

Teaching Photography in the Context of Jamaica's Photographic Culture

ABSTRACT

This reflective teaching research evaluates and examines how effective the teaching of photography has been in Jamaica, based on over six years of conducting workshops and lecturing at various universities and colleges in Jamaica to both local and foreign students from both the Minority and Majority worlds.

The aim of this research is to formulate a methodology of effectively teaching photography, with the research questions to be addressed being:

1. Are there cultural factors and conditions unique to Jamaica that influence how photography is both taught and learned?
2. Has 21st century digital technology nullified the affect of these cultural factors in the learning and teaching of photography?

Questionnaires administered to past students will provide data on their experiences and expectations. Information gained seeks to find out if they have received the skills and knowledge required for them to be successful photographers, whether they are hobbyists or a professionals.

The end result is the creation of an effective model of teaching photography in the developing world that will include suitable course content, activities and outcomes. The model will take into account: Jamaica's photographic culture; the resource and equipment challenges that exist in Jamaica; the job opportunities that exist for Jamaican still photographers; the affect of the ubiquity of digital photography in the 21st century; and still photography as an introduction and component of multimedia storytelling and documentation.

Keywords: photography, Jamaica, tertiary photographic education, national photographic cultures