
12 Rebellion	-	-
13 War	2.90	-
14 Defense	1.45	-
15 Atomic Bomb Atomic Energy	-	-
16 Diplomacy and Foreign Relations	-	-
17 Economic Activity	2.90	1.45
18 Prices	-	-
19 Taxes	-	-
20 Labor: Major	2.90	-
21 Labor: Minor	-	-
22 Agriculture	-	4.35
23 Judicial Proceedings: Civil	-	-
24 Crime	2.90	5.80
25 Communism in the U.S.A.	-	-

TABLE I (Continued)

Category	Paper	
	<u>Tulsa World</u>	<u>Daily Oklahoman</u>
	n = 138	
26 Sex	-	-
27 Accidents, Disasters	18.84	15.94
28 Social and Safety Measures	2.90	1.45
29 Race Relations	1.45	2.90
30 Alcohol	-	-
31 Money	-	-
32 Health, Personal	-	-
33 Health, Public	-	-
34 Science and Invention	5.80	-
35 Religion	1.45	2.90
36 Philanthropy	1.45	1.45
37 Weather	10.14	5.80
38 Natural Death	-	-
39 Transportation	1.45	2.90
40 Education	1.45	2.90
41 Children, Welfare of	2.90	-

TABLE I (Continued)

Category	Paper	
	<u>Tulsa World</u>	<u>Daily Oklahoman</u>
		n = 138
42 Children, Cute	2.90	4.35
43 Animals	4.35	1.45
44 Marriage and Marital Relations	-	-
45 Amusements	15.95	14.49
46 The Arts, Culture	-	2.90
47 Human Interest	1.45	-
		100.00%

Twelve issues per newspaper were randomly chosen for each of the six years in the study, with the exception of the year 1990. Because of lack of availability at the outset of the study, nine issues were selected for both the Tulsa World and the Daily Oklahoman.

The year 1965 was selected as a beginning point for the twenty-five year span of the study. Both the Tulsa World and the Oklahoman front pages were characteristic of traditional dailies in their geographic region and

newspapers of similar circulation in 1965. The World used a typical eight-column front page with two or more photographs.

The masthead for the World, familiar to readers since World War I, was a stylized globe with two crossed United States flags centered over the globe between the name Tulsa and World.

Photographs on the World's front-page had changed from the typical one or two column often centered photograph of the 1930s, to the general three-column left-of-center or flush-left photograph seen through the 1940s and 1950s. The photographs of the 1960s on the World's front page were still generally three columns wide. Occasionally, four- or even five-column photographs were seen.

The Oklahoman in 1965 was similar to the World in some aspects. Though front-page makeup saw a typical nine-column layout, the Oklahoman had also evolved through the earlier two column centered photographic phase of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. By the 1960s, the Oklahoman was using three-column front page photographs routinely. Location of front-page photographs for the Oklahoman also typically was upper left by 1965.

### Analysis of Categories

The front-page photographs in the study were coded by news content category. They were also coded by their placement on the page, by the use of the photograph with a front-page story, as a stand alone photograph, or referring to an inside story or photographs. Coding was also done by geographical origin.

#### News Content

There were 47 news content categories. Of these, 29 were represented in the study, or approximately 62%.

#### Lesser Represented Categories

The 45% of the study samples not in the six highest frequency categories fall into an additional 23 categories which range from a high of 3.62% to a low of 0.07% combined usage by both newspapers over the study. Those categories and their percentages are represented in Table II, on the following page.

TABLE II

LESSER UTILIZED CATEGORIES AND COMBINED  
PERCENTAGES OF USAGE BY THE WORLD  
AND THE OKLAHOMAN

n = 138	Percents each category
Our Nation, Politics, Children-Cute	3.62%
Science/Invention, Animals, Our Community/ Region	2.89
Economic Activity, Agriculture, Social/ /Safety Measures, Race Relations, Religion, Transportation, Education	2.17
War, Labor-Major, Philanthropy, Children- Welfare of, Arts/Culture	1.44
Hollywood, Other Nations Governmental Acts, Defense, Human Interest	0.07
Total	<u>45%</u>

Unrepresented Categories

Eighteen categories, or 38% of the 47 categories were not represented in the study. These categories included: People in Groups, Our Allies, Our Enemies, Rebellion, Atomic Bomb/ Atomic Energy, Diplomacy/Foreign Relations, Prices, Taxes, Labor-Minor, Judicial Proceedings-Civil, Communism in the United States, Sex, Alcohol, Money, Health-Personal, Health-Public, Natural Death, and Marriage and Marital Relations.



### Highest Represented Categories

In the study, 55% of the samples photographs fell into 6 of the 29 categories represented. These categories and the percentages of representation by year and by newspaper are shown in Table III through Table VIII. Table III, which follows, shows the percentages for the ACCIDENT/DISASTER category for each newspaper and the six separate years in the study.

TABLE III

PHOTOGRAPH USAGE DEPICTING ACCIDENTS OR DISASTER  
AND PERCENTAGE BY YEAR OF STUDY FOR THE  
TULSA WORLD AND THE DAILY OKLAHOMAN

n = 12 issues per year for each newspaper

<u>Tulsa World</u>					
<u>1965</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1990</u>
33.0%	25.0	8.3	8.3	16.6	-0-
<u>Daily Oklahoman</u>					
<u>1965</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1990</u>
41.6%	8.3	25.0	16.6	8.3	11.0

Table III indicates the highest percentage of photographs depicting disasters or accidents for both the Tulsa World and the Daily Oklahoman was in 1965. Both newspapers relied on the ACCIDENT/DISASTER category for 25% of their front page photographic usage, the World, in 1970, and the Oklahoman, in 1976. Years showing the least

percentage of this category for the World, 1990 at 0.0%, and for the Oklahoman, 1970 and 1986 at 8.3%. It is worth noting that there are differences between the newspapers for all years of the study.

Table IV, which follows, shows the percentages for both newspapers' usage of the AMUSEMENTS content category. The figures are again broken down by individual years studied for each newspaper.

TABLE IV  
PHOTOGRAPH USAGE DEPICTING AMUSEMENTS  
AND PERCENTAGE BY YEAR OF STUDY  
FOR THE TULSA WORLD AND  
THE DAILY OKLAHOMAN

n = 12 issues per year for each newspaper

---

Tulsa World

<u>1965</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1990</u>
-0- %	16.6	25.0	25.0	16.6	22.2

Daily Oklahoman

<u>1965</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1990</u>
8.3%	-0-	25.0	16.6	16.6	11.1

---

Photographs in the AMUSEMENT content category had the highest percentages for the Tulsa World in 1976 and 1981, with both years at 25%. For the Daily Oklahoman, the highest percentage was in 1976, at 25%. Lowest percentage of AMUSEMENT content photographs for the Tulsa World was in 1965, at 0.0%. The Daily Oklahoman had 1970 as the lowest

year of AMUSEMENT content photographs, also at 0.0%. The findings show a 2 to 1 usage in 1990 of the category by the World at 22.2%, over the Oklahoman at 11.1%.

Table V, below, shows the chosen years percentages for both newspapers' usage of the WEATHER content category.

TABLE V  
PHOTOGRAPH USAGE DEPICTING WEATHER  
AND PERCENTAGE BY YEAR OF STUDY  
FOR THE TULSA WORLD AND  
THE DAILY OKLAHOMAN

n = 12 issues per year for each newspaper

---

Tulsa World

<u>1965</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1990</u>
-0- %	8.3	-0-	8.3	33.3	11.1

Daily Oklahoman

<u>1965</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1990</u>
8.3%	8.3	-0-	-0-	16.6	-0-

---

Weather-related photographs used by the Tulsa World in 1986 are the highest percentage for this category. The Daily Oklahoman's highest percentage for weather related photographs was also in 1986, although the Oklahoman's usage was half that of the World for the same year in the study. Figures for both tend to suggest an above average interest in the weather in 1986.

Table VI, on this page below, shows the photographic usage by percentages for the Tulsa World and the Daily Oklahoman in the PEOPLE NOT WELL-KNOWN category. Again, the data is presented for each of the six years studied. Total percentages listed are for individual years of the study and reflect each newspapers usage of the category.

TABLE VI

PHOTOGRAPH USAGE DEPICTING PEOPLE NOT WELL-KNOWN  
AND PERCENTAGE BY YEAR OF STUDY  
FOR THE TULSA WORLD AND  
THE DAILY OKLAHOMAN

n = 12 issues per year for each newspaper

---

Tulsa World

<u>1965</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1990</u>
-0- %	-0-	-0-	-0-	8.3	-0-

Daily Oklahoman

<u>1965</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1990</u>
-0- %	16.6	25.0	16.6	-0-	-0-

---

The PEOPLE NOT WELL-KNOWN category was only represented in one year studied for the Tulsa World, 1986 for 8.3% of the year's dominant front page photographic content. On the other hand, the Daily Oklahoman, showed popular usage of the category in three years, with a highest percentage of 25% in 1976. Both 1970 and 1981 saw percentages of 16.6%. Like the World, however, the Oklahoman showed no representation of the category for 1965 or 1990.

Table VII, which follows, shows the content category CRIME. The Tulsa World and the Daily Oklahoman percentage figures for the years of the study are given in the table. It is of interest that the category is represented at both ends of the time frame for each newspaper. Total percentages listed are for the samples of each year of the study.

TABLE VII  
PHOTOGRAPH USAGE DEPICTING CRIME  
AND PERCENTAGE BY YEAR OF STUDY  
FOR THE TULSA WORLD AND  
THE DAILY OKLAHOMAN

n = 12 issues per year for each newspaper

---

<u>Tulsa World</u>					
<u>1965</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1990</u>
8.3%	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	11.1
<u>Daily Oklahoman</u>					
<u>1965</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1990</u>
16.6%	-0-	-0-	-0-	8.3	11.1

---

The highest percentage for the Tulsa World in the CRIME category was in 1990 at 11.1%. Four years, 1970, 1976, 1981, and 1986 showed no use of the category, with 0.0%, in the study. For the Daily Oklahoman, the highest percentage was in 1965 at 16.6%. The Daily Oklahoman also showed 11.1% for 1990 matching that of the Tulsa World. Three

years for the Oklahoman had no representation of the category. Those years were 1970, 1976, and 1981.

The last of the six categories that comprised 55% of the samples in the study is PEOPLE WELL-KNOWN. Table VIII, below, has percentages represented for both papers. Total percentages shown are totals for the entire study and not by year.

TABLE VIII

PHOTOGRAPH USAGE DEPICTING PEOPLE WELL-KNOWN  
AND PERCENTAGE BY YEAR OF STUDY  
FOR THE TULSA WORLD AND  
THE DAILY OKLAHOMAN

n = 12 issues per year for each newspaper

---

Tulsa World

<u>1965</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1990</u>
-0- %	16.6	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

Daily Oklahoman

<u>1965</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1990</u>
-0- %	16.6	8.3	-0-	-0-	11.1

---

The only year showing representation for the PEOPLE WELL-KNOWN category for the Tulsa World was 1970 with 16.6%.

The Daily Oklahoman also showed 16.6% in 1970 in this category. Other years represented by percentages for the Oklahoman included, 1976 at 8.3%, and 1990 at 11.1%. Three years in the study, 1965, 1981, and 1986 had no

representation for the Daily Oklahoman in the PEOPLE WELL-KNOWN category.

#### Placement and Usage

From the 1960s, daily newspapers have tended to prefer a top left placement for dominant front page photographs.<sup>5</sup> The findings in this study show both the World and the Oklahoman follow that trend in the placement of front page photographs.

Table IX, on the following page, shows the placement percentages by year in the study for the Tulsa World.

For purposes of this study, LEFT denotes a photograph that borders the left edge of the page. LEFT CENTER denotes a photograph that is left of the page's center but does not border the left edge of the page. CENTER denotes a photograph that is in the center of the page. RIGHT CENTER denotes a photograph that is right of the page's center but does not border the right edge of the page. RIGHT denotes a photograph that borders the right edge of the page.

TABLE IX  
 DOMINANT FRONT PAGE PHOTOGRAPH PLACEMENT  
 AND PERCENTAGES BY YEAR OF STUDY  
 FOR THE TULSA WORLD

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	LEFT	LEFT CENTER	CENTER	RIGHT CENTER	RIGHT	TOTAL
1965	25.0%	41.7	8.3	16.7	8.3	100%
1970	50.0%	16.7	-0-	8.3	25.0	100
1976	50.0%	16.7	-0-	8.3	25.0	100
1981	50.0%	25.0	-0-	-0-	25.0	100
1986	8.3%	58.3	8.3	25.0	-0-	100
1990	25.0%	25.0	-0-	16.7	8.3	100

n = 12 samples from the years 1965, 1970, 1976, 1981, 1986  
 and 9 samples from 1990

---

The information in Table IX shows the Tulsa World has a strong preference for dominant front page photograph placement LEFT and LEFT CENTER. The highest percentage placement during one year was LEFT CENTER at 58.3% in 1986. However, 1981 showed 50.0% for LEFT and 25.0% for LEFT CENTER, or a combined 75.0% of the year LEFT and LEFT CENTER. The CENTER placement was least utilized for four years of the study 1970, 1976, 1981, and 1990.

In the study, the least utilized placement for the Tulsa World was CENTER with 2.9% for all six years.

Table X, on the next page, shows the placement percentages by year in the study for the Daily Oklahoman.



TABLE X  
 DOMINANT FRONT PAGE PHOTOGRAPH PLACEMENT  
 AND PERCENTAGE BY YEAR OF STUDY  
 FOR THE DAILY OKLAHOMAN

	LEFT	LEFT CENTER	CENTER	RIGHT CENTER	RIGHT	TOTAL
1965	33.3%	33.3	8.3	8.3	16.7	100%
1970	33.3%	25.0	25.0	8.3	8.3	100
1976	66.7%	8.3	-0-	16.7	8.3	100
1981	25.0%	75.0	-0-	-0-	-0-	100
1986	25.0%	66.7	8.3	-0-	-0-	100
1990	22.2%	77.8	-0-	-0-	-0-	100

n = 12 samples from the years 1965, 1970, 1976, 1981, 1986  
 and 9 issues from 1990

Table X indicates that dominant front page placement for the Daily Oklahoman also follows the preference of the Tulsa World for LEFT and LEFT CENTER. The highest percentage placement for the Daily Oklahoman was LEFT CENTER at 77.8% in 1990. Combined with the 22.2% for the LEFT placement, LEFT and LEFT CENTER together are 100% of the placement for 1990.

The last three years studied, 1981, 1986, and 1990 all show a strong move away from placement other than LEFT CENTER and LEFT. RIGHT and RIGHT CENTER were the least utilized placements for both newspapers in the study.

Years in which the World did not utilize a center photograph were 1970, 1976, 1981, and 1990. The Oklahoman, on the other hand, ran 25% of dominant front page

photographs in the center in 1970. In 1976, 1981, and 1990 the Oklahoman did not use the center position for dominant front page photographs. Both newspapers sporadically ran photographs in the right or right center position, with the World doing so more frequently over the entire study than the Oklahoman.

### Origin

Statistical measures showed the differences in the papers and the origin of photographs were not significant at a 95% confidence level. A complex chi-square value of 4.164 at  $df=2$  was less than the 5.991 value for  $p = 0.05$ .

Origin for the front page dominant photographs was coded for each of the samples into one of three categories, local, national, or international. Local included photographs that originated in the city or surrounding community of each newspaper. The local category also included photographs that originated in the state of Oklahoma. The national category encompassed photographs that originated in the United States, that did not fit into the local category. International as a category included photographs that originated outside of the United States.

Table XI, on page 74, shows the frequency by newspaper for the origin of the dominant front page photographs in the study. The figures indicate the number of photographs from

the study's samples each newspaper utilized and where those photographs originated.

TABLE XI  
ORIGIN OF PHOTOGRAPHS AND  
FREQUENCY BY NEWSPAPER

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	<u>TULSA WORLD</u>	<u>DAILY OKLAHOMAN</u>
Local	50	52
National	15	17
International	4	0
Total	<u>69</u>	<u>69</u>

---

It is apparent from the frequencies that the highest frequency is in the first category, or locally originated photographs. Second to local is nationally originated photographs. And finally, the last in frequency is the third category, that of international origin.

The percentage of each of the three origins by newspaper is listed in Table XII, on the following page. These percentages represent the photographic usage over the entire study by each newspaper broken down by the photograph's origin.

TABLE XII  
ORIGIN OF PHOTOGRAPHS AND  
PERCENTAGES BY NEWSPAPER

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	<u>TULSA WORLD</u>	<u>DAILY OKLAHOMAN</u>
Local	72.46%	75.36
National	21.74	24.64
International	5.80	0.00
Total	100%	100%

---

Both the Tulsa World and the Daily Oklahoman rely on locally originated, primarily staff-produced, dominant front page photographs. The Tulsa World shows a slight decrease in both the Local and National origin categories compared with the Daily Oklahoman. On the other hand, the Tulsa World shows 5.80% for the International origin category while the Daily Oklahoman did not show representation for the International origin category.

Locally originated photographs clearly are used more at 72.46% for the World and 75.36% for the Oklahoman than the two other categories. The World shows a slightly smaller percentage of locally originated photographs at 72.46%, than the Oklahoman at 75.36%. Difference in percentages of origin are the largest in the third category, the international origin category. Where the World shows, over the study, 5.8% photographs of international origin, the

Oklahoman shows none. This gives the international origin category only 5.8% from the entire study.

Looking at the frequencies by year of origin categories, it is apparent from the data that inclusion of internationally originated dominant front page photographs has not tended to increase over the time of this study.

The World, in 1970, by percentage had 16.6% internationally originated photographs as dominant front page photographs, or roughly one sixth of the sample photographs studied. Besides those, the World also had 8.33% internationally originated dominant front page photographs in 1981, and 11.1% of international origin in the nine months of 1990 that were a part of the study.

The Oklahoman, again, over the entire course of the study, had no representation of dominant front page photographs of international origin.

### Usage

The study also examined how each newspaper played or used the front page dominant photograph. All photographs were coded into categories as (1) a package with a front page story, (2) a stand-alone photograph, or (3) used to refer to an inside story or more photographs.

Table XIII, on the next page, shows photographic usage in percentages for both newspapers. The percentage figures

represent the way both newspapers utilize dominant photographs to aid in presenting news.

TABLE XIII  
PHOTOGRAPHIC USAGE BY LOCATION IN PERCENTAGES  
FOR THE TULSA WORLD AND THE DAILY OKLAHOMAN

	<u>WORLD</u>	<u>OKLAHOMAN</u>
Front Page Package	53.6%	56.5%
Stand Alone	34.8	24.5
Refer to Inside	11.6	19.0
	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>

Clearly, both the Tulsa World and the Daily Oklahoman prefer to use dominant front page photographs as part of a Front Page Package.

The percentages in Table XIII show that both newspapers used front page dominant photographs over half of the time as a package with a story on the front page. Second to that, percentages show front page dominant photographs were used to stand alone over a third of the time for the World and a fourth of the time for the Oklahoman. Usage to refer to articles or additional photographs inside the newspaper was a last choice for both newspapers. However, there was a closer break for the Oklahoman between stand-alone at 25%

and refer-to-inside at 19% than was seen in the results for the World, at stand-alone, 35%, and refer-to-inside, 12%.

#### Other Findings

The study also examined the sources for the photographs, some factors of size, and violent or non-violent content, although these were not needed to answer the questions the study posed. The information from the other findings lends support to the study of possible trends in design changes of the two daily newspapers.

Table XIV, on page 79, shows the frequencies of source by newspaper. Source categories were 1) Staff- the newspapers photographers or employees, 2) Wire- subscription wire services capable of transmitting photographic copy, 3) Other- sources that do not fall into the first or second category, to include publicity and press releases, 4) Unidentified- photographic work that is printed without noting the source, 5) Non-photo Staff- any art work credited to the newspaper or the newspaper's employees, 6) Non-photo Wire- graphics or art generated through and credited to a subscribed wire service, 7) Non-photo Other- graphics or art work provided by sources other than category one or two, to include publicity and press releases, and 8) Non-Photo Unidentified- graphics or art work published without credit to a source.

Number three (3) Other, a category to catch such sources as public relations releases and other types of publicity sources, was not represented in the study. Non-photo Other, (7), similar to the Other category was also unrepresented.

TABLE XIV  
SOURCES BY PERCENTAGE AND NEWSPAPER

	<u>TULSA WORLD</u>	<u>OKLAHOMAN</u>
(1) Staff	65.22%	50.72%
(2) Wire	27.54	15.94
(3) Other	-	-
(4) Unidentified	4.34	31.88
(5) Non-photo Staff	-	1.44
(6) Non-photo Wire	1.44	-
(7) Non-photo Other	-	-
(8) Non-photo Unidentified	1.44	-
Total	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>

Statistical testing showed that a significant difference existed between the World and the Oklahoman in their use of sources. This difference, at a 99.9% degree of confidence, and a  $df = 5$ , had a test statistic value of 20.823. It could be accepted as a real difference and not likely due to chance.

The difference appears in the Oklahoman's heavier usage of work from unidentified sources. The figure may be explained by a possible carelessness or lack of regard in identifying staff work.



With 65.22% of the World's and 50.72% of the Oklahoman's dominant front page photographs supplied by the newspapers' staffs, it is apparent that locally originated work is the highest category.

In the last decade, wire usage of photographs by daily newspapers has steadily declined.<sup>6</sup> The figure for category (2), or Wire supplied photographs, at 27.54% and 15.94% comprise just under 22% of the total photographs examined.

Category (4), Unidentified source, shows much greater use by the Oklahoman than by the World. In this study, the Oklahoman ran nearly 16% of its dominant front page photography unidentified. At the World the corresponding figure was slightly over 2%.

#### Size Factors

Size of photographs was problematic to this study. The necessary material to complete the sample frame required traveling to Tulsa to access a relatively large number of issues of the Tulsa World through the Tulsa City Library systems. Other segments of the sample collection were performed at Oklahoma State University through utilization of the microfilm library in the media Resources facility of the Edmon Low Library.

All of the photographic material used in this study came from microfilm. As such, an accurate system of measurement could not be devised. But, due to the fact that

the study could not be conducted in one place and at one time, other factors also entered into the collection of sample material. A different type of positive print reproduction equipment was found at each facility. The availability of similar magnification lenses also became a factor. Due to these uncontrolled factors, size was not measured for the entire sample. Another major consideration is the variability of column width and number of columns employed on the front page of the Oklahoman. For these reasons, depth in inches for the photographs was not recorded or coded for the study. The only size consideration that was recorded and coded for the study was column width of the World's sample photographs.

Table XV, which follows, shows the findings from recorded and coded column width information for the Tulsa World for the period of this study. Year totals are for number of samples while column totals signify total frequency of usage during the period studied.

TABLE XV  
TULSA WORLD DOMINANT FRONT PAGE PHOTOGRAPHS  
 BY COLUMN WIDTH AND FREQUENCIES

	2-Column	3-Column	4-Column	5-Column	6-Column
1965	1	8	1	1	1
1971	0	6	6	0	0
1976	4	5	3	0	0
1981	1	8	2	1	0
1986	1	3	8	0	0
1990*	2	3	4	0	0
	—	—	—	—	—
Total	3	33	24	2	1

\*12 samples were used for all year's studied except 1990. For 1990, 9 samples were used.

From data about column width of the Tulsa World revealed in Table XV, a preference for three- and four-column width dominant front page photographs is clear.

The highest 2-column usage was in 1976, at 33.3% when 4 out of 12 samples examined were 2-column. The highest 3-column usage for the World was 75.0% in 1965, with 8 of 12 examined photographs at 3-column width. High 4-column usage at 75.0% was in 1986, again with 8 of 12 samples falling into the 4-column size.

Because the World has consistently maintained a very standard 13-1/2 pica per column width, six-column front page since changing to that format in 1975, the findings about size can be of value.

Violent Content versus Non-Violent Content

A final finding has to do with the violent or non-violent content of the dominant front page photographs of the World and the Oklahoman over the twenty-five year period of this study.

Table XVI shows the percentage by newspaper of violent and non-violent content of dominant front page photographs.

TABLE XVI  
PERCENTAGES OF VIOLENT AND NON-VIOLENT  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY NEWSPAPER

N=138

	<u>Combined</u>	<u>Tulsa World</u> N = 69	<u>Oklahoman</u> N = 69
1 Violent	27.54%	26.08%	28.98%
2 Non-Violent	72.46	73.92%	71.02%
	<u>100.00%</u>	<u>100.00%</u>	<u>100.00%</u>

Percentages in Table XXIV show a prevalence of non-violent dominant front page photographic content for both the Tulsa World and the Daily Oklahoman.

The figure for the Tulsa World for the study was 73.92% Non-violent. For the Daily Oklahoman, Non-violent content in the study showed 71.02%.

The combined newspapers total Non-violent dominant front page photographic content in the study was 72.46%.

This is in comparison to Violent dominant front page photographic content at 27.54% for the study's total.

From these percentages it is noted that the Tulsa World showed a slightly lower figure for Violent photographic content at 26.08% of the World's dominant front page photographs, in comparison to the Daily Oklahoman's figure of 28.98%.

Both the Tulsa World and the Daily Oklahoman reflected the highest percentage of the Violent category at the beginning of the study, in 1965. Percentages were 58.33% for the World, and 66.6% for the Oklahoman in 1965. It is possible that these figures can be attributed to photographic coverage of the Viet Nam War.

## Endnotes

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2. Ibid
3. Ibid

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

This was a trend study to identify photographs by news content and identify changes in that content over a specific period of time.

That goal was pursued by proposing that photographs could be placed into news content categories previously used to classify news stories. By doing so, it was assumed, photographs could be content analyzed much the same as news stories are analyzed.

The study examined the news value given to front page dominant photographs by two daily newspapers in Oklahoma over a period of 25 years. Other factors involved in the photographs such as their placement, how they were utilized on the front page, and their origin, allowed some comparison of these two papers and changes taking place in other daily newspapers.

## Summary

After coding the 138 samples in the study into the 47 content categories, these were examined for both newspapers together and for the newspapers separately.

Data differences in the content categories were examined to see if any patterns were evident for either newspaper or if the two newspapers tended to use photographs with any similarity in content.

In this study, the ACCIDENT/DISASTER category showed the highest usage for both the World and the Oklahoman. This is inconsistent with other content studies of photographs, particularly that of Singletary,<sup>1</sup> which determined a decline in the use of accident-disaster page-one photographs from 1936-1976.

The six papers studied by Singletary, however, were not randomly selected and therefore may not be representative of other newspapers.

The World and the Oklahoman do both show a decrease after 1965 in the usage of the Accident/Disaster category, though a trend is not apparent for either paper.

The AMUSEMENT category had the second highest usage for both newspapers. To aid the reader, since definitions vary in regard to amusement, this category was used in this study to denote photographs depicting entertainment, events,



celebrations, contests, travel for recreation, legalized gambling, radio, movies and television on the entertainment level. Although definitely a "soft" news category, it was not used as a human interest or feature story catch-all as much as a category for entertainment content.

A study by Fosdick<sup>2</sup> in 1969, found that "soft" news as a picture category, by his definition "sports, social events of all types, and human interest," was the highest usage category.

Fosdick also reported findings from a picture usage study conducted in January 1967 by Wisconsin graduate student Paul Roberts. Roberts examined six daily newspaper editions of March 1966.

In Roberts work, "soft-news photographs constituted 45% of the picture content of the New York Times, 73% of the Chicago Tribune and 86% of the Los Angeles Times."<sup>3</sup> Fosdick also refers to the ANPA News Research Center's newspaper content studies in 1952 and 1967.<sup>4</sup> He states that it was unfortunate that picture usage in those studies was not measured "across a broad spectrum of subject matter."<sup>5</sup>

In a 1963 study of actual news use in 25 large-circulation dailies, Stempel<sup>6</sup> utilized a human interest category which included prominence. Prominence was found to be second highest in the amount of front-page space in Stempel's study. It was second to the news attribute of timeliness.

The third most prominent photographic content usage in the study was that of WEATHER. It is important perhaps to note that Oklahoma does experience some of the country's highest frequencies of tornado and severe storms. The category also suggests strong correlation to the familiar news attributes of both timeliness, and proximity. Impact as a news attribute also could be applied to much photographic content in this category.

PEOPLE NOT WELL-KNOWN, CRIME, AND PEOPLE WELL-KNOWN are the next three categories in order of prominence by photographic usage for both newspapers. The PEOPLE WELL-KNOWN category falling as the last of the six most prevalent categories is perhaps unexpected since it is a contradiction of news content usage in stories.

Prominence, or "known principals," used as a news attribute in the work of Janet A. Bridges, in a study of front pages of 101 papers was found to account for 61% of the front page space allotment. It was second only to the news attribute of timeliness.<sup>7</sup>

#### Research Questions

Question 1: Has the photographic content of either or both newspapers changed during the study?

The first question this study addressed involved change in photographic content. It was assumed that if editors responsible for front page make-up consciously determined

photographic usage, and also if news photograph content could be placed into categories for study similar to those of news content, that both of the newspapers would place importance on timeliness and proximity. And, by doing so, the Tulsa World and the Daily Oklahoman would both use front page photographs in a traditional fashion.

The content categories and analysis of data from the study show that photographic usage by both newspapers can be considered traditional by Culbertson's assessment.<sup>8</sup> The question regarding change in content also supports both newspapers traditional approach to front page photographic usage.

Question 2: Were there changes in placement of the dominant front page photograph for either newspaper and if so do the changes differ between the newspapers?

Non-traditional newspapers tend to be less likely to place the dominant photograph in a particular location. In fact, in Utt and Pasternack's 1984 study of front pages of U.S. dailies, 59.1% of the modular dailies reported that they vary the location of dominant photographs. On the other hand, the same study reported that non-modular or more traditional newspapers are much less likely at 37.5% to vary the dominant photograph's location. Modular newspapers that do anchor the dominant photograph tend to pick the upper left section of the page, while non-modular newspapers appear to prefer the middle of the page.<sup>9</sup> Placement for

the Tulsa World's and the Daily Oklahoman's dominant photographs follow the top left placement preference Utt and Pasternack found in their study.<sup>10</sup>

The World showed a slightly higher preference for butting the photograph against the left margin, where the Oklahoman seemed to prefer to place the dominant photograph more toward the center and utilize front page space near the left margin for text. The World also showed a higher usage of photographs on the right of center and right side butting the margin than did the Oklahoman. The Oklahoman, however, a slightly higher percentage in using centered photographs than did the World.

Question 3: Has the front page photographic content become more international in origin?

This question directly addresses photographic usage depicting news from outside the United States. It was thought that expansion of satellite and wire technologies would find greater usage in the press photographically.

The question must be answered with a "no." International news has declined for several years in the press and is apparently only revived during periods of war. Although the Viet Nam conflict was reported during the time frame for the study, the study suggests that it was not a major factor in photographic selection for either of the newspapers studied.

The WAR content category (shown in Table II, on page 57), listed in the lesser represented categories, shows that of the study only 1.44% fell into this category. So, even with the World showing 5.80% for Internationally originated photographs, it is apparent that less than a fourth of those involved WAR as a category.

The Daily Oklahoman did not have photographs representative of the International category in the study.

The incidence of internationally originated or focused photographs has not increased for either of the two newspapers during the study.

#### Recommendations

Results of this study will perhaps be useful to photo editors who have found themselves at a loss for determining good reasons for using specific photographs. If news value can be successfully assigned to the pictures editors place on the front page, their decisions can follow responsible reasoning. And editing pictures intuitively can be replaced with guidelines similar to those used by news editors.

The findings of this study are not conclusive. As such, the author can only recommend that they be built upon by further study.

In the past, students of photography as well as new photo editors have been asked to use their own judgment, and

any number of other less defined means of determining which photographs were publishable and how they should be used.

Any assistance to those who make editorial decisions about visual elements, particularly photographs, although graphics will be increasingly popular, would seem appreciated. No one asks the news editor to function responsibly by getting a "feeling" for the news. But, that has been the long term practice for advice to those who deal with editorial decisions for photographs.

The complexity of the visual image, the processes for producing it, the actual communication process of encoder-receiver, visual vocabularies of cultures, ethical considerations, and any number of other areas of interest need further study.

A number of studies to further determine the news content of photographs, and perhaps a study of photographic and text content of the same newspapers would add additional information of value to those involved in news photography.

The possibility of utilizing other existing categories and news attribute lists also lend themselves to further study in this area.

### Conclusions

Visual elements in print have gained in importance and are used with impact today. Photographs are a very vital

and important part of the communication process in the daily press. As such, the need increases for information about how to effectively utilize this medium.

Any system for determining news value for photographs that would allow those responsible to make accurate decisions in the usage of photographs in the news would be an improvement over present methods.

This study, though it utilized categories designed for news content in the 1950s, succeeded in showing that at least the photographs that have been published as newsworthy could be placed within news content categories.

Knowledge of usage possibilities, for instance, photographic depiction of news of both prominent and timely nature, as well as news of impact to an area or region, could motivate editors to put more effort into using the visual elements at their access.

It is the author's fear and regret that Fosdick's concern in 1969 that "editors still do not consider photographs an appropriate mode for reporting the news,"<sup>11</sup> may still be the case today. His contention that "most (editors) still do not use photographs and picture layouts to creatively and dramatically report and interpret contemporary affairs for their readers," may have begun to change. But the change is at a snail's pace.

In fact, much of the change in today's newspapers, or at least in front page design, appears to have been in a

"sink or swim" effort to keep from appearing grey and old fashioned next to Gannett's USA Today.

Many studies have shown that large numbers of daily newspapers have undergone changes since the publication of USA Today in 1981.

The flashy news magazine type paper has been received coldly by many traditional newspapermen. Yet studies show that large numbers have begun to at least utilize the same technologies if not in the same proportion or design scheme as their new counterpart. The most significant change attributable to "Gannett's thunderbolt,"<sup>12</sup> that has taken place in the press today, has been the move toward much greater use of color.

Photographic elements have also been affected by this trend toward more color usage. However, it seems that most traditional newspapers have resisted implementing other photographic trademarks of USA Today, such as the large numbers of thumbnail size photos on the front page.

It remains to be seen just how the press will utilize the visual element of photography and graphics in the decade at hand. It is obvious that the area would benefit from well planned and carefully executed research.

This study would seem to suggest that even the traditional press can expand and explore photographic possibilities available in communicating news. It also



seems to suggest that those in photo editing positions in both the smaller press and in presses of the circulation size near that of the two studied could be a little braver. It might be possible to follow sound news judgement and place somewhat less "soft" news value on front page photography. That tradition is being broken by the modern and more visual front page of many of America's newspapers.

Just questioning the value of each photograph and the placement on the front page would seem to be an advance in some present newsrooms.

It is conceivable that actual ignorance of possible news value of images, particularly photographs, has allowed the present dilemma to develop and continue unchallenged. At this point in time, in view of other design changes and continuing improvement in technology, a serious examination of the use of front page photographs would seem appropriate for most newspapers.

Many larger circulation presses have and are continuing to move in the direction of USA Today. Design and content emphasis have made them look more like news magazines in appearance than the traditional newspaper that's supposed to "look like a newspaper." Newspapering is a business and as long as those tactics sell where they are employed, they will continue to be utilized.

Inherent in any change is an underlying interest in safe-guarding the integrity of the profession. It would

seem most expedient at present to reiterate that importance. Carelessness and utter dependence on technology could quickly allow today's computerized visual graphics and the next new technology to dictate not only design but content.

## Endnotes

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3. Ibid, p. 371.
4. Ibid, p. 371.
5. Ibid, p. 371.
6. Stempel, Guido H. III, "An Empirical Exploration of the Nature of News" in Wayne A. Danielson, ed., Paul J. Deutschmann Memorial Papers in Mass Communication Research (Cincinnati: Scripps-Howard Research, December 1963), pp. 19-23.
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