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Page, Print, JPEG: Researching and Curating *Picture Post*, its history and publics

Abstract

This article discusses methodological reflections underpinning an integrated research and curation strategy addressing the history of the British magazine, *Picture Post* (1938-57). The dispersed *Picture Post* archive includes the extensive collection of negatives, prints, contact sheets, publications and daybooks held by the Hulton Archive – part of the multinational visual content provider, Getty Images. Today, however, just a handful of familiar images from *Picture Post* are recirculated in print and online as visual shorthand for collective memories of twentieth-century Britain. Comprising an exhibition in 2025, online educational resources and an events programme, this project will deliver new historiographic insights into and public engagement with the seminal publication. Charting the magazine and archive's development, this article explores innovative approaches to research and curation that examine the business of photojournalism in Britain, the public circulation of photographs, and narratives representative of *Picture Post*'s international outlook and social democratic ethos.

Keywords

Picture Post, photojournalism, photo-archive, co-curation, collective memory, Wales

In 1972, Stuart Hall offered the following assessment of the seminal British photo-magazine *Picture Post* (1938-57) and the weekly photo-stories it offered its audiences: 'There is a sort of passion behind the objectivity of the camera eye here; a passion to present. Above all, to present people to themselves in wholly recognizable terms: terms which acknowledged their commonness, their variety, their individuality, their representativeness. (...) The *Picture Post* camera finds them interesting enough, complex enough, expressive enough in the detail of their routine everyday lives.'² Hall characterised this as the social democratic ethos of the popular photo-magazine – that is, a progressive political stance advocating interventions within the framework of a democratic political system to further social justice, and prioritising questions of representation and participation across social classes as central

to an equitable and effective political order. This progressive and egalitarian perspective not only underpinned the success of the magazine in mid-twentieth-century Britain, but also helped sustain its enduring reputation as an exemplar in the history of photojournalism into the twenty-first century.

In addition to what Hall termed the ‘social eye’ of *Picture Post*, a second defining feature of the magazine was the oversupply or surplus of photographs. In her history of the legendary cooperative Magnum Photos, Nadya Bair asserts that, ‘If the medium in which the agency worked had any single defining quality, it was overproduction.’³ The same is true for *Picture Post*. Over the photo-magazine’s lifetime, 7,500 photo-stories were commissioned, yet only around 1,800 were published.⁴ By the time *Picture Post* ceased publication in 1957, this surfeit had resulted in the amassing of some 4 million negatives and 10,000 colour transparencies, as well as contact sheets and prints. Notwithstanding this profusion of ‘raw material,’ today just a handful of familiar images by the photo-magazine’s most noted photographers – names like Bert Hardy and Kurt Hutton – are widely recirculated in print and online. In its heyday *Picture Post* had an international genesis and outlook, but the restrictive afterlives of mid-century photojournalism produce a reductive impression of the magazine’s scope, promoting largely nostalgic collective memories of British (even English) wartime and post-war experience.

These three facets of *Picture Post* – its original social democratic ethos, its business model founded on overproduction, and its largely nostalgic reputation today – are important provocations demanding a new historiography of photojournalism in mid-century Britain. The primary material and historical sources that would facilitate such a history of *Picture Post*, its development and legacies are diverse and dispersed. They include the vast photography collection of the Hulton Archive (owned by multinational visual content provider, Getty Images), the Tom Hopkinson Collection (Cardiff University), and the Oral History of British Photography (British Library).⁵ ‘All the material aspects and layers between the original prints and their digital copies,’ Costanza Caraffa argues, can help illuminate the biography of a photograph and the gestation and afterlives of a particular photo-story:

Documentary photographs are documents not only in relation to the objects they are intended to document but also – precisely because photography is not neutral – in relation to a whole series of other aspects that are, whether intentionally or not, registered in them.⁶

This article responds to the theme of the special issue by discussing methodological reflections that facilitate new avenues for the scholarly and public understanding of photojournalism in Britain via critical engagement with the dispersed archive of *Picture Post*.

This research results from a project being developed and delivered by a partnership between the Tom Hopkinson Centre for Media History (Cardiff University) and Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales, with the participation of Hulton Archive (Getty Images). This collaboration comprises work on the origins, impact, and legacy of *Picture Post*, as well as an exhibition (scheduled for 2025) with an associated public programme, online resources, and publications. These outputs seek to meet the shared aims of the two public institutions – the university and museum – both of which are committed not only to research and understanding, but also to community engagement, collaboration, and inclusion. To fulfil this commitment and to respond to the provocations itemised above, it is necessary to understand photojournalism, not as a set of ‘timeless’ iconic images or mythologised ‘illustrious’ careers, but rather as a complex commercial and cultural practice: ‘a heading under which a range of agencies, animate and inanimate, visible and invisible are clustered.’⁷ Examining this *photojournalism complex* across the span of a century – from its emergence in the 1920s to current image flows orchestrated by global visual content providers – it is vital to address the research frameworks used and the curatorial considerations to be addressed.

The central aim of this article is to highlight the interdisciplinary research methods and co-creative curatorial approaches that can facilitate new routes into the vast corpora of images, documents and artefacts that represent the history of this popular magazine’s production, circulation, and consumption. We argue that to evaluate and explicate the media ecology of a nationally successful and internationally networked photo-magazine demands integrated techniques of research and curation. The approach to *Picture Post* as a socially situated practice and large visual corpus outlined here is informed by – and seeks to further – recent work on professional networks, photo-agencies and image banks (by researchers such as Bair, Caraffa and Estelle Blaschke) to advance the historiography of photojournalism.⁸ We seek to address the following questions: How do you tackle such a dispersed and expansive archive to produce insightful histories centred on this seminal British photo-magazine? How does the Hulton Archive represent visually, organisationally, and practically the photojournalism complex in general and the business practice of *Picture Post* in particular? How do you translate innovative historiography on *Picture Post* into the structure and content of an exhibition for a national institution in one of the devolved countries of the

contemporary United Kingdom? What co-production and curatorial strategies should be used to exploit the opportunities offered by the exhibition for enriching and recontextualising public understanding of the history of photojournalism? In the first section we sketch the history of *Picture Post*, then we address the research framework employed, before outlining the curatorial considerations.

A century of *Picture Post*

Many popular histories of the seminal photo-magazine have been written, often by those involved as editors, journalists, or photographers.⁹ However, rather than historicise it, many promote or even mythologize the magazine – a process that began when the magazine published the article, ‘How *Picture Post* is Produced’ [Figure 1], in the Christmas 1938 issue. Examining the international post-war photojournalism market through the history of Magnum Photos, Nadya Bair takes a pointedly ‘expansive’ view. Deliberately moving away from the study of standout examples of photojournalism, Bair addresses Magnum as a shifting group of professionals operating within a commercial system: ‘Part of the work of unravelling Magnum’s mythologies is seeing how embedded the agency was in the larger business of making and selling photographs.’¹⁰ The same demythologising historiography is required for *Picture Post*.

The dispersed archive of *Picture Post* facilitates important new research uncovering the commercial networks and organisational histories that underpin the emergence of the publication, its success and closure, as well as its legacies. This includes exploring the title’s relationship with photo-agencies, the career trajectories of its photographers, the relationship between proprietor and editors, and myriad other nodes and interactions in the network that made up the functioning of the photo-magazine as a commercial enterprise. In doing so, we aim to craft an understanding of photojournalism, ‘not just in terms of isolated moments of production or reception, but as practices extended over time and place, as well as over gender and socio-economic categories, and between extended networks of individuals (of managers, workers, marketers, consumers, and recipients).’¹¹ A rounded cultural, social and commercial history of the photo-magazine has to span a century, from the emergence of photojournalism in interwar Europe to the ownership of vast image banks by multinational media companies today.¹²

As Berkowitz argues, there is ‘a tendency to downplay multiple, complex, and complementary influences’ on the development of photojournalism in the interwar period that is ‘especially evident



Figure 1. 'How Picture Post is Produced,' *Picture Post*, December 24, 1938; first double-page spread of a nine-page article on the commissioning, editing and printing process; left: photographs of Stefan Lorant and Tom Hopkinson; right: photographs depicting conversation between Lorant and Edward Hulton and an editorial meeting including Tom Hopkinson, as well as two photographs of ideas and possible layouts for photo-stories from the editor's notebook; photographer: Kurt Hutton; picture credit: *Picture Post*/Hulton Archive/Getty Images.

in the writing about *Picture Post*.¹³ Via the career trajectories of multiple experienced press professionals, the genesis of Britain's favourite photo-magazine is a decidedly European history. The field of press photography already comprised an international network by the early 1920s. Hungarian Bert Garai, for instance, was based in London running Keystone Press and helping to orchestrate the sourcing of work from European photographers both for publications in Britain and transatlantic dissemination. Additionally, new photo-agencies were established, such as Dephot run by Simon Guttman, representing a new breed of photographer, serving innovative art directors and catalysing the emergence of dynamic new photo-magazines characterised by a prioritisation of the photographic image sequence – what Hall termed 'image-over-text' publications.¹⁴ Founded in

Berlin in 1928, Dephot promoted work by photographers Hans Baumann, Kurt Hübschmann and Nachum Ignaz Gidalewitsch, for instance. A key client was Hungarian émigré Stefan Lorant, editor of the *Münchner Illustrierte Presse* (launched 1924) whose innovative presentation of topical and arresting photographs via the printed page combined image, text and layout design to secure circulation figures of up to 750,000 copies per week. From 1933, political change in Europe sent reverberations through the media landscape of Britain and the United States as numerous photographic innovators – many of whom were Jewish, left-wing or both – left Germany following Hitler's rise to power.

Having been detained for six months as a political prisoner, Lorant travelled to Britain along with Baumann, Hübschmann and Gidalewitsch. Changing their names to Felix H. Man, Kurt Hutton and Tim Gidal respectively they were among the most familiar names in a new cadre of successful photojournalists working in Britain.¹⁵ A key milestone in the inextricably European history of photojournalism and the photo-magazine in Britain was the launch of *Weekly Illustrated* by Odhams Press in summer 1934 – a photo-magazine on the model of innovative European titles based on a template proposed by Lorant, its founding editor.¹⁶ *Weekly Illustrated* published photographs by Hutton and Man, as well as Brits Haywood Magee and James Jarché, and other refugee photographers like Bill Brandt and Gisèle Freund. Tom Hopkinson – who had worked previously in advertising and publicity – was appointed assistant editor. With a European cohort of professionals and an outlook on internationally important events, *Weekly Illustrated* achieved circulation figures of around 250,000 exemplifying, as Hopkinson asserted, a clear 'pioneer in the introduction of photojournalism to Britain.'¹⁷

Accomplished photo-editor Lorant was thus an obvious choice when Edward Hulton wanted to launch his own title. His father had been proprietor of several papers including the *Daily Sketch*, one of the visually dynamic tabloid newspapers launched for British audiences at the turn of the century. With an inheritance, Hulton founded Hulton Press in 1937 and approached Lorant. Following Hulton's initial investment of £350,000, the first issue of *Picture Post* hit newsstands in October 1938.¹⁸ The publication was edited by Lorant with Hopkinson as deputy and produced at the printers, Sun Engraving, as *Weekly Illustrated* had been.¹⁹ Again, it featured work by émigré photographers Man, Hutton and Gidal. *Picture Post* was resolutely internationalist in make-up, outlook and business model, its raw materials (photographs) being sourced from around the world. Hulton's new title sold 700,000 copies of the first issue and achieved circulation figures of 1,700,000 within six months.²⁰ Recalling this watershed moment

for photojournalism in Britain, Man later observed that when he arrived in the UK ‘the continental method of writing essays with a camera was unknown’ and that it was only with the advent of *Picture Post* that, ‘The British public was, for the first time, introduced to abundant well-composed large-scale picture essays about ordinary, everyday things, which people were familiar with, but had never consciously observed.’²¹ Lorant’s influential approach to picture-editing (to sequencing and to unostentatious layout characterised by symmetrical, simple double-page spreads with a small number of pictures per page) has seen him dubbed ‘the picture genius’ who introduced photojournalism into the UK.²² Crucially this was not just a new *aesthetic* practice, but an effective *commercial* enterprise. At the time, Hopkinson asserted, ‘the basic decisions about the shape and form of the new magazine were almost all Lorant’s – and were all right.’²³ Notwithstanding, the diligence and innovation of the magazine’s pioneering photojournalists was also central, with *Picture Post* daybooks revealing that Hutton alone filed 29 photo-stories in the first three months of the title from 1 October to 31 December 1938.²⁴

From the outbreak of the Second World War, the currency of photojournalism was keenly understood in Britain. As early as 14 October 1939, in a note promoting the magazine to potential advertisers, the team was already claiming that, ‘Many thousands of people have already started to collect *Picture Post* as a record of the war.’ Minister of Information, Brendan Bracken, said of the *Picture Post* team that ‘the Hulton *tribe* are good propagandists.’²⁵ If Lorant pioneered the format, from July 1940 Hopkinson was instrumental in moulding the input of photographers, the contribution of writers and the reputation of the publication; he took over as editor after Lorant emigrated to the United States. Hopkinson oversaw the detailed coverage of the many theatres of war, as well as the Blitz and the national war effort on the home front. Additionally, the military became engaged in shaping the image of the conflict, establishing the Army Film and Photographic Unit to which *Picture Post* photographers like Bert Hardy and Leonard McCombe were recruited, contributing to the symbiotic relationship between press and state.

Picture Post continued into the later 1940s with a significant audience and a considerable impact on the national conversation, including the agenda for postwar reconstruction implemented by Clement Attlee’s Labour government following the party’s landslide victory in 1945. It was in this period from the early 1940s into the first post-war years that *Picture Post* was at its height, and it is to the imagery of this relatively brief era that nostalgic takes on the magazine frequently return. In 1947, for instance, the annual Hulton Readership Survey suggested as much as 26% of the British population over 16 were *Picture Post* readers, with over 7 readers per copy of an estimated circulation of 1,250,000.²⁶

After the departure of Hopkinson in 1950, a string of new editors followed including experienced press professionals like Ted Castle who had deputised for Hopkinson previously. But continued interventions by the owner meant many were only in post for a short time. The picture of Britain and the world that *Picture Post* reflected to its audience lost its focus and its critical edge over the 1950s, representing what photographer Grace Robertson termed the magazine's 'most uncertain phase.'²⁷ During this contradictory period for the magazine, it had access to exemplary photojournalism from around the globe as Bair has revealed. Robert Capa was a friend of Len Spooner, editor of Odham Press's *Illustrated* (the successor to *Weekly Illustrated* and *Picture Post*'s main competitor). Spooner signed a contract with Magnum's Paris office shortly after the agency's establishment and for a monthly payment *Illustrated* secured first refusal on work by Magnum photographers for publication in the UK, with an additional fee due for any story he published. As Bair has identified, 'over sixty picture essays by Magnum photographers appeared in *Illustrated* between 1947 and 1951,' raising the agency's profile and prompting *Picture Post* both to outbid *Illustrated* for the contract in 1952 and to employ Spooner. At the same time, *Picture Post* was notably uncritical and unquestioning of Britain's military conduct across territories of the waning empire. With little searching coverage of the situations in Malay or Kenya during Britain's wars against independence movements across the waning empire, the magazine relied mainly on official photographs and reports produced by government departments like the Central Office of Information.²⁸ As Robertson recalled, there were rumours in the mid-fifties that circulation had fallen below 600,000 and the 'editorial musical chairs' and 'crazy' economic decisions exacerbated the 'sad decline in values evident in the pages of the magazine.'²⁹ By 1953, the estimated readership had already fallen to 16% of the British population over 16 years-of-age.³⁰

Just as the emergence of photojournalism was a multifaceted phenomenon, the closure of *Picture Post* in 1957 – an event deemed of such national importance that Hulton announced it on the 6 o'clock television news – cannot be credited to any single determining factor. As exemplified by the closure of its main competitor *Illustrated* in 1958, the mass market photo-magazine targeting a general audience that had dominated visual experience for quarter of a century were losing their prominence by the end of the 1950s, as both television audiences grew and the magazine market became more segmented with the growth in leisure time. However, this shift did not signal the end of the *Picture Post* story, so much as a transformation in the circulation of photojournalism.

The systematic overproduction of photographic material during the lifespan of *Picture Post* resulted in the amassing of some 4 million negatives and 10,000 colour transparencies from staff photographers and contributors, as well as contact sheets and prints. At the same time, Hulton had also acquired historic imagery to be used alongside contemporary photojournalism in the magazine, such as the 55,000 glass plate negatives from the London Stereoscopic Company and the Henry Guttmann Collection featuring original prints by modernist photographers from interwar Paris, as well as volumes of illustrated antiquarian books. The potential for this growing collection – comprising extensive photojournalism by the magazine’s renowned photographers and copious historic pictorial material – to generate revenue was pursued from 1947 with the launch of the Picture Post Library. Overseen by librarian Mona Parrish, the venture continued to grow with a staff of 24 by 1950 and purchases such as the 120,000 negatives comprising the Topical Press photographic library dating back to the turn of the century.

After the closure of the magazine, this resource – renamed the ‘Hulton Picture Library’ – was marketed as the greatest picture collection in the world. It was said to comprise 5 million images and was organised according to the first system for classifying and indexing pictures designed by Charles Gibbs Smith, employee of both the Ministry of Information and the Victoria & Albert Museum. Structured around keywords represented by 3 or 4 letter abbreviations and divided into extensive sections and sub-sections, Gibbs Smith’s approach provided an innovative and rigorous system of categorisation.³¹ A large section on ‘Misery and Poverty’, for instance, was sub-divided into MIS>JUV or MIS>OLD. Bert Hardy’s photographs of the Gorbals district of Glasgow in 1948, for example, were retrievable via the notation, MIS>SLUM>SCO.³² While no longer formally in use, the extant prints bear labelling on the reverse that is evidence of how it works, and the original categories are still frequently quoted in digital metadata to assist with finding originals as required.

Hulton’s picture library reputedly offered ‘Every Picture You Ever Need’ accessible via ‘one telephone call’: ‘Describe your needs to our highly skilled Enquiry Office; our staff of educated and experienced librarians will assemble the picture.’³³ Although Hulton Press was sold to Odhams, the Hulton Picture Library took a different path with the history of this remarkable collection continuing well beyond the timeframe of the magazine’s publication down to the present. The collection was sold to the BBC in 1958 with staff expanding to 27 and the library handling 5,000 transactions per year, supplying around 50,000 pictures to clients, and claiming to be the ‘largest commercial picture library in the world.’³⁴ By 1988 it was owned by Brian Deutsch, a British entrepreneur who made the

most competitive offer of 21 bids to buy the ‘BBC Hulton Picture Library’ collection in response to the \$3.6 million price-tag requested.³⁵ Doubling the size of the holdings, Deutsch also acquired the Keystone Press collection. Comprising as many as 10 million photographs and other pictures disseminated for commercial use via CD-ROMs, by the early 1990s the ‘Hulton Deutsch Collection’ was ranked among the world’s largest visual archives alongside the collections of Time-Life and the Bettmann Archive. In 1996, the picture collection was acquired by Getty Images, established the previous year. Building on digitisation and commercialisation work in the previous decade, Getty Images capitalised on the Web 2.0 revolution through investment and reshaping of the collection as a vast online image bank. In 2001, the ‘Hulton Archive’ was launched with 250,000 digitised images made available online, organised with associated metadata and searchable using Getty Images custom-built image retrieval system, Index Plus.³⁶

Physically located in London, the Hulton Archive comprises not only negatives and annotated press prints, but also contact sheets, daybooks, and other historic materials. The collection is described by its curator, Melanie Llewellyn, as the core of the Getty Images Archive (which also now has responsibility for the Bettmann Archive in the United State and Sygma in France, as well as the Michael Ochs Archive in Los Angeles). The Hulton Archive comprises 1500 different collections and an estimated 80 million images. This includes the thousands of commissioned stories that were ‘killed’ (i.e. remained unpublished) by *Picture Post* editors. A commercial enterprise, the curatorial team at Hulton Archive includes a conservator. Commercial researchers and editors work with colleagues responsible for scanning, captions, keywords, metadata, wet darkroom, and gallery prints to contribute to the process of digitisation. Images are presented online with a title, description, date, details of original publication and credit line. Users can save images to personal ‘boards’ and purchase images for a fee. Private individuals can browse the online collection free of charge, the principal source of revenue being commercial licences for image use. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Hulton Archive was adding up to 30,000 images per year to its digital database (back up to 27,500 in 2021) and yet it is estimated that only 1% of the Hulton Archive is online. ‘Scale is our biggest challenge,’ Llewellyn explains, ‘as a result we set short-, medium- and longer-term objectives against available resources. Constant tending or “gardening” is required.’³⁷ The history of *Picture Post* outlined here is a complex cultural, social, business, and political history. Moreover, it also concerns the past in the present – i.e., the relationship between historic photojournalism and contemporary cultural memory. Exploration of the commercial value and

cultural reappropriations of the photographic archive as a digital commodity is underpinned by the methodological reflections outlined below.

Constructing Photographic Public Spheres & the Business of Photojournalism

To approach the history of *Picture Post* critically (rather than nostalgically) it is necessary to tackle the ways in which the magazine addressed its audience through the printed page and what sort of ways of seeing this promoted during the pivotal years of British social history from the interwar to post-war moment. As Hopkinson recalled, the team behind the title sought to make an intentional intervention in public debate: ‘We were out to influence events in a particular direction – that of a more just and equal society.’³⁸ Coverage of topical issues certainly provoked a response from the readership; the hundreds of letters received necessitated a team of four or five staff to read, reply and prepare a selection for publication.³⁹ This exemplifies how, as Melissa Miles argues, photography can be central to the construction and understanding of public life:

Images consumed in private may help to constitute publics by communicating values and ideas about how society should operate, informing identities and fostering a sense of belonging.⁴⁰

As in our own age of social media and rolling news, in the earlier age of photojournalism the public sphere was constructed ‘as a realm of visibility, discourse and debate (...) Photography’s publics come into being when strangers engage in collective, reflexive, communicative, publicly visible interaction through or in response to photographs.’⁴¹ Photographs not only make issues and individuals visible through their public circulation, but also prioritise the experience of seeing, being seen and being shown. Materials from the dispersed *Picture Post* archive – from editors’ diaries, programmatic statements on the magazine’s objectives, business records, contact sheets and annotated prints – allow a critical analysis of the effective ways in which *Picture Post* forged shared acts of spectatorship that contributed both to a sense of community among its readers and to a national conversation.

A standout example of photojournalistic efforts to shape ideas of national community and public debate is the wartime ‘Plan for Britain’ special issue published in January 1941. In a dozen

features over 40 pages, the themed issue set forward a holistic, national plan as, ‘our most positive war aim’: ‘The new Britain is the country we are fighting for.’⁴² A large part of the popular appeal of *Picture Post* arguably lay in its ability to report on national issues or international events while simultaneously incorporating a local perspective. The 1941 special issue, said to be inspired by an unsolicited contribution sent in by a Welsh miner, laid out a series of issues and aims for a post-war British society. The issue opened with the article by B.L. Coombes entitled ‘This is the Problem.’⁴³ Coombes articulated the realities of being unemployed during the war and his thoughts on what could be done to improve working and living conditions. In the title photograph on the article’s first page, Coombes is shown in a full-page picture [Figure 2] alongside his son and dog captioned, ‘Two generations look out over their native land.’ Since this was the first issue of 1941, the trio also appears to be gazing towards the future out across the prospects offered by the new year ahead. The coverage of Coombes in his home town was photographed by Bert Hardy with six photographs published across the three-page feature.⁴⁴ These gloomily document Coombes’ home, his idle son and young grandchildren, his peers, and the disused mine, validating his call for ‘new ideas and new methods’ in the organisation and running of the country. ‘This is the Problem’ is choreographed as an act of vision aiming to offer an insight into ‘life to-day, as it *looks* to me and my mates’ (emphasis added). Perspective, observation, looking – the language of sight complements Hardy’s photo-reportage as if to underwrite the representativeness of Coombes’ experience or guarantee the authenticity of his point of view. An alternative shot of Coombes to that used in figure 2, for instance, was rejected since (with a lower horizon line and more empty foreground) it presumably was not deemed to show with sufficient clarity the industrial landscape that acted as a backdrop, nor emphasise enough the gaze of Coombes and son up and out of the frame towards a better future.⁴⁵

While figure 2 opens the article, through the careful combination of text and pictures this article frames the theme and sets the tone of the issue overall. ‘This is the Problem’ is followed by nine photographically illustrated articles in which experts offer their point of view on key issues of the day, giving tangible examples to justify the ‘faith that we are moving towards better things’ expressed in the Coombes’ piece. This included Maxwell Fry on town planning, Elizabeth Denby on housing, and Julian Huxley on health services. The special issue is bookended by an article by Hulton. Thus, the hyperlocal narrative centred on an individual Welsh miner helps contextualise wider societal issues at play, providing a glimpse of the challenges of working-class life in wartime Britain. As Blaikie highlights, issues and articles such as these promoted ‘collectivist and redistributive



Figure 2. 'This is the Problem,' *Picture Post*, January 4, 1941; photographer: Bert Hardy; picture credit: *Picture Post*/Hulton Archive/Getty Images.

solutions to economic and social problems and provided the springboard by which photo-journalism gave visual expression to a newly imagined social democratic rhetoric that spoke for the people, 'a modern "we", in the name of reconstruction.'⁴⁶ There is a demonstrable effort to create a sense of authentic vision and voice with Hardy's matter-of-fact imagery and Coombes' understated rhetoric

collaborating in this aim. Critical attention must be directed to the layered acts of spectatorship promoting forms of recognition and community that are produced by the public circulation of photographs in this manner. Multiple other examples from the wartime discussion of post-war reconstruction likewise depict everyday people observing everyday life to forge an imagined community of spectators, not only observing their present but also looking to the future. For instance, a 1944 photo-story titled 'How to Plan Your Town' showed experts and citizens working together, instructing readers in the process of researching and planning the modernisation of Middlesbrough.⁴⁷ Such features exemplify the *Picture Post* approach characterised by Glenn Jordan:

What did *Picture Post* do? Above all, it sought to understand and present contemporary Britain to the British, i.e. to help the British public make sense of what was going on around them. It sought to genuinely communicate with its public – to represent, interpret or give meaning to important developments in contemporary society and culture it did this through intelligent, complex, sometimes contradictory discourse.⁴⁸

As Robertson put it, 'We as a nation were talking to each other through pictures in magazines.'⁴⁹ Topics were not simply depicted through photographs; through negotiations between micro-level examples and macro-level issues, the publication of photojournalism constructed a national conversation. It is the comparison between the printed page and the raw material of the vast photo-archive (negatives, contact sheets and prints) that makes evident the ways in which the picture editing process and page layout worked to construct shared acts of spectatorship and ways of seeing. Such research reveals how photojournalism helped define the contours of interaction and understanding in public debates of mid-century Britain, giving rise to an important example of what Jorge Ribalta has termed 'photographic public spheres.'⁵⁰

The 'excess' of the photo-archive can also be excavated to examine what was not published, rejections being as revealing as what was accepted for publication. The extant historical material reveals not only the constructed, edited characteristics of seminal photo-stories, but also the far greater number of features that were 'killed' at the time of production – an estimated three-quarters of all commissioned photo-stories. Perhaps the most renowned example was a photo-story by Bert Hardy and James Cameron from 1950 regarding the mistreatment of around 60 soldiers by South Korean authorities in Busan during the Korean War. A mock-up of the issue (now preserved in the

Tom Hopkinson Collection) was produced, but Hopkinson ultimately lost his job when he refused to accede to pressure from the board of directors to ‘spike’ the story. Another illuminating example is Grace Robertson’s coverage of childbirth which highlights aspects of the *Picture Post* business model and questions of gender in the post-war years. Unlike her predecessor, Merlyn Severn (a WAAF veteran and the only woman to be employed as a staff photographer at *Picture Post* from 1945-47) Robertson was only ever engaged as a freelancer by the photo-magazine.

Robertson grew up with the photo magazine, remembers it in the family home and recalled the exact moment when she became aware of the importance of photography:

standing in line for rationed food in 1948 she saw two women whispering and laughing with each other and realised that, ‘they would have made a marvellous photograph, which I could have taken *if I had had a camera in my hand!*⁵¹

Robertson claimed the extent of her professional training consisted of consulting volumes of photographic instruction from the local library – including Kurt Hutton’s *Speaking Likeness* issued by Focal Press in 1947 – and harsh feedback on her contact sheets from Simon Guttmann who she worked for at the photo-agency Report.⁵² Robertson submitted her first (unsuccessful) photo-stories to the *Picture Post* under a male pseudonym in 1948. Her first story placed in the magazine was a photo-feature about Chinese artists working in Britain (‘An English Summer Through Chinese Eyes’, 12 August 1950).⁵³ Robertson recalled that as a woman freelance photojournalist, there were three ways in which her picture stories came about: she would either devise a photo-story herself, shoot it and deliver the prints to the picture editor; alternatively, she could propose a picture story to the editorial team and see if it was accepted; or, she could accept a commission based on someone else’s proposal, often working alongside a journalist to document the story.⁵⁴ A Scot, she recalled with particular fondness shooting a photo-feature alongside writer David Mitchell about sheep-shearing in Snowdonia and the collaborative ‘story-telling process, so different from straightforward press photography’ that she experienced.⁵⁵ However, of the 47 photo-stories the magazine commissioned from Robertson, only 23 were published in *Picture Post*.⁵⁶ Facilitating a comparison between production and publication, the resources of the photo-archive and material like the daybooks make it possible to trace the business process underpinning the quotidian operation of the magazine. Moreover, as Llewellyn notes, in the later 1950s in particular the company’s daybooks reveal the state

of mind of an indecisive management and wasteful business model with story after story remaining unpublished.⁵⁷

Among Robertson's multiple 'killed' stories that did not make it into print was reportage about labour and childbirth in the nascent NHS taken in 1955 [Figure 3]. Robertson's proposal was rejected



Figure 3. Two photographs of A woman in hospital during childbirth (1956); photographer: Grace Robertson; picture credit: Picture Post/Hulton Archive/Getty Images.

twice at the ideas stage before finally being accepted, only to be ‘killed’ later. As Langford and Trompeteler observe, this was atypically candid coverage for the era. One striking close-up ‘depicts the woman’s face contorted in agony. She is shown mid-shout, her mouth ajar and brow furrowed. This is contrasted against studies of the woman peacefully sleeping, her arm languidly resting on her face. (...) The series concludes with the woman seeing her new-born, Robertson capturing her expression, a mix of pure joy and exhaustion.’⁵⁸ Robertson’s aim was to demystify the process of childbirth, not sensationalise it: ‘I felt I was an observer of society. (...) My driving force in photographing women was to find out what made women tick.’⁵⁹ A feature on depicting a home birth by Merlyn Severn had previously been published under Hopkinson.⁶⁰ Robertson’s retrospective assessment of why her story did not make it into print concerned the editorial team’s timid view of audience response: ‘although judged to be a great success in terms of pictures [the photo-story] was “killed” because *Picture Post* feared the realistic shots of a young woman in labour would alarm too many readers.’⁶¹ Arguably, the cultural politics of gender had changed in the intervening years; while wartime had seen many women joined the armed forces and the workplace, the post-war period saw a reversal of opportunities and an reasserted emphasis on marriage and domesticity. Regardless, Robertson was ‘bitterly disappointed that a cautious editorial policy had prevented young women of my generation from seeing the pictures’ and that because it had been commissioned by the magazine, it had been photographed on company film, with both the negatives and copyright surrendered, and no prospect of publishing it elsewhere.⁶²

On Williams’ assessment, women’s photography had an ‘equivocal’ position at the magazine: ‘For women photographers, the real double bind of *Picture Post* was that it asked women to photograph women as men wanted them to be.’⁶³ By implication, Robertson’s mid-fifties childbirth story did not fit that remit. Utilising the photo-archive of *Picture Post* to reconstruct the histories of commissioning and publication thus facilitates a reorientation of approach to photojournalism as a business that can offer new insights into wider social and cultural issues. Key among the revelations enabled by revisiting the resources conserved in archives and repositories of visual content providers is an appreciation of the role of gender (and the gendering of roles) within what Bair terms ‘the labor history of photojournalism.’⁶⁴ As well as a new business-oriented history of *Picture Post* then, this collaborative project also aims to deliver a gender-aware history of Hulton Press – to trace the career trajectories and contributions of women who have been eclipsed by their male counterparts, including Leonard McCombe, Kurt Hutton or indeed Robertson’s husband, Thurston Hopkins.

Social democracy, cultural memory & curating histories of photojournalism

The social concerns of the country played out in the photo-stories featured in the magazine. Moreover, Hall's examination of the 'social eye' of *Picture Post* highlights the prioritisation of questions of representation and participation – the recording and display of everyday life – as central to the pioneering success of the magazine. Readers recognised themselves and their lived experiences in the photographs and stories that were reported. Through sharing the magazine at home or in the workplace, sending in letters, or taking part in competitions (including 'snapshot' competitions), readers participated in this public visualisation and discussion of everyday life. Not only is Hall's analysis useful for understanding the historic success of *Picture Post*, but it is also valuable when thinking about how communities and the public could play a central role today in the research and curation strategies for a *Picture Post* exhibition. Social democracy is a guiding principle for Amgueddfa Cymru and informs all elements of practice, from collecting to programming to governance. The Museum's commitment to participation is a key element of its mission, and 'involving people and communities in shaping and taking part in our work' is a crucial requirement for the Museum if it is to reflect the communities it serves.⁶⁵

As Clifford highlights, museums are 'contact zones' or sites for cultural exchange.⁶⁶ By working with different community partners, the Museum aims to build sustainable, effective partnership networks and collaborations which shape its work, policies and practices in the future. One example is the establishment of the Amgueddfa Cymru Producers, a group of young people aged between 16-25 who participate in co-production projects across the museum from exhibitions through to education and events. The *Picture Post* project poses numerous opportunities to work with young people and other age groups, inviting their perspectives on how the social concerns of the magazine have contemporary relevance. The outcomes of this work would contribute not only to the cultural and collective memory of these events and how they have shaped society today, but also to how such processes of recontextualisation contribute to the re-presentation of these images within the archive.

Whilst collections are the focal point of museums, it is the histories, narratives and identities associated with the objects that create meaning for individuals and communities. Thus, as a cultural institution Amgueddfa Cymru plays a significant role in constructing and representing multiple identities. Museums are not only about the collections they house, Crooke argues, but also the pasts they represent, and their role and responsibility in 'constructing a sense of place, belonging and self.'⁶⁷

Memory is a key component of meaning-making, and cultural institutions have the capacity to shape cultural memory through their collecting and display practices. Cultural acts of inclusion and exclusion play a key role in meaning-making processes. For example, museums shape cultural memory when deciding to collect or display particular objects and histories. Similarly, for digital archives and collections, cultural memory is shaped by the way in which content is selected, navigated and presented in an online context. Hoskins coined the phrase the ‘connective turn’ to mark the paradigmatic shift in the conceptualisation of memory in the digital age, which places emphasis on the networked components of memory and how it is recalled, comprehended and re-interpreted in real-time.⁶⁸ He describes the archive as an institutional form for the remembering and forgetting of societies across history, while digital archives as ‘transformed, mediatized, networked, and part of the newly accessible and highly connected new memory ecology’, in which information flows continuously across networks.⁶⁹ This is a vital consideration in relation to the Hulton Archive, how *Picture Post* is curated and presented in an online capacity, and what this means for cultural memory of mid-century Britain.

While museums have traditionally taken an authoritative approach to how and what society remembers, emerging participatory practices seek to challenge this approach, and foster new methodologies which may, in turn, influence cultural memory. Nina Simon has written extensively about the ‘participatory museum’ and stresses the social responsibility of the cultural institution to connect individuals to each other in ways that generate communal, shared experiences.⁷⁰ Lynch and Alberti’s interpretation emphasises museums as places of collaboration *and* contestation, ‘in which participants might bring diverse interpretations of participation, democracy and divergent agendas.’⁷¹ In other words, in order to facilitate successful participatory projects, Amgueddfa Cymru must embrace and support contesting ideas and opinions, and be open to having difficult conversations around cultural content. Several challenges exist for museums to become more responsive to their audiences. These include defining the communities that the museum serves, articulating the purpose of its approaches, and interpreting objects in such a way that is relevant to the communities they represent.⁷² This is the underlying objective of the participatory nature of our curatorial strategy for this project on *Picture Post* – one which places communities at the heart of a process that fosters a sense of belonging and collective memory.

It is important to note here that the exhibition does not intend to present *the* history of *Picture Post*. Rather, it seeks to convey *a* history of the photo-magazine, one that prioritises the curation of material for and by the communities the museum serves. Key facets of our curatorial rationale are

community engagement and polyvocality – identifying and approaching relevant communities to co-produce exhibition content that represents multiple voices within the space of the museum and across its online presence. *Picture Post* can be historicised and theorised from social, political, and cultural perspectives. However, through the work of exhibition research and in the space of the gallery narrative could be further democratised, strengthened and enhanced by the inclusion of personal perspectives that are rooted in identity, place and lived experience. The photographs featured in *Picture Post* were made by the magazine’s photographers therefore, the images were taken from the perspective of the observer. But what information can be garnered if the photographs were to be discussed and interpreted from the perspective of the participant? Taking the photo-archive as the jumping-off point for a series of community workshops, photo-stories from the magazine and material from the archive will be discussed and critiqued. The workshops will prioritise stories from Wales and involve communities from the areas featured – not narrowly nation-focused, but addressing questions of ethnicity, as well as class, gender and equality. Since the popular appeal of *Picture Post* lies in its ability to report on national and international issues whilst simultaneously incorporating a local perspective, our research and curatorial strategy will seek to follow a similar approach. The inclusion of material that maps out historical events from a local perspective will enable this feature of *Picture Post* to be explored, whilst also uncovering less dominant visual narratives that contribute to the wider history of photography in Wales. Moreover, the inclusion of such material will elicit responses from a local audience, offering multiple points of entry from which to engage with the narrative. For example, ‘Down the Bay’, featured in an issue of *Picture Post* in 1950. Photographed by Bert Hardy with text by Albert Lloyd the story depicted the Butetown area of Cardiff, referred to as ‘Tiger Bay’, and home to one of the most diverse communities in Wales (if not Britain) including citizens from as many as 57 different nationalities.⁷³

One such case study is *Picture Post*’s issue from 1 January 1944, dedicated to the Swansea Valley and providing a worked example of plans for post-war reconstruction [Figure 4]. The issue featured stories related to education, housing, healthcare, and community, with accompanying photographs taken by Bill Brandt, Haywood Magee, and Leonard McCombe. When used in an exhibition context, these photographs provide a historical commentary on the socio-political landscape of the UK (in particular, Wales) towards the end of the Second World War. However, they can also be used to connect societal issues then to societal issues now. Not only will this work be used to invite personal accounts and experiences that draw on notions of identity and place, but it will also be used to invite



Figure 4. Front cover of *Picture Post*, January 1, 1944; photographer unknown; picture credit: *Picture Post/Hulton Archive/Getty Images*.

dialogue and debate around issues such as the social housing crisis in Britain in the twenty-first century, the lack of investment in funding of deprived areas, particularly in Wales, and the funding that has been stripped from these areas as a result of Brexit – indeed, these issues too are represented in the collection of project partner, Getty Images. One of the proposed community workshops will take the form of a walking tour of Swansea city centre, focusing predominantly on post-war,

modernist architecture and discussing the history and significance of these buildings in the context of ideas put forward in the *Picture Post* issue, and their present-day social, cultural, and political agency. It is anticipated that participants will include local people who have an existing understanding and lived experience of the city, its history, and the legacy of post-war reconstruction. This participatory work will generate rich associated content that amplifies multiple narratives and through which multiple voices are represented. Similarly, upon opening the exhibition to the public, visitors will have the opportunity to contribute their own thoughts and content, either physically in the gallery space or digitally through online platforms associated with the exhibition.

To engage a diverse audience and instigate rich dialogue, it is crucial that the exhibition situates *Picture Post* in a contemporary context. The inclusion of multiple perspectives will give the stories and images renewed agency. Similarly, the adoption of different display technologies, the analysis of modern iterations of the photo-magazine, and the inclusion of other objects that re-contextualise the original news stories (drawn from the wider collections at Amgueddfa Cymru and Cardiff University) will provide a more holistic understanding of the significance and influence of *Picture Post*. To further emphasise the contemporary context, it is imperative that the voices of young people are strongly represented. The first community workshop will therefore invite Amgueddfa Cymru Producers to discuss *Picture Post*'s coverage of the development of the publicly funded and world-renowned National Health Service (NHS) in Britain in 1948. The NHS has been at the forefront of public consciousness in the UK throughout the coronavirus pandemic, having previously been threatened by privatisation. This workshop will present an opportunity to hear from young people about the role of the NHS in contemporary society – particularly in the midst of the Covid pandemic – and whether the social ideals upon which it was founded are still relevant today.

The NHS had its roots in the Tredegar Workmen's Medical Aid Society in South Wales, an organisation set up by workers to pay for medical care for members and their families. Aneurin Bevan, Minister of Health for the post-war Labour government, was born in Tredegar and took the Workmen's Medical Aid Society as inspiration for developing the NHS. His aim to 'Tredegarise' Britain was borne out of his own experience of benefitting from the services offered by the Workmen's Medical Aid Society.⁷⁴ 'Where Bevan Got his National Health Plan' featured in *Picture Post* in 1946 and included photographs by Kurt Hutton [Figure 5]. The article explored the origins of the NHS through documenting the pioneering and democratic healthcare provision in Wales at the time. This story illustrates how articles from *Picture Post* can be used to historicise and contextualise current



Figure 5. A miner collects his prescription from a pharmacy in Wales; 'Where Bevan Got His National Health Plan,' *Picture Post*, April 27, 1946; photographer: Kurt Hutton; picture credit: *Picture Post/Hulton Archive/Getty Images*.

socio-political debates, both on a national and international scale. Moreover, the exhibition will use contemporary points of reference to mirror similar concerns of the twentieth century. Examples could include the prominence of the Black Lives Matter movement in the context of the 'Down the Bay' article, or debates surrounding post-pandemic reconstruction set against the backdrop of the Swansea Valley issue.

Tanvi Mishra provides a valuable provocation on the use of historic material from the photo-archive in the contemporary gallery space:

while archives can be private, the exhibition is a site for public discourse. By reviving these images for public consumption, can they be seen as affecting a public conscience or influencing collective memory?⁷⁵

This participatory approach to selecting, interpreting and recontextualising content from *Picture Post* through the methods described above seeks to reinforce the power of images to stimulate cultural memory. This act of memory involves modifying and redescribing the past in order to

shape the future.⁷⁶ This exhibition will contribute to the legacy and cultural memory of *Picture Post* and provide an ‘afterlife’ for some of the lesser-known photographs presented.⁷⁷ Moreover, through the vehicle of this exhibition and the partnership with the Hulton Archive, ‘reappraised photographs return to the archive with additional material and responses appended to them.’⁷⁸

* * * * *

This article demonstrates how, via the dispersed archive of *Picture Post*, it is possible both to track the history of the photo-magazine’s production (that is, the organisation and functioning of a commercial media operation) and to utilise the social democratic ethos of the magazine as inspiration for a curatorial approach that prioritises polyvocality and co production to foster and shape cultural memory. In order to critically address photojournalism in mid-century Britain from a historiographical perspective, it is necessary to employ innovative approaches to the cultural, social and business histories represented by *Picture Post* and the novel modes of distributing and publishing topical pictures that it represented – approaches that can account for the establishment of new photo-agencies, the advent of the photo-essay, and the construction of audiences for the photo-magazine.

In order to bring 4 million photographs and 1,800 photo-stories (the core of the *Picture Post* photo-archive) back to manageable proportions for this collaborative project, it is important to consider who the exhibition is for. Given the host institution’s location and remit, the most obvious focus is the people of Wales. Therefore, it makes sense to prioritise *Picture Post* stories from Wales but situate these within wider global narratives that (as the magazine itself did) take localities and the citizens who live there as the impetus for an international outlook. This approach aims to stimulate community participation, the outcome of which – drawing on the historiographical research – will ultimately shape the exhibition, its content and narrative. Using the physical and online resources of the Hulton Archive the participatory work will draw on the approach adopted by editors such as Tom Hopkinson, in which photographs played a central role in constructing and understanding public life. By engaging with these photographs in a contemporary context, new layers of understanding will emerge that connect current issues and events with those of the past, thus expanding and contextualising national conversations on internationally salient social issues that consequently shape cultural memory.

Notes

1. The authors are grateful to Saskia Asser, Paul Cabuts, Amanda Hopkinson, Melanie Llewellyn, Thomas Smits, and Helen Trompeteler, as well as the anonymous reviewers, for their advice and feedback on this article.
2. Stuart Hall, “The social eye of *Picture Post*,” *Working Papers in Cultural Studies*, 2 (1972): 71–120, specifically 83.
3. Nadya Bair, *The Decisive Network: Magnum Photos and the Postwar Image Market* (Berkeley, CA.: University of California Press, 2020), 4.
4. This figure is based on assessment of *Picture Post* daybooks held by the Hulton Archive and informed by earlier estimations by Sarah MacDonald, Curator at Hulton Archive until 2014.
5. Tom Hopkinson Collection (Cardiff University): <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/search/archives/e7b4f63b-a741-3377-8a9c-d33ceb860e70>. Other potential sources include the Stefan Lorant Collection (Getty Research Institute), the David Hurn Collection (Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales), the library at the Martin Parr Foundation, and the John and Judith Hillelson photojournalism collection (Victoria & Albert Museum).
6. Costanza Caraffa, “Photographs as documents/photographs as objects: Photo archives, art history and the material approach,” *Collection and Curation* 37, no. 4 (2018): 146–150, specifically 149.
7. James L. Hevia, “The Photography Complex: Exposing Boxer-Era China 1900–1901,” in *Photographies East: The Camera and Its Histories in East and Southeast Asia*, ed. Rosalind C. Morris (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 79–119, specifically 81.
8. Caraffa has recently used this notion of the complex or ecosystem to consider the histories, networks and transactions that constitute another extensive archive – the ‘Alinari complex’ comprises material, people, buildings, photographs, publications from 19th century transportation routes to 21st century digital infrastructure (Costanza Caraffa, ed., *On Alinari: Archive in Transition* (Milan: A+Mbookstore Edizioni, 2021). See also Bair, *The Decisive Network* and Estelle Blaschke, *Banking on Images: From the Bettmann Archive to Corbis* (Leipzig: Spector, 2016).
9. For example, Tom Hopkinson, *Picture Post, 1938–50* (London: Penguin, 1970); Robert Kee, *The Picture Post Album: A 50th Anniversary Collection* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1989); Gavin Weightman, *Picture Post Britain* (London: Collins & Brown, 1994); Colin Wilkinson, *Picture Post on Liverpool* (Liverpool: Bluecoat, 2011). In addition, numerous volumes exist addressing the work of individual celebrated photojournalists associated with the photo-magazine.

10. Bair, *The Decisive Network*, 4, 8.
11. Tom Allbeson and Pippa Oldfield, "War, Photography, Business: New Critical Histories," *Journal of War & Culture Studies* 9, no. 2 (2016): 94–114, specifically 106.
12. Regarding the advent of photojournalism in the 1920s and 1930s, and the novel media ecology this instantiated, see Tim Gidal, *Modern Photojournalism: Origins and Evolution, 1910–1933* (New York, 1972), and Bodo von Dewitz and Robert Lebeck, eds., *Kiosk: Eine Geschichte der Fotoreportage, 1839–1973* (Göttingen: Steidl, 2001).
13. Michael Berkowitz, *Jews and Photography in Britain* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2015), 79.
14. Hall, "Social eye of *Picture Post*", 83. On the importance of the art director, see Thierry Gervais, *The Making of Visual News: A History of Photography in the Press* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015).
15. Regarding the emigration of photographic innovators see Annette Vowinckel, "German (Jewish) Photojournalists in Exile: A Story of Networks and Success," *German History* 31, no. 4 (2013): 473–496.
16. Michael Hallett, "The Story of *Picture Post*," *British Journal of Photography*, July 2, 1992.
17. Tom Hopkinson, "Weekly Illustrated: Photojournalism's Forgotten Pioneer," *Creative Camera* 211 (1982): 580–581. *Weekly Illustrated* continued as *Illustrated* published by Odhams from 1939 to 1958.
18. Maxwell Raison, "In the Beginning," *Creative Camera* 211 (1982), 571. Apparently, this investment was recouped by 1940.
19. Peter Greenhill and Brian Reynolds, *The Way of the Sun: The Story of Sun Engraving and Sun Printers* (Ontario: True to Type Books, 2010).
20. Michael Hallett, "The Story of *Picture Post*," *British Journal of Photography*, July 23, (1992).
21. Felix Man, *Man with Camera: Photographs from Seven Decades* (New York: Schocken Books, 1984), n.p.
22. Mike Goldwater, "Four Penn'orth of Hope," *Camerawork* 5 (1977), 8.
23. Tom Hopkinson, "How *Picture Post* Began," *Picture Post*, October 2 (1948), 11.
24. Hutton's filed stories from 1 October 1938 to 18 November 1939 are listed in John Chillingworth and Colin Wilkinson, *Kurt Hutton: The Quiet Pioneer* (Liverpool: Bluecoat Press, 2018), 30–31.
25. Berkowitz, *Jews and Photography in Britain*, 111.
26. J. W. Hobson and H. Henry, *Hulton Readership Survey* (London: Hulton Press, 1947). This was based on a sample of 10,199 participants from an estimated population of 35,8 million.
27. Grace Robertson, *Grace Robertson: Photojournalist of the 1950s* (London: Virago, 1989), 22.
28. For example, see "A New Broom in Malaya," *Picture Post*, May 3 (1952) which addresses the appointment of Field Marshal Sir Gerald Templer as British High Commissioner in Malaya penned by a COI employee.

29. Robertson, *Grace Robertson*, 22, 26.
30. J. W. Hobson and H. Henry, *Hulton Readership Survey* (London: Hulton Press, 1953). This was based on a sample of 12,991 participants from an estimated population of 36,8 million.
31. See C. H. Gibbs-Smith, "The Hulton Picture Post Library," *Journal of Documentation* 6, no. 1 (1950): 12–24.
32. Thank you to Melanie Llewellyn for this insight and example.
33. This phrase comes from a marketing brochure circulated to clients by Mona Parrish in August 1957.
34. Daphne Moss, "Pictures: Radio Times Hulton Picture Library", in ASLIB Audio Visual Group, Audio Visual Workshop, May 7th–8th 1970 (London: Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux, 1970), 12–17.
35. Tyler Marshall, "Entrepreneur Buys British Photo Archive," *Los Angeles Times*, May 17, 1988.
36. Blaschke critiques the advent and operation of visual content providers. See Estelle Blaschke, "The Excess of the Archive," in *Documenting the World: Film, Photography, and the Scientific Record*, eds. Gregg Mitman and Kelley Wilder, (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 2016).
37. Comments shared during conversation between Melanie Llewellyn, Bronwen Colquhoun and Tom Allbeson (June 2021). Academic researchers can view the physical photo-archive by appointment at the Hulton Archive's dedicated facility.
38. Hopkinson, "Foreword" in *Picture Post Album*, McKee, n.p.
39. Hopkinson, "Foreword" in *Picture Post Album*, McKee, n.p.
40. Melissa Miles, "Introduction: Photography's Publics," in *Photography and its Publics*, eds. Melissa Miles and Edward Welch, (London: Bloomsbury, 2020), 3.
41. Miles, "Introduction", 4, 8.
42. "Foreword", *Picture Post*, January 4, 1941, 4.
43. Actually born in Wolverhampton, Bert Coombes was not a first-time writer. He published a memoir about working as a miner in South Wales in 1939 (see Chris Williams, "Bert Lewis Coombes," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, accessed March 1, 2022, <https://doi-org.abc.cardiff.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/74481>).
44. Hardy's name does not appear alongside Coombes'. Llewellyn observes, however, that the following month Hardy was the first photographer to receive a by-line credit in the magazine for his coverage of the London Blitz ("Fire-fighters," *Picture Post*, February 1, 1941).
45. This rejected alternative take can be viewed here: <https://www.gettyimages.in/detail/news-photo/unemployed-welsh-coal-miner-b-l-coombes-out-walking-with-news-photo/97860432>.
46. Andrew Blaikie, "Image and Inventory: *Picture Post* and the British View of Scotland, 1938–1957," *International Review of Scottish Studies* 38 (2013): 11–48, specifically 26.

47. “How to Plan Your Town,” *Picture Post*, October 28, 1944, 17–19 and 26. The production of this photo-story is also the focus of a short film illustrating the production of an unnamed photo-magazine, *Picture Paper* (1946), in which Hopkinson plays the role of editor and Hardy and Hutton feature as photographers: <https://film.britishcouncil.org/resources/film-archive/picture-paper>.
48. Glenn Jordan, “Tiger Bay, *Picture Post* and the Politics of Representation,” in *Down the Bay: Picture Post, Humanist Photography and Images of 1950s Cardiff*, ed. Glenn Jordan (Cardiff: Butetown History & Arts Centre, 2001), 9–21, specifically 13.
49. Cited in interview, Anna Murphy, “Grace Robertson,” *Sunday Telegraph*, August 9, 2010.
50. Jorge Ribalta (ed.), *The Worker Photography Movement, 1926–1939: Essays and Documents* (Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro De Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, 2011).
51. Robertson, *Grace Robertson*, 7–8.
52. Robertson, *Grace Robertson*, 11–13.
53. Catlin Langford and Helen Trompeteler, “Moments of Transition: The photographs of Grace Robertson,” <https://www.photooxford.org/2020-21/2021-festival/online-exhibitions/moments-of-transition>.
54. Cited in: Val Williams, *The Other Observers: Women Photographers in Britain, 1900 to the Present* (London: Virago, 1986), 136.
55. Robertson, *Grace Robertson*, 16. “Shearing Time in Snowdonia,” *Picture Post*, August 11, 1951.
56. Melanie Llewellyn, “Persevere Young Man: Grace Robertson and *Picture Post*,” lecture delivered on November 3, 2021, Photo Oxford Festival, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KOZdbCJapzo>.
57. Llewellyn, “Persevere Young Man”. Llewellyn notes that Robertson’s unpublished material is now part of an ongoing project by Hulton Archive to expand the digitisation and appreciation of *Picture Post*’s women photographers.
58. Langford and Trompeteler, “Moments of Transition”.
59. Cited by Langford and Trompeteler, “Moments of Transition”.
60. “A Baby is Born at Home,” *Picture Post*, August 31, 1946.
61. Cited in Williams, *The Other Observers*, 138.
62. Robertson, *Grace Robertson*, 21.
63. Williams, *The Other Observers*, 138 and 141.
64. Bair, *The Decisive Network*, 27. The many women working in decisive roles at *Picture Post* included Sheila Hardy (office manager), Hilde Marchant (writer), Katherine Whitehorn (writer), Anne Scott James (writer and

first Woman's Editor), Mona Parrish (librarian), Edith Kay (the head of darkroom who, like Lorant, emigrated from Germany), as well as émigré photographers Gerti Deutsch, Heidi Heimann and Edith Tudor-Hart. Some of these individuals have been identified via signatures on a leaving note for Hopkinson in 1950 in the Tom Hopkinson Collection. Numerous other women's names are decipherable from the list (e.g. Marguerite Mincher, Helen Lewis, Kathleen Mayer, Jessie Starke, Georgette du Pasquier, Eileen Poulter, Daphne Redman, Brenda Gasset, Julie Harrison), but it has not yet been possible to identify their roles at Hulton Press.

65. "Vision, Commitment and Values," *Amgueddfa Cymru*, <https://museum.wales/media/47131/Gweledigaeth-AC-Vision.pdf> (2019). This also resonates with Cardiff University's own strategic priorities including its civic mission which represents a similar ethos.
66. James Clifford, "Museums as Contact Zones," in *Representing the Nation: A Reader*, eds. Boswell and Evans (1999), 435–457.
67. Elizabeth Crooke, *Museums and Community: Ideas, Issues and Challenges* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), specifically, 13.
68. Andrew Hoskins "Media, Memory, Metaphor: Remembering and the Connective Turn," *Parallax*, (2011) no. 17(4): 19–31, specifically, 20.
69. Hoskins, "Media, Memory, Metaphor," 25.
70. Nina Simon, *The Participatory Museum* (Santa Cruz, CA.: Museum 2.0, 2009).
71. Bernadette Lynch and Samuel Alberti, "Legacies of prejudice: racism, co-production and radical trust in the museum," *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 1, no. 25 (2010): 13–35, specifically 20.
72. Sheila Watson, *Museums and their Communities* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), 27.
73. Jordan, "Tiger Bay," 10.
74. Kim Thomas, "Why the south Wales town that forged the NHS now points to its future," *The Guardian*, May 22, 2018.
75. Tanvi Mishra, "The Afterlife of a Photograph: Recontextualizing Images and Influencing Public Memory," in *Why Exhibit? Positions on Exhibiting Photographies*, eds. Anna-Kaisa Rastenberger and Iris Sikking (2018), 286.
76. Mieke Bal, "Preface," in *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present*, eds. Mieke Bal, Jonathan Crewe and Leo Spitzer (1999), vii.
77. Mishra, "Afterlife," 288.
78. Mishra, "Afterlife," 288.

Biographies

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