

Abstract

This thesis deals with visual communication in the form of photography. Explaining the theories of Roland Barthes and Vilém Flusser we point out the tight relationship of this medium with reality that obscures its constructive character. The witness role of photography seems to be essential in the context of journalism, where we are offered a story by the pictures that is however mistaken for reality itself. The thesis tries to present practices of media discourse that make us perceive an event as newsworthy. It draws on the theory of news values and the methods of social semiotic analysis and applies these to the winning photos of the contest Czech Press Photo (2006-2015). We highlight the semiotic resources used in the meaning-making process in relation to each picture. The results show that the preferred constructed news values are negativity, aesthetic appeal, proximity and personalisation and that the winning photographs mostly strengthen their semblance of being strictly informative.