

ISSA Proceedings 2014 - A Poem Without Words: Visual Argumentation And The Photography Collections Of The Black Panther Party

Abstract: The 40th anniversary of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense's founding in 2006 brought a renewed interest in an important organization within the Civil Rights Movement. Since the anniversary, two new collections of photography, by Howard Bingham and Stephen Shames, have been published that create discontinuities in the dominant historical narrative surrounding the organization. This essay draws on Cara Finnegan's work on visual rhetoric to advance our understanding of the transformative power of the image.

Keywords: argumentation, Bingham, Black Panther Party, image, photography, Shames, visual rhetoric.

1. Introduction

Non-dominant narratives often clash with conventional traditions and interpretations. Take, for example, the civil rights and counterculture movements of the 1960s and 1970s. These movements were comprised of smaller groups, charismatic leaders, and single events that helped to define their broader contributions. While a dominant historical narrative developed in these cases, new artifacts have been recently published that reveal new wrinkles in the movement's history. When new artifacts create non-dominant narratives that challenge previous assumptions, audiences are afforded the opportunity to reevaluate accepted historical narratives and frames. This essay argues that new, contradictory artifacts invite audiences to reconsider dominant historical narratives and reconfigure these narratives to reflect a deeper understanding of a unique and important moment in history.

2. Artifacts and framework

To illustrate the dynamic involved here, this essay carefully explores new artifacts

that challenge traditional interpretations of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense (BPP). Considered highly controversial, the BPP changed the direction of the black power movement within the United States during its existence from 1966-1982 (Jones, 2006). Recently, two previously unpublished collections of photographs, Howard L. Bingham's *Black Panthers 1968* (Bingham, 2009) and *The Black Panthers* (Shames, 2006), have emerged after the 40th anniversary of the organization's founding by students Huey Newton and Bobby Seale. These artifacts provide new insight and problematize the existing BPP narrative.

It is important to note that historical narratives are multilayered with several overlapping and sometimes contradictory meanings. Additionally, access to primary historical sources is limited. Young audiences intrigued by the tumultuous rhetoric of civil rights and counterculture can only look to books, recordings, and other secondary sources to understand these unique and compelling rhetorical situations. In other words, their experience with this history is mediated. Inevitably, the introduction of new artifacts provides audiences with the opportunity to reevaluate the inherited historical narrative.

3. *Literature review*

Many scholars have investigated different aspects of the Black Panther Party using rhetorical analysis. Primary investigation into the BPP has been through three contexts: individuals, the group as a whole, and media representation. Scholars have focused on individual BPP leaders to study their rhetorical techniques and implications. Recent works have focused on the rhetoric of Huey Newton, the more radical of the co-founders (Avril, 2012; Johnson, 2004). Avril (2012) analyzes Huey Newton's 1973 autobiography *Revolutionary Suicide* for the theme of black masculinity utilizing three concepts, authenticity, performance, and experience, to gain better understanding of how Newton's rhetoric influenced the BPP's rhetoric. Avril pays particular attention to how Newton's use of black masculinity is reflected in his opinions of motherhood and struggle, and she compares Newton's rhetoric to that of female panthers Angela Davis and Elaine Brown (p. 13). Avril also focuses on Newton's word choice to separate the "working class" from the "middle class" (p. 17-19).

Johnson (2004) focuses on Newton's 1970 address to the Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention. She applies the jeremaidic tradition to the speech and concludes that the speech should be understood as an Afro-American jeremiad (Johnson, 2004, p. 17-18). Newton's address debuts a philosophy that will be later

called “revolutionary intercommunalism,” or the belief that communities should orient themselves in a communal stance as opposed to an individual stance, and that this stance must be in opposition to current power structures (p. 19). This philosophy is linked into a core discussion of American hypocrisy as well as how intercommunalism must be revolutionary as a result (p. 22-23). Both Avril and Johnson use analysis of an individual’s rhetoric to speak about the entire organization.

Next, scholars use rhetorical analysis to look at the organization as a single entity (Bloom and Martin, 2013; Gatchet & Cloud, 2012; Ogbar, 2004; Rhodes, 2007; Spencer, 2005). Bloom and Martin’s (2013) book *Black Against Empire* provides a comprehensive history of the founding of the BPP and its first few years as an organization. The book focuses on the human relationships formed between the different leaders of the party, as well as how individual leaders influenced chapter members. In contrast, Ogbar’s (2004) book *Black Power: Radical Politics and African American Identity* takes a systems approach to the early rise of the BPP. Ogbar (2004) chooses to focus on the leadership as a single unit whose rhetoric influenced the general population. The book focuses on rhetorical positions taken by the larger organization, specifically, examining how those rhetorical positions affected three different levels: community members, the government, and larger society.

Rhodes’ (2007) book *Framing the Black Panthers: The Spectacular Rise of the Black Power Icon* provides context into how the Panthers became media subjects in the eyes of the national and international community. The book examines how the Panthers utilized their newfound fame to their benefit by primarily focusing on the “Free Huey” campaign (Rhodes, 2007, p. 116-144). This fame helped to influence Oakland’s political landscape. Spencer (2005) makes special note of the importance of the Free Breakfast Program on the local community and how Oakland politics since have had to utilize social welfare platforms to become elected. She notes that, “Two of the Panthers most important and perhaps most overlooked contributions to the Black Freedom movement were their attempts to nurture oppressed people’s political consciousness and revolutionize their daily personal and political praxis” (Spencer, 2005, p. 313-314). The effectiveness of these actions has been emulated to this day in California.

Gatchet and Cloud’s (2012) essay acts as a bridge between understanding the group as a whole and understanding the media’s depiction of the Black Panthers.

They use an examination of multiple leaders in the BPP to outline two distinct rhetorical devices. First, they explained BPP identity creation around the concept of self-defense (Gatchet and Cloud, 2012, p. 2-6). The Black Panther Party utilizes the biblical story of David and Goliath to depict the oppressed members of the black community as David. David is both oppressed, and at the same time armed, ready, and willing to defend himself for the greater good of the community. In addition, their analysis includes the rhetorical paradox between oppression and militancy (p. 6-10). This article shifts its focus into media framing by analyzing how these two creations are represented in two major news publications (p.10-14). Gatchet and Cloud claim that the media skewed the role of the David identity to delegitimize the Panthers.

Finally, scholars use rhetorical analysis to examine media framing of the BPP and its actions (Fraley & Lester-Roushanzamir, 2004; Davenport, 2010; Lule, 1993; Lumsden, 2009). The most interdisciplinary of the three categories, the artifacts are analyzed with a critical-cultural lens to dissect how the media portrayed single aspects of the Party such as the death of a leader (Fraley & Lester-Roushanzamir, 2004; Lule, 1993) and the role of media repression to undermine the BPP (Davenport, 2010). Most noteworthy, Lumsden's (2009) rhetorical criticism analyzes articles from the *Black Panther*, the BPP's primary publication that reached thousands of readers. Lumsden focuses on portrayals of black womanhood within the publication. By focusing on womanhood, Lumsden provides a different perspective into an organization that is viewed as hyper-masculine. She writes that the *Black Panther* portrayed woman as both militarily strong and "elaborated on their expectations of sexual equality" (p. 906). Strong women helped to create a stronger community, a key emphasis of the BPP.

The current literature on the Black Panthers neglects new artifacts recently added to the historical narrative, and undervalues normative elements of visual rhetoric. Lumsden's article provides a limited examination of photographs and cartoons that appear in the *Black Panther* newspaper, but examine them more as vehicles of propaganda.

4. *Critical method*

This essay seeks to provide an analysis of photographic collections, utilizing visual rhetorical analysis, that reveal different viewpoints yielding the best investigation for a contemporary audience. Visual rhetorical analysis is defined as "a mode of inquiry, defined as a critical and theoretical orientation that makes issues of

visuality relevant to rhetorical theory” (Finnegan, 2004a, p. 198). Finnegan (2004a) contends that visual rhetorical analysis is best used when trying to understand photography as rhetoric. Visual rhetoric forces the rhetor “to explore understandings of visual culture in light of the questions of rhetorical theory, and at the same time encourage us to (re)consider aspects of rhetorical theory in light of the persistent problem of image” (Finnegan, 2004a, p. 198). The goal of this analysis is to more vigorously integrate images in the rhetorical history as central aspects of the narrative instead of supplementary additions.

Scholars have presented many approaches to visual rhetoric (Finnegan, 2004a; Foss, 2005; Hart and Daughton, 2004; Moriarty, 2005), which combine to create a full-bodied analysis. Moriarty (2005) discusses the threefold nature of the sign, the interpretant, and the object. This adds an additional dimension to photographs by including the image, the caption, and other written text surrounding the image as one object for rhetorical analysis. This enhances the data gathering process. Hart and Daughton’s (2004) inquiry into “ideological force” (p. 189) and “significant tensions” (p.192) push the critic to create cohesive narratives throughout the criticism, linking images together to establish a holistic narrative. Foss (2005) contends that there are three ways for a rhetorical perspective to be applied to an image (p. 145-147). First, the critic needs to analyze the nature of the image. Second, the critic should analyze the function of the image. Third, the critic must evaluate the normative implications of image. This triangulation allows the critic to cover all fundamental aspects of visual rhetorical analysis.

Finnegan focuses on how to conduct visual rhetorical criticism of photography. She outlines three “moments in the life of the image” that must be accounted for when discussing the rhetoric of photography (Finnegan, 2004a, p. 199). First, production accounts for how the image came to exist (p. 200). Second, reproduction accounts for the current representation of the image to the audience (p. 204). Third, circulation accounts for how the narrative established by the photography fits into the overall historical discourse (p. 208). All three moments in time pose unique questions regarding the photographic artifact. Taken together, they provide the frame for examining the selected photography collections.

4.1 Production

The first moment in the life of the image is production, the time leading up to its

current positioning in the status quo. Essentially, production asks the critic to assess what brought these photographs into existence. This inquiry into the past informs the critic of the history of an image and provides insight into possible discontinuities within historical narrative. Furthermore, since these specific collections were taken decades before publication, it is important to understand what brought these bound collections into production. In short, understanding the past of the artifacts will help the critic understand the present.

The American 1960s was a time of great political upheaval and civil unrest. The death of a great black power figure Malcolm X in 1965 proved to be a catalyst for change. Inspired by his passing, two college students, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, decided to create a new organization rooted in the ideals Malcolm X championed. In 1966 Newton and Seale founded the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense to create a change for the repressed African American minority in the United States (Bloom & Martin, 2013). The newly created BPP expressed the opinion, mainly driven by the rhetoric of Newton (Avril, 2012), that the loss of this great orator left a void in the struggle for African American equality. Malcolm X's extremist rhetoric acted to provide greater momentum for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s rhetorical position of nonviolent resistance (Johnson, 2004). Specifically, Malcolm X championed self-defense among black communities that the BPP felt was non-existent in Oakland at the time of his death. As such, the BPP was created to fill this void.

Violent crime in minority communities was on the rise, and an increase in police brutality further fueled violence in the community (Gatchet and Cloud, 2012). The original purpose of the BPP was to act as a citizen police force within African American communities. As opposed to vigilantes, the BPP would patrol neighborhoods and prevent crime through armed presence. Shortly after their inception, the BPP evolved their mission to follow the police to make sure that they were following proper protocol and not discriminating against blacks (Lumsden, 2009). Lumsden also adds that the BPP did not simply act as a paramilitary force, they set up classes to instruct the community in proper gun safety and teach about how the government violated personal constitutional protections.

The Black Panthers gained national media recognition on May 2nd, 1967, when they staged a public demonstration at the California State Assembly to protest a pending act that would severely restrict a citizen's rights to bear arms in public

(Gatchet & Cloud, 2012). In a speech delivered by Bobby Seale on that day, the BPP outlined its ten point program that called for the end to police brutality, as well as the release of all black prisoners who were convicted by all-white juries (Davenport, 2010). Many aspects of the BPP attracted the American people to become fascinated with the Panthers. Visually, the Panther's unique uniform of leather jacket, a black beret, dark jeans, and black army boots created a notable strong, unified presence (Shames, 2006). Rhetorically, the BPP used extremist rhetoric to denounce a government's established institution of justice enforcement as unjust and corrupt.

Three years after the beginning of national media attention the BPP began a shift in rhetorical focus. After serving a two-years for the fatal shooting of John Frey, Huey Newton was released from federal prison in 1970. Upon his release, Newton started to develop the BPP into a political organization (Heath, 1976). First, the Panthers started to seek political office. Second, the BPP undertook a vast initiative to start free breakfast programs across the nation for school age children. At its peak in the early 1970s, Panther breakfast programs fed upwards of 250,000 children across the country daily (Theoharis & Woodard, 2005).

The intense and mostly critical media attention devoted to the Black Panther Party attracted in two different photographers to document the organization in action. Gilbert Moore explains how he came to work on the assignment of the Black Panthers with the budding photographer Howard Bingham (Moore, 2009). Since Moore was only one of two black writers for LIFE Magazine, and the only one not on assignment at the time, he was given the task of teaming up with photographer Howard Bingham to follow the BPP during the year of 1968 (p. 66). Bingham was relentless in his pursuit of the craft, taking hundreds of pictures during the few months of the duo's stay with the BPP. With full funding, the duo followed top leaders of the Black Panthers. Since the magazine contacted the BPP to publish its story, the Panthers regulated the access granted to Moore and Bingham. After the assignment was complete, the two left California and returned to their New York headquarters. Ultimately, LIFE Magazine did not publish the story both journalists spent countless hours creating without providing concrete reasoning for its decision.

Stephen Shames took a different path in his photography. In the foreword, Shames (2006) states that his quest to photograph the Black Panthers rose organically out of his interest in the organization when he started taking personal

pictures in 1968. When a major publishing company offered Shames the prospect of a book contract, Shames decided that he would journey cross-country, from California to New York, taking pictures of the BPP in major chapters over the course of 1970. Unlike Bingham who primarily focused in California, Shames took photographs of chapters in Oakland, Los Angeles, Chicago, Toledo, Philadelphia, and Boston (Shames, 2006, p. 8). Shames' free-flowing agenda and unofficial Panther membership allowed the photographer to gain access to very intimate shots. Further, since Shames began his road trip in 1970, he had the opportunity to photograph Huey Newton after his release from prison. During his travels, he formed personal relationships with many members of the Panther leadership, including Newton, Bobby Seale, and David Hilliard. Eventually, upon reaching New York City, Shames would discover that the book deal had been a ruse, and the majority of his photos would go unpublished for decades.

The 40th anniversary of the Party's founding in 2006 generated renewed interest in a recorded history of the organization. Shames' close relationships with individual Panthers helped to privately fund the publication of a collection, with the majority of the donations coming from former members including even the book's foreword by Bobby Seale (Shames, 2006). In contrast, Bingham's career blossomed after his stint capturing the Panthers on film. Bingham is most famous for his photographs or, and for co-authoring Muhammad Ali's autobiography (Bingham, 1993). Finally, in 2009, private collectors helped to fund a book of Bingham's BPP photographs (Bingham, 2009).

Both Bingham and Shames were instructed from an outside publishing source to take photographs, but ultimately, the initial promises of publication did not come to fruition. Both collections sat relatively dormant, hidden from public eye for forty years. Bingham's publication is used to display the photographer's artistic merit to the public. Shames' publication is directed from the inner community to share photographs with the public. In both cases, the intended audience is the current generation who may not be familiar with all three parties (Bingham, Shames, and the BPP). Production offers understandings of how Bingham and Shames came to create their photography collections.

4.2 Reproduction

The contemporary critic uses the history of an artifact to understand the artifact's present. Reproduction focuses on what the artifact is "made to do in the contexts in which we discover them" (Finnegan, 2004a, p. 204). Analysis of this time in the

life of the artifact focuses on the ways that the arrangement of the image, text, and caption work to create shared meaning in each photography collection. In addition, it is important to note commonalities and differences among themes within each collection. All aspects of each work must be understood including, but not limited to, introductions, forewords, photograph and caption placement, and articles.

Both collections are relatively equal, in terms of physical size and quantity of the photographs. Each book begins with a foreword from the author explaining how they came about gaining their respective assignments to take photos and how they went about those assignments. Also, both books have additional forewords from close friends commenting on the collection. Bingham's forward, from close friend Bernard Kinsey, focuses on the quality of the photographs (Bingham, 2009, p. 16). It is worth noting that Shames' foreword is from BPP co-founder Bobby Seale, which adds legitimacy to the collection (Shames, 2006, p. 11-13). Parallel to the foreword, each book has an afterword that is themed around the photographer or the content respectively. Furthermore, the most direct point of comparison is the representation of the ten-point plan in each book. Each book has opted to include a version of the BPP's plan. Bingham chose to include the shortened version of the ten-point plan distributed as a pamphlet (Bingham, 2009, p. 35). Shames includes additional text delivered by Bobby Seale at the California General Assembly (Shames, 2006, p. 14-15). Here, Shames uses a more detailed text to create stronger connections between the audience and the Panthers. By doing so, Shames' presentation of the ten-point plan becomes unique from the rest of the collection insofar as it is the one time where Shames book contains more text than Bingham's book.

The primary difference between the collections is the captions. This difference is twofold in placement and content. Shames' book (2006) utilizes full-page pictures and opts to place all the captions at the end, away from their respective photographs (Shames, 2006, p. 146-150). These captions range anywhere from one to four sentences and provide details explaining any important individuals. Sometimes these captions provide quick information; just enough to understand what is going on in the photograph such as "Huey P. Newton poses with three women at a rally in DeFremery Park. Oakland, 1971" (p. 148). Other captions explain additional details not provided in the picture such as "Bobby Seale's campaign car during his run for mayor of Oakland. The election was held on April

17, 1973. Seale lost. Oakland, 1973" (p. 150). By placing the captions at the end, Shames lets his audience evaluate the photographs on their own merit with little formal intervention in the image. In other words, he lets the picture do the talking. Once the audience accesses the image, the extra information from the removed caption focuses the message on a context of time, where the image represents more than just a single moment, but is part of a story.

Bingham's book (2009) takes an opposite approach to captions. Instead of saving the captions to the end, guest writers explain a series of pictures using lengthy paragraphs. Each short entry covers a series of three to ten photographs. An example of this is the section titled *Black Power Rally* (Bingham, 2009, p. 22-34) which includes text on page 23, explaining the seven pictures on the surrounding pages. These entries are very detailed and include discussion regarding photographic technique, which Shames did not. Each picture is centered on the page and includes a caption at the bottom. These captions are very short, never more than a sentence, and typically include just names and locations and little else.

Picture order is dissimilar between the two collections. Shames provides neither text nor content order to his photos. The audience drifts from photo to photo with no order or caption to intervene with the experience of discovery and analysis. Contrary to this, the organizational pattern of Bingham is driven by thematic sections centered either on a person, such as Kathleen Cleaver (Bingham, 2009, p. 38-43), or a location, such as De Fremery Park (p. 106-125). Primarily, this organizational pattern acts as Bingham's introduction to each person and location, almost as if each section is a different roll of film. This allows Bingham to drive conceptual stories through each miniseries of photographs. These stories outline the humanity of the individual leaders within the BPP.

Both photo collections share some similar tensions. Each book features very few pictures of police officers, and in instances where they do appear, they are never portrayed in a flattering manner. Bingham's fourth picture (Bingham, 2009, p. 8-9) displays officers holding wooden batons as if they are standing guard, protecting an unseen group of people possibly from the Panthers. The photograph is given no caption. Police officers are portrayed as the enemy of both the Panthers and public in general.

As a response to police brutality, the BPP adopted the ideograph of the raised fist

to display solidarity and power within the black community. The Panther fist is commonly held at rallies, but rarely outside of public spaces. This helps to establish that the leadership held celebrity lives; lives where they represent a persona and personal times where they only have to be themselves, such as in their homes. Shames captures Bobby Seale and his wife holding their son in a loving embrace (Shames, 2006, p. 130-131) showing his audience that important party members still found time to focus on their families.

Moreover, it is important to note that no photographs include a Panther holding a gun. There are two possible explanations for this decision by both artists. This could have been an intentional decision to exclude the hyper masculine from their photographs to show a more humanistic BPP. On the other hand, this could have been a decision passed down from the publisher. Significantly, this directly contradicts the dominant historical narrative of the Black Panthers as gun toting thugs.

The photographs significantly differ in their portrayal of romantic relationships. Bingham shares photographs of Eldridge and Kathleen Cleaver multiple times throughout his book. His photos of the duo are very business-oriented, as if they devoted their entire lives to the cause of the Panthers. In a photograph depicting Kathleen reading while Eldridge stands behind her. There appears to be little romantic attachment. The photograph focuses on the content of the reading materials instead of the two as a romantic partnership.

In contrast, Shames photographs portray strong work/life balance and deep romantic relationships within the BPP. Two photographs showcase David Hilliard (one of the Panther's prominent members and Chief of Staff at the time of the photograph) with his wife, Pat. The photograph on the left page shows David working on layout selection for *The Black Panther magazine* in the Oakland BPP office. David is in deeply concentrated, focused on his work, portraying the intense level of commitment to the organization often represented in the media. This photograph is juxtaposed by the photograph on the right capturing David and his wife engaging in a moment of intimacy. Pat sits on David's lap, as the couple closes their eyes, about to kiss. It is important that these photographs are placed next to each other, representing work/life balance.

Further, the two collections differ regarding their portrayal of masculinity within the organization. One photograph from Bingham's work is captioned "Bobby

Seale leading Black Panther drills Oakland, CA” (see Appendix A). The picture captures Seale dressed in full Panther uniform as he instructs male members, also in full uniform. The Panthers stand in line at military attention listening to Seale lead drills. The photograph uses linear directionality to place the focus on the importance of Seale’s body language. Seale’s facial expression illustrates power and his hand gesture, pointing at the ground, shows the importance of the Panther’s paramilitaristic, masculine organization centered on strong, African American men. Bingham sparsely features women in his photographs and chooses not to include children as a focal point. An opposing understanding of the BPP and masculinity is presented in Shames’ work. Outside St. Augustine’s Church in Oakland, Shames captures two Panthers standing guard. While the male Panther on the left holds no organizational significance, the female Panther on the right represents an important aspect of the organization. Claudia Grayson, better known as Sister Sheeba within the BPP, was a strong member, known for her role of enforcement. Here, Sister Sheeba represents equality of women within the BPP, as she shares her role equally with her male counterpart. Sister Sheeba becomes just as important, if not more important, for the organization and is perhaps the main focal point of the photograph.

Also, Shames captures the importance that children in the movement. One photograph displays children standing at attention in a classroom. Similar to Bingham’s photograph of Bobby Seale leading drills with male adults, the classroom scene shows young children dressed in uniform ready to receive instruction. There are differences in height, age, and sex of the children. The photograph illuminates the integral nature of childhood education within the greater movement, as the BPP stressed that children are the future of the nation. Many of Shames’ photographs feature children including one selection depicting young girls holding protest signs in public (Shames, 2006, p. 36). This nurturing aspect of the Panthers directly contradicts the predominant narrative of the Party as an organization predominately comprised of adult males. These collections challenge typical media representations of the Panthers as disorganized and menacing radicals from impoverished Oakland.

4.3 Circulation

It is important to understand the similarities and differences in reproduction to better understand how these narratives fit into the overall historical discourse of the Black Panther Party. Circulation asks the critic to analyze the significance

that the production and reproduction of the images have to the broader historical narrative. Bingham uses his collection to focus on the roles carried out by the Panther leadership, highlighting individuals and the struggles they encounter in their lives. He does this by using textual narrative and picture sequencing to drive his book in a very intentional direction. An audience member would view this collection to mean that the BPP was an organization driven by sophisticated individuals who stood with strong convictions and pushed a very public agenda. Alternatively, Shames uses his collection to convey a sense of community and happiness within the BPP. Shames' lack of organizational pattern, multiple photographs of diverse groups, and decision to save captions to the end of the collection immerse his audience in the chaos of a social movement with its diverse struggles and relationships.

These narratives add new and sometimes contradictory perspectives to a preexisting narrative. By providing narratives that encompass both viewpoints of the outsider (Bingham) and the insider (Shames), the audience gains an understanding of the depth and complexity of the BPP. Today's younger audiences were not in Oakland during the time of the BPP, and so they must use these collections as new avenues to assess the dominant narrative regarding the BPP, one that typically demonizes the Black Panthers.

5. *Conclusion*

We live a world increasingly dominated by images. Rhetorical criticism and argumentation theory have been slow to adapt to this fact. Recently, however, "Visual rhetoric has become a minor theme in rhetorical studies" (Finnegan, 2004b, p. 234). This essay contributes to this growing body of scholarship, and pushes the parameters of more traditional, text based approaches to argumentation. In so doing, it is important to note that visual rhetoric "should not be conceived as a unique genre of rhetorical artifact ('rhetoric' than is 'visual'), but as a project of inquiry that considers the implications for rhetorical theory of sustained attention to visuality" (Finnegan, 2004b, p. 235).

In the case at hand, when audiences juxtapose the two recently released photography collections of the BPP, they realize that non-dominant narratives do not have to follow the same path. There is not one countervailing interpretation, or method of presentation that is "correct." The way these stories are told, through the primary medium of the image, invite multiple interpretations of this important moment in history. While both collections challenge the dominant

historical narrative on many fronts, they do so in remarkably unique ways, and with different vehicles, frames, and modalities in communicating their stories.

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