

A description of the main arguments of “In Defense of the Poor Image” by Hito Steyerl,₁ translated into the form of excerpts from “Exercises in style” by Raymond Queneau₂

Notation

The poor image is a low quality, quick to send, easy to download and has been reproduced countless times, changing formats, being snipped and re-edited. In the text, Steyerl explores the poor image, noting the perception of low resolution, pirated and bootlegged images as lesser and low-brow. However, she argues that the poor image is more disseminable, which, in its accessibility can shift the gatekept hierarchy of high-resolution images and video.

R Reported speech

It was said that the poor image was seen to be low quality, quick to send, easy to download and was reproduced countless times. Some texts were seen to have changed formats, with evidence of snipping and re-editing. Hito Steyerl said of the poor image that, while it may be looked down upon for being a result of piracy and bootlegging, it is more accessible and therefore easier to disseminate. Steyerl discussed further that the implication of this dissemination may reduce the hierarchy and elitism of a high-cost high-quality image.

C Casual

Poor images are low quality, quick to send, easy to download and are reproduced a lot, changing each time. In the text, Steyerl talks about the poor image and the perception of the stolen photos as not good. She also argues that the poor image is easy to share, which, might make it better than high quality photos and films.

S Speaking personally

I think really, a low-quality image has usually been processed a lot, and in a way, reflects how we use images personally. Images shared online are screenshotted countless times, uploaded and re-saved, shared again, etc. I feel a personal connection to the images and memes I have saved and shared on my devices as it is part of how I communicate with important people in my life. People might think they don't have quality visually and culturally when compared to high quality imagery and video, but I think there is something to be said for the images and video we interact with the most, which tends to be of the poor variety.

T Telegraphic

IMAGES LOW QUALITY FAST SENDING REPRODUCED DIFFERENT
FORMAT EDIT RE EDIT LOW RESOLUTION PIRATE BOOTLEG LOW
BROW ARGUE MORE DISSEMINABLE ACCESSIBLE GATEKEPT
HIERARCHY HIGH RESOLUTION IMAGE VIDEO

P Permutations by groups of 2,3, 4 and 5 letters

Th po im is al ow qu it ck to se sy to do ad an ha be re pr ed co le ti es
Ang orm bei ipp and edi int ext Ste exp poo ima not ing the per ofl res ira
Boot imag assl and lowb ever argu that thep orim more semi hich acess shif
Gatek ierar ofhig resol onima andvi

1. Steyerl, Hito, 2012, The wretched of the screen, Sternberg Press. Kortext E-book.
2. Queneau, Raymond, 1998, Exercises in style, John Colder. Kortext E-book.