1

Assignment

WHERE TO FIND NEWS

Steve Linsenmayer, of the *Fort Wayne* (Indiana) *News-Sentinel*, heard the newsroom's emergency band scanner cackle, "Structure fire." Looking out the window of the newsroom, he saw black rain clouds covering a sky broken by distant lightning.

Linsenmayer hesitated to race out into the storm until his boss, Keith Hitchens, came running down the hall yelling, "Church fire." Hitchens had heard the second call on the radio asking for more fire companies and identifying the burning structure as St. Mary's Church.

"Oh shit," Linsenmayer gasped as he grabbed his camera bag on the way to his car.

The photographer heard about this out-of-control fire at a nearby church by monitoring the emergency scanner radio. Steve Linsenmayer, *Fort Wayne News-Sentinel*

When he got to St. Mary's, the lightning storm that had started the blaze was still in full glory. Within minutes of starting to shoot, Linsenmayer's umbrella blew out, so he radioed back to the office to send more photographers—and dry towels.

About an hour later, heavy smoke started to billow out of the rear steeple. Linsenmayer kept shooting as he captured the shot of the church's crosses enveloped by smoke. The photo filled nearly the entire front page of the next day's edition (see page 2).

NEWS HAPPENS

SCANNER RADIO SIGNALS FIRES AND ACCIDENTS

Most dramatic news photographs result not from city desk assignments but from vigilant photographers who monitor scanner radios to learn about breaking news situations. Police, fire, and other emergency agencies communicate with cops and firefighters in the field via low frequency, very high frequency (VHF), and ultra-high frequency (UHF) radio wave bands. Each agency—the police, the highway patrol, Coast Guard—broadcasts on a different frequency. A scanner radio automatically switches from one frequency to another, stopping whenever a transmission is occurring. The scanner continually rotates through the frequencies it is programmed to listen for. By monitoring a scanner radio, a photographer can listen to transmissions from all the emergency agencies in an area. If a warehouse fire takes place, the dispatcher will call for fire engines and give a location. By noting the number of the alarms (indicating the size of the fire), the number of engines called, and the location, a photographer can determine the magnitude of a blaze, its news value, and whether it will be burning by the time the photojournalist arrives on the scene.

Jim MacMillan, a winner of the Pulitzer Prize who has covered spot news for the *Philadelphia Daily News* for years, says 90 percent of his tips come from listening to the scanner radio—make that four scanners, all of which he monitors simultaneously. He recommends keeping one scanner tuned to the citywide police, one to local police, one to the fire department, and one to pick up transmissions from the local TV news desk, as well as the Coast Guard and airport.

Sam Costanza, on contract with the *New York Post*, spends six nights a week parked near the intersection of three main highways that lead to New York's boroughs—all the while monitoring the transmissions of the New York Police Department's special operations section. "I'm a listener," he says. "There aren't many listeners. Other photographers respond to assignments. By the time they arrive, I'm already leaving the scene."

Political groups like this one demonstrating in front of an abortion clinic in Wichita, Kansas, often tip off the media about the time and place of their protests. Kim Johnson, for the *Wichita* [Kansas] *Eagle*

Kent Porter of the *Santa Rosa Press Democrat* covers spot news—news that occurs without warning—in rural Northern California. He tracks the action with four antennae on his Toyota Tacoma as well as a scanner inside his house. He monitors scanner transmissions, carries a cell phone, and stays tuned to local news radio. He says the antennae make his truck look like a centipede.

Different agencies use their own special codes when talking on the air. Porter knows he is heading out for a strong-arm robbery or assault with a weapon when he hears "211." He also knows to "be on the lookout" when he hears "B-O-L," and that "code 20" means an officer needs immediate assistance. In New York Costanza knows that a "1045, code one," means a fire-related death.

Although there are no uniform codes from one city to another, stores that sell scanner radios usually have printed copies of local codes available.

The codes tell photographers what is taking place, but they do not always indicate the importance of the action. Every photographer interviewed for this chapter said that the tension in a dispatcher's voice reveals an emergency's significance. "I listen for the voices

In near-100-degree heat at Marine World, staff members distribute hats and water to stranded riders after a cable broke on the thrill ride Boomerang. The photographer heard the tip on an all-news-radio station while driving home. Dean Coppola, *Contra Costa* [California] *Times*

on the scanner," says Santa Rosa's Porter. "The stress in their voices will tell you so much." The *Post*'s Costanza puts it this way: "The dispatchers have distinctive voices—you can tell when they are alarmed. Listen hard and quick. You might only get one shot at it."

STAY TUNED TO ALL-NEWS RADIO, TELEVISION, AND WEB SITES

Alternatives include all-news radio stations, television stations that provide frequently updated news reports, and web sites that post the latest information as soon as it comes across the wires. MacMillan in Philadelphia begins each day by checking all the local newspaper, TV, and radio news sites as well as wire service date books, and activist calendars.

An all-news radio station or a cable network like Cable News Network (CNN) interrupts in-progress programming immediately if an emergency arises. These stations monitor several scanner channels, including the fire and police departments, and will announce when a major fire alarm or multicar accident occurs. Radio alerted Dean Coppola to riders trapped on a stalled roller coaster at a local theme park. He was the first still shooter on the scene. With temperatures nearing 100 degrees, park workers started distributing water and hats to the people on the ride. Shooting with a 400mm lens, Coppola took a page-one picture based on a tip from the all-news-radio station.

The all-news channel's weather forecaster monitors natural disasters such as hurricanes or tornadoes. The information provided by all-news stations is not as immediate as what you will learn on a scanner, but their reports often will suffice. See if your community has a local Internet site that provides up-to-the minute news tips. Sites like these feed data directly from all the emergency services in the area. You may even be able to download these feeds onto your cell phone.

For magazine and freelance photographers working overseas, CNN as well as the BBC and MSNBC provide around-the-clock news updates. Even photographers covering huge, breaking, international stories turn to one of the 24-hour outlets to get news in English and see how the rest of the world is receiving the story. Cell phones with Internet access also can provide nearly instant access to developing news.

Today, many photojournalists on foreign assignments carry laptop computers with modems that allow them to track developing stories on the web and, of course, transmit pictures and stay in touch with editors.

USE CONTACTS

Michael Meinhardt of the *Chicago Tribune* has developed his own system of finding out about local spot news as it happens. Using a system of pagers, two-way radios, cellular phones, and a network of sources and contacts, he stays abreast of news as it breaks in the Chicago and greater-Chicago area.

Firefighters, police officers, dispatchers, and even air-traffic controllers at surrounding airports notify Meinhardt of news events via a voice-message pager that he carries 24 hours a day. He has befriended these contacts at other news events, where he introduced himself, left a business card, and followed up by giving them photographs of themselves at work.

"You'd be surprised how many of them remember me when the news breaks," he says.

"Additionally," he explains, "I belong to a network of contacts led by a local radio news reporter who is considered the dean of spot news. . . . We all have two-way radios on our own frequency that we monitor around the clock. . . . Once the closest person arrives on the scene, I can usually ascertain whether it's worth traveling to shoot pictures. They can also let me know how urgently I need to get there before the scene clears up."

Not surprisingly, Meinhardt is considered a great source of information by his colleagues in the newsroom and also by the newspaper's city desk.

Bruce Chambers of the *Orange County Register*, who has been nominated for the Pulitzer six times, recommends talking to the police and to firefighters. He goes even further and recommends giving them pictures you have taken of them if your news organization allows. To find stories, Chambers reads the events calendar at City Hall. Of course he reads his own paper, but he does not stop there. He reads every news outlet in the area.

Chambers may have an edge when it comes to story ideas, though—a secret and proprietary source. "My mom is my favorite source for ideas," he reveals.

TIPS HELP

News organizations often get leads on top news stories when people call or write with tips. In fact, some newspapers, web sites, and a few magazines offer monetary rewards for tips. The desk editor sizes up the event; then, if the decision is to respond, the editor or an assistant may send out a reporter and photographer or call a local freelancer.

Special-interest groups also notify news outlets if group members think publicity will do them some good. If minorities, mothers on

Photograph people in action. Whenever possible, avoid the office portrait. Milbert Brown, *Chicago Tribune*

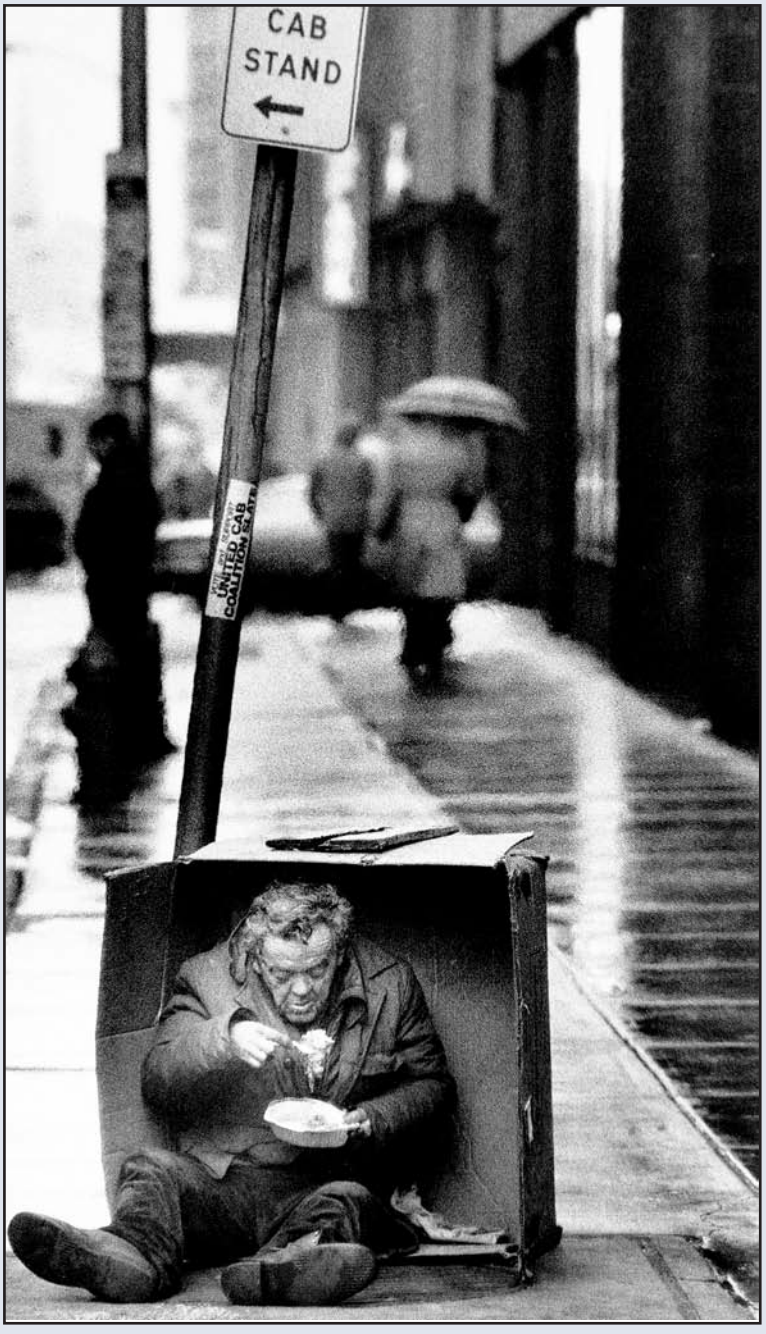
MAKING THE MOST OF AN ASSIGNMENT

PHILADELPHIA'S HOMELESS: HOW THEY SURVIVE

Tom Gralish of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* recalls that when he received an assignment to photograph the homeless, editors suggested he "might do portraits of the street people, each standing in front of their grates or cardboard boxes or whatever else they called home. At that point, I wasn't sure what I would do, but I decided then and there that whatever it was, it would be the most honest photography I'd ever done. I was determined to do something as true as possible to the traditional ideals of documentary photojournalism."

Consequently, Gralish did not set up portraits. Instead, he followed street people with names like Hammerman, Spoon, and Redbeard through the ups and downs of their barren, subsistence lives. He photographed them staying warm atop steam grates on a frozen street, drinking wine, and panhandling. He showed them sleeping in boxes. Rather than a series of formulated, posed portraits, Gralish photographed the nitty gritty of these men's lives. For his efforts, he won both the Pulitzer Prize and the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Prize. ■

Photos by Tom Gralish, *Philadelphia Inquirer*



welfare, gays, or antinuclear groups, for example, are going to stage a protest for which they want coverage, they might contact local and national outlets with the time and place of their planned demonstration.

BEAT REPORTER KNOWS THE TERRITORY

Most news outlets assign reporters to cover a certain beat: city hall, hospitals, or police headquarters for a city newspaper or web site, or the White House, education, or medicine for a national magazine or 24-hour cable station. These specialists keep up with the news and events in their area; consequently, they know when to expect a major story to break. The city hall reporter may call in to the city desk to say, "The mayor is greeting some astronauts today. It will be worth a good picture." The editor will probably assign a photographer. A magazine writer working on a story about education in America may need pictures of a school for the gifted. The magazine's photo editor, often in New York or Washington, will assign a photographer who is under contract with the publication or will call a local freelancer.

PR OFFICE IS THERE TO AID YOU

The senator will arrive at her office at 9:00 A.M. She leaves for the airport at 10:15 A.M. to dedicate a new runway. She will be at the Golden Age Senior Citizens' Home from 11:30 A.M. until 12:30 P.M. During a 1:00 P.M. lunch at Parker House, the senator will address the State Beautification Committee.

If you want to know the whereabouts of the senator at practically any minute of the day, just consult the politician's schedule. The senator's itinerary is planned weeks in advance. From the mayor to the president of the United States, politicians have carefully planned schedules, usually handled by media relations officers.

Companies, schools, hospitals, prisons, and governmental departments also have press or public relations offices. Sometimes called public affairs or public information departments, they generate a steady stream of news releases announcing the opening of a new college campus, the invention of a long-lasting light bulb, or the start of a new special-education program. Many of these PR releases suggest good picture possibilities.

When Bruce Chambers of the *Orange County Register* set out to do a story about a multigenerational fire-fighting family for the anniversary of the September 11 attacks, the public affairs officer for the fire department provided Chambers with contact information. (See Chapter 4, "Features," for more on working with PR professionals.)

SCHEDULES IN PRINT OR ONLINE

Another source for upcoming news events comes daily to your doorstep rolled and held with a rubber band. The daily newspaper and its web site carry birth, wedding, and death announcements. Here is where you will find schedules of local theaters, sports events, parades, and festivals. When the circus arrives in your town, start with your local media outlets to find the time and place.

Web sites also offer lists of upcoming events. Many organizations and sports facilities list activities on their own sites. Surf the Internet for updated schedules.

UNUSUAL LEADS IN TRADE MAGAZINES AND ON SPECIALIZED WEB SITES

For more unusual activities check special-interest newspapers, magazines, and special-interest groups on the web. Dog and cat lovers, cyclists, plumbers, skateboarders, mental health professionals, and environmental groups all publish magazines or newsletters, and most have web sites that announce special events.

To track upcoming happenings with visual possibilities, newspapers, wire services, web sites and magazines maintain log books listing the times, places, and dates of activities that might turn into stories. The notation in the book includes a telephone number for the sponsoring organization in case the photographer needs more information. Freelancers can adapt this idea to track events for themselves.

WORKING WITH REPORTERS: CLICKERS MEET SCRIBBLERS

PHOTO REQUEST STARTS THE PROCESS

Whether it's *Time* magazine, *The New York Times*, or *MSNBC.com*, most news organizations have many more staff reporters than photographers. From their sources, these newshounds generate potential stories. When an editor approves a story proposal, the reporter makes out a photo request.

For the photographer, the key to great photo coverage depends on the information and arrangements on the photo request. Typical assignment requests include the name of the person or event to be photographed, as well as the time, date, and place. The editor usually assigns a slug—a one- or two-word designation for the story that serves as the story's name until the copy desk writes a final headline. The assignment sheet often includes a brief description of the proposed article, as well as a telephone number with which to contact the key subject if anything needs to be changed.

FROM A WRITER'S POINT OF VIEW

Reporter Ellie Brecher of the *Miami Herald* suggested the following to photographers in *4Sight*, a newsletter published by Region 4 of the National Press Photographers Association:

Understand the assignment by talking to the reporter ahead of time.

Don't barge into an interview.

Share information with the reporter.

Bring ideas to the reporter.

Have your technical act together.

PHOTOGRAPHER AND REPORTER MEET IN ADVANCE

Under the best of circumstances, the reporter, photographer, and assigning editors meet or talk on the telephone or by email at this point in the story's development to discuss the team's approach or define the story's thrust. Here, the photojournalist can suggest visual ways to tell the story that correspond to the reporter's written approach. The photographer can recommend candids, a portrait, or a photo illustration—and also can estimate the amount of time needed for the shoot, or identify props and necessary clearances.

At some outlets, unfortunately, the photographer never meets with the reporter and assigning editor. Instead, the shooter receives the information from an intermediary editor, or is briefed by notes on the assignment sheet. In these circumstances the photographer plays a reduced role in determining the story's final outcome. Located at the end of the assignment chain, the photographer has little say in determining the best approach to the story.

DETERMINING THE BEST TIME TO SHOOT

At many news outlets, the reporter calls the subject and makes shooting arrangements. Sometimes this saves the photographer time. In most cases, though, the reporter will probably overlook great picture opportunities.

The reporter, for example, may decide to do a story about the controversial principal at Lincoln High School.

The writer asks when the principal is free for an interview and pictures. The principal responds: "Well, I'm busy all day. I greet the kids as they get off the bus. Then I meet with parents and teachers. Next I observe classes and eat lunch with the kids. Then I usually work with student discipline problems in the afternoon. All the teachers and students are gone by four. How about meeting me in my office after four?"

From the reporter's point of view, four o'clock is fine. The principal is free to answer questions and chat in a quiet environment in her office.

From the photojournalist's perspective, four o'clock is okay if formal portraits or headshots are satisfactory. But four o'clock is a disaster if the goal is to produce revealing candid pictures.

Shooting at a writer's appointed hour is more likely to result in a portrait in front of the school or inside a classroom. The environmental portrait can show what a principal looks like but can hardly reveal her character.

PHOTOGRAPHERS MAKE THEIR OWN ARRANGEMENTS

Although reporters can hold a telephone interview or call back later for more facts, photographers need to be present when the subject is engaged in work. Photographers and photo editors need to educate those who report, or assign reporting, about this need if pictures are ever to go beyond the routine.

Photographers usually find that they can make better arrangements than a reporter or editor because they know the kinds of pictures they are looking for. Photographers are mindful of both the subject's activities and the quality of light at different times of the day. High noon outside rarely provides attractive light for an outdoors portrait, for example. Ideally, photographers would get names and phone numbers of subjects and then make the appointment, or decide what other pictures might go with the story. The reporter might tape the interview at four o'clock, and the photographer might arrange to shoot the subject from dawn until dusk on a different day.

When scheduling a shoot with a subject it's always good to ask, "What is your typical day like?" As the subject, like the principal mentioned earlier, describes a normal day's activities, you can note which hours the person is sitting behind a desk talking and which hours he or she is doing something active and therefore photogenic. You also should find out if anything unusual is coming up that would lend itself to revealing photos.

ON THE SCENE: WORKING IN TANDEM

For some types of news, the photojournalist and reporter must cover the event together. Sometimes it's the reporter who knows the important players. Sometimes the photographer needs a second set of eyes to help provide protection, such as at a violent street protest. "You be my extra ears," says Ellie Brecher, a photographer-friendly reporter for the *Miami Herald*, "and I'll be your extra eyes." (See Chapter 3, "General News," page 52, for special situations where photographers must not share information.)

Even at dangerous breaking-news events like street riots, when the situation calls for all available eyes and ears, the photographer and reporter should not become joined at the hip. Each has different needs. One is following the action as it flows down a street, while the other is checking a quote and making sure the name is spelled correctly. However, while the photographer and reporter each need independence, the two also need to reconnect every once in a while to confirm they are developing the story in parallel ways.

Although the photographer and writer may not shoot and interview at the same moment, they should coordinate the message of their words and pictures. Photographers should pass on their observations about the subject or event to the writers. Writers can explain how their story might lead.

In the end, the reader will be looking at both the picture and the accompanying story. If the writer describes the subject as drab, yet the picture shows a smiling person wearing a peacock-colored shirt, the reader is left to resolve the conflict. Writers and photographers should resolve conflicts between words and pictures before the story goes to press.

PICTURE POLITICS

With good planning, editors avoid poor use of photo resources. However, many news outlets continue to operate in a traditional structure long unfriendly to the effective use of photography.

Traditionally, news organizations have been organized to handle assignments proposed by either reporters or editors. Photographers rarely originated story ideas. And even if they did, the photo-reporters received little in the way of picture play for their efforts.

While some of this is changing as print outlets shift toward distribution of content on the visually friendly Internet (see Chapter 12, "Multimedia," and Chapter 13, "Video"), the process in many publications continues to work like this: once the reporter gets the green light, research begins. The reporter might interview subjects, check the publication's library for related articles, do a web search, call authorities, and, finally, write the copy over a period of days or even weeks. Only when the story is nearly completed and ready for publication does the reporter fill out a photo request. Finally, the photo department becomes aware of the issue.

With the story written and the publication date set, the shooter has little flexibility. While the reporter took days and weeks to develop the story, the photographer may have only hours to produce photos. While juggling three or four other assignments for the day, the photojournalist is unlikely to be able to shoot in the best light, have time to wait for a candid moment, or to reshoot.

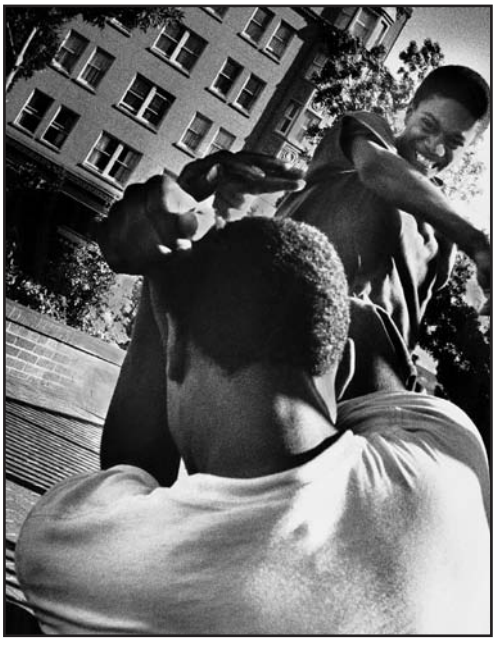
THE BUDGET MEETING

At most news organizations, the decision about how much space or how much time to allocate to a story as well as where it will play takes place at a daily, weekly, or monthly conference often known as a budget meeting. Representing each section of a media outlet, different editors pitch their best stories to the managing editor, who ultimately decides which stories get cover display and which will run inside. While the photo editor speaks up for pictures at this meeting, word editors always outnumber the lonely representative from the photography department. (See Chapter 7, "Photo Editing." Also see the documentary "Inside *Sports Illustrated*," on the DVD enclosed with this book.)

At the budget meeting, editors defend their turf. At a large news outlet, the sports editor, fashion editor, city editor, and foreign desk editor might each have an entire section. On a news magazine, the national editor, political editor, and music editor each might have a minimum number of pages to cover the most important topics in a specific area. Too often, the photo editor has no designated turf: there is no space assigned solely to photo stories. Though seated at the table with other decision makers, the picture editor has no formally reserved space.

Furthermore, the picture editor is up against colleagues who think that their

To avoid being attacked during his forays into San Francisco's Tenderloin neighborhood, Fred Larson dressed unobtrusively and hid his camera inside a portable stereo. Scott Sommerdorf, *San Francisco Chronicle*



Street fighters continued their battle while an unobtrusive Larson moved in close with his camera-in-a-boombox. Frederic Larson, *San Francisco Chronicle*

sections cover the most important news, contain the best writers, and ought to have the most space. And, because more and bigger photos mean fewer words, few print editors see the advantages of storytelling pictures that eclipse longer stories. Furthermore, managing editors, most of whom have moved up from the writing rather than the visual side, make the final decisions about the use of space. The upshot in most organizations: even a very outspoken photo editor can rarely counterbalance these inherent structural biases toward words.

On the other hand, the Internet's capacity to deliver unlimited numbers of pictures and video without incurring additional cost provides inherent advantages over print publications. On web sites, you might think, having space for pictures should not be an issue.

Think again.

The "splash" or "home" page is a news outlet's guide to its web site. The demand for space by section editors means that pictures on the home page are often run the size of postage stamps. In addition, because of download-speed considerations, web designers often reduce the number of pictures on the opening page as well as their size so the pages will load quickly. Just when photographers thought they had found a photo-friendly medium on the web, they discovered their work squeezed again—at least on the opening page.

Fortunately, many news organizations are now recognizing the draw of telling stories with photography on the Internet and are assigning photojournalists to shoot and often report and produce in-depth photo stories that include audio. While words may still reign in print, photojournalism is finding its place in powerful multimedia projects that include still images, sound, words, and, increasingly, stand-alone video projects.

See Chapters 12, "Multimedia," and 13, "Video," for more on taking advantage of these new opportunities when approaching assignments.

TAKE A REPORTER TO LUNCH

To avoid the trap of being the last one to know about important stories—and having your pictures played poorly—try this: If you are a new staffer, ask the managing editor which reporter stands out in the newsroom. If you have been on staff for a while, you already know the names of the best writers.

Start by introducing yourself to one reporter and asking what he or she is working on. If the story sounds interesting, discuss picture possibilities. If you know that an event is coming up that would help explain the story, suggest to your photo editor or managing editor an assignment that will help illustrate the story. On your own, start reading about the issue. If you notice a picture that might support the story, shoot it. Look for as many ways as you can to photograph the writer's story even before the wordsmith has finished the masterpiece.

When the story results in a formal photo request, your editor will likely assign the job to you because you already have started on the photos. By now you have a clear idea of the possible pictures that would expand the story. Also, a story written by a top writer will probably receive prominent play.

If you continue to look for good writers, anticipate photo requests, and build alliances with the word side, you will likely find writers agreeable to listening to your story ideas. A writing/photography partnership is likely to claim more space than your proposal alone.

GENERATE YOUR OWN ASSIGNMENT

Sometimes a photographer pulls over next to an overturned car, jumps out, and shoots. No written assignment at all. Usually, a photographer receives a verbal or written assignment from an editor. But many shooters report that their best assignments are those they proposed themselves. Self-generated assignments allow the photographer to pick exciting topics that lend themselves to visuals.

When a photographer has researched a good story, the next step is to request a reporter to provide the needed text. The more stories photographers propose, the more control they will have over their work. Fred Larson of the *San Francisco Chronicle* spent weeks photographing the city's tough neighborhood known as the Tenderloin (see page 11). The *Chronicle*'s Kim Komenich leapt from the world of stills into video journalism when he assigned himself to follow a Bay Area Santa Claus nearly all the way to the North Pole. (See pages 307–308, Chapter 13, "Video." Chapter 10, "Covering the Issues," and Chapter 11, "Photo Story," feature other successful self-generated assignments.)

INTERNATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

Many news outlets have expanded their beats to include the world. From covering earthquakes in India to uprisings in Rwanda, photojournalists are literally on the move. Photographers who covered high school football on Friday night may find themselves boarding a plane for Iraq on Sunday morning. Never has the mastery of foreign languages or knowledge of international affairs been more important to photojournalists.

Michael Kodas, who has covered international news for the *Hartford Courant*, reads voraciously: *The Wall Street Journal*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, and *The New York Times*, among others. National Public Radio (NPR) is a good source of international news for car-bound photojournalists. If an intensive language course is out of your budget, try substituting language tapes for your favorite rock groups when you are stuck in traffic.

And do not forget the most basic preparations of all, as recommended by freelancer Keith Philpott, who shoots for *Time* and *People*. Keep a current passport in your camera bag, and make sure your inoculations are current for travel in developing countries.

The photographer was on the front with the U.S. military during an incursion into Najaf, Iraq. Their temporary outpost was taking constant sophisticated sniper fire through windows and down corridors. American soldiers used the sniper dummy to draw the enemy into sight and return fire.

A sniper was spotted about 450 yards away in an abandoned hotel. U.S. forces called in an air strike, and a fighter jet soon dropped two aerial bombs onto the hotel, shattering the building and probably killing the sniper, although incoming sniper fire resumed just a day later.
Jim MacMillan, Associated Press

Carol Guzy, who covered the Ethiopian famine for the *Miami Herald* and the tumbling of the Berlin Wall for the *Washington Post*, says to pack light for international assignments. She carries as little photo gear as she feels she can get away with, she says, but does bring an extra camera body—and memory cards, lots of memory cards.

Do not forget batteries.

VISUAL VARIETY

OVERALL SHOT SETS THE SCENE

If readers themselves were at a news event, they would stand in the crowd and move their eyes from side to side to survey the panorama. The overall photo gives readers at home the same perspective. A good overall allows viewers to orient themselves to the scene. The overall shot is one that will serve you well in video as well as in stills (see Chapter 13, "Video").

For some stories, an overall might include just a long shot of a room. For others, the overall might cover a city block, a neighborhood, or even a whole town. The scope of the shot depends on the size of the event. The overall shows where the event took place: inside, outside, country, city, land, sea, day, night, and so on. The shot defines the relative position of the participants. In a confrontation, for example, the overall angle would show whether the demonstrators and police were a block apart, or across the street from one another. The overall shot also allows the reader, by judging crowd size, to evaluate the magnitude of the event.

Margaret Bourke-White, a member of the original *Life* magazine staff, always shot overalls on each assignment, even if she thought they would not be published. She explained that she wanted her editor to see the shooting location so that he could interpret the rest of the pictures she had taken.

Generally the overall requires a high angle. Knowing this, Gene Pepi rented a 12-foot-tall ladder and stationed it right in the middle of San Francisco's Market Street to photograph a peace demonstration. His ladder and position provided the best location to capture the historic size of the crowd.

When you arrive at a news event, quickly survey the scene to determine what is happening. Then search for a way to elevate yourself above the crowd. In a room, a chair will suffice. But outside, a telephone pole, a leafless tree, or a nearby building will give

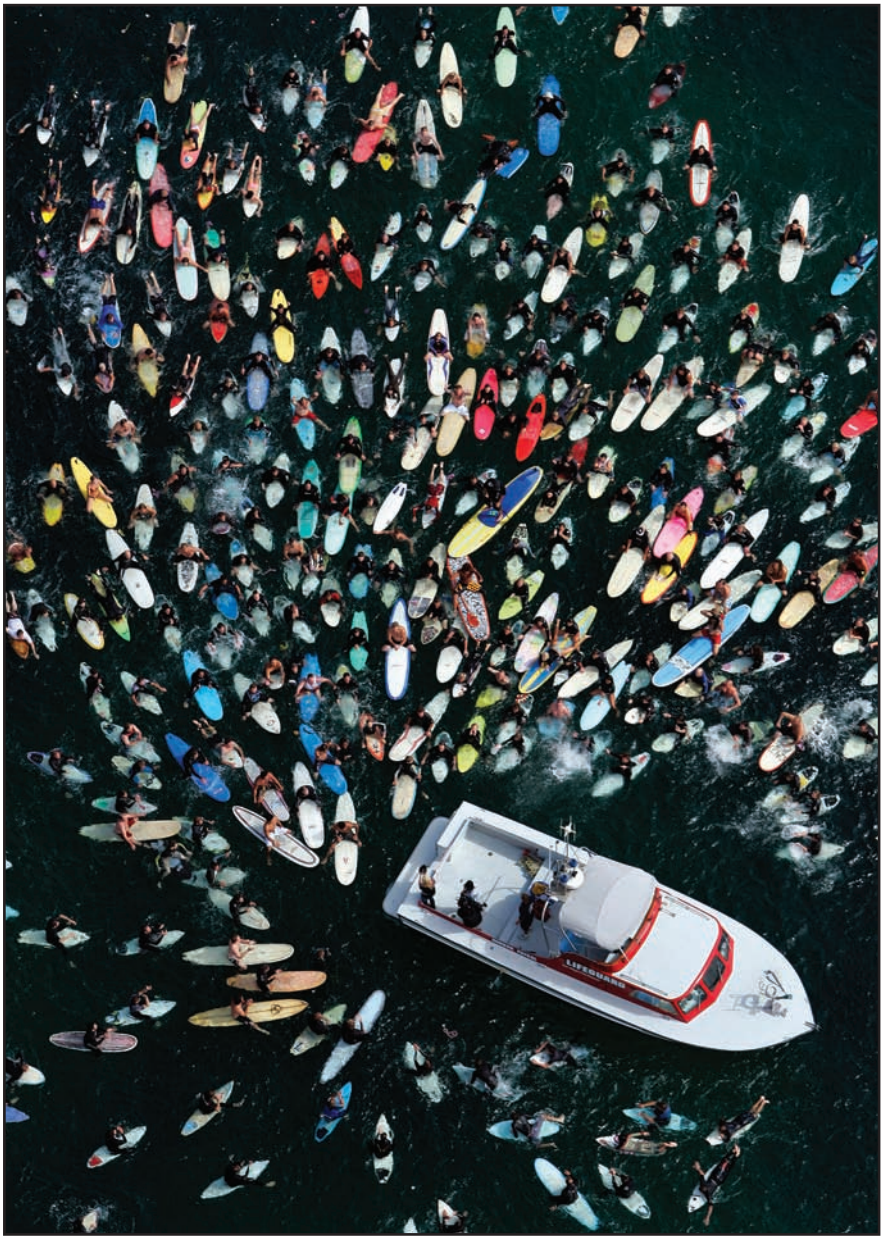
GET HIGH

Gene Pepi knew the shot he wanted at a peace march in San Francisco could not be taken from ground level. He rented a 12-foot-tall ladder so he could photograph over the heads of the marchers for an overall shot of demonstrators filling the length of Market Street, with the city's Ferry Building in the background. A telephoto lens appears to compress the space between the banners down Market Street, making them seem closer together than they really are.
Gene Pepi, *Frontlines*

Gene Pepi gets the picture from atop a ladder he rented for the occasion. © Ken Kobré

ASSURING VISUAL VARIETY

MEDIUM
When published alone, a medium shot must tell a complete story. Ryan Newman (left) jumps back as the last challenger's car erupts into fire while heading into the garage at the NASCAR Winston Cup Tropicana 400 at Chicagoland Speedway. Scott Strazzante, *Chicago Tribune*



CLOSE-UP
A musician's hands resting on her church's organ keys shows the reader the curvature of the woman's fingers and the texture of her skin. The 92-year-old organist had played at her church since 1927.
Rich Abrahamson, *Fort Collins Coloradoan*

OVERALL
Shot from a helicopter, this high vantage point best conveys how many people paddled out to attend this memorial for a young professional surfer who had died. With the door removed from the chopper, the photographer was harnessed in and able to lean out safely to get a clean shot.
K.C. Alfred,
The San Diego Union-Tribune

you the high angle you need for an effective overall. When in a flat area, even the roof of your car will add some height to your view.

The wider angle lens you have, obviously, the less distance from the scene you will need. However, on a major news story that encompasses a vast area, such as a flood, hurricane, or conflagration, you may need to work with your editors to rent a helicopter or small airplane to get high enough to capture the dimensions of the destruction.

MEDIUM SHOT TELLS THE STORY

The medium shot should "tell the story" in one photograph. Shoot the picture close enough to see the participants' action, yet far enough away to show their relationship to one another and to the environment. The medium shot contains all the storytelling elements in the scene. Like a news story lead, the photo must tell the whole story quickly by compressing the important elements into one image. This is another shot video shooters share with still photographers (see Chapter 13, "Video").

An accident photo might show the victims in the foreground, the wrecked car in the background. Without the car, the photo would omit an essential detail—the cause of the victims' injuries. With only the crumpled car, the reader would wonder if anyone had been hurt. The combination of elements—car plus victims—briefly tells the basic story.

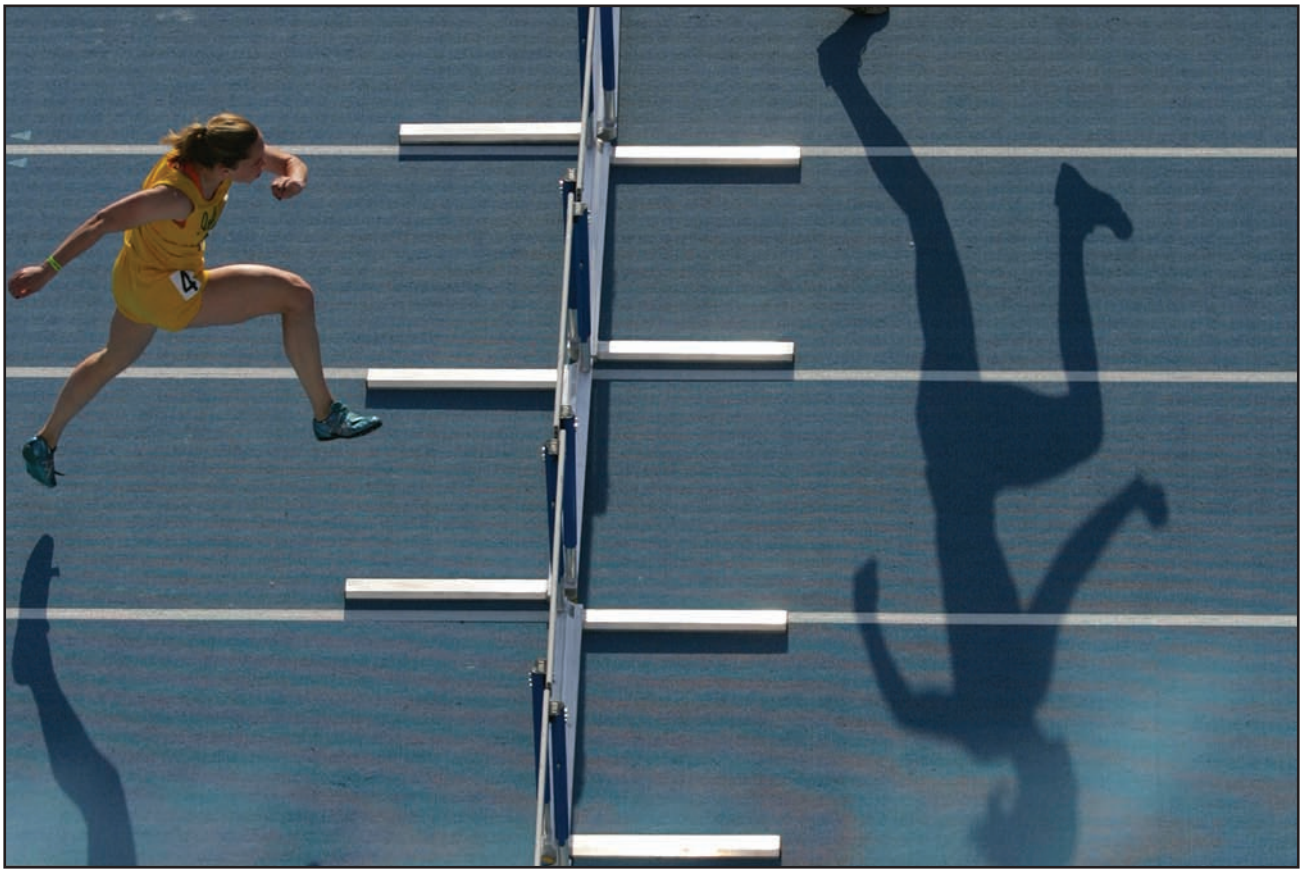
A medium shot gains dramatic impact when the photograph captures action. Although the camera can catch fast action, you may still have difficulty: action often happens so quickly that you have no time to prepare. Shooting action is like shooting sports (see Chapter 6, "Sports"). For both, you must anticipate when and where the action will take place.

If a man starts a heated argument with a police officer, you might predict that fists will fly and an arrest will follow. Aim your camera when the argument starts; do not wait until a punch is thrown. If you hesitate, the quarrel might end while you are still fiddling with your equipment.

For the medium shot, a wide-angle lens such as a 24mm or 28mm works well on a full-frame camera. On a digital camera with a small chip, you need at least a 17mm or 18mm to shoot comfortably.

CLOSE-UP ADDS DRAMA

Nothing beats a close-up for drama when shooting stills or video. The close-up slams the reader into eyeball-to-eyeball contact with the subject. At this intimate distance, a



High angles such as this shot of a hurdler and a competing shadow give the reader a fresh perspective on the race. The photographer shot from the roof of the press box for this early morning competition.
Jeremy Portje, *Telegraph Herald* [Dubuque, Iowa]

subject's face, contorted in pain or beaming happily, elicits empathy in readers.

How close is close?

A close-up should isolate and emphasize one element. And not all close-ups include a person's face. Rich Abrahamson photographed only the hands of a 92-year-old organist who had played the organ at her church for more than three-quarters of a century. The aged hands tell the woman's story without showing her face (see page 15).

Sometimes objects can tell the story even when the story involves tragedy. A close-up of a child's doll covered with mud might tell the story of a flood better than an aerial view of the disaster.

Longer lenses enable shooters to be less conspicuous when shooting close-ups. With a lens zoomed to 200mm, you can stand ten feet away and still get a tight facial close-up.

The telephoto lens decreases the depth-of-field and thus blurs the foreground and background. This effect isolates the subject from unwanted distractions.

In addition to using a telephoto for close-up work, some photographers employ a macro lens or a standard lens with an extension tube if the subject is tiny—and stationary. With either of these lenses, the camera can take a picture of a small object such as a contact lens and enlarge it until it is easily seen (see page 144).

HIGH/LOW ANGLES BRING NEW PERSPECTIVES

Since most people see the world from a sitting or standing perspective, a photojournalist shooting stills or video can add instant interest to pictures simply by shooting from a unique elevation. Shoot down from a 30-story building or up from a manhole cover. Either way, the viewer will get a new, sometimes jarring, but almost always refreshing look at a subject. Even when covering a meeting in a standard-sized room, standing on a chair or taking pictures while sitting on the floor can add interest to your pictures.

Avoid the "5'7" syndrome." On every assignment, avoid taking all your pictures at eye level. When you start shooting, look around for ways to take the high ground. Whether going out on a catwalk or shooting from the balcony, find some way to look down on the scene you are shooting.

"Get down. Get dirty. Get your camera where the action is," says Bruce Chambers, the outstanding feature photographer for the *Orange County Register*. Digital cameras and video cameras with flip-up LCD screens allow shooting from (literally) ground level. Even without a flip-up screen, use a

A low angle provided additional power to this commemoration of the second anniversary of the September 11 attacks. Bruce Chambers, *Orange County Register*

When more height is called for, like the situation at this Santa Ana College football game, the photojournalist can try holding the camera overhead, aiming and shooting without looking in the viewfinder. Photographers call this shot a "Hail Mary" because they hope and pray for a good image when they cannot see what they are shooting. A wide-angle lens usually works best in these situations.
David Pardo, freelance

wide-angle lens to place your camera as low as you like, even on your toes. Aim. Then shoot without looking. It's easy to check the results with the LCD screen on digital cameras. Try pointing a wide-angle lens in the approximate direction of your target, take a picture, and then check it on the screen. If you miss, just bend down and shoot again.

Using a wide-angle lens, hold your camera as high as you can stretch your arms, aiming the lens in the direction of your target. Do not worry about looking through the viewfinder.

Now, regardless of your religion, say a "Hail Mary" and pray your picture was framed well. Then check the image on the LCD screen in case your prayers were not answered. Then shoot again if necessary. Photographers call this shot a "Hail Mary."

The "Hail Mary" often provides an unusual view and works especially well when battling other photographers for a shot of the winning athlete after a game. Some photographers even extend the "Hail Mary" by attaching their cameras to a monopod and triggering the shutter with a hard-wired cable release or a remote control radio slave like the PocketWizard.

The over-the-head "Hail Mary" is also effective for shooting at a dance or street fair. These crowded circumstances often make it hard to get a clean shot without a distracting background. Coming up close to your subject, holding your camera high, and pointing down will clean up the background nicely.

Shooting at shoe level or rising above the crowd with a "Hail Mary" will greatly expand the visual variety of all your assignments.

GOING WIDE

Walter Green, who worked for the Associated Press for many years, noted that he took most medium shots with a 24mm lens (equal to a 16mm on some digital cameras). Green got extremely close to his subjects and filled the entire frame. The resulting pictures, he said, tended to project a more intimate feeling between the subject and the viewer.

Because shooters like Green work close to a subject, few distracting elements appear in their images This proximity also emphasizes the subject. Finally, a wide-angle lens takes in a large area of the background, thus establishing the relationship of the subject to his or her surroundings.

Eugene Richards, a photographer who has won numerous awards, is master of the wide-angle lens. His lens is like a mother spreading her arms to include all her children in an embrace. Richards's wide-angle lens encompasses his subjects, often bringing together two elements into one picture to tell a more comprehensive story in a single image. His topics, which also have appeared in books, have ranged from drug addicts (***Cocaine True, Cocaine Blue***) to emergency room personnel (***The Knife and Gun Club***). One of his award-winning pictures includes, to the right of the frame, a tiny coffin in the front seat of a hearse; in the middle, open car doors; and, at the extreme left, a young child. Richards brought together the widely separated elements of the child-sized coffin and the youngster in one visual whole.

For more on shooting with wide-angle lenses, see Chapter 8, "Camera Bag."

Multi-layered Images

The wide-angle lens is the perfect tool for "layering" images. Here a photographer tries to frame the main subject occupying the middle ground of the image with something else of interest on the edge. The inclusion of this additional element produces a more complex image, causing the viewer to study both the dominant subject and its relationship to the framing elements. The guitarist on the opposite page is the obvious subject of the picture, but the other musicians in the foreground and background add layers of interest.

PERSISTENCE PAYS OFF

Photographers stay on site until they get the best picture possible within their time limits. Amateurs take a few snaps and hope for the best. Still photojournalists search for the decisive moment and know when they get it. A pro might take 100 or even 1000 shots to get the perfect moment.

Former *New York Times* photographer George Tames said, "If you see a picture, you should take it—period. It is difficult if not impossible to recreate a picture, so do not wait for it to improve. Sometimes the action gets better, and you will take that picture

also, but if you hesitate, you've lost the moment, and you can't go back."

Chambers of the *Orange Country Register* echoes that advice, "Don't always wait for the perfect moment. It never comes. Start and make a picture. Make the next picture better."

Sometimes, staying with a situation yields a series that has more impact than any single image (see pages 20–21). While the video shooter isn't looking for a particular moment, both Chambers' and Tames's words ring true for another reason. If the action is interesting, keep the camera rolling. If you turn it off too soon, you'll miss the entire sequence.

An unedited set of still pictures straight from a novice's camera, or "take" as it is often called, usually shows a few shots of many different scenes throughout. All might be taken from exactly the same position. Professionals, however, visually explore each scene, taking a number of pictures of essentially the same thing but at different moments or from different angles. (See a variety of one pro's images on page 124.)

Usually this means that they will take a few shots, then move to a different position, and shoot the same thing from a fresh vantage. They might shoot six frames from one location and then walk around the subject and shoot six more. By watching the subject as well as the background, photographers are trying to find the perfect balance of a picture's elements while capturing a revealing expression or telling body position.

The video shooter will also explore a scene from a variety of angles and locations for a different reason—the need to have sufficient footage to edit cuts into seamless scenes. (See Chapter 13, "Video," for more on shooting for video.)

MAGNUM PHOTOGRAPHERS' SHOOTING APPROACHES

Each photographer's shooting style differs, though. In his book, ***Magnum: Fifty Years at the Front Line of History***, Russell Miller described a wide range of shooting styles practiced by the diverse members of the Magnum picture agency, which was founded after World War II.

Ernst Haas. A Magnum photographer known for exquisite color work, Haas always began shooting before the action occurred,

With the bass fiddle close up, the banjo in the rear, and the guitarist as the central subject, each member of the Roanoke Valley Pickers is on a different plane in the photograph. The photographer moved in tight with a wide-angle lens. Josh Meltzer, *The Roanoke Times*

according to Eve Arnold, another Magnum shooter. Haas, she said, followed through to the peak of the action, and then tapered off.

Henri Cartier-Bresson. Magnum's Henri Cartier-Bresson is famous for capturing one decisive moment in an image. In fact, his 1952 book was published in the United States under the title ***The Decisive Moment***, which suggests perfect shutter timing to freeze action at its peak. But Cartier-Bresson also looked for balanced composition.

He wrote: "To me, photography is the simultaneous recognition, in a fraction of a second, of the significance of an event as well as of a precise organization of forms which give that event its proper expression. . . . Inside movement, there is one moment at which the elements in motion are in balance. Photography must seize upon this moment and hold immobile the equilibrium of it."

For Cartier-Bresson, a photograph must not only freeze an instant of time, but must capture that instant within a well-designed composition. Cartier-Bresson did shoot some 15,000 rolls of film during his active career—not all of which caught decisive moments—according to Claude Cookman's dissertation, "The Photographic Reportage of Henri Cartier-Bresson, 1933–1973." (See pages 441–443 for more about Cartier-Bresson).

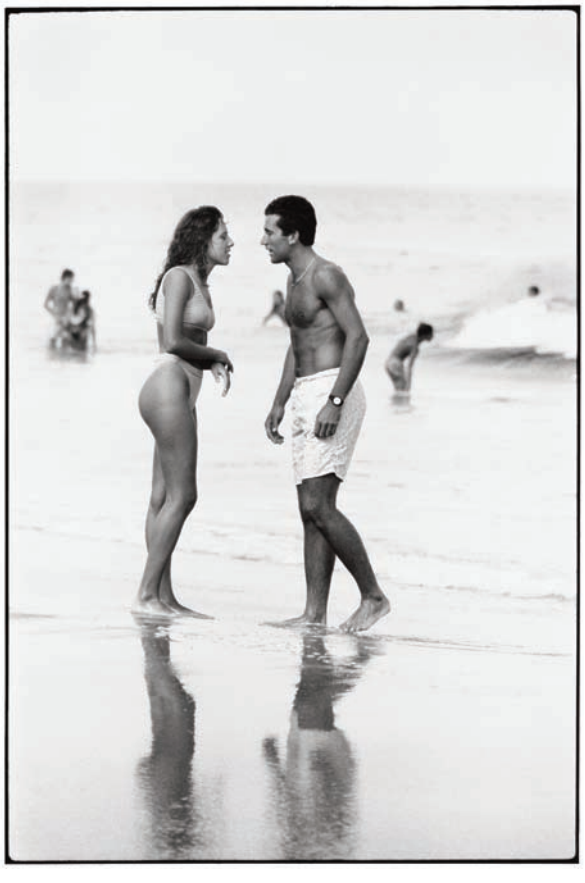
Robert Capa. Capa, whose real name was André Friedmann, was perhaps the world's greatest war photographer and the founder of Magnum, the picture agency cooperative (see pages 440–443). He had a yet different approach to shooting.

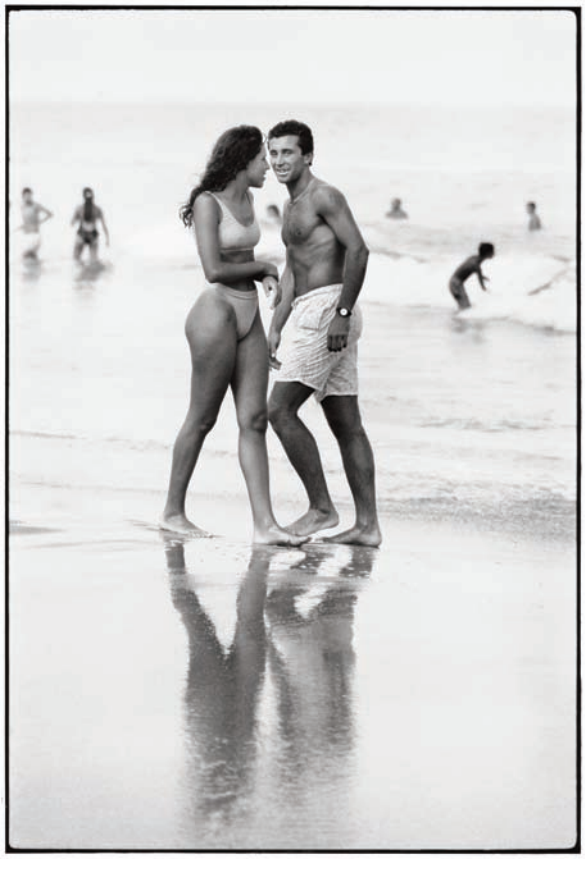
According to Magnum colleague Eve Arnold, Capa's contact sheets did not show Haas's persistence in pursuing a sequence. Nor were Capa's individual pictures as well designed as Cartier-Bresson's.

Yet Capa took some of history's most memorable images. During the Spanish Civil War, he photographed a soldier, arms flung wide, falling backward at the moment of death (see page 442). Capa also took the classic World War II D-day landing pictures. He was killed while covering the war in Vietnam. When Eve Arnold told *New Yorker* writer Janet Flanner that Capa's pictures were not well designed, Flanner shot back, "History doesn't design well, either."

After that, Arnold said, "I began to understand that the strength of Capa's work was that just by being there, where the action was, he was opening new areas of vision.

"He was aware that it is the essence of a picture, not necessarily its form, which is important."





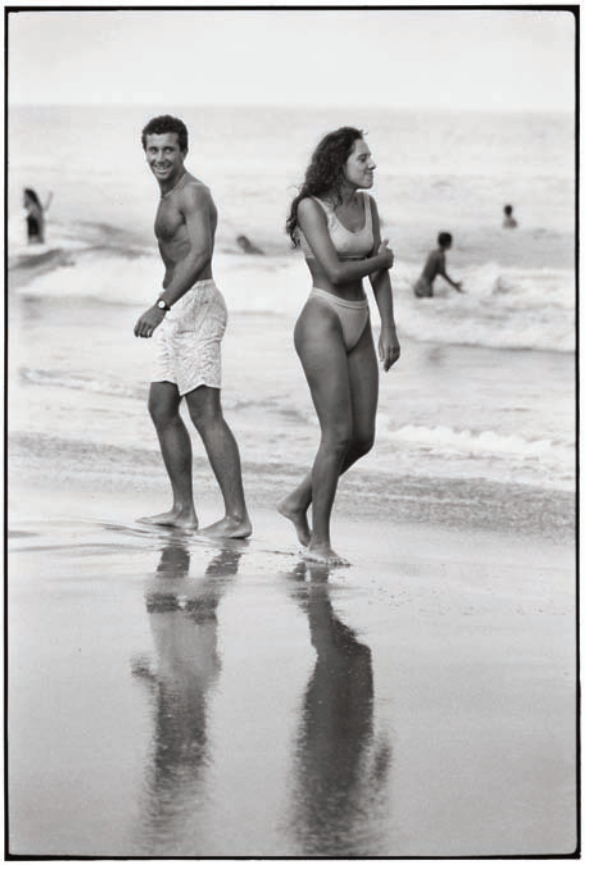
CATCHING CANDIDS

What sets photojournalistic pictures apart from other types of photography? The photojournalistic style depends on catching candid moments. Good photojournalists have developed the instinct to be at the right place, at the right time, with the right lens and camera. Often, they can steal images like a pickpocket, without anyone ever knowing that photographic sleight-of-hand has taken place.

Photojournalists must catch their subjects as unaware as possible to record real emotions. Rather than stage-managing pictures, photographers observe but do not direct. The results depend on their ability to record intimate moments without interrupting. In good candid pictures, subjects never gaze at the camera. Eye contact tips off the reader that the picture is not candid and suggests that the subject was at least aware of the photographer and might even be performing for the lens.

TECHNICAL STRATEGIES

Preset Your Camera. Prepare your camera before you point it. If you are fiddling with the camera's dials, you might catch the subject's attention instead of a candid moment. Make sure you have set your ISO, shutter speed, aperture, focus mode, selection area, and continuous shooting mode.



Some encounters play out like a short story. The photographer anticipated the encounter, kept shooting, and caught the final glance on this Brazilian beach. As is often the case, some stories are told best in more than one image.
Elliott Erwitt, Magnum

About 95 percent of the time, you will get a correctly exposed picture with the camera on either Aperture Priority or Shutter Speed Priority. These are not bad odds. (See page 157 for exceptions.)

Photojournalists often use Aperture Priority for catching candids since this option allows control of depth of field by selection of the lens aperture, while leaving shutter speed selection to the camera. The photographer is free to shoot quickly without readjusting the lens as the subject moves from the deep shadows under an oak tree into the brilliant sunlight of a grassy field.

This semi-automatic exposure mode reduces the number of under- or overexposed shots while increasing chances for catching the decisive moment. All photographers still must keep an eye on the camera-determined shutter speed so that the speed will be fast enough to stop any subject or camera movement.

Photojournalists covering sports with long lenses often use Shutter Priority, selecting a fast shutter speed to stop the action. With the camera set on shutter speed priority, a lightning fast tennis player will be properly exposed whether serving from the shadows or guarding the net in bright light.

Decide ahead of time how you might want to frame the picture. Before pointing your lens toward your intended subject, select your autofocus "hot zone." Do you plan to frame the subject in the middle of the photo or off to the side? Adjust the hot zone accordingly. Then, with the designated hot zone focus area in the viewfinder over your subject, let the camera itself focus the lens as you press the shutter. (For more on autofocus, see pages 106–108, 158 and 160.)

Use autofocus on continuous mode. On "autofocus continuous," the camera is focusing as long as you keep the shutter pressed halfway down. If the subject moves forward or backward, the lens will stay focused. Camera manufacturers offer other ways to hold focus if the subject is likely to move to the right or left.

Select the appropriate lens before you bring the camera to your eye. Of course you might have to zoom in or out to frame your subject most advantageously.

Watch your subject. You have preset your camera and now you must concentrate on your subject's expression.

Everyone was aware of the photographer's presence during a Yom Kippur service at a retirement home. The subject was more involved in kissing the hand of the female rabbi than in the photographer. Robert Cohen, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*

The photographer moved in quickly with a wide-angle lens for this candid shot. The moment was over in one frame. Julie Stupsker, *San Francisco Examiner*

With all your camera control choices set ahead of time, you can swing the camera up, frame, and press the shutter at the same time to freeze a meaningful moment. The lens will almost instantly focus and expose automatically to catch a natural scene. (See pages 106–108, 158 and 160 for more about using autofocus.)

Anticipation and Timing

Candid photography requires the skill of a weather forecaster. Photographers must guess what is going to happen based on how they see a situation developing. If two kids have their fists up, they are likely to fight. A couple holding hands might kiss. Sometimes the photographer, like the meteorologist, judges the evidence correctly and is prepared with the right lens, shutter speed, ISO, and f-stop. At other times, like the weather person, the photographer misinterprets the obvious.

Timing to release the shutter at the optimum moment is as important as anticipation. Even with continuous shooting mode and autofocus, photographers must get into the flow of the action. Most action builds to a peak and then settles down again. Almost every event has a crucial moment.

FOUR APPROACHES TO CANDID PHOTOGRAPHY

Out in the Open

An out-in-the-open approach works when subjects, engaged in an engrossing activity, forget that a photographer is present.

Robert Cohen arrived at a Jewish nursing home early for the high holy days of Yom Kippur.

He introduced himself to everyone and asked whether anyone in the room either did not want to be photographed or could not be photographed for legal reasons.

"With elderly people I tend to stick with those who are with their family members or those who I am convinced are lucid enough to make decisions on their own," he says.

A woman enjoying a hot spring in the California desert was aware of the photographer who, by the way, also was naked. The subject returned to her own reverie after the photographer told her to ignore the camera. Julie Stupsker, *San Francisco Examiner*

As the service proceeded, the female rabbi visited with residents. Cohen anticipated that a special spark might take place between the rabbi and one of the congregants.

Just as an elderly man reached out and kissed the rabbi's hand, Cohen moved in close and grabbed a candid with his wide-angle zoom lens. The man was far more engaged in his act of courtliness than the photographer. After taking the picture, Cohen slipped away so as not to interfere with the event's natural flow (see opposite page).

With his telephoto lens, the photographer could shoot unobserved from a distance when the 101-year-old grandmother gave a kiss and a pinch to her great-great grandson. Bryan Patrick, *Sacramento Bee*

Click and Run

Some photographers use a click-and-run approach rather than try to work unobserved. They catch candid images by walking past the subject, shooting quickly with a wide-angle lens, and then moving on.

According to observers, Henri Cartier-Bresson would pause in front of his subject and, with one fluid motion, raise his Leica, focus, and click several frames. By the time the subject turned toward the photographer, Cartier-Bresson had gone his way.

Julie Stupsker saw two children at a day-care center about to duck into their sweatshirts. She moved in close with a wide-angle lens and bounce flash just in time to grab one frame as they partially disappeared into their clothing. With the flash ready and the camera preset, Stupsker shot quickly and caught the candid moment (see opposite page).

Big Game Hunter

Like a hunter stalking prey, a photojournalist studies his or her subject. Sighting through a rifle-like telephoto lens, the photographer stands across the room or across the street—watching, waiting, and trying to anticipate what might happen next.

Patience, if this is your approach, is not only a virtue but a necessity.

Bryan Patrick had been covering the "Gathering of Honored Elders" at the Indian Museum for two hours when he noticed an elderly woman playing with a young child. Using a medium-telephoto zoom lens, he focused on the pair and watched from afar as the woman held up the child.

Just as she pinched the child's cheek and rubbed his nose, the *Sacramento Bee* photographer snapped the shutter. Only after he approached her for caption information did the centenarian realize she and her great-great grandson had been photographed (see page 23).

When hunting features, many photographers carry a medium-long zoom lens and an even longer fixed telephoto lens.

Introduce Yourself

Even when someone is engaged in another activity, the sight of a photographer loaded with gear can bring all action to a stop. The advantage of stealth is gone. The simplest solution is to ask the person to continue, "Go on about your business and ignore me." If the person returns to work or fun, you may be forgotten altogether in the moments that pass.

Spotting a woman bathing in a hot spring in the California desert, Stupsker climbed a fence to get closer for the scenic shot. Then, following the ancient advice to do as the Romans when in Rome, the photographer stripped and joined the woman in the water.

Having watched the photographer climb the fence with her gear and then take off her clothes, the woman was curious, of course. When Stupsker explained she was taking pictures for the *San Francisco Examiner*, the woman resumed her respite and ignored the photographer. Stupsker was able to capture a natural moment before the arrival of a group of teenage boys quickly brought the shooting session to an end (see page 23).

Diana Walker, who shoots behind-the-scene photos at the White House for *Time* magazine, must catch candid images in private areas almost every day. She says she tries to avoid conversation with her subjects so they will forget she is there. (For more on Walker's technique, see pages 50–51, Chapter 3, "General News.")

SAVE ROOM ON YOUR FLASH CARD

By changing memory cards before the last megabyte is filled, photographers build in some insurance. Having extra capacity at the end of an assignment is like having money in the bank. You may never need it, but it might save you in an emergency—and reduce your own anxiety, as well. ■

A captain comforts her daughter and says good-bye to her husband, one of about 250 paratroopers departing for a deployment to Iraq. Even at the end of your assignment, save some room on your memory card in the event a moment like this occurs.
Andrew Craft,
The Fayetteville Observer

MARKETING SPOT NEWS: A CASE STUDY

A few minutes after the 1989 San Francisco earthquake, a father reacts as his dead baby is removed from a collapsed apartment building. The photographer sold the picture to *Life* magazine.
Kaia Means
Oslo, Norway

When the Loma Prieta earthquake rocked San Francisco in 1989, journalism student Kaia Means was one of thousands who initially thought the quake was "just another" shaker. Visiting friends atop Russian Hill, however, the San Francisco State University student noted a huge cloud of dust rising above the Marina District. She said her goodbyes and left for a 5:30 P.M. meeting, thinking she'd drive by the Marina first to see what the dust was all about.

"I knew I had to turn in a spot news assignment sometime during the semester," recalls Means, who was a news-editorial major taking her second semester of photography. "So I thought I'd drive by to see if there was anything to take a picture of." Means found more than fallen bricks and broken glass. The first photographer on the scene, the 22-year-old student from Norway photographed a distraught father awaiting the rescue of his wife and baby.

In addition to the father in the crowd, Means photographed firefighters carrying the baby from the building, its father grieving in the foreground. Later, in tears upon realizing that the baby was dead, Means photographed the mother's rescue and reunion with her husband.

Although Means was "shaking all over" by the time she finished shooting the tragedy, the young photojournalist's real-life midterm exam was just beginning.

DETERMINING POSSIBLE OUTLETS

The photo student's pictures certainly had wide local and national interest. And Means was in a good bargaining position because she had exclusive images. However, the earthquake had shaken local news outlets as well as buildings and bridges.

Means took the film to the *San Francisco Examiner*, which had lost all electricity and phone capabilities, and was conducting its photo operation out of a van in the paper's parking lot. Having told the photo chief about the pictures, she helped out for a while and then left the film, marked "DEAD BABY" on the canister.

In less chaotic circumstances, Means could have bargained for the sale of the pictures. Having gotten a bid from the *Examiner*, she could have contacted local TV stations to see how much they would offer for rights to the photos. With the story's national impact, she could have offered the film to the wire services, either the Associated Press (AP), Agence France-Presse (AFP), or Reuters—all of which depend a great deal on stringers and freelancers.

None of the services maintains a large enough photo staff to cover the country—or the world—thoroughly. Many photos appearing in print and carrying the AP, AFP, or Reuters credit line are taken by independent photographers.

Alternatively, Means could have called other large dailies around the country. Today, newspapers want their own photos of a major story to augment those supplied by the wires, and many send staff photographers. However, none would have had this series of pictures.

But with phone lines down and chaos around her, Means left the film with the *Examiner*. Naturally, she was surprised when she opened the paper the following day and did not see her dramatic pictures. She called to see what had happened and learned that, in the confusion, the film had never even been processed.

Following more confusion at the newspaper, the young photojournalist finally got her film back—still unprocessed two days after the event. Under normal circumstances, this series of faux pas would have spelled photographic disaster for the fledgling photojournalist. The pictures' timeliness would have dissipated.

However, once the film was processed, it was easy to see that these were no ordinary pictures. It was time to seek a national market. The news magazines were already closing by the time the film had been processed, and they rarely buy anything but color. Her photo teacher, this author, gave her the number of Peter Howe, picture editor at *Life* magazine at the time. Means took over from there. Howe was out of town, but editors at *Life* wanted to see the prints.

A REAL *LIFE* ASSIGNMENT

After viewing the pictures, *Life* editors purchased first North American rights for six months and sent a reporter to San Francisco to interview Means and the parents she had photographed. When an order for a follow-up story came in, the second-semester photo student received the five-day *Life* assignment.

In the year-end issue of the magazine, Means' photo of the distraught father, in addition to two of the follow-up pictures she shot on assignment, ran as a two-page spread. ■