
Photo Journalism (105)

Unit 1

Basic photography: Types of camera — film speed — shutter speed — lens speed — four operations (viewing, focusing, exposing, processing)

Unit 2

Photographic composition: qualities of a good picture (stopping power, purpose & meaning, emotional impact, graphic quality)

Unit 3

News photography: Ethics — substance — aesthetics — qualities and tasks of a press photographer — examples of great news photographs.

Unit 4

Photo essay: grouped pictures — thematic sequence — importance of layout — text and pictures — the classic photo essay.

Unit 5

Photojournalism's media: newspapers — magazines — company magazines — special magazines — record covers — greeting cards — posters.

Basic photography

There are a couple of terms that everyone really needs to learn first before they get into this and beforehand. They are the most basic of terminology that is essential to photography. I will be using these terms throughout my pieces and this is a good reference guide for students that are taking a photography class as well.

Know this: these terms are very, very interchangeable in the photography world. Here's the Sparknotes version of them all. You can refer to this list forever to find answers.

Rule of Thirds- This is the basic idea of composition. It is essentially dividing the image up into three horizontal and vertical sections.

These lines are available to see on most point-and-shoot cameras. On a DSLR, you can either change the filter in your eyepiece (viewfinder) or imagine them. Depending on who you ask (and I've been taught both ways by my mentors and in internships) you can either use the lines to ensure that your subjects (those you are photographing) are not centered or that they are centered.

For more interesting images, don't center your subjects. However, there are times when it really is essential to do that.

Shutter Speed- This is how long your camera's shutter stays open for and it can be read on either the back of your screen or within the viewfinder. It is typically a fraction or a whole number.

For example:

1/15 = a fifteenth of a second

1/1000 = a thousandth of a second

1" = 1 second

15" = fifteen seconds

Here are the basic rules to follow:

The longer the shutter speed the more motion that will be captured and the stiller you need to remain. This is great for capturing nighttime scenes.

The faster the shutter speed the less motion will be captured. This is great for capturing fast moving objects like sports action.

On your camera, this can be seen with the S mode.

Aperture- This is also known as an F stop. It controls how much of your image is in focus or not (IE what is clearly and sharply seen and what is blurred out.) It also controls how much light comes into the lens of your camera and hits the sensor (the equivalent of film.)

In general:

f1.4 = Enables high shutter speeds, not much is in focus.

f2.8 = Enables almost as high shutter speeds, more is in focus. Great for portraits.

f11 = Needs slower shutter speeds, much more is in focus.

f22 = Needs the slowest of shutter speeds. Everything you point your lens at should be in focus. Best used with a flash unless there is tons of available bright light.

On your camera this is also known as AV mode.

Depth of Field- This is what is the range of distance within the subject that is acceptably and sharply in focus. It can be controlled using your F stops.

ISO- Light sensitivity of your camera's sensor. The higher the ISO, the more sensitive your camera will be to light and the grainier your images will be. The lower the ISO, the less sensitive the camera will be to light and the less grainier your images. Higher ISOs allow for faster shutter speeds.

ISO 100 = great for daylight use, no image grain.

ISO 400 = great for twilight use, a bit more grain.

ISO 1600 = much more suited towards low light or high action where you need to stop fast movement.

ISO 6400 = Even better suited to low light and fast action, but delivers grainy images.

Manual- A shooting mode on your camera that enables you to control every aspect of shooting. You can manipulate the shutter speeds, ISO settings, aperture settings and loads more. On your camera this is the "M" mode.

Exposure- This term is used very, very interchangeably in the photographic community. It can mean your shutter speed, a single photo and other things. Your camera has something called, "Exposure Compensation" that depending on the meter will either make your image brighter or darker.

The way it typically can work on your camera is by adjusting the shutter speed, ISO or aperture depending on what shooting mode (manual, aperture, shutter priority or program) that you are in.

Usually, you just have to judge from the context.

Lens- The piece of glass attached to your camera. There are different types of lenses.

Prime: A fixed focal length with no zoom. They can be 50mm, 28mm 85mm etc. They typically tend to have better results depending on manufacturer and have a fixed aperture as well.

Zoom: a lens that zooms in and out. Lesser quality zooms will generally change aperture when zooming in and out depending on the range. Higher quality ones keep the same aperture throughout the zoom ranges. Once again, this depends on many different factors such as zoom range.

Lenses with a larger aperture (f1.4) are known as fast lenses. Lenses with a smaller aperture (over f4) are known as slow lenses.

Focus- This is what the camera is mainly trying to take a picture of. On a point and shoot, it is what appears in the green boxes on your camera's LCD. For a DSLR, it is literally what can be clearly and sharply seen in the depth of field. The larger your F stop (f1.8) the less will be in focus.

The out of focus area is affectionately called, "bokeh" and can deliver some beautiful results.

There are also different type of focusing modes:

Macro, which is anything really, really up close. About a couple of inches or even less. (seen as a flower symbol)

Infinity, which is for very, very far away objects. (seen as a mountain symbol)

Normal, which is generally everything in between Macro and Infinity.

Beyond this there is also:

Auto-focusing which lets the camera focus for you.

Manual-focusing which enables you to do all the focusing.

There are also in-between modes depending on the type of lens and who made it.

For example, Canon creates USM lenses that can auto-focus and allow you to touch it up with manual focusing.

On Olympus, it is done through the camera. For them there is:

Single focus- Which will auto-focus on one stationary subject.

Single/Manual- Same thing but allows for manual touch up.

Continuous focus- which will continuously focus on one spot or subject as you are moving.

Continuous/Manual- Same thing but allows for manual touch up

Tracking Focus- Which will continuously focus on one subject as it moves.

Flash - The burst of light that comes from the camera when a picture is taken.

There are different types of flash. Here are just two examples.

Fill Flash - light that will just fill in any dark spots.

Red Eye - flash that will prevent red-eye from showing up.

On your camera, this is typically characterized by the lightning bolt symbol.

Shooting Speed/Mode- This determines how many pictures (or exposures) your camera will take when the shutter is pressed down.

Single- When the shutter is pressed it will take one picture. To take another picture, you need to press the shutter again.

Continuous- When the shutter is pressed and held down it will keep taking pictures until the card fills up or the processor can't write anymore photos to the card.

On your camera, this is typically characterized by the three rectangles stacked on top of one another.

RAW- There are many different types of image files. The most common are JPEGs, which most cameras take and what you always see online. RAW is a much larger file that contains lots of information and allows for more flexible editing. Different camera companies make different RAW files. For example: Canon is CR2, Olympus ORF, Adobe is DNG.

Think of it this way:

Film: Negative -> Print

Digital: RAW -> JPEG

Not all cameras have RAW shooting mode. All DSLRs do though.

Types of camera

Cameras can be divided into several major types. Although most cameras operate in roughly the same way, there are a few notable differences. It helps to know what type of camera you are using, and what its strengths and weaknesses are.

Common Components

Firstly, let's look at what cameras have in common. Except for some specialist types of camera, all cameras have the following basic components:

Body: A light-tight compartment to house the recording medium (film or CCD).

Lens: A transparent element to focus light rays onto the recording medium.

Aperture: A method of controlling how much light reaches the recording medium.

Shutter: A method of controlling how long the recording medium is exposed to the incoming light.

Viewfinder: A way to see the image that is to be captured.

Transport: In film cameras, a method of moving the film and holding it in the correct position.

Types of Camera

SLR (Single Lens Reflex): The viewfinder sees the same image as the main lens, i.e. what you see is what you get. SLRs also allow you to change lenses for different purposes. This is a hugely popular type of camera, pretty much the standard for enthusiasts and professionals.

Viewfinder (or range finder): In this type of camera the viewfinder is separate to the lens. This is common in cheap cameras, although some professional cameras also use this configuration. The main problem with a separate viewfinder is that the image you see may not be quite the same as the image that gets recorded. This limitation is overcome in professional cameras by using viewfinders that compensate for the different positions. Viewfinder cameras do have some advantages; for example, lower noise and higher light levels to the viewfinder.

Twin reflex: The camera has two lenses — one for the photograph and one for the viewfinder. This type of camera has certain advantages in some professional situations.

View: A flexible bellows joins two standards — one with the lens and the other with the viewfinder or film. This allows for unusual types of composition; for example, distorting the shape of the image by skewing the film plane.

Pinhole: A very simple camera without a lens.

Unit 2

Photographic composition

Composition is the arrangement of subjects or elements within the photographic frame. How the subjects are selected and arranged can make a big difference to your photograph. As a photographer, you control the arrangement and the look of the image. You decide what the focal point of interest is and where to place it within the frame so that the viewer will be drawn to the picture. Design elements such as line, shape, pattern and color have a dual function. Firstly, their presence helps to create a stronger image. Secondly, each element has intrinsic and symbolic attributes which can evoke certain emotions and feelings in the viewer. For example, curved lines give the feeling of gracefulness and calmness; diagonal lines can be dramatic and powerful; patterns can be repetitive and structured.

THE GOLDEN SECTION / MEAN

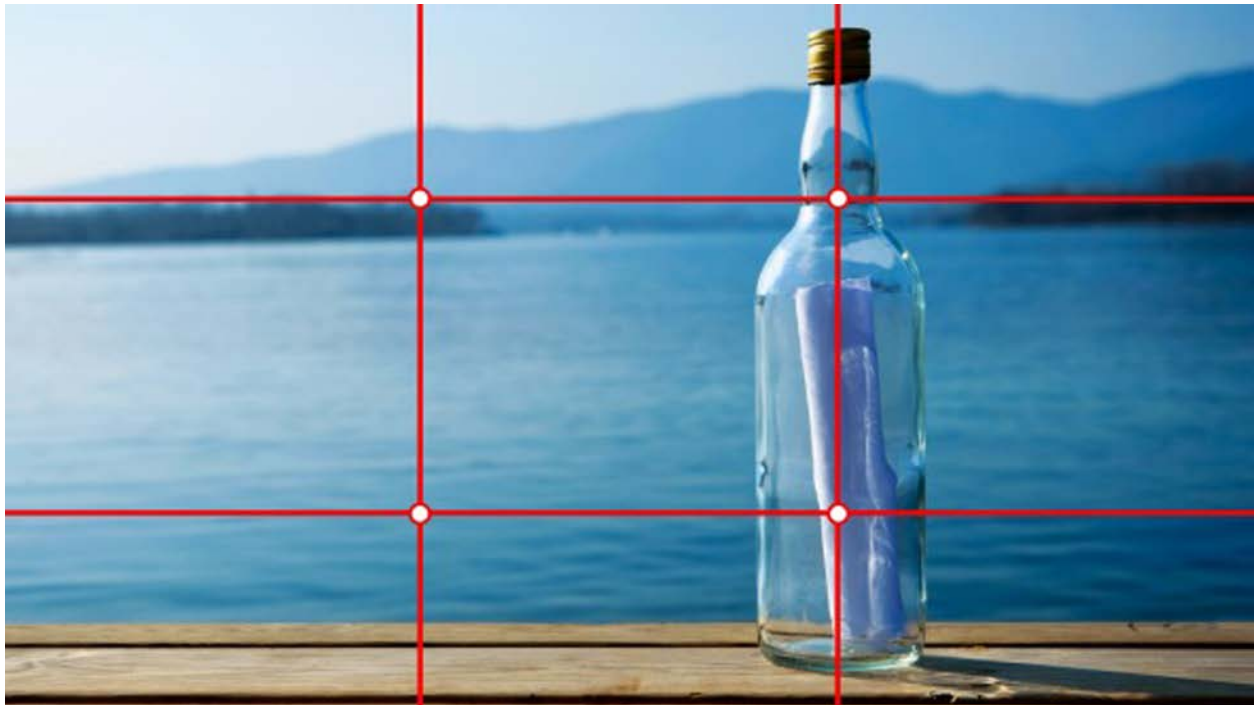
The ancient Greeks were the first to devise the golden section. Based on geometry and mathematical formula, they constructed the golden section or mean. They found that the proportions drawn were most beautiful and pleasing to the eye. The golden section is applied to art, architecture, design as well as photography. Examples are the Parthenon in Athens and Keops in Egypt.



RULE OF THIRDS

The rule of thirds is an extension of the golden section. Since the 35mm frame approximates the proportion of the golden section, we can use the golden section to help us compose our picture. If the subject or points of interest are placed on one of the intersection of the lines, it will give the image a more harmonious balance. The rule of thirds helps to break the symmetry and monotony of the rectangle

The horizon line of the photograph is also usually placed either about one third from the bottom or the top of the frame corresponding with the rule of thirds lines. The horizon line is never or rarely placed in the center of the frame as the image will have less impact. If the image is divided into equal parts, it tends to be weak and undefined. Conversely, if the horizon line is placed at the lower or upper third of the frame, it will divide the image into unequal parts, creating a more dynamic composition.

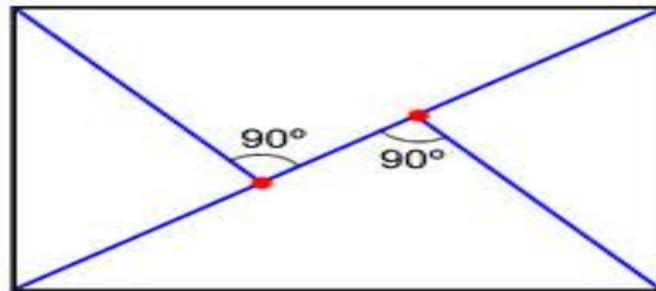


GOLDEN TRIANGLE

If your picture is characterized by diagonal lines, you may want to apply the golden triangle rule. Divide the rectangle of your frame into triangles as shown in

If you place your main subject on either of the intersection points (shown as black dots), it will be more appealing to the eye.

GOLDEN TRIANGLE



Qualities of a good picture

What makes one or two photos rise to the top in a stack of 20, 30, or even 100 photos? The answer, despite what beginning photographers may imagine, is not a secret known only to seasoned photographers and photo editors. Nor is there a single element that makes a photo "good." Rather there is a not-so-secret checklist of criteria commonly used to evaluate images.

Having said this, I hasten to add that evaluation checklists vary by person, and, like other judging criteria, there are always exceptions to the rules. Furthermore, the lines separating the criteria very often blur. Photography is, after all, subjective.

Despite these disclaimers, knowing the commonly accepted evaluation criteria can give you a roadmap to getting better day-to-day photos, and a guide for evaluating the final images. Following is the evaluation list that I use when I review my images. In addition, I've included sample questions for each checkpoint that you can use or adapt for evaluating your photos.



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1. Is there a clear center of

interest? In a strong photo, the viewer can immediately identify the subject. While this sounds like a no-brainer, a surprisingly high number of photos fail to clearly identify the main subject. Instead, a complex montage of elements compete for the viewer's attention.

In a strong photo, the subject should dominate the image and form the viewer's first impression. If the subject is strong, the viewer's eyes may move to explore other areas of the image, but the eyes are drawn inevitably back to the subject. While the colors and cloud formations of a sunset are dramatic, they are seldom enough to create a compelling image. Beyond a quick, though perhaps appreciative

first glance, most sunset photos are quickly forgotten. And in large numbers, they quickly become "ho-hummers."

However, when the photographer adds an element that gives the sunset context and interest, you have a sunset photo with impact, and one that is far more likely to capture and retain the viewer's interest. The sunset photo here includes the activity of people enjoying the last moments of the day against the backdrop of the dramatic late-day color.

To evaluate your own photos for a strong center of interest, try asking yourself these questions. Or show the picture to a friend and ask your friend to honestly answer the questions.

- When you look at the photo, what is the first thing you see? If you're evaluating your own image, is what you see first the subject you had in mind for the photograph?
- What holds your eye the longest?

- Do other elements in the image compete with the subject for attention?
- Do technical aspects such as light and the direction of light, depth of field, focus, and so on add to or detract from the subject?

2. Is the image composed well? In a strong photo, there should be a sense of overall organization. While entire books are written on composition, at the most basic level, composition is the process of establishing a sense of order for the elements within an image. Note Composition rules or guidelines are a helpful starting point, but they are useful only as long as they enhance the overall image.

Here are a few basic composition pointers.

- **Fill the frame** Filling the frame helps establish the center of interest, and, simultaneously, it helps exclude competing background details. You can fill the frame by moving closer to the subject or by using a longer focal length (or zooming in).

- **Organize elements** In composition, the Rule of Thirds is often used to organize elements in a composition. This rule is derived from the Golden Section or Golden Rectangle that divides a space, such as a



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photographic frame, into equal segments to create pleasing proportions. In simple terms, if you apply the Rule of Thirds in photography you simply imagine a tick-tac-toe pattern on the viewfinder. Then, when you place the subject of the photo at one of the intersection points, the result is a pleasing sense of order.

- **Control the background** A non-distracting background is a compositional tool to help bring attention to the subject of the photo. You can control the

background by moving your position or moving the subject to avoid background distractions and by using a wider aperture (smaller f-stop) to blur the background. It's a good practice to review the entire scene and, when possible, eliminate or rearrange as many distracting background elements.

- Keep it simple The fewer the elements in a photo, the stronger the statement the image makes. Simplicity also helps prevent the viewer's eye from being distracted. To evaluate the composition of your images, try asking these questions.
- Is there a sense of order and balance in the image that helps lead the eye through the composition?
- Are elements included that do not contribute to the subject of the image?
- Are elements excluded that, if included, would have enhanced the subject of the image?
- Do the depth of field, focal length (lens or zoom setting), lighting, angle, and perspective enhance the composition?
- Does the crop enhance the composition?



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3. Is the focus tack sharp and is the exposure appropriate? With the exception of photos that either intentionally show motion or are taken as soft-focus images (such as a portrait), tack-sharp focus is one of the first things that everyone notices first about an image.

Going a step further, the center of focus should be on the center of interest of the subject. In other words, if the picture is of a person, the focus should be on the person's eyes. The sharpest point of the picture should pinpoint what the photographer sees as the most important aspect of the image.

The exposure (the combination of focal length [lens or zoom setting], aperture, shutter speed, and ISO) should also enhance the intent of the photo. For example, in a scene of an old building, did the photographer use exposure controls to emphasize the age of the structure and perhaps the starkness of the surroundings? To create this sense, a photographer can choose a moderately wide-angle lens or zoom setting, use

black-and-white mode, choose a higher ISO (or use a high-ISO black-and-white film) set a narrow aperture (larger f-stop number), and choose a fast shutter speed (depending, of course, on the light). This combination would produce sharp detail, visible grain or digital noise to enhance the sense of antiquity, and increased depth of field to emphasize the sense of loneliness.

On the other hand, if the image is a portrait of a person, I would look for quite different exposure settings, for example, a low ISO, a wide aperture (small f-stop number), and, depending on the light, a slower shutter speed. In this case, the portrait would be little or no grain or digital noise and the narrow depth of field would blur the background to emphasize the subject. (Of course, a photographer might choose the opposite setting to achieve an entirely different look.) The question is whether the exposure settings were planned to enhance the image "design."

Questions that can help you evaluate whether focus and exposure settings are appropriate for an image include:

- Is the sharpest point in the image on the center of interest of the subject of the photo?
- Does the depth of field enhance the subject, mood, or look of the image or does it distract from it?
- Does the focal length or zoom setting enhance the subject and message?
- Does the image have good overall contrast for the type image the photographer intended?
- Does the color appear natural and/or does it help set the mood of the image?
- If the image is in color, would it be stronger in black and white, or vice versa?

4. Does the photo tell a story. Most often, the difference



between a photo you remember and one that you quickly forget depends on whether the photo tells a story. As a viewer, I want to see the story, and this is one of the most important evaluation points I look for in other photographer's images. It is also the element that I always try to include in my images.

In strong photos, the story is revealed at first glance, and it is self-contained. In the best images, the story evokes an emotional response from the viewer. I believe it's that emotional response that ultimately makes the image memorable. Try asking these questions as you evaluate images to decide if the image tells a story.

- At a minimum, does the photo make a statement that you can articulate?
- Does the photo elicit an emotion? In other words, can you relate to the subject or the situation?
- What could be changed in the image to give it a stronger story or message.

5. Does the lighting enhance the subject and message? Like the composition, lighting is a subject that is worthy of book-length discussions. Whether in shooting or evaluating photos, light should be used to its maximum potential to reveal what's important in the image and to set the overall tone of the photo.

In masterful hands, lighting is used selectively to focus attention on specific areas of the subject while simultaneously demphasizing less important areas; to guide leading the eye through the composition, and to establish the overall mood and tone of the image by taking advantage of the different temperatures (colors) of light.

Light is another "design tool" that can be used to enhance the overall mood and intent of the image and subject. For example, when taking a portrait of a man, a strong, unfiltered white side light may be appropriate because it emphasizes the man's rugged and angular features. On the other hand, a soft, warm-color diffused light is more appropriate for a portrait of a woman because it mirrors the delicate features of these subjects. And, of course, there are few photographers who fail to take advantage of the superb colors of light during sunrises and sunsets.

When evaluating the lighting merits of a photo, ask:

- Is the intensity and color of light appropriate for the subject?

- Is the light too harsh, too contrasty, or is it too soft and too flat?
- Are all important aspects of the subject well lit, or could the lighting be improved by using a flash, fill flash, reflector, or auxiliary light?
- Does the light help convey the overall message of the photo?
- In a color photo, is the color balanced or corrected for the light temperature (in other words, the overall color should be natural-looking). And if it isn't, does the color cast contribute to the photo?



6. Is the approach creative? In broad terms, I define "creative" as an image that goes beyond predictable techniques and treatments. In more specific terms, the best creative images show subjects through the photographers' eyes and perspective. In other words, the photographer reveals the subject in extraordinary ways: ways that the viewer otherwise would not have seen.

Creative techniques and subjects can range from bringing abstract ideas into a visual form, taking a concrete idea and making it abstract, relating or associating unrelated concepts into a visual space, or, in short, taking a fresh look at and lending the photographer's unique thinking and vision any subject.

When evaluating the creativity of a photo, ask yourself:

- Does the photo disclose more about the subject, or show it in unexpected ways?
- Does the photo relate visual elements in unusual and intriguing ways?
- Is the photo interesting and fresh, or is it just too weird for words?

Depending on the day, and depending on the photo, I may add other criteria to my evaluation checklist, but I seldom delete one of these basic six points.

In the real world, I also know that if 10 people look at the same photo, approximately five may give it good marks and five may give it low marks. Photography is, of course, as subjective as individual taste.

But when everyone has had their say, the bottom line is that you now have evaluation criteria so that you can evaluate your own work. If an image is your best so far, enjoy the image and your achievement. Then go back in a month or two and evaluate the image against the six basic criteria again. If it still passes the test, frame it and hang it on the wall, and then go out and shoot a better picture.

Most print media use a combination of words and pictures to tell the news, but some only use words. If you have ever seen a newspaper with no pictures, you will know that it does not look attractive; it does not make you want to read it. It looks as though it will be hard work, and readers are therefore put off. It is also limited in its ability to tell the news accurately.

When we talk about "pictures", we are usually talking about photographs, but there are other kinds of pictures, too. Good drawings, paintings and other graphic work also work well as news pictures. We shall consider those in the next chapter.

Why do we need news pictures?

There are three main reasons why newspapers need news pictures.

To brighten the page

A page without a picture is just a slab of grey text. It looks boring and many people will not bother to read what is written on it.

That is a pity if some of those stories are well researched and well written, but it is true. The readers who pay money for a newspaper expect their job to be made easy for them. They expect the news to have been sorted out into big stories and little stories, to have been written clearly, and to be presented in a way which is easy to read.

Newspapers without pictures do not make the news easy to read. They make life hard for the readers. The newspaper's journalists are not doing their job properly.

To tell the news

As we saw in Chapter 1: What is news?, news is something which is new, unusual, interesting, significant and about people. It is obvious that new, unusual, interesting and significant things about people can be communicated by pictures as well as by words.

Not all stories will be ideal for pictures. Some will be told more easily in words than in pictures, while other stories may be told with one picture more easily and more clearly than in many words.

There is an old saying in English that "one picture is worth a thousand words". That can be true, but only if it is the kind of story which is suitable to be told by a picture, and only if it is a good picture. We shall look in a moment at what makes a good news picture.

Pictures can sometimes tell the news just by themselves, with a caption to say who the people are and where the event is taking place. At other times, the picture may go with a story, to work as a team with the words. In either case, a news picture must always leave the reader knowing more than he did before. It must carry information.

To show what it looks like

Only a very gifted writer can use words in a way which lets the reader visualise exactly what a scene is like. Not every reporter can write as well as that.

A picture can let the reader see what a person, or a place, or a building, or an event looks like.

In societies which do not have television, newspaper photographs are probably the only way that most people can know what these things look like. They may be the only way that people outside the capital city will know what their own leaders look like. Even in societies with television, some areas of the country and some levels of society may have no access to it, and many of the programs may be imported from overseas. The newspapers still have an important job to let readers know what their own news looks like.

Emotional Impact

One of the most powerful aspects of a photograph is its ability to generate emotions. The effects of a photograph are immediate and are thrust upon the viewer with little warning or time for preparation. The first impression that you get from a photograph is extremely critical; it can set the tone for the entire viewing experience.

Photographs are often created specifically for the purpose of evoking an emotional response within the viewer; some photographers are very good at doing this. At times, photographers can be aggressive in their efforts to stir emotion and at other times they can be subtle. It is not necessary to be clobbered with emotion when studying a photograph. You need not wind up sobbing on the floor or flying above Cloud Nine for an image to stir your emotions.

It is often best to recognize the nature of the emotions you experience when viewing an image and to keep them in perspective. A field of pale clover will not have the high drama and impact of a field of screaming yellow sunflowers. But the field of clover may have its own quiet qualities that evoke powerful emotions. Both high drama and subtlety are well represented through the medium of photography.

If you recognize the subject or understand the message the first time you see a photo, you may well connect it with your experiences. You carry the memories of these experiences with you throughout the viewing process; this can make for an extraordinarily moving experience. This is one reason that images depicting human suffering are often so powerful. All people experience pain. When people read a sad face, it brings back memories of their pain and suffering. As each person has had diverse experiences, it follows that there cannot be a right or wrong way to interpret the emotional aspects of a photograph.

Evaluating the Light

The evaluation of the quality of light is subjective. There are various ways to look at and interpret the light in a photographic image. Artists, being familiar with the properties of light, come to the table with lots of ideas as to how it should be captured in photography. It's important to put your personal preferences aside and try to imagine the scene as the photographer might have seen it.

When evaluating the light in a photograph, consider the following:

- Is the main subject adequately lit? Should it be brighter or darker? Is it exposed well? Is the image properly processed?
- Is flash or other artificial lighting technique used? If so, how well was it used??
- Is time of day evident? Does it add to the image?
- Does the light make you feel anything? Does it contribute to the mood of the image?
- Is the image too contrasty? Are the highlights too bright or the shadows too dark?
- Does the light have weight? Does it seem thin and light, crisp and airy, thick and muggy?
- Is the light direct, obstructed, or filtered? Do the obstructions, if any, affect the quality of the light falling on the subject? Would it have been better to create the image in different light?
- Is the image side-lit, front-lit, back-lit, or lit from above or below? Would light from a different direction have been more effective?
- Does the light cause glare or extreme contrast? Does the light add a sense of drama? Did the artist purposely over or underexpose the scene to create an artistic effect?

These are not questions that need to be answered for every photograph. They are simply a range of things to be considered when evaluating the light in photographic images.

Unit-3

News photography

Pictures are worth 1,000 words – in the newspaper business that equals about 25 inches of print. Images are one of the most powerful forms of communication, especially in journalism. One image or sound can summarize an event or person or motivate a nation; one image can upset people more than endless pages of print on the subject. Kenneth F. Irby from the Poynter Institute describes photojournalism as “the craft of employing photographic storytelling to document life: it is universal and transcends cultural and language bounds.”

In the early days of newspaper journalism the photojournalist’s role was relatively straightforward. Armed with a camera he captured a moment in time – a reality. Back at the newsroom he spent hours in the darkroom mixing chemicals and perfecting his art. The photojournalist emerged with a snippet of reality, ready to show the truth to the public. The development of news photography in the 19th century supported claims by newspapers that they reported events as they happened, objectively.

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imported from overseas. The newspapers still have an important job to let readers know what their own news looks like.

What makes a strong news picture?

A strong news picture has to be about the news. That is, it has to be about something which is **new, unusual, interesting, significant** and **about people**. To that extent, it is no different from a news story. However, news pictures also need three other qualities:

Life

To the photographer, a picture assignment may seem dull. It may just seem like yet another cheque presentation, or yet another graduation day, or yet another retirement.

To the people involved in the story, though, each of these is a big event - the culmination of months of fund-raising, the fruit of years of study or the end of a lifetime's service. It is the news photographer's job to feel the same excitement which the people involved in the story feel, and to convey that through the picture to the readers.

If the people being photographed look alive and involved in the subject of the photograph, then the photograph will have life.



A picture of a person behind a desk tells the reader nothing, because there is no context

Relevant context

A photograph of a man behind a desk tells us nothing, and no newspaper should ever publish such a picture.

Some people sit behind desks because they are business people, running companies which produce soft drinks - photograph them in the factory, surrounded by bottles of soft drink.

Some people sit behind desks because

they are head teachers, running schools - photograph them in the school grounds, surrounded by students.

People sit behind desks for many reasons, and it is the reason which matters, not the desk.

Also, it has to be a very unusual desk for the picture to have any interest for the reader. A desk with a phone and some papers on it is very boring.

News pictures should always try to capture this context, the job which the person does, or the reason why they are in the news. If a schoolteacher is in the news because they have won a painting competition, then the relevant context would be the painting. A photograph of them teaching would not provide the correct context.



A picture of a person in context: the printing presses and the newspaper tell us this is the editor

However, a photograph of the teacher painting, surrounded by the students, might be the complete news picture.

In the case on the right, the man is an editor, so show him doing something special to his job.

Meaning

Every news picture must earn its space on the page. That means that it must tell the story clearly, without needing people to read the story first in order to understand what the picture is all about. In other words, every news picture must have meaning.

A picture of a man pointing at a broken window means nothing. If this is a man whose house has been broken into, by the thieves breaking a window and climbing in, then the story is about the way he feels, as well as the damage done. The picture should show his anger, or distress, in his expression and gestures; behind him and to one side can be the broken window; all around him may be the mess which the thieves left behind. In this way the picture can have meaning to the reader.

Types of news picture

It is not possible to give a complete list of types of news picture, any more than it is possible to give a complete list of types of people. People come in all sorts of shapes, sizes and characters; so do news pictures.

The list which follows is just a guide to the most common types.

Some news pictures will fit into more than one category - a portrait of a person may well be humorous, for example. And there will always be good photographers who can produce good pictures which book authors cannot fit into any category at all. That is what makes journalism so interesting.

The happening

There are all sorts of news story, but the big one is the thing which just happened. Perhaps there was an unusual act of nature - an earthquake, a cyclone, an eclipse of the sun. Perhaps there was a man-made drama - a murder, a robbery, a demonstration, a parade. Whatever happened, it was new; and if it was unusual and interesting, then it was news. A photograph of it is just what a newspaper editor wants.

A photograph of a happening helps the readers in many ways. It provides proof that the event really happened, since the readers can see it with their own eyes. It also takes the readers there, and lets them see the setting in which the event happened. In this way, it helps the words to tell the story, by making clear what they mean.

The epitome

An epitome is something which shows, on a small scale, exactly what something larger is like. For example, a photograph of one student with her head buried in a book might epitomise all the studies being done by all students, and could be a strong news picture as the time of national examinations comes near.

Epitomes are important to news pictures. It is impossible for the human mind to imagine 10,000 people starving to death, or 500 refugees being turned back at a

border, or 30,000 miners on strike. These numbers are too vast, and our minds cannot cope.

What people can understand is one thin mother, with no milk in her breasts, watching her baby starve to death.

They can understand the despair of one refugee as the door of hope is shut in his face.

They can understand the hopes and fears of one striking miner, as he balances the desire to stand up for what he considers to be his rights against the need to provide for his family.

In each case, by reducing the vast scale of the story to the human scale, the story gains in emotional power. The epitome is the picture which shows in one person what the story actually means to 500, 10,000 or 30,000. It turns statistics into people.



The epitome: one child in poor housing conditions is more meaningful than thousands of people

There are also pictures which epitomize situations, in that each part of the picture stands for something bigger. For example, when the Soviet Union sent its army to occupy Czechoslovakia in August 1968, and end the liberal reforms of the Dubcek government, people went out on to the streets of Prague to protest. One memorable photograph showed a young man, still wearing his pyjamas, standing in front of the gun of a Russian tank baring his chest defiantly. The picture summed up the whole situation - the weak humanity of Czechoslovakia being defeated by the metal inhumanity of Russia, but still refusing to accept it. It was a brilliant and memorable epitome.

People

News is about people. It is about things which people do, and things which happen to people. To tell the news, we need to let the readers know who those people are and what they are like.

A picture can do this, if it shows the person's character and the person's context. If the news story is about a man's house being burned down, then we do not want a picture of him smiling: he needs to look sad. He needs to be photographed either in the burned remains of his house, or on the beach where he has to sleep now, or in whatever other context tells the story.

Revelations

Most of our readers see only a few places and meet only a few people in their everyday lives. They do not see a lot of what goes on around them, because it happens in places which they never visit.

There are many other things which most of our readers do not see because they do not want to see them, even though they may be happening in places which they visit regularly - beggars on the street, people looking in rubbish bins to find food, pickpockets and car thieves.

It is part of the job of all the news media to reveal to their readers or listeners what their society is like, and newspapers in particular can publish pictures which force people to see clearly the society they live in.

These pictures may show that crime is committed, that some people live in poor conditions in squatter settlements or shanty towns, that there is social injustice, that there is fighting going on between rival clans in remote parts of the country.

All this may sound very negative, but it is only possible for things which are wrong to be put right when people know about them. When you sweep out a room, the first job is to get all the dirt out from under the furniture into the middle of the room. Only then can it be cleaned right out of the door. In the same way, journalists often need to bring the dirt of society into the open, so that it can be cleaned up.

Not all revelations need to be negative, though. It is just as valuable to make your readers look for the first time at the life of a person or a family which overcomes difficulties - perhaps dealing with physical handicap, or finding ways to make money when there are no jobs available, or getting on with life while tribal fighting is going on all around.

*Revelations:
pictures like this
make readers
look at things
they usually do
not see, like the
way people can
overcome their
physical
handicaps*



Humour

A newspaper without a sense of humour is missing out on an important part of life. People enjoy a joke, and they will like a newspaper more if it can see the funny side of life as well as the serious side.

Pictures can often be funny by bringing together things which are not usually seen together, or by using contrasts of extreme sizes.

Pretty pictures

People do like to look at pictures of pretty scenes or attractive people, and newspapers need to recognise that. But a picture of a pretty scene or a pretty girl which has no news value should not be used in a newspaper as if it was a news picture.

That does not mean that we cannot use these pictures. Pictures of attractive young people, in particular, can find their way into the paper in connection with any artistic or cultural activity, such as dancing, or using the youngsters as models wearing clothes which have been designed or manufactured locally.

More than one picture

If you get back to the office, and find that the one picture you have taken does not really tell the story, it is too late to do anything about it. You cannot gather everybody together again for another attempt.

So when you are sent to cover a story, and when it has picture possibilities, you should always take more than one picture.

In the first place, cameras can be held two ways, to take both horizontal and vertical pictures. You should always take at least one picture of each shape.

You should also come up with more than one picture idea, in case one of them does not really work. That means thinking in advance about the story, and imagining what the finished picture could look like.

So, for each picture idea, you will have a horizontal and a vertical shot.

Now, for each of those, you will need to try a number of different camera settings, to make sure that you get at least one picture with the right light quality. Try several different shutter speeds and several different *f* stops. (If your camera is fully automatic, this does not apply to you.) In particular, even if the light is not very good - inside a building, for example - always try at least one shot without flash, using available light. If it is too dark, you have lost very little time; if it works, you will almost certainly have a better picture than one which uses flash. Flash makes everything look very flat and dull, and should only be used when there is no alternative.

This is why you need to take more than one picture even when the newspaper will only use one picture. There are also some types of job which require more than one picture to be published in the paper, and these make special demands on the photographer.

Sequences

A sequence of pictures can show a story unfolding, and therefore tell that story better than a single image can do. Very often, the editor will want to use the last picture like the punchline of a joke, using it bigger than the rest, so that the early pictures give the background to the main news, which is shown in the final climax picture. Be prepared when news is happening in front of you to keep taking one picture after another, in rapid succession, so that you may have a good sequence.

In any case, whether you have used only one frame or 30, the photos must be developed or downloaded as soon as you return to the newsroom. If you are using film, it should not sit in your camera for several days, waiting for you to finish the roll, while the news becomes old; you may as well use all the film on the current assignment.

Big events

A big event, like an independence anniversary celebration, or the visit of a foreign head of state, may well need many photographs to tell the whole story. Such an event will probably be too diverse to be captured in one picture.

At these times you will need to look for pictures of all the types listed above. You will want a picture of the moment the flag flies out of the hands of the soldier,

perhaps; a picture of the proud and emotional face of a person in national dress looking up at the flag as it is raised, to epitomise the nationalism of the day; lots of pictures of people, of both high and low rank; a picture of a drunk collapsed under a tree; funny incidents; happy children.

All aspects of human life are there on these big occasions, and it is the job of the news photographer to capture them all.

And don't forget that many big days are not happy – for example Hiroshima Day in Japan - or may be sorrowful for some people in the society. In Australia, for example, Australia Day signifies for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders the day their country was colonised by the British. A spread of photos of Australia Day celebrations would be incomplete without some showing the perspective of indigenous people.

Taking the picture

Professional photographers tend to use sophisticated cameras, which allow them to control just the sort of picture they want. If you feel comfortable with a camera of this type, that is fine.

Most people, however, become confused by all those lenses and different settings. If you are like this, you will probably get better results with a simple fixed-lens fully automatic camera than with a fancy one.

The reason for this is simple: you should be concentrating on the picture which you are taking, not on the camera. If you find that you have to puzzle over the camera settings, then you would probably do better with an automatic camera. These can now be bought for as little as US\$100, though for newspapers and magazines you will probably need to spend more for a good quality lens necessary to take pictures which can be reproduced in large and clear format.

Whatever kind of camera you use, learn to look at the picture through the camera. Do not look at the scene first, decide it will be a good picture, and then click the camera shutter. Look at the scene through the camera, and see what it looks like.

Look all around the picture, too, not just at the subject. Look into the corners, and at the background. Photographers who do not do this often take photographs of

people who seem to have things growing out of their heads - it may be a tree which is behind them.



The classic boring cheque presentation picture, with no context, no life and no meaning

Always remember that you can move - not only from side to side, and backwards and forwards, but up and down, too. Your knees bend. Try kneeling down, or even lying down; try standing on a chair. See what a difference this makes to your picture.

Remember, too, that the people in your picture can move. However, they can only move if you ask them to do so. You will need to take control of the situation and be the boss.

This is not always easy, especially if you are a young journalist and you are photographing important people. You will need to remember that you are a professional person, doing an important job.

If you can take a better photograph of the President outside the building than inside the building, explain to him what you want and ask for his cooperation. If he says no, you have lost nothing; but if he agrees, you will get a better picture. This will please the President as much as it will please you. (See *Chapter 16: Interviewing* for details of how to deal self-confidently with important people.)

Compare the picture above with the one on the right here. You will see similar posed pictures of presentations - cheques, leaving presents, reports being handed to Parliament etc - in newspapers and magazines all over the world.

Posed pictures like the one above, which are simply people handing something to someone else, are quick to set up and



The cheque is for the South Pacific Games, and now they are ready to race ... a picture with context, life and meaning

easy to take - but they do not grab the readers attention.

By comparison, the photograph on the right took longer to set up and take, but it is a more memorable shot. Your subjects will recognise this and may even ask for a copy to put in a frame on their wall!

When you photograph a group of people, you will need to organise them. Left to themselves, they will stand in a long line, with big spaces between them. Your photograph will then look awful.

Try to arrange different groupings. Bring more important people closer to the camera, so that they will appear bigger than the other people. Try putting tall people behind short people, or get some people to sit and others to stand behind them. Try putting everybody in a crowd, looking up, and stand on a table to photograph them from above.

However you arrange the group, persuade them to stand closer together than they really want to. It is a strange thing, but people look unfriendly in a photograph unless they are very close together, and you will have lots of dead space through the picture if they stand apart. Explain why, and get them to stand so close together that they touch, unless this is entirely socially unacceptable. If it is, bring some people nearer the camera to cover the gaps in the line behind them.

Above all, have ideas for good pictures before you start a job. You can then take control of the situation. If important people try to tell you what to do - "I think we will have one of me behind my desk" - take the picture they want first, and then say: "Can we now try another idea? My editor always likes me to have a selection of shots." Even if you never use the boring picture of the person behind the desk, it was worth the cost of a little film or digital processing time to win the person's confidence in you.

Today, the ethics of photojournalism goes far beyond the ethics of the newspaper photo. It includes the millions of news-related images that appear on our televisions, cell phones, computer screens and other multi-media devices. We are an image-saturated world.

With these advances photojournalism has become more complicated technologically and ethically. The claim that photographs and images simply “mirror” events is no longer plausible. Moreover, photojournalists face tough ethical decisions on what to shoot, what to use, and if and when images can be altered.

In newsrooms, digital technology has all but eliminated the cumbersome process of film developing. Digital images are easily transmitted, raising the demand for images. With fresh demand comes increasing competition for the best, most dramatic photo.

Ethical and legal considerations

Photojournalism works within the same ethical approaches to objectivity that are applied by other journalists. What to shoot, how to frame and how to edit are constant considerations. Photographing news for an assignment is one of the most ethical problems photographers face. Photojournalists have a moral responsibility to decide what pictures to take, what picture to stage, and what pictures to show the public. For example, photographs of violence and tragedy are prevalent in American journalism because as an understated rule of thumb, that "if it bleeds, it reads". The public is attracted to gruesome photographs and dramatic stories. A lot of controversy arises when deciding which photographs are too violent to show the public.

Photographs of the dead or injured arouse controversy because more often than not, the name of person depicted in the photograph is not given in the caption. The family of the person is often not informed of the photograph until they see it published. The photograph of the street execution of a suspected Viet Cong soldier during the Vietnam War provoked a lot of interest because it captured the exact moment of death. The family of the victim was also not informed that the picture would run publicly.

Other issues involving photojournalism include the right to privacy and the compensation of the news subject. Especially regarding pictures of violence, photojournalists face the ethical dilemma of whether or not to publish images of the victims. The victim's right to privacy is sometimes not addressed or the picture is printed without their knowledge or consent. The compensation of the subject is another issue. Subjects often want to be paid in order for the picture to be published, especially if the picture is of a controversial subject.

Another major issue of photojournalism is photo manipulation – what degree is acceptable? Some pictures are simply manipulated for color enhancement, whereas others are manipulated to the extent where people are edited in or out of the picture. War photography has always been a genre of photojournalism that is frequently staged – see war photography: history for early examples). Due to the bulkiness and types of cameras present during past wars in history, it was rare when a photograph could capture a spontaneous news event. Subjects were carefully composed and staged in order to capture better images. Another ethical issue is false or misleading captioning. The 2006 Lebanon War photographs controversies is a notable example of some of these issues, and see photo manipulation: use in journalism for other examples.

The emergence of digital photography offers whole new realms of opportunity for the manipulation, reproduction, and transmission of images. It has inevitably complicated many of the ethical issues involved.

Often, ethical conflicts can be mitigated or enhanced by the actions of a sub-editor or picture editor, who takes control of the images once they have been delivered to the news organization. The photojournalist often has no control as to how images are ultimately used.

The United States National Press Photographers Association (NPPA) is a professional society that acknowledges concern for the public's right to freedom in searching for truth in a photograph and the public's right to be informed about the events that occur in the world. Since the same ethical approaches are applied to photojournalism as to other journalism forms, photographs should illustrate news in an object manner to keep the public accurately informed. The following are the Code of Ethics that the members of NPPA follow:

The practice of photojournalism, both as a science and art, is worthy of the very best thought and effort of those who enter into it as a profession.

Photojournalism affords an opportunity to serve the public that is equaled by few other vocations and all members of the profession should strive by example and influence to maintain high standards of ethical conduct free of mercenary considerations of any kind.

It is the individual responsibility of every photojournalist at all times to strive for pictures that report truthfully, honestly and objectively.

Business promotion in its many forms is essential, but untrue statements of any nature are not worthy of a professional photojournalist and we severely condemn any such practice.

It is our duty to encourage and assist all members of our profession, individually and collectively, so that the quality of photojournalism may constantly be raised to higher standards.

It is the duty of every photojournalist to work to preserve all freedom-of-the-press rights recognized by law and to work to protect and expand freedom-of-access to all sources of news and visual information.

Our standards of business dealings, ambitions and relations shall have in them a note of sympathy for our common humanity and shall always require us to take into consideration our highest duties as members of society. In every situation in our business life, in every responsibility that comes before us, our chief thought shall be to fulfill that responsibility and discharge that duty so that when each of us is finished we shall have endeavored to lift the level of human ideals and achievement higher than we found it.

No Code of Ethics can prejudge every situation, thus common sense and good judgment are required in applying ethical principles.

Laws regarding photography can vary significantly from nation to nation. The legal situation is further complicated when one considers that photojournalism made in one country will often be published in many other countries.

Qualities and tasks of a press photographer

A photograph conveys what a thousand words cannot. But to achieve that, there are a few qualities a photographer needs to possess in order to capture a Kodak moment. Let's check them out!

Go Outdoors

To bring the outside inside, you need to go out and explore the great outdoors. That means travel far and near! It could be your neighborhood marketplace or a nearby park. Or, it could be going out and exploring on one of your vacations. Either way, you need to step out of your normal routine and check out the unknown.

Be Curious

Curiosity can result in great pictures! There's no virtue as fulfilling as that, because if you're curious, photography doesn't become a chore. Instead, it's a joyful experience. Also, when it's all work and all play, you'll end up with a far greater output than a less curious photographer who's doing it only for the money and recognition. Also, curious people see things around them with renewed interest, as if they're seeing it for the first time. You need to perceive

things without your mind being in a hurry. That's the main secret! Great photos may come, but being curious itself is greatly enjoyable. Remember, the voyage of discovery lies not in finding new landscapes, but in gaining new eyes.

Make Mistakes

Know no fear! It's okay to mess up a photo by trying out all kinds of exposures, angles, subjects and moods. Don't be afraid to make mistakes. The way to take great photographs is to take a lot of them. Learn from the mistakes of others, but don't be afraid to make your own as well. Some photographers have a weekly ritual of taking approximately 50 photos a day and reviewing them over the weekend. Many have reported that their photography techniques have improved and their level of quality has gone up. It could be their ability to understand light and manipulate the aperture, shutter speed and ISO. Or, it could be their creativity that has reached a new high. It could also just be their constant exposure to photography and its elements. Therefore, the lesson here is shoot, shoot, shoot!

Be in Control

I don't mean that in a negative sense. I'm talking about keeping an eye on everything that makes up a good photo every time you're out with your camera. That could mean changing the ISO, aperture value, shutter speed, light, etc. Shooting becomes more fun when you control the settings. That's also when you become more creative. When you can control the settings, you can control anything for a good photo. With control comes your own style. Be brave enough to do something crazy. Shoot what impresses you and you'll impress others!

See Things Differently

A good photographer is one who notices things others are oblivious to. The best way to testify to that is to go through interesting photos on the Flickr Web site every other day. One of the things you'll notice is that most photos are of ordinary subjects, but are taken in an extraordinary manner; be it lighting, angle, contrast, background, foreground, focal length and so on. For example, sometimes a building that appears ordinary by day might end up looking spectacular by night.

Be Different

Great photographers don't do different things, they just do things differently. So, try and be different in everything you do. Stay away from monotonous angles, subjects and backgrounds. Step out of your comfort zone and push the envelope of creativity to break new ground. Know the rules, but also set out to break them. Just be different!

View and Review

It's always good to be pals with other photographers taking similar shots. That way, you get to learn from their mistakes and even solve some of the problems you're facing in your photography. Swap ideas, give each other tips and share the lessons you learn. Once a sense of sharing develops between you and other photographers, you'll end up becoming a better photographer through viewing and reviewing.

Resort to Lateral Thinking

Put disconnected ideas together and see where your creativity takes you! Just place random ideas together and find new solutions to problems. Do that regularly and you'll never be short of ideas.

Be Playful

Some of the best photos come about when you're just fooling around with your camera with no agenda whatsoever. Therefore, the key is to play with new angles, with different shooting distances, with shooting from different perspectives and so on. A playful approach to life could very well take your photography to a new level.

Be Patient

Many of us feel happy when we take many photographs, no matter how bad they are. And to achieve that, we end up racing against time and shortening our life cycle. Instead, a better bet would be to give time a break and just relax. Just

watch the world go by with no intention of shooting scores of images. At one time or another, you'll end up capturing a Kodak moment. Just wait it out and enjoy life at the same time!

Unit 4

Photo essay:

A photo-essay is a set or series of photographs that are intended to tell a story or evoke a series of emotions in the viewer. A photo essay will often show pictures in deep emotional stages. Photo essays range from purely photographic works to photographs with captions or small notes to full text essays with a few or many accompanying photographs. Photo essays can be sequential in nature, intended to be viewed in a particular order, or they may consist of non-ordered photographs which may be viewed all at once or in an order chosen by the viewer.

Sequencing

Sequencing refers to the order you put your samples in within your portfolio. While mostly relevant to [photography portfolios], the sequence acts as a guide to the information, ideas, and picture making skills contained in your portfolio. Aspects of your work may be played up or subtly minimized. Any time, in fact, pictures are strung together in a book, on a gallery wall, on a website, they have an effect on one another.

Advice on Sequencing

Both the content of a picture and its form (line, shape, color scheme, tonality...) subtly overlay our experience of the next picture in a sequence. Consider the order of your images with that in mind.

Be clear about what you want your pictures to communicate. Use sequencing to establish the subject matter you want to work with, the skills you want to highlight, and your particular way of working.

Take a look at well-designed photography books (especially monographs). Read the foreword and text to understand the photographer's agenda then try to get a line on how their sequencing strategy works to enhance that agenda. Then

consider how the order of your pictures can bring forward the qualities in your work that you believe are most important.

Begin to experiment with the sequence. Do this over time, as it's subtle work

Photography Sequencing Strategies

Group Sequencing: Organizing pictures into groups of similar subject matter or categories is the most basic way of presenting work in a portfolio and done thoughtfully, serves as the first purpose of sequencing; to make a coherent thus easily remembered, presentation. Group sequencing is appropriate for many [photography portfolios], particularly for [photojournalism portfolios] which should demonstrate the photographer's ability to work in specific areas like spot news, sports, and features. Group sequencing may be less appropriate for a photographer trying to showcase a distinctive style or niche, such as in [fine art portfolios].

Narrative Sequencing: [Photojournalism portfolios], [editorial portfolios], [documentary photography portfolios], and many [fine art photography portfolios] become very invested in sequencing as integral to their creative process. Implicit in a narrative is the passage of time. This may be literal, by the clock, sense of time or a narrative may suggest the passage of time in a broader way.

Thematic Sequencing: Though documentary projects often employ a narrative sequencing strategy, there are many notable exceptions by photographers who are less interested in specificity and more interested in exploring broader themes.

Visual Sequencing: At issue in every sequencing strategy is the way that visual elements relate to each other from picture to picture and page to page whether in print or on a monitor. Visual or formal elements like line, tone, color scheme, scale, and shape can encourage a flow of information or can work to isolate images and their ideas from each other. Pairing pictures together that share formal qualities encourages the viewer to associate them together even if their content is different while pairing pictures that don't visually connect supports their differences. You've heard the expression "form is content" right? Page layout strategies may also work towards similar ends including; placing sets of images in a grid on a page or screen to create cohesion among the images, leaving a blank page next to a key image, and using image size to direct the viewer's attention.

Website Sequencing Strategie

Web page layout and navigation both obliterate sequencing strategies and create new opportunities. Even though the viewer is often choosing the order in which to view pictures on a website, the editor still has many opportunities to impose sequencing ideas. Arranging thumbnails across the bottom of a page or into grids should be done as artfully and thoughtfully as if in print. Pictures fading one into the next in a Quicktime narrative is not so different than flipping through the pages of a book. On the web or in print, the basic rules of form and storytelling still apply.