



Guide for **Judges, Chairs and Entrants** of PSA-recognized Exhibitions with **Photojournalism** sections, and for all other Photojournalism competition and activities in the PJ Division

Photojournalism Division—effective June 1, 2024

This guide should be reviewed by exhibition chairs, PJ section chairs, directors of PJ activities and all PJ judges before any PJ images are judged.

Purpose of the Definition

The PSA Photojournalism Division (PJD) is *reality-based*, like the PSA Photo Travel and Nature Divisions. The objective of PSA Photojournalism (PJ) is to capture spontaneous moments in our world to make informative images with impact. The purpose of the PJ definition is to guide photojournalism entrants towards showing life as it is, rather than how they would like it to be, to avoid deceiving the viewer and to produce truthful depictions of their observations. This illustrated guide is intended to help judges and entrants gain a clearer understanding of the definition, and to guide judges to accept appropriate PJ images that succeed without violating the definition.

Below are the individual sections of the PJ *definition (in red)*, illustrated with examples to explain each part of the definition and some examples of images that do not meet the definition.

Photojournalism entries are images with informative content



and emotional impact,



reflecting the human presence in our world.



The journalistic (story-telling) value of the image receives priority over pictorial quality.



Not eligible are images that misrepresent the truth, such as those from events or activities arranged specifically for photography, or of subjects directed or hired for photography.



The image to the left is an honest depiction of a group of people making photographs. The one below is an attempt to deceive the viewer into believing that it was a found moment that was happening spontaneously.

(two examples courtesy of Tom Tauber, APSA, MPSA)



Processing or editing must be limited to making the image look as close to the original scene as possible.



Except that full conversion to monochrome is allowed.



In addition, when Human Interest is SPECIFIED, those images depict a person or persons in an interactive, emotional or unusual situation,



EXCLUDING sports action.



In summary, the PJ definition:

Photojournalism entries are:

- *images with informative content and emotional impact*
 - *reflecting the human presence in our world.*
 - *The journalistic (story-telling) value of the image receives priority over pictorial quality.*
 - *Not eligible are images that misrepresent the truth, such as those from events or activities arranged specifically for photography, or of subjects directed or hired for photography.*
- *Processing or editing must be limited to making the image look as close to the original scene as possible, except that full conversion to monochrome is allowed.*

Allowed Editing Techniques:

- *Cropping, straightening and perspective correction*
- *Removal or correction of elements added by the camera or lens, such as dust spots, noise, chromatic aberration or lens distortion*
- *Global and selective adjustments such as brightness, hue, saturation and contrast to restore the integrity of the original scene.*
- *Several images (typically 2-4), each with a small white border, combined into a single image that depicts a progression of events or related activity.*

Editing Techniques That Are NOT Allowed:

- *Removing, adding, moving or changing any part of an image, except for the allowed techniques*
- *Blurring or darkening parts of the image during processing to obscure elements in the original scene*
- *Partial color or partial toning*
- *Unnatural color, extreme saturation or desaturation*

PSA Statements on Artificial Intelligence and Subject Matter apply to all sections.

When a Human Interest Section or a Human Interest Award is offered, the following statement is included:

When human interest is specified, those images depict a person or persons in an interactive, emotional or unusual situation, excluding sports action.

Note to Entrants:

Entrants to a PJ competition should ask themselves if the image is a true representation that was not influenced by them, or by anyone on their behalf, and was not changed in post processing to reflect anything inaccurately. Otherwise, it should be entered only in Projected Image Division or Pictorial Print Division exhibitions or competitions.

Note to Judges:

*Judges of PJ exhibitions should ask themselves if the image meets every aspect of the definition in their opinion. If not, it should be scored lower, **regardless of the photographic merit**. However, disqualification (DQ) is reserved for a violation that is unambiguous, and **not** based on opinion.*

For more information, contact the PJD Exhibition Standards Director at pjd-esd@psa-photo.org or PJD Image Evaluation at <https://psa-photo.org/page/mo-individual-image-evaluation>

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