



The issues surrounding the photographic representation are receiving increasingly a lot of attention as the digital age moves forward. I have been asked repeatedly if I believe that digitally altered images should be marked with a special symbol to differentiate them from, lets say, traditional images.

My response has been that a symbol to show that a photograph has been digitally manipulated, begs the following question: what of all the images that have been manipulated without having been created in digital formats.

Before we continue we should define the limits and parameters of what a "manipulated" image actually consists off. To think those issues through is already part of the answer.

In the end what is everyone so scared of? is it about issues of image credibility? and if so, isn't it about time that we come to terms with the fact that photographs have never been THE truth about anything.

Photographs, as I see it are open-ended in their interpretation, and that I believe is their beauty and mystery. How can one explain that a picture can have it's meaning completely altered just by a caption. So if photographs can't define themselves on their own, but are dependent upon external factors, shouldn't we start to worry more about those external factors than we have allowed that to happen up to now.

Editorial 6

Written by Pedro Meyer

As photographers we all know endless stories of our images being cropped, presented in layouts to make an editorial point not in the images themselves, or have had our work edited out of context. What sort of symbol should those images carry?

I find the idea of placing a symbol next to a picture to address the issues of manipulation, to be a simplistic solution to a very complex issue, namely that of who has manipulated what and when. I suggest on the other hand that the more people are aware that there are all these manipulations (and that is what is happening) , and that they even exist, be they digital or not, the better we are off. Therefore we should have open discussions about such issues. All those schools that visit us, here at ZoneZero, should place particular attention to these issues.

Very soon you will find that we are going to have forums here at ZoneZero where we can discuss these and many other topics, we are in the process of setting up all the equipment to enable us to do so.

Pedro Meyer
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<http://zonezero.com/editorial/april97/editabril.en.html>