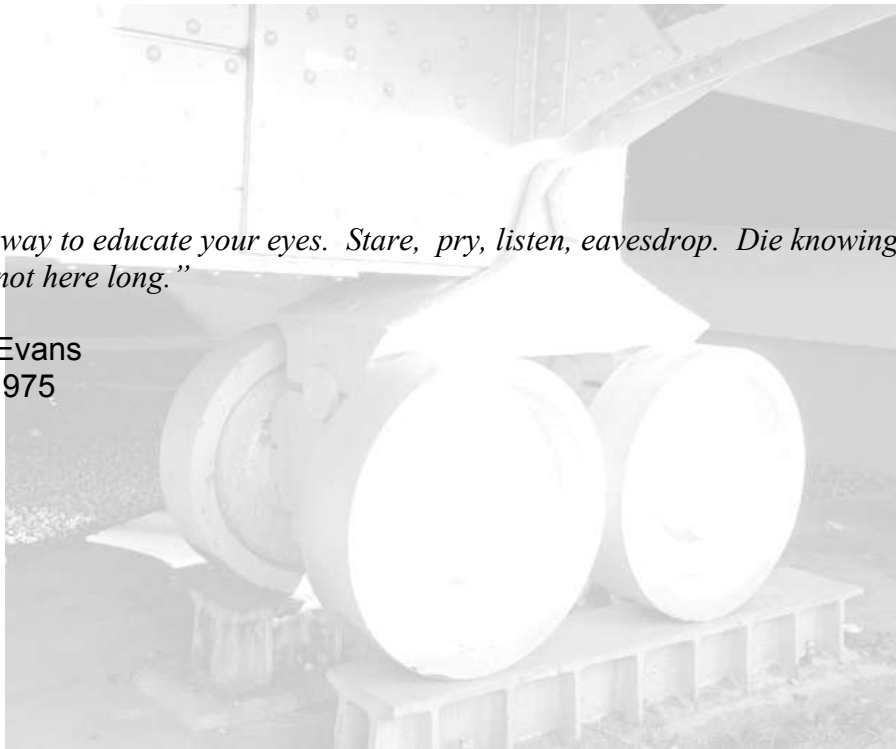


# BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY

## PART THREE: UNDERSTANDING IMAGE CONTENT

*“It’s the way to educate your eyes. Stare, pry, listen, eavesdrop. Die knowing something. You are not here long.”*

Walker Evans  
1903 - 1975



## **Part Three - Chapter Thirteen: Describing Photographs**

### **Introduction**

One of the first steps in evaluating or criticizing a photograph is to begin the fundamental task of describing to ourselves and others what we are seeing. We begin by gathering together the basic information about the image and then move on to more complex forms of investigation. In essence, describing a photograph is a process of mining it for data. We must ask:

- ❖ What are we looking at?
- ❖ What information is present within the photograph?
- ❖ What do we know about the image without making assumptions?

All the above steps are included within the first attempt to evaluate an image. Successful review of photography (whether it is our own or that of others) must start with the basic confirmation of the physical context of the image, then move on to more sophisticated analysis that explores what the image is saying.

### **Basic Information**

Although it may seem obvious, there is much to be learned by voicing some of the physical characteristics of a photograph. What size is the photograph? Is it a silver gelatin print? Is it mounted on a mat board or other surface? Does it have a portrait or landscape orientation? What type of paper is it printed on?

#### **How large?**

In a later chapter, we will learn that the context of a photographic display (museum, magazine, web site) affects the meaning of a photograph. Because the size of an image may determine what the context is, beginning the evaluation of a photograph by describing its dimensions will set up an assessment of how well the image works within the various methods of presentation.

As an example, by indicating a photograph is twenty inches by twenty four inches, the suggested context for that image may be within a museum or displayed on a wall. In contrast, a photograph that is four inches by five inches might suggest placement within a magazine or on a milk carton. Since many of the images produced for this course are eight inches by ten inches, what category of display might that fit into?

#### **How is it made?**

Not all photographs originate within the darkroom. A photograph is an image made by a camera, and because an increasing number of cameras are digital based instead of film based, the majority of photographic images we see will be created in the computer and printed with ink deposited on paper or viewed on a screen. Because the method of creation (or genesis) of the image can tell us something about the photographic intent, describing the photograph by how it was made gives us insight into its meaning.

Photographs produced in the darkroom are made by exposing paper that is sensitive to light. This type of paper uses silver halide crystals that are suspended over the surface of the paper on a thin layer of gelatin. We call this type of photograph a "Silver Gelatin Print." Consider the following and ask yourself how they are made:

- ❖ Silver gelatin print

- ❖ Ink jet print
- ❖ Newspaper or printing press photographs
- ❖ Electronic photographs (computer images)

All the above fit within the definition of photograph, but all have a wholly different method of delivery and presentation. Do we think differently about each type of image? Do we rank the images based on an inherent value that is affected by how it is made? Is the context of the image determined in part by how the image is created? Describing the photograph with consideration for these questions can greatly change our perception of the image.

To further develop this concept, ask yourself basic questions about each of the types of photographs above including questions on effort, intent, and feedback to the artist or photographer. Does the amount of work that goes into creating an image affect what the image means or says? Can we assume that the artist or photographer, when knowing how the image is going to be produced, is affected by that process when using the camera? Does the artist - photographer change in terms of motivation, emotional context, and artistic capability because of the process used to create the image?

As a precaution to evaluating images, don't automatically devalue a type of photograph because you might think the effort placed in its production was much less than some other means. Evaluation requires we consider the production regarding how it may have affected the photographic intent, and in turn resulted in an image that brings to us a greater meaning.

## **Orientation**

Photographs can be presented as squares, rounds, rectangles, triangles.... In short, any number of geometric shapes in two dimensions. Because we have been conditioned to accept images in format that has four corners, we tend to see the world within that shape. Most two dimensional artwork lives within the confines of horizontal and vertical framing. We might attempt at some time to break from this restraint, but for the discussion in this text, our understanding of photographs will be limited to those square or rectangular images.

In general, photographs are presented in three basic orientations:

- ❖ **Portrait**, where the horizontal dimension is less than the vertical dimension if the image is viewed on a wall or other vertical surface.
- ❖ **Landscape**, where the horizontal dimension is greater than the vertical dimension if the image is viewed on a wall or other vertical surface.
- ❖ **Square**, where both horizontal and vertical dimensions are equal.

The terms used to describe the first two orientations are both revealing and prejudicial. A portrait refers to an image of a person, whereas landscape refers to an image of an outdoor scene. As a result, we naturally assume that when making an image of a person, we should orient the camera in such a way that the proportions are as described above. In addition, when making the image of an outdoor scene, we should rotate or orient the camera in such a way that the image is wider than it is tall. Is this prejudicial?

The methods used to frame the subject attempt to eliminate unwanted information. Because people are generally vertical in construction (they are taller than they are wide) placing them within an image without including any unnecessary detail would require a "portrait" style orientation. Landscapes generally follow the opposite proportions, which relates to the horizon and the expanse it creates.

## Paper Type

Photographic paper comes in two basic styles, fiber based and resin coated. Fiber based papers are the oldest of modern papers, and are constructed of “layers” of material that form the print. Beginning with the “bottom” or “base” layer, the paper includes the following:

- ❖ The paper base – a ph neutral (neither acidic nor basic) paper that is composed of cotton or other organic fibers that are pressed together to form a flexible sheet that holds together in water.
- ❖ A baryta layer – a coating of a clay-based material (like paint) which removes the texture of the paper and gives it an even coating that is responsible for the “whites” in a black and white image. This layer is often tinted by the manufacturer to give the paper a special look that helps identify it from other brands.
- ❖ Silver emulsion layer – where the silver halide crystals are mixed with a clear gelatin. This is the layer that is sensitive to light.
- ❖ Gelatin overcoat – the top layer that provides protection from light abrasions.

Resin coated or “RC” papers are the most common types of photographic papers and the type used in this course. Resin coated papers differ from fiber based papers by placing a polyethylene (resin) coating on each side of the paper base. This resin coating acts as a water-proof membrane that greatly reduces the ability of photographic chemicals to permeate the paper base. This treatment significantly shortens the amount of time required to process the paper, specifically in the washing and drying cycles.

Because fiber based papers absorb the photographic chemistry like a sponge, they must be thoroughly rinsed in order to remove the chemicals that will eventually stain the print. Effective washing may take over 90 minutes, and likewise a number of hours to fully dry. Resin coated papers, because they do not absorb the chemicals, can be processed and dried in a few minutes. As a result, resin coated papers allow the photographer to process more prints in less time.

Fiber based prints are used most often for exhibition prints due to the demonstrated stability (or archival quality) of the paper. Although resin coated papers retain the same tone and color for over one hundred years if correctly processed, fiber based papers are considered to have an indefinite life span if processed according to archival standards<sup>16</sup>. Fiber based papers, because they lack a plastic coating, are able to sustain higher temperatures when mounted using heat-sensitive dry mounting tissues, the standard for most exhibition prints since they contain no adhesives which can release harmful chemicals over time. Resin coated paper is sensitive to heat, and can delaminate (layers separate) when dry-mounted unless the greatest care is taken, and so are often mounted with spray-on adhesives.

When describing a photograph, based on your knowledge of the types of paper, how would either a fiber based or resin coated paper affect your assessment? Two identical prints, one each on both types of paper, would have no difference in the quality of the image. Each could retain the same amount of detail, have similar color, and the same range of tonal values (although some resin coated paper surfaces, such as luster or satin, do not have the same range as glossy) giving both prints the same informational value. Would knowing which is fiber based and which is resin coated change your opinion of either?

Assessing all the physical attributes of a photograph help the viewer establish basic information about the image that may or may not influence the impressions of quality, character, and substance. When photography is rendered as fine art, the totality of the image must be considered when evaluating how well the photograph succeeds in conveying to the viewer the essence of the fine art message<sup>17</sup>.

## Basic Information On Content

In general, photographs are made with cameras that capture a real scene. Because the strength of the camera and photography in general is the ability to freeze reality in a split second, the number of images that can be captured is a function of the individual's reality. With this statement, the student no longer is hard pressed to complain that "there isn't anything to photograph anymore." Although scenes may be similar, no camera or artist is able to capture the same scene at the same moment in time from the exact same perspective because it would require more than one camera sharing the same physical space.

Being able to identify what is inside the boundaries of the photographic print's borders requires participation by both the artist and the viewer. We share common experiences and acknowledge that although we haven't seen every tree that grows, we can most likely recognize a photograph of a forest. If the image is blurred beyond recognition as a result of the artist's error, the viewer may not be as capable in identification of the subject matter. Should the image be of an object or scene that is wholly alien and new to the viewer, the photograph becomes an educational tool that may inspire the viewer to seek more knowledge about the image.

A black and white photograph cannot be an exact duplication of reality since it is missing both color and three dimensions. We accept this consideration when viewing the image, and are seldom denied recognition of the content because of it. Making this assumption requires the viewer to fill in the blanks about color and shape using abstract thought. Because the image initiates this response, we consider the subject to be an abstraction. The relative distance between reality and the presentation of the image is directly related to the amount of abstract thought required to evaluate the image. In addition, the further the image is from being identified as a real object, the number of viable definitions provided by the viewer may increase proportionately.

When detached from reality to the point where the content of the image is unidentifiable in terms of giving a common name to what has been photographed, we now evaluate the content wholly as shape and form. This broad spectrum of definition greatly changes the type of message contained in the photograph. It ranges from simple, concise description of a real object to a more fluid, emotional description of shapes and tone that may have a variety of meanings based on those qualities alone. Most fine art photography falls between the two points in such a way that it requires the viewer to identify both abstract and non-abstract components.

### **Describing the Content**

Defining what is present in the image (content) begins with four basic investigations of the image:

- ❖ What are the basic statements about the subject matter?
- ❖ What is the material (media) used to make the image components?
- ❖ What can we say about the various image elements?
- ❖ What can we say about the "who, what, where, and when" that created the image?

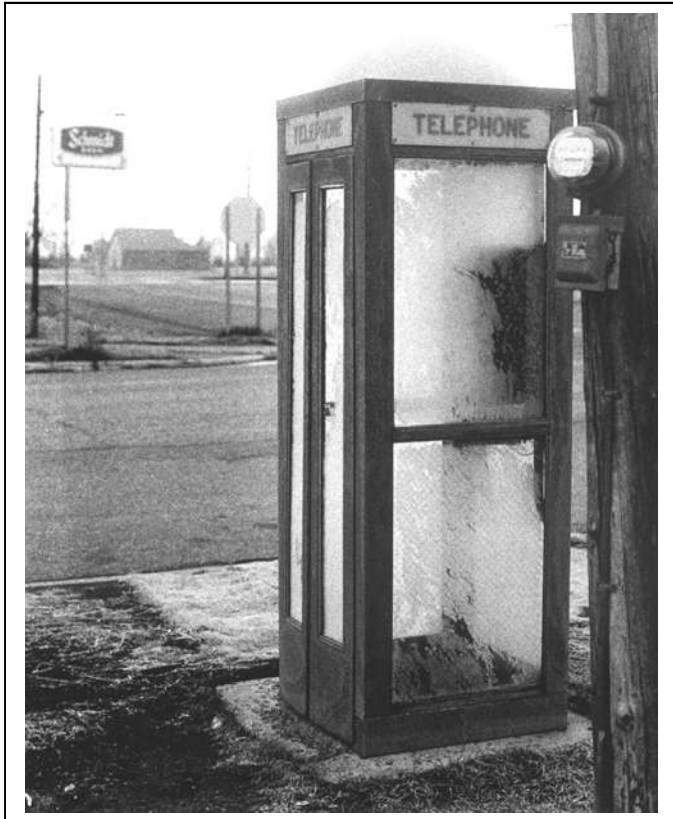
Determining what the subject matter is may not always reveal the subject. In viewing the photograph, we first recognize what most of the various forms contained within the image if it is not too-far removed from reality. A dog, a car, a chair, etc. might be included within the image frame, and we should begin our investigation by listing those elements. Once complete, our next evaluative challenge is to identify to ourselves which of those elements directly contribute to the message contained in the image, and which may support it at a lower level.



In the above photograph, most of us can identify a person standing to the right of the image, apparently gazing off into the distance. Many of us will recognize a town in the background, and a granary to the left that is common to many rural American towns. Not all of us may realize that the photograph was taken on the top of a large, metal grain storage tank, but most of us will see that the image is well above ground.

In the above definition, a basic statement was made about the key subject matter that is relevant to the image. With that consideration, the person within the image appears to be most important to the subject, whereas the granary and small town are less so. We arrive at this conclusion in part because the artist has placed the various elements within the photograph in such a way that it gives each a level of importance. How is that accomplished?

By identifying the material making up the image, we define the media used to create the message. In the photograph on the right, we see a telephone booth located at what appears to be at a cross roads in



some small town. The media for this image is a phone booth, utility poles, a bar sign, structures, pavement and a cloudy sky. Without having the image in front of us, what story can we create using the above list of elements?

The basic **Image Elements** at work for the photograph of the phone booth include shape, perspective or point of view, and form. Together they are combined as if we were carefully writing chapters in a book in order to guide the reader through the story. The placement of the phone booth, when considering the other image elements, suggests something to the viewer that might be lost if it were shifted slightly to the right or left. Evaluating the image based on the relative success of each picture element gives merit to the subject matter used. And just like the arrangement of chapters in a novel, the effective use of image elements gives strength and understanding to the message within the image.



The environment surrounding the moment of capture when the image was made helps the viewer evaluate how the media (subject matter) relates to itself and ultimately to the message. Identifying the who, what, where, and when places the image in the context of its causal environment. From this we can make another assessment as to how that knowledge might change how the various Image Elements and media work with each other to better define the message.

In the image above, we see a person spinning wool. The person is an adult woman, wearing glasses, and appears to know what she is doing. There appears to be other activities in the background, suggesting this photograph was made at a fair or other community event. Although the person spinning is dressed lightly, some of the other people within the scene have winter garb, suggesting the scene was taken indoors during the winter months. With consideration for hair styles, apparel, and footwear we could also assume this photograph was made within the last twenty years.

A summary of this photograph might be “ a person spinning yarn during a winter craft fair.” So now what? Have we arrived at defining the subject or message that the photograph has suggested? The next step in evaluation is interpret the information we have gathered from a variety of viewpoints as a means to extract the strongest message.

### Review Questions

Answer the following questions to help you better understand this chapter.

- How does the overall size of an image affect the message it might contain?
- How does the method used to create a photograph affect its meaning? i.e. digital v. traditional photography.
- What do we mean by the “context” for viewing an image?
- When could a “portrait” orientation be used successfully for a “landscape” type image?
- What is the difference between resin coated and fiber based paper?
- How are black and white photographs abstract?
- What is the media of a photograph?
- How are image elements used within a photograph?
- What is the range of abstraction within a photograph?
- How do we determine the who, what, why, and when of a photograph?
- How does understanding the causal environment of a photograph help us define the message?

### Photographic Assignment

Produce a single 8 x 10 black and white photograph that contains the following:

- Subject matter fitting within a “portrait” orientation.
- At least two of the primary image elements.
- Clearly identifiable subject matter.
- A clearly identifiable causal environment.

On a separate page, answer the following questions about the photograph:

- What is the media?
- Is there a who, what, why, or when? If so define each.
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how abstract is the image with 10 being the most abstract.
- What, in your opinion, is the subject or message of the photograph?

Submit both the photograph and answers to the above questions by enclosing them back to back in a clear plastic sleeve with **your name in the upper right corner of the answer sheet.**



## Part Three – Chapter Fourteen : Interpreting the Subject

### Introduction

The previous chapter described a process for understanding photographs beginning with a somewhat simple exploration of the physical attributes of the photograph, followed by a discovery of what is contained within the image. These first, basic steps reveal to us a number of things about the photograph that we may have either taken for granted or perhaps overlooked. Although it may seem repetitive or unnecessary at times, it does give the viewer a point of reference to begin a more thorough evaluation of the subject or message a photograph may contain.

We understand the subject by interpreting the message contained within the subject matter or media. Interpretation is a calculated and reasoned opinion we all have the right to express, however a good interpretation should be based on a strong argument that gains value when accepted by others as a means to best explain what is before us. The photographer must consider the strength of their argument when preparing the image.

Knowledge of the media and how it is different from the message is given a special place in photography. Because the media is presented in a very real way that the viewer identifies as being unaltered, the message is both profound and simple.

### Understanding the Subject

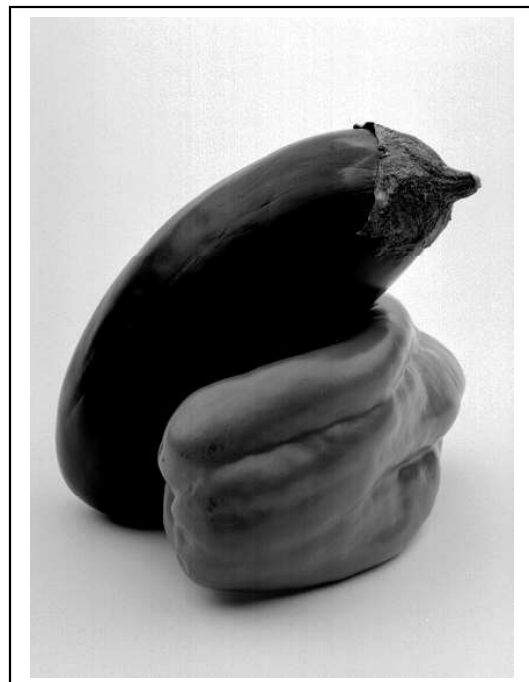
Knowing the difference between what is the subject matter (or material) and the subject is the first step in a broader understanding of how images (including photographs) communicate. For each and every photograph there is subject matter, a subject, and to a greater or lesser degree some form of message. Understanding how these components communicate with each other requires a set of common terms that act as wayfinders for the journey.

#### **Subject Matter or Material**

When describing a photograph based on fundamental methods developed in the previous chapter, understanding what the media or “subject matter” consisted of was a primary objective. Within a portrait, the medium may be a person or other living creature that describes the portrait. Within a landscape, the medium may be the natural surroundings, manmade structures, animals, and people. A still life may contain glassware, plants, and a studio background.

Photographers can take a great liberty in deciding which media is most suitable for the subject. In many ways, the media most quickly identified with the subject may be the least suitable for an image.

In the photograph to the right, the subject matter (or medium) is a bell pepper and eggplant. We could also indicate that the media includes what appears to be a seamless background, probably paper or other material.



Is the subject of this photograph the vegetables? If so, what kind of message does it communicate to us?

### **Discovering a Message**

Making the argument that the subject of the above photograph is “vegetables” is part of an interpretive process that we will explore further, but for this discussion, let's assume that the subject is not “vegetables” but is instead perhaps something more complex. Although there may be other means or methods to illustrate whatever the subject might be, choosing the two vegetables as the media requires us to ask several important questions:

1. How does using vegetables as the medium to illustrate the subject affect the actual message?
2. Has something been gained or lost in the explanation by using this medium to define the subject?
3. What other forms of media (again, subject matter) could be used to convey a similar message?

The Eggplant and Pepper photograph elicits a variety of responses, but in general the terms most often expressed in describing the photograph are “sensual” and “suggestive.” The placement of the eggplant and pepper with each other appears to be natural, and the two fit together well when presented this way. The surface texture of each, when photographed in black and white, is smooth and even. The graceful lines and curves of each suggest the human form, and when presented together suggest two nested human beings.

In this instance, the two vegetables have become slightly more than simple salad fare. Because the presentation suggests something other than the reality, the viewer is challenged to explore the message by adding their own personal views and experiences to what they see within the borders of the photograph. As a result, each viewer comes away with a unique interpretation of what the subject is, yet shares certain components of the message with everyone. Using the two vegetables in this way enhances the experience of both the artist and viewer, and communicates shared ideas on a personal level.

It is possible that the same message could be conveyed by using some other type of medium. How successful would the image be if two human forms were substituted for the vegetables? Although the initial relationships might be more apparent, the interaction between the photograph and viewer would take place on a different level. With the vegetables, the viewer experiences were solicited by the arrangement as a means to make the message whole. Human forms would convey their own message, perhaps one completely different than that of the eggplant and pepper.

If human forms were posed in a similar way, would the subject be vegetables?

### Interpretation

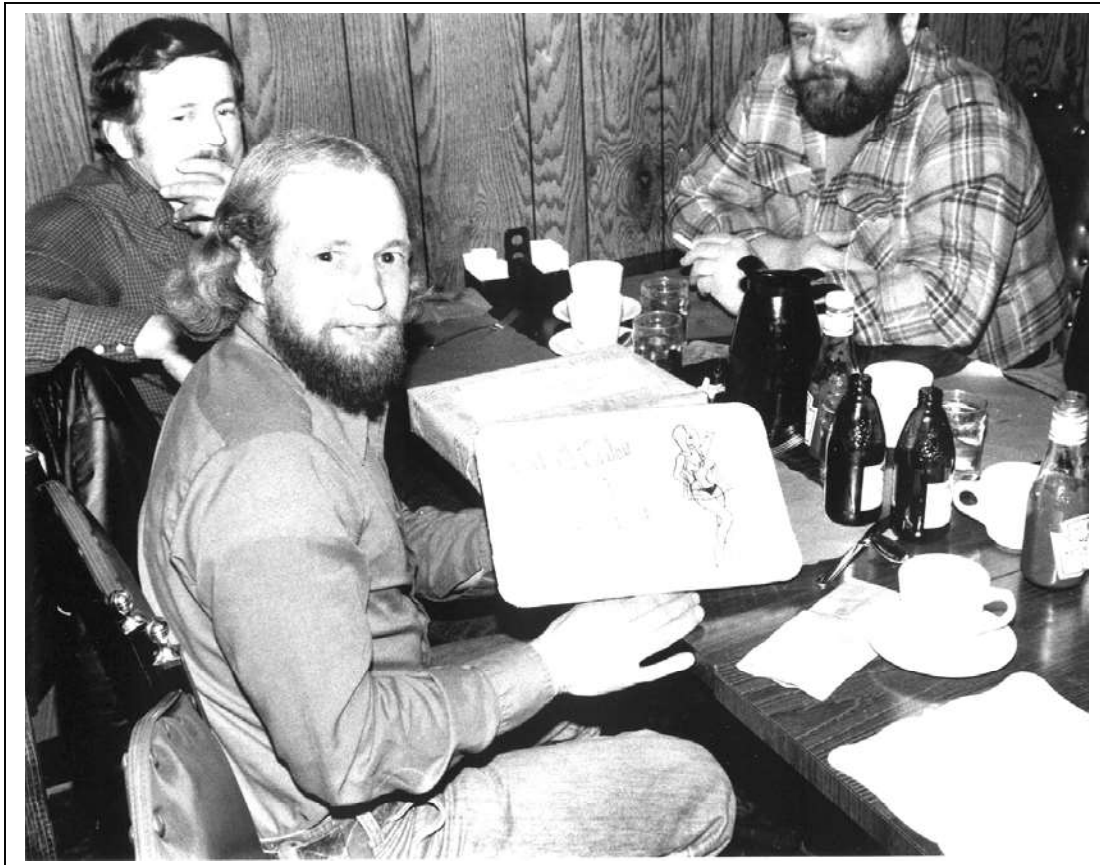
We have established that the subject matter (or medium) and subject or (message) are quite often two completely different realities that the photographer has used to better express an idea. When used in writing, this type of descriptive tool is termed a metaphor. A metaphor is an implied comparison between unlike things. The photograph Eggplant and Pepper suggests some sensual notion usually reserved for humans. The relative quality of the metaphor helps establish how credible our argument is in linking the message to the subject matter.

### **Terms for Interpretation and *Original Sin***

Even the simplest photographs require interpretation. Because the photograph has been made with human hands through a camera that is focused with human eyes, it carries with it the “baggage” of the person making the image. How each of us views the world is affected by our own personal experiences and

opinions. Trying to separate ourselves from how we see takes away the value of being an individual and how we contribute to a greater understanding of our world.

This lack of neutrality can be considered a “visual prejudice.” We see what we want to see, and so our vision is no longer innocent and unbiased. Because the camera itself has no “baggage,” the subject matter it captures is DENOTED by the reality it presents. An eggplant is an eggplant. But because the camera was guided by human hands in order to capture a human vision, the subject matter CONNOTES something else. Perhaps the eggplant is wicked? Hmmmm.....



In the photograph above, “Leonard and Cake” the subject matter is people, a restaurant or other establishment, beer bottles, dishes, and a birthday cake. The relationship between the subject and photographer can be hard to define, since the image could have been captured by chance or planning. The photographer brings his own personal emotional “baggage” into this image by simply being present and making the photograph. Let’s ask some basic questions about the relationship and determine if they shape or shift our own opinion of the message.

1. Does the photographer know the subjects? If so, is the relationship positive or negative? If not, does the photographer hold the subject in a high or low regard?
2. If there is a positive relationship, what might the message be?
3. If there is a negative relationship, would the message be different?
4. If there is no relationship, yet a high regard exists, is the message the same as in number 2?
5. Again, if there is no relationship, yet a low regard exist, is the message the same as in number 3?

Understanding photographs helps make us better photographers. We may not gather any additional skills as to how aesthetically pleasing our photographs are, but we do establish a method for making images that relate to some coherent idea. If our goal is to communicate with others through photography, we must understand how that communication takes place.

### **Interpretive Frame of Mind**

Because there is no innocent photographer, the artist's point of view or frame of mind greatly influences how the subject matter is used to convey the message. Consider the following points of view or "predispositions" and imagine how each might interpret "Leonard & Cake."

- ❖ A feminist
- ❖ A communist
- ❖ A conservative capitalist
- ❖ A pacifist
- ❖ A red neck

Each of us might fit into one of the above categories in either a small or all-encompassing way. Which point of view best presents the subject matter for any type of message? Does that tell us anything about what types of subject matter we might choose based on our points of view? How do we determine which frame of mind is the most qualified?

### **Participation and Contrivance**

The images you create must be efficient. If your intended message is to be delivered with accuracy, the content of the image should be a participant of the subject matter or not part of the image at all. Extra space, a useless tree, or a bad composition do not contribute to the message and therefore confuse the viewer. Your message should account for everything within the borders of the photograph, and your self evaluation should establish that connection.

It is natural for the artist-photographer to assign some type of value to an image component that shouldn't be there. We will go to near super-human lengths to qualify how a telephone pole that is growing out of your subject's head adds to the "networking" quality that you ascribed to the subject's personality. The term used to describe this attempt at linking unrelated subject matter to the message is "**contrivance**."

The relative balance between participation and contrivance determines the value of the artist - photographer's delivery. As a result, it seems apparent that the simple, uncluttered photograph speaks more clearly than one with a substantial amount of information. Can you think of any instance or category of photograph where this is not the case?

### Photography's Unique Place

Crafting a message from what first appears to be wholly unrelated subject matter is one of photography's great strengths<sup>18</sup>. The medium is not compromised by the brush stroke or chisel, but instead is revealed through the unflinching eye of the camera and placed onto film and paper. We accept what we see in the photograph as being in front of the lens at some time, and therefore the relationship that exists between the media elements truly does or did exist.

The objects convey the message by their own power without assistance. The eggplant is truly smooth and glossy. The pepper may be curvaceous and sensual. Leonard is missing a tooth. The beer bottles were

once filled with beer. And now the message is truly based on real things that did or do exist, and are not revealed to us by first being filtered through a mind or a computer. Or at least we assume that is the case.

In the previous chapter we described photographs in part by determining what type of photograph was present, specifically if it were either a digital image or a traditional silver based image. Answer to yourself the following questions and evaluate the implications of each as to the relationship between subject matter and message:

1. Can we determine if a digital image has been altered?
2. Would “computer enhancement” of an image affect the subject?
3. Is knowing the difference between the two important?

### Review Questions

Answer the following questions to help you better understand this chapter.

1. What is the subject matter in a photograph?
2. Is the subject matter the same as the subject?
3. How is the subject changed if an unrelated media is used to present it?
4. What is a metaphor, and why is a photograph considered a metaphor?
5. What is meant by saying the photographer is prejudiced?
6. What is denotation?
7. What is connotation?
8. How does your point of view affect the message?
9. What is participation? Contrivance?
10. When you crop portions of the image by moving in closer with the camera or selecting a different perspective, which term in question number 9 is being enhanced?
11. Are photographs real?

### Photographic Assignment

Produce a single 8 x 10 black and white photograph that contains the following:

1. Subject matter fitting within a “portrait” or “landscape” orientation.
2. At least two of the primary image elements.
3. Clearly identifiable subject matter.
4. A clearly identifiable causal environment.

On a separate page, answer the following questions about the photograph:

1. What is the media?
2. What is the subject or message.
3. What media is participating, and what is not?

Submit both the photograph and answers to the above questions by enclosing them back to back in a clear plastic sleeve with **your name in the upper right corner of the answer sheet.**

## Part Three – Chapter Fifteen: Categories of Photographs

### Introduction

Learning how to describe photographs as explained in the previous two chapters leads to establishing categories of photographs. Because each of us looks at the world in different ways, we can conclude that no two photographs are alike when it comes to how each of us interprets the image. At the same time, we can conclude that photographs do share certain basic themes when considered from a broad point of view. Portraits, landscapes, and mug shots could be considered categories of photographs containing an infinite variety of images. This chapter will focus on learning a basic set of photographic categories that can be used as tools for shaping the photographic message.

### Establishing Categories

#### **A theory for categories**

For the artist, categories that go beyond the type of subject matter (as above) can be very useful when attempting to organize a group of photographs into a coherent whole that share common themes. John Szarkowski, former curator for the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) specified five traits that are unique to photography in his book *The Photographer's Eye* :<sup>19</sup>

- ❖ The thing itself. As mentioned in a previous chapter, the camera captures a real thing, something actual existing in front of the lens.
- ❖ The detail. The photograph is linked to what makes the “thing” work.
- ❖ The frame. Photographs are selected with a viewfinders frame. They are not a conceptual image that is created without a verification of how the parts relate to each other.
- ❖ Time. Photographs describe single parcels of time.
- ❖ Vantage point. Photographs, in revealing the “thing” itself, offer us new views that we have not yet seen.

This analysis is very important to the artist-photographer in not only pointing out how “communicating” with a camera is unique to photography, but also that those unique characteristics can help organize photography into categories which emphasize one or more of those traits.

Given these unique traits, Szarkowski later proposed a simple method of categorizing photographs based on being a window or a mirror. As you can imagine, the concept of a window suggests the photograph supports a realist point of view. In contrast, a mirror refers to a more romantic notion where the image is interpreted to mean more than what the content of the image might provide.

History indicates that photography has been submitted to two polar categories based on the fundamental trait of realism and romance on more than one occasion. The earliest usage classified photographs as either “pictorial” or “purist.” Similar to this type of comparison would be “manipulated” or “straight.” Which of Szarkowski’s categories would be linked to “manipulated” and which would be linked to “straight?”

Although the above methods of placing photographs in useful categories are functional and effective, they remain too broad for use by the artist-photographer when crafting the image. In practice, the artist should be able to visualize an image, and then place that image within a category supporting the basic message of the image.

## A Practical Approach

For the purposes of this text, we will adopt a set of categories based on the function of the photograph when applied to the viewer. As an example, we could say that a series of images created to demonstrate how a flat tire is changed may be placed in a category called "Photographs which describe or explain something." This approach to creating the categories gives the photographer a tangible foundation for expanding on the image content based on the type of category it represents. Below is a listing of the categories used in this text, accompanied by a brief explanation which will be expanded upon in later chapters.

- ❖ **Photographs which describe or explain something.** Although quite broad in content, the general function of this photograph is to provide the viewer with an understanding of what something is or does. Scientific photography illustrating a biological process, a soldier frozen in mid air as a land mine explodes below him, or a drop of milk captured by electronic flash are all examples of photographs which explain something.
- ❖ **Photographs created to express an idea.** This type of image is romantic in its basic nature as it requires the photographer to arrange the subject matter in a way that it reflects a thought or idea that may be wholly unrelated to the subject matter. Staging a scene from a play, creating a still life with components that seem animated, or capturing a scene that is ripe with symbolism are good examples of photographs which express an idea.
- ❖ **Editorial Photographs.** Photographs which state an opinion based on the subject's content are considered editorial photographs. The images are often made in such a way that it emphasizes a condition or circumstance that can place it in a positive or negative light. Quite often the photographer is very passionate about the message and has expressed it in such a way that the image may encourage the same passion.
- ❖ **Evaluative photographs.** Images which are made to best reflect the inherent charm or beauty of the subject matter are being used to evaluate the subject matter. Often identified with fine art, this type of photography could be considered one of the most traditional uses of the camera since it seeks to find beauty in everyday objects by presenting them to the viewer using image elements and techniques which best reveal that beauty.

### Determining the Category

Most photographs can be placed in more than one of the above categories. Deciding which is best relies upon the methods learned in previous chapters as to revealing the subject.

The media used for the photograph on the right are a grain elevator, an electrical pole, ice or snow, and a pile of grain. It was made by photographing the grain elevator after a fire destroyed the structure. Water sprayed on the blaze froze into the icy shapes you see attached to the wires, poles, and covers the mound of grain.

What category best describes this image? It could be an editorial; speaking to the dangers of living in a cold climate should a fire break



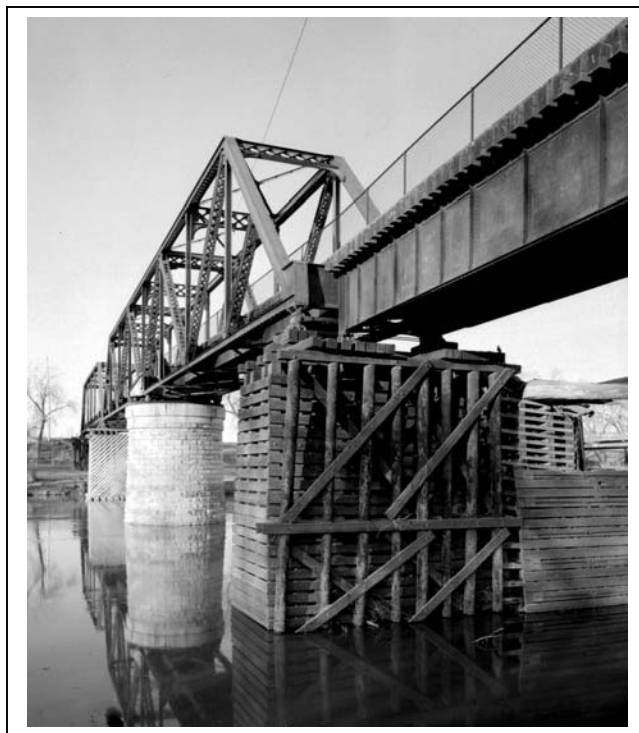
out. It could be evaluative; where it considers the icy beauty of the aftermath. It might be expressing an idea; where the icy elevator might be a fairy tale castle.

The strongest notion might seem to be a photograph which describes or explains. Although any of the above could be argued, the most captivating part of the image is that of the effect of cold upon the fire fighting actions. While the blaze managed to keep the water in liquid form where the surface was hot, the remaining media components were covered with an icy shell. Establishing that fact seems to be the strongest use of the image, and one that gives it a unique message.

The image on the right consists of two young girls of different racial backgrounds playing together in a sand pile. The photograph could be descriptive, where it illustrates a natural pastime for young people when presented with a pile of sand. It could be evaluative, where it expresses the innocent beauty of two children. It could also be expressing an idea where the children have been asked to act out a favorite story from a children's book that involves a sand castle.



The most compelling category seems to be an editorial about the nature of the two children playing together. Although relationships between the races and attitudes about what even constitutes one's race have advanced over the past fifty years, more understanding is needed. This photograph seems to suggest that the conflicts are not inevitable, in that as children we find little to separate us. Because that message is subtle, it lends credence to placing it in an editorial category.



The media used for the photograph on the left is a train trestle, a river, a city in the background, and a mostly clear sky. The image could be descriptive, where it attempts to show the viewer the method of spanning a river, or how transportation and cities grow together as one. It could be an editorial, where the image suggests how a once beautiful bridge has been removed as a price we pay for flood protection (see following note.) It might also be expressing an idea, such as projecting a soaring, arching symbol of strength.

The most appropriate category might seem to be evaluative. The use of form, texture, viewpoint and shape work together to present this old bridge in its best possible light. The aesthetic evaluation relies on the camera's strengths in revealing the details of this train

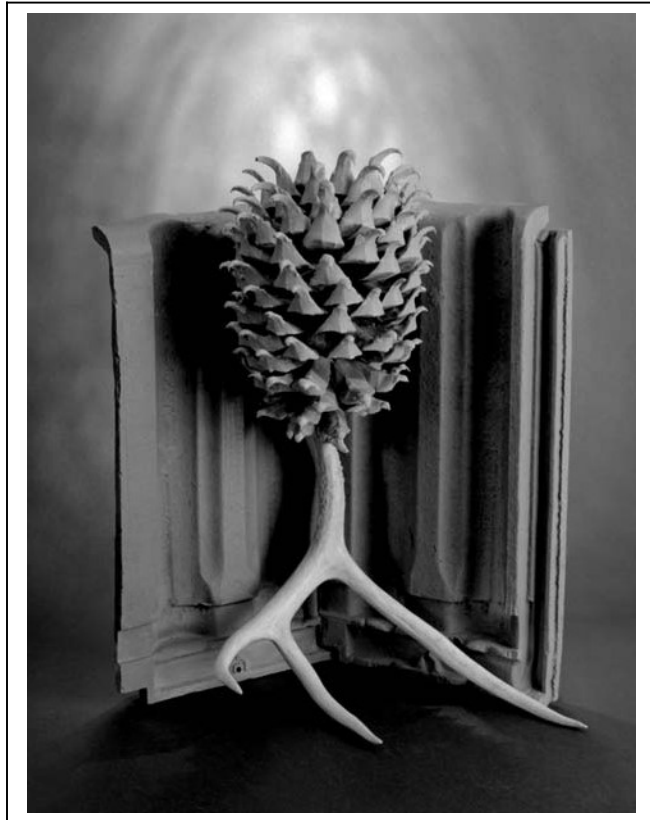


trestle, illustrating the craftsmanship and effort of stonemasons, ironworkers, and carpenters as they formed a functional bridge that pleases the eye.

(Note: The train trestle pictured once spanned the Red River between Grand Forks, North Dakota and East Grand Forks, Minnesota in the “downtown” area near the center of both communities. The trestle was considered an important factor in restricting the flow of water during a flood in 1997, and caused the river to rise to a greater level upstream. As part of the subsequent flood protection project, the trestle superstructure was removed, leaving only the stone pier and a portion of the steel framework.)

The media used for the image on the right consists of a large pine cone, a deer antler, and two clay tile shingles. Based on the process of elimination, we can assume the author will gravitate to the category of expressing an idea. That aside, applying any of the other categories to this example would be difficult at best.

The pine cone seems to suggest an aboriginal mask for a tribal people living in a primitive world. The clay shingles suggest a shield or other armor, while the antler is both an appendage and a brace of sorts. In all, the message seems to be one of a power present in the jungle. The title of this work is “Kurtz”, and is named after a character in Joseph Conrad’s novel, *Heart of Darkness*. Within the novel, Kurtz is a ivory trader who has gone mad and presides over the aboriginal natives like a god. He has crossed every moral boundary of civilization, and is living in a self created world of savagery.



### Practical Application

By using categories the artist-photographer can now better understand how the message within a image can be delivered. By first selecting the function of the photograph as defined in the categories, the artist can present the image in a way that best supports that choice, yet perhaps makes the other options less viable. Consider the following example.

You have decided to visit a local park in the early fall, and choose to explore the various trails that wind along a narrow creek. You come across a quaint old walk bridge, and you make one of your first images by exposing the film so that it looks as though the far side of the bridge is receding into the darkness of the forest.

Next, you slip down the banks of the creek and discover that the fall light is emphasizing the light colored bridge structure by placing it against a background of dark foliage. You make the second exposure that carefully frames the bridge in a diagonal direction, giving the image tension and strength.

As you move along the creek bank, you notice that the bridge is held in place by several strong steel cables that wrap around a post, and you marvel at the way the cables have been looped within each other to form a perfect knot. You frame the knot carefully, but leave enough room to show how the cables lead off to support the bridge and make your third exposure.

Before leaving, you notice that the bottom of the bridge has fallen into disrepair. On closer inspection you see that the attempted repairs are crude and leave you with a sense that the bridge isn't as safe as it used to be, so you make your last exposure in such a way that it captures the bridge as most see it, but also reveal the poor maintenance work that might be caused by a lack of adequate funding. What category would you place the bridge photographs in?

### Review Questions

Answer the following questions to help you better understand this chapter.

1. What qualities are unique to photography?
2. In a two-category model, what is the basis for each?
3. What is a descriptive or explanative photograph?
4. What does an evaluative photograph evaluate?
5. How can photographs express ideas?
6. Can any photograph be placed in any category?
7. Who determines what category a photograph is placed in? Will it stay there?

### Photographic Assignment

Produce a single 8 x 10 black and white photograph that contains the following:

1. Subject matter suitable for the category the photograph is placed in.
2. At least two of the primary image elements.

On a separate page, answer the following questions about the photograph:

1. What is the media?
2. Is there a who, what, why, or when? If so define each.
3. What is the photographic category?
4. What, in your opinion, is the subject or message of the photograph?

Submit both the photograph and answers to the above questions by enclosing them back to back in a clear plastic sleeve with **your name in the upper right corner of the answer sheet.**

## Part Three – Chapter Sixteen: Training your Eyes

### Introduction

In the previous chapters we have explored the physical attributes of photographs in order to establish a baseline method for evaluating images. We also gave meaning to the subject matter by considering the different ways to interpret the photograph and determine what it is communicating to us. Finally, as a means to help make more meaningful photographs, we established basic categories of photographs based on how the message within each is meant to function.

The knowledge gained can be applied to our own work. Creating exciting, well conceived photographic images can be done in a variety of ways. Studio, landscape, nature, and architectural photography are only four of many types of fine art photography requiring specific equipment and work habits. The studio photographer might specialize in creating characters out of sticks, then photographing them with controlled lighting using a large format camera. The landscape photographer will explore the country side in order to create images that reveal the beauty of our planet. Nature and wildlife photographers capture everything from wildflowers to wildebeests in exquisite detail to show the viewer the aesthetic power contained within all living things. The architectural photographer works to capture the form and detail of manmade structures as a means to reveal the artistic intent of the architect or engineer.

This chapter will concentrate on a photographic discipline best served by the 35mm single lens reflex (SLR) camera. Most of us enjoy using this camera because it is light, relatively easy to use, and produces images of the highest quality. As the typical 35mm SLR camera can be taken with us to virtually anywhere we travel, it can become a visual diary for our lives, and produce images from all the basic categories. Although it is occasionally used with a tripod, the ergonomics of the camera suggest it's primarily hand-held for the majority of images.

Henri Cartier-Bresson, a well known French photographer, made famous the art of street photography and capturing life in a "Decisive Moment." He referred to

his camera as a "sketch pad," and used it to frame and seize life's special moments. For the purpose of discussion, we'll call this type of image making "**Personal Photography**," and consider the style autobiographical but also something much more than that of self-portraiture. Personal Photography defines us not by our own image, but instead by how we see the world. This and the following chapters will explore the method and means for using this camera to its full advantage for this style of work.



Nikon F5 – A 35mm SLR camera

## Categorical Pursuit

### **Active and Passive Image Acquisition**

The purpose of the title is to provide a frame of reference for how we might create meaningful images with help from the categorical definitions created in the previous chapter. In short, images created for each category may require either an active or passive relationship with the artist. An active relationship suggests that the artist has manipulated or organized the subject matter to best present the fundamental message or idea. A passive relationship exists when the artist captures the subject to its best advantage with good camera work, but does not physically change, enhance, or supplement the subject in any way.

The type of message contained within the four categories (Descriptive, Expressive, Editorial, Evaluative) of photographs are relatively discreet and unique to the category, and therefore can be assigned to either a passive or active role without much trouble. Although rules are meant to be broken, the following guidelines for each category should apply to most of your images:

Photographs that describe or explain something tend to be passive photographs. Although the artist's intent might be to explain a scientific process, images taken as personal photography rely on capturing an event or circumstance in a way that subject matter is interacting within the frame without assistance from the photographer. As an example, a photograph that illustrates how a small dog leaps into its owner's arms when tempted with a treat is an image that explains something.



Capturing this type of image to the best effect requires that the photographer select image elements that illustrate what is taking place within the image. In the above photograph Powwow: North Dakota Centennial Celebration, a high vantage point allowed all the relevant subject matter to be included within the frame. A wide angle lens helped suggest the formation of a circle around the dancer. Shooting from the shade into the sun created a frame around the dance area that helps focus attention on the main event. What level of active participation might the photographer have included?

Photographs that convey an idea are often very active photographs. They include a wide variety of studio images using every type of subject matter from the human form to rocks. Although the studio isn't absolutely necessary for staging active images, most photographers find it is much easier to control the various aspects of lighting and composition. This shouldn't suggest that the outdoors or other environment is not conducive to active photography, but only that it may reduce or dilute the desired effect in presenting the idea.

In contrast to the active “idea” photographs, the artist may discover a number of visual metaphors in the natural environment which can be presented in a passive context. The juxtaposition of image elements that suggest or connote something because of their relationship within the image frame are very effective, but can be somewhat less sophisticated than the effort created in the studio. Because the photographer “discovered” the image in lieu of creating it from scratch, the virtuosity of the idea may be compromised. For the photograph “Clawfoot Cabbage” on the right, is it plausible that the artist found the media within this image occurring naturally?

Editorial photographs are compelled to be passive but quite often presented in a very prejudicial way by using the image elements skillfully. Since personal photography is meant to reflect an artist’s opinions and tastes, rendering a particular subject in a positive or negative light is a natural form of expression, and doing so can be a revealing experience for both the viewer and photographer.

Making a deliberate attempt to alter or modify the image may be noticed by the viewer. If the effect of any modification is to strengthen the positive or negative connotation of the subject, the ethical conduct of the photographer may come into question. Such attempts, if made, should be done



so in a very deliberate and noticeable way so as to shift the category from that of an editorial photograph to one expressing an idea. Does the image on the left, “Whiskey This Way” suggest that the photographer intervened in the image? What editorial statement is being made by this image?

Photographs which seek to evaluate the aesthetic qualities of the subject matter can be passive or active since the purpose of the image is to reveal the beauty of the object itself. Depending upon the subject, it may be impossible to manipulate the media as a means to present it, as would be the case when photographing a mountain range. In contrast, revealing the intricate beauty of a sea shell might require that the artist arrange on a table top with a suitable background in order to present the shell in the most favorable view.

Regardless of active or passive roles by the photographer, careful use of image elements, specifically those affected by lighting, is critical. The use of texture, form, and shape are regulated by the quality and quantity of light. When capturing

the sea shell on a table top, arranging the lights to best reveal the shape and pattern of the subject will be the most important steps in crafting the image. The mountain range may require waiting for the sun to become lower in the sky, for weather conditions to change, or to revisit the scene a different time of year.

For the image “Steel Wheels” on the right, the photographer placed the camera in a position which best captured the form and texture of the wheels as illuminated from the setting sun. Although the steel bridge wheels are very utilitarian, the effect of the lighting seemed to give them a more graceful and elegant purpose. Would the meaning within this image be changed if the photographer picked up any loose debris from around the wheels before making the image? What if additional lighting was added to fill in the shadows?



### **Form follows Function**

Personal Photography relies in part on the strengths of the 35mm camera including flexibility, portability, speed, and ease of use; qualities that support a passive role when interacting with the subject matter. As a result, most Personal Photography takes the form of explaining how something works, editorial photography, or evaluating the subject's aesthetic merit. The latter of the previous three categories may be the least prevalent, as quite often this form of expression requires the photographer to actively manage the subject matter.

Although photographs which describe an idea are often made with a high degree of success using a 35mm camera, the emphasis on image effort is usually placed on gathering materials, managing the lighting, and arranging the subject matter. Once completed, the final step requires framing the image within the viewfinder and pressing the shutter release. The majority of “intellectual effort” has been expended on the subject matter in this case, knowing that other camera formats may work more efficiently in producing the image.

Individuals tend to gravitate into a categorical style once they find a particular type of image-making that is the most rewarding. As a result, they also tend to seek out those settings and situations which provide the greatest number of categorical opportunities. For example, an artist whose style can be described as “images that explain how something works” may investigate street scenes or public events. Photographers preferring editorial images may frequent the sources of their passion, which can be as wide and diverse as the universe of opinions.

### **Image Catalysts and Pre-visualization**

Understanding the above relationships makes it possible to establish a method of exploration. In the active categories, the photographer begins by entering a setting or situation that is ripe for photography. Once there, events or the type of subject matter can suggest it may be possible to capture any number of

interesting images. As a point of reference, the events and subject matter present in each setting are referred to as “**Image Catalysts**.” Each individual artist and category of photographs has a unique set of Image Catalysts which pique our creative process.

Learning to identify the Image Catalysts for each category of photographs begins with applying our knowledge of how the world is revealed through the camera on black & white film. Through experience we know that both color and the dimension of depth are not present in black & white photographs. Being able to imagine what the effects of that transformation are when viewing the world is referred to as “**Pre-visualization**” as also described in Chapter Twelve.

Pre-visualization requires experience to master, but the basics can be learned through simple rationalization of what the camera “sees” in black and white. We can mimic the camera’s black and white vision with a few simple actions. Be mindful of your company when practicing the steps below since it is possible to be mistaken for a lunatic.

1. See the world without depth. When our two eyes focus on an object, the minor differences in muscle position which trains the eye tells the vision center of our brain how far away the object is. It also allows the vision center to model a three dimensional shape more effectively. By closing or covering one eye, we see the world in a flattened perspective. Doing so changes the emphasis on depth, and instead presents the receding planes as a large a flat surface that gobbles up image space.
2. See the world without color. Because the retina’s ability to discern color is dependent upon sufficient light, squinting our eyes or severely reducing the scenes brightness with dark sunglasses can have the effect of removing the color and leaving only light and dark areas of tone. Although definition and detail are lost (to the eyes) with this practice, it does allow the photographer to visualize what the tonal range of the image might be. Adapting a practice which minimizes the effect of color may be the most important pre-visualization technique. Color fills the world, with bright colors capturing our attention more readily than earth tones or subtle hues. Black and white film levels the colors to gray tones, and perhaps shifts emphasis to those objects which may have escaped notice in a color photograph.
3. Isolate the subject with frame lines. The camera viewfinder frames the subject matter and occludes the rest of the world, creating a tunnel vision effect. Through the viewfinder your subject matter can be separated from distracting content, allowing the photographer to create interesting images out of details that would normally be overlooked by the casual observer. A simple method of quickly framing an image is to cut a 4 inch by 6 inch rectangle from the center of a 8-1/2 inch by 11 inch mat board or other sturdy paper. By viewing the world through the opening, you can quickly see what the camera will frame. Holding the card near your eyes has the effect of a wide-angle lens. Holding it away would simulate a telephoto lens.

Being able to “see” the world in black & white as the camera does drastically changes how we approach our image making tasks and reveals an abundance of Image Catalysts that had been previously undiscovered. In the chapters that follow, we will apply our knowledge in real world exercises that reinforce what we have learned.

### Review Questions

Answer the following questions to help you better understand this chapter.

1. What are some of the various types of photography?
2. How do we describe Personal Photography?
3. Why does a 35mm camera work so well for Personal Photography?
4. What is the difference between “active” and “passive” image acquisition?
5. What categories of photographs use active acquisition?
6. What are Image Catalysts?
7. What is Pre-visualization?

### Photographic Assignment

Produce a single 8 x 10 black and white photograph that contains the following:

1. Prepare a cardboard cut-out as described in the text for pre-visualization.
2. Using the cut-out, seek out and find an image that consists of detail isolated from its surroundings by using the card.
3. Using the camera, photograph the isolated detail by placing the cardboard cut-out in front of the camera, so that the resulting photograph contains both the cardboard cut-out and the image detail.

On a separate page, answer the following questions about the photograph:

1. What is the media? Does it include the cardboard cut-out?
2. What is the photographic category?
3. What, in your opinion, is the subject or message of the photograph?

Submit both the photograph and answers to the above questions by enclosing them back to back in a clear plastic sleeve with **your name in the upper right corner of the answer sheet.**



## Part Three Chapter Seventeen: Photographs which Describe or Explain

### Introduction

Images that communicate a description or explanation captivate us by suggestion. The photographer presents a view that illustrates only a small fraction of an event's duration, but has crafted the image in such a way that it best describes what the photographer "saw and felt" during the moment of exposure. The photograph which freezes the moment is unable to offer factual information about what takes place within the frame either before or after that instant.

The image itself becomes a suggestion of what has happened or what will happen. In turn, the viewer is compelled to fill in the blanks for which there is no answer sheet. The photograph becomes a personal journey for the viewer as they create for themselves a story that can include the photograph as a descriptive instant. Preparing to capture this type of photograph requires that the artist learn to see the results of action and anticipate how to best capture that event.

Prior to setting out on a journey to explore this type of image making, it is beneficial to take stock in your own personal tastes for this category of photography. Are you a person that enjoys being around other people, and to photograph the results of human interaction? Do you prefer exploring places to witness the results of nature's actions? Are you attracted to places and things that suggest some man made event was the cause of your interest?

During the trip, you won't find convenient signs pointing to every image with instructions on where to set up the camera, what lens to use, and the best time of day for making the image. Remember that Personal Photography is not a reason for being someplace, but is instead a journal that records your vision. Seeking out the image should be secondary to the exploration of life, and when taken in this context, the images will have an even greater strength.

### Journal Entries

Personal Photography that creates images which describe or explain something stem from the following process:

1. The individual is exploring a place, event, or concept in which he or she has a personal interest.
2. During the exploration, the photographer discovers situations and settings that can reveal a cause & effect relationship.
3. The photographer Pre-visualizes the situation or settings to evaluate its potential for strength as a black & white image.
4. Using camera skills and select image elements, the photographer captures the image , reflecting the pre-visualized concept.

### **Exploring the Place, Event, or Concept**

Photographers and cats share the same curious nature. We are compelled to investigate and explore to help us understand our world and then share it with others using the camera. Exciting new images usually evolve from exploring new places, and seem to be enhanced by the sense of mystery we might encounter. Instinctively we are drawn to what appears to be an interesting situation that may be defined by the following **Image Catalysts**:

- ❖ A grouping of graphic shapes or forms.

- ❖ Objects that are new or unusual.
- ❖ Motion or events that suggest action and reaction.
- ❖ A system of objects which work together as a whole.

The following groups of images explain how Image Catalysts pique interest in the subject and lead the eye into an interesting image.



Annual flooding that follows a long winter can provide a number of dramatic images as the rivers break apart and flow out of their banks. Exploring the sites and sounds of spring requires caution, as the snow and ice can give way to a watery bath in the small coulees and ravines that lead into a larger stream. For the above image, the sounds of breaking ice and rushing water called attention as the river pushed its way through the trees that normally mark its summer banks. Floating slabs of broken ice were constantly moving, making and remaking interesting shapes along the river's edge. The **Image Catalyst** was the presence of the large ice slabs, which piqued the photographer's winter weary interest.

Pre-visualizing the scene suggested that the best point of view would be as high above the water as possible, yet close to the edge in order to present all the subject matter while separating the image planes. In addition, the overcast sky suggested a flat lighting which would help emphasize the shapes, but only if the film was processed to produce a higher contrast.

Noticing a new or unusual object includes familiar objects that are presented in a new way. The Image Catalyst for the photograph "Twisted Farm House" on the following page was the recognition that either the old structure was shifting or that the carpenter was less than capable. Our instincts tell us that most

buildings have straight walls and roofs, so when we recognize a structure that doesn't conform to this notion, our curiosity is summoned.

Upon closer inspection, it was apparent the old structure was giving way to the forces of nature.



Twisted Farmhouse

Understanding that one day the wind would win the battle, **Pre-visualization** suggested a point of view that would include the fence post and fence as a means to establish the rural context of the image. Placing the structure in the upper left allowed the fence line to act as a visual pointer that directs the eye into the old



building. The winter sun was strong, and helped define the weathered wood and building age. A yellow filter was used to darken the blue sky, and as a result it was important to not include too much shadow as the yellow filter will obliterate all detail in the dark areas.

Public events such as the “Powwow” in the photograph on the left can present a new or unique cultural experience that is both rewarding and entertaining. Understanding that the camera can be obtrusive and occasionally prohibited, it's important to first determine if any limitations on use exist. Because the above event

was conducted within a public building, photography is permitted as long as it does not invade the privacy of the subject.

A Powwow is typically loud by its very nature, exciting, and crowded. Exploring the sights and sounds soon leads to an understanding of how the events work. Seeing the drums and singers gathered in a circle suggested a method of keeping time, and also suggested an oral tradition for learning the music. Pre-visualizing the image suggested a viewpoint that would capture the participants, yet reveal the circular patterns which centered on the drum. The available lighting was harsh, so retaining details in the shadows can be difficult. In addition, a relatively slow shutter speed was used in order to capture some blur in the drum sticks.



Exploring public places during off-hours or during the season when activity is low can allow a more revealing look at something we take for granted. An empty library or a quiet city street explored on foot can allow you to access places normally unavailable, and provide views that had previously been unexplored. Being able to visually link shapes and objects together that once were apart or not associated can re-invent our impressions of once common scenes.

The drive-in restaurant, such as “The Kegs” illustrated above, is an American icon that grew out of the automobile age. Although we currently think of the drive-through window as being the most common association between vehicles and food service, the convenience associated with the drive-in was related to our love affair with cars and not the demand for fast food. To capture that relationship, it was important to

frame the image in such a way that it suggested a distance between the menu, the method of ordering, and the source of food.

Pre-visualizing the image resulted in a point of view similar to that of being in an automobile parked near the station and waiting for service. Although not apparent in the reproduction, the clouds were heavy and rain showers provided reflective surfaces that could brighten the image. The background was left out of focus as a means to isolate the menu while retaining the connection to the restaurant itself. A wide angle lens was used to emphasize the near by objects and allow the background to retreat in apparent size.

### Artist's Intent

I've provided a limited amount of background information on each of the previous images in this chapter as a means to explain the process of using **Image Catalysts** to both explore a space and enhance our personal experiences. Although the photographs continue to elicit a personal recollection of events, the images can be interpreted in a variety of ways depending upon individual tastes and experiences. Because that chasm exists between image maker and image viewer, our best intent and efforts may not carry the message we suggest.

If the message is understood to be something other than what the artist intended, has the image failed? If our goal is to describe a journey through personal experiences, then the image can fail only if it fails to communicate any message at all. Photographs which have good organization; are technically well made; and use image elements which excel at communicating will be successful regardless of the message content.

In his book "Criticizing Photographs", Terry Barret suggests that knowledge about the "how, who, when, and why" of a photograph can help interpret and categorize the message within the image. For his explanation, he refers to the internal, original, and external contexts of the photograph and how evaluating each greatly affects how we both appreciate and interpret the image<sup>20</sup>. To that end, the original context provided for the images in this chapter help explain the causal environment, but might also suggest something about the photographer which can enrich the message.

### Review Questions

Answer the following questions to help you better understand this chapter.

1. When is a photograph a suggestion?
2. What should we do prior to exploring?
3. Why are photographers like cats?
4. What are the four steps of the process used to create photographs which explain or describe something?
5. What are four types of image catalysts?
6. What is meant by "Artist's Intent"?
7. Under what circumstances would the image fail?

### Photographic Assignment

Produce a single 8 x 10 black and white photograph that contains the following:

1. Subject matter which explains or describes something based upon one of the four types of Image Catalysts described in this chapter.
2. At least two of the primary image elements.

On a separate page, answer the following questions about the photograph:

1. What is the media?
2. What is the subject?.
3. What is the Image Catalyst?
4. What, in your opinion, is being described or explained?

Submit both the photograph and answers to the above questions by enclosing them back to back in a clear plastic sleeve with **your name in the upper right corner of the answer sheet.**

## Part Three – Chapter Eighteen: Photographs Created to Express an Idea.

### Introduction

Unlike photographs which attempt to explain or describe some event or place, photographs used to convey an idea begin with the individual seeking a way to express something that might only be communicated in a visual way, or that expressing a common idea visually is appealing to the artist. Regardless of motivation, the challenge begins by assembling objects or subject matter that can be used together in forming a cohesive message that conveys that idea.

“Idea” image creation is not limited to the studio, but can be produced anywhere the media can be combined and controlled to the extent necessary for the image. Outdoor settings bring the nuances of nature to the scene, but can compromise the overall design since lighting, wind, rain, and the other forces of nature are difficult to regulate. In addition, since the image is not fully under the control of the photographer, “Idea” images can transform into photographs which explain or describe something, since the subject matter is being influenced by sources other than the photographer.

### The Range of Ideas

Categorizing ideas as polar opposites can describe what lies between them. For the purpose of explaining how ideas can become photographs, suggesting the extremes for any particular intellectual pursuit may not be very effective. Describing several methods for achieving this type of expression requires a very broad interpretation of what each method contains, which of course reflects the photographer’s personal vision. With that consideration before us, the following categories of creative process or “prototypes” should be considered simple guidelines only, knowing that each individual can refine or discard them as required.

### **Graphic shapes speaking directly to the eye**



This concept of conveying ideas is referred to as “Swiss Design” and ascribed to a graphic design movement of the early twentieth century which attributed meaning to graphic shapes that could not be interpreted by the written word.<sup>21</sup> Although it was ascribed to font styles and type settings, it grew to include images that communicated directly to our sense of balance and symmetry within the image frames.

Because of the very abstract nature of the image, it is important to retain as much simplicity in design as possible. Everything within the frame must contribute to the overall design concept, including the background and lighting. Although research into the Swiss Design movement and other similar design schools will assist greatly in understanding how graphic elements contrast or compliment each other, using your own sense of balance in arranging shapes and forms can be very rewarding.

Pre-visualization follows the entire creative process, as understanding the graphic power of each shape or form must be considered without the influence of color when working with black & white media. For the photograph “SD-II” on the previous page, two types of simple paper were used to create the textured and smooth backgrounds. A white cup and saucer filled with milk provided a high key circular form that contrasted with the background, and is placed along the diagonal line at a point that seems to balance the image. The three cylindrical shapes are glue-sticks, which are used to compliment the shape of the cup and break the diagonal line while directing some visual weight into the lower part of the image.

### Using human subjects to perform ideas

This method is most suitable to outdoor use or in a setting that has less than optimal control over the lighting since the context of using a human subject helps bridge some of the difficulties in understanding the image. The human form is very expressive, and our collective understanding of cultural and social norms can be used very effectively when communicating ideas that suggest or imply a strong cultural or social message.

Ideas conveyed using the human form can be abstract or concise. Abstract images tend to contain broad, somewhat ephemeral messages that often describe emotions in a dream-like way. Concise images use sharp focus, common body language, and everyday situations to clearly describe ideas efficiently and effectively. Both require careful assembly so as to not introduce media which isn't supporting the message.



For the photograph Masque, above, the original idea was the concept of masks both real and imagined. In other words, an attempt was made to convey how we shape our self image in response to certain types of circumstances that task our self assurance. The media includes a simple Halloween mask that had been painted a flat white color in order to remove any identification with another subject, and to suggest a pale, impartial view. To frame the image, the shot was made into a mirror which reflected the subject clearly but allowed the mirror and frame to remain out of focus. The camera angle was tilted to suggest tension within the frame.



## Assembling creations as metaphors for ideas



Collecting objects that can be used for creating a metaphor is as simple as attributing meaning to a shape based on its shape alone. Symbolism is another form of abstract communication that relies upon a common recognition of shapes which suggest a point of view or other idea. Swastikas, the middle finger on a human hand, and the Nike Swoosh all have specific and well known messages associated with them. Human subjects arranged on the floor in the shape of a "Peace Sign" might suggest a passive protest or other point of view.

Another method of creating metaphors is to assemble unrelated media which may have no particular connotation into something that does. For the photograph on the left, "Cervantes' Little Man," two pieces of drift wood that resembled a leg were found along the river. The iron ring was part of a collection of "studio items" waiting to be used within an image. The driftwood found its way

into the same box as the iron ring, and when seen together the idea sprouted, although somewhat vague at the time. Eventually the colander, maple leaf, and weathered wood base came together to form the little soldier who escaped captivity. It suggests the character Don Quixote, with the same, somewhat unrealistic, idealism.

## The Context of Viewing Photographs

Consideration should be given by the photographer when creating "idea" photographs to what context or environment the image will be viewed. Although this remains personal photography, the idea of conveying an image must also include the setting in which you share it. Consider the following locations which traditionally display photography as to message.

- ❖ Art Gallery
- ❖ Walls within a home or business
- ❖ Billboard
- ❖ Milk carton
- ❖ Magazine
- ❖ Newspaper
- ❖ Web page

Each of the above can be considered a context for viewing. Although an art museum or gallery might be the most straight forward, how might the message change if your photograph is published on a billboard? Would the photograph “Masque” above retain a different message if published in *Ladies Home Journal* than it would in *Gentlemen’s Quarterly*?

Most images are made with the final context of viewing in mind. In general, fine art is meant to be displayed within a book, magazine, or on walls within a home or gallery, with the intent to present them as such. Placing fine art in any of the above takes into consideration the size of the image when viewed. Would the photograph “SD II” be equally effective when printed to a size of eight by ten inches as it would twenty by twenty four inches? Depending on the context, a small print has much less impact than a large print, and provides less detail as to image content.

### Review Questions

Answer the following questions to help you better understand this chapter.

1. Are photographs which convey an idea usually active or passive?
2. What are the problems associated with working outdoors when creating “idea” photographs?
3. What is meant by graphic shapes that speak directly to the eye?
4. What are two basic forms of idea images that use the human form?
5. How are symbols like metaphors?
6. What is meant by the context of viewing?
7. Does image size affect how an image is perceived?

### Photographic Assignment

Produce a single 8 x 10 black and white photograph that contains the following:

1. Subject matter which explains or describes an idea base on the three prototypes in this chapter, or a new prototype that must be accompanied by a description of how it accomplishes the goal of communicating an idea.
2. At least two of the primary image elements.

On a separate page, answer the following questions about the photograph:

1. What is the media?
2. Which prototype (or method) was used?
3. What is the idea being communicated?

Submit both the photograph and answers to the above questions by enclosing them back to back in a clear plastic sleeve with **your name in the upper right corner of the answer sheet.**

## **Part Three – Chapter Nineteen: Editorial Photographs**

### **Introduction**

Editorial photography can be described as image making which places the subject in either a positive or negative light. Most often associated with the news industry and typically reflecting the opinions of editorial boards, this type of photography is a powerful tool when used to shift public sentiment. When applied to Personal Photography, the result of the artist's efforts is to render the subject with a personal bias that may be either positive or negative, but does reflect personal taste.

In Part Three – Chapter Fourteen we learned that all artists bring a predisposition to the image simply by being human. There is no innocent eye, and as a result each and every photograph we make must contain a certain amount of editorial content that ranges from minor criticism to wholesale aspersions; or from passive approval to unrestrained endearment. Through this process, those photographs which lean towards wholesale aspersions and unrestrained endearment best fit the category of editorial photographs, or images which reveal a strong personal opinion.

Unlike images which describe something, or those which express an idea, editorial photography tends to make a judgment based upon personal likes or dislikes. The judgment can be rendered for any variety of subjects, and isn't limited to a social context. It can apply to a taste in clothing, where we live, or other items worthy of evaluation. Understanding how to use this relatively narrow category of personal photography begins with assessing personal tastes.

### **Personal Assessment**

#### **Core values and self image**

Most of us form opinions about politics, athletic teams, and computer operating systems that reflect our past experiences and self image. This self image gives rise to any number of opinions on transient issues, but for the most part remains the same or transforms very slowly as we move through life. Making photographs which reflect the transient issues typically do not manifest themselves as personal photographs, but instead are voiced in more traditional ways. Photographs which reflect our self image are more prevalent, and tend to create a number of photographs over time that suggest the same point of view.

For Personal Photography, this type of image making can be the most rewarding and certainly the most revealing about the photographer. When considered as part of a "photographic journal," the images provide the viewer with insight as to the artist's core values and how they may or may not transform over time.

#### **A personal perspective**

"Buffalo Commons" is a term coined by Deborah and Frank Popper, two researchers from Rutgers University. In general, the term refers to a plan where the land of the great plains will once again become the fenceless prairie which allows the indigent animal population to roam freely.<sup>22</sup> The basis for the theory stems from the ongoing drain of population within this area, and their subsequent understanding that populating the prairie may have been a mistake in the first place. Below is a portion of their work titled "The Buffalo Commons as Regional Metaphor and Geographic Method" as submitted to the *Geographical Review*.

"The Plains have inspired extraordinary literature and art evocative of their physical distinctiveness and the difficulties human settlement encounters there. Walt Whitman wrote in 1879, "One wants new words in writing about these plains, and all the inland American West-- the terms, far, large,

vast, &c., are insufficient" (Stovall 1963, 218, emphasis in original). The painter Thomas Hart Benton wrote in 1937, "Cozy-minded people hate the brute magnitude of the plains country. For me the great plains have a releasing effect. I like the way they make human beings appear as the little bugs they really are. Human effort is seen there in all its painful futility. The universe is stripped to dirt and air, to wind, dust, clouds, and the white sun" (quoted in Raban 1996, 60). Kathleen Norris' Dakota: A Spiritual Geography begins: "The High Plains, the beginning of the desert West, often act as a crucible for those who inhabit them. Like Jacob's angel, the region requires that you wrestle with it before it bestows a blessing" (Norris 1993, 1).

Photographs can give testimony to this type of change, and based on personal preference it might be either a positive or negative statement. Such a definition could be a powerful sentiment for individuals living in the Great Plains, and may reflect their core values and self image as seen in the place they live. Using this concept as a guide, let's evaluate a series of photographs to determine what each might suggest.



The media or subject matter in the photograph above includes the prairie sky, an abandoned farm home, trees, the prairie itself, and some dilapidated farm equipment. Based on image planes, the foreground includes the farm equipment, the middle ground includes the farm home, and the background is comprised of the sky. The image was made on Tri-X film, using a 35mm lens and a yellow filter to darken the sky and help reveal the clouds.

Can we draw any similarities between this image and some of the writings quoted by the Popplers? Would the overall impression of this image suggest a positive or negative point of view?

The media in the photograph on the top of the following page, "Prairie Windmill," includes a cloudy sky, the prairie, a windmill and cattle post with two rubber tires attached to it. The image was made using Tri-X film, a 35mm lens, and a yellow-green filter which reduces the value of the sky and helps raise the value of some of the prairie plants located near the windmill.



What are the similarities between this image and the previous photograph? Does the sky in each reflect a different mood or atmosphere? Does the portrait orientation change the image? (Consider the ratio of earth and sky, and the relative lack of “landscape” features.) What terms would you use to describe this photograph? Are they positive or negative?

The media in the image below includes the prairie, sky, and a wood granary. The photograph was made using Tri-X film with a 24mm lens using a yellow filter. The image is relatively “flat”, as the image planes do not immediately suggest a great amount of depth. The foreground is the ubiquitous prairie grass, the middle ground is occupied by the granary, and the background is the ever present prairie sky.

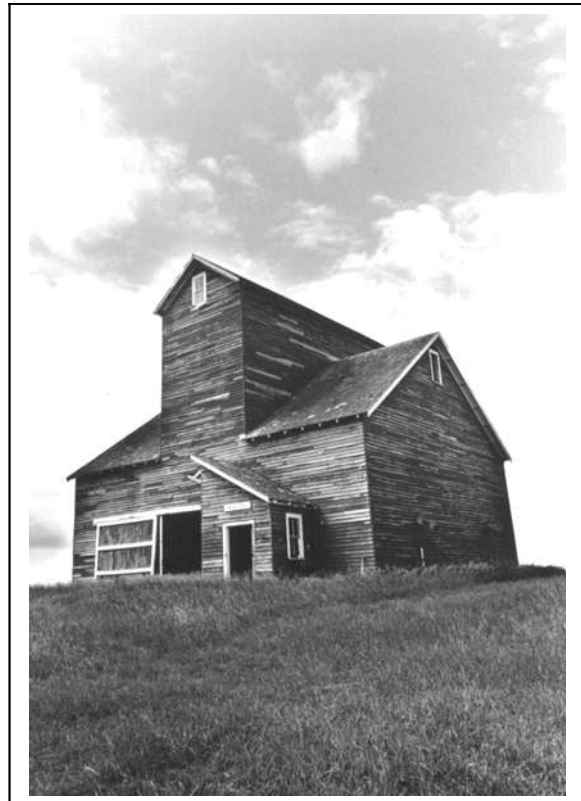
This image carries much of the same content as the previous two, all of which suggest a slow decay of man-made things and dreams. In contrast, the images all suggest a certain permanence of the land and sky that define the prairie view surrounding each man-made item. To consider the editorial content, it may be beneficial to understand what might be opposing forces within each frame. The man-made structures and equipment seem to be in a process of

being absorbed into the earth. One perspective might suggest that each image illustrates a failure on behalf of humans to settle and make fertile a land or place. Another perspective might be that the land and sky are permanent, dependable parts of our lives that will live beyond all of us regardless of our intentions.

### **Illustrating the point of view**

The previous images were made to communicate a point of view relative to the concept of Buffalo Commons and the people who live there. Although the idea of a vast, unbroken prairie which hosts indigenous wildlife as it had over one hundred years ago is an interesting notion, the reality of this transformation taking place is less one of design but instead one of evolution. The point of view is that of the interested by-stander, who understands the forces at work and makes witness of the results as they alter the landscape.

The photographs could easily introduce to many a strong, positive statement about the landscape and



its resiliency. Each suggests that year by year the earth takes back what has been forsaken or lost by its human owners as they move off the land. At the same time, the images speak to the strength of the inhabitants, who built strong, proper buildings that could weather a storm. The implements were parked in neat rows, the windmill sturdy and attractive. A sense of pride permeates the images, although the subject matter has fallen into a state of disrepair.

As editorial images, they become proponents of both the land and the people, but convey there are a winner and a loser. Although it appears humans will lose out to the forces of nature and the economy, their efforts should be treated with dignity since their existence here created a strong and sturdy people. The lasting vestiges of the population become monuments to a time and place where a people did there very best, enduring great hardship, to make a life for themselves.

### **Creating the images**

Editorial images are by nature diverse and reflect individual opinions. In many ways, the value of the photograph relies in part on the marketplace of ideas. If the message is pertinent and well conceived, and based on a credible issue, then it follows that the work will be accepted in the marketplace as having value. Concepts which elicit strong emotions such as the Buffalo Commons are relatively easy to present in editorial form. Subjects that are more personal in context require greater skill and care in presentation as the image content might be alien to a majority of viewers.

Below is a checklist of actions that can assist the artist in creating effective editorial photographs.

- ✓ The image content should be based on core value issues, not transient or short term conflicts that might rise from those core values.
- ✓ Identify key components of the issues being evaluated. In the photographs presented above, they include the prairie, settlements, and farmland.
- ✓ Where a conflict exists, identify the participating subject matter simply and clearly.
- ✓ Avoid any active participation in the subject matter. Effective editorial photography is based on real events and places.
- ✓ Avoid using lenses at the extreme edges of focal length. Extreme telephoto and extreme wide angle lenses distort the relationship between subject matter, and using each for that purpose is a transparent attempt to bias the viewer.
- ✓ Respect the subject matter, and try to photograph using lighting that isn't overly bright or flat and lifeless. Outdoor scenes should avoid overcast days and the subsequent gloom.

### Review Questions

Answer the following questions to help you better understand this chapter.

1. What is the goal of editorial photography?
2. What is meant by the term "innocent eye"?
3. Why are core values used to express opinions in editorial photography?
4. What type of subject matter should be used for editorial photography?
5. Should the artist be active or passive in regards to the subject matter within editorial photography?

### Photographic Assignment

Produce a single 8 x 10 black and white photograph that contains the following:

1. Subject matter which is chosen to represent a conflict and subsequent opinion.
2. At least two of the primary image elements.

On a separate page, answer the following questions about the photograph:

1. What conflict is present within the image?
2. Which subject matter is presented in a positive or negative light?
3. How does it relate to the core values of the photographer?

Submit both the photograph and answers to the above questions by enclosing them back to back in a clear plastic sleeve with **your name in the upper right corner of the answer sheet.**

## Part Three – Chapter Twenty: Aesthetically Evaluative Photographs

### Introduction

Possibly the most common form of photography used in fine art, images revealing the most aesthetically pleasing side of any subject matter are referred to as Aesthetically Evaluative Photographs. Its purpose is two fold and includes illustrating the object's beauty as well as demonstrating the skill of the artist. A reverse approach can be taken as well, where the purpose of the photograph is to reveal the lack of aesthetic qualities. The same techniques apply, only the goal is to remove any positive attribute instead of applying it. For this chapter, the text will concentrate on the more traditional approach of exploring the beauty of the media.

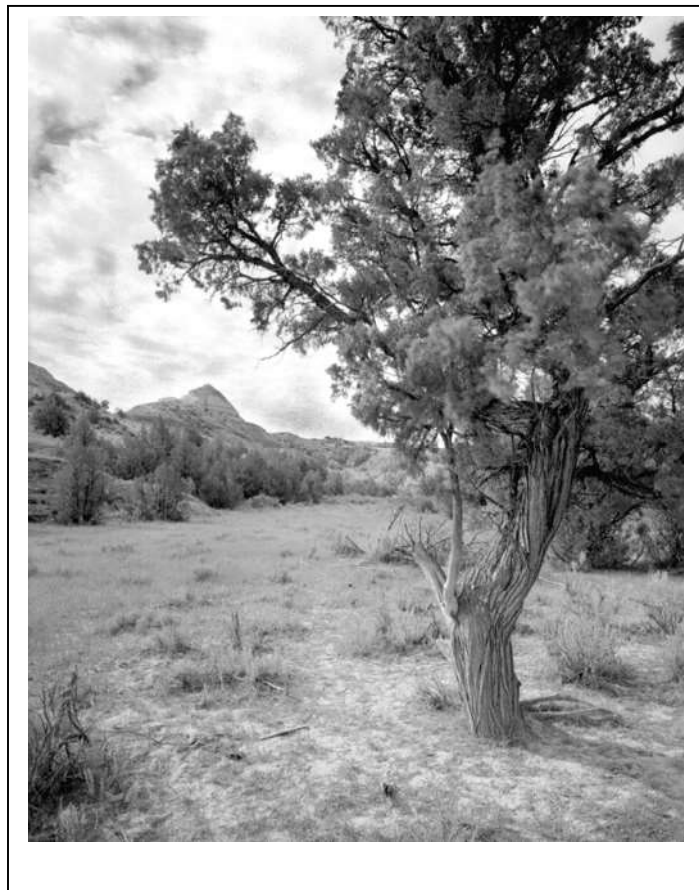
### The Common Subjects

#### **The Landscape**

Mother Nature never tires of providing us with awe inspiring and beautiful vistas. They become a natural subject for Personal Photography since they represent a time and place dear to each individual. Capturing the landscape in a way that represents what the artist "saw and felt" at the time can be difficult, and requires following a few simple guidelines to reveal the subject in the most favorable way.

Consider the following suggestions, and determine how they were used in the photograph of the North Dakota Grasslands, right.

- ❖ Frame the image in landscape or portrait orientation according to the principle subject matter.
- ❖ Place subject matter in the foreground and background, but reserve the middle distance for a slight negative space which emphasizes both.
- ❖ Use subject matter in the foreground which can give a sense of scale to the rest of the image.
- ❖ Limit the sky to only one third of the image.
- ❖ Photograph during the early or later hours to provide texture and form while reducing strong shadows.
- ❖ Use camera settings which provide the greatest depth of field without blurring the image. Out of focus landscape photographs should be kept from view in a closet or waste basket.
- ❖ When necessary, use filters (such as yellow, red, or green) to emphasize the sky and separate it from the clouds.
- ❖ In general, do not use an extreme wide angle or extreme telephoto lens for landscape images.





Remember that the landscape itself is the subject, and that the subject matter you use should make a positive contribution. Although a tripod can be helpful, keep in mind the spirit of Personal Photography and use the effort expended on a tripod to shoot a greater number of images.

### Still Life



A traditional staple for aesthetic evaluation, the still life illustrates the artist's ability to arrange objects in a pleasing way. Although it is possible to craft a message from the subject matter that goes beyond the aesthetic, evaluation of the image should be limited to the level of success achieved in expressing either the beauty of the objects or the arrangement.

For the photograph on the above, a very simple composition of pumpkins, gourds, maize, and fallen leaves were organized in the studio on seamless background paper. The subject appears to be harvest bounty or a similar notion, and is organized around a central feature. Again, consider the following suggestions for a traditional still life image.

- ❖ The subject matter should be related in function, and complimentary in form. Avoid mixing extremely large objects with small items as they can become lost in the composition.
- ❖ Select one component to be the principle subject matter, and organize the remaining objects around the principle in a supporting role.
- ❖ Limit the number of different objects to six or less.
- ❖ Use a simple background which does not detract from the subject matter.
- ❖ Use soft, directional lighting that avoids creating harsh shadows yet establishes form and texture.
- ❖ Position the camera at an angle that reveals all the subject matter yet doesn't present an unnatural point of view.

### Human Form

This genre includes images of people in a broad context. Conveying a sense of beauty / mystery within the subject can be accomplished in a variety of ways, with each requiring its own specific lighting, background, and camera angle to best illustrate the intent of the photographer.

The photograph "Ghost" on the following page was made with the shutter open, while at the same time having the subject rise out of the chair, then make a few steps across the seamless paper. A brief pause by the subject caused the image to solidify at one point. Many negatives were made using the same basic arrangement, with only one being successful.

The human form presents a wide variety of image possibilities that can be evaluated very successfully. It should be noted that for personal photography, presenting people as beautiful can be completed in a wide variety of settings. The aesthetic evaluation can include the following circumstances:

- ❖ Candid portraits of people during interpersonal events such as dinner or a night out.
- ❖ Photographs of people as they work or play, illustrating the beauty of human effort and the relationship it creates.
- ❖ Street photography that captures strangers doing things which reflects kindly on the stranger, and presents them in a positive light.
- ❖ People helping people during a community or charitable event.
- ❖ Teachers and students pursuing a common goal.



### **The Broadest Category**

The three subject types of aesthetically evaluative photographs presented here certainly do not complete the category. Producing images using one of the three subject types continues to be an integral part of Personal Photography, and provides valuable experience for applying our skills to other types of subjects. Investigations beyond what is described here can lead to image making that might suggest some other form of aesthetic standard for the photographer.

As an example, consider the following subjects and imagine what type of photographs could be made that emphasize beauty within each.

- ❖ Automobile wrecking yard
- ❖ Landfill for waste
- ❖ Service station
- ❖ Meat packing plant.
- ❖ Industrial Plant

Although not typically accepted as a thing of beauty, the photographer may find that certain components of each can be arranged, isolated through the viewfinder, and captured by the film in a way that suggests a much different point of view. The ability to do so starts with a very open mind and the ability to Pre-visualize the images as you explore this type of subject.

### Review Questions

Answer the following questions to help you better understand this chapter.

1. What is the purpose of aesthetically evaluative photography?
2. What are the three principle subjects for aesthetically evaluative photography?
3. What guidelines can be used for landscape photography?
4. In what ways can the human form be presented?
5. Should the artist be active or passive in regards to the subject matter within aesthetically evaluative photography?

### Photographic Assignment

Produce a single 8 x 10 black and white photograph that contains the following:

1. Subject matter from one of the three included in this chapter for aesthetically evaluative photographs.
2. At least two of the primary image elements.

On a separate page, answer the following questions about the photograph:

1. Which subject was chosen for the image?
2. What guidelines were used successfully?
3. How does the photograph flatter the subject?

Submit both the photograph and answers to the above questions by enclosing them back to back in a clear plastic sleeve with **your name in the upper right corner of the answer sheet.**

## NOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> John Szarkowski, *Mirrors and Windows: American Photography since 1960* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1978), pp. 18-19
- <sup>2</sup> Henri Cartier Bresson, *The Decisive Moment* (Paris: Editions Verve, 1952)
- <sup>3</sup> Sebastio Salgado, *An Uncertain Grace* (New York: Aperture, 1992)
- <sup>4</sup> Sebastio Salgado, *Workers: An Archaeology of the Industrial Age* (New York: Aperture, 1993)
- <sup>5</sup> Sebastio Salgado, *Migrations: Humanity in Transitions* (New York: Aperture, 2000)
- <sup>6</sup> Weegee, *Weegee's World* (New York: Bulfinch Press, 1977)
- <sup>7</sup> The Term "Depth of Focus" is a technical reference to the degree of sharp focus as it relates to the distance from the film plane. It is used to describe lens performance, and because it does not relate to the actual objects in front of the lens, it has no practical usage for image management.
- <sup>8</sup> Iford Photo, a large producer of silver based imaging products based in England emerged from bankruptcy in 2005 under new ownership. Since that time, the company has reported a strong increase in sales of black and white photographic products and anticipates sales well into the future. Iford Photo, Harman Technologies, press release. (Mobberley, UK, 2005)
- <sup>9</sup> Ansel Adams, *The Negative* (New York: New York Graphic Society, 1983), pp. 17
- <sup>10</sup> Ansel Adams, *The Print* (New York: New York Graphic Society, 1983), pp. 41 - 49
- <sup>11</sup> Kodak Company, *Kodak Technical Publication F-4016* (Rochester: Kodak 2004), pp. 2
- <sup>12</sup> John Hedgecoe, *The New Book of Photography* (London: DK Publishing, 1994), pp. 42
- <sup>13</sup> Estelle Jussim, *EW 100: Centennial Essays in Honor of Edward Weston* (Carmel, California: The Friends of Photography, 1981) pp. 55
- <sup>14</sup> Ansel Adams, *The Negative* (New York: New York Graphic Society, 1983), pp. 99-119
- <sup>15</sup> Andreas Feininger, *Principles of Composition in Photography* (Garden City: Amphoto, 1978), pp. 82
- <sup>16</sup> James M. Reilly, et. al., *The Stability of Black and White Photographic Images* (New York, The Abbey Newsletter, Volume 12, No. 5, 1988)
- <sup>17</sup> Terry Barrett, *Criticizing Photographs* (Mountain View, California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 2000) pp. 35
- <sup>18</sup> Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1976)
- <sup>19</sup> John Szarkowski, *The Photographer's Eye* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1966)
- <sup>20</sup> Terry Barrett, *Criticizing Photographs* (Mountain View: Mayfield Publishing Company, 2000) pp. 96.
- <sup>21</sup> Richard Hollis, *Swiss Graphic Design*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006)
- <sup>22</sup> Frank and Deborah Popper, Essay, *The Great Plains: From Dust to Dust*, (American Planning Association (Publisher) Planning Magazine, December, 1987)