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# Pictures That Lie

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Lyn Belisle  
CSCI 1300 1,3,5

Note: Additions and revisions to the project and the evaluation are highlighted in yellow – LB – 01.07.10

### **Assignment: Pictures That Lie (Understand, Access, Use Ethically, Evaluate, Create)**

**Introduction:** *It is important to carefully evaluate the reliability of electronic web and print media, especially in an academic setting. Recent and dramatic technological advances in the production, manipulation, and dissemination of images have transformed the practices of research and journalism as well as the visual environment itself. From digital retouching to wholesale deception, we are beset by an unprecedented range of moral, ethical, and legal challenges.*

#### **Part One:**

Use an academic search database from the Coates Library to find the article titled **Journals Find Fakery in Many Images Submitted to Support Research** in the **Chronicle of Higher Education**, Thursday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Read the article critically and carefully. Choose a quotation from the article – for example, “*Ms. Roovers might have gotten away with the image enhancements if the paper had been accepted by a different journal*” - and formulate a position for class discussion. Use class wiki to record discussion observations and issues.

(Ref: <http://chronicle.com/free/2008/05/3028n.htm>)

#### **Part Two:**

Choose a photo to analyze from this CNET website:  
[http://news.com.com/2300-1026\\_3-6033210-1.html](http://news.com.com/2300-1026_3-6033210-1.html)

Look at the photos and read the comments on the right regarding the alleged manipulation. Choose one of the photos to analyze in detail.

## Example

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September 11, 2006 7:51 AM PDT



August 2006: This photograph by Adnan Hajj, a Lebanese photographer, showed thick black smoke rising above buildings in the Lebanese capital after an Israeli air raid. The Reuters news agency initially published the photograph on its Web site, then withdrew it when it became evident that the original image had been manipulated to show more and darker smoke.

"Hajj has denied deliberately attempting to manipulate the image, saying that he was trying to remove dust marks and that he made mistakes due to the bad lighting conditions he was working under," said Moira Whittle, head of Reuters public relations. "This represents a serious breach of Reuters' standards and we shall not be accepting or using pictures taken by him."

Other photographs by Hajj were also determined to have been doctored.

**Latest Photo Galleries**

Photos: Top-rated reviews of the week

Photo: Huhhla Taloerona takes center stage

**Related Stories**

Smoking out photo hoaxes with software

**Photo by** Hany Farid, Dartmouth College

**More Galleries**

## Make an entry in your blog discussing the existing published photograph:

- What picture you chose and why
- Where did the picture originate?
- How was it manipulated?
- Why was it manipulated?
- Was the manipulation harmful? Why or why not?
- What copyright issues, if any, were involved?
- Conclude your entry with a link to a relevant existing page that deals with copyright issues and photojournalism
- In class, review and comment on three of the blog entries authored and analyzed by fellow classmates

## Part Three:

Create Your Own "Picture That Lies," keeping in mind the purpose and motive behind your digital manipulation. Using Photoshop Elements 7 tools, alter a photograph (or combine photographs) of your own choice so that it has a different meaning or appearance from the original (this can be your own picture or one that you download from the internet – check for copyright).

Technical guidelines: Use at least 3 tools or adjustments (brightness/contrast, hue, saturation, text tool, etc). Be creative! Save two copies, one as a working (layered) Photoshop project (.psd file) and one as a flattened image (.jpeg) for posting on the Web. Be sure to save a copy of the original(s) in the Groups network assignment folder and a back-up on your Y drive.

As part of your creative process, post your completed picture to your own blog. **Because it will be available on the Internet, your intellectual property should be protected.**

License your work through Creative Commons after you have read their “basic things that you should think about” list to learn about your eligibility:

[http://wiki.creativecommons.org/Before\\_Licensing](http://wiki.creativecommons.org/Before_Licensing)

If, for example, you are combining pre-existing works made by other people then you need to make sure that you have express and explicit permission to apply a Creative Commons license to the end result

Addition- save your manipulated photograph as a.jpeg for the web. Upload it to your blog entry so that your reader can see the results as s/he studies our analysis.

Example



## Assessment

Part One: find and read article: Informal assessment, class discussion

Part Two: analyze existing manipulated journalistic photo: Weighted blog entry, peer comments

Part Three: **Make an entry in your blog** discussing these issues regarding your own work:

- What picture you chose and why
- Where did the picture originate?
- How was it manipulated?
- Why was it manipulated?
- Was the manipulation harmful? Why or why not?
- What copyright issues, if any, were involved?
- Conclude your entry with a link to a relevant existing page that deals with copyright issues and photojournalism
- In class, review and comment on three of the blog entries authored and analyzed by fellow classmates

Evaluation for creating original manipulated photo project: Technical and Critical Pictures That Lie Rubric

Question for analysis	Pt	1-2	0-1
What picture you chose and why?	2	Gave valid rationale for personal choice	Vague criteria for choice
Where did the picture originate?	1	Specific sources cited	"Newspaper," Magazine" Other non-specifics
How was it manipulated?	1	Detailed use of PSE technical skills and tools	Non-specific terms – "blurred it," changed color"
Why was it manipulated?	1	Critical understanding of motive and effect, cites precedent	"To fool people" – vague and unspecified
Was the manipulation harmful?	1	Thoughtful answer, not black and white	Brief yes or no
Why or why not?	2	Critical analysis, demographics, social/historical concerns, etc.	Vague and unspecified – "Didn't really hurt anybody"
What copyright issues were involved?	2	Specific statues with citations	Non-specific generalities

## Technical Assessment

<p>1. Knowledge of Software: Did student display knowledge of the software's features by the quality of the product? Was software correctly and effectively? 10 Points</p> <p>2. Quality of Product: Is the project seamless and clean? Is the project dynamic? Is the project well created? Is the project complex and interesting? 10 Points</p> <p>3. Following Instructions: Does the project meet the requirements of the assignment? Does the project make sense to the audience? Was a complex project chosen and was all of the time necessary to complete it used? 10 Points</p>	<p>4. Project Self-assessment – Post your project to your blog, then make an extensive and informed critical judgment about your own manipulated photo by answering the same questions in an accompanying blog entry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ What picture you chose and why</li><li>▪ Where did the picture originate?</li><li>▪ How was it manipulated?</li><li>▪ Why was it manipulated?</li><li>▪ Was the manipulation harmful? Why or why not?</li><li>▪ What copyright issues, if any, were involved?</li><li>▪ Was the project successfully licensed through Creative Commons? If not, why?</li></ul> <p>20 points</p>
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Assessment Follow-Up: Pictures That Lie photos may be posted (with permission) to a gallery webpage linked to the class website for further discussion and analysis:

<http://www.cs.trinity.edu/~jbelisle/cs1300/>