

A MEDIUM AT WAR |

AN ANALYSIS OF PHOTOGRAPHY'S RELATIONSHIP WITH HUMAN CONFLICT

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SYNOPSIS |

This dissertation looks at the way in which conflict is portrayed through photography in its various forms. Specifically, it examines the relationship between the photographer and the images they produce, the ability of art to visually define conflict, the photographic portrayal of terrorism, and the effect of continually modernising warfare on how it is visually communicated. Ultimately, it examines how conflict is currently portrayed by photography, and how the subject will be approached in the future by the medium.

INTRODUCTION |

Photography is one of the key ways in which we learn about the world around us, and most notably, far away from us, which may otherwise seem beyond our realms of experience. Although we are privy to enormous amounts of information in written form, the photograph embodies the notion that seeing is believing, and that a photograph offers a visual record of irrefutable fact. Whether this is the case or not has been the subject of debate, but with the growth of the Internet and the advancement of other photographic technology, photography has permeated every area of society. In terms of subject matter, there is one area that has continually embraced this advancement, and has seen photography stand witness to one of the most harrowing, powerful subjects that the medium documents. Susan Sontag stated that photography developed in tandem with tourism¹ – the same can be said of human conflict.

Alongside the subject itself, conflict coverage in the print media has been continuously evolving throughout history – from the first wood-block prints of the Nineteenth Century Afghan War in *The London Illustrated News*, we have now reached a point where conflict photographers and journalists are sending their editors digital material almost instantly from the scene of battle. Additionally, the traditional idea of distance, with conflict seen taking place far from home, has changed markedly in recent times. As the methods of waging war continually change and modernise, the media in which they are covered is forced to adapt, and expand the notion of conflict that has gone before – and not only in the press.

This dissertation will focus primarily on the analysis of the portrayal of conflict through photography in various environments, and the matters that affect the imagery, as well as the portrayal of conflict in photographs outside of a journalistic context. Instead of solely looking back at coverage of the World Wars, for example, the subject matter will largely consider recent history, after the Vietnam

¹ Sontag, Susan. *On Photography* (London: Penguin, 1978) - Page 9

War, forward to the present day, with the invasion of Iraq, and the Afghan conflict providing context for discussion.

In addition to the analysis of photographic coverage of war in print media, attention will be directed into exploring the variance between how artistic photography and press photography cover similar subject areas, using conflict as a central topic to determine whether or not there are key areas of similarity between the two. The depiction and coverage of terrorism in photography will be investigated, with the aim of showing that the traditionally separate ideas of terrorism and combat share much more in common when covered in the media than has been previously discussed. Finally, looking at the impact of the continuing modernisation of warfare, the manner in which an increasingly inaccessible subject can be covered will be discussed, through the study of both the print media and other areas of photographic representation. Ultimately, the additional analysis directed at these areas will strengthen the overall picture of how conflict is conveyed to the public via the photographic medium.

To achieve the required level of grounding in the subject, a range of research has been conducted – an analysis of biographical and autobiographical information on photographers engaged in the area, as well as work by the photographers themselves. Additionally, to aid the analysis of the current and past perspectives within the press, an interview with a serving picture editor from one of the world's top broadsheet newspapers has been conducted – the information gathered offering insight into the editorial viewpoint, as well as their own thoughts on key events that have shaped the direction of conflict coverage. Finally, texts on the representation of conflict and war in the press have provided important objective information on a number of conflicts, and also the political and journalistic issues associated with them. From this diverse mix of sources, the dissertation will hopefully add to works by writers such as John Taylor, whose material looks at selected conflicts, up to 1998. With events such as major terrorist attacks on the United States of America in 2001 and the subsequent

invasion of Iraq that have taken place in the time since, there is sufficient scope to produce work that tackles new subject matter.

CHAPTER ONE | PHOTOGRAPHERS AND PHOTOGRAPHY

To discuss the origins and evolution of conflict photography is to discuss the human pre-disposition of conflict itself across the ages; with each major outbreak of war in the world, the associated documentation grew alongside, striving to satisfy the documentary desires of the public. From Roger Fenton's photographic coverage of the Crimean War, the world was brought some of the first images of war, although they did not depict moments of battle, so much as moments during a war. Such is the technology of that time, that images such as the two entitled *The Shadow of the Valley of Death* are the limit of what can be shown – still images of still scenes. Their focus on the aftermath and the static form of the battlefield gives a bizarre tranquillity, resulting in distance between the image and the reality of the conflict. Ultimately, the photographs function best when paired with written reportage on the subject, which was much less hampered by the restraints of technology, or public expectation. Indeed, before photography became the primary visual descriptor in the public consciousness, the description of events in text was not matched by their portrayal in imagery – the Afghan War's placid wood-cut print imagery jars against the written comment of *The Illustrated London News*.

One of the first moments of real action in conflict photography can be seen in Robert Capa's famous image of the Spanish Civil War, *Loyalist Militiaman at the Moment of Death*, where soldier Federico Borrell García is pictured collapsing after being hit by a bullet (see fig. 1). Although the photographic truth of this image is debated vigorously, it still remains as a key step in the progress of visual war documentary in print. The most recent research points to the image as having been taken as part of a military re-enactment that went awry (as opposed to a soldier dying in the more traditional sense of combat),² but the way in which the physical trauma of the soldier is presented to the viewer

² Nash, Elizabeth *Shot Down – Capa's Classic Image of War*, The Independent, Posted July 21st 2009, Retrieved November 19th 2009, (<http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/news/shot-down--capas-classic-image-of-war-1754405.html>)

brings a much more immediate representation of what is taking place; the image manages to tell at least part of the story by itself.



Figure 2 - Robert Capa: *Death of a Loyalist Militiaman*. 1936. Black and White Photograph

However, the issue associated with Fenton's Crimean War coverage remains – without written information on what has occurred, the viewer is still left with only a partial idea of what has taken place. As much as the advance in technology in the interim has allowed the capture of a moment of action, the single photograph still fails to be able to convey the reality of the situation on its own, and requires acute description to avoid confusion or deceit with regards to its content. With regard to this issue in photography, Caroline Brothers offers firm support of the perspective. She states:

“Above all, their context must be respected, since it is within their context that inheres their meaning.”³

Both these images highlight a problem discussed by Roland Barthes, who stated:

³ Brothers, Caroline. *War and Photography* (New York: Routledge, 1997)

“The structure of the photograph is not an isolated structure; it is in communication with at least one other structure, namely the text – title, caption or article – accompanying every press photograph.”⁴

Within both these photographs lies a gulf in the information required to correctly disseminate the image, which can only be filled by further explanation. In the majority of journalistic cases, as Barthes observes, the associated text is the bridge required to offer the complete story of the image itself. In both previous examples, the lack of material supporting the images themselves has led to confusion regarding either the authenticity of the photograph, or what is occurring in the image.



Figure 2 (Without cannonballs) & Figure 3 (With cannonballs) - Robert Fenton: *The Valley of the Shadow of Death*. 1855. Black & White Photograph

⁴ Barthes, Roland. *Image Music Text* (London: Fontana Press, 1977) - Page 16

Fenton's two images show a road covered in cannonballs in one, and the same road cleared of shot in the other – the debate of whether one (or both) of these images was staged came about due to a lack of accompanying information explaining the two images (see fig. 2 & 3). As with Capa's image, research has since revealed the truth of the photograph⁵ – the cannonballs were placed on the road for the second image, presumably for compositional reasons, looking critically at the two shots.

In a conflict context, as with any documentary photography, the apparent truth of the image is constantly under threat. Whilst it is accepted that photography is not capable of creating an absolute facsimile of reality, if utilised correctly, it can produce something that is suitably close so as to give an accurate depiction of an event. As a result, the portrayal of conflict is not simply about ensuring the photographic depiction is accurate, but is equally about the way in which the image is portrayed in relation to any accompanying material. Conflict photographer Philip Jones Griffiths states the following in regard to the issue of context:

“I think the problem with photography is that you can decontextualise it. What does a picture of a wounded body or a mother clasping her wounded child mean? Why is that happening? I want to know that. I'm not satisfied just photographing little sorts of visual climaxes of a conflict.”⁶

This statement addresses the issue of context, but also raises a point that will be explored later – if there is a necessity to add information to a photograph, in order to ensure the context (and subsequently, the true meaning) is left intact, does the information have to come exclusively in the form of text, or are there other means by which suitable depth of information can be imparted to an image?

Far on from this initial foray into the photographic documentation of conflict, the Vietnam War is widely recognised as being the most significantly photographed in history. The war saw a huge number of photographers following US soldiers into combat, often at the expense of their own

⁵ Morris, Errol. *Which Came First, the Chicken or the Egg? (Parts One, Two & Three)*, New York Times Blog, Posted September – October 2007, Accessed November 19th 2009

⁶ Howe, Peter. *Shooting Under Fire: The World of the War Photographer* (New York: Artisan, 2002) - Page 63

safety – Vietnam claimed the life of Robert Capa, who stood on a landmine whilst out on patrol with the military, and renowned conflict photographer Larry Burrows was killed in a helicopter crash, along with several other journalists.

The images produced from the failed US conflict are famous for their anti-war stance, largely due to the subject matter of the image content, which frequently portrayed scenes of graphic bloodshed and suffering, both in the civilian and military populace. Previous conflicts, such as World War Two, were heavily documented by photographers – indeed, it produced some of the most iconic war images of all time, such as Jim Rosenthal's *Raising of the Flag at Iwo Jima* – but were also heavily censored by both governmental restrictions, and editorial decisions.⁷

The media coverage of the conflict was largely focused on the positive portrayal of the situation on the front, and official photographic output was also based on either military use, or biased propaganda to support the Allied cause – few publications in Britain broke from this perspective, and the likes of *Picture Post* were notable exceptions in their depiction of negativity.⁸

In Vietnam, the flow of photographers into and out of the very places where soldiers were engaged in battle was actually facilitated by the US military, severely limiting control over what was documented from the conflict. This meant photographers were able to travel virtually everywhere.⁹ The result, simply put, was a stream of images that burrowed deep into the public consciousness of America, and played a major part in the perception of Vietnam in a largely negative light amongst the US public. This negativity is interesting when considered in parallel with the apparent viewpoint of the press during the conflict, with Philip Jones Griffiths stating:

⁷ Taylor, John. *War Photography: Realism in the British Press* (London: Routledge, 1991) - Page 54-55

⁸ *Ibid.*, at page 55-56

⁹ Howe, Peter. *Shooting Under Fire: The World of the War Photographer*, (New York: Artisan, 2002) - Page 71

“I vehemently object to the idea that the press lost the war. The truth is that the press was always way behind the American people, who were antiwar long before it was.”¹⁰

Importantly, the images from Vietnam can largely be seen as anti-war, not only because of the content of the photographs, but also as a result the environment in which they are viewed in – more than the context of their position in the media, the context in the psyche of the viewer is a major part of the overall portrayal of a photograph. Susan Sontag’s writing on the subject furthers this point of view, stating:

“The photographer’s intentions do not determine the meaning of the photograph, which will have its own career, blown by the whims and loyalties of the diverse communities that have use for it.”¹¹

Photography in general is subject to the influences of areas outside the realms that can be taken into account when the shutter is released, many of which (association with written copy and analysis in public commentary, for example) do not exact their influence until long after the photograph has been taken.

Across the area of conflict photography in general, there is an interesting rebellion against the traditional ideas of what is photogenic. Indeed, the area of documentation as a whole is cited by Sontag as a key exception to the idea that “what moves people to take photographs is finding something beautiful”.¹² However, this comment is perhaps too general - in many documentary images, the ideas of classical composition and visual aesthetics clearly influence the overall construction of the photograph; in general, news photography can frequently be seen as beautiful, depending on the subject matter. Looking at images from Vietnam from the likes of Larry Burrows, although some suffer from the impact of their creation in combat (blurred motion during action scenes), there is still obvious consideration to the overall visual attraction of the image. The idea of

¹⁰ Howe, Peter. *Shooting Under Fire: The World of the War Photographer*, (New York: Artisan, 2002) - Page 71

¹¹ Sontag, Susan. *Regarding the Pain of Others* (London: Penguin, 2003) - Page 35

¹² Sontag, Susan. *On Photography* (London: Penguin, 1978) - Page 85

beauty in this situation, however, is lost in the manner Sontag suggests; her denial of the theoretical exclamation of “Isn’t that ugly! I must take a photograph of it”¹³ amongst most photography, conversely fits extremely well amongst images of conflict. Frequently, the documentation of the ugly – that which has the ability to visually repulse or horrify – is what emerges from the ability of war to present such grizzly material for documentation.

Of course, given the public’s increasing exposure to photography of this nature, and the rising experience of the medium in documenting conflict, it is apparent that the consideration of beauty in conflict photography is fraught with complex issues in terms of social expectation and acceptability – can it be permissible to find beauty in such images? John Taylor states:

“Published photographs offer viewers the opportunity to stare at and become enthralled by forbidden or taboo subjects, including physical torment and macabre deaths.”¹⁴

This comment puts forward the notion that we *do* look at images of death, and that they may be photographs that are traditionally not a part of the accepted culture of seeing, but it does not vindicate the idea of finding beauty in them. Although we are happy to look at the most horrific of images, and many images of conflict arguably have an element of beauty to them, there is still a clear limit in assigning them a quality beyond that of their ability as documentary objects; defining images of conflict as beautiful remains taboo.

The idea of voyeurism - viewing without permission - permeates photography, and documenting conflict captures some of the most invasive examples of this – shooting moments of intense pain, suffering, and situations where natural human instinct would direct the individual to involve themselves, rather than document. Sontag states:

“The person who intervenes cannot record, the person who is recording cannot intervene.”¹⁵

¹³ Sontag, Susan. *On Photography* (London: Penguin, 1978) - Page 85

¹⁴ Taylor, John. *War Photography: Realism in the British Press* (London: Routledge, 1991) - Page 14

¹⁵ Sontag, Susan. *On Photography*, (London: Penguin, 1977) - Page 12

There are a number of ways in which this point can be considered in relation to the photographic coverage of conflict – the first is the most literal, in that an individual cannot perform two such opposing actions at once, even from a physical point of view. Secondly, there is the idea of the need for a documentarian to remain neutral in situations of conflict, in order to be able to ensure their ability to continue operating in a hostile environment, and ultimately to ensure their own safety. Finally, there is the notion of professional distance, required to create images that do not portray a situation in a biased light.

As a result of a combination of these issues, it is rare for a conflict photographer to involve themselves in war more than their role would traditionally define. Don McCullin, a seasoned combat photographer, pragmatically states:

“Although I don’t consider photographing helping, what else can I do? I’m not a qualified person; if I was, I wouldn’t be there as a photographer, would I?”¹⁶

Regardless of this, the relationship between a photographer and their subject is rarely as simple as being a neutral observer: photographers talk of camaraderie with the soldiers they accompany, the bond with civilians they encounter in war zones, and an engagement with the story they’re attempting to cover. The photographer may not physically intervene, but ultimately, the nature of conflict can often emotionally attach them to their subject. Psychological involvement can ultimately be one of the most harrowing aspects of being a photographer in this genre – the expectation of inaction, coupled with photography offering the only outlet against what they are witnessing can mean individuals feel helpless, and even complicit in what they see.¹⁷

The viewpoint of someone working in this position is often that they are taking photographs to affect change – their perspective being that the only way that this change can be achieved is for the

¹⁶ Howe, Peter. *Shooting Under Fire: The World of the War Photographer* (New York: Artisan, 2002) - Page 124

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, at page 178

world to be informed of what they would not otherwise see.¹⁸ This sentiment is more notable in positions where photographers are aware of a humanitarian issue – Vietnam, Bosnia and various African conflicts serve as examples. In each of these situations, the portrayal of conflict often indicates the hardship or wrongdoing of specific groups involved in it, making the story of the victims of war become the paramount issue. Although opinion on the effectiveness of their work varies between photographers, many define the quality of their output by its ability to act as a functional record of history for those they document, rather than simply an image as illustration.

¹⁸ Howe, Peter. *Shooting Under Fire: The World of the War Photographer* (New York: Artisan, 2002) - Page 78-81

CHAPTER TWO | THE ART OF WAR

Although photography as photojournalism has become one of the primary methods in which we see the landscape of battle and conflict, as well as the results therein, it is not the only means by which the public are able to witness conflict. For many years before photography took hold of the coverage of war, the presence of the war artist facilitated visuals of conflict, and with the absence of even the notion of the photograph (and the associated arguments of realism and truth), it offered a unique insight into the imagery of war.

Before it is possible to consider photography's place in conflict art, the first consideration is the variation between the notions of documentation in war – the nature of recording that is conducted through photojournalism, and other areas of the media – and that of artistic works from the theatre of conflict.

Firstly, the goals of documentary work and fine art are not necessarily opposed, although they are often different. Whilst, as previously discussed, photojournalism in conflict is often centred on the ideal of creating an item of historic record which will subsequently be interpreted as visual proof, one of the aims of art in the same situation is to provide comment on the same subject that the photograph is recording. So, in essence, their roles are complementary – a concept that expands on the idea that text is not the only means by which the full meaning of a photograph can be explained.

As stated by writer Mark Lawson:

“Historically, war art had fulfilled two purposes: the provision of a basic visual record in the years before the camera, and the production of propagandistic images for the glory of the victors.”¹⁹

In an early journalistic context, art can be seen to have *directly* taken the place of photography, as a rudimentary form of documentation. As an example, coverage of the Nineteenth Century Afghan

¹⁹ Lawson, Mark. *Conflicts of Interest: John Keane* (London: Mainstream Publishing, 1995) - Page 64

conflict in *London Illustrated News* utilised a series of wood-cut prints, depicting images of war to accompany the written articles in the newspaper²⁰. Like Fenton's early war photographs (which were printed in the newspaper at a later date) they did not show conflict, so much as they showed the environment of war itself. Compared to the article accompanying the images in the issue, the illustrations come across as tame – a grand drawing of an Afghan castle featuring alongside the journalist stating:

“The Cabul gate was blown in; the tremendous fire of our artillery paralysed the enemy, and the English advanced guard, after a short but desperate struggle, won their way into the palace.”²¹

This initial foray into the illustration of conflict is a timid one, with the potency of the written content being much more descriptive than the image, which makes little visual or artistic comment on the subject it conveys. In this respect, art became obsolete in one respect, as photography's unimpeachable influence took hold as *the* way to record visually.

The modern definition between photography as war art and documentary photography is certainly not as clear as when art was confined to the descriptive analysis of the traditional painter as a war artist – as a medium, artistic photography in conflict is new, and continually evolving. As an example of war artistry that is particularly close to the conventions of photojournalism, Robert Wilson's recent depiction of the British Army in Afghanistan gives a clear illustration of the issue. The book, *Helmand*, contains a series of photographs illustrating the individuals and environment of the current conflict in the region – none of which show any direct depiction of combat.

Instead, many of the images impart the idea of combat in their subject matter, by illustrating the conditions, paraphernalia and settings of war that exist as a result of the presence of conflict itself. In essence, these are documentary photographs, but they lack the written descriptor that would be

²⁰ Illustrated London News, Issue 1, *ILN*, May 14 1842

²¹ *Report on war in Afghanistan*, (London: Illustrated London News, May 14 1842) – Page 5

required should they be used in a journalistic context; the content of the image is left to speak on its own.



Figure 4 - Robert Wilson: *Soldier*. 2008. Colour Photograph. in Wilson, Robert 'Helmand', Jonathan Cape, London 2008, page 149

A further comparison with journalistic photography can be made when specifically studying Wilson's portraiture of the various military and civilian individuals that he selects for study (see fig. 4). Again, they are not conveyed in the traditional sense of a photograph in the press – realistically, the subject

matter is not overt enough to illustrate a detailed story, even when viewed as a series. The images themselves show the sand-blasted faces of troops whose facial expressions give an insight into their individual personalities, rather than just their position as cogs within the mechanisms of war.

Realistically, the difference in visual depiction between the soldiers in Wilson's photos, and the Vietnam-era photographs of various photojournalists, such as Larry Burrows and Don McCullin is slight. All produce images that feature an apparent levity, achieved by shooting their subjects straight on and ultimately gaining a "tender and monumental" quality, as is said of Wilson's photos in Mark Holborn's introduction to the collection. The only real way to discriminate between the two areas is to consider the notion that Wilson's photographs are conceived as artistic expressions, whilst the work of McCullin et al is based on the creation of visually striking imagery within their role as photojournalists, in order to improve the ability of their work to convey the story that they see developing (see fig. 5).

The introduction of Brigadier Mackay – the commander of the Task Force to which Wilson is attached - in the book gives a unique perspective on what it is that differentiates these portraits from what is seen in the photojournalism. This is the view of a combat force's commanding officer, on the images of his men - not the Army itself, as is commonly published during war-time. Mackay makes an interesting distinction about the photographs, stating:

"The story of how the Brigade assembled the Task Force ... and fought as part of the Counter-Insurgency against the Taliban Insurgency will be told elsewhere, but the story of those who fought can be told here, by capturing the very essence of those individuals."²²

This comment shows the sentiment in the Commander of a clear distinction between the actions of the operational force - which would be the focus of legitimate news photography - and the soldiers as individuals. This distinction marks the difference in a number of opinions on what artistic coverage of conflict should encompass; the view of the Commander being that the members of the

²² Wilson, Robert. *Helmand* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2008) - Page 10

Task Force are the direct focus of the work, rather than the story of the war in Afghanistan.

Ultimately, the comment made by Wilson is a personal one, relating to the men and women he captures in his images, rather than considerations of overall narrative, such as those that attach to photojournalism of the Vietnam era.



Figure 5 - Don McCullin. *Shell Shocked Soldier, Hue*. 1968. Black & White Photograph

Clearly, this type of material exists at one end of the scale in terms of what is considered photographic art; the differentiation between it and photojournalism is very slight in places, and some of the shots produced by Wilson could so easily have come from the camera of a combat photojournalist in the same situation – the notable difference being that parts of his work generally do not focus on recording a key moment, so much as they illustrate people and settings out of time. The far end of this artistic spectrum can be seen through abstract photography, where the definition of an image can be far removed from the more recognised practices of capturing an image.

Sontag states that “Time eventually positions most photographs, even the most amateurish, at the level of art”²³, essentially arguing that the chronological distance between the subject matter of photojournalism and the viewer makes it an object of limited impact, capable only of aesthetic effect rather than an attachment to a greater narrative and existing in an “image-world”²⁴ that exists parallel to reality. Abstract photography, on the other hand, embraces the idea of its own removal from the strictures of documentary requirement from the start, and utilises this position to produce images that encourage thought and consideration in place of out outright observation and analysis.²⁵

Broomberg and Chanarin’s 2008 portrayal of events during the current Afghan conflict – *The Day Nobody Died* - certainly fall within the reaches of abstraction, even pushing the limits of what it can achieve. The images themselves explore the conflict in a manner that is superficially similar to photojournalism, but in a completely different visual language. Using huge rolls of photographic paper, the duo made vast exposures of various scenes in the conflict without using a camera – instead keeping the media in darkness and then exposing it to the natural light of whatever environment they wanted to depict. The photographs themselves reach so far into the idea of abstraction that the need for the viewer to be informed of their aim is central to their success or failure, as the majority of the images do not reflect any traditional notion of visual description.

²³ Sontag, Susan. *On Photography* (London: Penguin, 1977) - Page 21

²⁴ *Ibid.*, at page 11

²⁵ Rexer, Lyle. *The Edge of Vision - The Rise of Abstraction in Photography* (New York: Aperture, 2009) - Page 195 - 196

Indeed, their exhibition has been described as at risk of “being considered absurd”²⁶ due to this need for such clear introduction. In this case, the consideration of the process and story that created the images is as important to their integrity as the photographs themselves, and therein lies their main flaw. Although the photos are documentary, insofar as they photographically record short periods of conflict as they take place, the strongly abstract method of their capture (as illustrated by the video that accompanies the collection)²⁷ makes them somewhat inaccessible as a means of portraying conflict to those not present when the images were created (see fig. 6).



Figure 6 - Adam Broomberg & Oliver Chanarin. *The Brother's Suicide / The Day Nobody Died*. 2008. C-Type Print

Other work from the pair in consideration of conflict is perhaps not quite as conceptual, but still maintains a distance from traditional reportage photography. *The Red House* documents a notorious

²⁶ Pitman, Joanna. *War's absurdity in The Day Nobody Died at Paradise Row*, *The Times*, Published September 28th 2008, Retrieved November 19th 2009, (http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/tol/arts_and_entertainment/visual_arts/article4803938.ece)

²⁷ *The Day Nobody Died*. Dir Adam Broomberg & Oliver Chanarin, Online Video, 2008 - Retrieved December 28th 2009, (<http://www.choppedliver.info/>)

torture centre used by Saddam Hussain's regime, but portrays only the imagery scrawled on the walls by prisoners, giving an insight into the people who were incarcerated without actually depicting a single person. However, as with their images of Afghanistan, the removal of a temporal stamp removes the immediacy that would be embodied by an image of a tortured prisoner, for example. The majority of their work embodies the pair's strong dislike for the familiarity and unoriginality that they feel is embraced by photojournalism in its traditional form, and can be seen as reactionary in *that* respect, even if the collection is, in essence, a series of documentary images (see fig. 7 & 8).



Figure 7 & 8 - Adam Broomberg & Oliver Chanarin. *The Red House*. 2006. Colour Photographs

Their work, along with that of other photographers such as Hiroshi Sugimoto and Atta Kim (whose individual endeavours have focused on the removal of the temporary through long exposure photography)²⁸, can be described in the area of 'Slow Photography,' as noted by writer Peter

²⁸ Rexer, Lyle. *The Edge of Vision - The Rise of Abstraction in Photography* (New York: Aperture, 2009) - Page 184-185

Brook²⁹. This idea looks directly at the variation in immediacy between art and photojournalism, and points to photojournalism's search for the definitive moment being the antithesis of what the work of these conceptual photographers is concerned with - a sentiment with which Broomberg agrees, stating:

“All we're doing is giving people warning, letting the subjects represent themselves instead of pretending to catch 'the defining moment' that speaks the unwitting truth. The point is we're being self-conscious about our intervention, about the fact that it is a mediated truth.”³⁰

While the opposing photographic styles of art and photojournalism trade blows over various points as discussed, they can serve each others' interests in offering a more complete visualisation of a given situation. As mentioned in the discussion of the first chapter, there is often a need for photographs of a journalistic nature to be attached to a commentary of some type, which usually comes in the form of a written caption. However, the idea of more than one photograph being able to act as an alternative, substantial descriptor has been adopted by image-based publications – *Time* and *Life* magazines for example – in the past.

Considering the weakness in the work of conflict photography as art, in its necessity for some sort of leading statement or introduction to offer context, the combination of photojournalism and a more detailed visual description, created through artistic contribution can potentially offer a more complete picture of a whole subject, rather than just the series of single moments that is derided by artists.

This approach can be seen in a unique work by photographer Didier Lefèvre and illustrator Emmanuel Guibert, depicting the former's journey into Afghanistan during the summer of 1986 as a

²⁹ Brook, Peter. *Slow Photography: Broomberg and Chanarin*, Prison Photography, Posted October 16th 2009, Retrieved November 19th 2009 (<http://prisonphotography.wordpress.com/2009/10/16/slow-photography-broomberg-and-chanarin>)

³⁰ 'Trusting the Truth' at Johannesburg Art Gallery (Gallery Listing), ArtThrob.co.za, Posted September 25th 2007, Retrieved November 19th 2009 (http://www.artthrob.co.za/03apr/listings_gauteng.html)

photojournalist accompanying Médecins Sans Frontières staff across the border from Pakistan. His work saw him stationed there for several months, and the book chronicles his time there, along with the arduous journeys involved in the mission. The intriguing method of depicting the photographic story of this trip is the amalgamation between art and documentary work, which sees the story unfold through photographs linked together with graphic illustrations rather than solely words (see fig. 9).

There are numerous outcomes from this interaction between photography and graphic art, both in the context of book, and a larger narrative. The overall impact on the book – a non-fiction graphic novel, if you will – is to create an immensely rich story, facilitating commentary from the photographer beyond the traditional captioned image. Although the images were shot in a photojournalistic style, the result of their arrangement in this manner removes the sense that they are a series of instants, as is so often the case with conflict photography.

The approach is not without its problems, however. The general nature of art in conflict distances itself from reality, by the very way it is recorded – through the artist's interpretation of their subject. Regardless of debates on the photographic real, art is still seen as a more compromised means of recording reality (in the photography-as-proof sense) when compared with the modern, photographic documentation of conflict. When combined with the common notion of the cartoon as a child's plaything, the use of illustrations can trivialise the subject matter. Further to this, the fact that the photographs were taken fifteen years before the production of the book removes any sense of immediacy, toying with the idea that the book cannot be seen as either photojournalism or art by traditional standards.

While the expansion of the ideas in the book cannot be seen as a resolution to the argued weaknesses of traditional conflict photography, it does point to an interesting shift in the way the two styles of illustration can be disseminated in a meaningful, accessible way.



Figure 9 - Didier Lefèvre, Emmanuel Guibert & Frédéric Lemerrier. Excerpt from *The Photographer: Into War Torn Afghanistan with Doctors Without Borders*. 2009. page 97

CHAPTER THREE | TERRORISM AS CONFLICT

As with the media in which it is portrayed, conflict itself is evolving. Whilst the traditional concepts of war and conflict remain, they have been augmented in several areas, including through terrorism and the rise of the use of technological warfare by military powers.

Terrorism is in no way a new development in conflict, and even in the recent history of the 20th century, instances are too numerous to list in detail. Britain itself bore the brunt of terrorist attacks by the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) from the 1960s onwards, including numerous bombings in a sustained campaign that killed hundreds of civilians. However, sustained, world-wide terrorism on the basis of a common set of ideals is a new concept³¹, and in recent time, the world has witnessed the most devastating terrorist attacks ever recorded as a result. This idea has been described by Matthew Morgan as 'The New Terrorism' – the rise of terrorism that has moved away from traditional political motivators, replaced instead by religious belief and behaviour of a zealot-like nature.³² Traditionally, photography has struggled to deal with terrorism, and journalistic coverage of the subject in general has been largely unable to assign a unique way of portraying it in the media. During The Troubles in Northern Ireland and the subsequent associated violence in mainland Britain, the activities of the PIRA were largely depicted as those of criminals, and were illustrated in the British press using photographic material that complied with this rhetoric. In relation to this, Taylor suggests:

“Photographs prove that foreign mayhem has arrived in the country, that an alien presence is amongst ‘us’.”³³

³¹ Manningham-Buller, Eliza. *Countering Terrorism: An International Blueprint*, Transcript Of The Lecture by the Director General of the Security Service at The Royal United Services Institute (Rusi) conference on "The Oversight of Intelligence and Security", June 17th 2003 (<https://www.mi5.gov.uk/output/director-generals-speech-at-rusi-2003.html>)

³² Morgan, Matthew J. 'The Origins of New Terrorism', in *Parameters*, Volume 34, Spring 2004 - Page 29

³³ Taylor, John. *War Photography: Realism in the British Press* (London: Routledge, 1991) - Page 139

These images act to reduce the perceived distance between the viewer and reality, and instil a sense of fear that the traditional safety of home is under threat in a manner similar to that which is experienced during wartime. This highlights the confusion of the visual language used to discuss terror. Taylor's view is based extensively on the media's depiction of this viewpoint through the images they select as illustration to articles, which serves to convey the editorial direction of the press at the time as much as it does the photographic imagery available.

By comparison, coverage of the events of New Terrorism is much more focused on the addition of the immediate to that of the retrospective in photography. Through the proliferation of digital imaging technology, the photograph is no longer the sole property of the photojournalist in the context of breaking news, and ultimately conflict - the result of this shift is an increase in the image's capability as a documentary item, and the speed with which it can offer insight. Like the images of conflict that have been obsessed with the idea of the moment for so long, New Terrorism is captured in the image of embedded photographers; the difference being that these photographers are embedded in society, amongst their peers, as opposed to the front lines of a distant war.

Picture Editor of *The Times*, Paul Sanders, discusses the notion of the citizen journalist in relation to documenting news stories, as they develop. He states:

“I don't think it [the use of photographs captured by amateurs] detracts from what the trained news photographer does, it actually adds to the profession – those images are quite shaky, they're quite blurred, and the feeling in them is of immediacy.”³⁴

These images – such as those produced during the 2005 terrorist attacks on London – illustrate the story in a manner that would have previously been seen as beyond the reach of photojournalism; the likelihood of having a press photographer present at the scene of a terrorist attack as it happens would only be possible as a co-incidence. Indeed, Sanders suggests that in the same manner eye-witness accounts have previously been the main way in which journalists heighten the sense of

³⁴ Sanders, Paul. Interview with James Porteous, London, December 22nd 2009

immediacy and detail in written news copy, especially in situations with access restrictions, photographic coverage has been bolstered by the presence of the public's visual output.³⁵ Of course, eye-witness accounts are reliant on the descriptive ability of the witness – their photographs, tied into the notional existence of photographic truth, are much stronger descriptors, and arguably shed much of the doubt that would be present if they were to simply talk about their experiences. Sontag states:

“A photograph passes for incontrovertible proof that a given thing happened. The picture may distort; but there is always a presumption that something exists, or did exist, which is like what's in the picture.”³⁶

With the removal of the professional strictures that photographers place on themselves – most amateur images taken on the spur of the moment lack consideration of factors that direct those educated in classical rules of composition³⁷ - the conscious distortion Sontag talks about is reduced, and the ability of the image to convey the reality of the situation is improved. As a result, photographs that might otherwise be considered below the standards demanded of photos included in a print publication instead provide a powerful sense of proximity to the viewer, especially in situations such as those associated with acts of terrorism.

While previous attempts at the documentation of terror, such as the PIRA attacks mentioned above, have focused on the terrorism-as-crime methodology, there is much to suggest that it is more appropriate to look at these events in the manner adopted for conflict coverage. Looking at the attacks of September 11th 2001 in America, and specifically at the destruction of the Twin Towers, similarities can be drawn in a number of areas.

The idea of beauty, discussed earlier, is a subject of contention in relation to conflict photography, but the notion of beauty in coverage of serious crime is completely unheard of, and is bizarre to

³⁵ Sanders, Paul. Interview with James Porteous, London, December 22nd 2009

³⁶ Sontag, Susan. *On Photography* (London: Penguin, 1977) – page 3

³⁷ Sanders, Paul. Interview with James Porteous, London, December 22nd 2009

consider. Yet, in discussing photographs of the World Trade Centre attacks, Sontag relates the similarities of the uncomfortable notion of finding surreal beauty in the images that arose from it,³⁸ and those from conflict – an idea reflected by photographers present on the day of the attacks.³⁹ Outside of the critical analysis of the images themselves, it is possible to see parallels not just in the coverage itself, but the way it is considered by both those who create it, and those who view it.

Photographic evidence of the aftermath in major terrorist attacks is also unlike anything else seen outside of warzones – no other type of crime creates such large scale destruction and loss of life as terrorism. Images of this aftermath share more in common with the ruins of war-ravaged urban environments, and are summed up best in the comparison offered by Christopher Morris, an acclaimed conflict photographer. He states:

“If you look at Hue or the World Trade Center, Grozny, or Yugoslavia – cities where man has destroyed them – they all look the same.”⁴⁰

As aftermath, conflict and terror are photographically indistinguishable, the only difference being the place that has been destroyed, and how the geographical context will affect the distance between the viewer and the reality of the situation – although Sanders points out there is a difference in the way conflict and terror are illustrated at *The Times*, he raises the importance of accuracy, sympathy to the subject (and those involved), and an appreciation of the readership’s threshold for graphic imagery in both areas of coverage.⁴¹

Looking at the perspective of photographers who have experienced both environments offers particular insight into the matter of portrayal. Morris suggests that the environment of photography created by these attacks is directly comparable with conflict – his analysis of the physical risks that

³⁸ Sontag, Susan. *Regarding the Pain of Others* (London: Penguin, 2003) - Page 19

³⁹ Howe, Peter. *Shooting Under Fire: The World of the War Photographer* (New York: Artisan, 2002) - Page 37

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, at page 166

⁴¹ Sanders, Paul. Interview with James Porteous, London, December 22nd 2009

are undertaken by a photographer in both conflict and terror situations further the concept of the photographer's position in terrorist attacks as similar to that of one in war. Further, he suggests an issue mentioned by Taylor – distance – is what makes it difficult to place the correct manner of documentation for events such as those in New York.⁴² For the US and UK, recent history has shown war to be a long distance issue (the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, for example), while crime is usually a domestic matter.

These comparisons between conflict and crime, in the sense of their photographic representation, tend to show that photography itself would present them as it would a warzone. However, as Taylor's discussions on the British press coverage of IRA attacks show, and as previous chapters have argued, the physical context of these photographs amongst supporting news content is implicit in any analysis of photographic portrayal.

⁴² Taylor, John *War Photography: Realism in the British Press* (London: Routledge, 1991) - Page 94

CHAPTER FOUR | THE EMERGING INVISIBILITY OF CONFLICT

During some past conflicts, the documentary coverage of conflict has been limited by the presence of governmental controls. Restrictions on photographers in the Falklands Conflict meant that barely any images of combat appeared in the UK press – in reality, only a tiny number of photos were ever transmitted out by photographers.⁴³ This level of regulation is clearly in stark contrast to the freedoms afforded to photographers present in Vietnam by the US Forces, which as mentioned earlier, resulted in the provision of huge volumes of imagery from the war.

In recent times, the idea of the diminishing presence in conflict has been highlighted – the concept that the public sees less of conflict is raised by Taylor in his discussion of the first Gulf War, where imagery of the body (as a corpse) is perceived to have disappeared from news coverage as a result of the effects of censorship, and the denial of access to photographers by various means⁴⁴ - a fact which Sanders agrees with in relation to *The Times* present day coverage of both acts of war and terror.⁴⁵ This represents a large shift from the photographic imagery associated with the Vietnam War, which routinely featured images of dead soldiers and civilians (although generally not US soldiers) as subject matter. The resulting idea of distance and abstraction that Taylor describes creates an environment that does not represent the documented truth of conflict, but rather a sanitized, tasteful timeline of events within the war. This interference in the effectiveness of the image to portray the symbolic aspects of war, whether visually unpleasant or not, diminishes its ability as an item of historic record. It is in this area that Sanders and Taylor differ in their opinion – the perspective of the picture editor, which is explored in more depth later, points to the absence of

⁴³ HC 17-1, Page xxxviii and 'Memorandum submitted by the Ministry of Defence PR, PR arrangements for the Falklands Operation', Annex C, HC 17-11, page 117. **Cited:** Taylor, John. *Body Horror: Photojournalism, Catastrophe and War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998) - Page 94

⁴⁴ Taylor, John. *Body Horror: Photojournalism, Catastrophe and War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998) - Page 160

⁴⁵ Sanders, Paul. Interview with James Porteous, London, December 22nd 2009

the body being not only acceptable, but preferable in illustrating stories involving the presence of the deceased.⁴⁶

Aside from the effect of this type of censorship, which has been present in conflict since at least the First World War, the technological advancement of warfare has had an effect on the photographic visibility of war. Former photojournalist Simon Norfolk, who now works as a landscape photographer covering alternative aspects of conflict, raises the major issue of the visibility of war:

“ ... I wonder what photojournalists of the future are going to photograph? Are they still going to photograph guys with guns, shooting at each other? Because quite soon there aren't going to be guys with guns shooting at each other. We're quite soon getting to the era of UAVs [Unmanned Aerial Vehicles] and stuff. People aren't even going to know what shot them – and there will be nothing to photograph.”⁴⁷

While tradition dictates that photographs of war show the combat and associated mechanisms of conflict, the nature of warfare's current development is removing access to its visual element – the aspect that photographers utilise, specifically in photojournalism, to illustrate a story. While Taylor discusses the removal of the body from photographic evidence of conflict, war has subsequently removed the soldier, and ultimately the photographer's ability to document.

For example, in instances of military attacks utilising the UAVs that Norfolk discusses, the problem faced by those requiring photographic illustration is very clear – the BBC resorting to the standbys of stock images of the aircraft itself, and subsequently, a map of the region when the technology is deployed for a suitable visual accompaniment.⁴⁸ The distance and immediacy involved in the act itself is what prevents the expected level of photographic documentation, and ultimately lessens the impact of the associated article. This practical issue places photography as a medium that is reliant

⁴⁶ Sanders, Paul. Interview with James Porteous, London, December 22nd 2009

⁴⁷ Manaugh, Geoff *War/Photography: An Interview With Simon Norfolk*, BLDG BLOG, Posted November 11th 2006, Retrieved November 19th 2009 (http://bldgblog.blogspot.com/2006_11_01_bldgblog_archive.html)

⁴⁸ *Pakistan drone raid 'kills three'*, BBC News Online, Published November 19th 2009, Accessed November 19th 2009 (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/8367621.stm) & *US drone 'kills 5 in Pakistan'*, BBC News Online, Published March 16th 2009, Accessed November 19th 2009 (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/7945404.stm)

on human attachment, when the subject itself is pushing beyond such limitations and dispensing of the need for anything but remote human involvement.

Nowhere are the emerging shortcomings of the medium more apparent than in situations that involve the documentation of the intangible. Mainstream news articles relating to the Internet, as well as associated companies and technology, often utilise photographs of computer screens in various guises as illustration, with the only apparent variable being the creative ability of the photographer involved.

Clearly, in the context of conflict, this changes little. A recent report by technological security company McAfee highlights an issue that will ultimately affect the capability of photography to document war – the future rise of electronic and cyber warfare.⁴⁹ While the use of advanced technology, such as un-manned drones, in place of combat aircraft has implications on the difficulties of immediate coverage, removing the idea of combat from war altogether would require an extensive re-consideration of the genre of conflict photography itself.

Norfolk's photographic work in this area is particularly relevant to this discussion. His former position as a photojournalist gives him a unique insight into the limitations of the medium. He states:

“Photojournalism is a great tool for telling very simple stories: *Here's a good guy. Here's a bad guy. It's awful.* But the stuff I was dealing with was getting more and more complicated – it felt like I was trying to play Rachmaninoff in boxing gloves.”⁵⁰

With the increasing complexity of conflict itself – such as the changing face of terrorism that was discussed previously – the medium's ability to record and document in a meaningful, descriptive way are being compromised. Norfolk's photography instead studies the environments of conflict themselves, and how they have been shaped by the presence of war.⁴³

⁴⁹ Virtual Criminology Report 2009 – Virtually Here: The Age of Cyber Warfare, McAfee, November 3rd 2009

⁵⁰ Manaugh, Geoff. *War/Photography: An Interview With Simon Norfolk*, BLDG BLOG, Posted November 11th 2006, Retrieved November 19th 2009 (http://bldgblog.blogspot.com/2006_11_01_bldgblog_archive.html)



Figure 10 – Simon Norfolk: *Former teahouse in a park next to the Afghan exhibition of economic and social achievements in the Shah Shahid district of Kabul.* In Norfolk, Simon 'Afghanistan: Chronotopia'. 2003. Colour Photograph

His landscapes do not document conflict in the traditional sense, yet do explore its impact on situations – artistically, although the photos are intended as visually accurate depictions of the places he studies, the reasoning behind them is abstract to the traditional ideals of conflict photojournalism (see fig. 10). This is especially apparent in considering his photography of supercomputers that are used in the design and theoretical testing of nuclear weapons; although the subject matter is mundane in the extreme, the images depict the locals of military progress in an abstract manner that befits the intangibility of the situations he photographs.

How this can affect a solution to the shortcomings of photojournalism is somewhat complex. Norfolk is not a news photographer, and his photos do not offer the straightforward illustrative qualities required for that genre. However, the idea of aftermath that he embraces in looking at how conflict

can alter a landscape is similar to the method embraced in conflict photography; the study of the fact the story itself extends beyond the event, into the aftermath. Although this cannot aid the portrayal of more complex notions of warfare as they develop, it does maintain the idea of immediacy by focusing on what *is* happening as opposed to what *did* happen.

From the perspective of the press, there is an acknowledgement that the aftermath is not only useful in illustrating those events beyond the logistical or geographical reach of the publication.

Sanders speaks of his belief that the retrospective viewpoint is the most potent. He states:

“It's always about the reaction of the people that it affects. Whether it's a picture of a girl whose dad is coming back from a war in a coffin, who's quiet; whether it's someone running through a station screaming because they've been caught in a blast, it's always about the effect. The people that are going to have to carry the scars for the rest of their life, whether they are emotional or physical - the better pictures always come from the reaction, *always.*”⁵¹

Whilst Norfolk focuses on the impact of conflict on the environment it takes place in, Sanders describes a similar approach to the human element of conflict, albeit with a much more obvious temporal proximity to the event itself. In both cases, the potency of the images lies in the inherent strength of using the aftermath as a means of illustration, rather than merely making the most of a compromised method.

If the future of conflict is to be one where professional photographers are increasingly unable to be present at key moments during the moments of initial action – an area where citizen journalism is, as discussed, coming to the fore – then the study and documentation of the effect of conflict should be seen as an entirely capable means of visually portraying conflict. The analytical power of the retrospective can serve to create a more considered narrative, with strength beyond that of images snatched from the heat of battle.

⁵¹ Sanders, Paul. Interview with James Porteous, London, December 22nd 2009

CONCLUSION |

This dissertation has examined the position of photography within the context of conflict, and has compiled a number of key discussions on several important areas of consideration within the subject. Although the aim is not to decisively resolve the matters raised in each of these areas, conclusions can be drawn from the arguments within.

Looking at the photograph and the photographer in conflict, the opening chapter explores the relationship between the individual who is photographing conflict, the images they create, and the matters that affect the perception of their work. Briefly looking at the origins of conflict photography as a starting point, the need for context and support in relation to the story of an individual image is highlighted, using images by Capa and Fenton to illustrate the problem that an image cannot completely record on its own. Continuing the discussion of the weakness of isolated imagery, and how the perception of these images is ultimately affected by the manner in which they are placed within other descriptive material, the idea of the viewer's preconceptions is raised as a potential mechanism for the decontextualisation of photography. Sontag's discussion of the perception of beauty is then examined in analysis of whether it is possible to see such beauty in images of conflict, and ultimately leads to the conclusion that although we do expect these images of human violence and suffering to be shown, we still struggle to move past the taboo of finding aesthetic pleasure in images associated with these topics – an idea which is drawn on in the final chapter on terror. The last examination in this area is that of the photographers themselves, and their position in the intervention of photography. While the nature of their role demands that they do not intervene, their overriding viewpoint is that they do, but in a manner that still allows them to be present in these situations; their intervention is in the nature of bringing the things they see into the public consciousness, using the photograph.

The role of fine art photography in conflict is considerably more complex than that of photojournalism - by looking into the relationship between war artistry and conflict photography in

general, it is apparent that the scope for alternative methods of expression does not simply push the boundaries of conflict photography, but the idea of what can be considered photography in general. In reality, the artistic works and journalistic photography that are created in war can ultimately serve to enhance each other, and mindful of the point in the opening chapter – regarding the isolation of photographic imagery – the potential for the pair to be supplemental to each other is put forward. Case studies of photography as art then follow up this idea, exploring the differences between the polar opposites of abstraction and realism in the field, highlighting in both the same issues of context that affect traditional conflict photography. A need for further narration than can be offered by the image alone – in fine art photography, this generally comes in the form of an introductory narrative of the work, rather than a continuing monologue on the subject of the images, as is the case with documentary photography of war. As a closing case study, the examination of *The Photographer* as a unique manner in portraying conflict is used to argue the case for alternative means of photographic description, and the dissemination of images without an absolute reliance on written evidence. Additionally, the weaknesses highlighted in the use of graphic illustration further the argument that art's dissociative nature, and in this case, the connotations of cartoons as an immature medium, make the artistic depiction of war in photographs a complex issue.

In the closing chapters, the modern issues of terror and the visibility of conflict are raised as two areas of interest in relation to photography of this subject. The former is explored first, creating a grounding of argument based on studies of Taylor's discussion of the photographic portrayal of terrorist attacks in Britain by the IRA, facilitating the analysis of development in conflict coverage. Subsequent study reveals that terrorism at present has itself evolved, with reference to the attacks of September 11th 2001, and that as a result, the way in which photographers document images of terror has changed in parallel - discussion of references to the attacks on the Twin Towers ties the documentation of acts of terrorism to the style of photography normally associated with conflict. Examination of Sontag's arguments on the position of beauty within images of terrorism, along with consideration of the experiences and insight offered by conflict photographer Christopher Morris,

gives the clear impression that imagery from this type of event should be viewed in the manner of war, as opposed to the criminal symbolism previously embraced by the British press.

As a continuation, the diminishing visual presence of conflict is examined in the final chapter. The matter of censorship's limitation of the photograph's ability to document is raised in relation to the Gulf War, ultimately indicating the damaging nature of such controls on the role of the photojournalist, and the historic documentation of conflict. Additionally, the implications of distance and immediacy are considered, looking at their importance in the ability of photography to capture events in conflict that far outstrip the speed with which photographers can access them, and how advancing technology is causing this problem to develop. Along with the physical implications of technological advancement, the descriptive ability of the photograph is also altered by the shift towards the capture of the intangible, in the form of data-based warfare, which will present the opportunity and necessity for the medium to adapt, if conflict of this nature is to become widespread in the future. The analysis of the work of Simon Norfolk shows that there is certainly scope for photography to adapt to this change, although how that may be achieved in the context of photojournalism is unclear at present – for now, the genre appears reliant on documenting the aftermath of modern conflict, as suggested by the likes of Paul Sanders.

Ultimately, the use of photography in the context of conflict can be seen as a field of continual adjustment and evolution. As time passes, the photographic process itself moves on, and as in all genres that it covers, the subject matter changes too – nowhere is this more evident in the present day documentation of modern warfare, and the changing face of terrorism. While the most long-standing arguments, such as those concerning the truth of photography, the need for context and the relationship with the press, have existed for as long as the medium itself, ideas on the portrayal of more modern subjects are still developing rapidly in front of us. As conflict becomes less visible, and as the violence of war becomes augmented by acts of terror that solely target the civilian population, photography will continue to serve its often compromised role as the world's most

accessible means of witness. While it is simple to say photographic imagery is changing, the forward motion of the genre is by no means guaranteed, although the widening acceptance of citizen journalism as a legitimate entity has introduced a new, if fragile dimension to photojournalism. The future of conflict photography – this medium at war – relies on the continuing creativity of individual photographers to capture the violence, destruction, and horror of the world of conflict, at home and abroad.

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