

Paradoxical Communication in Creative Travel Photography

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Abstract

This study reviews paradox in photography and finds common elements that construct its paradox and can be use as guidelines for creating paradoxical travel photography. Paradox is something that appears to be true and yet contradicts itself. Paradox stimulate audiences attention to receive the unexpected messages and persuade them to visit the place. In rhetoric or figure of speech, paradox is a profound text that audiences get through its hidden messages, these contradictory messages conceal reality and sometimes violate most people's beliefs and common senses that seems unlikely possible. Paradox is used in various mediums such as novel, drama, music, photograph, movies etc.

Travel photography degrades the travel experience by making people familiar with where they are going before they get there. The travel photography is the image that exhibits its landscape, people, culture in specific time. The propose of this study is to find elements to create photographs for heritage tourism that attract tourists paradoxically.

Keywords: Paradoxical Communication, Travel Photography, Creative Research.

Background

This study aims to implicate the concept of Paradox to apply in a creative research which will produce its photographic production for travel photography that supports heritage tourism. This creative research combined qualitative method and used media technology to construct photograph to simulates audiences for relishing their experiences and the meaning within media and messages that allure the target audience. In which the researcher intends to find the ingredients to construct potential photographs to promote the heritage tourist attraction.

Consequently, Paradox has been used in communication messages, that motivated the audiences which blended in various media such as literatures, novels, photographs, television and movies. The researcher noticed that Paradox attracts audience with its controvert to their common senses, which stimulate and help audience to receive the communication message that signified the meaning.

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Significance of the study

Creating text with Paradox helps to complicate the content of the presentation that causing viewers to experience unexpected events and surprised with new content which are able to motivated and inspired the audience to enjoy the presented message continuously. This constructing method therefore provided its success for the messenger to create communication text, which is achieving an important communication objective – to understand and entertain the audiences.

Research Objective

The main objective of this study is to understand the attribution of paradox that used in various media, to find ways of applying it to travel photography that attract audiences to view, consume and entertained by its contents.

Research Findings

As mentioned, the purpose of the work is planning to do the Creative research for photographic production to promote heritage tourism which is the 16th century Japanese Village in Ayutthaya through photography to help tourists understand its lifestyle and culture in the Ayutthaya period. The study employs a documentary and creative research methodology to investigate the process of meaning construction through photography using the imaginative communication approach to collect and analyze the data, and then to simulate them through photography for heritage tourism to enhance their socioeconomic values.

What is a Creative Research?

Practice-based research, can take form when creative works are considered both the research and the object of research itself. It is the debatable body of thought which offers an alternative to purely scientific methods in research in its search for knowledge and truth. Sir Christopher Frayling (Frayling C., 1993) describe different ways of thinking about research, noting that research could be for practice, where research aims are subservient to practice aims, through practice, where the practice serves a research purpose, such as observing the working processes of others. Bruce Archer's statement (Archer B., 1995) shows the growing recognition of arts practice as research at this time, There are circumstances where the best or only way to shed light on a proposition, a principle, a material, a process or a function is to attempt to construct something, calculated to explore, embody or test it.

What is Travel Photography?

Travel photography is central within the modern tourist gaze. Vision and the tourist gaze are linked with the medium of photography, the most important technology for developing and extending the tourist gaze.

The tourist gaze is directed to features of landscape and townscape which separate them off from everyday experience. (Urry, J.R., & Larsen, J. 2011) Such aspects are viewed because they are taken to be in some sense out of the ordinary. The viewing of such tourist sights often involves different forms of social patterning, with a much greater sensitivity to visual elements of landscape or townscape than normally found in everyday life. People linger over such a gaze, which is then often visually objectified or captured through photographs. These enable the gaze to be reproduced, recaptured and redistributed over time and across space.

What is a Paradox?

In the everyday sense of the word a paradox is a statement that appears self-contradictory or opposed to common sense, but is perhaps true. (Hayden, G., & Picard, M. 2009) In this loose sense of the word, British philosopher R.M.Sainsbury's statement that a paradox is "an apparently unacceptable conclusion derived by apparently acceptable reasoning from apparently acceptable premises"

Through such paradoxes, human beings communicate indirectly about the things that are most important in human lives. (Peter Murphy, 2009) These things are often notoriously elusive, which is why they lend themselves to indirect, tacit, enigmatic and, in general, indirect ways of communicating.

Sample of Paradox Sets, (Hayden, G., & Picard, M. 2009) there are many different paradoxes as follows:

Knowing and Believing : The will to believe, Placebo effects that is itself has no pharmaceutical properties but it works only because the patient believes it will cure.

Vagueness and Identity : The vagueness of words like "bald" and "heap" can not be done away with by any amount of information gathering.

Logic and Truth : An interesting thing happens in the unprovable liar – the self-referential paradoxes such as an example of the statement "This statement is false", a form of the liar paradox. The statement is referring to itself, the statement cannot be false and true at the same time.

Mathematical Paradoxes : There are many proofs that use proof by contradiction, where you make a statement and then prove that it is wrong by producing a contradiction such as paradox of infinity.

Probability Paradoxes : Probabilities are numbers between 0 and 1 that tell us how likely various events are. An event that will certainly happen such as the sun will rise tomorrow, but who can confirm that what if the world ends tomorrow then the sun wouldn't rise anymore or what if there are more cloudy enough to darken the sky and block the sun from our eyes. This Gambler's fallacy can alternate the truth of the matter from gambler's belief.

Space and Time : Zeno's paradox of Achilles and the Tortoise showing that Achilles would never catch the tortoise by running to its present location, he can only catch it by running

to meet it at future location. As more paradoxically with Grandfather paradox that if someone going back to the time before the birth of his father in order to kill his grandfather. If he succeeds, he would prevent the birth of his father and thus guarantee his own non-existence, which is clearly absurd.

Impossibilities : The paradox of the stone explained impossibilities through paradoxical question that Could God make a stone so heavy that even He could not lift it? To answer YES is to imply that there is something God could not do (lift the stone). To answer NO is also to imply that there is something God could not do (create this stone)

Deciding and Acting : The paradox that give clues to people for them to make a decision and lead them to do a paradoxical action. For example the Buridan's bridge paradox.

Buridan's Bridge

Socrates wishes to cross a river using a bridge.

Plato, the bridge keeper, says, "If your next utterance is true, I will let you cross. But if it is false, I will throw you into the water".

Socrates mischievously replies "You will throw me into the water".

This makes Plato can not fulfill his promise, because if he throws Socrates into the water then Socrates speaks truly.

Paradoxical shows and leads to surprises, challenges, and most confuses to audience's mind, and it stimulate audiences attention to receive the unexpected messages. This concept can be used in various mediums such as novel, drama, music, photograph, movies etc.

Sample of Paradoxical in Media

Figure of Speech is one of the rhetorical tactics, is a statement of meaning that is similar to the conflict. But when analyzing and interpreting, it is possible as mentioned. It's the words or phrases that have conflicting or opposite content to be discussed together to make it more interesting. These are example of figure of speech in Thai language :

ไฟเย็น, เล็กดีรสโต, ชัยชนะของผู้แพ้, สันติภาพร้อน, ยิ่งรีบก็ยิ่งช้า, หัวเราะร่ำน้ำตาริน, ความขมขื่นอันหวานชื่น

these figure of speech contain contradictory meaning, but also containing the truth.

Music Lyrics used statements contrary to belief and understanding of most people in general, which seems unlikely impossible to happen. The reason why sometimes poets do not use the word in its true meaning, but used in terms of its images and audiences' feelings that have more

than one meaning. These are example from Thai Music Band “Dr.Fuu” in order to send message to the audience with a profound feeling through connotation (hidden) messages.

“คำว่ารักจะขอใช้มันเพื่อรำลา กับคนไม่มีค่า สบตาซักครั้งได้ไหม”

Lyrics above has a conflict in a message saying that “we used the word - LOVE for saying Goodbye” although the word love is often used to keep lovers close together. But considering the conflicts, it is possible because if you love someone, then women do not love you back and do not appreciate it. The man must use the word love to say goodbye.

TV Series: Big Love, a 5 season American TV series tell a story of a polygamist who faces a myriad of challenges in meeting the emotional, romantic and financial needs of his three wives and seven children in suburban Salt Lake City. As normal family love life, people intend to keep love monogamously (involving marriage to one person at a time) but this paradoxical story shows how a man live his life with three wives and seven children, it out of ordinary and absurd, but it sure calls attention.

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Bill Paxton stars as Bill Henrickson, a polygamist who faces a myriad of challenges in meeting the emotional, romantic and financial needs of his three wives and seven children in suburban Salt Lake City.

Featured Cast

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- Jeanne Tripplehorn**
Barbara Dutton Henrickson
- Chloë Sevigny**
Nicolette Grant
- Ginnifer Goodwin**
Margene Heffman
- Amanda Seyfried**
Sarah Henrickson

Picture 1 : Official home page of Big Love TV series

Films: The Fighter Pilot (2013) - The Eternal Zero, a Japanese films telling a story of a young woman and her brother explore the history of their grandfather Kyuzo Miyabe, a Kamikaze pilot who died in the World War 2. They start contacting the men who flew with him, asking them about who he was. The main paradoxical story is about why his comrade blaim him as a coward, , though an exceptionally skilled fighter pilot, for consistently returning alive from missions, openly explaining "I don't want to die," the result of a promise made to his wife Matsuno and daughter Kiyoko: to return from the war alive. This paradox was showing a view of a strange-minded pilot who must give his life for the Empire of Japan, but he did an opposite way of living



Picture 2 : Official poster of The Fighter Pilot (2013) - The Eternal Zero

Fashion Photography: The first example of paradoxical photography is titles THE LAST FAREWHALE, these photo series by a Thai fashion photographer, Tom Potisit who was inspired by the mystery death of a Bryde's whale found beached not far from Bangkok. He shot this series with a Dutch model, Melanie De Witt.



Picture 3 : sample of Fashion Photography THE LAST FAREWHALE



Picture 4 : sample of Fashion Photography THE LAST FAREWHALE



Picture 5 : sample of Fashion Photography THE LAST FAREWHALE

The photo series THE LAST FAREWHALE was an impact to audiences as it was taken where the Bryde's whale found dead. The professional model showed her feeling of losing a significant living in tragedy that contradict and conflict of the ugly death and the beautiful living. This set of photographs has its own uniqueness with bizarre events, but visualized with aesthetic presentation.

Conclusion

This review of Paradox shows how media creators initiated and constructed their idea and stories to challenge audiences to received messages that inspired and attracted their feelings. This is how to use the review to start deconstruct these example and extend creating the attractive travel photography with paradoxical, which will stimulate with unexpected messages.

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