

Visual Construction of Youth in Czechoslovak Press Photographs: 1959-1989

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Abstract : This text focuses on the visual construction of youth in press photographs in socialist Czechoslovakia. It deals with photographs in a magazine for young readers, *Mladý svět*, published by the Socialist Union of Youth of Czechoslovakia. The aim of this study was to develop a methodological tool for uncovering the values and the ideological messages in the strategies used in the visual construction of reality in the socialist press. Two methods of visual analysis were applied to the photographs, a quantitative content analysis and a social semiotic analysis. The social semiotic analysis focused on images representing youth in their free time. The study shows that the meaning of a socialist press photograph is a result of a struggle for ideological power between formal and informal ideologies. This struggle takes place within the process of production of the photograph and also within the process of interpretation of the photograph.

Keywords : ideology, press photography, socialist regime, social semiotics, youth

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