Analogue vs. Digital Photography: Which embodies the true essence of photography?

By

Samya Arif

Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture
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This Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of BACHELOR OF COMMUNICATION DESIGN, from Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture.

Internal Advisor : Tazeen Hussain
                   Arshad Farooqui

External Advisor :
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Abstract

“Photographs do not seem to be statements about the world so much as pieces of it, miniatures of reality, that anyone can make or acquire.” Susan Sontag, On Photography, 1977.

Before the advent of the digital age, photography was perceived to be a magical process of capturing the realities of our world in single moments. Not everyone could capture the magic, for although the analogue process nurtured spontaneity, individuality and adventure it also required discipline, patience and time. A photographer was in other words also a creative laborer.

However, the dawn of the digital revolution transformed the world, as we knew it, not least of which, was photography. The digital side of photography was able to overcome the problems of analogue but instead, also brought on a new set of issues. These issues, which involved the advanced ability to greatly alter and manipulate an image, faltered the core value of photography–reality.

Today, photography represents a confused body of images. The values and ethics that were once the stronghold of this field have changed. So have the processes, ideals and results. So what does photography stand for in current times? And from the time of its inception to up till now, which medium, analogue or digital has encompassed its true spirit?
Introduction


This dissertation examines and evaluates the two most popular mediums of photography; analogue and digital, and assesses which in terms of aesthetics and the outcome conveys the true essence of photography. The essence of a photograph is created by the photographic elements that are brought together to form an image. When looking at a photograph, one may say that it is the subject or the light or the colors in it that are bringing the essence forward, but in actuality it is the photographer’s intentions and decisions regarding these factors that fundamentally shape the image. One of the photographer’s decisions is to make a choice between analogue or digital.

The primary reason for the instant and prominent success of photography was its ability to capture reality unlike any other medium. This was the basis upon which analogue photography sustained itself until the digital age decided to revolutionize photography, and change the process and result of creating a photograph dramatically. Through a change in the medium, the beliefs and understanding attached to it are directly affected and thus, modified as well.

Analogue’s close connection with reality and the romanticism of the dark room, enamored photographers such as Imogen Cunningham and Ansel Adams. The truth inhabiting analogue photography is unquestionable and its foremost ethical stand, for the negative of the film is completely unalterable. A point that created photography’s value and power. The film offers individuality, spontaneity and
adventure but it is also shadowed by long hours in the dark room, uncertainty and heaps of negatives.

Digital photography recognized the existing problems in analogue photography; and drastically transformed the medium to better meet the needs of our convenience-based society. Gone were the tedious printing processes, uncertainty and storage issues, replaced with ample amounts of prints in lesser time, fewer mistakes and virtual image storage.

Factors such as these have today made digital photography the general medium of preference for both the client and the photographer, especially for commercial projects, where quantity rules over quality. Moreover, with the extension of digital technology, photographers have been able to create images from the imagination, combining fantasy and surrealism. Alteration works in this instance, as the viewer is aware of the illusion.

But convenience with technology does not come without a price. The digital revolution has opened one too many doors, and with the digitalization of photography, a photographer has been able to manipulate and alter any image radically, through the use of various softwares and digital tools.

This has created an internal riff in fields such as photojournalism and Wildlife photography, as the means to alteration and manipulation are a source of disbelief and doubt in the accuracy and reliability of the image at stake. The aforementioned fields of photography relied on the vital existence of truth and reality in an image to demonstrate their accuracy.
It is apparent that digital photography has affected not only photography and its processes, as we knew them to be, but also the ethics, beliefs and values attached to it. Does this signal the era of a new kind of photography? Photographers such as Ameen J prefer to call it the evolution of photography. Listing its transformation from the black and white days of the dark room, to the introduction of the color film and photo labs, to the recent invasion by digital cameras and the inception of electronic galleries in the future.

Many photographers like Arif Mehmood, however, have learnt and mastered photography on an analogue camera, and worry about the repercussions of moving on to digital entirely. It seems that individuality and the element of discipline are at risk with the use of digital cameras.
Research Methodology

My dissertation question may be split into two basic sections, one being the study of the affects of digital technology on the field of photography. And the other, understanding which (Analogue or Digital), embodies the true essence of photography. Keeping in mind these two key points of my dissertation I have come to the conclusion that this dissertation will primarily be a qualitative/empirical research based dissertation. For which I will also be carrying out a few but significant semi-structured interviews.

It is crucial that the affects of digital photography be studied to an extent within the context of this dissertation. The intricacy of understanding whether analogue or digital photography conveys the true message of a photograph may only be resolved to an extent through a sustained study of books and essays already on this subject. To expand the findings I hope to gain from this study I intend to conduct semi-structured interviews with four photographers. I have identified these four people, who are prominent photographers in their own right and will be able to provide relevant and vital knowledge regarding the subject at debate. The four photographers I plan to interview are as follows:

- Arif Mehmood (Photojournalist), White Star (Photography agency). He is one of the most respected and renowned names for black & white (analogue) photography in Pakistan, he shot solely analogue for twenty five years, with his most prominent work being in analogue only and is a recent convert to digital photography due to pressure on his agency to take more photographs.
in lesser time. His agency is a subsidiary of Dawn news, one of the leading newspapers of the country.

- Ameen J (Fashion Photographer and Photojournalist): One of the top, younger photographers in the country who started out with digital only and often alters his photographs digitally. He rarely shoots film, and for any given project his obvious preference lies with digital, assuring his strong support of the digital evolution. As he has often given lectures at Indus Valley School, I am certain that his approach towards the interview will not be biased towards digital photography and that he will be able to reach out to his analogue days during his education for a fair assessment.

- Masood Jamal (Art Photographer, Photography Critic, Photojournalist and documenter), UK: A pursuit of photography that spawns over twenty years as a side-interest, he was a true analogue loyalist, until an experience with a digital camera, initiated his descent into the digital world as a professional photographer. And though, he is still suspicious of digital technology, in terms of manipulation, he has developed a quiet fondness for his Nikon D-90. He believes that both forms of photography can co-exist, serving different functions, for this purpose I feel he will be able to elucidate a precise analysis between both mediums and their true qualities.

- Farah Mahbub (Art Photographer, Photography Critic, and Photojournalist): One of the Pioneer, female photographers of the country, she currently heads the Photography Department at Indus Valley School. A true analogue lover,
she is a master of Dark room skills and holds command over digital as well, but unlike Arif Mehmood does not give blatant preference to analogue photography. A lot of her recent work has been shot on digital, and although she misses the charm of the dark room, she does not ignore the pros of using digital and can show an incisive look into a world where both mediums exist to fulfill distinctive needs.

A discussion on the comparison of digital and analogue photography can be a largely abstract one. This I feel lends itself best to the format of a semi-structured interview for after asking a set of key questions I want the discussions to be flexible and hopefully reveal more than just the obvious.

All four of the photographers that I am planning to interview have an experienced background in both digital and analogue photography, however their preferences lie. They possess a flair for going into interesting details about the matter at hand, and the diversity of their photography and their subject will ensure that I am able to identify the intricacies involved in creating a photograph. And therefore be able to assess and analyze whether analogue or digital transmits the genuine spirit of photography.

I feel the strategy of combining a qualitative research with interviews conducted with the relevant people will enable me to write a well-rounded and meaningful dissertation.
Analysis / Discussion

In this day and age we are constantly being bombarded with new representational electronic information and digital tools. These have significantly altered the way in which we perceive art, photography and society, and call into question the way we attain knowledge and how we represent it. The development in new technologies has changed our very concept of reality that has existed since the Renaissance.

When reviewing history one can conclude that any major changes in the arts have been brought about by cultural changes happening at that period. “The history of every art form shows critical epochs in which certain art forms aspire to effects which could be fully obtained only with a changed technical standards, that is to say, in new art forms.”

_Walter Benjamin, The work of Art in the age of Mechanical Reproduction, 1936_, (Benjamin 6).

Resources of art are not simply physical materials and processes. Each process has attached to it beliefs, practices and conventions that affect our understanding and reading of the images produced. Once beliefs and practices have altered, artists may find that certain types of effects can no longer be obtained.

Photography critic Robert Hirsch writes on his blog, (Hirsch 1). “We often assume that all pictures are, “signs,” that stand for something and possess an innate semiotic (pertaining to signs) structure and value. But is it also possible that pictures are just
pictures that represent circumstances that cannot be expressed in any other way. Pictures are an essential component of how humans observe, communicate, celebrate, and remember. For the majority of people the standard, automatic type of photographic record keeping is adequate, but for others it is not. This smaller group finds it a necessity to control, interact, and manipulate the photographic process and to interpret and actively interject their responses to the subject.”

A photograph is not necessarily about something; rather it is something in and of itself. A photograph may be enigmatic or it may allow a viewer access to something remarkable that could not be perceived or understood in any other way. It is analogous to what the dancer Isadora Duncan said: “If I could explain to you what I meant there would be no reason to dance.”

Therefore, if one is to question what the true essence of photography is, and which medium conveys it better or more, then we must understand the different reasons for the popularity and usage of both analogue and digital photography. The pros and cons of both the mediums need to be assessed and analyzed to realize the answer to the question at heart.

Prior to deliberating on the impact, and pros and cons of digital photography, we must understand the ways in which photography functioned before this new technology was introduced. More particularly, we must look at the features that have distinguished
analogue photography’s use in the production of images; it is helpful to consider the way in which photography has traditionally functioned differently from painting.

A photograph has a special connection with reality and an independence from the Photographer’s intentions. For example, if there is an object or a person in a photograph, we assume that they must have been in front of the camera, since the object or person cannot just be a product of the photographer’s imagination. It is for this reason, a photograph is thought to verify the existence of its subject in a way a painting never could. A photograph requires the presence of the subject for its production, while a painting could depend wholly on the artist’s imagination.

“There are many things that photography brought to the repertoire of image-making processes: a rapidity and ease of production, a new standard of precision and accuracy, and a more informal and experimental approach to composition and subject matter. But perhaps more distinctive was the perceived status of the photographic image, a status derived from its mechanical nature of its production,” William J. Mitchell, The Reconstructed eye, 1992, (Mitchell 13-16).

This close connection between what the photograph shows and what exists make a photograph of a subject more pleasing or upsetting than a painting or drawing of the same subject. The conception of the difference between photography’s reality and a painting’s questionable reality is the key reason why photography gained popularity in the first place.
The association of fun and adventure with analogue photography added to the whole discipline. Farah Mahbub\textsuperscript{1}, a prominent female photographer in Pakistan, remembers her first encounter with her father’s ancient Polaroid camera as a time of great discovery and an innate search for the right image.

Going out to photograph for long hours and spending insane hours in the dark room, trying to get the right tone, in her opinion, taught her more than any digital camera ever could. “A single, correct image is more difficult to shoot rather than a couple of images, and whoever said photography was about shortcomings? Every image is a challenge, it should be. Otherwise what are photographers for?” She regards her earlier days spent in a hurl of films and dark rooms as the most passionate time of her career.

Arif Mehmood\textsuperscript{2}, one of the master black and white photographers of the country holds analogue photography in even higher regards and brazenly credits analogue for teaching him how to tell a story. Being primarily, a photojournalist, knowing how to tell a story is of the utmost importance. The fact that he had a limited amount of rolls at a given shoot led him to make better choices in what to shoot and to not click away foolishly, or to waste an image. He strongly feels that the element of discipline that one has to adopt when working with film is gravely missing from digital photography.

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\textsuperscript{1} Appendix – 4 – Interview/Discussion with Farah Mahbub
\textsuperscript{2} Appendix – 2 – Interview with Arif Mehmood
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Furthermore, he feels quality wise; the inherent grain in film is a very strong element of analogue photography, a factor that digital photography might not be able to ever overcome or create. “One cannot disguise the apparent plasticity in a digital image”, he says, “it’s the grain in the film which creates depth and a link to reality in a photograph, a pixel in a digital image is virtual”. Additionally, he believes, the discernible individuality in each print of analogue photography creates considerably more original and genuine work.

Rather than criticizing the wait for the images to develop in analogue photography, he believes it creates patience in the photographer, which is a much-required characteristic in the field, especially for analogue shooters. He hails, Salvador Salgado, one of the masters of photography and fellow photojournalist as a great inspiration. A man who has only shot film, and still, even his 8x8” prints outclass his larger digital counterparts in any given exhibition.

If given a choice, Arif Mehmood blatantly prefers to work with analogue cameras, one because he strongly believes that there is more individuality in hand done work and the other because he knows the ropes to analogue far better than digital, thus creating a sort of comfort zone for him. Even Ameen J, another renowned Pakistani Photographer, who is a die-hard digital loyalist, is compelled to agree with Arif on the visible dominance of individuality in analogue photography.

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3 Appendix – 3 – Interview with Ameen J
In any given image, shot by both digital and analogue, the analogue one will almost always have comparatively more idiosyncratic results. Along with individualism another major stronghold of analogue photography is the power of the negative, for unlike a digital image it is eternal and can never be altered or changed.

On the other hand, Masood Jamal⁴, a distinguished, UK based photographer credits analogue photography for teaching him the discipline and use of design in photography but also believes that the usage of digital cameras has advantages and ideals that have elevated photography farther than analogue possibly could.

He does not shy from saying, "I am a convert and I really do not see any occasion when I would prefer to use analogue processes. The cost, safe storage, availability of films and processing facilities, and lack of instant feedback and transmission facilities make the demise of Analogue photography a certainty for non-studio based Professionals. There is however a place for analogue photography in the professional studios and there are still major advantages that can be extracted from the Printing processes and the Mediums used by the society photographers."

Even before the advent of digital photography, the existing problems within analogue were taken as part of the package. It was understood that the prints were to not be touched in fear of fingerprints. Which created a riff between the viewer and the image, a sort of invisible line where the viewer was kept at bay, never invited. The distance has

⁴ Appendix – 1 – Interview with Masood Jamal
been covered by digital photography with the introduction of LCD and touch screens. Moreover, the quality of the printing and paper in dark room photography, doesn’t allow a photograph to last long without getting withered. The paper has a knack for turning yellow and the dyes don’t take long to fade. Many of Ansel Adams original prints hang in despicable conditions today.

Even the unpredictability factor of what might appear in the image once the developing process has taken place, can work against analogue, especially when a professional photographer is looking for a certain kind of look in an unsettled environment like War or Wild-life photography. The instant the shutter is released there is no turning back, deleting or replacing an image. You either get the image or you don’t. Most photographers, who are in the field as professionals, such as Photojournalist Arif Mehmood, find it hard to work with such a risky and uncertain medium especially when the client has a high profile and expects quality and quantity in a minimum amount of time. In fact, Arif’s agency, Whitestar was forced to adopt digital photography to meet the growing demands and trends of the market. “Time is everything in the world today, and photographers don’t seem to have much time now”, he says.

If a photographer is to use an analogue camera professionally then he is also forced to face the hurdles linked to storing negatives, the heavy-duty and incredible amounts of time that printing requires. Ansel Adams, the father of all photography was unable to print a considerable sum of his life’s work due to the insane amounts of hours he had to spend on a single print in the dark room.
At the end of our interview, a reluctant Arif Mehmood is obligated to admit that the dark room has lost its edge, and he supposes that to be a photographer today it might not be necessary to know the intricacies of what goes on in a dark room, even if at one time it was regarded as magic. He feels that the dark room is soon to become a niche Art and will pertain more towards Fine Art photography.

Ameen J and Masood Jamal are quick to agree on that. Masood goes as far as saying, “There seems to be an implied bias that the ‘art’ bit is restricted to the Darkroom. I think not, I have seen beautiful arty images taken digitally without the sexy red-light intervention of the darkroom. Art must never be in the process and always in the result.”

He is swift to add that he loved the results that he got in the dark room and learnt about composition and contrast and negative spaces all the while as the solutions lapped the corners of the prints and the grains became images that he had taken days before. “There have been disappointments too, far too many to mention, but I think I would do it now the new way.”

Ameen adds by observing, that in the days of the analogue the masters had to do with what they had, they didn’t really have a choice. When black and white photography existed, that was all that one could print images in, but when color photography came out, more than half of the photographers switched to that. Therefore it seems only inevitable to him that digital outgrows analogue.
The unavailability of fresh film, bad manual processing, and the closing of film stores everywhere has added to the reasons why throngs of photographers are switching to digital. Many of the top photographers of the world today such as John Sexton and Annie lebovitz shoot mostly digital.

The boom of the digital age was not only a landmark in Photography’s history but it changed the meaning and process of taking a photograph, as we knew it.

When asked whether analogue or digital is better in terms of quality and the result, Ameen J’s, straight up answer is digital. Listing its quality, ‘zero room for accidents’ factor, precision and appropriate management of time as the main reasons for his preference. Ameen received his first digital camera on his graduation day from his parents, and learnt the ropes in a few tries. Since then he feels he has been able to shoot and experiment more, thus producing a variety of work.

He strongly values the user-friendly approach of digital cameras, which has made the camera a popular and economical hobby amongst the masses. More people are interested in taking images of our ever-changing world since there is no trial and error, strenuous hours of printing or waiting involved anymore. The need to print images has lessened tremendously with the advent of the Internet; one can look at an image, transfer it, post it on the net and share it with the world anytime.
Even Arif Mehmood has no qualms in admitting that commercial work, like Wedding Photography fares better with digital photography, citing convenience and low costs as vital components of the newer medium. “There are always second chances with digital”, he adds with a mischievous smile.

Farah Mahbub points out that along with reliability, quality and quantity the digital evolution has also radically lessened the printing time, made storage of images convenient and allowed us to get closer to the print through touch screens and electronic galleries, which she believes is the future of photography.

One of the undeniable advantages of digital photography is allowing the photographer to experiment with photography at another level. Photographers have the means to create convincing fantastical and surreal images with the help of softwares such as Adobe Photoshop and DreamWeaver, to the point, where Ameen claims that the feel of the inherent grain in film can be duplicated on a digital image through tools on Adobe Photoshop.

However, one must not get too impressed with the diverse options that digital photography has to offer, for all photographers know that the digital age does not come without irony. Within the medium and its usefulness are factors that are bringing with them an altered attitude. This change in attitude may ultimately diminish some of the powers and work ethics to which photography has traditionally laid claim.
In its days of glory, analogue photography had created a mysterious, courageous and adventurous image of photography; photographers like Ansel and Cartier-Bresson were celebrated for their search of the most beautiful, rare image. A photographer had time to enjoy his craft; this Ameen feels is one of the vital elements missing from digital photography, everything is too quick. Photographers don’t spend much time on the quality anymore; the focus is on the quantity. Some photographers have become more like paid researchers, due to the boom of stock images on the net. One has to only choose the right combination of available stock images and merge them on Photoshop to create the desired image. Gone is the spontaneity of film photography.

Although digital photography enhances a photographer’s perspective in showing his vision through various software applications, it has also created an open door for all kinds of manipulations and alterations to take place on any given image. The power of an image’s connection to reality has greatly faltered. At the time of its invention, photographs were not just images; they were an evidence and documentation of the past. They were bearers of truth.

Not anymore, countless photography scandals involving manipulation and alteration of the image, especially in wildlife photography and photojournalism have diminished respect and reliability of the image in the aforementioned fields of photography. At times, the alteration is almost undetectable, causing one to question the ethics of the medium. This has managed to create a loss of incentive amongst photographers to compete in the wild for the right shot.
If we come to the point where photos are commonly digitized and altered, our faith in the credibility of photos will inevitably weaken, and one of the major differences in our conception of painting and photography could all but disappear. This change could not only affect our ability to use photographs as evidence, it could also have far reaching implications for the aesthetics of photography. With the rising prevalence of digital manipulation, photography may also become to be seen as a construction, very much like paintings and individualistic, hand done techniques might cease to exist.

Ameen is quick to defend digital photography in this aspect by pointing out that the processes of dodging and burning in the dark room are equivalent to the digital alteration achievable now. Masood sees eye to eye with Ameen on the subject and adds, "Photo-journalism is about the unvarnished truth. Do you remember the ‘dodging’ and the ‘Cropping’ in the dark room and where was the truth then? It is the integrity of the photographer and the Publication that the Public has to assess and then decide how much reliance is placed on the image.”

Ameen predicts that in the near future, photography will become a thing of the past with the introduction of moving images, on LCD screens and billboards. He even goes as far as to say that the next generation might not even be aware of analogue photography. Farah Mahbub disagrees with the thought by giving the emergence and popularity of the Lomography movement as an example of analogues durability. She feels that no photographer should have a singular approach towards photography, that is,
to just shoot digital or analogue. No one can completely master either medium; you learn
different things from both.

The world is ever changing; we all know that the only thing constant is change. The
digital evolution is a part of that change. Just like the introduction of color photography
was evolutionary for its time and inevitable, the acceptance of the digital age is half upon
us and inevitable. It is important to realize that each medium brings with it, its own
disciplines, aesthetics and values. Some might remain the same, while some may change.

What all four photographers agree on is that in the end the image is what matters. If
the composition works and you are able to see what the photographer wants to show you
then for the most part, the true essence of the photograph has been carried forward.
However, in fields such as photojournalism and wildlife photography, the accuracy and
reliability factors matter just as much as the composition or the message in the image and
are vital elements of the photograph’s true essence. This truth in an image may only be
achievable with analogue photography, due to its tight bind with reality. Farah adds, “All
photographers must realize this to maintain a need and interest for photography in the
future.”
Glossary

*Blog* – a web site on which an individual or a group of users produces an ongoing narrative.

*Cibachrome* – Ilfochrome (formerly known as Cibachrome) is a dye destruction positive-to-positive photographic process used for the reproduction of slides on photographic paper. Since it uses azo dyes on a polyester base, the print will not fade, discolor, or deteriorate for a long time. Characteristics of Ilfochrome prints are image clarity, color purity, as well as being an archival process able to produce critical accuracy to the original slide.

*Lomography* – is a global community whose strong passion is creative and experimental analogue film photography.
Bibliography


Ansel Adams Photos:

http://www.afterimagegallery.com/adamsmoonriselarge618.jpg

Appendix 1

Masood Jamal – UK based photographer

Art Photographer, Photography Critic, Photojournalist and documentator.

Online Interview through email (questions followed by answers):

Write a short paragraph, introducing yourself, and touch upon how long you have dwelled in the field of photography and what about it irked your interest?

I have always been creative. I remember my mother pointing this out to my father when I was very young. We were all sitting in the "sun room" at our family home in the depth of the Quetta winters. That afternoon I had picked some reed stalks from the rush beds along one of the water channels that ran along the length of our road. I had taken them home and while the rest of my siblings were playing Carom, I was carefully stripping the bark of one of the reeds in thin long strips until the pith was totally exposed. It was strange and slightly exhilarating to behold the virginal fresh brittle white interior and the long stiff cane that it still resembled. Yet it was as light as air and had a strange squeaky, scratchy feel in my hands.

That’s new, I thought. This strange white cane that I held would never have seen the light of day without my intervention. I had given it birth and it needed to have a purposeful existence. This could not just be me trying to prove the "idle hands make the devil's worship” syndrome correct. This new object needed to have a life and that’s why it now lay in my hands.
I snapped off a foot long section of it and whittled one end of this length into a sharp point. With the thin bark strips, I cut out three half-foot lengths and snapped them in half ensuring that the polished outer skin remained intact and held the severed sections together. An inch up the blunt end, I inserted the three strips equally around the flesh of the cane and stood it up on its bended knees. Pakistan had its first rocket! And I had become a "Creative" even before the term had been invented.

So now some forty years later, having almost spent a lifetime being an accountant and resisting, on a daily basis, the urge to be creative, I have given all that up and resumed my life that my mother had foretold all those years ago.

I am now a professional artist and photographer and whenever I work on a project or a painting, I remember the pithy, fleshy stiff brittle cane that could have snapped easily into oblivion unless I respected the object and appreciate the vernability that I have exposed and that it needed to have life breathed into it. All objects or feelings that are exposed are a symbiotic liaison between the artist and the subject and not to record them correctly would be criminal. That to my mind is the pursuit of art.

1. Being an avid and loyal analogue photographer, what made you finally give into the madness of digital cameras? Furthermore, in what ways did you see yourself and your photography benefit from digital cameras?

I was approached recently by a Local Authority in London to work on a project that involved recording in photographs the Muslim Experience in the UK. The brief was
determined to warrant high quality digital color photographs and I had decided that to be true to the ambition of the project, a "cinema-verite" style had to be adopted.

I put together a team comprising of two other Photographers and myself. These two were photojournalists and being Spanish, had an incomplete command of English and therefore I knew that their contact with the subjects would be time-restricted and very fleeting to achieve the "instant truth" images that I was looking for. My conversion to digital photography was truly imposed upon me by this project. The images resulting from the project were well received and the instant quality control that became available to me was fundamental in achieving the aim of the brief.

2. Having used both digital and analogue cameras, which carries your preference and why? In your opinion are there any particular factors due to which analogue photography supersedes digital photography?

I am a convert and I really do not see any occasion when I would prefer to use analogue processes. The cost, safe storage, availability of films and processing facilities, and lack of instant feedback and transmission facilities make the demise of Analogue photography a certainty for non-studio based Professionals.

There is however a place for analogue photography in the professional studios and there are still major advantages that can be extracted from the Printing processes and the Mediums used by the society photographers.
3. Black and White photography is an art of the dark room. Do you think that it makes sense to shoot black and white in digital?

The question posed is indeed tricky and slightly loaded. There seems to be an implied bias that the "art" bit is restricted to the Darkroom. I think not I have seen beautiful arty images taken digitally without the sexy red-light intervention of the darkroom. Art must never be in the process and always in the result.

4. Is the dark room a dying art? To be a photographer today do you think it’s important to have had experience in the dark room?

I have loved the results that I have had in the dark room and I have learnt about composition and contrast and negative spaces all the while as the solutions lapped the corners of the prints and the grains became images that I had taken days before. There have been disappointments too, far too many to mention, but I think I would do it now the new way.

5. How has digital photography changed the face of photojournalism and wildlife photography, in respect to digital manipulation? Has it created uncertainty towards the accuracy and reliability of an image?

Photojournalism is about the unvarnished truth. Do you remember the "dodging" and the "Cropping" in the dark room and where was the truth then? It is the integrity of the photographer and the Publication that the Public has to assess and then decide how much reliance is placed on the image.
6. Part of photography’s allure was the romanticism of the dark room and the element of discipline that came with using film. Is that a significant, missing factor in digital photography?

We are a different world from what we were even ten years ago. It is now an even more fluid pace then a decade ago. Technology is the main reason why this has happened. Photographers have to embrace it. Romance has always involved "smoke and mirrors" in some form or other. It’s just that the technology has changed.

7. What is the role of the photographer today in modern society, and how does it vary from that of a photographer say in the 80s?

Photographers record an image and hope to transmit it to millions. Whether the truth is lost through technology, manipulation, process is for the viewer to decide.

Appendix 2

Arif Mehmood

Photojournalist and Director of White Star (Photography agency).

Interview Questions:

1. Digital Photography vs. Analogue Photography, which is better in terms of quality and the result?

2. What is the popular preference amongst professional photographers?
3. What advantages does analogue photography hold over digital? Factors that digital might not be able to overcome?

4. Does black and white photography make sense in digital?

5. Do you think the dark room is a dying art? To be a photographer today do you think it's important to know how to work in the dark room?

6. In your opinion today what does it mean to be a photographer? Furthermore what is the role of the photographer now?

7. Nostalgia for film? Do you think the dark room will become a specialized field?

8. In your opinion are there any limitations in analogue photography?

9. Why do you prefer film?

10. What was the impact of digital photography on your work?

11. How has digital photography changed photojournalism?

12. What is the future of photography?

Answers Received:

1. Analogue’s results are better in terms of its negative and it’s unalterable power. The Inherent grain in the film creates a depth and link to reality. Taught me how to tell a story. Therefore, for me, the quality lies in analogue.

2. Most professionals prefer film; commercial work thrives on digital photography. Wedding photography works better with digital.

3. The Inherent grain in the film creates a depth and link to reality that is not present in digital. Results come later, so it keeps you on your toes. There is and always will be more individuality in hand done work.

4. Prefer to shoot black and white on film.
5. The dark room has lost its edge, and it’s not necessary to know it to be a photographer, as photographers don’t have enough time on their hands today.

6. Photographers today, have to be versatile in what they do, as the market requires that. No one can master either medium, you learn everyday.

7. I wish more photographers could realize the significance of the dark room. But, sadly, the dark room is going to become a niche art, and will move onto the fine art side.

8. Yes, digital photography has been able to overcome theses by making photography less expensive, user-friendly and convenient.

9. I prefer film, I am in my comfort zone when I shoot analogue. More comfortable shooting film. Plus, the element of discipline is missing from digital photography.

10. Digital is quicker and helps a photographer’s perspective. A lot of photojournalists are shooting digital or both. But creates storage issues, too many back-ups in digital.

11. It hasn’t made it better since photographers like Salvador Salgado still shoot film only, his 8x8” hand prints stand out in any exhibition, just makes it convenient.

12. Digital will probably takeover, photography will continue to evolve and become user-friendlier. In the end, it’s all about seeing things. The image is more important than anything else.
Appendix 3

Ameen Jan

Fashion Photographer, Photojournalist, teacher.

Interview Questions:

1. Digital Photography vs. Analogue Photography, which is better in terms of quality and the result?
2. What is the popular preference amongst professional photographers?
3. What advantages does digital photography hold over analogue? Factors that analogue might not be able to overcome?
4. Does black and white photography make sense in digital?
5. Do you think the dark room is a dying art? To be a photographer today do you think it’s important to know how to work in the dark room?
6. In your opinion today what does it mean to be a photographer? Furthermore what is the role of the photographer now?
7. Nostalgia for film? Do you think the dark room will become a specialized field?
8. In your opinion are there any limitations in digital photography?
9. Why do you prefer digital?
10. What was the impact of digital photography on your work?
11. How has digital photography changed photojournalism?
12. What is the future of photography?

Answers Received:

1. Digital’s quality is better, less time required, zero room for accidents and precise.
2. Digital all the way.

3. The quality of prints is better, analogue had no fresh film available, bad processing and manually not managed well. Photoshop. Even the inherent grain can be created in a digital image.

4. Of course it does, the masters did not have a choice. New disciplines are brought in or created with new technology.

5. Since it is a dying art, there is no need to know.

6. A photographer is generally a person who records visuals and shares them.

7. Yes I have moments of nostalgia, from my days of education. Yes, it will become a specialized field, no doubt about it.

8. Yes it is too quick, doesn’t let a photographer enjoy the craft, photographers don’t spend too much time on the image anymore, its quantity over quality. Plus there is more individuality in analogue photography.

9. Anything is possible with digital. Convincing the viewer to believe, seeing is believing.

10. I started shooting a lot more, started experimenting more.

11. There is alteration and manipulation happening, but it is the responsibility of the photographer to not abuse software’s such as Photoshop.

12. The next generation of photographers will be unaware of analogue photography. It’s an evitable evolution. Black and white gave way to color, color gave way to digital, and soon we will only be surrounded by moving pictures.
Appendix 4

Farah Mahbub

Art Photographer, Photography Critic, and Photojournalist.

Discussion on Digital vs. Analogue:

- A single image is more difficult to take rather than a couple of images.
- The future of photography lies in electronic galleries, which is how photographers will now exhibit.
- Without looking at the line that separates digital from analogue, commercial photographers are still forced to shoot according to the client’s wishes. Have choices really increased or decreased?
- In the end it’s about the composition one framed rather than anything else.
- Not good to have a singular approach that is to just shoot digital or analogue, a photographer should be handy at both.
- Color correction and other such subtle facilities offered by digital should be availed, for the camera can never shoot like the eye. There is always room for improvement.