

On the Cover of *Rolling Stone*: Photographs, Politics, and the Public

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“The most political decision you can make is where you direct people’s eyes.”
– Wim Wenders, *The Act of Seeing*, 1997

“We take all kinds of pills that give us all kinds of thrills/ But the thrill we’ve never known/ Is the thrill that’ll get ya when you get your picture/ On the cover of *Rollin’ Stone*”
– Dr. Hook & the Medicine Show, “Cover Of Rolling Stone,” 1972

Twenty-year-old Dzhokhar Tsarnaev is currently on trial for thirty charges related to his alleged involvement in the bombings that took place during the Boston Marathon this past April. Tsarnaev is facing federal charges of using and conspiring to use a weapon of mass destruction, malicious destruction of property by means of an explosive device resulting in death,¹ and the murder of an MIT police officer. Tsarnaev was taken into custody on the evening of April 19, 2013 and accused of being involved in constructing and exploding two pressure-cooker bombs near the finish line of the Boston Marathon earlier that week on April 15. On August 1, 2013, Tsarnaev was featured in an in-depth article in Issue 1188 of *Rolling Stone* magazine. Entitled “Jahar’s World,” the story explored his family, his life as a young student and athlete, and his eventual transformation into a killer. His photograph was also used as the cover image for that issue.

The use of Tsarnaev’s image on the cover prompted public outrage. Social media outlets such as Twitter and Facebook became hosts to numerous declarations of disgust and heated debate regarding the magazine’s “glorification” of Tsarnaev. Many claimed that the cover photo made him “look like a rock star.” The controversy became a major

¹ United States of America v. Dzhokhar Tsarnaev. Case No. 13-2106-MBB. United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts. Accessed 30 Sept 2013, <<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/chi-dzhokhar-tsarnaev-charges-20130422,0,402562.htmlpage>>

story covered by news outlets around the world. Even certain retail chains in the United States refused to sell the issue of *Rolling Stone* in their stores.

Using *Rolling Stone's* August 2013 cover image of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev and the ensuing outrage as a case study, this essay explores the conditions and processes that allowed this controversy to arise. From a theoretical basis that combines semiotics and Foucauldian discourse analysis, I will argue that the ways in which images are created, used, and interpreted are processes that follow a distinct set of protocols. Though the relationships shared between certain images and sentiments appear to be “natural,” they are actually the result of a specific combination of historic and cultural influences.

The use of “iconic” images is one of the influences that shaped the discussion of this cover image, through references to Tsarnaev appearing like a “rock star,” or a “young Jim Morrison or Bob Dylan.” I argue the access of these visual and cultural “icons” contributed to the public perception of Tsarnaev’s *Rolling Stone* cover image as a “violation.” Furthermore, the venue provided by social media sites like Twitter and Facebook shaped the particular ways in which the public backlash against the image emerged, through the popularity of the hashtag “#BoycottRollingStone,” and the creation of a Facebook “group” in opposition to the cover image. Overall, the genesis of this controversy is the product of a unique combination of visual and digital culture that exists in today’s world.

Visual Culture and Photography

“The primitive notion of the efficacy of images presumes that images possess the qualities of real things, but our inclination is to attribute to real things the qualities of an image.”²

² Susan Sontag, *On Photography*, (New York: Picador, 1977), 158.

Photography was formally introduced to the world in Paris, France at a joint meeting between the Academy of Science and the Academy of Fine Arts in 1839. At this meeting, Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre's method of exposing and developing a light-sensitive copper plate won him a permanent seat in the French government, under the condition that he fully transcribed his photographic process. His successive pamphlet, entitled *History and Description of the Process of the Daguerreotype and the Diorama*, was published later that year and quickly translated into several languages.³ Photography's large-scale dissemination throughout the world had begun.

Since then, every aspect of photography – from its methods to its applications within society, science, and the arts – have continuously been contested. From Matthew Brady's gruesome depictions of the carnage of the American Civil War (see fig. 2), to Eadweard Muybridge's early investigations of human and animal locomotion (see figs. 3 – 4), to the work of Alfred Stieglitz, F. Holland Day, and other members of the pictorialist Photo-Secession movement (see figs. 5 – 8), photography's ability to comment in a variety of ways upon the social and political realities of specific moments in history has been proven. Mysteriously situated between art and science from the very beginning, photography's ability to transmit information is unlike any other method of visual communication. The age-old debates about photography's function – what it can and should say and how it can and should be used – are still alive and well today.

Why do photographic images hold such authoritative power? How and why are different assumptions regarding each photograph's relationship to "reality" formulated? Why are fashion advertisements different than news photographs? Why are family photo

³ Mary Warner Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History, 3rd Edition* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2011), 3.

albums different than the photographs that sometimes adorn the album covers of music artists? And, more importantly, *how* do viewers perceive these differences? The answers to these questions can be found in a critical analysis of visual culture and its pervasive role within all levels of society, from the realms of popular culture and the news media to medicine and scientific inquiry.

Life in today's world involves a continual set of complex negotiations between various combinations of text and images. On screens, newsstands, and billboards, one is constantly forced to decide where and how to look. The phrase "how to look" refers to how each viewer chooses to interpret a particular image or set of images that is presented before him. The agency of the viewer to decide where to land on the continuum of "acceptance," "rejection," or "qualification" with regard to any particular image is an important component of visual culture that cannot be ignored. Visual culture not only involves the actions of those who create and circulate images, it also involves the actions and choices of those who view them.

Anthropologists have studied "culture" as an academic subject since the late 19th century. In his work *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, academic Raymond Williams famously writes, "Culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language."⁴ Visual culture is no exception, as each culture's contradictions, sets of appropriations, influences, and transformations affect the ways in which cultures create, use, and understand images.

The concept of "culture" has developed to encompass ideas about how societal systems of value are integrated both within daily life (i.e. clothing, food, family life,

⁴ Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, rev. ed., 87 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983).

medicine, architecture, and the organization of public spaces) and special instances of ceremony (i.e. births, deaths, weddings, coming-of-age rituals). Naturally, some of these categories overlap, and certain qualities (such as food and clothing) can transform and be repurposed as the context of their use may change. For example, the food that one eats and the clothing that one may wear every day could be drastically different from the food that one eats and the clothing that one may wear at the wedding of a close family member. The broad range of ways in which societies are organized around these different customs and sets of ideals (in other words, “a ‘whole way of life’”⁵) have come to be understood as “culture.”

“Cultural studies” as an interdisciplinary field of academic inquiry has existed since the 1970s, and it developed out of the useful intersections between different fields such as anthropology, philosophy, literary studies, social theory, and history. It is important to mention the overlap of these different academic positionings when defining “visual culture” because, by its very nature, visual culture involves an interdisciplinary analysis of both the symbolic and the literal interactions that occur visually every day.

Furthermore, the complexities of these interactions and their scholarly importance are two features that have only recently been recognized. In the past, the study of images was restricted only to the realms of fine art and art history. An increase in the use of visuals within virtually every societal domain and the subsequent rise in the volume of one’s daily interactions with images have resulted in the need to turn more academic attention to the processes within the realm of visuals within quotidian venues as opposed to the landmark oeuvres of the art world.

⁵ Maria Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 3.

Visual culture is a broad term that “encompasses many media forms ranging from fine art to popular film and television to advertising to visual data in fields such as the sciences, law, and medicine.”⁶ Each of these varied fields use images in particular ways in order to both communicate. It is important to include each of the aforementioned fields within the study of visual culture so that the diverse role that images play in daily life can be understood and possible connections between visual forms and messages can be established.

The practice of “looking,” as it is one of the ways through which one gathers information from and engages with his surroundings, can be considered a “social practice.”⁷ The choice to look, the choice not to look, and even the desire to look are all socially motivated decisions. Sometimes the decision to look is a display of individual agency on the part of the viewer, and sometimes it is a sign of obedience. Sometimes looking provides an opportunity for learning, and other times looking facilitates manipulation. The practice of looking, therefore, is embedded within (and can be evidence of) the different power relationships within society.⁸ Why is the visual world present in particular ways, and who benefits from this presentation? Studying visual culture involves analyzing what is made visible, how that which is visible is seen, as well as what is purposefully hidden from view and what is systematically ignored.

Visual Culture and Semiotics: “Ceci n’est pas une pipe”

“A science that studies the life of signs within society is conceivable; it would be a part of social psychology and consequently of general psychology; I shall call it *semiotics*

⁶ Sturken and Cartwright, 1.

⁷ Sturken and Cartwright, 9.

⁸ Sturken and Cartwright, 9.

(from the Greek *sēmeîon* ‘sign’). Semiology would show what constitutes signs, what laws govern them.”⁹

Semiotics can be used to understand how certain conclusions are drawn from certain images. In this section, the relationship between visual and linguistic systems of communication will be investigated, and the utility of semiotics in extracting meaning from images will be explained. Other philosophers have since utilized and contributed to this method of study, including Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Emile Beneveniste, and Michel Foucault.

Semiology and *semiotics* are two terms that are used to refer to the “science of signs.”¹⁰ The origin of this field of study occurred at about the same time in the early 20th century both in Europe through the efforts of Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, and in the United States by way of the American logician, scientist, and philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce. The study of semiology is concerned with how signs (and representational forms, such as images, gestures, or written and spoken languages) are used to communicate and generally how messages are symbolically imparted and interpreted.

Saussure focused on the arbitrary and representational nature that exists between the auditory and written forms of language and the things that those language forms describe. For example, the written and spoken (auditory) forms of the word *bird* (in English), *pájaro* (Spanish), and *oiseau* (French) all represent the same animal, despite the fact that they look and sound differently. The relationship between the word and the

⁹ Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. Roy Harris (Chicago: Open Court Publishing), 16.

¹⁰ Terence Hawkes, *Structuralism and Semiotics* (Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1977), 124.

animal it represents is determined by the ways in which languages are organized, rather than some “natural connection.”¹¹ As film theorist and art historian Kaja Silverman writes, “The point upon which Saussure here insists is that no natural bond links a given signifier to its signified; their relationship is entirely conventional, and will only obtain within a certain linguistic system.”¹²

Peirce used semiotics to argue that thought and linguistic communication are both processes that involve “sign interpretation.”¹³ Through Peirce’s logic, the perception of a sign and accessing the meaning of that sign are two different processes. It is the interpretation of a perception (called the “interpretant”) and the subsequent action caused by the interpretant that constitute “meaning,” rather than solely the perception of a sign itself. A common example of the relationship between sign perception and interpretation are drivers’ interactions with traffic signs and signals. Drivers “perceive” a red sign in the shape of an octagon imprinted with the letters “S-T-O-P,” but the “meaning” in a driver’s interaction with this sign is in the driver’s “interpretation” of the sign and the action the interpretation causes.¹⁴ (The driver interprets the sign and then stops his car.) For Peirce, the meaning of a sign cannot be accessed without the necessary second step in the thought-process, the “interpretant” and the action(s) that follow.¹⁵

Roland Barthes, a French philosopher who also contributed to the study of semiotics, built his work upon the ideas of Saussure and Peirce. Barthe’s contribution to semiotics is based around the informative relationship between the “signifier” and the

¹¹ Sturken and Cartwright, 28.

¹² Kaja Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 6.

¹³ Sturken and Cartwright, 28.

¹⁴ Sturken and Cartwright, 28.

¹⁵ Sturken and Cartwright, 28.

“signified.”¹⁶ For Barthes, the signifier (the actual image, word, or sound itself) along with the meaning that it imparts (the “signified”) create the “sign.”¹⁷ Different emotions and concepts can be “signified” by the same signifier.

For example, the act of smiling when one’s photograph is being taken is a modern, Western convention. The smile (the signifier) indicates happiness and enjoyment (the signified) and can be found in both photographs of individuals (i.e. school portraits) and groups of people (i.e. vacation photos). However, the common practice of smiling in photographs is utilized in an unconventional way to convey an eerie and off-putting sentiment in photographer Arthur Fellig’s (more commonly known as Weegee) 1941 photograph “Brooklyn School Children See Gambler Murdered in Street” (fig. 9). Because of the title of the photograph, the viewer is told that he or she is looking at a group of people who are looking at a murder scene, a presumably grim and possibly frightening environment. The viewer sees some of the expected confusion and despair (one woman looks as though she is crying) in the faces of most of the onlookers. However, along the left-hand edge of the frame, one of the schoolchildren in the frame, a boy, is smiling. In the context of this image, the boy’s smile seems inappropriate and out of place. It does not convey “happiness” or “enjoyment” in the conventional sense, but the sort of voyeuristic interest a murder scene may induce. The smile, in this context, adds to the tension of the scene depicted within the photograph.

Semiotics is useful when discussing images and their meanings because both processes of linguistic and visual communication operate through the aforementioned processes of “sign” interpretation. As has been shown, words, sounds, and images (the

¹⁶ Sturken and Cartwright, 29.

¹⁷ Sturken and Cartwright, 29.

“signifiers”) are representational entities through which meaning (the “signified”) is established. A famous example of the representational function of words and images is Surrealist painter René Magritte’s “*La trahison des images*” (“The Treachery of Images”). In this work, a painted image of a pipe is depicted with the words “Ceci n’est pas une pipe” (“This is not a pipe”) written underneath the image (fig. 10).

The “meaning” of Margritte’s work (that is, the “meaning” that can be established from the particular interaction of these “signifiers” – this particular combination of image and text) can be formed in multiple ways. In his response (entitled *This Is Not a Pipe*) to Magritte’s “The Treachery of Images,” philosopher Michel Foucault explores a few of these meanings. The first that he explains is that “this” (meaning the painted image of the pipe) is not a pipe. In this case, the word “this” as the signifier and the first word of the sentence is understood to represent the painted image of the pipe. The second, is that “this” (literally the word “this”) is neither an image of a pipe nor a pipe itself (figs. 11 – 12).¹⁸ In the words of Foucault, “Nowhere is there a pipe.”¹⁹

Furthermore, the interactions between image and text in Magritte’s second rendering of this work (fig. 13) become intertwined and complicated even further. In this second version, Magritte places the painting of a pipe and its negating statement within a wooden frame and then places that frame on a wooden tripod. Foucault writes:

A painting “shows” a drawing that “shows” the form of a pipe; a text written by a zealous instructor “shows” that a pipe is really what is meant... From painting to image, from image to text, from text to voice, a sort of imaginary pointer indicates, shows, fixes, locates, imposes a system of references... But why have we introduced the teacher’s voice? Because scarcely has he stated, “This is a pipe,” before he must correct himself and

¹⁸ Michel Foucault, *This is not a Pipe*, trans. and ed. James Harkness (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 26 – 7.

¹⁹ Foucault, 29.

stutter, “This is not a pipe, but a drawing of a pipe,” “This is not a pipe but a sentence saying that this is not a pipe,” “The sentence ‘this is not a pipe’ is not a pipe,” “In the sentence ‘this is not a pipe,’ *this* is not a pipe: the painting, written sentence, drawing of a pipe – all this is not a pipe.”²⁰

Though the system of negations intensify and the relationships between image, text, and “reality” become more and more complicated within the context of the introduction of this new “frame,” the basic truth regarding the representational nature of image and of text remains.

Semiotics is useful when considering the *Rolling Stone* cover image of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev because it displays, literally, one instance of Tsarnaev’s life in which he created a photographic representation of himself. As a digital “selfie” (a popularized term for self-portraits that young people make of themselves, usually for the purpose of posting the images to social media sites), the photo of Tsarnaev is put within a particular social and historical context. The information supplied by these contexts, in addition to the context provided by the presence of Tsarnaev himself, play an important role in the public’s interpretation of the image. The context provided by the venues in which the photograph is displayed (such as the cover of *Rolling Stone* magazine) will be discussed in the following section.

Culture, Ideology, and Representational Systems

It has been established that images operate (that is, they convey “meaning”) in ways that are similar to the ways in which linguistic communication functions. Both images and words communicate through representation. The representational function of images is based on a system of culturally-defined relationships between specific images and the messages that they impart.

²⁰ Foucault, 29 – 30.

These “culturally-defined relationships” are built by the “rules and conventions of the systems of representation within a given culture.”²¹ This means that the ways in which people “read” certain relationships between images and the feelings or ideas that they communicate are the result of culturally-specific understandings. It is important to understand how images are created within these systems of belief in order to recognize how they both embody and represent systems of social power and ideology.²²

Ideologies are complicated systems through which belief and value are allocated and understood within a particular culture. They play a role in forming how people understand life “as it is,” and they are also important in forming ideals regarding the way life “should be.”²³ People participate in and respond to ideologies within the wide and complex range of social interactions in which they engage on a daily basis. Images are both “a means through which ideologies are produced and onto which ideologies are projected.”²⁴ This means that images, as a means of communication, both perpetuate and help to create the ideologies of which they are a part.

One of the most important things to note about ideologies is that the associations within a given ideology are understood as being “natural or given,” instead of being specific components that contribute to the particular way a society is able to function.²⁵ Linkages between images and concepts, such as glasses and intellectualism or red roses and romantic love, are just a few of the examples of relationships that are constructed and

²¹ Sturken and Cartwright, 14.

²² Sturken and Cartwright, 22.

²³ Sturken and Cartwright, 23.

²⁴ Sturken and Cartwright, 23.

²⁵ Sturken and Cartwright, 23.

not natural.²⁶ For instance, visual culture is not only a means by which cultural values are represented, it is a way through which ideas about the societal “norms” of family structure, the government, medicine, and education are created and upheld.²⁷

In his 1967 essay entitled “The Death of the Author,” Roland Barthes discusses how authority is negotiated between the creators and the consumers of texts. “Creators” of texts can either be “an individual maker... a plurality of creative individuals unified by a shared set of aesthetic strategies of production design and display... or a corporate conglomerate engaged in different phases and aspects of an ad.”²⁸ Barthes argues that the creator’s (the author’s) power “dies” with the creation of the text, and the power then lies mainly within the readers’ interpretations of the text.²⁹ There is no singular meaning for readers’ to attain from a particular text. The readers of texts have agency in the “creation” of the text through their particular interpretations.

In order to describe and analyze the ways in which viewers (“readers”) bring meaning to images, a similar ideological positioning upheld by Roland Barthes in “The Death of the Author” can be used. Despite the fact that media images generally utilize and perpetuate dominant ideologies, viewers still hold the power to choose to identify these ideologies and also to articulate how they function in the creation of meaning.³⁰ The agency (that is, the choice to accept, to not accept, or to qualify anywhere in between) ultimately lies with the viewer. Therefore, “meanings are created in part when, where,

²⁶ Sturken and Cartwright, 30.

²⁷ Sturken and Cartwright, 23.

²⁸ Sturken and Cartwright, 52.

²⁹ Roland Barthes, “The Death of the Author,” trans. Richard Howard, UbuWeb Papers.

³⁰ Sturken and Cartwright, 52.

and by whom images are consumed, and not only when, where, and by whom they are produced.”³¹

The meaning of images, as it is produced through the interactions between image producers and image consumers, is not only culturally dependent but also *context* dependent.³² Certain images viewed within one context can change meaning if viewed in another context. For instance, a similar photographic controversy unfolded over the “United Colors” publicity campaign headed by the United Colors of Benetton in the early 1990s. The ad campaign superimposed the Benetton logo on top of a politically and emotionally-charged photographs printed in magazines and displayed on billboards around the world. A combination of “refugees, terrorism, and illness” can be found within these ads, but perhaps the most controversial of Benetton’s advertisements from this campaign utilizes Therese Frare’s photograph entitled *Final Moments*.³³ In this image, a young man named David Kirby lies upon a hospital bed, surrounded by his family as he dies of AIDS (see figs. 14 – 15).

Benetton, which sells clothing in 93 different countries, stated that it was only trying to increase social awareness of important, contemporary issues through its campaign.³⁴ Many critics believed that this context (an advertisement for a clothing store) was an unsuitable use for this particular “news photograph.” The photograph of Kirby and his family is “acceptable” as a news image, but it is not acceptable in the Benetton advertisement. Though there are a wide range of social and cultural reasons *why* the

³¹ Sturken and Cartwright, 55.

³² Sturken and Cartwright, 25.

³³ Vicki Goldberg, “Benetton and the Uses of Tragedy,” *Light Matters* (Aperture Foundation, Inc., 2005), 166 – 171.

³⁴ Goldberg, 168.

context of the Benetton ad is perceived as being an “unsuitable” context for this photograph, the main point is that photographic images can be “acceptable” in certain contexts and not in others.

When Images Become Icons

Certain photographic images are immediately recognizable to a particular audience. The people and symbols within the image are familiar, the event that the photograph may be documenting (or the event with which the photograph is associated) is important, and the overall meaning of the photograph is easily understood. Iconic images play an important role in understanding how visual culture communicates because the images that are collectively understood to be “iconic” within a particular culture speak to how that culture views and brings meaning to the world. Visual culture, as a method of communication, can be used as a demonstrative tool to understand how societies function.

Michel Foucault, in his work *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language* discusses the creation of “statements” and “discourses.”³⁵ Foucault is interested in finding a way to explain why certain statements are created at particular points in history within particular contexts. Foucault is also interested in using this theory to explain how a statement’s meaning can evolve over time. Foucault writes,

The analysis of statements, then, is a historical analysis... it does not question things said as to what they are hiding, what they were ‘really’ saying, in spite of themselves... but, on the contrary, it questions them as to their mode of existence, what it means to them to have come into existence, to have left traces, and perhaps to remain there, awaiting the

³⁵ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Random House, Inc., 2010).

moment when they might be of use once more; what it means to them to have appeared when and where they did – they and no others.³⁶

By Foucault’s definition, a “statement” is any created thing (a book, a speech, a statue, or a building). A “statement” can even be a photograph. “Discourses” are defined as “practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak.”³⁷ This definition elevates the term “discourse” from merely a set of conventions and practices that define a particular field to include the very *activity* of definition.

People are continually interacting with statements, bringing new meanings and associations to them. As these interactions continue, the relationships between statements and discourses can also eventually shift. “Icons” are the product of a particularly powerful alignment of creation, purpose, and acceptance that (for whatever reason) is able to remain valuable over the course of time. Foucault writes, “[In] our time, history is that which transforms *documents* into *monuments*.”³⁸

One example of an “iconic” image is Alberto Korda’s photograph of Ernesto “Che” Guevara entitled “Heroic Guerrilla Fighter” (fig. 16). This photograph was taken at an event honoring the deaths that occurred aboard the ship *La Coubre* as a result of sabotage on March 5, 1960 after the conclusion of the Cuban Revolution.³⁹ This photograph became world famous seven years later after Guevara’s murder in Bolivia. Korda’s photograph of the assured gaze of the revolutionary leader has come to represent a number of revolutionary efforts all over the world beyond the Cuban Revolution. In an

³⁶ Foucault, 109.

³⁷ Foucault, 49.

³⁸ Foucault, 7.

³⁹ Cristina Vives and Mark Sanders, eds., *Korda: A Revolutionary Lens* (Germany, Steidl, 2008) 53.

ironic twist, the image itself has been heavily commercialized for consumption all over the world, printed on t-shirts and accessories (figs 17 – 18).

Another example of an iconic photograph that has origins and meanings specific to the United States is the news photograph of Martin Luther King, Jr. waving to the crowd at the March on Washington following the delivery of his “I Have a Dream” speech on August 28, 1963.⁴⁰ This photograph (fig. 19) has come to represent not only Martin Luther King, Jr.’s legacy as a leader of the Civil Rights Movement, it is also a representation of the entire Civil Rights Movement. This photograph, besides that fact that it is an icon itself, also utilizes the idea of the “icon” within its content.

The fact that King delivered this speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial (a monument commemorating Abraham Lincoln, the President in power at the time of the end of the Civil War and the President who signed the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 ordering that all slaves be freed) in Washington, D.C. (the capital of the United States) is significant. Abraham Lincoln as an historical icon in the United States associated with the process of ending slavery and the reunification of the warring North and South factions of the country. The Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. is a representation of Abraham Lincoln, his life and his legacy. The Civil Rights Movement was a collective national effort to end discrimination and achieve a reality in which every citizen of the United States, regardless of race or gender, is treated equally. The Civil Rights Movement can thus be seen as a continuation of the work that was done under the leadership of Abraham Lincoln. This photograph of Martin Luther King, Jr. on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial unites these two segments of American history while bringing

⁴⁰ “Martin Luther King’s ‘I Have a Dream’ speech, August 28, 1963,” *History Wired* (<http://historywired.si.edu/detail.cfm?ID=501>).

meaning to King's speech and the Civil Rights Movement as a whole through the historical context of Lincoln's presidential leadership.

A third example of an iconic photographic image is Iain Macmillan's 1969 photograph of the Beatles walking the crosswalk of Abbey Road (fig. 20) in London.⁴¹ The photo shoot itself took only about 10 – 15 minutes, but the photograph has since become an icon within the music world and in popular culture as a whole.⁴² This album cover also marks the first time that neither the Beatles' name nor the name of the album appear on the album cover.⁴³ Released on September 26, 1969, *Abbey Road* became number one on the British album chart that October and remained at the number one spot for seventeen weeks. (It spent eighty-one total weeks on the British chart.)⁴⁴ It spent eleven weeks at the top of the U. S. charts out of a total of eighty-three weeks on the chart.⁴⁵

A discussion of *how* "iconic images" become iconic is useful in an analysis of the *Rolling Stone* "Boston bomber" cover image because many of the remarks condemning *Rolling Stone's* use of the photograph comment upon Tsarnaev's "tousle-haired"⁴⁶ appearance and one source even calls him a "shaggy troubadour."⁴⁷ Tsarnaev's haircut

⁴¹ Lauren Moraski, "The Beatles walked across 'Abbey Road' 43 years ago today," *CBSNews*, Aug. 8, 2012 (<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/the-beatles-walked-across-abbey-road-43-years-ago-today/>)

⁴² "The Beatles," Aug. 8, 2012.

⁴³ "Abbey Road," *The Beatles*, 2013 (<http://www.thebeatles.com/album/abbey-road>).

⁴⁴ "Abbey Road," *The Beatles*, 2013 (<http://www.thebeatles.com/album/abbey-road>).

⁴⁵ "Abbey Road," *The Beatles*, 2013 (<http://www.thebeatles.com/album/abbey-road>).

⁴⁶ Julie Cannold, Mayra Cuevas, and Joe Sterling, "Rolling Stone cover of bombing suspect called 'slap' to Boston," *CNN.com*, July 18, 2013 (<http://www.cnn.com/2013/07/17/studentnews/tsarnaev-rolling-stone-cover/index.html>).

⁴⁷ "Rolling Stone controversy: Not every image is a celebration," *The Boston Globe, Editorials*, July 18, 2013

and appearance are mentioned because they are then used to draw the conclusion that Tsarnaev resembles either Bob Dylan or Jim Morrison, two rock-and-roll musicians that have been featured on the cover of *Rolling Stone* (figs. 21 – 23). “[The cover image of Tsarnaev is a] Bob Dylan-style photo,”⁴⁸ and “I thought of old sort of archival pictures of a young Bob Dylan. And, you know, that’s a very different kind of figure than somebody accused of these killings,”⁴⁹ are two comments from different articles that liken Tsarnaev’s appearance in the cover to that of Bob Dylan. A tweet from Judd Leglum, editor-in-chief of the liberal website “ThinkProgress.org” is one example that relates the cover image to a Jim Morrison cover from April 4, 1991: “New Rolling Stone cover turns the Boston Bomber into Jim Morrison.”⁵⁰

Regarding the *Rolling Stone* cover of Tsarnaev, remarks like “he looks like Jim Morrison,” or “he looks like a young Bob Dylan,” are able to have meaning because of the visual narrative of popular culture in the United States. One’s perception of what a “rock star” looks like, one’s perception of *Rolling Stone* as a publication, and one’s (potential) experience with specific images of Bob Dylan and/or Jim Morrison all contribute to the creation of these references and visual relationships. Furthermore, the role of visual culture is so pervasive that even if one has not specifically seen an image before that is being referenced (that is, the cover image of Tsarnaev), one can still *infer* as

(<http://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/editorials/2013/07/17/rolling-stone-controversy-not-every-cover-celebration/a8s1F4brQEEInOnJHHAobK/story.html>).

⁴⁸ Doug Stanglin, “‘Rolling Stone’ defends Tsarnaev glam cover amid outcry,” *USA Today*, July 17, 2013 (<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2013/07/17/dzhokhar-tsarnaev-boston-marathon-bombing-rolling-stone/2523891/>).

⁴⁹ David Folkenflik, “Outrage Over Boston Bombing Suspect On ‘Rolling Stone’ Cover,” *NPR*, July 18, 2013 (<http://www.npr.org/2013/07/18/203194444/outrage-over-boston-bombing-suspect-on-rolling-stone-cover>).

⁵⁰ Judd Leglum (@JuddLegum), July 16, 2013, 7:54pm, Tweet.

to how that image looks because of the context provided by *Rolling Stone* magazine and because of the references to other musicians like Bob Dylan and Jim Morrison.

Photographic “Truth”: Sergeant Sean Murphy and Revealing the “Real” Dzhokhar Tsarnaev

“This guy is evil. This is the real Boston bomber.”
- Sergeant Sean Murphy, April 2013

Another important case against the cover image of Tsarnaev is based in the cultural belief that associates photography with realism. This association between photographic images and realism derives from the philosophy of “positivism.”⁵¹ Positivism “concerns itself with truths about the world,” and it emerged in the 19th century out of the belief that scientific knowledge “is the only authentic knowledge.”⁵² Within the context of this particular philosophy, “the photographic camera could be understood as a scientific tool for registering reality more accurately” than other methods, such as drawing or painting.⁵³

The general assumption that whatever content is within the frame of a photograph must have occurred in front of a camera in “real life” for the photographer to be able to record it is one of the underlying linkages between photographs and assumptions about their veracity. However, as has already been discussed, images are merely “representations” of the visual world, and photographs are no exception to this rule. Photographs simultaneously hold the ability to serve as dispassionate “proof” (as identifying individuals) and to evoke a powerful emotional reaction within a viewer. In

⁵¹ Sturken and Cartwright, 17.

⁵² Sturken and Cartwright, 17.

⁵³ Sturken and Cartwright, 17.

fact, one “derives photographic meaning precisely from this paradoxical combination of affective and magical qualities and the photograph’s cultural status as cold proof.”⁵⁴

This combination of avenues towards photographic meaning that relates photography and “reality” can be used to explain the action taken by Sergeant Sean Murphy, a Massachusetts policeman, who “independently released his own photos of the search for and capture of Tsarnaev”⁵⁵ as a personal form of protest against the *Rolling Stone* cover (fig. 24). Murphy is quoted as saying: “[Glamorizing] the face of terror is... insulting to the family members of those killed in the line of duty... This guy is evil. This is the real Boston bomber. Not someone fluffed and buffed for the cover of *Rolling Stone* magazine.”⁵⁶

Murphy’s release of the photographs of Tsarnaev’s capture in an effort to show the “real Boston bomber” (which ended up jeopardizing his job with the Massachusetts State Police) implies that the cover image of Tsarnaev is “not real” (or “fictionalized”). This is, of course, untrue because all photographic images are both “real” and “fictionalized” at the same time because they are all *representations* of reality. Context and the positioning of each individual viewer are what ultimately determine the extent to which a photograph is “real” (or conveys reliable information). The agency lies within each viewer to accept, reject, or qualify the veracity of a photographic image. However, as has been discussed in the above sections on “icons” (and as is referenced in a news article title that describes Murphy’s actions: “War of Images: *Rolling Stone*, Tsarnaev

⁵⁴ Sturken and Cartwright, 18.

⁵⁵ Fred Ritchin, “War of Images: *Rolling Stone*, Tsarnaev and the Branding of a Tragedy,” *TIME: LightBox*, July 22, 2013 (<http://lightbox.time.com/2013/07/22/war-of-images-rolling-stone-tsarnaev-and-the-branding-of-a-tragedy/#1>).

⁵⁶ *TIME: LightBox*, July 22, 2013.

and the Branding of a Tragedy”) great power lies in being able to communicate to the general public what something “looks like,” because this determines how an event like the Boston bombing will be recorded, perceived, and ultimately, how it will be remembered.

New Journalism and *Rolling Stone*

“Today, what *Rolling Stone* publishes and what it sells are often two entirely different things. As in the February 9, 1989 issue, serious articles on crack, *glasnost*, the war in Belfast and yuppie hucksterism are bundled up and shoved beneath a cover image of Jon Bon Jovi, the doe-eyed ‘lite metal’ preteen idol.”⁵⁷

Cultural icons can be literary as well as visual. The story of the development of *Rolling Stone* magazine is the story of how a literary publication gained fame and became an icon in popular culture. *Rolling Stone*’s stylistic association with the New Journalism movement and the vision of its founders, Jann Wenner and Ralph Gleason, both contribute to the public perception of *Rolling Stone*’s current position within the media landscape as a magazine that is associated with alternative reporting styles, music, and popular culture.

The literary movement in the 1960s and 1970s known as “New Journalism” marked a shift in the characteristics and ideals of “reporting” and, more largely, of “non-fiction writing.” American writers such as Norman Mailer (known for his coverage of the 1960 Democratic Convention in Los Angeles for *Esquire* and his novel *The Armies of the Night*), Gay Talese (also a writer for *Esquire* and a novelist), Truman Capote (author of the 1966 nonfiction novel *In Cold Blood*), Hunter S. Thompson (*Rolling Stone* reporter known for his political coverage and his novel *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*), and

⁵⁷ Draper, 18.

Tom Wolfe (known for his work in defining the field of New Journalism because of his experimentation with various literary forms in his writing and his novel *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*) are commonly regarded as leading figures of the movement, which has eluded a strict definition since its beginnings. Characteristics, such as the employment of literary techniques generally used in fiction writing such as multiple points of view, scene-by-scene construction, and in particular the “appearance” of the author within the text through the inclusion of the first-person, are employed by some but not all of the New Journalist writers and are always utilized in different combinations and to serve different purposes.

In the Preface to his work *The Reporter as Artist: A Look at the New Journalism Controversy*, editor Ronald Weber writes: “The term ‘New Journalism’ is anything but a precise one. When it’s used in the documents here it doesn’t always refer to the same thing; and in some documents it isn’t used at all, or used with capital letters, and what writers have in mind is simply a new awareness of the literary and journalistic potential of nonfiction writing.”⁵⁸ In fact, the only defining characteristic of New Journalism was that it could be defined and carried out in a number of ways.

Gay Talese, in the author’s note to his work *Fame and Obscurity* writes: “The new journalism... is, or should be, as reliable as the most reliable reportage although it seeks a larger truth than is possible through the mere compilation of verifiable facts, the use of direct quotations, and adherence to the rigid to the rigid organizational style of the

⁵⁸ Ronald Weber, ed., *The Reporter as Artist: A Look at the New Journalism Controversy* (New York: Hastings House Publishers), 1974, 9.

older form.”⁵⁹ Truman Capote, choosing to call his own work in *In Cold Blood* a “nonfiction novel,” even referred to the genre of journalism as “only literary photography” that is “unbecoming to the serious writer’s dignity.”⁶⁰

These characterizations corroborate the legitimacy of works written in the style of New Journalism, as the genre has faced significant criticism from the standpoint of proponents of traditional journalism in which the writer should never “appear” in the work and the main goal of journalistic pieces is to convey and adhere to “objectivity.”⁶¹ Clifton Daniel, a former managing editor of the *New York Times* famously remarked that “‘newspapers hold up a mirror to the world,’ [and] the reporter must not get ‘involved.’”⁶² However, one of the main questions that New Journalism poses is whether or not it is truly possible to have a totally dispassionate and uninvolved author.

Rolling Stone magazine not only accepted the techniques of New Journalism, it is one of the American magazines that championed the publication of articles written in the New Journalistic style, along with *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Esquire*, *Harper’s*, and *The New Yorker*. Furthermore, *Rolling Stone* brought writer Hunter S. Thompson, one of New Journalism’s founding fathers, to fame. *Rolling Stone’s* involvement in early efforts to legitimize the New Journalistic style, combined with its “rock-and-roll” subject matter,

⁵⁹ Gay Talese, “Author’s Note to *Fame and Obscurity*,” in Ronald Weber, ed., *The Reporter as Artist: A Look at the New Journalism Controversy* (New York: Hastings House Publishers), 1974, 35.

⁶⁰ George Plimpton, “Truman Capote: An Interview,” in Ronald Weber, ed., *The Reporter as Artist: A Look at the New Journalism Controversy* (New York: Hastings House Publishers), 1974, 188-9.

⁶¹ Nat Henthoff, “Behold the New Journalism – It’s Coming After You!,” in Ronald Weber, ed., *The Reporter as Artist: A Look at the New Journalism Controversy* (New York: Hastings House Publishers), 1974, 49.

⁶² Henthoff, 51.

both contributed to *Rolling Stone's* current position within the media landscape as a landmark publication on popular culture (see Fig. 25).

On November 9th of 1967, Volume 1, Issue 1 of *Rolling Stone* magazine hit the newsstands. The magazine's beginnings involve ingenuity and deceit, along with the sweat, drive, and creativity that can only result from a group of people united under the passion of a shared vision. *Rolling Stone* was the brainchild of Jann Wenner, a charming, business-savvy college dropout who made both friends and enemies with similar ease. Wenner's volatile personality and complete obsession with rock and roll were two of the most formative influences upon the magazine's origin. Today, the Wenner Media Company is based in New York and has a monthly audience of about 58.1 million readers.⁶³

Rolling Stone's original staff shared a dedication to documenting the social, cultural, and political relevance of music, an approach that distinguished *Rolling Stone* from other contemporary publications. For instance, there were music and album review sections in major newspapers, but they rarely, if ever, "confused politics and music."⁶⁴ However, it was precisely the music of the time that was created as a result of and in reaction to current political realities. In 1965, the Beatles, Bob Dylan, and the Rolling Stones released "Eleanor Rigby," "Like A Rolling Stone," and "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction," respectively. *All the lonely people. How does it feel? I can't get no!*⁶⁵ The music and its surrounding political and cultural realities distinguished a generation of

⁶³ "Overview: Wenner Media, LLC," *LinkedIn*.
(<http://www.linkedin.com/company/wenner-media>)

⁶⁴ Robert Draper, *Rolling Stone Magazine: The Uncensored History* (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., 1990), 50.

⁶⁵ Draper, 46-7.

young people from everything that had come before them. What did this music movement mean for the future of the United States and the world? How could this movement be critically discussed and distributed to the masses? These were the questions that Jann Wenner and his staff members worked to answer.

Jann Wenner was born in New York City in 1946, only five months after the conclusion of World War II. Both of his parents served in the military; his mother, Ruth Simmons (“Sim”) Wenner had been in the Navy and his father, Ed Wenner, the Air Force. Sim was a businesswoman, novelist, and artist, and Ed was an entrepreneur. In 1947, the Wenner family moved to the Bay Area of California after Ed started his own company, Wenner’s Baby Formulas, Inc. Jann, with “the creativity of his mother and the entrepreneurial instincts of his father,” was naturally suited to fulfill the role as co-founder and editor of *Rolling Stone*.⁶⁶

After completing high school at the prestigious Chadwick School in Palos Verdes, Wenner enrolled at the University of California at Berkeley beginning in the fall of 1963. This would turn out to be an incredibly important decision that would significantly affect Jann Wenner’s life. When considering liberal culture in the early 1960s in the United States, Berkeley was the “motherland.” At Berkeley, politics and campus culture were inextricably united.

Students and faculty had shouted down loyalty oaths in the fifties and the House Un-American Activities Committee in the sixties. They protested the execution of convicted murderer Caryl Chessman; they reviled the growing military-industrial complex; they leafleted, picketed and sat in. The campus communicated through movements; to miss the movement was to dwell unknown, voiceless and disconnected.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Draper, 35.

⁶⁷ Draper, 40.

Freshman Jann Wenner went straight to the source of this politically motivated campus culture during his first semester at Berkeley. The organization's name was Slate, and its purpose was to evaluate Berkeley teachers. Started in 1958 and headed by husband and wife duo Phil and Joan Roos, Slate was usually steeped in controversy and always under watch by the Berkeley community. The group was known to "cause a campus stir with its every utterance."⁶⁸

Wenner's involvement with Slate secured his position at "the heart of the Berkeley left wing,"⁶⁹ but he continually used his "insider" status for his own social advancement on and off campus. Wenner used his connections with Slate in order to obtain invitations to events such as debutante balls and other functions. Partially motivated by an increasing level of embarrassment over his mother's bohemian lifestyle, Wenner sought out social opportunities in a way that was similar to his behavior as a student at Chadwick. Ted Hayward, a roommate with whom Wenner shared a penthouse apartment during his sophomore year at Berkeley recalls, "Gradually I began to see the whole center of him and what he wanted from me. I'd never met anybody who was motivated exclusively and purely by opportunism. In wonder – never really out of malice..."⁷⁰

This desire of being accepted by people he admired is a trait that defined Wenner through his early years at *Rolling Stone* and also served as a significant inspiration for the creation of the magazine. Many publications have gained success because they were the embodiment of their creator's desires and particular vision of the world. Take, for

⁶⁸ Draper, 32.

⁶⁹ Draper, 41.

⁷⁰ Draper, 42.

instance, the character of both *Time* or *Life* magazine and the straight-shooting style of founder and journalist Henry Luce. Jann Wenner is no exception to this rule, and has reportedly been quoted telling a staff member early on that he started *Rolling Stone* so that he could “meet John Lennon.”⁷¹ Wenner was the ultimate rock-and-roll counterculture disciple, and *Rolling Stone* was created for an audience of like-minded music enthusiasts.

But Jann Wenner did not begin *Rolling Stone* alone. He met his long-time collaborator and co-founder, Ralph Gleason, during the fall of 1965. Denise Kaufman, one of Wenner’s love interests, fellow Berkeley student, and also a part-time member of the Merry Pranksters introduced Wenner and Gleason. She was friends with Gleason and introduced the pair because she believed that they had similar views on music’s role in society. Gleason was a jazz critic for the *San Francisco Chronicle* and, like Wenner, he was a huge fan of musicians such as Bob Dylan, the Beatles, and the Rolling Stones. Gleason and Wenner quickly became friends, and Wenner found another mentor in Gleason.

By the end of his spring semester at Berkeley in 1966, Wenner increasingly found the “scene” at Berkeley to be boring. That summer, he spent time with Ken Kesey, Neal Cassady, and the Merry Pranksters in Mexico, made the decision to drop out of Berkeley, and then traveled to London with his friend Richard Black (a member of the Hearst family) and Berkeley graduate student Jonathon Cott. Black and Cott were going to London to attend film school, and they reluctantly agreed to allow Wenner to come with them. Obsessed with the possibility of meeting the Rolling Stones, Wenner went straight

⁷¹ Draper, 34.

to the famed scene on Carnaby Street where he encountered both fans and famous musicians. (During one of his trips to Carnaby Street, Wenner even met the rhythm guitarist for the Rolling Stones Brian Jones.)

Wenner left London later on that summer after his friendship with Richard Black became strained when Black refused to bring him to a dinner party to which Paul McCartney was reported to also be an invited guest. Once he was back in the United States and unable to return to life as a student at Berkeley, Wenner moved to White Plains, New York “broke, depressed, [and] adrift.”⁷² By corresponding with mutual friend Denise Kaufman, Gleason found out about the difficulties Wenner was experiencing and offered him a job as the “entertainment editor” at an offbeat magazine entitled *Sunday Ramparts* (an offshoot of the former *Ramparts* magazine) that he was starting. *Ramparts* was known for its unruly reportage, and it famously “attacked the Pope, the Warren Commission, Ronald Reagan and Barbie dolls with equal zeal, its prose hell-bent and its art slick and splashy.”⁷³ It was difficult for the magazine to attract and hold advertisers, and most of the money that supported the magazine came from the many wealthy liberals with which managing editor Warren Hinckle III mingled. The opportunity was a perfect next step for Wenner, and one month later, Jann Wenner returned to California.

Gleason and Wenner’s ideological solidarity regarding the cultural significance of rock-and-roll put them in the minority among the staff members at *Sunday Ramparts*. Wenner researched and wrote articles about topics in which other writers held little interest, such as Joan Baez’s appreciation for Gregorian chants and the Egyptian prayer

⁷² Draper, 50.

⁷³ Draper, 51.

after which the Grateful Dead were named. Around the office, Jann Wenner became known as the “pudgy Gleason understudy similarly confusing politics and music.”⁷⁴ Wenner quickly acclimated to life as a *Sunday Ramparts* writer and began sending letters to friends using *Ramparts* stationery, telling them about whom he was able to meet and interview because of his connections at *Ramparts*. He also grew to idolize Warren Hinckle III, the managing editor of *Ramparts* and of *Sunday Ramparts*. Wenner had found a new hero and a new sense of purpose.

Less than a year later in May of 1967, *Ramparts* lost money, and Jann Wenner was not offered a permanent position on the staff. Gleason had also left the magazine earlier on over a conflict he had with Hinckle over the coverage of a story about the “psychedelic scene.”⁷⁵ Wenner temporarily gave up on reporting and took the civil service exam with the intent to become a postman.

Later on that summer, Jann Wenner was attending a concert in the Avalon Ballroom, which took up the top two floors of the building at 1268 Sutter Street in San Francisco. By this time, Wenner was living in his mother’s basement and working as a mailman, all while the happenings of the Summer of Love were occurring in the city around him. The city officials worried:

Overnight, it seemed, the Haight-Ashbury district had become a Calcutta of white middle-class children... Ever since the Human Be-In, city officials feared the worst. How many would show up at the Haight’s doorstep? A hundred thousand? Two hundred thousand? There would be no food, no shelter. All these misbegotten runaways would deposit themselves in this shining city and sprawl across its streets like an open sore.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Draper, 50.

⁷⁵ Draper, 51.

⁷⁶ Draper, 54.

He was currently working with Gleason on writing a rock & roll encyclopedia. The project was met with great enthusiasm in the beginning, but it was beginning to lose steam.

Wenner had gone to the music venue on the north side of San Francisco to unwind, and he ended up running into the Avalon's manager Chet Helms. Helms asked Wenner how things were going, and he explained how another of his endeavors seemed to be going south. Chet Helms felt sorry for the young, struggling reporter, and he told Wenner about a magazine that he was starting. It was to be a publication about the "counterculture lifestyle" entitled *Straight Arrow*.

Wenner accepted the offer, and he began to attend the preliminary meetings where staff members discussed distribution and potential readership. A mailing list of potential subscribers was obtained from the local radio station KFRC-AM. After about a month, though, Wenner decided that the magazine was progressing too slowly, and he stopped attending the meetings. He also thought that the magazine was missing the point by focusing on the "tribal lifestyle." The music was what mattered to Wenner, and the music was what he saw transforming a generation of young people, not the "tribal lifestyle." Wenner saw the weight that lay in the ability to determine *how* a generation's cultural movement would be reported and remembered.

After being particularly moved by a viewing of the Beatles' *A Hard Day's Night* in a San Francisco movie theater, Wenner's convictions were confirmed: "If you spent an evening at the Avalon, you would walk away with more information about American youth, what they were thinking about and what really moved them, than could be gleaned from a year's worth of *Time* issues, a year's worth of political rallies and, for that matter,

a year's worth of tribal life."⁷⁷ Near the end of the summer of 1967 was when Jann Wenner first got the idea to begin his own magazine.

Wenner first pitched the idea to Gleason, who immediately agreed to take part in the founding of a new publication alongside Wenner. (After leaving the *Ramparts* editorial board earlier on that summer, Gleason had the time to dedicate to this endeavor.) Because of his experience working as a jazz critic for the *Chronicle*, Gleason would prove to be an invaluable resource. The new publication would be able to gain interviews with musicians, sell advertising space to record labels, and gain promotions from radio stations in the area.⁷⁸

Wenner and Gleason talked about their vision for what the magazine would be (“[the] direct pipeline into the Love Generation”)⁷⁹ and when Gleason asked what the magazine would be called, Wenner was ready with an answer: *The Electric Newspaper*.⁸⁰ Gleason did not like the name, and he countered with *Rolling Stone* – a phrase borrowed from an old proverb, the title of a Muddy Waters song, and simultaneously the title of one of Bob Dylan’s hits and also the name of a certain English band.⁸¹ Wenner accepted Gleason’s suggestion, but he stood by the name he had selected for the publishing company: “Straight Arrow.”

Though asking his old Chadwick and Berkeley friends to invest in the magazine was a slow and difficult process, Wenner continued to make progress. Wenner was able to enlist the talent of Michael Lyndon, a young *Newsweek* reporter who had covered

⁷⁷ Draper, 58.

⁷⁸ Draper, 61.

⁷⁹ Draper, 61.

⁸⁰ Draper, 61.

⁸¹ Draper, 61.

various counterculture events around California, such as the Human Be-In. He also hired Baron Wolman as chief photographer, Dugald Stermer as art director, and John Williams as production director. Jann had a vision for *Rolling Stone* to “read professionally” like publications such as *Billboard* and *Cashbox*, but to also have the stylish layout (the same font, headline, and borders) of *Sunday Ramparts*.⁸² Dugald Stermer had worked on creating the design of *Sunday Ramparts*, and one day at a meeting Wenner asked him if he could use that same design for *Rolling Stone*. It was an outrageous request, but Stermer agreed, giving Wenner a free design and free paste-up flats on which he could compose his first issue.⁸³

The next thing Wenner needed was a place to print the magazine. Garrett Press, a small printing agency located on Brannan Street in the warehouse district of San Francisco, was also the same agency that printed *Sunday Ramparts*. After meeting with the head of Garrett Press Alan Seibert, Wenner came out with a business deal to print *Rolling Stone* with Garrett Press and free office space in the attic of the printing agency. It was an incredible offer. By the end of the summer of 1967, the headquarters of *Rolling Stone* magazine were located in the loft at 746 Brannan Street.

Wenner and his crew of “young kids” (writers, editors, unpaid volunteers, and “radio station groupies”) quickly became a spectacle in the Brannan Street warehouse with their blatant drug use and unconventional office antics.⁸⁴ Working together in an attic of a building containing heat-producing printers during the end of a California summer, everyone sweated as they toiled away on Issue 1. Under Jann Wenner’s

⁸² Draper, 64.

⁸³ Draper, 64.

⁸⁴ Draper, 65.

leadership, the production of *Rolling Stone's* first issue were underway. Wenner got a drawing of the *Rolling Stone* logo, written in the now iconic elegant script, from the famous psychedelic poster artist Rick Griffin.⁸⁵ Griffin wanted time to submit a second version of the logo to Wenner, but Wenner would not let him because the magazine had to keep moving forward to its first publication.

The lead article of *Rolling Stone's* first issue investigated the legitimacy of the Monterey Pop Festival's status as a "charity event." Writer Michael Lyndon found that while the festival was marketed as being philanthropic, it actually was designed to underhandedly make large sums of money for the festival's organizers. While Lyndon had not been able to conduct an interview with Lou Adler, the festival's producer, it was still a hard-hitting piece.

Wenner continued to fill the first issue with stories about John Lennon's first acting role in *How I Won the War* (Lennon's face would be on the magazine's first cover), photos of the Grateful Dead after being busted (exclusives, shot by Baron Wolman), eight record reviews (written by Wenner himself), and an article by Ralph Gleason attacking the presence of racism on television.⁸⁶ The issue was beginning to come together. Ads for subscriptions to the magazine read in large letters: "Can you dig it?"

Before *Rolling Stone's* first publication, however, a sample issue needed to be sent out to potential subscribers, advertisers, and "friends in high places."⁸⁷ In order to obtain a list of names and addresses, Wenner went to KFRC-AM and told the staff at the

⁸⁵ Draper, 67.

⁸⁶ Draper, 68.

⁸⁷ Draper, 67.

radio station that he was with *Straight Arrow*.⁸⁸ He then obtained the mailing list that the Avalon's manager Chet Helms was planning to use in order to promote his new magazine, which Wenner had left only a few months before. Before leaving the station, Wenner also sold KFRC a full-page ad in *Rolling Stone*'s first issue.

Gleason suggested that Wenner contact the British publication *Melody Maker* and offer to trade stories about the music scenes in London and in San Francisco on a regular basis. This is how Wenner acquired Nick Jones, *Rolling Stone*'s "London correspondent." These connections to the British music scene would prove to be quite useful in the future, bringing content like information about John Lennon's first acting role, which would be the first issue's cover story.

Ralph Gleason also got John Carpenter, a writer based in Los Angeles, to put his exclusive interview with Scottish singer-songwriter Donovan in the premier issue.⁸⁹ This was a fantastic addition, though the interview itself was too long to publish in the first issue, so the decision was made to publish it in two parts.

During the evening in mid-October, production director John Williams was in the office finishing the assembly of the first issue of *Rolling Stone*. Also during this time, change was moving through San Francisco. Only eleven days earlier on October 6, 1967 a cardboard casket was carried through the streets of the Haight-Ashbury district and then set on fire in the Golden Gate Park as a symbolic end to the Summer of Love. As a part plea, part explanation to future readers and potential subscribers to *Rolling Stone*, Wenner wrote the following message:

⁸⁸ Draper, 67.

⁸⁹ Draper, 68.

You're probably wondering what we are trying to do. It's hard to say: sort of a magazine and sort of a newspaper. The name of it is *Rolling Stone*...

Rolling Stone is not just about music, but also about the things and attitudes that music embraces... To describe it any further would be difficult without sounding like bullshit, and bullshit is like gathering moss.⁹⁰

On the evening of October 18, 1967, the printing presses at 746 Brannan Street began churning out 40,000 copies of Issue 1 of *Rolling Stone*. The “crazy hippie” employees celebrated with bottles of champagne, and Wenner gave a teary-eyed speech that ended in, “It’ll never get better than this...”⁹¹

On November 9, 1967, *Rolling Stone* hit the newsstands, and of the 40,000 copies that had been printed, 34,000 of them made their way back to Brannan Street unsold. Wenner was furious. The battle to continue the life of the magazine continued. A few employees, like Michael Lyndon, refused to take their salary during the magazine’s first issues, radio station disc jockeys offered to help sell ads for the magazine, a “hippie with a van” became *Rolling Stone*’s “circulation manager,” and, on top of everything else, the publication of the first issue had attracted the help of new volunteers.⁹²

Wenner and Gleason eventually partnered with Miller Freeman Publications, a California distributor that worked with twenty other clients. *Rolling Stone* received nine cents of every twenty-five cent copy sold, for a total of a 36% return. This was not much of a profit, and the magazine was not a “hot commodity” (Ward Cleaveland, the newsstand director for Miller Freeman Publications, regarded Jann Wenner as “a hippie

⁹⁰ Draper, 69.

⁹¹ Draper, 69.

⁹² Draper, 71.

who ‘didn’t know what the hell he was doing’”) but things kept moving forward for *Rolling Stone*.⁹³

It was becoming clear to Gleason, the Lyndons, and others who worked on the staff that Wenner would do anything to gain capital for the magazine. He even enlisted one of his friends to make wooden roach clips that *Rolling Stone* advertised in Issue 5 as “handy little devices” that would be sent to subscribers for free.⁹⁴ This move angered Gleason, as using *Rolling Stone* to sell drug paraphernalia was against the law. In any case, Wenner had achieved unmatched success obtaining advertising from each major record label (assisted in part by Ralph Gleason’s reputation within the music industry): Atlantic, Capitol, Columbia, Reprise, Elektra, A&M, Warner, and RCA.⁹⁵

The first year of the magazine was filled with some changes in staff and many close calls financially. But *Rolling Stone*’s reputation was beginning to grow. The one-year anniversary cover featured a nude portrait of John Lennon and Yoko Ono, an image that their record label hesitated to use for the cover of their record. Several distributors refused to deliver the magazine, and one newsstand owner in San Francisco was arrested for “peddling obscene material.”⁹⁶ Though the magazine was far from wealthy at this point, this issue gave *Rolling Stone* the publicity that it needed to solidify its existence in the coming year of 1969.

Rolling Stone faced many changes in the 1970s, including moving the headquarters from the original Brannan Street location to 625 Third Street out of the need for more office space. This move, however, fundamentally changed the office

⁹³ Draper, 72.

⁹⁴ Draper, 73.

⁹⁵ Draper, 73-4.

⁹⁶ Draper, 81.

environment because the communal space that was characteristic of the Brannan Street warehouse no longer existed.⁹⁷ Each staff member had his or her own space, separated from the rest of the writers, photographers, and editors by walls and hallways.

The magazine also struggled with its own identity, trying to determine exactly where it landed on the spectrum of politics and popular culture. Certain writers such as Langdon Winner, pushed to cover political events with more intensity, while others like founder Ralph Gleason argued that “politics had failed”⁹⁸ and music should remain the magazine’s focus. Gleason’s views, however, were becoming increasingly outdated, and his presence on the staff began to cause tension in the office. Both Gleason and Wenner were criticized of continuing to blindly praise the work of their heroes (Bob Dylan, the Beatles, the Rolling Stones), was largely seen by other staff members (including editor John Burks) as outdated.

Jann Wenner’s increasing lack of leadership and presence in the *Rolling Stone* led most employees to see it as “John Burks’ magazine.” By the end of the 1960s, “*Rolling Stone* had fulfilled [his] dreams, [helped him to] achieve stardom, and won [him] an identity.”⁹⁹ Wenner became a record producer (working on Boz Scagg’s first album) and his wife Jane frequently socialized with John Lennon and Yoko Ono. His obsession with fame and rock and roll began to cheapen his dedication to *Rolling Stone* as a publication. Furthermore, the parallels between his use of and vision for the future of the *Rolling Stone* name became more and more flashy: Wenner even looked into establishing a

⁹⁷ Draper, 125.

⁹⁸ Draper, 128.

⁹⁹ Draper, 123.

“*Rolling Stone* Club,” modeled after *Playboy* founder Hugh Hefner’s “members-only nightclubs.”¹⁰⁰

By the end of the 1960s, Wenner and *Rolling Stone* had come under attack from a continued ignorance the publication showed toward contemporary political realities. As the deaths of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy wracked the United States, *Rolling Stone* published articles including an obituary of singer/songwriter Frankie Lymon’s “Why Do Fools Fall in Love?” and criticisms of Cream’s new album.¹⁰¹ Though politics and the uncertain future America’s youth would face began to converge in some frightening ways, *Rolling Stone* (mostly due to Jann Wenner) continued to stand by its mantra: “Rock and roll is the *only* way in which the vast but formless power of youth is structured, the only way in which it can be defined or inspected.”¹⁰²

This philosophy began to change, however, in 1969. In the April 5 issue of that year, Wenner issued the following statement: “Like it or not, we have reached a point in the social, cultural, intellectual, and artistic history of the United States where we are all going to be affected by politics... These new politics are about to become a part of our daily lives, and willingly or not, we are in it.”¹⁰³ The police assault on a group of Berkeley students gathered in People’s Park occurred on May 1969, the Tate-LaBianca murders happened in August 1969 – marking the beginning of the national sensation of the Manson family, and December of 1969 saw the bloody disaster that was the Altamont Speedway Free Festival. It would be ludicrous for *Rolling Stone*, the zeitgeist of America’s youth, to bypass such events in its reporting.

¹⁰⁰ Draper, 122.

¹⁰¹ Draper, 123.

¹⁰² Draper, 121.

¹⁰³ Draper, 122.

Rolling Stone had become a household name by the mid-1970s. The magazine was the subject of *New Yorker* cartoons, the space that housed Hunter S. Thompson's compositions, and Jackie Onassis had been photographed while reading an issue.¹⁰⁴ Wenner also began spending more time at *Rolling Stone's* New York office, and on October 1, 1976 he announced that the magazine's headquarters were going to move from San Francisco to 745 Fifth Avenue in New York.¹⁰⁵ Many staff members at this point had grown up reading the magazine, and they saw this decision as a betrayal of *Rolling Stone's* character.

The new "corporate-style" offices in New York brought with them drastic changes to the magazine. *Rolling Stone* began to feature profiles about socialites like Princess Caroline of Monaco, and celebrities like David Eisenhower and Caroline Kennedy authored articles, and one issue in particular was solely about New York.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, space limitations and financial constraints due to space needed for advertising, the average article length had to be shortened.¹⁰⁷ The magazine began to shift toward featuring mainstream cover stories in order to expose their "music-oriented" readers to the talent of *Rolling Stone's* non-music writers.¹⁰⁸ For instance, Michael Rogers won an American Association for the Advancement of Science Award for Distinguished Science Writing for his *Rolling Stone* story about a total eclipse in the Sahara Desert, and Donald R. Katz became the magazine's best writer covering

¹⁰⁴ Draper, 239.

¹⁰⁵ Draper, 244.

¹⁰⁶ Draper, 252.

¹⁰⁷ Draper, 252.

¹⁰⁸ Draper, 272.

international politics during his time studying at the London School of Economics.¹⁰⁹

Rolling Stone began to obtain a sophisticated reputation that was totally opposite to the magazine's disposition at the end of the 1960s.

Rolling Stone today still occupies an important, albeit less-dominant, space within the realm of the criticism and documentation of current events and popular culture. With the introduction of music-centered publications and websites (*SPIN* magazine, Pitchfork, and Okayplayer) *Rolling Stone* covers a unique range of content that still spans the connections between current events of political and social importance and the topics of music and popular culture. However, the public still overwhelmingly perceives *Rolling Stone* to be a magazine solely for "rock stars," and its cover is still a hallowed space only to be occupied by the singer behind this month's hot new single.

The significance of the impact of the public's perception of *Rolling Stone* magazine today is evident when comparing the reaction to the use of Tsarnaev's image on the cover of *Rolling Stone* in August versus the use of the same image on the cover of the *New York Times* earlier on in May (see Fig. 27). The *Times*, however, received "no backlash... because everyone knows the *Times* is a news organization."¹¹⁰ *Rolling Stone*, because of its history as a swashbuckling publication that writes about rock-and-roll is not a "news organization" in the same way as the *New York Times* is perceived to be. These two publications, because of their different histories, present different contexts for

¹⁰⁹ Draper, 272.

¹¹⁰ Matt Taibbi. "Explaining the Rolling Stone Cover, by a Boston Native." *RollingStone.com*, July 19, 2013. Accessed November 4, 2013. (<http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/blogs/taibblog/explaining-the-rolling-stone-cover-by-a-boston-native-20130719>).

the same image. Each context is significantly different enough to prompt two very different responses from the public.

The “Boston Bomber” Controversy and Social Media

Another factor that contributed to the particular way in which the controversy over the August 1, 2013 issue of *Rolling Stone* unfolded was the availability and the use of social media as a space for public dialogue. After posting the cover of its upcoming issue (Issue no. 1188) on its Facebook page on July 16, 2013, *Rolling Stone* magazine’s social media sites became the center of a firestorm of criticism. The discontent displayed by users on the social media sites Twitter and Facebook in particular, even became the focus of several articles in major news outlets such as NPR (“Outcry Over Boston Bombing Suspect on ‘Rolling Stone’ Cover”)¹¹¹, USA Today (“‘Rolling Stone’ defends Tsarnaev glam cover amid outcry”)¹¹², CNN (“Rolling Stone cover of bombing suspect called ‘slap’ to Boston”)¹¹³, and Fox News (“Rolling Stone blasted for giving rock star treatment to accused Boston bomber”).¹¹⁴

Recent activity on *Rolling Stone*’s Facebook page and, in some cases citations of specific “tweets” (messages of 140 characters or less that Twitter users are able to post to their accounts) were referenced and even cited in these news articles. “Very rarely does something make me so mad I have a negative tweet, but #BoycottRollingStone.

¹¹¹ NPR, July 18, 2013.

¹¹² USA Today, July 17, 2013.

¹¹³ CNN, July 18, 2013.

¹¹⁴ Joshua Rhett Miller and FoxNews.com, “Rolling Stone blasted for giving rock star treatment to accused Boston bomber,” *FoxNews.com*, July 17, 2013 (<http://www.foxnews.com/us/2013/07/17/rolling-stone-features-boston-bombing-suspect-dzhokhar-tsarnaev-on-cover/>).

Absolutely unacceptable”¹¹⁵ and “Way to glorify a madman,”¹¹⁶ being just two examples of Twitter citations in news articles. It was also mentioned in some articles that the topic “Rolling Stone” and the hashtag “#BoycottRollingStone” were noted as “trending” on Twitter (e.g. “Hey @RollingStone you could have honored any victim of the Bombing [sic] with your cover. But you chose a Terrorist [sic] #BoycottRollingStone,”¹¹⁷ and “Terrorists shouldn’t be immortalized as rockstars [sic]. #BoycottRollingStone”).¹¹⁸ Facebook users flooded *Rolling Stone’s* Facebook page with over 6,000 comments within a day of the cover’s release, including remarks such as “Don’t make martyrs out of these people” and “Jeff Bauman, who lost both legs, should be on the cover.”¹¹⁹

News outlets, such as ABC News, also encouraged audience members to participate in the discussion of the issue either by directly encouraging social media participation at the end of an article or video, or news outlets indirectly encouraged social media participation by placing the network’s or the program’s hashtag in the bottom of a screen during a video segment (see fig. 28). CNN even placed a link embedded within its article entitled “Share your view of the cover,” which then directed viewers to a page called “CNN iReport Assignment: Sound-off” where audience members are given the opportunity to record a 60-second video of themselves responding to the day’s news

¹¹⁵ *FoxNews.com*, July 17, 2013.

¹¹⁶ *FoxNews.com*, July 17, 2013.

¹¹⁷ Scott Kleinberg, “Rolling Stone puts Boston Marathon bombing suspect on cover: Social media reaction to decision overtly negative,” *Chicago Tribune*, July 17, 2013 (<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/chi-rolling-stone-boston-marathon-bombing-suspect-cover-20130717,0,7285782.story>).

¹¹⁸ *Chicago Tribune*, July 17, 2013.

¹¹⁹ Anthony Castellano, “Rolling Stone Responds to Dzhokhar Tsarnaev Cover Backlash,” *ABC News*, July 17, 2013 (<http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/headlines/2013/07/rolling-stone-cover-of-dzhokhar-tsarnaev-ignites-online-firestorm/>).

stories.¹²⁰ A link labeled with the words “Add you story” sits in a window underneath the words “What’s your reaction to the news of the day? Here’s your chance to have your voice heard on CNN.”¹²¹ In addition to creating and sharing their own videos, audience members can watch and respond to videos that other people have sent in, share content on Facebook, as well as choose to follow “#sound-off” on Twitter.

The public “outcry,” as it was manifest and broadcast via social media, also led to certain retail chains that generally carry *Rolling Stone* refused to sell Issue 1188 of the magazine featuring Tsarnaev. Walgreens, Tedeschi Food Shops (based in Rockland, Massachusetts), and CVS, all companies with roots in the New England area, reported that they would not carry the August 1 issue of *Rolling Stone* in their stores. While Walgreens tweeted that they would not stock the issue,¹²² CVS wrote on its Facebook page: “As a company with deep roots in New England and a strong presence in Boston, we believe this is the right decision out of respect for the victims of the attack and their loved ones,”¹²³ and Tedeschi Food Shops posted a Facebook statement that concluded with the sentence: “Music and terrorism don’t mix.”¹²⁴

Responses to the controversy were not only confined to the realm of social media. Some responses utilized social media to organize protest action. One Boston resident even launched a campaign to publicly burn copies of the magazine by creating Facebook and Twitter accounts titled “Sunday Burning Sunday,” and encouraged people to

¹²⁰ <http://ireport.cnn.com/topics/7233>

¹²¹ <http://ireport.cnn.com/topics/7233>

¹²² *ABC News*, July 17, 2013.

¹²³ *USA Today*, July 17, 2013.

¹²⁴ *USA Today*, July 17, 2013.

purchase the magazine, burn it, and then post a photograph of the burning magazine on one of the two social media sites.¹²⁵

But for the most part, social media dominated this controversy from the beginning. Social media was involved in each step of the controversy: it played a major role in the creation of the controversy, the discussion of the controversy, and the response to the discussion of the controversy. Even the photograph of Tsarnaev that was the subject of the debate was a self-portrait (popularly referred to as a “selfie”) that he had taken of himself and posted on his Facebook page. How can social media simultaneously be the source of a controversy *and* the space in which the controversy is discussed? How did social media become a space that allows “events” such as this one with Tsarnaev’s image on the cover of *Rolling Stone* to happen?

Audience, Mediation, and Digital Culture

The concept of the “audience” has historically played an important role in media studies. Though in the past, groups of “viewers” or “readers” were generally classified as being passive consumers of media content (via newspapers, magazines, or radio and television programming) the current age is one in which “ordinary people” are able to communicate their thoughts and views, as well as share photos and opinions with others around the world through the use of the internet and social media websites.¹²⁶

The Internet and the social media sites contained within it are all parts of what is known as “digital culture.” “Digital culture” refers to “both the tangible and the

¹²⁵ Jack Mirkinson, “Boston Resident Launches Campaign to Publicly Burn Rolling Stone’s Tsarnaev Issue,” *The Huffington Post*, July 18, 2013 (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/18/boston-rolling-stone-cover-burning_n_3618173.html?utm_hp_ref=media).

¹²⁶ Nancy Thumim, *Self-Representation and Digital Culture* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012), 1.

amorphous implications of digital technology” including the ways that digital technologies shape every day life both by its presence and by its absence.¹²⁷ These “participatory” online spaces are available only to those who have the tools (e.g. the internet-capable devices and internet literacy skills) with which to access these spaces. Digital culture not only determines *who* can participate within it, but also *how* they can and cannot participate.

The advent of the Internet and the subsequent emergence of social media sites show that past distinctions between “production, text, and reception are increasingly difficult to sustain.”¹²⁸ This means that producers of online content are also simultaneously consumers, and a flow of movement between sites of production, text, and reception is a more appropriate theoretical approach to the study of this movement.

This is but one example of the complex ways in which interactions between the “old media” and the “new media” are converging.¹²⁹ This idea of “convergence,” offered by Henry Jenkins, is useful because it allows for a multi-dimensional understanding of the interactions between “old” media forms and new and emerging forms of digital media. Digital media has not completely replaced previous media forms, but rather it has allowed for new sets of interactions to occur between media forms.

In the case of the Boston Marathon bombing, trends in the content of social media directly became subject matter within the news media. The news media also initiated the creation of social media content by encouraging social media users to submit responses to videos and articles within the news media that described the controversy. Furthermore,

¹²⁷ Thumim, 12-3.

¹²⁸ Thumim, 13.

¹²⁹ Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 2.

the entire controversy began because of social media responses that demonstrated a unified response to what the public perceived as being a “violation” of how *Rolling Stone* magazine (a part of the media landscape) “should look.”

Participation within digital media increasingly requires (or “provides opportunities for”) self-representation. This is particularly true for social networking sites. Within the realm of social networking, self-representation is increasingly becoming a “condition of such participation.”¹³⁰ That is, one must engage in the creation of various textual and visual representations of oneself in order to become “involved” (that is, in order to build and maintain a profile) on a social networking site. For instance, Facebook, brands itself as a space for “socializing,” but “in order to participate in online socializing here, people *must* represent themselves.”¹³¹ Similarly with Twitter (“the best way to connect with people, express yourself and discover what’s happening,”)¹³² users must create accounts in which they are required to negotiate how to engage in self-representation.

One of the ways to analyze how particular interactions occur between “ordinary people” and different media forms is to analyze how and by whom these interactions are mediated. (The term “ordinary people” is used in a celebratory sense to describe social networking participants because of the opportunity that social networking has provided groups that have historically been “low on the hierarchy” to engage in the production of

¹³⁰ Thumim, 137.

¹³¹ Thumim, 138.

¹³² “About,” *Twitter.com*, 2013 (<https://about.twitter.com/>).

dialogue and media content.¹³³) Participation in social media networks, as it becomes more and more common, new forms of “virtualized” relationships emerge.¹³⁴

For instance, interactions with media forms have been mediated throughout history (and continue to be mediated and controlled) through news outlets and broadcasters, entities such as museums or art galleries, and also through various technologies and “formats” that one may use to access media content (i.e. a newspaper, a radio, or a television). Though mediation in digital spaces of interaction can be less obvious, they can also be just as ubiquitous and pervasive as within media formats in the past. Three forms of mediation: institutional, cultural, and textual will be investigated to understand how and why certain forms of self-representation take place on social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter.¹³⁵ Both Facebook and Twitter, as cultural sites and as companies, have demonstrated their influence within the functioning of daily communication and social interaction. Facebook, Inc. is a private company founded in 2004 with headquarters in Menlo Park, California.¹³⁶ With 80% of Facebook’s 727 million daily users outside of the U. S. and Canada and 5,794 employees working in over 30 offices worldwide, Facebook is truly an entity with which people all over the world interact on a daily basis.¹³⁷ Similarly, Twitter, Inc., launched in 2006, hosts an average of 500 million individual Tweets per day from over 230 million accounts, 77% of which are

¹³³ Thumim, 21.

¹³⁴ Terry Flew, “Introduction,” *New Media: An Introduction*, Rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), xvii.

¹³⁵ Thumim, 49.

¹³⁶ “Key Facts,” *Facebook Newsroom*, 2013 (<http://newsroom.fb.com/Key-Facts>).

¹³⁷ *Facebook Newsroom*, 2013.

outside of the United States.¹³⁸ Twitter employs 2,000 people (50% of which are engineers) in 25 offices worldwide.¹³⁹

For both Facebook and Twitter, self-representation is a condition of participation (among other factors that will not be discussed in-depth here, such as regular access to internet-capable devices). Despite the fact that the term “self-representation” carries with it ideas of lessened mediation (because the “representing” is being done by those who are being “represented” or, in other words, because of the “removal of *mediators*”)¹⁴⁰ this is not actually the case. The forms of self-representation that take place on Facebook or on Twitter are shaped by the commercial interests of the social media networks themselves. The appearance of the Facebook or the Twitter page, for example, is heavily branded due to visual qualities on the web pages such as “color, font and layout.”¹⁴¹ This “branding” of the Facebook and Twitter pages is arguably more dominant than any content a user may upload to either site.

Furthermore, though the number of languages available on both Facebook and Twitter is constantly expanding, certain languages are used more frequently than others, and some continue to go unrepresented. Also, particularly on Facebook, “targeted advertisements” are always “lurking” in the same locations on every page.¹⁴² These targeted advertisements are evidence of another method of institutional mediation in which Facebook is constantly balancing the privacy of its users and the needs of advertisers. The source of this tension lies in the fact that Facebook’s owners are able to

¹³⁸ “About Twitter, Inc.,” *Twitter.com*, 2013 (<https://about.twitter.com/company>).

¹³⁹ *Twitter.com*, 2013.

¹⁴⁰ Thumim, 142.

¹⁴¹ Thumim, 142.

¹⁴² Thumim, 142.

sell users' information to third parties (i.e. advertisers).¹⁴³ As Facebook continues to develop privacy controls, the institutional negotiation that balances the benefits for users, advertisers, and the company itself ensures that self-representation on Facebook is never without institutional mediation.

When analyzing various forms of self-representation in digital culture across different technologies, it is important to consider the venue of participation (“the site”), the participants (“the people who are being represented”), and the different types of representations that are produced.¹⁴⁴ Who is being represented and how are they being represented? Who is being represented in a variety of ways, and who is only represented certain types of ways? The various technologies of digital culture have allowed the practice of self-representation online to become ubiquitous, and the kinds of input that people can access and utilize within these spaces are virtually without limit.¹⁴⁵ This is why a cultural analysis of *who* is being represented and *where* and *how* they are being represented is important.

More importantly, questions about media literacy and how to classify representation itself arise when dealing with cultural mediation in self-representations online.¹⁴⁶ If one is projecting a representation of himself or herself online, questions about how does he or she know effectively know how to represent himself or herself arise, and for what audience does he or she believe that he or she is projecting his or her representation?

¹⁴³ Thumim, 142.

¹⁴⁴ Thumim, 144.

¹⁴⁵ Thumim, 144.

¹⁴⁶ Thumim, 145.

The question of how audiences form for online representations is an important one for a venue like Twitter is an important one, because one's tweets can be sent to a list of hundreds of thousands of followers (like Twitter's comedy guru, American Rob Delaney¹⁴⁷) or they can be read by no one. Among those who have the most "followers" on Twitter are pop icons Katy Perry (coming in at number 1 with 48, 013, 573 followers), Justin Bieber, Lady Gaga, Britney Spears, and Rihanna.¹⁴⁸ Other social media websites like YouTube (for video-sharing) and Instagram (for sharing photos and short video clips) also graced the Top 10.¹⁴⁹ When taking into account who is represented online most effectively (that is, most noticeably), it becomes evident that "inequalities and prejudices are by no means absent from representation online."¹⁵⁰

Cultural mediation is also present in the ways that users interact with Facebook. The structure itself of the website, in particular, adds to the "ephemeral" quality of photo-sharing and status updates.¹⁵¹ This allows one to submit "status updates" (short verbal statements that one can post to his or her own account) change his or her profile picture (the photo that is linked with one's account) as often as they like. In this way, Facebook users are able to alter the visual and textual representations of themselves "within the considerable structures of the Facebook form."¹⁵² (Despite the fact that one has the "freedom" to represent oneself in a photograph with family at graduation or as an image of a famous actor or a landscape painting, the reality of one's choices are determined by

¹⁴⁷ Rob Delaney, @robdelaney, 2013 (<https://twitter.com/robdelaney>).

¹⁴⁸ "The Twitaholic.com Top 100 Twitterholics based on Followers," *Twitaholic.com*, 2013 (<http://twitaholic.com/>).

¹⁴⁹ *Twitaholic*, 2013.

¹⁵⁰ Thumim, 146.

¹⁵¹ Thumim, 147.

¹⁵² Thumim, 147.

his or her level of media literacy. The idea of the “unitary self” does not exist in this arena, as countless representations and combinations of representations are made possible.¹⁵³) Though various forms of institutional mediation determine how the Facebook website “looks,” what users “do” within that system are shaped by media literacy skills and cultural mediation.¹⁵⁴

Though Facebook is a public forum for communication, one’s level of media literacy also comes into play when navigating the site’s various “privacy” settings. What one decides to share (or what one ends up sharing) publicly could be the result of a conscious decision to apply or to not apply certain privacy settings to one’s profile, or it could be the result of a lack of understanding about how the website functions.¹⁵⁵ These different levels of compensation between “public” and “private” settings have introduced a “blurring of boundaries between public and private communication” within the realm of social media.¹⁵⁶ Even if the highest level of privacy settings are applied to one’s profile, one must always assume that social networking activities online are public interactions.

Self-representations on social networking sites like Twitter and Facebook allow one the freedom to represent himself or herself using different combinations of images and words in a variety of ways, but always within the format permitted by the website. The overwhelming attention turned towards representations of certain individuals and corporations (like popular musicians and other social media sites) mirrors the inequalities present in how power is exerted and displayed in other media forms. Media literacy skills

¹⁵³ Thumim, 150.

¹⁵⁴ Thumim, 147.

¹⁵⁵ Thumim, 148.

¹⁵⁶ Maria Bakardjieva, *Internet Society: The Internet in Everyday Life* (London: Sage Publications, 2005).

and a knowledge of the functions of each website determine the level of “privacy” users are able to create for themselves, but the blurring of the division between “public” and “private” content is a characteristic that defines participation in social media. Self-representations can thus be viewed, shared, and engaged by others, creating “fluidity” within these new “virtualised” relationships.¹⁵⁷

Through various challenges (and adherences) to content within the mainstream media, social media provide a space in which a wide range of opinions can be vocalized. Challenges, however localized they may be, can be made to the content that is communicated through the mainstream media. However, mediation is about negotiations of power, and which opinions are displayed at the forefront, as well as *how* these opinions are displayed, are determined through processes of textual mediation.

Some scholars argue that sites like Twitter and Facebook only contribute to the “oversimplification” and generally “binary” political views with which the public already engages.¹⁵⁸ The social media sites generally provide at best a carefully crafted interaction (on the part of the politician, celebrity, corporation, etc.) between “ordinary people” who participate in social media and various leaders in today’s world that is masked as being “personal” and “spontaneous.” The “access” gained through social media into the lives of politicians and celebrities or to “behind-the-scenes” operations and special promotions at various companies is simply just another venue through which each entity is able to communicate whatever information it desires to promote the image that it wants to project. Mainstream views and norms are thus repeated through social media.

¹⁵⁷ Flew, xvii.

¹⁵⁸ Matt Bai, “Complex Political Issues Are Trivialized by Social Media,” in Dedria Bryfonski, ed., *The Global Impact of Social Media* (Detroit: Gale CENGAGE Learning, 2012), 57 – 60.

Empirical sociological research has shown that online and offline communities are interconnected.¹⁵⁹ This means that people are a part of more “international” or “cosmopolitan” networks offline will be a part of more “international” or “cosmopolitan” networks online. Conversely, people whose communities are more localized offline will also have more localized online communities. Though Facebook’s mission statement is “to give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected,”¹⁶⁰ the tendency for online networks and communities on the Facebook site to mirror offline communities is overwhelming.¹⁶¹

Group politics can also emerge on the Facebook and Twitter sites because of the range of possibilities for self-representation that are possible. If an individual account identifies with a particular cause, then the act of identification with that cause becomes part of their process of self-representation on their Facebook page. These “causes” can range from political causes (“Democratic Party” with 654,605 likes)¹⁶² to corporate entities (“General Motors” with 508,552 likes),¹⁶³ and from movies and television shows (“NCIS” with 17,994,546 likes)¹⁶⁴ to random objects and activities (“Carnivorous Plants” with 10,670 likes).¹⁶⁵ People’s political views and personal interests, therefore, are treated like equally valid ways to convey one’s identity (see fig. 29). In this space, one’s hobbies, casual interests, and political views become equal parts of their self-representation and also contribute to the formation of various “groups” on Facebook. The

¹⁵⁹ Thumim, 151.

¹⁶⁰ “About Facebook,” *Facebook.com*, 2013 (<https://www.facebook.com/facebook/info>).

¹⁶¹ Thumim, 152.

¹⁶² “Democratic Party,” *Facebook.com*, 2013 (<https://www.facebook.com/democrats>).

¹⁶³ “General Motors,” *Facebook.com*, 2013 (<https://www.facebook.com/generalmotors>).

¹⁶⁴ “NCIS,” *Facebook.com*, 2013 (<https://www.facebook.com/NCIS>).

¹⁶⁵ “Carnivorous Plants,” *Facebook.com*, 2013 (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Carnivorous-Plants/110687715622271>).

act of “liking” a particular page unites individual users with similar interests within the various “groups” that are present.

Facebook profiles of each individual user are therefore an amalgamation of different representations of “me.”¹⁶⁶ This is due to the fact that these representations are a condition of participation in the “socializing” offered on Facebook. “It is only once we think about the self-representation that *must* take place *in order* to socialize in Facebook that we are able to address the important question of how these representations interact with dominant media representations. – that is, do they challenge them, ignore them, uphold them or alter them?”¹⁶⁷ As has already been discussed, the Facebook brand (the colors, organization, and overall “look” of a Facebook page) institutionally mediates the self-representations that can take place. However, Facebook’s focus on the development of the “individual self” *for the explicit purposes* of socializing, networking, and “staying in touch” puts the self-representations that are formulated on and for Facebook within a context that not only facilitates but favors “generic expectations of the self-representation” (e.g. images of oneself, stories of their mood, their opinion, and their feelings).¹⁶⁸

Social Media as a Venue for Debate

“Who’s gonna throw the very first stone?/ Oh! Who’s gonna reset the bone?”¹⁶⁹

Social media is a venue that is able to host a variety of responses. Given the aforementioned characteristics of the social networking websites Facebook and Twitter, the displays of discontent with *Rolling Stone’s* cover image of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev that

¹⁶⁶ Thumim, 153.

¹⁶⁷ Thumim, 153.

¹⁶⁸ Thumim, 153.

¹⁶⁹ Arcade Fire, “Intervention,” *Neon Bible*, Merge Records, 2007.

were posted to and hosted by each site can be understood as fitting within the prescribed formats of self-representation and individual and group identity formation that each site provides. Actions such as posting to Rolling Stone’s official Facebook page, directly “tweeting at” Rolling Stone’s official Twitter account (@RollingStone), the creation of Facebook groups in protest of the magazine’s cover image, and the emergence of “#BoycottRollingStone” as a trending hashtag on Twitter are all examples in which social media users displayed their opinions about the cover.

The “Boycott Rolling Stone magazine for their latest cover” Facebook group was created on July 16, 2013, the same day that *Rolling Stone* publicly released its cover image of Tsarnaev. The group currently has over 168,000 “likes,”¹⁷⁰ or Facebook users who have chosen to connect “themselves” (that is, to connect their Facebook account) with this group. Essentially, “likes” can be equated with a desire to support the group’s cause in this particular case.

The “profile image” of the group shows the cover of issue 1188 with a large black “X” covering Tsarnaev’s face (see fig. 30). The banner across the top of the page shows a multi-frame portrait of four people who were killed during the events of the bombing: Martin William Richard, Krystle Marie Campbell, Lu Lingzi, all of whom were spectators at the marathon, and Sean A. Collier, an MIT police officer who was allegedly murdered by Dzhokhar and Tamerlan Tsarnaev. In the group’s “Description” on its Facebook page, it reads “We are not opposed to the article itself. We are opposed to the unethical usage of a photo of a murder suspect as a cover page... We feel that the time has now come for a voluntary journalistic etiquette to be established that refrains from

¹⁷⁰ “Boycott Rolling Stone magazine for their latest cover,” *Facebook.com*, 2013. (<https://www.facebook.com/BoycottRollingStoneMagazineForTheirLatestCover>).

inadvertently spotlighting banal murderers.”¹⁷¹ In a comment posted by the page’s organizers, visitors to the page are invited to “‘like’ and comment on existing postings and connect with other supporters” and to “post links on your own sites, regardless of your opinion, provided that your site is civil and constructive”¹⁷²

This Facebook group was created specifically to unite (“connect and coordinate” the efforts of)¹⁷³ people who, for one reason or another, opposed the usage of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev’s image on the cover of *Rolling Stone* magazine. The content of the group follows similar patterns as can be seen in other social media outlets, including: a call to redirect the media and the public’s attention toward the victims of the bombings (“This [cover image] is unacceptable and a slap in the face for those [Tsarnaev] killed and maimed”¹⁷⁴); a page entitled “Various Articles and news reports regarding the cover” that includes a set of links to various articles, videos, and surveys, including a link to the “Save Sgt. Sean Murphy Rolling Stone True Pictures” Facebook group; and various comments by other Facebook users ranging from gung-ho disgust (“Never forget and never forgive! Boycott! Fire the CEO!”¹⁷⁵ “Sad to know that they are even giving coverage to this bastard!!!! Stop buying this mag!!!,”¹⁷⁶) to nationalist rhetoric (“Our

¹⁷¹ “Description” in “Boycott Rolling Stone magazine for their latest cover,” *Facebook.com*, 2013.

(<https://www.facebook.com/BoycottRollingStoneMagazineForTheirLatestCover/info>).

¹⁷² “Boycott Rolling Stone magazine for their latest cover,” *Facebook.com*, 2013.

¹⁷³ “Boycott Rolling Stone magazine for their latest cover,” *Facebook.com*, 2013.

¹⁷⁴ “About” section in “Boycott Rolling Stone magazine for their latest cover,” *Facebook.com*, 2013.

¹⁷⁵ “Profile Image Comments Section” in “Boycott Rolling Stone magazine for their latest cover,” *Facebook.com*, 2013

(<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=514024665329553&set=a.513576665374353.1073741825.513576305374389&type=1&theater>)

¹⁷⁶ “Profile Image Comments Section” in “Boycott Rolling Stone magazine for their latest cover,” *Facebook.com*, 2013.

men & women are overseas fighting dirt bags such as this one... RS might as well burnt the American flag on the cover”¹⁷⁷), to attacking *Rolling Stone* (“I’ve bought my last copy of this shameless rag”¹⁷⁸ and “There is no shame. How can Rolling Stone staff [sic] sit in their office and make a decision like this and not be ashamed of it. [sic]”¹⁷⁹), to outright threatening remarks (“Your magazine is a disgrace.hang [sic] this scumbag in front of a firing squad”¹⁸⁰ and “Bomb that magazine”¹⁸¹). However, some participants defended *Rolling Stone*’s use of Tsarnaev’s image on the “Boycott” group Facebook page (“RS reports much more than music, always has. Why aren’t any of you boycotting any news station or magazine that has used this same photo since the bombing happened?”¹⁸²). The Facebook page thus became a host to a variety of opinions and responses, and a space for debate regarding the cover image of Tsarnaev.

The activity on Twitter in response to the *Rolling Stone* mirrored the content that was posted on the “Boycott Rolling Stone” Facebook page, with comments both against and in defense of the cover image. However, instead of posting comments “on” one specific webpage (like the central role played by the “Boycott” Facebook group) people either “tweeted at” *Rolling Stone* magazine’s official Twitter account (including “@RollingStone” somewhere within the tweet) or they typed the hashtag “Boycott

¹⁷⁷ “Profile Image Comments Section” in “Boycott Rolling Stone magazine for their latest cover,” *Facebook.com*, 2013.

¹⁷⁸ “Profile Image Comments Section” in “Boycott Rolling Stone magazine for their latest cover,” *Facebook.com*, 2013.

¹⁷⁹ “Profile Image Comments Section” in “Boycott Rolling Stone magazine for their latest cover,” *Facebook.com*, 2013.

¹⁸⁰ “Profile Image Comments Section” in “Boycott Rolling Stone magazine for their latest cover,” *Facebook.com*, 2013.

¹⁸¹ “Profile Image Comments Section” in “Boycott Rolling Stone magazine for their latest cover,” *Facebook.com*, 2013.

¹⁸² “Profile Image Comments Section” in “Boycott Rolling Stone magazine for their latest cover,” *Facebook.com*, 2013.

Rolling Stone” (“#BoycottRollingStone”) at the end of their message. Twitter user “@BostonBachelor” wrote: “Hey @RollingStone you could have honored any victim of the Bombing with your cover. But you chose a Terrorist #BoycottRollingStone.”¹⁸³ The action of tweeting @RollingStone and including #BoycottRollingStone in one’s tweet effectively served the same purpose as the webpage of the “Boycott” Facebook group – these were the common (albeit virtual) spaces in which the discussion and debate of the cover image unfolded.

Guy Debord and “The Society of the Spectacle”

One of the most distinctive characteristics of the cover image controversy is the social media attention the cover received, even more so than the story itself, thus becoming the subject of a plethora of news articles: “Rolling Stone Cover of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev Ignites Online Firestorm,” ABC News; “Rolling Stone blasted for giving rock star treatment to accused Boston bomber,” Fox News; “Bomber as rock star? Rolling Stone cover outrage,” Yahoo! News; and “Outrage Over Boston Bombing Suspect On ‘Rolling Stone’ Cover,” NPR. Society’s immediate and intense response to the cover (as manifested through social media) was again brought into the spotlight by the news media, which then also encouraged the public to respond to news articles via social media, polls, and the comments sections associated with specific articles.

The fact that the news media reported on the controversy and then encouraged people to respond to those reports fed the polarization, the intensity, and the duration of the controversy itself. This “reality” of the controversy is an example of Guy Debord’s theory regarding society’s continual need to organize, define, and categorize itself, which

¹⁸³ *Chicago Tribune*, July 17, 2013.

he lays out in his work, “The Society of the Spectacle.” In Debord’s view, the “spectacle” is a particular philosophy of life “that has been actualized, translated into the material realm – a world view transformed into an objective force.”¹⁸⁴ The spectacle is at once “reality” and “unreality,” but it is made real (that is, it is affirmed) through society. The choice of whether or not to “participate” in the spectacle is always open, and actions such as participating in social media, voting (on polls, elections, or reality television shows), or even possessing the technologies that permit one to take part in these actions both affirm the spectacle and one’s participation within it. The most significant way the spectacle is affirmed and perpetuated, however, is through the underlying belief that the “progression” of society (e.g. the progression of communicative technology) is “natural” and could not possibly occur any other way.¹⁸⁵

Debord’s theory of the spectacle is useful in framing *how* the controversy began and was subsequently fueled by the overlapping forces of both social media and the news media. Furthermore, the loaded rhetoric of both social media posts and news articles *in combination with* the “yes or no” format of opinion polls contributed to the increasing polarization of the “debate,” thus intensifying the controversy itself. Though social media has the potential to host a variety of opinions, postings generally follow a heavily divided and oversimplified pattern of debate. The use of buzzwords and phrases such as “extreme Islam,” “terrorist,” “celebrity,” and “rock star” when describing Tsarnaev and the *Rolling Stone* cover image speak to emotionally powerful topics and ideas for a contemporary

¹⁸⁴ Guy Debord, “The Society of the Spectacle,” trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 1994), 5.

¹⁸⁵ Debord, 6.

American audience. These words play upon concepts of “Wedom” and “Theydom,”¹⁸⁶ and the historic tendency of upholding stereotypical and “othering” Orientalist views within the West. “Terrorists” should never be “celebrities.”

A prime example of a “we/they” polarizing response within the news media is the “Opening Statement” segment delivered by Jeanine Pirro, J.D. on Fox News Channel’s *Justice with Judge Jeanine* (fig. 31). The show, which premiered in 2011, airs weekly on the Fox News Channel and showcases Pirro’s point of view regarding various issues within recent news relating to crime and justice. The “Opening Statement” from July 20, 2013 in which Pirro discusses the “Boston bomber” cover image heavily utilizes religious, nationalist, and emotionally-laden rhetoric. Pirro directly calls Tsarnaev “just plain evil, like the Devil,”¹⁸⁷ calls his mother a “good old Jihadi mom,”¹⁸⁸ and says that “maybe [Tsarnaev] wants... and chose to be a terrorist.”¹⁸⁹ Pirro ends her segment by directly addressing Tsarnaev with the following:

Dzhokhar, I don’t like your mother, and you take after her. You came here to feed off the fat of our land like the rest of your family to suck us dry. You shouldn’t have been allowed here in the first place. And you hate us?... Dzhokhar, you’re not the one in pain. You’re not a rock star. You’re not a cover boy. You’re a damned terrorist, the spawn of Satan, who should go directly to Hell, sooner rather than later.¹⁹⁰

Directly following her dialogue, the show cuts to a full-screen invitation for viewers to participate in the “Justice Insta-Poll” by answering the question “Did *Rolling Stone* cross

¹⁸⁶ McKenzie Wark, “The Weird Global Media Event and the Tactical Intellectual,” in *New Media, Old Media: A History and Theory Reader*, Wendy Hui Kyong Chun and Thomas Keenan, eds. (New York: Routledge, 2006), 268.

¹⁸⁷ Jeanine Pirro, “Justice with Judge Jeanine,”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zM6aSBrygs8>, accessed November 20, 2013, 3:03.

¹⁸⁸ “Justice with Judge Jeanine,” 2:43.

¹⁸⁹ “Justice with Judge Jeanine,” 2:36.

¹⁹⁰ “Justice with Judge Jeanine,” 8:55.

the line by putting Dzhokhar Tsarnaev on its cover?” (fig. 32). This tactic of following intense and controversial content with an invitation for the audience to “participate” by sharing their opinion via social media (a poll, Facebook, Twitter, or a comments section) was employed by almost every major news source that reported on the controversy (figs. 33 – 36).

Conclusion

Visual culture is embedded within and reinforces power structures that exist within society. The controversy surrounding the August 1, 2013 cover of *Rolling Stone* magazine is indicative of how visual culture parallels how systems of power operate within the United States today. The representational nature of visual communication contributes to the establishment of various visual icons, which then forms culturally-specific concepts about what purposes certain images can and cannot serve and how certain images “should look.” The cover of *Rolling Stone* magazine is seen as an iconic space, reserved for those who are prominent figures within popular culture.

This collective perception of *Rolling Stone* as a publication combined with the communicative space afforded by social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter contributed to the initiation of the cover image controversy. The interaction between the news media and social media further contributed to the span and the polarization of the debate. This controversy is a unique product of the interactions currently taking place between visual and digital culture. As these interactions continue to unfold, the course of visual culture and the public’s participation within it will only continue to grow and take new forms. It will always be important, however, to analyze *what* is happening within the

realm of visual culture and *why* it is happening because of the vast implications these processes have for the ways in which society functions.

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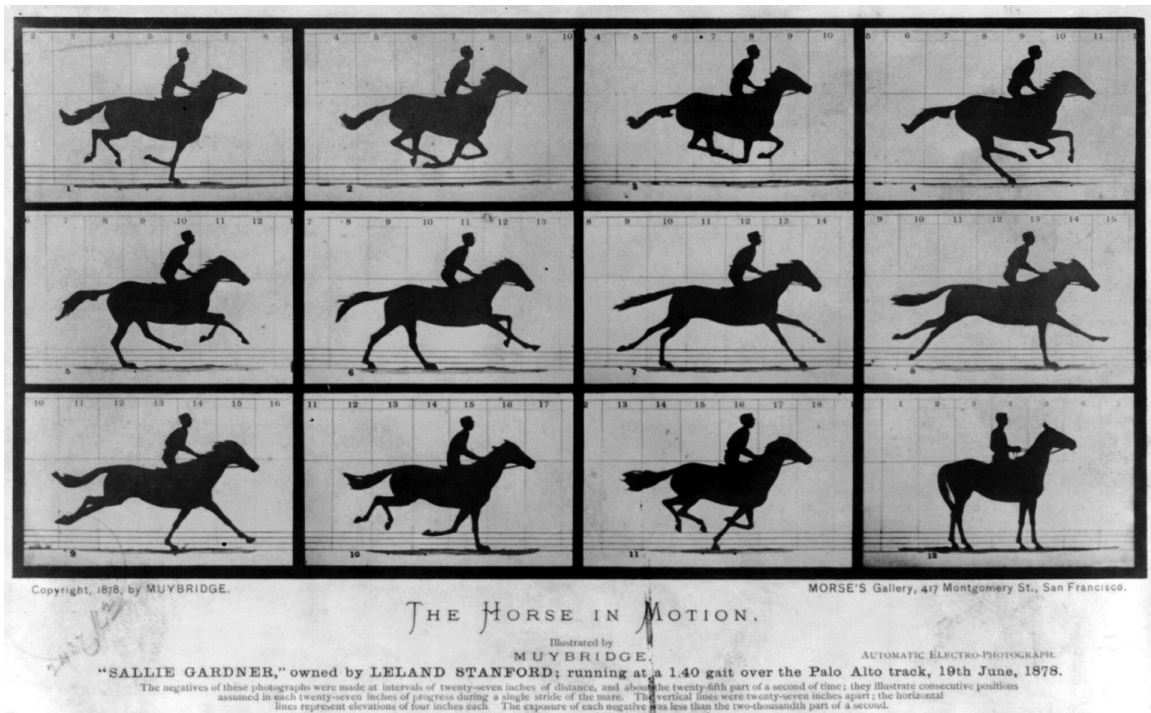


Fig 3. Eadweard Muybridge, "The Horse in Motion," 1878.



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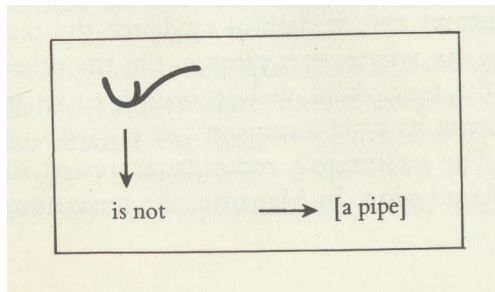


Fig 11. Foucault diagram 1.

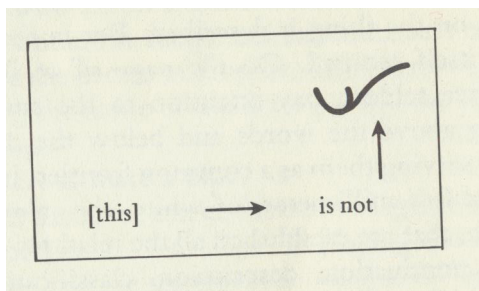


Fig 12. Foucault diagram 2.

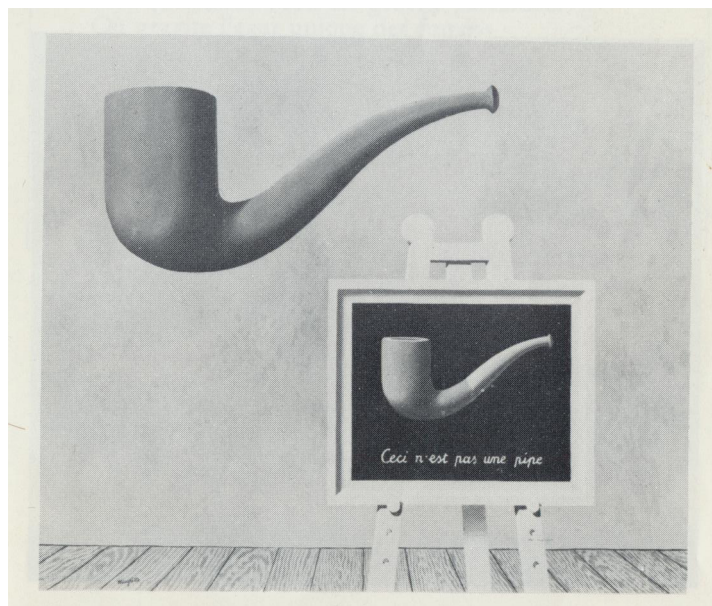


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Fig 21. A young Bob Dylan.



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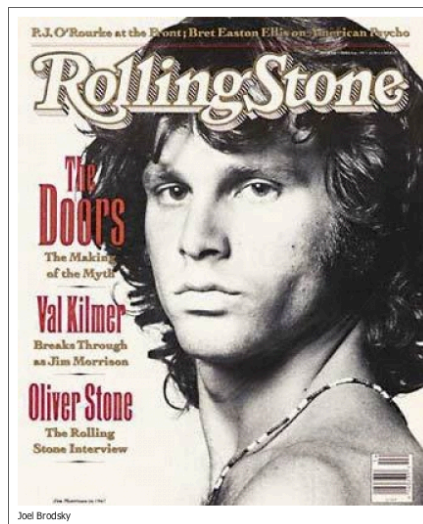


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Fig 27. The May 5, 2013 cover of the *New York Times*, which featured the same image as *Rolling Stone* issue 1188.



Fig 28. ABC News video with #ABCWorldNews at the bottom of the screen.



Fig 29. An example of the convergence of different possibilities for self-representation (through the action of “liking” on Facebook).

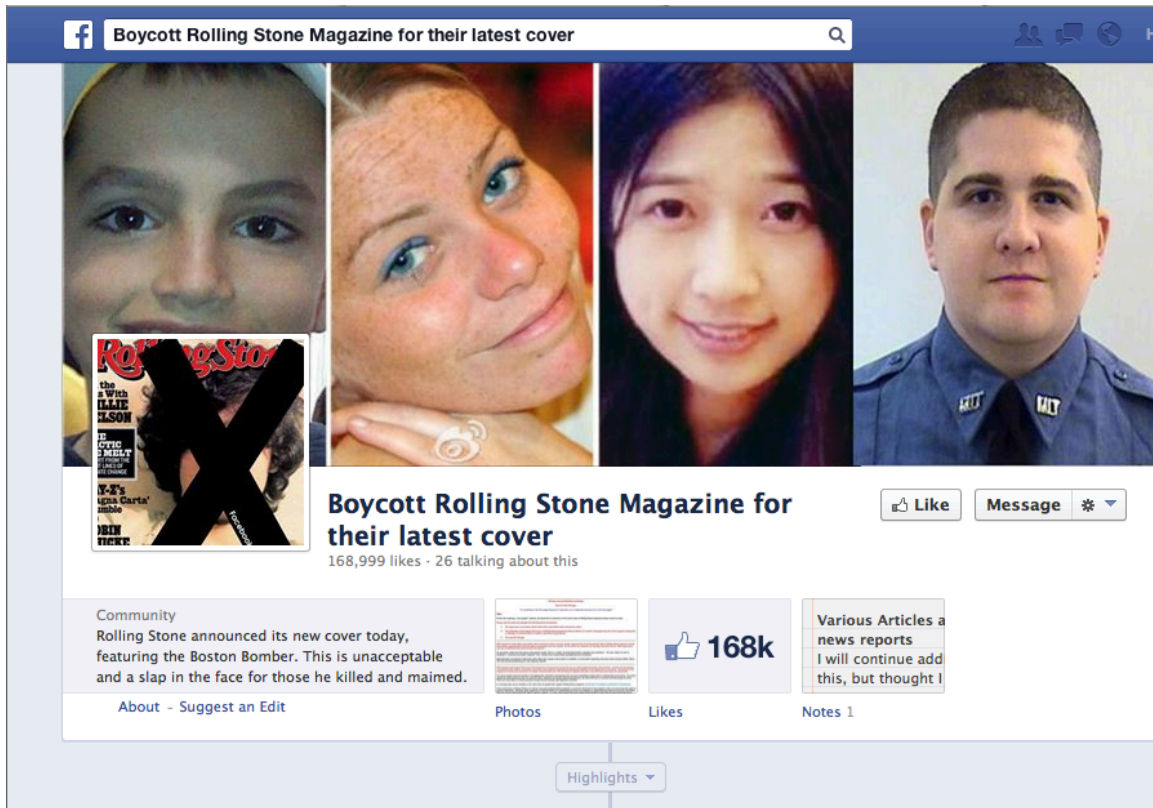


Fig 30. “Boycott Rolling Stone Magazine for their latest cover” Facebook group, 2013.



Fig 31. View of “Opening Statement” from the July 20, 2013 broadcast of *Justice with Judge Jeanine*.

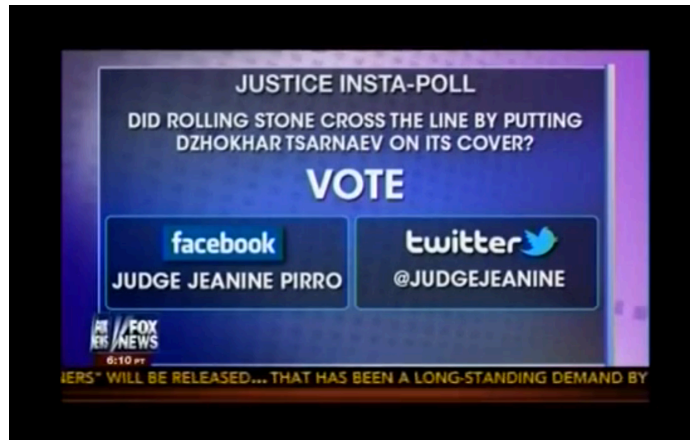


Fig 32. View of the poll regarding the *Rolling Stone* cover image of Tsarnaev from the July 20, 2013 broadcast of *Justice with Judge Jeanine*.

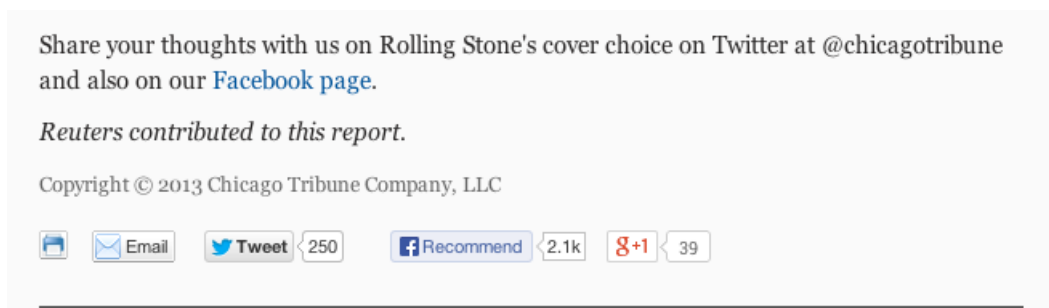


Fig 33. Invitation from the *Chicago Tribune* to “share your thoughts” via social media (Twitter and Facebook), 2013.

UPDATE: On Wednesday morning, the pharmacy chain CVS and the Tedeschi Food Shops both said they would refuse to sell the issue in their stores.

Quick Poll

Was Rolling Stone wrong to publish this cover?

Absolutely.

No way!

VOTE

ALSO ON HUFFPOST:

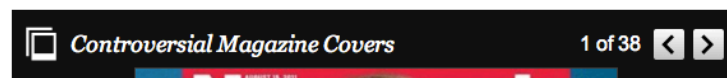


Fig 34. Invitation to participate in a poll conducted by *Huffington Post* at the end of an article about the controversy.

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Comments for this thread are now closed. ✕

25 comments



Best ▼ Community

Share

Login ▼



Barbara A · 5 months ago

I really do believe Americans have too much time on their hands. If Rolling Stone's cover causes this much brouhaha then America needs to get a hobby!

5 · Share ▶



Richard Freeze · 5 months ago

An astute quote from another commentator on Truth Dig: "Every media outlet from CNN to Fox showed this man's photo incessantly for weeks and no one said a damn thing about it."

Is it me? Aren't you all sick and tired of being manipulated by the

Share

25 Comments

support comes from:



Fig 35. The comments section at the end of an article on *NPR*'s website, 2013.

A horizontal row of social media sharing options. From left to right: a 'SHARE' button, a Facebook icon with '19886' and 'CONNECT' below it, a Twitter icon with '811' and 'TWEET' below it, a speech bubble icon with '1051' and 'COMMENT' below it, an envelope icon with 'EMAIL' below it, and a share icon with 'MORE' below it. Above the icons are small thumbnails of magazine covers, including one with 'The Bomber' and another with 'Lynnes Manson'.

Fig 36. Links to “share, connect [via Facebook], tweet, and comment” on an article about the Tsarnaev cover image on the *USA Today* website, 2013.

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