

# PHOTOJOURNALISM: THE ULTIMATE

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With gratefulness towards my Heavenly Father who gave me the talent to become a good photographer.

Dedicated to my wife Laurika, whose encouragement, help and love made this book possible, and to my parents for all their encouragement and their financial support over the past three years.

Thank you also to my friend Hein du Plessis whom I have met on my first assignment, as well as the rest of the photographers working at “Die Volksblad”.

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## INTRODUCTION

There are no specific rules in photography. The most important “rule” is to *see*. Photography is all about *detail*. It is about noticing small things, for example how many clouds there were in the sky this morning, or from what side the wind was blowing. To become a good photographer, one has to start focusing constantly on small detail like this.

For the past three years I have been involved in many photojournalistic assignments, often working with photojournalists from a local newspaper, as well as with some of the best photographers in the world. During this time, I have learned a great deal about photography in practice. There are of course a huge difference between photography in the classroom, and photography in a real life situation, where you have to think on your feet and where each second is of tremendous importance.

A second missed can be a photograph missed, and the opportunity will be gone forever. For me, photojournalism is the ultimate form of photography. The adrenalin of the situation, the immediacy of events and the feeling of satisfaction after seeing the photographs, makes it all worth while.

## 1 WHAT IS PHOTOJOURNALISM?

Photojournalism encompasses a broad variety of word and picture reportage. The term itself is fairly new. In the early days, photographers were “news photographers,” “press photographers,” or “magazine photographers”. It was not until the 1940s that the term *photojournalism* was popularised by professor Cliff Edom of the University of Missouri to describe the type of word-and-picture integration he was teaching. Through his lectures, writings, and work at the Missouri Photo Workshop, Edom defined the word in its present meaning. Wilson Hicks, picture editor of *Life* Magazine from 1937 until the late 1950s, gave a detailed definition of photojournalism in 1952 in his classic book *Words and Pictures*:

*“This particular coming together of the verbal and visual mediums of communication is, in a word, photojournalism. Its elements used in combination do not produce a third medium. Instead they form a complex in which each of the components retains its fundamental character, since words are distinctly one kind of medium, pictures another”.*

According to Hicks, the result of this photojournalism is a combination of words and pictures that produces a “oneness of communicative result” with the reader’s educational and social background (Hicks 1952: 17).

## 2. APPROACHES TO PHOTOJOURNALISM

*“Learn the fundamentals of photojournalism so you can cover news well on deadline. Then you can handle any type of photojournalism”*

Ref.: Hoy, F.P. Photojournalism - The Visual Approach p. 291

### 2.1 Wire Services

News services like Associated Press (AP), United Press International (UPI), Agence France-Presse, and Reuters are major news sources for all manner of communication media today. These wire services have survived and grown by covering news on the local, national, and international scene, and continually adapted new technology for their coverage. The Associated Press and other wire services inaugurated coast-to-coast networks of wire transmission over telephone lines during the mid 1930s, and in today's electronic era, the concept has been updated with electronic equipment that digitally delivers news images via satellites and computers around the clock. Each wire service transmits hundreds of daily news photographs directly into newspaper, magazine, and television newsrooms around the globe. They literally have “a deadline every minute” somewhere in the world.

The photojournalist who works for the wire services, is highly pressurised, due to the constant deadlines he/she has to face. For example, if something newsworthy happens somewhere in the world, the photojournalist working for the wire services has to go there and take photos of the events taking place, for example a war scene, a bomb explosion, etcetera. Photographers from all over the world will surely also

be there to take photographs, but the pictures cannot wait until the photographer gets home and then only be printed and published in the newspaper! By that time, the event would already be “old news”, and the newspaper would definitely not sell. Thus, the photographer working for the wire services delivers the photographs digitally to the wire service he/she is working for. Full colour digital images are almost immediately transmitted onto the computer screens of the wire service. This way, a single photograph can go to the entire world or to just one single newspaper! No printed photographs are required. Wire services constantly compete for the first images of the scene or subject. The wire service who gets the image first, will sell it to newspapers, magazines, etc. world-wide. Some of the advantages of this kind of digital delivery, are the following:

- \* It is very fast
- \* It allows sharper reproduction, with none of the quality loss associated with analog transmission lines
- \* It makes the photographs required by the newspaper/agency available immediately
- \* The photographs can be “edited” on the computer, ensuring a good product and saving hours of time in the darkroom
- \* A single photograph can reach the entire world within a few seconds
- \* Can be send from anywhere in the world - only a cellular phone or modem is required

However, the need for accuracy, good news judgement and plain old technical know-how will always remain the most important part of the wire service approach. Electronic picture desks and digital scanners (which



are used to scan the images onto the computer) do speed transmission, but it remains the responsibility of the photojournalist to think and work fast and accurately under sometimes extremely difficult situations (Keene 1993: 27).

## 2.2 Photographs by Modem

Another digital photographic service available today, is the telephone modem. Digital photographic images can be sent to computers all over the world via the telephone modem. PressLink, an international network publishing and electronic mail service, was the first to expand its electronic mail role into a photographic service via phone lines, modems, and personal computers. The Super Bowl which took place in Florida during 1991 had been covered this way. Colour images of this event were delivered over PressLink connections to a string of newspapers across the country.

The main advantage of the PressLink connection is definitely its direct delivery into a publications' editing and layout computers (Keene 1993: 132).

## 2.3 Newspapers

Newspapers offer the widest variety of assignments for the photojournalist, since new photos are needed every single day. Although newspapers focus more on local spot news than the wire services, photojournalists often sell photos which are important and dramatic enough, to both. The photojournalist who takes interesting or unusual photos, will always have the chance of a spread or layout of photos in newspapers too.

The newspaper photographer has a broader variety of work than the wire-service counterpart, since newspaper general assignment extends beyond straight news and includes spot news, features, fashions, studio work, illustrations, pictorials, picture pages, as well as some promotional or public relations shooting. Therefore, the photojournalist may be called upon to shoot all areas in which the business has an interest, and this way, he/she gets a chance to shoot a bit of everything.

Photos in newspapers makes the day's news a visually attractive package, and therefore newspapers are presently using more, larger and better photographs to report and even interpret the news (Rothstein 1979: 232).

#### 2.4 **Magazines**

Picture pages, Sunday newspaper magazines, weekly newspapers, weekly news magazines and other magazines also uses work by freelancers and experts who also use the camera to report. All these magazines need good photographs on a regular basis, and because few of them have staff photojournalists, they provide a good market for freelancers.

Although many photographers want to work for the world's largest photographic institutions, newspapers, magazines, etc., Ann Bailie, of the Long Beach *Press Telegram* , believes a small paper is the best place to start in photojournalism:

*“Small dailies and weeklies are generally more receptive to photojournalists than large city papers, so they are a good place to start. Find a job, take good pictures, and maintain your idealism....Get a few years’ experience, move up, and start all over again”.*

(Baillie 1981: 27)

The most important thing the photojournalist has to keep in mind, is to keep on shooting for any publication that will publish his/her photos. Do not worry about “big pay”. Just carry your camera and keep on looking for photos, and keep the publishers aware of the fact that you are around. Sooner than later, they will start making use of your photos!

### 3. COVERING AN ASSIGNMENT

When the photojournalist is out on an assignment, he/she has to be aware of the following:

- \* Where to find news
- \* How to assure visual variety, and
- \* when and where to sell news pictures.

#### 3.1 Where to find news

The photojournalist, first of all, has to know where to find news. Most newspaper photographers monitor the police band because they are usually the first ones called to a murder, robbery, or accident. The exact frequency used by the police can be obtained from your local police department, or a directory that lists all emergency frequencies in the region can be obtained from an area radio store. However, some countries do not allow monitoring equipment in the home or office. A photographer has been arrested in Florida for carrying a permanent scanner in his car.

The photographer who cannot afford a monitor, can listen to an all-news radio station or a station that specialises in frequent news or updated news report. A station with an all-news format interrupts any on-going programming immediately if an emergency arises. Although news radio does not provide as immediate information as the scanner, the radio will often suffice.

Special-interest groups also call in tips to the newspapers if the members think the publicity will do them some good. A typical example of this is the



student unrest that took place at Technikon Free State during the first quarter of 1995, when black students held a protest march to the office of the Rector at the Main Building. Many local newspaper photographers and SABC cameramen were on the scene to photograph the protest march, and black students were interviewed by the SABC. Obviously these black students thought that the publicity would profit them in some way, and therefore informed the Volksblad and SABC about the protest march which was going to be held.

However, whether a photographer stumbles into an event in progress, finds out about it from a scanner radio, or gets a tip, he or she still must evaluate its news and picture worthiness, photograph the activity, and rush the picture to a media outlet in time for the next deadline.

Sources for planned news also exist. Companies, schools, hospitals, prisons, and governmental departments have press or public relations offices. These offices, sometimes called public affairs or public information departments, generate a steady stream of news releases. Many of these PR releases suggest good picture possibilities. The public relations officer and the photographer sometimes can benefit one another. The PR officer wants pictures of a politician or institution published, and the photographer wants usable pictorial news tips. Find out from the local newspaper or magazine what kind of pictures they would like to buy and when the deadlines are before you go ahead and waste a lot of money.

Newspapers also print schedules of local theatres, sport events, parades, festivals, etcetera., from which especially the free-lance photographer can benefit. Newspapers and wire services also maintain a log book listing the

time, place, and date of each future activity. The notation in the book includes a telephone number of the sponsoring organization in case the photographer needs more information before going on the assignment. The log book idea again works well for free-lancers (Kenneth 1980: 38).

### **3.2 How to assure visual variety**

Photojournalists have to think like film directors when on an assignment. For example, they have to plan and look for locations for overall shots and ways to move in for close-ups.

Thus, when the photojournalist arrives on the scene of a news event, it is important to take an overall photo which can give the viewers at home the perspective of someone standing right within the crowd, moving his/her eyes from side to side to survey the entire panorama. The overall photo therefore allows viewers to orient themselves to the scene.

However, it is also important to take some medium shots. Medium shots should “tell the story” in one photograph. The photojournalist has to shoot the picture close enough to see the action of the participants, yet far enough away to show their relationship to one another and to the environment. The photo must tell the whole story quickly by compressing the important elements into one image. In short: the medium shot summarises the story.

Wide-angle lenses such as a 24 mm or 28 mm work well for the medium shot, although a 50mm lens will also do. J Walter Green, a top photographer with the Associated Press, notes that he takes most medium

shots with his 24mm lens. This lens enables him to get extremely close to the subject to fill the entire negative area. According to Green, the resulting pictures tend to project a more intimate feeling between the subject and the viewer. Because he works so close to the subject, few distracting elements intervene in front of his camera when he is shooting. He is also able to emphasise the subject. Finally, Green's wide angle takes in a large area of the background, thus establishing the relationship of the subject to his surroundings (Kenneth, 1980: 121).

However, the wider the angle of the lens, the greater the chance for apparent distortion. This is because you can focus very close to a subject with a wide-angle lens, and the closer any part of a subject is, the bigger it will appear. To avoid distortion with the wide-angle lens, you must keep the back of the camera parallel to the subject. For example: when shooting a building, you must either get far enough away, or high enough, so that the back of your camera is perpendicular to the ground and therefore parallel to the structure.

The close-up also adds drama to the photo. The close-up slams the reader into eyeball-to-eyeball contact with the subject. A soldier's face contorted in pain, for example, can, because of this intimate distance, elicit empathy in the reader.

When on an assignment, it is also important that the photojournalist takes several frames of the subject from each vantage point. This approach is called the *saturation method*. This is important, because a slight change in perspective can bring important elements in the scene together to make the picture more visual. Thus, if the photojournalist sees a picture, he must

take it, because, if he hesitates, the moment is lost forever! Take the picture immediately - it may be the best chance of the rest of your life.

### 3.3 When and where to sell news pictures

What should you do when you have snapped a good spot news picture?

The answer to this question depends on whether you are a staffer or a free-lancer. The staff photographer ought to call his editor immediately, and briefly describe the incident and his photos. The editor will decide whether the photographer should remain on the scene and send in his film by messenger, or if he has to return to the office. The free-lance photographer, under the same circumstances, has more options for his pictures. He can call local newspapers, magazines or wire services and ask if they are interested in buying his pictures. The amount that they are prepared to pay for a picture depends on the value of the photo at the time of publication.

In 1963, *Life* Magazine paid Abraham Zapruder between 25 000 and 40 000 dollars for his 8mm movie film of President Kennedy's assassination! Still, each photo is unique, and its value must be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. The most important factor to keep in mind, is time. The time element is always crucial. What is news today, might be old news tomorrow. Therefore the free-lance photojournalist should never underestimate the value of his pictures, and never wait too long to find a buyer for them. Newspapers and wire services remain the best market for spot news (Hoy 1986: 47).



#### 4 THE LAW AND ETHICS OF PHOTOJOURNALISM

*“We believe the agencies of mass communication are carriers of public discussion and information, acting on the Constitutional mandate and freedom to learn and report the facts....journalists will seek news that serves the public interest, despite obstacles...”*

Society of Professional Journalists  
Code of Ethics

While doing their job, photojournalists have to overcome many obstacles. On the scene, they often act almost instinctively on their obligation to report “without fear or favour”. They have more rights than restrictions on their activity - however - these are not qualified rights. Although photojournalists today have great freedom in their activities, they can still violate subjects’ rights, often without knowing it. If photographs are used for advertising or commercial purposes without a subject’s permission, this could violate a person’s right to privacy. Therefore it is of utmost importance for photojournalists to know the boundaries within which they work when photographing people. Those boundaries are of two kinds: the law, or what they *can* do, and the ethics of journalism, or what they *should* do.

##### 4.1 The rights of Subjects

There is a certain balance between the public’s right to know, and the individual’s right to be left alone. Thus, law applies to photojournalism by protecting members of the public against harm by false reporting or unwanted invasion of privacy.

##### 4.2 The rights of Photojournalists

As already mentioned, photojournalists have more protections than

restrictions, but just how much protection depends on the circumstances, for instance whether you photograph in a public or a private place, and whether your subject is a public official or figure, or a private citizen.

Photojournalists have the right to photograph in public places, as long as no local ordinance prohibits it and they are not interfering with the public's right of way. Therefore places like the streets, airports, public areas of schools and similar locations open to the public are also open to photojournalists - they can photograph public or private citizens there without permission.

However, any citizen in his or her own home is protected by law from intrusion. People therefore have the right to bar the press from their residences. The photojournalist may only take pictures in private places like a person's home with his/her permission.

Private places that are open to the public, for example restaurants, hospitals, or similar private locations that cater to the public fall somewhere in between the private and public guidelines. The restrictions that apply to these locations are set by law, but the photojournalist can usually photograph there with permission.

*Invasion of privacy* is unwanted intrusion on another person's life. Each person has the right to live a life in seclusion, if desired, without unwanted or undue publicity. The First Amendment and other laws protect news photographers to a large extent, but if photographs are used beyond strict news coverage, the subject's written permission is needed. (Hoy 1986: 159).

### 4.3 The Ethics of Photojournalism

*Ethics: the discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation...the principles of conduct governing and individual or a group...*

Ref.: Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, p. 225

In some news situations, the photojournalist's ethics are tested to the full. It is important that the photojournalist knows what to do when faced with them. The so-called bad-news assignments that deal with tragedy, grief, or violence are typical examples of situations where the photojournalist's ethics can be tested.

These situations cause problems for photojournalists on the scene, since photographs of such events are not welcome, and photojournalists are viewed as intruders into private moments of tragedy. In earlier days, the strict unwritten policy was that if something was news, the photojournalist was obliged to report it - regardless of personal feelings. However, the public - and photojournalistic - view of ethics has changed dramatically since then. Today the photojournalist makes an ethical decision on the spot. However, there is often no time to decide what ethics or the law has to say or even to sympathise with subjects. This leads photojournalists to intrude on the grief of subjects and to get photographs that might shock readers when they see the photos in print. On assignments like accidents and similar tragedies, photojournalists can therefore feel, and indeed be treated, as unwelcome intruders exploiting tragedy.

Many photojournalists have covered tragic scenes with tears in their eyes and have asked themselves, "Why am I here?" The responsibilities of the press and the rights of the subject often seem to conflict.

Photojournalists therefore *do* see and photograph sights that shock in their work, and it is up to editors to make the decision whether to publish such photographs - but it is important that neither should lose a strong sensitivity for the subjects who are photographed (Rothstein 1979: 232).

## 5. EQUIPMENT OF THE PHOTOJOURNALIST

The most important thing regarding his equipment in the eyes of the photojournalist, is that he wants a camera system that continues to function perfectly, frame after frame.

The equipment that I use, are the following:

- \* Nikon F4S camera
- \* Nikon F90X camera
- \* 18-35 mm Sygma lens
- \* 28-70mm Sygma lens
- \* 75-300 mm Nikon lens
- \* 400 mm Tokina lens
- \* SB-25 Nikon Speedlight

One thing that can be said of the Nikon F4 and Nikon F90X camera bodies, is that they *do* function perfectly - frame after frame. These cameras are both known for their reliability and durability throughout the world. Since both cameras have a very fast autofocus system which is of necessity to the photojournalist, they are the perfect equipment on an assignment, since there are no time to focus by hand when the action strikes. Both the Nikon F4S and F90X also have built-in lightmeters, which makes the use of an external lightmeter unnecessary.

The 18-35mm wide-angle Sygma lens is the most versatile lens that I have ever used. This lens stays on my camera almost all the time. Because the lens is so short, the shutter speed used does not have to be so high, which enables me to take photos even under low-light

circumstances. No tripod is necessary, since the short lens limits camera shake. This lens is also the perfect lens to use when photographing people and events, since you have to come very close to these persons/objects to photograph them, and therefore these photographs often reveal what other photographs would not have been able to, for example emotions on people's faces, etcetera. Thus, this lens helps the photographer to actually become a part of the events that are taking place.

Photojournalists' equipment vary a lot, since they all work under different circumstances and therefore have different camera needs. However, I think that both an autofocus body and a good wide-angle lens are absolute necessities for the photojournalist.

The SB-25 Nikon Speedlight is normally used at -1.3 or -1.7 stops than normal, which enables the photojournalist to give an exact 1-2 or 1-3 fill-in flash effect on the subject, which makes the photo look very natural. For example, when a person's face is photographed, the shadows on the face are very natural - in other words not too light or too dark, and thus no detail is lost. The hot spots in the eyes are also maintained, which makes the picture look "alive". The Nikon SB-25 Speedlight also comes in very handy when taking photos on overcast days when the light is very flat. This flash system is a big asset to the photojournalist who requires high contrast pictures with the subject on the foreground.

The kind of equipment the photojournalist will be likely to choose, will to a large extent depend on the kind of work he has to do every day. Personal taste also plays a role. However, the kind of equipment chosen is not the most important thing, in other words, it is not a necessity to have a Nikon

F4 or F90 or a Canon EOS1 system. What is important, is that the equipment is reliable and that it answers to the individual needs of the photojournalist.

## 6. CAREERS IN PHOTOJOURNALISM

Many people romanticise photojournalism. They imagine it to be an exotic lifestyle, “rubbing shoulders with the rich and famous and travelling first class around the world at someone else’s expense in search of tomorrow’s scoop” (Keene 1993: 216).

However, it is not like that.

Many photojournalists work under a lot of stress. They have to face constant deadlines, work long hours without having enough rest, and often have to put their lives at stake for the sake of a photo.

There is no formal career structure in photojournalism. The hardest part, however, is to find a career that suits you. Many photojournalists start as trainees at a local newspaper, which is an excellent learning school. The photojournalist might also consider working for a provincial news agency in a large city. These news agencies supply stories and pictures to both local and national newspapers. The disadvantages of working for a news agency is the long working hours and the pay, which might eventually be somewhat less than that on a local paper, but the advantages are that you will gain broad experience of press photography very quickly, and your work will be seen by a wide range of picture editors.

If you have followed a study field in Photography and has a good portfolio, it is up to you where to go from here on. You may want to move on to a larger paper, or consider freelancing. There is an increasing tendency for provincial newspapers to use freelances, because they need only be hired when there is work to be done, and they carry no overheads in terms of pensions, equipment, cars or sick pay. However, it would be a brave photographer who starts a career as a freelance, because it would be better to gain some knowledge, gather some experience and make a few mistakes while working for someone else.

The photojournalist might also contact public relations firms to offer his/her services. PR work frequently pays better than press photography. Most PR companies expect to see a set of contacts from a job before ordering prints. The only drawback with PR work is that it is usually a firm commitment which cannot be dropped if an important news job arises.

Some large magazines employ their own staff photographers. The photographer who wants to get a job at one of these magazines, has to knock on enough doors, show editors his portfolio, and eventually somebody will publish his pictures or offer him a job.

Many photojournalists regard it as the ultimate to work for one of the national news agencies like Associated Press, Reuters and Agence France Presse. These agencies have staff photographers based in London who are supplemented by freelances as the need arises.

There are more than enough careers for the photojournalist to choose from. The most important factor, however, to keep in mind, is to choose the



career which will suit you best, - a career which you will enjoy - since you are making a lifetime commitment when choosing a career (Kenneth 1980: 35).



## 7. THE AUTHOR'S OWN WORK

### 7.1 Going to the movies

This photograph was taken one night when I went to watch a movie. While I was waiting for the movie to start, I took some photographs of the people waiting for the movies to begin, when I noticed the couple in the picture sitting on the stairs. I liked the repetition of the posters, the steps behind the couple, the two cooldrink glasses and the two straws pointing in the same direction, as well as the two stair poles in the foreground.

When I sat down to take the photograph, I saw that the right-hand side of the picture was empty. I decided to wait for someone to walk up the stairs in order to fill this open space. I used a slow shutter speed in order to blur the movement of the people coming up the stairs. Since the couple on the stairs remained sitting still, I realised that the photograph could be sharp if I used a shutter speed of only 1/15 of a second. My camera had an 18 mm lens on, and I shot on XP2 400 ISO film.

I liked the contrast between the very relaxed couple on the left -hand side of the picture and the fast moving figures on the right-hand side. This photograph is almost divided into two worlds by the stair poles, namely a world of tranquility and a world rushing forward to nowhere.



Fig. 7.1 GOING TO THE MOVIES

TELEPHON  
LINES OFF

## 7.2 THE HANGED MAN

During a protest march in Bloemfontein, the Police tried to disperse the crowd peacefully by means of an interpreter.

At that stage, I was standing on the opposite side of the crowd when I noticed three black men climbing into a tree in order to obtain a better view. I immediately visualised the end result of the photograph, because I knew their feet were going to hang down from the tree, looking like they have been hanged. Unfortunately, only one of the men's feet hang down from the tree in such a way that the photograph could be used successfully. The person in the foreground supplied a natural frame to the picture.

I like the fact that the hand leaning against the tree and the feet hanging from the top makes the viewer wonder where the rest of the body is. The irony is that this person could just as well be hanged, but it would have gone unnoticed, since the viewer's attention is focused at the deeper centre of the photograph.



Fig. 7.2 THE HANGED MAN

### 7.3 INTIMIDATION

This photograph was taken during the Municipality workers' country-wide strike earlier this year. Only a few people were really interested in going on strike. The rest were intimidated to take part in the strike actions.

The man in the centre of the photograph was busy working when the intimidators got hold of him and made him run with a banner in front of the protest march. He had to remain in front of the crowd, because when the intimidators caught up with him, they beat him with sticks and sambucks. At a stage he fell to the ground and was kicked heavily by them. The Police had to take hold of the situation by removing this person before he was killed by the crowd.

I took a series of photographs of this person by only pointing the camera in a general direction and shooting, since the crowd was moving at such a speed that I had to shoot while I was running. It was very difficult to stay in front of the crowd and to shoot back over my shoulder towards them.



Fig. 7.3 INTIMIDATION

#### 7.4 **CROWD ON ROOF OF BUILDING**

This photograph was taking during president Mandela's election campaign in Thaba Nchu in 1994. The stadium in Thaba Nchu only offered limited space, and this caused some of the president's supporters to use any facilities available to sit or stand on, for example trees, roofs, etcetera.

I took a sequence of three photographs, and the last frame contained the correctly placed barbed wire in the left-hand side of the picture. By placing the wire out of focus, the photograph contains only the necessary elements in order to round it off nicely.

The eye contact that was obtained from the crowd on the roof makes the photograph that more personal. It is almost as if the viewer can be the president himself!





Fig. 7.4 CROWD ON ROOF OF BUILDING

### 7.5 I WILL BEAT YOU UP, BOER!

This photograph was taken during a protest march which got out of control, and the Police had to take action against the transgressors.

I knelt between two policemen and kept my eyes on the crowd. I knew that they would soon enter into conflict with the Police, since they were shouting at them and pointing sticks at them. When one of the coloured men in the photograph pointed a stick at one of the policemen, I quickly took the photograph. He was also shouting at him, and it seems that he was warning him not to come any closer, or otherwise he would be beaten up.

I liked the mood of this photograph, since it reflects something of the situations of conflict policemen have to face in South Africa on a daily basis.

Furthermore, the cudgel of the policeman in the foreground helps to lead the viewer's eye into the picture, while it also adds depth to the picture.





Fig. 7.5 I WILL BEAT YOU UP, BOER!

## 7.6 THE CLOSED GATE

This photograph was taken in Bophuthatswana. The people on the photograph are all ANC marshalls who went to listen to president Nelson Mandela during his election campaign. However, only a few selected marshalls were allowed to enter the stadium. The gate on the photograph was literally closed in their faces, and some of them got very angry because they came a long way to see the president of South Africa.

However, when the president arrived, they were so glad to see him that they forgot all their grievances and cheered .

I like all the lines in this photograph, especially the two poles in the foreground that leads the viewer's eye into the photograph and then back to the hand in the immediate foreground. The smiles on the people's faces are very catching, and when looking at this photograph, the viewer wants to share in the marshalls' joy of meeting their president eye to eye.



Fig. 7.6 THE CLOSED GATE

## 7.7 “OOMPIE”

While walking through Woolworths one Saturday morning , I noticed an old man sitting on one of the display stands waiting for his family to finish their shopping. I silently kneeled behind him and waited for the people on the left-hand side of the photograph to fill the open space, in order to round off the composition. I used a slow shutter speed to blur their movement.

In a way, the old man frames the photograph on the right-hand side, while his feet and the shop's lights leads the viewer's eye deeper into the photograph.

I used a 20mm wide angle lens and actually became a part of what was happening in front of me. I believe that it is critical to become a part of the subject to be photographed in order to reveal the true atmosphere of what is happening.



Fig. 7.7 "OOMPIE"

## 7.8 RIOT SMOKER

One day I was trapped in the middle of a crowd of protesters who protested against the low wages they earned. The MEC for Finance was addressing the crowd at that stage. I was unable to move around, and I realised that a good photographer would still be able to take a good picture, even in this trapped position. Therefore I started to look around, when I noticed a black man smoking. His profile formed very strong lines against the light from the back, while the smoke from his cigarette was enhanced by the light.

I did not have a flash with me at that stage, and was thus unable to use any fill-in flash, which contributed to the strong atmosphere of the photograph.

I used Ilford XP2 film and a 35 mm lens set at 3.5 to focus sharply on the smoking man only. The immediate foreground, as well as the background are out of focus, while even the lines on the man's face are visible.





Fig. 7.8 RIOT SMOKER

## 7.9 HANDS UP

This photograph was taken during a protest march which got out of control. The policemen started to arrest people. Everybody scattered and tried to get away. The man on the photograph tried to escape between the two riot police vehicles. Unfortunately he was pinned down and could not escape. I could not figure out whether he raised his hands out of hopelessness or as a sign that he was willing to give his co-operation to the police, but he was like a mouse in a trap.

I like the hand in the foreground with only the fingertips that are highlighted. The expression on the man's face is one of "Oh no!". It all happened in a split of a second. I had to anticipate what was coming and be ready. It worked.



## 7.9 HANDS UP

## 7.10 BLOOD BATH

This photograph was taken during yet another riot that got badly out of control, and during this riot, the blood started flowing. The man on the photograph tried to break through the Police cordon. He got hid very hard. Immediately there was even more chaos. Some of the black men pulled out their knives, and some even wanted to kill the traffic officer who hid the victim. Things got even worse, and the Police had to remove the traffic officer from the danger zone very fast.

The victim covered his cut-open head with a yellow scarf. The sun was already setting, as it was almost 5 o'clock in the afternoon. The setting sun, the yellow scarf of the man and the red blood that flew from the wound all worked together to provide the nice colour combination of the photograph.

I used a slow shutter speed of 1/15 of a second. The blurred movement together with the nice colour combination captured that which had happened perfectly.



7.10 BLOOD BATH

## 7.11 SHOTGUNS

As far as weapons in South Africa are concerned, one often hears: “If you cannot buy one, steal one. If you cannot steal one, make one yourself”. This photograph was taken in Bophuthatswana. People were walking around with rifles everywhere. Whether this was legal, remains an open question. The two persons on the photograph were asked to stand together to show the contrast between the new and the old South Africa.



## 7.11 SHOTGUNS

7.12 **PEACE FORCE**

The press was invited to De Brug just outside Bloemfontein to interview the former leader of the Peace Force. There was this one white soldier amongst the hundreds of black soldiers. I concentrated on him. He was by far better, faster and much more disciplined than the rest of the soldiers. As the photographs reveals, his cudgel is ahead of the rest.

I also like the slight blur of movement, as well as the repetition of figures in uniform that leads one's eye through the picture.





7.12 PEACE FORCE

### 7.13 THE BOSS WATCHING HIS FOLLOWERS

While the crowd on the photograph was protesting and toyi-toying, these two elderly black men were sitting on the wall drinking their frozen fruit juices. This picture is a typical scene of what is going on in the new South Africa today. Some people were toyi-toying, while the others were so used to it that they continued with their everyday life.

This photograph was taken on Ilford XP2 film with a 28 mm lens set at f3.5 to blur the two “bosses” in the foreground. The two figures in the foreground also forms a natural frame for the rest of the picture. What is also interesting, is the curious white persons in the background.



Fig. 7.13 THE BOSS WATCHING HIS FOLLOWERS

## 8. CONCLUSION

Photojournalism is all about images - images that tell a story, images that make the human heart beat like a drum, images that make one laugh and sometimes make one cry. Photojournalism brings the news to the people, thus playing a major role in every facet of society.

Photographs are one of the most effective methods of creating awareness and understanding in a troubled world. Just like the human eye is the visual master of the body, the eye of the camera is the creator of awareness and understanding to those who would otherwise not even know about things taking place around the world.

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