

PHOTOGRAPHER'S ETHICS IN TEN PHOTOJOURNALISM SITUATIONS  
AS JUDGED BY THREE TYPES OF FLORIDA  
DAILY NEWSPAPER NEWS MANAGERS

By

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This study examined photographer's ethics as judged by three types of Florida daily newspaper news managers: (1) the person who sets overall editorial policy, (2) the key editor for daily news operations, and (3) the highest ranking news photo manager.

The purpose was to investigate a possible shift in the ethical evaluations by the respondents of three alternative photographer actions in each of 10 case-model situations. Respondents were asked to judge the photographer's "on site handling" of each situation; to judge the photographer, assuming he does not tell the editor on duty (that is, the "desk") how he handled each situation; and to judge the photograprer, assuming he does tell the desk.

Respondents were given four categories of ethical responses in which to make their evaluations: "Perfectly Ethical," "Questionable Ethical Practice," "Unethical," and "Extremely Unethical."

It was hypothesized that the photographer's ethics would be judged highest where he tells the desk how he handled a given situation, and lowest where he does not tell the desk. The ethics of the photographer's "on site handling" would be judged somewhere between the two extremes, depending on the situation.

All three types of news manager respondents were expected to make similar ethical evaluations concerning the photographer's actions.

Results tended to support the investigator's hypothesis. There was a shift in the ethical evaluations by respondents of the three alternative photographer actions in the directions expected, and the respondent groups' evaluations were similar to each other.

The results of the study are important because they show that the ethics of the photographer's actions are not only viewed in terms of his actions in the field, but are also contingent upon whether or not the photographer tells the desk how he handled the given photo assignment. Those who are responsible for the photographer's work, as well as those responsible for the newspaper content, want to be kept informed of the photographer's actions.

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Chairman

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