

Changing Images of the Democratic Party:
An Analysis of the Aesthetic and Philosophical
Underpinnings of Life's Photo-essay
"Happy Days in Miami."

by

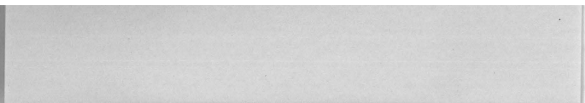

Rick Slater

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Master of Arts
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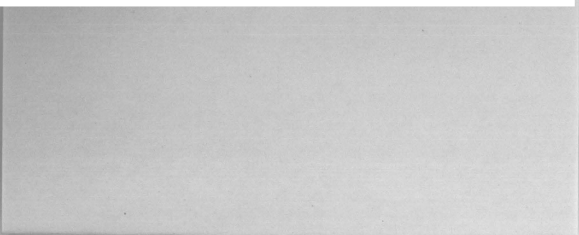



Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Literature Review.....	3
An Aesthetic History of Life Magazine.....	5
Similarities Between 'New Journalism and '70s Photojournalism.....	13
Conception & Publication of Miami Convention Coverage.....	15
Evaluation of Photographs.....	17
Conclusion.....	30
Endnotes.....	33
Bibliography.....	35

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The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of New Journalism on the photo-essay "Happy Days in Miami" from the 21 July 1972 issue of *Life* Magazine. The stylistic elements of New Journalism such as scene-by-scene reconstruction, overt stylization, status details and others, are analyzed for their role in the construction of the visual and political narrative utilized in this photo-essay. Its influence on 1960s art photography as embodied by Larry Clark, Danny Lyon and the New Documents exhibition is also considered. This was analyzed through research of the various topics (New Journalism, the Presidential Convention in 1972, *Life* and 1960s art photography), critical readings of the photographs and original interviews with Ralph Graves, *Life's* managing editor in 1972 and contributing editor Richard Meryman.

Introduction

The Democratic Convention in 1972 was one of the most important events for the party in the century up to that point. After maintaining control of the Presidency for twenty-eight of the past forty years, the majority in the Senate for thirty-six of the past forty and the House of Representatives for all but four years over that same time, the Democratic party was in disarray and was searching for a new direction.¹ Amongst those seriously competing for the Democratic nomination that year was Shirley Chisolm, the first female African-American candidate; Hubert Humphrey, a Midwestern Senator long associated with the old politics embodied by labor unions; Henry 'Scoop' Jackson, a Senator in favor of continuing the Vietnam War; John Lindsay, the former Republican Mayor of New York City who only recently changed party affiliation; George Wallace, a committed segregationist from Alabama; and George McGovern, the anti-Vietnam war populist from South Dakota. This contest was increasingly portrayed by the media as a battle for the party's identity: stereotypical smoky backroom politics and party bosses dictating policy versus an open and inclusive party willing to listen to all participants.

This transition to a more open and inclusive party that listened to the ideas and wishes of all its constituents and not merely its longest tenured members had been largely overseen by McGovern in hopes of promoting more diverse participation. As playwright Arthur Miller wrote after the 1972 Democratic Convention, "The clear purpose of reform was to "open up" the party's internal processes to those who were most vocal in complaining they were shut out in 1968--the young people, the blacks, the Chicanos and the just emerging woman activists."² The change in the demographics of the party was already evident by the beginning of the convention as over 85% of the delegates were voting at a convention for the first time.³ This McGovern-led transition became the narrative that drove the coverage of the Democrats in the press, and the convention was, in many ways, portrayed as "an onslaught of young reformers battering at the ranks of old-line regulars."⁴

One of the most effective portrayals of the changing composition of those participating in the Democrats' politics was the photojournalism found in the pages of *Life* magazine. That *Life* was so effective in portraying this situation was not unusual. *Life's* photojournalism had long been seen, in the

words of Edward Steichen, as “an authoritative source of visual information about our times.”⁵ In his description of the pre-digital era of photojournalism, Michael Carlebach wrote, “Ultimately, the power of the news photograph and its ability to communicate derive[d] from the public’s continued belief in the mechanical accuracy of the camera.”⁶ For the readers of *Life*, the magazine’s photographers showed things in an unbiased, unmediated fashion; in other words, they were showing things as they are, not what they felt like. However, as I hope to show in this thesis, the photographs published in the 21 July 1972 article “HAPPY DAYS IN MIAMI” *Life* coverage of the Democratic Convention in 1972 portray a different journalistic aesthetic demonstrating an impressionistic take on current events more in line with New Journalism than traditional photojournalism.

The aesthetics and philosophical concerns found in “HAPPY DAYS IN MIAMI” are similar to those utilized by New Journalism. New Journalism is generally regarded as a text-only movement. But such elements as scene-by-scene reconstruction in order to tell a story more effectively, the immersion of a journalist with their subject in order to better understand it, and other marked difference from photojournalism’s traditional characteristics connect “HAPPY DAYS IN MIAMI” to New Journalism. By using these techniques in their coverage of the convention the photographers effectively portrayed the generational dissension and concurrent evolution of the Democratic Party from a closed-off stratified organization to a more open and inclusive political entity.

I will analyze where and how these philosophical and aesthetic traits manifested themselves and were used to demonstrate the evolution of the party in that summer of 1972. I will show how those responsible at *Life* explicitly addressed these changes that were taking place through their portrayal of George McGovern, his family, and campaign workers through the stylistic choices used to construct this photo essay.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Envisioning the areas I needed to cover in this thesis I split my research into three primary areas of study. The first was a study of the politics and culture of America that existed in the early 1970s; second was the history of New Journalism and the qualities that made it unique; last was of the state of photojournalism and, specifically, *Life* magazine in 1972.

Before research began I decided to choose broad histories of late 1960s/early 1970s culture and politics. I felt *Nixonland* by Rick Perlstein was best given that it analyzes the life and culture of the era through its politics.⁷ The book's thesis was that Nixon exploited and widened the generation gap between the baby boomers and their parents for his own political gain. Many histories of the era celebrate the cultural changes that took place in this era, but Perlstein expresses serious doubts about the long term benefits of this cultural change.

I also read the *The Seventies* by Bruce Schulman.⁸ This book was more helpful than *Nixonland* in helping me come to an understanding of the cultural malaise in the United States after the cultural revolution of the 1960s, nevertheless I found the book far too broad and its theme was largely unclear. More analytical was *Debating the 1960s: Liberal, Conservative, and Radical Perspectives* by Michael Flamm and David Steigerwald.⁹ These historians analyze the areas of social welfare, civil rights, foreign relations, and social order primarily through the context of the rise of the left wing counterculture and the Barry Goldwater right. This work had a greater depth than either of the other two books I read on this era, but the 1972 election is only mentioned in passing.

For more detailed first-hand accounts of the time period I began by consulting newspaper articles from major newspapers such as the *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times* and periodicals such as *Esquire*, *National Review*, *New York Review of Books*, the *New Yorker*, *U.S. News & World Report* and *Life*.¹⁰ While no one voice was stronger than any other what I found persuasive was the near unanimity in declaring the Democratic Party on the edge of collapse and a total dissatisfaction with the state of the country.

Two primary sources that helped me understand the 1972 political campaigns better were books by authors who took diametrically opposite methods to tell their stories: *The Making of the President 1972* by Theodore White and *Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail '72* Hunter S. Thompson.¹¹ In *The Making of the President 1972* White provides a highly detailed factual chronicle of the road to the White House for the Republicans and the Democrats, withholding his opinions throughout. Thompson takes the exact opposite approach. His unfettered bias on the events surrounding the election makes the reader question its factual veracity, but one is given the feeling that his vivid descriptions and personal reactions reveal greater truths than the use of straight facts possibly could.

Fear and Loathing sent me in search of more works describing the background of and basis for New Journalism. I previously read the work of journalists such as Thompson, Gay Talese, Joan Didion, and Tom Wolfe, but I was not clear on where the New Journalist movement came from or what characteristics made it a movement. I began with the anthology *The New Journalism*, co-edited by Tom Wolfe and E.W. Johnson featuring selections from 23 different writers and an introductory essay by Wolfe. This essay clearly identified the underpinnings of New Journalism, and described all those elements that separate New Journalism from traditional journalism.¹² This thesis could not have been written without it. Last, I read the book *The Gang that Wouldn't Write Straight* by Mark Weingarten, which claims New Journalism is the last significant American literary form to emerge.¹³

The final area I researched was *Life* Magazine. First, I read Loudon Wainwright's insiders' history of *Life*, entitled *The Great American Magazine*.¹⁴ In addition to Wainwright's unfettered access to employees past and present, his description of the way outside influences such as television and war affected its editorial decisions was of greatest aid to me. Finding critical material on *Life*'s first twenty years was not hard. Wendy Kozol's *Life's America* provides great insight into the philosophical underpinnings of *Life*'s photographs and its portrayal of the American family.¹⁵ The anthology *Looking at Life Magazine* analyzed different aspects of the magazine, from the make up of *Life*'s readership and the limits of Henry Luce's vision for the magazine, as analyzed through its editorial decisions, to its portrayal of Chinese Americans during World War II, and a study of the photographer Gordon Park's work at the magazine. The most helpful essay for the purpose of this essay was James Baughman's "Who Read *Life*?"¹⁶ Baughman investigates the readership of *Life* over the years by looking at public opinion polls and advertising data. The last book I read on *Life* was Glenn Willumson's *W. Eugene Smith and the Photographic Essay*, which gives a detailed analysis of Smith's major photo-essays for *Life*, but more importantly for my purpose provides an effective overview of how *Life* constructed its photo-essays and the photo essay as an art form.¹⁷ Disappointingly, almost all significant research into *Life* and its photographs ceases in the late '50s, just before I felt the magazine became much more interesting in its attempts to break free of its past.

Life Magazine's Use of Photographs

Life was the third magazine Henry Luce founded after starting *Time* with Britton Haddon in 1923 and *Fortune* on his own in 1930, and it was by far the most ambitious in content and format. *Time* was designed as a political magazine for the general public made up primarily of text, but too often, as the historian David Halberstam said, "[i]n the conflict between curiosity and ideology, ideology tended finally to win out."¹⁸ The second magazine, *Fortune*, was planned before the Great Depression, but was not published until 1930.¹⁹ Its aim was to promote America's place in the global marketplace. *Life* was founded in 1936 as a weekly picture magazine that was a "different, less political, more open" alternative to *Time*, that featured weekly stories on topics such as news, sports, movies, medicine and social life.²⁰ Luce's goal was that it should reflect America to Americans, to paraphrase Halberstam.²¹ *Life's* content was formally structured around two cornerstones photo essays: 'the big news picture story' and the 'big special feature.'²²

Life was an immediate success, upon its publication in November 1936. The Volume 1, Number 1 issue sold all 250,000 newsstand copies on the first day.²³ One of the important reasons for *Life's* popularity was its dedicated use of photographs throughout. Its circulation increased to 2.86 million issues per week by 1940, but its greatest increase in readership happened as a direct result of its coverage of World War II by *Life* photographers including such legendary figures as Robert Capa, Eugene Smith and Margaret Bourke-White; by 1948 the readership was 5.45 million people per week.²⁴

In his prospectus for *Life* Henry Luce stated the reason for its founding was, "To see life; to see the world; to eyewitness great events; to watch the faces of the poor and the gestures of the proud..."²⁵ There were earlier photomagazines--the genre began in Germany--and fashion magazines such as *Vogue*, but what separated *Life* from these antecedents was that "At *Life*, pictures were the centerpiece of their enterprise," and clearly superior to the written text.²⁶ In short, in *Life*, Luce wanted photographs to function as rhetoric in the same way text traditionally did. This goal was furthered by *Life's* most important contribution to photography: its development of the photo-essay, a new form of communicating the news in a narrative fashion with the "photographs arranged in a logical, and seemingly casual, order."²⁷ The dependence on the photo essay increased from 1938 onwards when

Henry Luce insisted that they be constructed in such a way that they be directed toward a specific point of view; include a moral component, and "to be for things."²⁸

There were many involved in the creation of *Life's* photo essays. As photo historian Glenn Willumson noted, "The photographic essay was not the work of a single individual. At *Life* photo-essay production was a group creation rather than an individual expression."²⁹ While the photographer was likely to be consulted to help ensure his or her happiness, control of image selection, sequencing, layout and captioning ultimately rests with the editors and management and not the photographer.³⁰

With the help of so many skilled and experienced editors and photographers over the years, *Life* not only created but was able to maintain stylistic consistencies in its published photographs. The news photographs did not only adhere to the tradition of realism, and *Life* attempted to use this aesthetic and its apparent objectivity to inform and disseminate.³¹ While the neutrality of this discourse has since been questioned it should be made clear what was meant by realism as a mode of aesthetic representation during the time *Life* was published from 1936-72.³² The sort of realism utilized in *Life* was a mode of photographic representation that "rigidly adhered to Western conventions of perspective and sharp focus, supporting the illusion of looking through a window."³³ This realist aesthetic was used for most of *Life's* run, from 1936-1972, and it brought great acclaim through the work of W. Eugene Smith, Alfred Eisenstaedt, Andreas Feininger and Margaret Bourke-White, among others. The photographs in *Life* differed from, for example, its sister publications *Fortune* or *Time* because *Life* made it clear from the beginning that photographs bore the weight of the magazine's worth. In both *Time* and *Fortune* the photographs were included to support the text; a reader could not follow a story from looking at its photographs. The reader knew when picking up *Life* or *Look*, or similar picture magazines, that these pictures were not subordinate, but were more important than the photographs in magazines such as *Time* and *Fortune*.

The end of the 1960s brought with it a crisis for picture magazines, and particularly *Life*. Not only was the circulation of *Life* down by millions from its post-World War II peak, but also its photography was seen by contemporary photographers and critics as lazy and emblematic of middle-

class complacency.³⁴ Throughout the 1960s, American magazines had lost audiences and advertisers to television, and according to Ralph Graves, *Life's* final managing editor, this was also true of *Life*.³⁵ The emotional impact usually created for subjects by photo-essays was replaced by the much more immediate emotional spectacle of television. Hastening the magazine's slippage in the eyes of artists and critics was that "the *Life* readership that emerged was anything but representative of the national population. It was middle class, often comfortably so," and this middle class complacency was at odds with a new audience coming of age and looking to find a new aesthetic.³⁶ Photojournalist Danny Lyon said his early work, *Bikeriders*, a profile of the Outlaws motorcycle gang, was "an attempt "to destroy *Life* magazine" and what he saw as its anodyne vision of American Life."³⁷ The harshest criticism came just weeks after *Life* ceased operation as a weekly publication at the end of 1972 when *Village Voice* critic A.D. Coleman wrote, "in recent years the appearance of anything in *Life*--even photographs--actually undermined its credibility with the younger generation because it had become obvious that the magazine which once spoke to (almost) all Americans had evolved into a complacent house organ for the middle and upper management of corporate America."³⁸ Certainly it was true that *Life* still had photographs of events such as Hollywood parties and cheesecake starlet photographs, the sort of images Coleman and Lyon could not abide, but those were not the only realities *Life* was presenting.

When looking at *Life's* photographs through the 1960s and 1970s it is clear the editors and photographers were changing the style of photographs that were published in the magazine. To see how *Life's* style changed by the time of the Democratic Convention in 1972 one needs only look at where it was 15 years earlier. On the cover of the January 7, 1957 issue (FIG. 1) there is a photograph by Loomis Dean of then Vice-President Richard Nixon and two young Hungarian girls involved in a passion play. This photograph was taken during a diplomatic mission Nixon undertook in order to bring attention to the refugee problem that arose after the 1956 Hungarian uprising against the Soviet Union.³⁹ Upon first look, this photograph seems to have been taken during an informal moment between Nixon and these two young girls. Nixon is smiling and looks affectionate, and the girls are being affectionate in return. The apparent informality of the moment is emphasized by the angle from which the photograph was taken and the way editors cropped it to make it appear almost like a snapshot.⁴⁰ If readers did

not know who the man in the picture was, this air of informality might have been able to be maintained, however the caption tells the reader it is the Vice-President and common sense makes it obvious that this photograph is neither a snapshot or in any way informal. In such a situation any access to the Vice President would be tightly supervised by the Secret Service, the White House press office and any number of levels of bureaucracy. As Abigail Soloman Godeau has written, here is a level of objectivity that speaks to exteriority and nonimplication, but not to authenticity.⁴¹

There is a distance between the photographer and the subject that speaks more

to access and simply being allowed to take the photograph than to the intimacy and informality. It is more indicative of a publicity shot than a work of photojournalism. This photograph matches up with John Szarkowski's description of news photographs as, "in greater or lesser degree, setups. In a larger sense the news events that they report are themselves setup," and for lack of a better phrase, such photographs are "an honest fiction."⁴² While there is no doubt the honest fiction inherent in such pre-arranged and stage-managed photo ops convey an inherent truthfulness, *Life's* subsequent development suggests readers no longer trusted this kind of photojournalism..

As the 1960s progressed the primary change to *Life's* photography was not just stylistic, but also in its choice of subject matter. *Life* never published violent or sexually explicit as that on subcultures by photographers such as Danny Lyon (FIG. 2) or Larry Clark (FIG. 3), who photographed biker gangs and Oklahoman drug addicts. But the magazine was clearly influenced by the great cultural shift occurring in the United States in the 1960s and strove to reflect America to Americans even

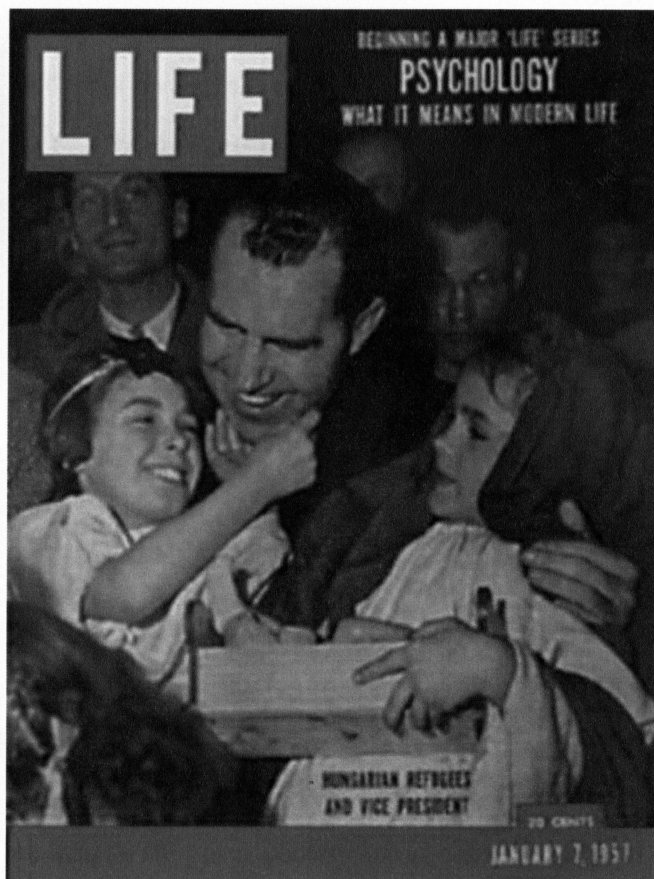


Figure 1 Loomis Dean, [Richard Nixon and Two Hungarian Girls], *Life*, 7 January, 1957, cover.



Figure 2 Danny Lyon, "Racer, Schererville, Indiana", *Bikeriders*, 23.



Figure 3 Larry Clark, [untitled], Tulsa.

if they might not like what it saw. For instance, in 1965 the photographer Bill Epperidge and the writer James Mills authored the photo-essay "HEROIN LIFE" (FIG. 4). This photo essay followed a young couple through New York City as they managed their addictions and included photographs of the couple injecting.⁴³ However, the portrayal of drug addiction is very clinical and detached, as if the magazine was profiling "others" or the photographer was scared to get too close.

A significant evolution in the aesthetic of *Life's* photographs throughout the 1960s is best seen in the work of Larry Burrows' war photography, and especially the cover photograph of the April 16, 1965

issue of *Life* (FIG. 5). In one of *Life's* most memorable covers Burrows captures helicopter crew chief James C. Farley as he shouts to his crew while pilot Lt. James E. Magel lies dying next him and another soldier largely cropped out of the photograph lies prone on the floor of the helicopter.⁴⁴ With his mouth agape and a distressed look in his eye Farley looks nothing like the stolid, world-weary, but ultimately victorious soldier of American movies and the popular imagination. He looks scared and worried, the way any man would look in this situation.

The stylistic choices of Burrows and his editors complement the confusion we can see within the frame of the image. First, the photograph lacks a clear center of focus. The subject is not made explicitly clear; it could be Farley and his distress; Magel lying dead in the lower middle



Figure 4 Bill Epperidge, "Heroin Life", *Life*, 16 April, 1965.

section of the photograph still wearing his gas mask; or, what I always find my eyes drawn to: the machine gun pointing out the cabin door, unused for the moment, but looming over the soldiers. There is no one single paramount element; readers' eyes linger over the image in an attempt to interpret the relationship of the elements.

The next key stylistic element is that the action captured in the image is happening so fast that Burrows' photograph captures not only the movements of Farley, but the way in which the machine gun is swivelling on its stanchion as well as the helicopter moving over the land below. In *Life's* heyday, the appearance of an out

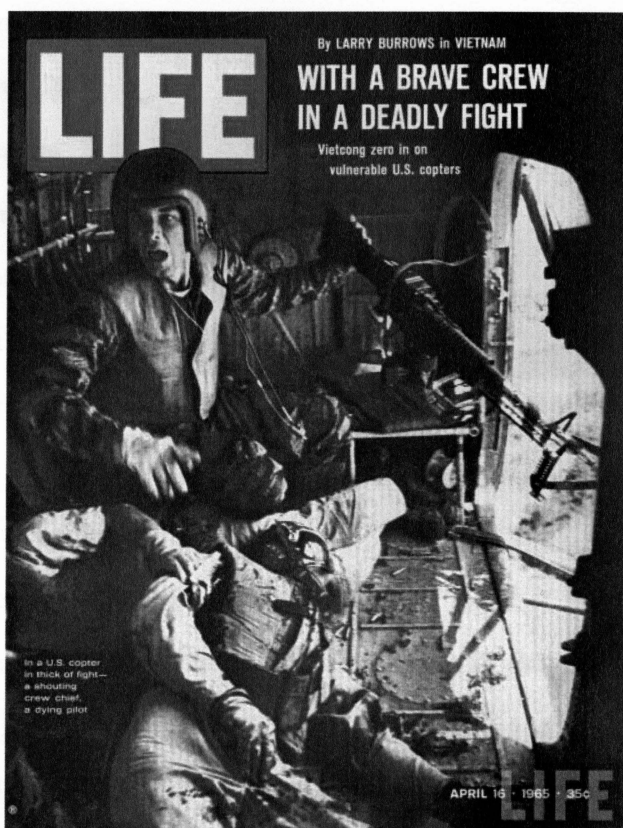


Figure 5 Larry Burrows, 'In a U.S. Copter in Thick of Fight—a Shouting Crew Chief, a Dying Pilot', *Life*, 16 April, 1965, cover.

of focus photograph was a rarity, even amongst their war photographs from World War II; however, here was one on the cover where very little is in focus at all. This blurriness and the way the living soldier to Farley's left is cropped out of the frame means the only object in sharp focus is the dead body of James Magel. This image not only captures the subjects, and effectively expresses what is happening at this moment, but gives the reader a better understanding of the confusion and danger in Vietnam. Burrows' technique in photographing the war is very close to the New Journalists' method of ignoring the larger historical narrative and instead immersing themselves in their subjects' lives in order to forgo the traditional journalistic distance.⁴⁵ Moreover, the photograph is so effective because while it shows a terrifying moment from a country at war it neither judges the War nor falls back on the historical narrative. According to photojournalism historian Mary Panzer, Burrows' Vietnam War photographs generally use "the war as a background against which to show the drama," and the fear and the confusion "of the individuals as they fought in battle or supported one another."⁴⁶

The effect of a photograph such as this on the cover of *Life* in April 1965 must have been great. It was truly at odds with the populous passing it on the newsstands; as of April 1965 almost twice as many people in the United States preferred escalation to withdrawal and as of August of the same year 61% of the respondents to a Gallup poll believed sending troops to Vietnam was not a mistake.⁴⁷ The portrayal of battle in Burrows' work are in no way indicative of the sort of images that could be described as anodyne or complacent.



Figure 6 Opening at Museum of Modern Art, Alexander Calder Exhibition, New York 1969

By the time of the 1972 Democratic Convention, the composition and style of many of *Life*'s photographs, like Burrows', were significantly different from those of the apex of its post-World War II popular and critical acclaim. At the end of its run, the photojournalism in *Life* no longer looked posed or supported the illusion of looking through a window. The photographs looked spontaneous and more natural. They looked more like the kind of snapshots familiar to most readers. The work of Garry

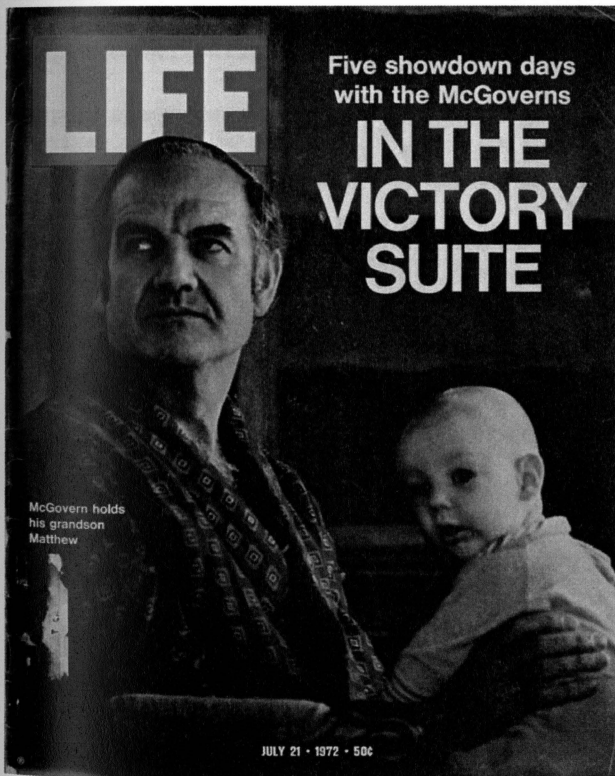


Figure 7 Stanley Tretick, [McGovern Holds his Grandson Matthew], *Life*, 21 July, 1972, cover.

Winogrand (FIG. 6), a former *Life* contributor, is a good example of this kind of snapshot aesthetic.⁴⁸ His photographs are a series of "quick takes," they are not obviously composed even if some of them may have been, and the subject of some of his photographs is ambiguous at best.⁴⁹

The change between *Life* in the 1950s and in the 1970s can best be seen in a comparison of its treatment of Nixon in 1957, and George McGovern for the July 21, 1972 cover (FIG. 7). This is another seemingly informal moment involving an American politician holding a child, but unlike the photograph of Nixon the image seems genuinely

intimate. authenticity to the image, as opposed to pseudo informality, and casualness in this moment; it is the kind of bearing people see in everyday snapshots. Politicians are routinely pictured as serious men; they have concern on their face, wear suits at all times and appear calm under pressure. While McGovern does appear at ease, the image of him dressed so informally in his pyjamas in what looks so much like a family snapshot gives him the air of a grandfather and not someone with the preternatural calm of a statesman. There is nothing in this photograph to suggest he is preparing to deal with issues like withdrawal from Vietnam or an oil crisis. According to *Life's* last Managing Editor, Ralph Graves, this change was a conscious decision on his part to do away with or at least play down the traditional look of *Life*.⁵⁰

The development of *Life* photographs from a very distant one of almost scientific neutrality to a more casual position of privilege is similar to photographic historian's Abigail Solomon-Godeau's criticism of photographic depiction that underlies much of photography theory. Along one pole is the outsider's perspective that "is taken to produce an alienated and voyeuristic relationship that heightens the distance between subject and object," or in this case, the subject of the photograph and the readers' perspective.⁵¹ The ultimate example she gives of this "photographic exteriority" is the work *Homes for America*, by Dan Graham, since "not only are the photographs" of suburban tract housing "exterior views, but they model themselves directly on the impersonality, anonymity, and banality of the purely instrumental image."⁵² While Eugene Smith's "COUNTRY DOCTOR" and Epperidge's "HEROIN LIFE" work very well as photojournalism in that they reveal new worlds to the audience, they seem too careful in their posing and lighting--in effect, the photographs are too artful--for empathy. At the other end of this pole is the insider's perspective, recognized by its, "position of engagement, participation and privileged knowledge."⁵³ Burrows' photographs, with their implication that the photographer is involved in the battle in Vietnam, and Tretick's photographs showing McGovern, his staff and family in such private and intimate ways embodied these traits.



Figure 8 W. Eugene Smith. [From *Country Doctor*], *Life*, 20 September, 1948.

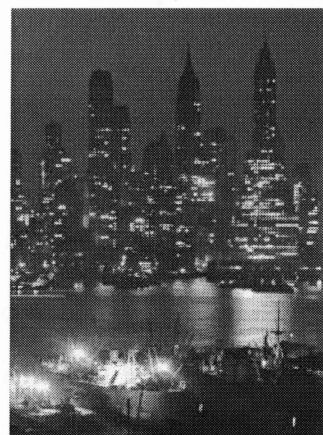


Figure 9 Andreas Feininger. [From *A Big Spectacle in Big Pictures*], *Life*, 14 April, 1941.

There were two significant influences on the change in the composition and style of *Life's* photo-essays at the end of its run: the first was Ralph Graves's role at the magazine, and the second was the magazine's budgetary constraints. Ralph Graves's influence was important in two ways. First, in support of the snapshot aspects of Winogrand and Lee Friedlander's work he conveyed to the photographers working for *Life* that he was "against posed and set up pictures," and did not want his photographers "to set up stuff."⁵⁴ Instead, he said he wanted "straight pictures only," in order to "do more about what was going on in America right now."⁵⁵ Second, he admired Larry Burrows' work in Vietnam and chose to publish photographers who worked in a similar vein. Graves still feels to this day that Burrows was the finest war photographer of the Vietnam or any other war. Graves sees a connection between the work of Burrows and the reporting New Journalist Michael Herr did for *Esquire* in Vietnam.⁵⁶ Burrows' work captured an enormous range of human emotion while seeming to be free of any self-conscious artistry or contrivance. These are all qualities effectively captured on the home front in *Life's* photo-essay from the 1972 Democratic convention, "HAPPY DAYS IN MIAMI". The other, and, likely, most important factor was, as Graves put it, that he wanted to do "fewer stories, better bets," due to budgetary constraints; in other words, for the last three years of publication "we were broke."⁵⁷

Similarities between 'New Journalism' and 1970s Photojournalism

Those responsible for the photographs and the layout in "HAPPY DAYS IN MIAMI" did not simply attempt to portray 'things as they are', but were also influenced by the journalistic techniques evident in New Journalism. Even if photographers such as Danny Lyon, Mary Ellen Mark and Larry Clark have been referred to as new journalists, New Journalism is generally seen as a mode of journalism that is text-based.⁵⁸ It became popular in the 1960s and 70s, and deviated from traditional journalism in its use of the literary techniques in order to convey "its unique power, variously known as its 'immediacy,' its 'concrete reality,' 'its emotional involvement,' its 'gripping' or 'absorbing' quality."⁵⁹

The most important element separating New Journalism from traditional print journalism was the way the writers composed a story through scene-by-scene reconstruction, the way novelists do, with less reliance upon the larger historical narrative.⁶⁰ In most cases this smaller detail reconstructed

acts as a representation of a larger narrative, however. For instance, New Journalist Gay Talese's portrayal of the formation of Sandstone Retreat, a settlement for communal sex and love in his book *Thy Neighbor's Wife*, is a metaphor for the sexual confusion and longings of all of America.⁶¹ In photography, the element that best corresponded with this quality of New Journalism is the photo essay. This form traditionally limits itself to a single narrative based around an element such as a character ("COUNTRY DOCTOR" by W. Eugene Smith) or location ("NEW YORK: A BIG SPECTACLE IN BIG PICTURES" by Andreas Feininger) that is largely unconcerned with historical context.

Earlier photo essays utilize scene-by-scene reconstruction, but as the photo essay evolved in the 1960s, many photographers developed an ever increasing closeness to their subjects, blurring the roles and closing the distance between those watching and those being watched. They were no longer standing apart from their subjects at all, as was the case with most of the ones in the first three decades of *Life*, but the photographer's role blurred as he or she seemed to immerse his or herself in the life of the subject and not maintain any kind of journalistic distance. Good examples of this are the intimate and transgressive photographs by Larry Clark or photographs from Danny Lyon's book *Bikeriders* during the creation of which Lyon said, "I was a bike rider, a photographer and a history student, probably in that order."⁶² These photographs were not only respectful and empathetic in the way of the photographs that take the insiders' perspectives, but they also went far beyond any of the ones in *Life* as they "declare rhetorically and visually the photographers' personal stake in the substance of the representations."⁶³

The second defining characteristic of New Journalism is the way it reveals character through a subject's dialogue.⁶⁴ For example, in the writer Rex Reed's profile of Ava Gardner, "AVA: LIFE IN THE AFTERNOON," the first article included in the collection *The New Journalism*, entire paragraphs go by without any commentary by Reed. In fact, most of the article is simply Reed transcribing Gardner's prattling.⁶⁵ Obviously, dialogue cannot be shown in a photograph, but a similar technique in photography is the way a subject's character is revealed by his or her body language during the moments they interact with others or in ways pointed out in the photograph's caption. These photographs show a subject revealing more of his or her self in a moment captured by the camera and is equivalent to the way subjects can betray themselves in unexpurgated dialogue in text.

The third technique utilized in both textual and photographic New Journalism is the use of overt stylization to attain objectivity through complete immersion and subjectivity. By overt stylization, I am referring to the use of storytelling methods that draw attention to the subject or theme because they are very unusual. In text, this largely manifests itself largely through the use of the third person limited point of view; that is, telling the story not from a neutral point of view, but from the point of view of another person. This is captured effectively in the pages of Tom Wolfe's *Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*, when he is describing the fugitive writer Ken Kesey's drug accentuated paranoia. Wolfe alternates between describing what seem to be innocuous actions--a tan sedan driving down the street without a license plate, a telephone linesman making repairs--with paragraphs in all capital letters describing it in Kesey's voice, such as "MORE TELEFONO TRUCKS! TWO LOUD WHISTLES THIS TIME--FOR NO EARTHLY REASON EXCEPT TO COME GIT YOU. YOU HAVE MAYBE 35 SECONDS LEFT."⁶⁶ Using multiple points of view in this way is traditionally the purview of fiction, but Wolfe claims its use in New Journalism is not fiction since it is only used after thorough interviews and research.⁶⁷ The corollary to this in photography is photographers' or photo editors conscious use of unusual angles, photographic effects that distort the image, or cropping decisions that alter appearance of a photograph in order to convey a message the image alone would not.

The final element that separates New Journalism from traditional modes of journalism is the reliance upon status details to reveal information about a subject that their words or actions might not. In photography this occurs when the subject is revealed is by the objects and clues surrounding them and not only by their photographed image. These items can clue the reader to make assumptions about the culture and character of a subject. The reading of these elements is largely based upon cultural stereotypes, and is treated similarly in both text and photographic forms of journalism. Objects are used as symbols of the subject's status, that is, they are seen to represent, "the entire pattern of behavior and possessions through which people express their position in the world."⁶⁸ This is an effective method to convey another aspect of a subject's character that is overlooked because it reveals the differences between how a subject presents his or herself to a journalist and how he or she might be understood without any pretensions.

Construction of "HAPPY DAYS IN MIAMI"

Life featured significant photographic coverage of every major presidential nominating convention from 1940 to 1972.⁶⁹ Beginning in 1940 onwards the photo essay on the convention appeared as the initial, shorter, "big news picture story" photo essay and never as the "big special feature." The most common images throughout the years of coverage are those stereotypical images most people still associate with political conventions to this day: the candidate and his family raising their arms in victory, wide shots of the delegates on the convention floor, supporters expressing glee for the winning candidate, as well as competitors making speeches at the podium. There are some notable exceptions, such as the photographs of the first television correspondents to report from a political convention having their make-up applied on pages 16 and 17 in the July 26, 1948 issue, but generally the images in convention issues are what we come to expect.

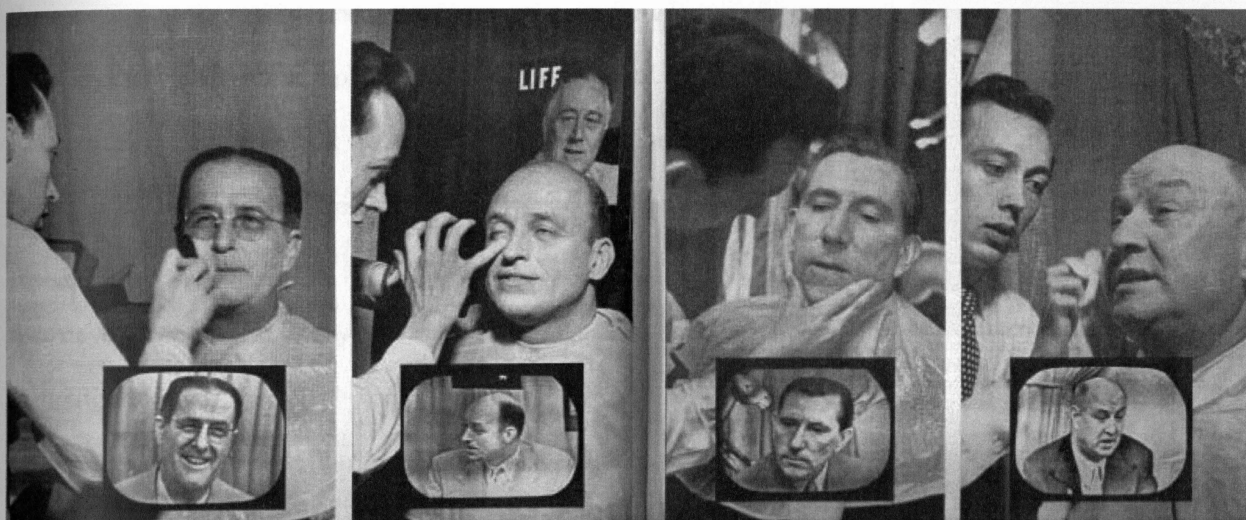


Figure 10 Eric Shaal, Francis Miller, George Skadding, Francis Miller, [Men Submitting to Make Up], *Life*, 26 July, 1948, 16-17.

The photographs in "HAPPY DAYS IN MIAMI" are distinct from prior convention coverage in that there are no photographs in the essay of actions taking place on the convention floor. Every other issue of *Life* covering a convention, floor photographs are the center of the essay. For example, most of the photographs from the nomination of John F. Kennedy in 1960 are shots of people looking joyous or celebrating on the convention floor and there are lots of balloons and even Barry Goldwater's contentious

nomination for the Republican Party in 1964, at a convention much like the Democratic one in 1972 (more famous for the infighting between the moderate and conservative wings of the party than for any belief Goldwater could defeat President Lyndon Baines Johnson), earns him glorifying photographs of people celebrating on the convention center's floor. "HAPPY DAYS IN MIAMI" is marked by McGovern consulting with advisors and family members in his hotel suite (FIG.16) and McGovern celebrating acknowledgement of his victory not with thousands of supporters and a balloon drop, but in a hotel room with just a few other people--none of them in focus (FIG.19).

The photo-essay "HAPPY DAYS IN MIAMI" makes up the majority of the coverage of the 1972 Democratic Convention in *Life*. It runs from page 6 to 14 and features photographs by Stanley Tretick and captions written by Richard Meryman.⁷⁰ Tretick was a photographer for *Look* magazine until it closed in 1971 and worked freelance for *Life* in its final year, while Meryman had been an editor at *Life* since the 1950s.⁷¹ The photo-essay covers the five days Tretick and Meryman spent with George McGovern and his campaign team in their "17th-floor rooms in the Doral Hotel."⁷² The July 21,

1972 issue credits four different photographers for the convention photographs: Stanley Tretick, Bill Epperidge, John Olson and Dick Swanson.⁷³ However, only Tretick was with McGovern in his hotel suite. *Life* was able to acquire their near-exclusive coverage of McGovern in the hotel suite through the work of Meryman.⁷⁴ Meryman previously edited articles about the McGovern campaign that were liked by those in the campaign; having gained

their trust, he was allowed access to the suite with a photographer for the week.⁷⁵

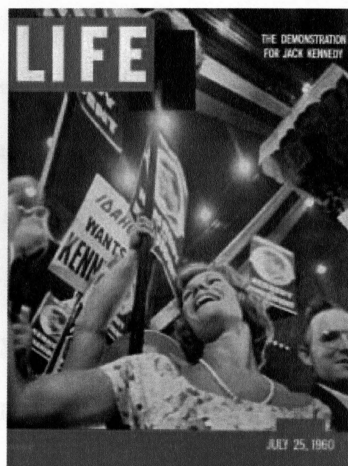


Figure 11 Howard Sochurek, [Supporters of John F. Kennedy at the Democratic National Convention], *Life*, 25 July, 1960, cover.



Figure 12 John Dominis, [Sen. Barry Goldwater and wife waving to constituents at Republican National Convention], *Life*, 24 July, 1964.



Figure 13 (Clockwise from Upper Left) Ken Regan, Eddie Adams, Regan, Michael Abramson, Regan, Regan, Dirck Halstead, Alan Freeman, Regan, (Center) Halstead, [On the Convention, Miami 1972], *Time*, 24 July, 1972, 14-15.

Ralph Graves was “enormously proud” of *Life*’s coverage although he felt that the magazine’s depleted resources limited the potential breadth of its coverage.⁷⁶ Graves recalls that he took only a half dozen employees to the convention in Miami, though other sources say he took thirteen.⁷⁷ This small number of workers made *Life* one of the smallest, if not the smallest, of the major media organizations in Miami. “*Newsweek*’s convention staff numbered thirty-five and *Time*’s was seventy, including eighteen photographers”; therefore, it must have been especially gratifying when *Time* with its eighteen photographers, asked Graves for one of Tretick’s photographs from the victory suite.⁷⁸ During the convention, each of the four photographers’ film was collected and sent to New York City for developing. The negatives were printed onto a contact sheet for Ralph Graves’ and the photo editors’ evaluation. Graves and the editors then created the issue in New York.⁷⁹ As they were constructing the photographic coverage Meryman wrote the captions for the photo-essay and an article on the convention.⁸⁰

Evaluation of “HAPPY DAYS IN MIAMI”

In comparison with other magazines *Life* took an unusual approach in its coverage of the 1972 Democratic Convention. It did not concentrate on the emotional spectacle of the convention floor where the ostensible “news” of the week was occurring as, for instance, *Time* did (FIG. 13), but instead it attempted to tell a story by focusing on the intimate moments in McGovern’s hotel suite television could not capture. They wanted a focus that was small and more human. While this choice to overlook the grandiose for something more intimate was undoubtedly unusual, it also played into

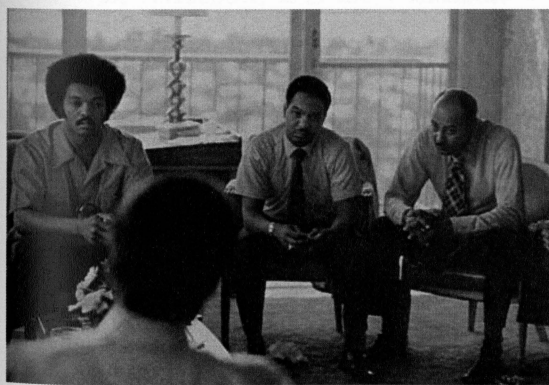


Figure 15 (Detail) Stanley Tretick, “Staying On Top with an Alert Staff,” *Life*, 21 July, 1972, 8-9.

some of Graves’ desire for the photography. First, having Tretick stay with the McGovern campaign headquarters for the duration of the not only gave him the time to take effective photographs without the need to set anything up, but it also gave him the opportunity to locate the shots that could best reflect the situation American was going through at this point, such as the photographs of

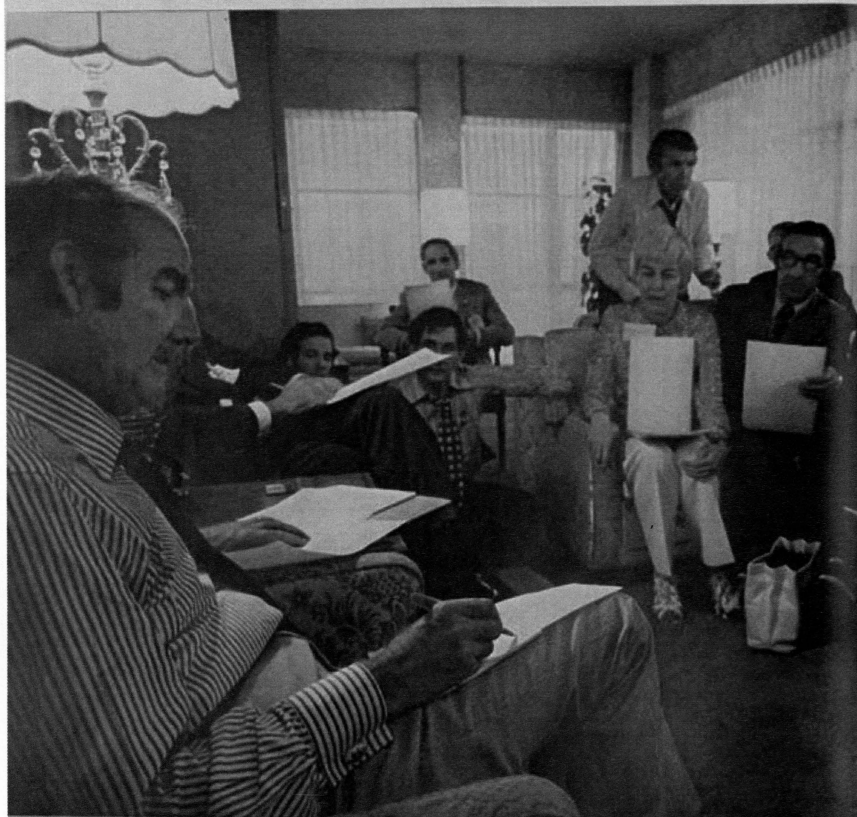
the black leaders confronting the white leader of their party (FIG. 15), and McGovern waiting out the

vote on the inclusion of the California delegates (FIG. 19). Second, on its face this work has little in common with the work of Larry Burrows, but the one element they do share is that the photographers were embedded, as it has become commonly known, with their subjects. The unlimited access provided to *Life* allowed the people in the suite to become more comfortable with the camera and therefore ignore its presence to a certain degree. This was used to show how campaigns operate, and to reveal George McGovern's relationship with both his family and campaign workers. Last, by having exclusive access to the suite, the decision to keep the focus small and human became the safest of bets for a compelling convention story and avoided the cost of bringing a large number of photographers to cover the convention floor.

An additional reason for the coverage to focus on the victory suite as opposed to having photographs of the scenes on the convention floor was the presence of television. Television was first used at the 1948 Republican and Democrat Conventions when newscasters did not report live from the convention site, but recorded their reports in order for them to be played back later.⁸¹ From 1952 to the present day both the Democrat and Republican Conventions have been shown live on television.⁸² For years *Life's* coverage of the conventions had similar images to those on television, seemingly following the same highly scripted arrangement as television, with "less flexibility allowable within the unfolding of the event itself."⁸³ In 1972 *Life* changed their tactic and provided the sort of intimate coverage television cameras could not. Tretick and the editors were able to tell a story similar to what television might have, but in an intimate, more personal and less scripted fashion.

In retrospect, this more intimate format for the convention became important only after the convention. McGovern was favoured by many on the far left of the Democratic Party, because he not only called for an immediate withdrawal from Vietnam, but advocated for open politics and the participation of all those who wished to be heard, especially minorities, women and young men and women.⁸⁴ This advocating for open politics brought many atypical delegates to the convention, the kind that may not have made up a majority of the party (or anything close to that), but who did draw a lot of attention. So, even though "the vast majority of the conventioners looked utterly conventional," they were not seen on television. Instead, the television cameras "dwelled on the likes of...Allen Ginsberg [sitting] cross-legged, chanting mantras...

STAYING ON TOP WITH AN ALERT

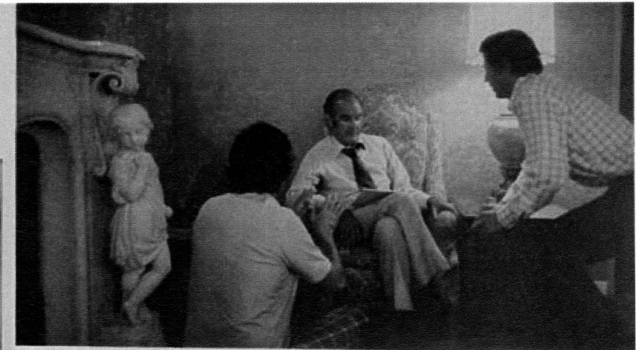


McGovern and his staff, above, measured their delegate strength often. On the floor at McGovern's left are aides Harold Himmelman and chief dele-

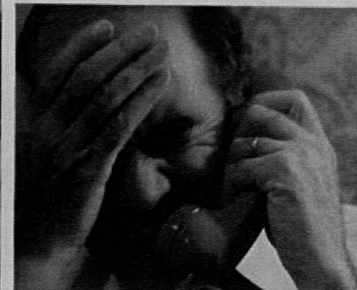
gate counter Rick Stearns. Behind them, seated, is close advisor John Douglas. Left to right on the couch are aide Jean Westwood, and advis-

ors Stewart Udall and Wisconsin Gov. Patrick Lucey. South Dakota's young lieutenant governor, Bill Dougherty, stands behind the couch.

STAFF



Surrounded by gaudy, resort-hotel appointments, McGovern discusses money matters, above, with finance chairman Henry Kissinger, left, and Morris Dees, who handles direct-mail for the campaign. The candidate worked his phone hard, left, and the news was nearly always good.



A meeting with black leaders, below, brought plain talk. Seated left to right are Rev. Jesse Jackson, Delegate Walter Fauntroy of Washington, D.C., and Rep. Louis Stokes of Ohio. They complained to McGovern that they were hearing second hand about activities relating to blacks and discussed ways of improving liaison with him.

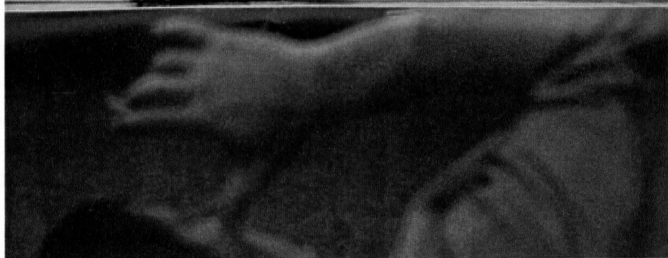


Figure 15 Stanley Tretick, 'Staying On Top with an Alert Staff', Life, 21 July, 1972, 8-9.

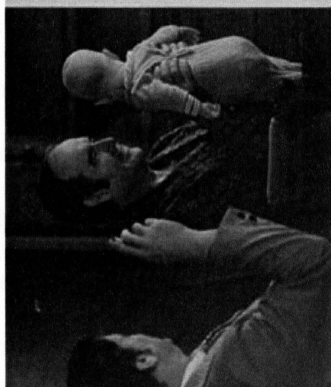
denim and tie-dyed t-shirts and peasant dresses; men carrying babies in papoose boards...a black man and a white woman kissing on camera," items antithetical to the "silent majority" that Richard Nixon alleged supported him.⁸⁵ While watching peculiar people may have made for a more interesting night of television, this sort of coverage drove away some Democrats watching from home, who could not see themselves voting for a man who they now came to believe was too socially liberal for them. The intimacy of the photographs normalized McGovern and differentiated him from the likes of Ginsberg.

"HAPPY DAYS IN MIAMI" is made up of three two-page sequences, bookended by introductory and closing images. It officially begins on pages six and seven (FIG.18), but the cover of the magazine functions as a preview of what is to come. This large, informal portrait of George McGovern described earlier not only prepares us for the high degree of informality in the essay, but also for Tretick's and the editors' ability to both record an image of the candidate, and express the character and personality of the man; the theme of George McGovern the man and Candidate McGovern is something "HAPPY DAYS IN MIAMI" explores throughout. Additionally, the caption on the cover informs readers what they will find inside. It reads: "Five showdown days with the McGovern in the victory suite." In a single picture and caption the cover introduces us to many of the themes we will find in the photo-essay.

As described earlier the most obvious connection between text-based New Journalism and New Photojournalism is the photo-essay's use of scene-by-scene reconstruction. This is first seen in "STAYING ON TOP WITH AN ALERT STAFF" (FIG. 15). The only unifying element in all four photographs is the figure of George McGovern. Beginning from the top left and proceeding clockwise he is shown with staff or delegates "measuring their delegate strength often," "discussing money matters," "working his phone hard," and "meeting with black leaders."⁸⁶ In other words, he is doing the low-key and non-photogenic work necessary. In the first photograph, McGovern is shown in a meeting in the foreground of the image, with his staff sitting on the couches some distance away. In the next shot, he appears to be in the same chair, but now two men are crowding him while they discuss money matters.⁸⁷ The caption for the next image reads that McGovern "worked his phone hard... and the news was nearly always good," but the image tells a different story.⁸⁸ McGovern is shown with a phone to his ear, his eyes shut tightly and a hand to his head. These three photographs depict a man of whom much is



Matthew Rowen, 5 months old, is the middle man of McGovern's three grandsons. While he could not provide high strategy, as chief political tactician Frank Mankiewicz is doing at left, he did contribute needed diversion. His grandfather crooned, "Hello, baby, Hello, baby," then turned back to brooding with Mankiewicz. Matthew found still more attention extended from his grandmother at right.



MIXING STRATEGY WITH HOUSEHOLD FUN



McGovern sits down to his room-service Saturday night dinner with McGovern's son, Sanders, and the table are crowded with James Rowen, bolding son Matthew, and McGovern staff aide Roger Sanders. In the background, McGovern's personal secretary Pat Donovan handles the phone, while aides Bill Dougherty, John Dougherty and Dick Dougherty huddle.



Daughter Terry, 23, plunks down on the senator's lap. At right, she touches her mother, who seeks a few moments' sleepy respite on the couch.



Figure 16 Stanley Tretick, 'Mixing Strategy with Household Fun', Life, 21 July, 1972, 10-11.

being demanded, and the resulting stress until we reach the last photograph. There, he is meeting with the black leaders Reverend Jesse Jackson, Delegate Walter Fauntroy, and Representative Louis Stokes of Ohio, and the shot is taken from directly behind him. The viewer sees what he sees: three angry politicians confronting him over "hearing second hand about activities related to blacks."⁸⁹ The strength in this photograph comes from what is unseen: McGovern's reaction. In just a few photographs the editors took you from a general meeting with nine others measuring "their delegate strength", to a discussion with two advisers of "money matters" to him speaking one-on-one with people over the phone to the last meeting that is about complaints.⁹⁰ Noticeably this image is placed immediately after we are told "the news was nearly always good."⁹¹ Once we read in the caption that this last photograph is about "plain talk" and we see the look on the men's faces, and specifically Delegate Walter Fauntroy's look of complete dissatisfaction it is difficult for anyone not to comprehend the apprehension McGovern must be feeling after the build up in the three previous photographs.⁹²

The organization of these photographs reveals little-to-no traditional journalistic distance. This is especially true of the third photograph. This photograph shows no real action, per se, it is a close up of McGovern looking pained speaking on the phone, but featuring a caption that states "the news was nearly always good" despite the pained look on his face. This image is only really useful as an example of photojournalism if it is part of a larger sequence such as this that reflects New Journalism's desire to "witness the scenes in other people's lives as they took place."⁹³ By the end of this sequence one understands why the caption on the cover of the magazine describes this convention as "showdown days."

The desire to show a full three-dimensional portrait of the candidate, something which is only really possible to do with closed-door access, leads *Life* to utilize another scene-by-scene reconstruction to in order to demonstrate the pinch on McGovern's family life. This personal side of the candidate's life is detailed in 'MIXING STRATEGY WITH HOUSEHOLD FUN' (FIG.16). The theme running through these photographs, however, is not one of family fun and togetherness, but the way candidates must balance the relationship between their family and their campaign, and in doing so possibly compromise their relationship with their family. This sequence is composed of six photographs sequenced to allow the

reader into the head of McGovern. This set of photographs represents the area where McGovern the candidate and McGovern the family man overlapping, as in a Venn diagram; they provide a scene-by-scene reconstruction of the way these positions are so difficult to hold in balance. The first photograph demonstrates the confluence of family and politics most clearly. It features McGovern in the center of the photograph holding his grandson Matthew and staring into his face as his chief political tactician Frank Mankiewicz sits nearby, just out of focus, to "provide high strategy."⁹⁴ The next photograph is a close-up just of McGovern and his grandson much like the cover of the issue, and a last wider shot portrays Mankiewicz, McGovern, Matthew and Eleanor McGovern sitting together. It is clear these photographs make up a sequence of shots. Mankiewicz and Eleanor were probably by George McGovern's side the whole time; the difference between Mankiewicz and Eleanor is that from the first photograph onwards we are aware of Mankiewicz's presence, but only learn of Eleanor's when we get to the third and final photograph, denoting their relative importance at this moment.

The conflict of McGovern's public and private selves is most pronounced in the photograph at the bottom of page 10. George and Eleanor McGovern are sitting down to dinner with their son-in-law and grandson nearby. In the next photograph these family members are surrounded by campaign workers that are either talking with McGovern directly, making phone calls or strategizing (we can assume) on his behalf. Even at a traditional moment of familial bonding like dinner, McGovern cannot escape from his job as a candidate and return to the security and ease of the hearth represented by the joyful looks on his face when he is only with his family throughout the whole of the essay.

The most telling of McGovern's familial relationship are the two on the bottom of page 11. The one on the right shows McGovern's daughter, Terry, sitting on his lap. With their smiling faces occupying much of the top third of the image one cannot help but feel they are both happy, but if one looks for a moment longer one notices George McGovern's hand sticking out from around Terry holding a pile of papers. As soon as one realizes these papers represent the work yet to be done this ostensibly happy photograph becomes tinged with melancholy. This melancholy is justified by the last photograph in this section, on the bottom right hand corner of the page. Here Eleanor "seeks a few moment's sleepy respite on the couch" in the hotel, with only her daughter providing support.⁹⁵ The space between them

Photographed by
STANLEY TRETICK

HAPPY DAYS IN MIAMI

On the night they arrived in Miami Beach, George and Eleanor McGovern leaned back and smiled at each other in their hotel suite. Looking as relaxed and confident as any happily married couple beginning a luxurious vacation, they actually faced five days of hard work and waiting. McGovern did his thinking and politicking awash in the stream of family and staff members who poured through his 17th-floor rooms in the Doral Hotel. He dandled his grandson while mulling over strategy, vote counts, platform. He listened to important visitors and watched important moments on television. If no weightier matter was at hand, McGovern kept busy by tidying up around the cluttered suite. During this crucial period, photographer Stanley Tretick kept a remarkable pictorial record of the pleasures and tensions that came last week to a presidential candidate on the verge of nomination.



Figure 18 Stanley Tretick, [George and Eleanor McGovern], *Life*, 21 July, 1972, 6-7.

is seemingly meant for McGovern, but he is undoubtedly off dealing with that pile of papers from the previous photograph.

Looked at positively this section portrays a man who loves his personal and professional lives in equal measure, but it could also very easily be seen as a man who is being overwhelmed by the latter at the expense of the former. If Tretick tried to capture the pull between McGovern's personal and political loyalties in a disconnected set of shots it would lose its effectiveness, or be too melodramatic; by constructing this section in a way that not only seems realistic but reasonable it is much more poignant and revealing. The way New Journalism reveals a subject's character through their own words and dialogue is the same way photographs reveal a subject's character by capturing their body language in a given moment. This is best seen on the first page of the photo-essay (FIG.18). Here the reader's attention is drawn less to one person or the other in the

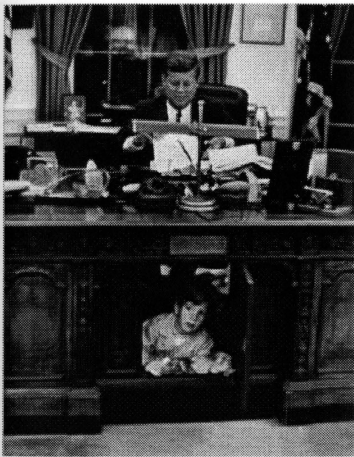


Figure 17 Stanley Tretick, 'John Jr. Playing under JFK's Desk', *Look*, 3 December, 1963.

photograph and more to the space between them. All that we really need to know about the couple's feelings at that moment are captured in their body language. Eleanor sits in a bright red sweater, bathed in a bright light, stretched out and leaning back in a fairly inviting pose. George sits across from her and has the unmistakable look of a man who unmistakably enjoys her presence. This image introduces an unusual aspect of presidential news coverage at that time: it portrays the potential first couple in a seemingly unguarded moment that makes the couple's relationship three-dimensional and not one

merely created for the benefit of the candidacy of the man who could potentially be the leader of the free world. It is similar to the impression Tretick created of John F. Kennedy a decade earlier as a capable of balancing his ability to be a loving father with his passion for his job (FIG.17).

The overt stylization of New Journalism in comparison with traditional journalism is most effectively captured in its use of telling stories from the point of view of another person. In text this is called third-person limited narration, and in "Happy Days in Miami" this is best captured in "WINNING BREAKTHROUGH" (FIG.19) by its noticeable differences from the rest of the essay. After the initial photograph of McGovern

McGovern's nomination was actually won Monday night when his full California delegation was seated. Before the vote, the argument over credentials raged, and the waiting McGovern ranged through a scale of emotions. Right, he calmly slices a banana into some dry cereal. Below, he munches grapes while concentrating tightly on television reports. At far right, he exuberantly slugs the air as he shows former California Gov. Pat Brown how his troops are fighting. Watching are secretary Pat Donovan and minorities aide Yancey Martin.



WINNING BREAKTHROUGH

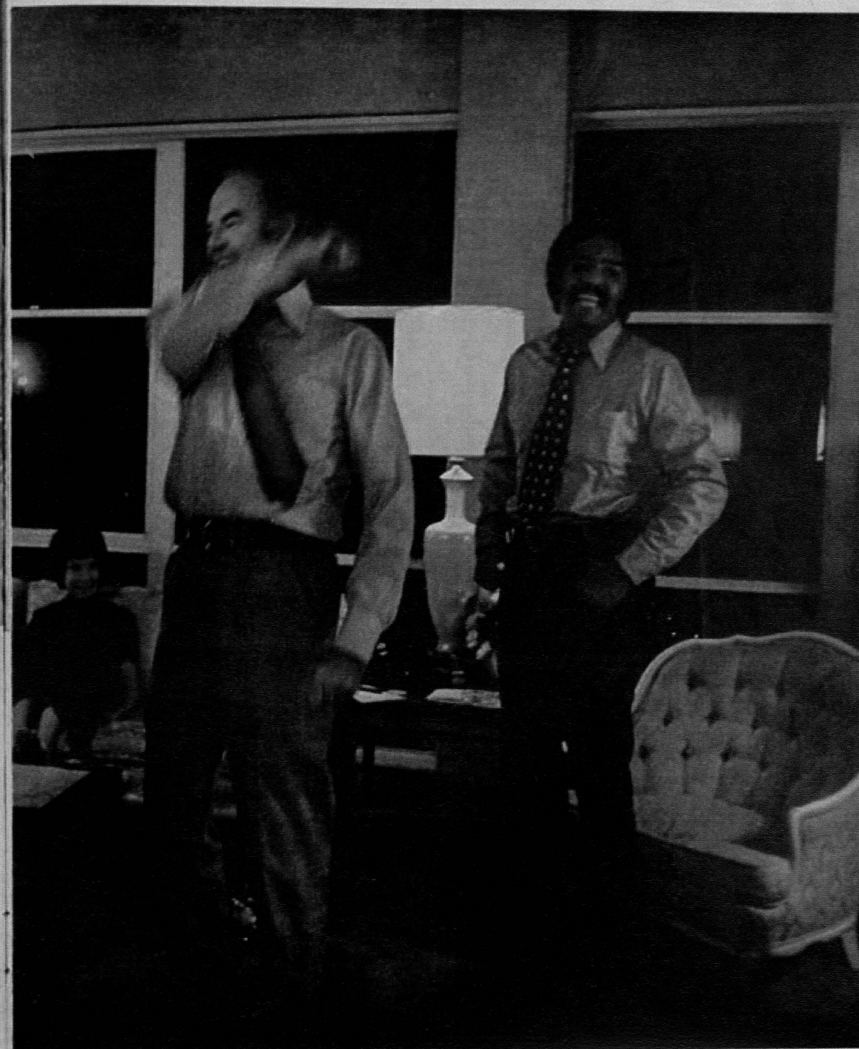
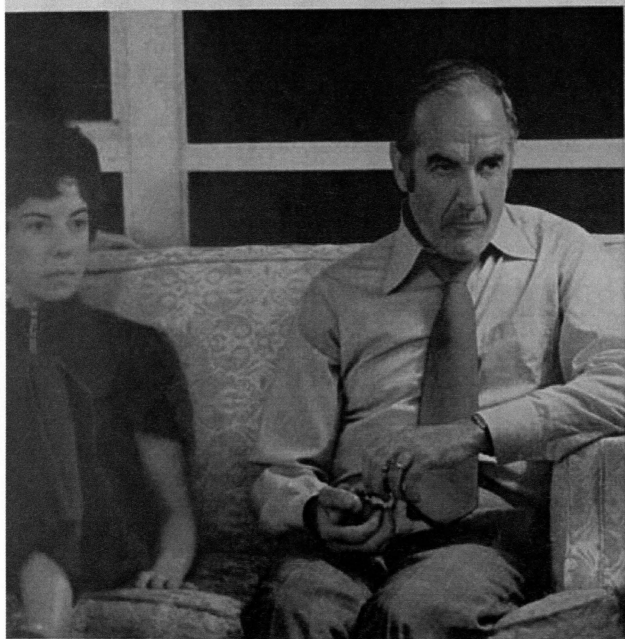


Figure 19 Stanley Tretick, 'Winning Breakthrough', *Life*, July 21, 1972, 12-13.

with his wife, and the sequences depicting McGovern's interaction with the campaign workers and the rest of his family, this section is notable for its exclusive focus on George McGovern. It reconstructs McGovern's anticipation and reaction to winning the right to seat his California delegates.

This is the most important section in the photo-essay because it represents the crucial issue of the entire convention centered on the ownership of California's 271 delegates. McGovern captured all of them on June 6, but an 'Anyone But McGovern' "coalition led by Hubert Humphrey's agents pushed through an after-the-fact change in the rules, parceling out the California delegation proportionately," and cost "McGovern 151 delegates."⁹⁶ If this decision stood it would have cost McGovern the majority 1,509 delegates needed to gain the nomination, and perhaps make delegates think about drafting another nominee. In short, this was the moment that would make or break the entire reform movement McGovern had instigated: if the reform did not result in any change and Humphrey was nominated as the result of, to quote McGovern himself, "such a naked power grab-straight power, no principle, straight opportunism," nothing in the Democratic party was likely to change except, perhaps, an even greater disenfranchisement between the party and those whose representation McGovern's new rules of representation sought to promote.⁹⁷

Given these circumstances it is natural that McGovern is the prominent figure in each photograph, prominent to the point that he is the only figure clearly captured in the whole sequence. This sequence is about seeing the decision of the delegates from his point of view, in the same way Tom Wolfe makes the outlandish LSD-influenced cross-country bus ride the author Ken Kesey undertakes in *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* empathetic by telling moments of the story from his point of view.⁹⁸ Driving this point home is that in the first two photographs the reader's attention is drawn to McGovern's eyes due to the camera angles Tretick utilized. In this sequence the first two photographs of him eating are taken from noticeably higher angles than most of the previous photographs. Readers literally look down on McGovern in the first picture; the second shot is taken from a lower angle than the first and McGovern takes up most of the frame, but the photograph is still from an angle commensurate with a position of authority; in the last photograph McGovern is in the position of authority as he "exuberantly slugs the air" in celebration of his California delegates being seated.⁹⁹

This last photograph spreads over pages 12 and 13, and it is easily the most distinctive image in the issue. It is distinctive not only because of what McGovern is doing, but the way he is shown doing it. The first two photographs are sharply focused and tightly cropped images of a stressed McGovern, but this final shot is so effective because the McGoverns' celebratory reaction is so passionate that he moves faster than the shutter and appears only as a whirling dervish thereby underlying the tension of the first two images and emphasizing the exuberance of this moment. If it was printed in the style of the first two images of this spread, the celebration would simply appear as joyous, but instead it comes across as exaltation and relief. The only time I am aware of *Life's* use of similar stylistic choices is in its Vietnam War photography, like the Burrows photograph detailed earlier.

The last primary quality of New Journalism, the reliance upon status details to reveal information about the characters, is easy to recognize when analyzing the photographs that bookend this photo essay. By status, I mean not just the subject's economic standing, but their social status. The material objects in the first photograph (Fig.16) illuminate the character of the subjects. The key status details in this photograph are the rumpled clothes, the can of beer--Budweiser no less--the papers in George's right hand, Eleanor's bright purse and high-collared, frilly blouse. Such details can be read in various ways, but my initial reaction was of a hard-working man who is drinking the most American of beers and his stylishly conservative wife. This reading is telling because some of their main supporters, the young and dedicated grass roots activists, were condescendingly said to, "look like the cast of Hair," the counterculture musical, and not upstanding members of the Democratic Party.¹⁰⁰ There is nothing revolutionary about the couple shown in this photograph; nothing that should cause any kind of fear in traditional Democrat supporters. These details (or lack of details depending on your point of view) reveal aspects of McGovern's character that are not covered in the captions or the subsequent feature article; the former is basically a thesis for the photo-essay to follow with little about the couple, and the latter about McGovern the politician, while these details capture McGovern the human being in a way the text does not.

The last photograph in "HAPPY DAYS IN MIAMI" also utilizes details to reveal aspects of McGovern's status, but in this case it is not social status as much as it is professional status (FIG.20).

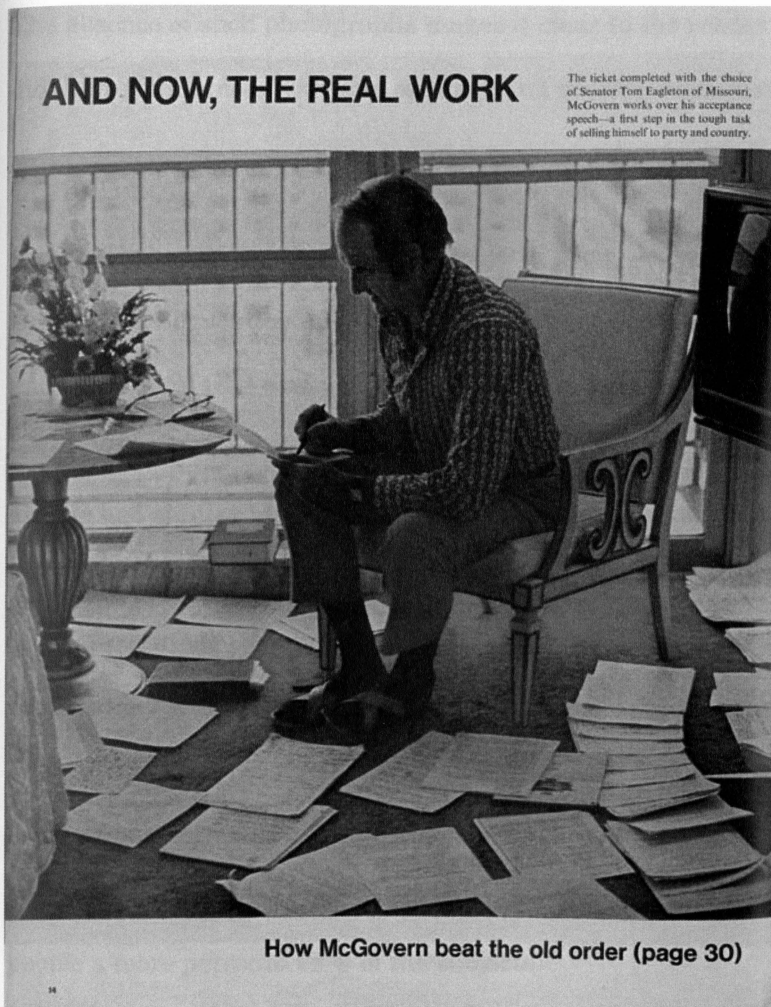


Figure 20 Stanley Tretick, 'And Now the Real Work Begins', *Life*, 21 July 1972.

"AND NOW, THE REAL WORK BEGINS"

the title above McGovern states as he "works over his acceptance speech--a first step in selling himself to party and country."¹⁰¹ However, when one looks at this photograph one does not see a man who is prepared to sell himself. There are few symbols that signify poor professional status more than the worker with papers piled all over their desk. In this case the piles of paper--presumably memoranda, briefing papers and prior drafts being patched together for his victory speech--are not only on the desk, but all over the floor with little apparent order. These piles act as symbols for McGovern's level of

competence and organization. I could not find out exactly how soon after the convention Graves and the other editors compiled the issue, but this symbolism as an ill-prepared and second-rate candidate could be a reflection of the disorganized nature of the convention as well as a comment on McGovern's choice of Vice-President candidate Thomas Eagleton, whose earlier incarceration in a mental hospital where he underwent electroshock treatment that McGovern did not know about.¹⁰²

Missing from *Life's* photo-essay are the celebratory images of the convention, featuring the Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates and convention goers. Traditionally, they would have appeared joyous and smiling in the photographs, presiding over a convention hall full of celebrating supporters and falling balloons. These images do appear in *Time*, but are undercut by text which proclaims such things as, Nixon "could come across as both more stable and wiser than McGovern."¹⁰³

The absence of such photographs makes it clear to the reader that to the editors, "[McGovern's] name didn't matter," since, "He, She, or It couldn't possibly beat Nixon in November."¹⁰⁴

Conclusion

Undoubtedly, the stylistic tools of New Journalism were widely brought to bear on the Democratic Convention in 1972. Hunter S. Thompson and Timothy Crouse covered it for *Rolling Stone*, and Norman Mailer was writing an article on it for *Life* that would be published in the 28 July 1972 issue. When looking at "HAPPY DAYS IN MIAMI," I have no doubt Stanley Tretick and the photo editors at *Life* had similar ideas in mind when he took the photographs and they were laid out. It was as if in their attempt to convey the chaotic state of the convention, the party, and possibly the country in a more intimate manner they knew the aesthetics of a previous era of *Life* would not effectively convey the conflict they witnessed. They needed something more evocative and expressive; the strategies of New Journalism gave it to them. The photographs and their sequencing convey ideas and themes in a more expressive and immediate fashion; greater chances are taken with the style of the photographs so the reader will take greater notice of the most important moments; and status details are utilized to give people a more personal view of the subjects.

In the *Letters* section of the August 18, 1972 issue of *Life*, readers responded to this new photojournalism from "HAPPY DAYS IN MIAMI" in a way that demonstrates these traits were noticed by *Life* readers. Newspaper and magazine *Letters* sections generally feature an equal number of letters for and against an issue, chosen to represent all the letters received. Two letters from opposite sides of the political divide exemplify the effectiveness of the use of the New Journalism strategies. The first letter by Marvin Beckman states: "Thank you for your eye-opening pictures. I'm not wasting my very first presidential vote on a beer-drinking man who wears a bathrobe for a meeting with his staff."¹⁰⁵ The second letter by Shirley Loomis Klotz states: "Bravo! For your "IN THE VICTORY SUITE" photos. How delicious it is to see real people as is--instead of the pseudo, carefully orchestrated pictures of the Washington Royal Court."¹⁰⁶

What is so interesting about these two letters is that similar elements are noticed by each writer, but elicit opposing reactions. In the first letter Beckman is opposed to McGovern being a beer drinker

and his informal attire with his campaign advisers. The former is an example of the reader picking up on status details. We never see a McGovern with a beer in his hand, much less him consuming one; in fact, the one rule Ralph Graves always upheld as editor at *Life* was that a photograph should neither show a person consuming alcohol or show him or her with alcohol in their hand.¹⁰⁷ Tretick's and the editors' inclusion of this detail led Beckman to draw an assumption, whether he should have or not, that this beer, this little detail, is indicative of his character.

he most interesting problem Beckman has, however, is one of the most distinctive details in the entire essay, McGovern's pyjamas. It was unusual to see an important man depicted in such a casual manner. As described earlier "MIXING STRATEGY WITH HOUSEHOLD FUN" (FIG. 16) had a sequence of photographs showing McGovern holding a meeting with his strategist Mankiewicz while holding his grandson, while his wife sits to his left. This sequence revealed how little time there was for McGovern the family man. Marvin E. Beckman disapproved of a scene that places the reader in a situation he found inappropriate yet Shirley Loomis Klotz praises this scene because it showed readers a view of the candidate they never saw before. She lauded this informality; she felt this depiction (a depiction that would be impossible without the complete immersion of the photographer with McGovern's campaign team) was a positive one because it revealed the subject as he actually was and not how he felt he should be viewed, which was one of the aims of New Journalism.

These are two responses out of many and both notice elements that were unlikely to have been present in earlier photo-essays in *Life*. The fact that these elements were noticed at all demonstrates the topicality of "HAPPY DAYS IN MIAMI". I think it would be highly informative to read all the readers' responses to this article, as their reactions would be the only empirical method to discern whether the use of these New Journalistic techniques were effective in portraying the events of that week. The provocative techniques and philosophies employed in the construction of this photo-essay elicited a noticeable reaction from readers, engaging them in an analysis of changing political discourse and aesthetic prerogatives in a manner that was groundbreaking in its informal depiction of a political figure.

Endnotes

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