

CDES 206 PROJECT #2: SAME PERSON, SAME PLACE - DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS



Byron Wolfe, Spring 2005. Two views of Ben at early light.

OBJECTIVES

To more fully explore your camera controls and gain a better understanding of how they affect the look and feel of photographs. To work with a subject in an environment. To make two substantially different and compelling photographs by adjusting photographic variables. To refine color to B&W conversions. To use curve adjustment layers to craft expressive prints.

INSTRUCTIONS

One of the interesting challenges of photography is in translating the four-dimensions of space and time into the static two dimensions of a print. To be successful, you need to be aware of what's in front of the camera *and* how to control photographic elements to emphasize specific visual or conceptual elements. To practice this concept, you will make photographs of a person in an environment of your choosing while adjusting the range of photographic tools available. In other words, work with the same person in the same place, but make completely different interpretations by changing how you photograph. The basic variables that a photographer can use to make different pictures of the same subject and setting include aperture (depth of field), shutter speed (duration, motion, and time), vantage point (point of view), focal length (cropping and sense of space), focus (point of emphasis), timing, and light (time of day, mood, point of emphasis).

For this project we will emphasize either of the first two of these variables; depth of field or time. Bear in mind that the other variables are available to you to use in combination with these first two.

STUDY #1: Make two expressive photographs with significantly different *depth of field*.

Depth of field is controlled by three things: aperture, the focal length of your lens, and the distance from your subject. Explore variations in depth-of-field by changing these three variables. A full depth of field puts everything in your scene into sharp focus while a shallow depth of field helps isolate your subject against a blurred background.

OR

STUDY #2: Make two expressive photographs that explore time and motion by your use of extreme *shutter speed settings*.

Freeze your moving subject by using fast shutter speeds and use slow shutter speeds to explore blurred motion or the passage of time. Try to avoid unintentional camera jiggle by using a camera support during long shutter speeds - or consider intentionally moving the camera during exposure. **Your subject must be in motion** for this part of the assignment.

ADDITIONAL CAMERA VARIABLES TO USE

VANTAGE POINT: Move around in relation to your subject and environment - get a mouse's eye view, a bird's eye view, and everything in between. Getting close typically creates a more personal experience while backing up creates literal and figurative distance. Explore the extremes!

FOCAL LENGTH: Short focal lengths give you a wider angle of view, expand spatial relationships, and make a viewer feel more like a participant in the scene. Long focal lengths appear to magnify your subject, compress spatial relationships, and distance a viewer from the experience.

TIMING: It has been said that a good photo is all about knowing where to stand. *When* to press the shutter button is also an important factor to consider when deciding how to best capture a subject or scene.

LIGHT: Light changes minute by minute and the time of day can play an essential role in determining the thematic and compositional impact of a scene. Go with the flow as lighting conditions change; be resourceful and consider the use of light as a compositional element.

EXPOSURE: Typically, you want to make as accurate an exposure as possible, but experiment a little. Sometimes a slightly over or under-exposed image has an intangible quality that heightens visual impact. Experiment!

WORKING WITH PEOPLE

Take advantage of the fact that when you are photographing a person, you are dealing with a subject with whom you can interact. Communicate and collaborate with your subject as you take photographs. When you make a picture with potential, show it to your sitter to let them know how things are going and to give them feedback on what you want them to do. This will also help them to relax and give you an opportunity to catch a variety of spontaneous actions and expressions with your camera. Take pictures with the person looking directly at the camera, across the room, out a window, toward the floor, or off into space. Leave plenty of room for serendipity; an unplanned moment may yield the most interesting image of your photo session.

It's easy to get "tunnel vision" and only see your subject. Remember to consider not only the principle subject, but also the foreground and the background elements you include in your photographs. Take note of the visual and thematic significance of details when you are taking pictures of people. Search for camera angles and lighting solutions that allow your subject to agreeably connect with their environment.

Questions you should ask yourself are: Do you always have to hold the camera straight and still? Is the background distracting or does it contribute something to the mood? Does the background have to look pleasant? Does the person always have to be standing or sitting? What different emotions can the person express? Can you make a revealing portrait without showing their face? Should props or other elements contribute to the picture?

WHAT TO DO & DUE DATES

PROJECT ASSIGNED **the week of February 20:**

Shoot at least 60 pictures for first round of this assignment. At this initial stage, work with the same person in the same place and experiment with both shutter speed and depth of field. Dedicate approximately 1/4 of your exposures to each approach.

CONTACT CRITIQUE: **One hour after lab starts the week of February 27:**

- Make your properly named 20-up digital contact sheets and turn it in on the server.
- Select your two most promising pictures that emphasize DEPTH OF FIELD and two others that emphasize TIME & MOTION. Create and print a 4-up, 300 ppi contact sheet to share during our Contact Critique.
- After the contact critique, choose one of your most promising images and make new pictures that respond to the first. If your chosen picture uses a slow shutter speed, respond to it with a new picture that uses a fast shutter speed in an interesting and compelling way. If your chosen image uses a shallow depth of field, then respond with a picture that uses a full depth of field in an interesting way.

WORK PRINT CRITIQUE: **One hour after lab starts the week of March 5:**

- Make your properly named 20-up digital contact sheets for any new pictures and turn it in on the server.
- Make two work prints **from one of the studies** for our Work Print Critique. [Resize](#) your images with the shortest dimension set to **6 inches** and **resample image** turned to **"off"**. Use a [black and white adjustment](#) layer to convert your picture to a black and white image. Apply a single [curve adjustment layer](#) to correct contrast and tonal quality. Make your [print](#) with the image centered using the correct orientation.
- one work print must emphasize a **shallow** DEPTH OF FIELD and the other a **full** DEPTH OF FIELD
OR
- one work print must emphasize TIME & MOTION with a **fast** SHUTTER SPEED and the other a **slow** SHUTTER SPEED

FINAL CRITIQUE: **One hour after lab starts the week of March 12:**

- Make your properly named 20-up digital contact sheets for any new pictures and turn it in on the server.
- Make your two final prints for one of the two studies.
- Turn in a digital folder that contains your two image files (in Photoshop format with your adjustment layers) that you used for your final prints. Title your files with your last name followed by the assignment number, and "a" or "b", e.g. **jones2a.psd, jone2b.psd**.

NAME

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THE CRITIQUES

- Participation in the contact critique
- Participation in the print critique
- Evidence of effort and improvement after critiques

MISSING	INADEQUATE	ADEQUATE	EFFECTIVE

THE CONTACT SHEETS

- Correct file name and format (.pdf)
- Quantity of exposures
- Evidence of visual exploration
- Overall technical execution

MISSING	INADEQUATE	ADEQUATE	EFFECTIVE

Other exposures that are interesting ideas or options

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IMAGE "A"

IMAGE "B"

THE .PSD FILES

- Correct file name
- Correct file format (.psd with layers)
- Appropriate exposure (as seen in histogram)
- Effective use of BW adjustment layer
- Effective use of a curve adjustment layer
- Resized (6" in shortest dimension, resample "off")

M	I	A	E

IMAGE "A"

IMAGE "B"

THE PRINTS

- Relevance of your final subject for project
- A clear point of focus
- Use of depth of field **or** shutter speed
- Use of framing
- Use of vantage point
- An engaging and effective image

M	I	A	E

GESTALT

Effectiveness of the two when seen together

MISSING	INADEQUATE	ADEQUATE	EFFECTIVE

Final score considering the overall quantity and quality of all work

Please note: each main category is worth approximately 25% of the whole
 A score of 75% indicates that you successfully met the basic requirements for the project

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OTHER FEEDBACK

- Revise before semester's end
- Come talk to me
- Shoot more!
- Get out, explore more!
- Steady your camera / use faster shutter speeds
- Work in stronger light (outdoors, daylight)
- Don't use your flash
- Use manual focus

- Resize image with "resample off" to preserve resolution
- BW adjustments too aggressive: artifacts created
- Too many points on your curve
- Curves too wiggly
- White point problems with curve
- Black point problems with curve
- Duplicate or extra curve adjustment layers
- Unnecessary adjustment layers