

Photography, value, history (Leicester/online 16–17 Jun 25)

Online/De Montfort University, Leicester UK, Jun 16–17, 2025

Registration deadline: Jun 11, 2025

Prof Gil Pasternak

What is the history of photography's value a history of? Is it a labour and economic history? An institutional history of museum cataloguing systems and art market pressure? A history of the values promoted by photography as a cultural and social activity? A history of photographic conventions, trends and fashions? Recent publications like issue 8 of *Photographica* in 2024 and the PHRC conference of 2023 "Photography in its Environment", showed the increasing volume of work dealing in one way or another with photography and value.

In this PHRC 2025 conference speakers shall use the ambiguity of the term "value" as a starting point to reflect on the intertwined political, social, economic, scientific and historical factors that have shaped the value(s) of photography. They will use of diverse methodological perspectives to critically analyse what has made photography valuable to a variety of stakeholders.

Papers will focus on topics related, but not limited to themes like:

- Photographic values and ethics
- The markets of photography
- Labour and/or economic histories of photography
- The value of photography as heritage
- Value systems in photography collections
- Photography's influence on social values

As in recent previous years, we offer a hybrid conference, allowing speakers and delegates to participate remotely or on site. For further information and registration please visit the conference webpage <https://photographichistory.wordpress.com/annual-conference-2025/>

PROGRAMME

MONDAY 16 June 2025

9.15–9.45 Registration and coffee

9.45–10.00 Welcome: Kelley Wilder, PHRC

10.00–10.45 Keynote Lecture: Donna West Brett (University of Sydney) - "After the Inferno": News, Disaster, History and Photographic Value

10.45–11.15 Discussion

Panel 1. Intercultural Values

11:15–11:30 Christina Riggs (Durham University) – “Wasting valuable time”: Photography, values, and empire in the Sudan Archive

11:30–11:45 Helen Anderson (British Museum, London) – Re-evaluating the British Museum’s African Photographic Collections

11.45–12.00 Emily Beswick (University of Liverpool / Tate Liverpool) – The ocean archive: capitalism, colonialism and affect in the Blue Funnel photograph archive and beyond

12.00–12.30 Discussion

12.30–14.00 LUNCH

Panel 2. Values in the Marketplace

14.00–14.15 Molly Kalkstein (Philadelphia Museum of Art) – “Faking Out the Collectors”: Forgery, Conservation, and Value in the 1970s Photography Market

14.15–14.30 Aayushi Gupta (University of Cambridge) – The Value(s) of British Indian Postcards: An Ethnographic Study of the Postcard Trade

14.30–14.45 Shannon Perich (Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History) – Curatorial confessions from the Photographic History Collection

14.45–15.00 William Wessel Nore (IFIKK) – Farms, fertilizer, and milk: Photography and the value(s) of Agriculture in Interwar Norway

15.00 –15.30 Discussion

15.30 –15.45 Comfort Break

Panel 3. Value Protocols

15.45–16.00 Peter Buse (University of Liverpool) – Medals, contests, and the formation of photographic value

16.15–16.30 Elena Cooper (University of Glasgow) – Photography and Value Through a Legal Historical Lens: Copyright in the Police Courts in the 19th Century

16.30–16.45 Thale Sørli (Norsk Teknisk Museum) – Photography – a vital need or luxury goods?

16.45 –17.00 Sean Willcock (University of Oxford) – Facts, Values, and Modern War: The Entangled Histories of Photographic and Artistic Reportage in the late-Victorian Period

17.00–17.30 Discussion

17.30–18.30 ONLINE Reception (We welcome you to meet one another on Teams)

19.30 Conference dinner

CLOSE OF DAY 1

TUESDAY 17 June 2025

9.00 Registration and coffee

9.15–10.00 Keynote Lecture: Catherine Troiano (V&A South Kensington) – Recalibrating Value: Extraction, Emotion and Legacy in Photography and its Histories

10.00–10.30 Discussion

10.30–10.45 Comfort Break

Panel 4. Socio-technical Values

10.45–11.00 Tania Cleves (Independent Scholar / University of Nottingham) – Seen by the Camera: nudism, “tonal values” and skin

11.00–11.15 Annie Rudd (University of Calgary) – Candor: Excavating an Implicit Photographic Value

11.15–11.30 Sara Dominici (University of Westminster) – The Developing Tank: A Threshold in Darkroom Experiences

11.30–12.00 Discussion

12:00–14.00 LUNCH

Panel 5. Communities of Value

14.00–14.15 Jason Bate (University of London) – Shared Values, Ethics, and Schooling in the Amateur Photographic Societies of British Medicine, 1880-1914

14.15–14.30 Erika Zerwes (University of London) – The history of Latin American photography’s value

14.30–14.45 Anna Grumbach (University of Paris) –The Values of “Anti-Photography”: A Political and Artistic Manifesto of the Contre-jour Circle

14.45–15.00 Sadie Levy Gale (Cardiff University) – “A Worker’s Utopia”: Visual representations of industrial model villages in the British illustrated press, 1905-1910

15.00–15:30 Discussion

15.30–16.30 Networking

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Reference:

CONF: Photography, value, history (Leicester/online 16-17 Jun 25). In: ArtHist.net, Mar 24, 2025 (accessed Apr 12, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/44890>>.