A PHOTOJOURNALIST'S **FIELD GUIDE**

IN THE TRENCHES WITH COMBAT PHOTOGRAPHER STACY PEARSALL

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Peachpit Press

A Photojournalist's Field Guide: In the trenches with combat photographer Stacy Pearsall
Stacy Pearsall

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I dedicate this book to the guy who said, "You need to go back and read your manual so you know how to operate your camera properly," and the man who told me, "Your compositions aren't too bad, but your exposures are way off," and the gentleman who admitted, "You're a wonderful photographer, and I'm so proud of you." That guy, that man, and that gentleman is my husband, Andy Dunaway.

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Acknowledgments

There's a long and distinguished list of photographers—too many to mention here—who have facilitated my professional growth as a photojournalist. Those who have touched my life and career know who you are and should be aware that I greatly appreciate all you've taught me over the years.

One photographer I would like to mention by name, who just so happens to be my husband, is Andy Dunaway. He deserves a huge thank-you for putting up with my red-eye writing rages. He provided some much-needed calm and wisdom when I was on the brink of going insane from putting this book together. Thank you, darling.

Then there are the editors and production team at Peachpit who held my hand through the entire process, too: Katerina Malone, Liz Welch, Erin Heath, Valerie Haynes Perry, Mimi Heft, and the WolfsonDesign crew. I particularly want to thank my project manager Valerie Witte, who was incredibly obliging and patient when I bombarded her with one-liner questions in more than 100 emails. I'm grateful Peachpit decided to take on this project, as I believe there's so much information contained in these pages that can only benefit working photojournalists. Y'all are amazing.

Finally, I have to thank my photographer buddies and colleagues who graciously contributed their time, insights, and imagery to make this the best educational photojournalism handbook out there. Here they are in alphabetical order: Al Bello, Tom Bol, Michael Clark, Carolyn Cole, Andy Dunaway, Mirjam Evers, Enrico Fabian, Bill Frakes, Deanne Fitzmaurice, Steve Glass, Lucas Jackson, Yuri Kozyrev, Joe McNally, Win McNamee, Phil Pacheco, Eli Reed, and Bruce Strong.

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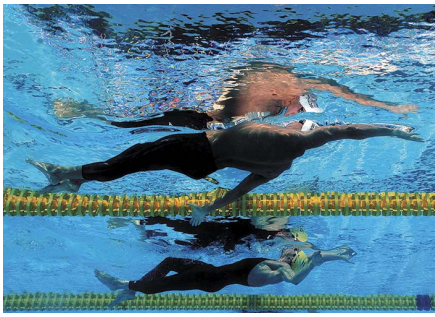

INTRODUCTION

IN THE TRENCHES

There's a lot I wasn't taught in the military or college regarding the business of photojournalism. As a young combat photographer, I had no field guide like this to help steer me through the daily minutia of the photojournalism profession, including the nonphotographic challenges. The training I received was often on the job or passed down from photographer to photographer, hands-on. I was given volumes of reading material issued to all Air Force photographers that had little to do with my specialty job as a combat photographer, so the only time I ever read it was when promotion time rolled around and I was required to. To be honest, I gained more insight through shadowing other, more experienced military photojournalists and simple trial and error in shooting.

This is an image taken of me during a combat patrol in Kahlis, Iraq. (Photo by Andy Dunaway)

Lens (mm): 55, ISO: 200, Aperture: 4, Shutter: 1/180, Program: Aperture Priority

Speaking from Experience

It's logical to question how someone like me, relatively young, has enough knowledge to sit down and write a book about photojournalism. Well, I guess the answer is I got an early start and haven't stopped since. Plus I've been lucky enough to gain worldly experience in a relatively short period of time. I've compiled all I've learned and experienced on domestic and international assignments and have translated these experiences into the valuable information found on these pages.

Starting somewhere

When I was 17, I never imagined where I'd be today. I was naive, energetic, and optimistic about my future. I lacked the talent of numbers and science, but I excelled at the arts. I studied my options and even looked at several art schools before deciding on the military as my career, which came as no surprise to my family because the majority of them served in one branch of service or another.

I enlisted in the U.S. Air Force as a basic still photographer. I went to basic training, also known as boot camp, and then to the Defense Information School (DINFOS). The brief photography course taught me how to process film of all types, black and white, C-41 and E-6. I learned to read light using a handheld meter and make a manual exposure with my Nikon camera. After studying the basics of camera operations, I learned the concepts of composition, content, and storytelling. The classes lasted 6 months, including a brief course on how to process U-2 reconnaissance aircraft large-format camera film. I loved the photography classes, but the film processing... not so much.

As luck would have it, the Air Force sent me to the Joint Intelligence Center to process thousands of feet of infrared spy plane film. As if that torture weren't enough, I had a follow-up assignment at the Joint Analysis Center for more darkroom shenanigans. Needless to say, I spent 4 years tucked away in a vault, within a vault, within another vault. For me, it was prison.

I knew I had to get out of the darkroom, so I plotted and planned my escape. During my research and scheming, I came upon one of the best-kept secrets in the Department of Defense: Combat Camera. I had not touched a camera outside of my own personal projects — that wasn't part of my official duty description. I scrounged together some pictures that resembled a portfolio and submitted them along with my military evaluation reports and full-length photo of me in uniform.

Becoming a Combat Cameraman

The Combat Camera unit was primarily made up of very talented male photographers with years of experience. There were a few ladies among the ranks, which gave me

hope that I too could be a combat photographer, but the biggest problem was that someone in the unit had to leave for a position to come available—they were coveted.

At the time, I was 21 with moderately acceptable quality images and no technical background at all. The odds were stacked against me, or so I thought. However, after the tragic events of September 11th, I received word that I had been accepted into the premier Combat Camera unit. Weeks later, as I was prepared to move from England to Charleston, S.C., I watched troops make their way into Afghanistan.

My first few months at "COMCAM" were the most challenging, both personally and technically. I learned how to ingest digital files from the camera and transmit them via satellite all over the world, how to take images from the open ramp of a C-17 Globemaster cargo aircraft at 14,000 feet; how to fire a weapon on a moving target; how to tactically drive armored vehicles; and how to navigate terrain using only a topographical map and a compass. I felt the pressure to perform without error, because I had the critical eyes of my peers watching me closely—ever ready for me to make a mistake. Whether that was reality or perhaps my perception of reality, it drove me to work harder and harder.

By the time I was considered combat ready, I was aerial qualified and had attended ground survival and evasion courses, prisoner-of-war training, water survival school, and close-quarters combat training. I was hammered with photography training and techniques, as well as workflow and image transmission using satellites. I was certified on multiple weapons and knew just about everything there was to know about war, without the real war experience.

Before going off to document the real combat, I was sent to South America and Southeast Asia to gain hands-on working experience. I also ran re-supply missions to the combat zone with a senior photographer. I was tested and grilled on every aspect of combat photojournalism. Basically, I had to prove that I could not only take pictures but also perform under fire when it really mattered.

Trial by fire

My first combat deployment was Iraq in 2003 followed by a series of assignments, which included the Horn of Africa, Lebanon, Yemen, and a couple more trips to Iraq. I spent 280 days a year away from home covering Special Forces operations and humanitarian relief missions. It was a far cry from my think-less and thankless days in the darkroom processing film. My primary goal was getting real-time combat imagery from the battlefield to the Joint Combat Camera Center in Washington, DC. The President, Secretary of Defense, and Joint Chiefs of Staff used my pictures to make informed decisions on military tactics and maneuvers in the battle space.

The photos I took on assignment were disseminated to news agencies such as the Associated Press and Getty Images and were picked up by several newspapers, magazines, and online news-gathering sites. All of the images I took while in

the military are considered public domain, so you, the taxpayer, own them. As a general rule, combat photographers adhered to the National Press Photographers Association's (NPPA) rules, guidelines regarding the photojournalism's code of ethics. I did my best to remain unbiased and document what unfolded in front of me without judgment or prejudice. Even though I wore a uniform, I strove to stay objective.

Getting good

As I gained more experience and grew more confident in combat, my outlook of photography began to grow and change. I was taking more risks and pushing myself photographically. During my basic courses, I was taught just that: the basics. I began to realize there was much more to understand in order to truly capture artful, colorful, and memorable pictures. After losing several friends in combat, I also realized that there was more to my pictures than just news worthiness. In many cases, I was the last person to take their pictures. That was pretty heavy stuff.

Once I grasped that concept, my vision as a photographer changed immensely. From the age of 21 to the age of 27, I captured more than 500,000 images from over 41 different countries. I was considered the best photographer in the military and was the first woman to have won the Military Photographer of the Year twice. I was giving the boys a run for their money. I was awarded one of the military's highest honors, the Bronze Star, for saving the life of several soldiers during an enemy ambush in Iraq.

A life-changing experience

After being hit by two roadside bombs and further injuring my neck saving a severely wounded soldier during an ambush, my combat photography career came to an end. My life had changed in an instant. I spent about 18 months recovering from my wounds, during which time I could barely lift a camera, let alone take a picture. It was determined I could no longer wear the 80+ pounds of body armor and tactical gear, which meant that I could no longer deploy to the combat zone. The Air Force retired me from service in August 2008; I was only 28 years old.

Simply because I was disabled did not mean I was unable. I didn't give up. I figured if I could survive 6 straight years of combat, I could survive this transition in my life. I brought my skills as a seasoned combat photographer to my photography assignments stateside. Specializing in the armed forces, I began to shoot commercial and editorial assignments related to law enforcement, emergency rescue, military, and other government agencies.

Because I trained apprentice military photographers during my time in service, it made sense that I'd continue to teach and prepare other photojournalists, both civilian and military, for similar assignment work. After all, my combat photography career was forged, molded, and guided by some of the best photojournalists and educators in this industry. All they asked is that I pass on the knowledge I've gained

as freely as I got it, and that's why I've tackled this book. Their influence has made an impression on me, and now I'd like to pay it forward by touching many more. Through my efforts as a volunteer mentor for the National Press Photographers Association, the Eddie Adams Workshop, and my own education facility, the Charleston Center for Photography, and now this book, I'm sure to.

Chapter Overview

To give you a clear idea of what to expect as you read the book, I wanted to break down each chapter a bit and explain what you'll be learning as you go. Think of the descriptive titles as image captions; they're the bare bones of each chapter's subject matter. There's a lot of information on each topic, so be sure to crack open each one and read it for the details.

1. Understanding Your Role

I've placed this up front, because it outlines photojournalists' day-to-day responsibilities and discusses the challenges you might encounter while on assignment. I present occupational vulnerabilities such as the fine line between fostering professional relationships with story subjects and developing full-fledged friendships, discussing the pros and cons of both scenarios and their impact on the storyline and you as an individual. Along with getting emotionally close to the story, I talk about when and how the story affects you—when you go from covering the story to becoming the story.

Because being a photojournalist requires physical and mental stability, I provide insights on keeping your body in shape through detailed exercises that will help build, strengthen, and maintain your body as you cover your assignments. I offer tips on how to identify and reduce stress in your personal and professional life, so you aren't overwhelmed when you're under pressure. Your home life directly impacts your professional life, so I give suggestions on how to maintain your personal household tasks so you can focus on your professional responsibilities.

2. Preparation: Everything but the Camera

Over the span of your career, it's likely you'll find yourself in risky situations, so I dedicated a to preparing for the unexpected. I've included information about specialized training for high-risk environment assignments such as first aid classes, hostage survival courses, and personal security training. And because some assignments are abroad, I discuss how to prepare for traveling overseas, from securing travel documents to receiving medical inoculations.

There's no telling where in the world you'll end up, or what challenges you'll face when you get there. I give tips such as how to wash your clothes in a plastic bag and shower with a string and water bottle. I provide a detailed list of personal hygiene items that travel well, from bar shampoo to travel towels. Whether you're covering a devastating natural disaster, famine, or war, these items will get you through your assignment.

But this isn't restricted only to photographers who intend to cover overseas stories. The insights highlighted here can be applied to domestic assignments as well. I've dedicated an entire section to noncamera equipment essentials I feel are important tools for every photojournalist, with explanations of why I bring each item and how I use it in the field. I even discuss body armor made specifically for women with tailored plates for women's body shapes and how to pick armor that's right for you—regardless of gender. Along with tangible items that are occupational essentials, I discuss the unseen necessities, such as insurance.

3. Gear Essentials

Sure, every photographer needs a camera, but there's more to our equipment than just a camera body and lens. In this chapter, I recommend my must-have lenses, explaining the perks of each and why I use them; camera and lens accessories that help keep precious gear safe; and lighting equipment that can enhance assignment work. I include images of the gear I use, along with explanations as to why I choose to use it, as well as several behind-the-scenes images from some of my past shoots that show the gear in use. Outside of the apparent camera kit equipment, I talk about the less obvious items such as rain gear to super clamps, showing you how to make use of them in the field.

I teach you how to develop an assignment gear list based on shooting requirements and how to properly invoice and pack your equipment for transport. I also provide a breakdown of my digital workflow, which covers the software I use and my process of downloading, file naming, captioning, transmitting, and archiving images. You'll learn all about the gear you need, but also how to inventory, maintain, store, and transport that gear.

4. My Shooting Methodology

In this chapter, I share my personal approach to the technical side of photography. Early on in my on-the-job training, I developed an acronym to help remind me of the steps I need to take to make solid exposures every time. I cover this system from start to finish, including images that illustrate the process. My system will keep you from making unnecessary technical errors while on assignment when the environmental pressures are bearing down.

I'm a firm believer that it takes both light and shadows to create a dynamic image; the combination of the two gives the picture dimension and feeling. I explore the best ways to exploit the available light and how to consciously make that light articulate certain messages. Then I fold in color theory, and I discuss how each color has a particular connotation and can be used to help the viewer infer the picture's true meaning.

I close with an important method of shooting I applied while documenting combat: the 10-Frame Methodology. Using this approach, I show you how to slow down and become more aware of your surroundings, to patiently survey a scene for the best subject or point of view, and to take the time you need to capture the right moments.

5. Covering All the Angles

Surviving in this career requires talent, drive, and foresight. In this chapter, I talk about what it takes to succeed as a photojournalist today. I include information on supplementing your income, internships, mentorships, personal projects, and continued education. Because our community is relatively small, I discuss the importance of building and maintaining professional relationships and teaming up with other photographers on special projects.

Photojournalism covers a wide variety of topics, from sports to war. That's why I discuss the idea of specializing in one of the many niches our profession offers, and then enhancing your final products within that area with video and multimedia components. I also offer tips on how to identify which style of documentation you like to shoot and how to make your product marketable. Many of my friends and colleagues who focus within certain genres have been gracious enough to contribute their insights into these fields, offer helpful tips, and share some images, too.

6. Putting It All Together

Creating a solid photo story is a large part of what we do. In this chapter, I talk about several story approaches, their advantages and disadvantages, and when and why you'd use them for different sorts of story subjects. Each approach has a visual example that corresponds with the text as well. Of course, you'll spend a great deal of time on visual variety and capturing the most compelling story possible—even if you've only got a couple hours to complete the assignment. Along with print-style photo stories, I dive into the world of multimedia.

Given that subject familiarity is important no matter which documentation style you choose, I provide interview suggestions to help you develop an appreciation of your story's subject and determine how to best tell the narrative. From there, I outline the audio and video gear I use when capturing multimedia stories and

describe how I approach the assignment, discussing the similarities to standard still photography documentation while paying particular attention to the unique aspects of audio and video recording.

7. Staying Above Board

What can I say; ethics plays a huge part in how we function as professionals. And whether we truly understand how these ethical guidelines may be applied in practical terms while on shooting assignments is a complicated matter. That's why I decided to share my most personal experiences regarding ethics in order to help you better understand the less cut-and-dried aspects of ethical behavior while documenting stories. Up until now, I haven't shared my individual ethical dilemmas with anyone other than my husband and those who were present at the events described. However, I feel these experiences are worth sharing and debating so you're aware that you're not alone when you have tough decisions to make.

Within our community, we have unwritten laws that govern how we should conduct ourselves, but there are also bona fide laws that outline *our* rights as journalists. I include a section dedicated to outlining our freedoms as news documentarians and journalists both domestically and internationally.

8. Staying Afloat

The days of getting a camera kit and company car from your newspaper are numbered. Hell, staff positions are rare. Most photojournalists today work on a freelance basis, which means you're the secretary, bookkeeper, marketer, negotiator, producer, and photographer. What's more, you have to be an entrepreneur, someone who can recognize a gap within the market and offer a product that fulfills that need. You've got to be motivated enough to learn new technology and embrace change to stay ahead of the industry and be diverse enough in your talents to stay competitive.

Because most artists aren't necessarily business minded, I've spelled out how to create a business plan of operation. This helps establish how much you have to earn in order to stay afloat financially. I include tips on how to negotiate pricing with customers and how to circumnavigate the "I don't have a budget" discussion with your clients. At the end of the day, you've got to get paid, so it's important to know what your talents are worth.

Let's Get Started

My objective with this book is to translate all I've learned through these experiences so that you can spend more time on what really matters—storytelling. Everything I write about in this book is based on my personal experiences, failures, and achievements. What you take away from it is up to you. Just know that my way isn't the only way, and you can modify anything I teach you to fit your own personal preference. Now let's get to it.


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CHAPTER 4

MY SHOOTING METHODOLOGY

There's an old cliché that practice makes perfect, and as much as I despise adages, it's especially true in photojournalism. Perhaps practice doesn't always lead to perfection, but if you practice enough it becomes routine. For instance, as you prepare to take a picture, you have many decisions to make before releasing the shutter—such as lens selection, ISO, f-stop, shutter speed, and white balance. Each photographic scenario is different, which means you must adjust your settings to accommodate for the bright sun or perhaps a lightless room. As you practice more and more, this repetition helps permanently store the data so that when you need the information to be recalled on the fly, it's nearly instantaneous. Eventually you'll be able to walk into a situation and know—or at least be close to knowing—what your exposure needs to be. Approximations are not dead on, which is why I'm reluctant to shout the aforementioned cliché from the rooftops. But I'll take a close estimate over an uneducated guess any day.

A U.S. soldier returns fire on the enemy from a rooftop in Buhriz, Iraq.

Lens (mm): 55, ISO: 200, Aperture: 8, Shutter: 1/350, Program: Aperture Priority

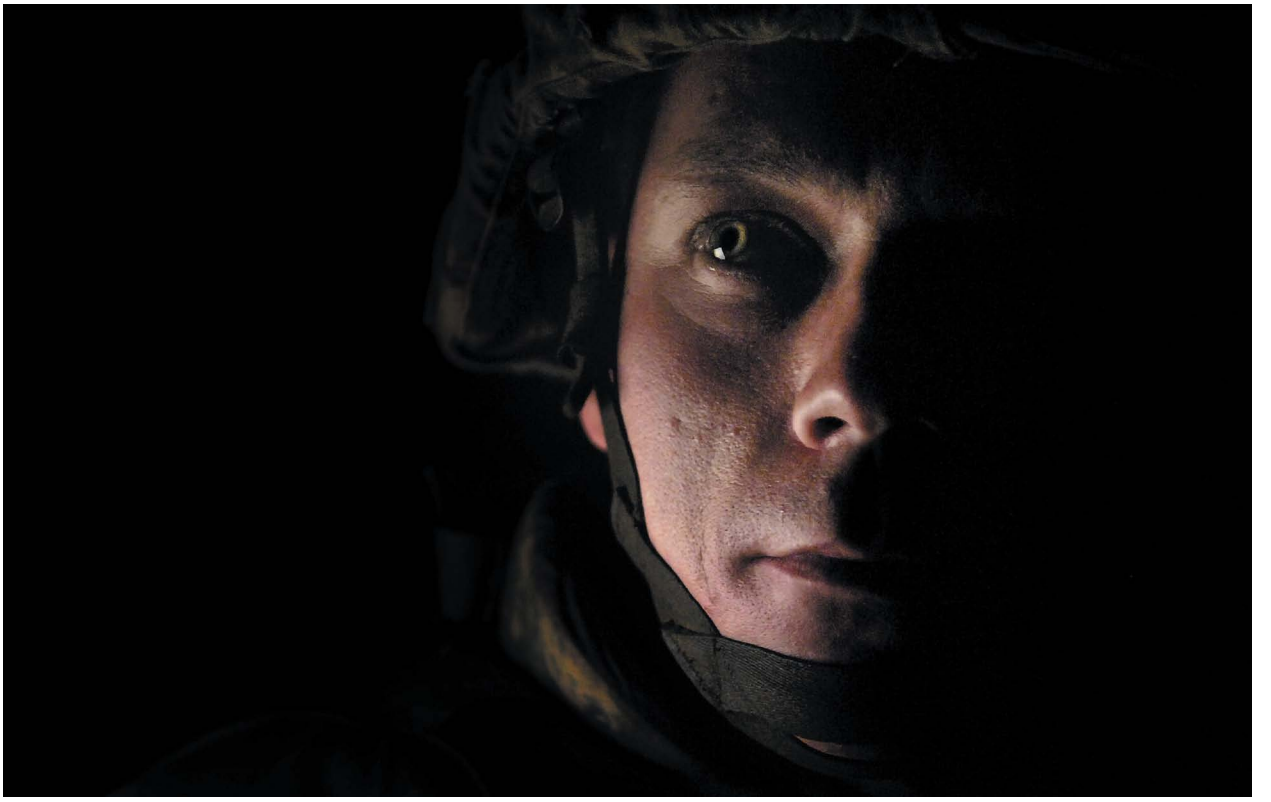


FIGURE 4.1 U.S. Army Private 1st Class Daniel Williams sits inside an M2A2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle while convoying to Buhriz, Iraq, at approximately 4:45 in the morning.

Lens (mm): 55, ISO: 3200, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/13, Program: Manual

What IFS

Over the course of my career, I developed a shooting method I refer to as my "What IFS," which stands for ISO, f-stop, and shutter speed. When making an exposure, I start with my ISO, and then I choose my depth of field, and finally, my shutter speed. There's no rule that says you must approach exposures any particular way, and I'm not suggesting my way is the only line of attack, but it's what works best for me. Whether or not you choose to adopt my process, you'll find that having a routine exposure method is helpful.

Consistent exposures make assignments go so much easier and far less stressful. As a photojournalist, you'll be required to operate under strenuous, often harsh, conditions. Reducing unnecessary stressors such as exposure will help free up energy better spent elsewhere (**Figure 4.1**).

Step 1

Each scenario will pose a new challenge. It's up to you to determine what your ISO setting should be, based on the available light. The darker the scene, the higher number ISO is required, and the brighter the scene, the lower the ISO. You should check ISO first because you want to set the foundation for the rest of your exposure by getting the most from your camera. If you're in a very low-light situation and shoot on ISO 200, you're not doing yourself any favors. You'll be forced to slow down your shutter speed and risk getting blurry shots. You don't want that. However, the trade-off is that a higher ISO may cause pixilation in your image. I'd rather have a pixilated, sharp image than a soft, unusable one (**Figures 4.2** and **4.3**).

Step 2

The reason I consider f-stop, or aperture, the second item on my list is due to its impact on my ability to take in more light, but also the crucial influence it has on depth of field. If you want less depth of field, then shoot for a smaller f-stop number like f/1.4 or f/2.8. If you want more depth, increase your f-stop accordingly. As you increase f-stop, however, you'll simultaneously be decreasing your shutter speed. When your shutter speed slows, you open yourself to capturing motion in your frame, whether it's your subject moving or you. In extreme cases, the motion blur can render your subject out of focus and therefore become an unpleasant, if not altogether useless, picture. So just keep that in mind that it's a trade-off. Also, shooting with wider lenses can increase your depth of field without forfeiting shutter speed. Last, and perhaps the most important consideration, a higher f-stop will show things like dust spots, sand, hair, and dirt on your images.

FIGURE 4.2 Air Force Technical Sergeant John Mizelle walks to the rescue helicopter an hour outside of Pyongtaek City, Korea, during a pararescuemen exercise.

Lens (mm): 17, ISO: 800, Aperture: 16, Shutter: 1/500, Program: Manual

FIGURE 4.3 Example of dust spots at maximum depth of field.

Step 3

After you determine ISO and f-stop, you can set your shutter speed to make a proper exposure. I recommend that you meter for the highlights using Center or Spot Metering to figure out the most accurate setting. This approach will also ensure you have detail in your highlights. When you shoot with longer lenses, you may also want

FIGURE 4.4 A U.S. Army soldier rests after conducting a foot patrol in Buhriz, Iraq.

Lens (mm): 45, ISO: 800, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/80, Program: Manual

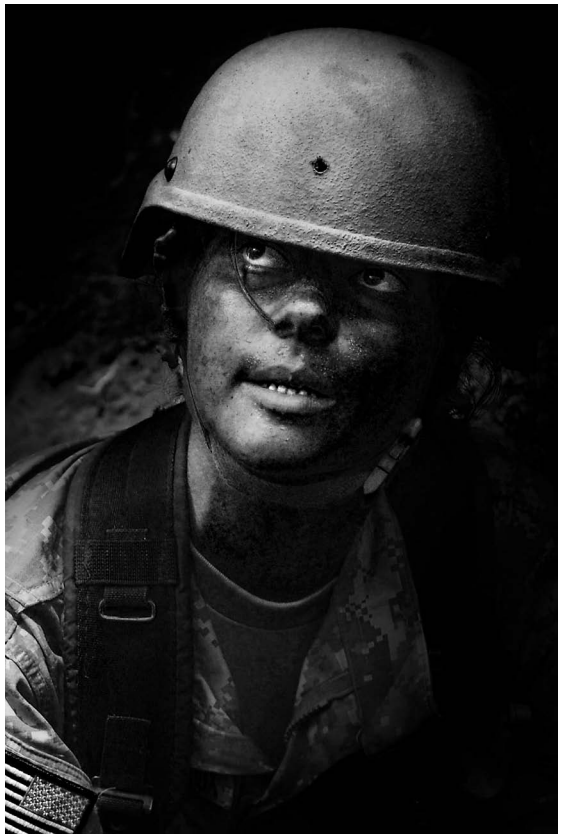


FIGURE 4.5 During night field operations, a U.S. Army soldier stays low in her foxhole at Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

Lens (mm): 255, ISO: 200, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/500, Program: Aperture Priority

to be sure you have your shutter speed faster than the length of your lens. Nowadays, longer lenses have built-in Vibration Reduction (VR), which allows you to shoot a bit slower. But if you don't have that technology, don't chance it (**Figures 4.4** and **4.5**).

There are exceptions to the precedence of order. When shooting action, panning, or even showing the motion of the rotor blades on a helicopter, you'll want to set your shutter speed first and equate your exposure with your f-stop. Whether f-stop or shutter speed comes before the other, ISO always comes first in my routine.

Multiframe burst

When you slow down your shutter speed, you increase the risk of picking up any motion. Try to eliminate motion within the camera by using these techniques. Set your camera to take multiframe bursts, slow your breaths, and when possible, anchor your body against something firm such

Insights: Lenses Exposed

Greater depth of field is an inherent trait of shorter focal length and wide-angle lenses. These lenses provide better depth of field than telephoto lenses because wide-angle lenses have a greater rear depth of field and can more easily attain critical sharpness at infinity. Because I was mainly photographing close quarters combat inside houses and aerial combat operations inside helicopters, I often used shorter focal length lenses. When I shot DX format cameras, I primarily used the 17-55mm lens on assignments. DX cameras have a sensor that's about 1.6 times smaller than the standard 35mm full frame (FX) sensor cameras. Now I shoot FX cameras, so I've switched to the 24-70mm lens. These wider lenses allow me to photograph my subjects in the tight spaces; I achieved decent depth of field at wide-open apertures such as f/2.8 and had faster shutter speeds at lower ISO settings. However, there were situations and assignments that called for longer glass.

To save time, I would have one camera body with a normal or wide-angle lens and another camera with a longer lens. By having two dedicated setups, I could switch back and forth without having to stop and change lenses, and I also reduced the amount of sand and debris that got on my cameras' sensors and on my lens's glass.

When I used longer telephoto lenses in close proximity with my subjects, I would run into focus problems because of lens-to-subject distance. The threat of motion blur was ever present. The telephoto lenses often needed more light while inside dark aircraft and house interiors, which meant I had to slow my shutter speed down to compensate, thus resulting in movement from my lens being transferred to my pictures.

Think of your telephoto lens as a boat cruising over small waves. The tip of your lens is the bow of the boat moving up and down as you breathe. You may not notice the movement, but it's happening. Here's a tip when using telephoto lenses in any situation: the shutter speed should be the reciprocal of the lens's focal length rounded off to the next higher shutter speed. Here's an example: a 50mm lens needs a shutter speed of 1/50 of a second or faster: rounded up, it would be 1/60 of a second.

as a wall or a tree. Be sure to tuck in your elbows, too. By having arm-to-body contact, you increase your stabilization. Your lens stabilization and focus hand should be under your lens, not over the top. This gives your lens and camera a more stable platform, decreases camera shake, and reduces the risk of dropping your camera because of sweaty or greasy hands.

Transference

If you happen to be shooting from an aircraft such as a helicopter or fixed-wing plane, the vibration may cause blur. Try not to let your body touch the aircraft's frame. This will reduce the amount of shutter speed of vibration that passes through your body and transfers to your camera.

In motion

When you're photographing helicopters or aircraft with propellers, it's imperative that you show movement in the blades. If not, it will appear as though they'll drop from the sky at any minute.

Shutter speed is the primary control for motion. A faster shutter speed is selected when attempting to freeze or stop a moving object. Let's say a moving car requires a shutter speed of 1/1000 of a second to stop action; well, a person running on foot may only need a shutter speed of 1/500 to stop

FIGURE 4.6 A Marine Corps CH-53 helicopter flies a routine patrol off the coast of Djibouti, Africa.

Lens (mm): 80, ISO: 200, Aperture: 25, Shutter: 1/200, Program: Manual

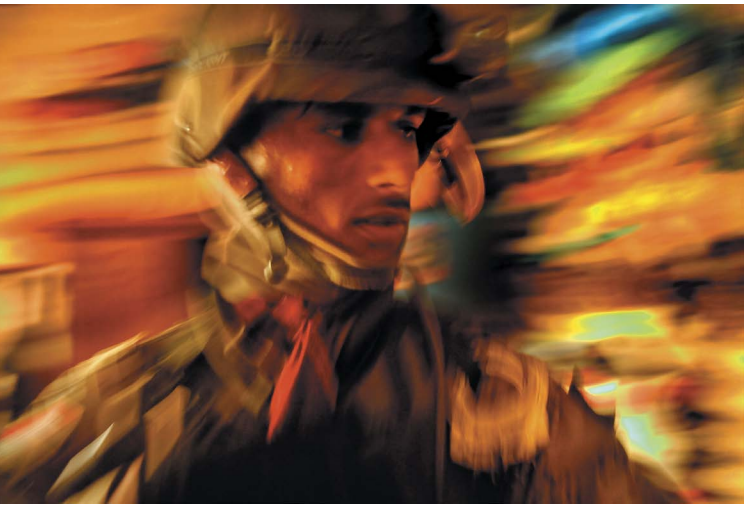


FIGURE 4.7 A soldier of the Iraqi Army clears a civilian's house during combat operations in Tahrir, Iraq.

Lens (mm): 20, ISO: 800, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/8, Program: Aperture Priority

the movement. How fast you set your shutter speed will depend on how fast the subject is moving. Shutter speed can also be used to show an object's motion by causing it to be blurry (sometimes referred to as motion blur). Select your shutter speed based on how fast your subject is moving and how you want to render it (**Figure 4.6**).

If the subject is stationary, nearly any speed is fine. If the subject is moving, you have creative options. You may choose to freeze motion so that your subject is stopped and appears clear and sharp. A fast shutter speed will do this: 1/250, 1/500, and higher. You may choose to blur the subject so it appears as a soft, undefined streak across the frame. A slow shutter speed will do this: 1/20, 1/15, or lower.

In the case of **Figure 4.7**, I wanted to demonstrate how quickly Iraqi soldiers moved through houses looking for enemy fighters. I knew that if I simply stopped the action, it would not convey the same movement than if I panned. By slowing down my shutter speed and moving with my subject, I gave him the appearance of forward momentum. The panning also gave me the bonus of blurring the distracting background. Now all of the attention is right where I want the viewer to look—at the soldier.

On assignments, you have to contend with camera motion and subject motion all the time. By virtue of our own heartbeats and breathing, hand-holding a camera will cause movement and could result in a blurry picture. You must then be mindful to use a shutter speed fast enough to prevent camera shake from ruining your picture. The general rule we're taught in basic photography school is to shoot at 1/60 or faster. In my opinion, that's not nearly fast enough.

FIGURE 4.8 An Iraqi soldier makes a flying leap at a secured door while searching for enemy fighters during a cordon and search for insurgence and weapons caches in Chubinait, Iraq.

Lens (mm): 17, ISO: 400, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/1000, Program: Aperture Priority

In **Figure 4.8**, you can see that I've caught the soldier in midair as he attempted to breech the door. Unfortunately, his efforts did not yield any results, and he fell on his butt. After conducting my fair share of cordon and searches running from house to house, I learned that I needed to have my shutter speed as fast as the available light would allow. Like the soldier, I had many failed attempts at catching shots like this because my shutter speed wasn't fast enough. I was running, breathing hard, and my subject was moving, so my results were consistently soft. I began to increase my ISO slightly, so I could obtain a faster shutter speed. I didn't sacrifice the quality of the image with too high an ISO—just enough to give me an edge.

FIGURE 4.9 A soldier from the Multi-Iraqi Transitional Team runs through the yard of a civilian's house during a battle with al-Qaeda and Ansar al-Sunna forces during Operation Orange Justice in Buhriz, Iraq, in February 2007.

Lens (mm): 17, ISO: 400, Aperture: 5.6, Shutter: 1/2500, Program: Aperture Priority

Shutter speed is one of three major exposure components of IFS, and when it is adjusted to capture stop action or show motion blur, it can directly affect the exposure balance. In **Figure 4.9**, the glare of the desert sun bounced off the tan facades and sandy ground, making the entire scene extremely bright. I had the choice of compensating for the sun by increasing my shutter speed or f-stop number, and I'm not a big fan of shooting with smaller apertures. In this situation, I chose to increase my shutter speed and stop the action. If I wanted to achieve motion blur without adding more depth of field in this scenario, I could have used a neutral density filter; however, that was not the look I wanted to accomplish. Instead, I chose to stick with a higher shutter speed and let my aperture stay open.

FIGURE 4.10 A U.S. soldier smokes a cigarette as he prepares for a four-day operation in New Baqubah, Iraq.

Lens (mm): 55, ISO: 100, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/1000, Program: Manual

Finding Your Mode

Most professional cameras offer several exposure modes, often leading to confusion as to what mode to use and when to use it. I'm going to limit this section to my favorite three modes.

(M) or Manual

The Manual mode allows the photographer to select his or her own ISO, aperture, and shutter speed settings with the assistance of the camera's meter. If you follow the camera's recommended settings, this will render an average exposure; however, this mode allows you to vary from the metered settings to change the exposure and thus the tonality (lightness or darkness) of a subject.

I choose to shoot on Manual mode when I'm in a tricky light situation. Take **Figure 4.10**, for instance. The light is falling on the short side of my subject's face, which makes targeting it with my camera's meter more of a challenge. By switching to Spot Meter on Manual mode, I can achieve a more precise highlight exposure right from the start. I won't have to fuss with Exposure Compensation and miss the moment. (See the sidebar "Insights: Overriding Your Technology" for an explanation of this feature.)

FIGURE 4.11 Soldiers from the U.S. Army pop green smoke to indicate their location during a joint operation with the Iraqi police in Baqubah, Iraq.

Lens (mm): 55, ISO: 160, Aperture: 5.6, Shutter: 1/750, Exp. Comp.: -0.3, Program: Aperture Priority

(A or AV) or Aperture Priority

Aperture Priority is a semiautomatic mode that allows the photographer to set a desired aperture. The camera will select an appropriate shutter speed to render an average exposure. Aperture is expressed in "f" numbers, such as f/11, f/2.8, or f/4.

Aperture Priority is one of my go-to shooting modes, especially for fast-paced assignments that go from indoors to outdoors. All I have to concern myself with is my ISO, because I prefer to shoot on f/2.8 and the camera determines the shutter speed. This mode gives me the freedom to concentrate on the action versus manual exposure. Plus, I can use the Exposure Compensation to make the exposure exactly as I want it if I don't quite agree with the camera's decision (**Figure 4.11**).

(S or TV) or Shutter Priority

Shutter Priority is also a semiautomatic mode in which the photographer selects a desired shutter speed and the camera sets the proper aperture, again rendering an average exposure.

As a former aerial combat photographer, a great deal of my time was spent in the air. I've photographed all types of aircraft in the U.S. Air Force, Navy, Army, and Marine Corps arsenal. Shutter Priority was definitely a handy tool for assignments involving propellers. For those who aren't familiar with planes and helicopters, propellers (or props) are the blades that spin and give aircraft momentum and helicopters lift. You want to see the motion of the props to give the sensation that the helicopter or plane is in flight. To do this, set your camera to Shutter Priority mode and use a slower shutter speed to catch the rotation. Let the camera determine the necessary f-stop to make a decent exposure without missing the moment (**Figure 4.12**).

FIGURE 4.12 A Marine CH-53E helicopter blows sand and rocks as it takes off in Harar, Ethiopia.

Lens (mm): 35, ISO: 125, Aperture: 14, Shutter: 1/125, Program: Shutter Priority

Insights: Spot Metering

Spot metering is very accurate and is not influenced by other areas in the frame. It is commonly used to shoot very high contrast scenes. For example, if the subject's back is being hit by the rising sun and the face is a lot darker than the bright halo around the subject's back and hairline (the subject is "backlit"), spot metering allows the photographer to measure the light bouncing off the subject's face and expose properly for that, instead of the much brighter light around the hairline. The area around the back and hairline will then become overexposed (**Figure 4.13**).

Figure 4.13 A U.S. Army trainee listens to a brief during the Buddy Movement Course at Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

Lens (mm): 170, ISO: 200, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/1600, Program: Manual

Metering Matters

Metering matters. I prefer to use Center Weighed Metering, a mode in which the meter concentrates between 60 to 80 percent of the sensitivity toward the central part of the viewfinder. The balance is then "feathered" out toward the edges. One advantage of this method is that it is less influenced by small areas that vary greatly in brightness at the edges of the viewfinder. In this mode, you can achieve more consistent results, as opposed to more blanket coverage metering that often results in flat exposures.

I also like to use the Spot Metering mode. With this mode, the camera will only measure a small area of the scene (between 1 and 5 percent of the viewfinder area). This will typically be the very center of the scene, but some cameras allow the user to select an off-center spot or to recompose by moving the camera after metering.

As a rule of thumb, you should aim to expose for the highlights and print for the shadows. Once the details in the whites are gone, you can't put that information back. If you attempt to burn down your highlights in post-processing, the results often turn out gray and muddy. However, if there is detail in the blacks, you can recover information using image-editing software such as Adobe Lightroom or Photoshop. It is important to remember that your camera's meter is only capable of recommending an aperture and shutter speed it thinks is appropriate. It is usually pretty accurate, but it is sometimes very wrong. Any scene that has a predominance of very bright or white subjects fools the meter into underexposure. You can correct this by increasing the exposure from the meter's recommendation—that is, open the aperture, or slow down the shutter, or some combination of the two.

FIGURE 4.14 A Humvee drives through a sandstorm in Iraq. (Photo by Andy Dunaway)

Lens (mm): 70, ISO: 100, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/3200, Program: Aperture Priority

Figure 4.14 was taken during a sandstorm in the desert, which can be a tricky metering situation. There's no apparent white highlight to speak of and no true black. In cases like this, meter for the brightest part and expose for it. You still want to maintain detail, even in the lightest parts. Without the detail, you lose the color and texture of the sand overall. In situations like these, you have to know what look you're going for and what mood you want to convey to the viewer, strategize, and then expose.

Figure 4.15 A U.S. Army soldier smokes a cigarette after engaging the enemy in a street battle during a foot patrol in Buhriz, Iraq.

Lens (mm): 20, ISO: 800, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/20, Program: Aperture Priority

Had I let the camera have its way with the exposure of **Figure 4.15**, it would have resulted in a flat mess with the highlights blown out—not to mention you wouldn't see the smoke. Instead, I exposed for the narrow sliver of light coming through a nearby door and falling on the subject. This guaranteed the room would remain black, as I saw it, and he'd be rimmed with light. Considering the fact that the soldier just survived an intense gun battle with the enemy, I thought the mood of the light fitting.

Insights: Avoiding Overexposure

Any scene containing a lot of very dark colors or blacks will fool the meter into overexposure. To fix this, you must decrease exposure from that recommended by the camera. Again, if you meter a black room, the camera will try to make it medium—hence a gray, flat image. If you want that object to look black, you must "close down," or decrease, your exposure.

Light Matters

Simply taking a properly exposed picture is only part of the equation. That's not to say you can't go around taking pictures all day long. However, you must be able to translate the story through that exposure as well. You have to be able to convey emotion by use of light, body language, angle of view, and so on (**Figure 4.16**).

My manual from the Department of Defense's Basic Still Photography Course suggested I take pictures with the sun to my back and, when in doubt, just set my camera to f/8 and shoot. Many of the guys called it the "f/8 and be there" setting. Sure, they were good go-to settings, but I wasn't creating meaningful pictures—I was just letting these rules dictate the look of my photography, not to mention the quality. One day I said to hell with all of the rules. My new mantra was, "Know the rules to break the rules."

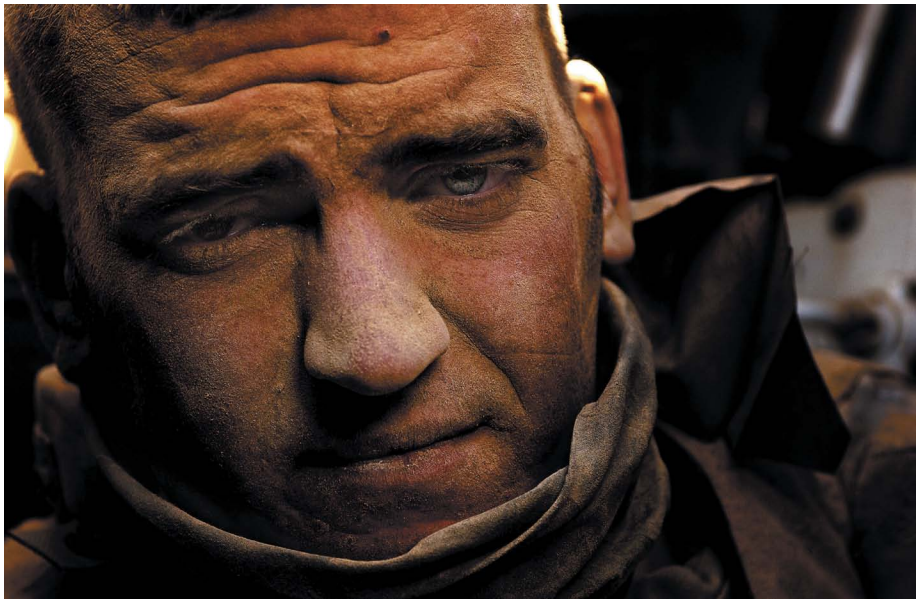


FIGURE 4.16
A soldier's face is covered with sand after a 6-hour ride to the Syrian boarder. (Photo by Andy Dunaway)

Lens (mm): 70, ISO: 400, Aperture: 5.6, Shutter: 1/80, Program: Aperture Priority

Insights: Overriding Your Technology

Exposure Compensation: If you are working in Aperture or Shutter Priority, you can accomplish this change by using your camera's exposure compensation feature. Varying aperture or shutter speed in any automatic mode without using exposure compensation does nothing to change the exposure on the sensor. Exposure compensation is a camera setting that biases the meter reading toward a lighter or darker result. It is accessed by a button usually labeled with a +/– mark and is set in stops or fractions of a stop lighter (+) or darker (–) than the metered exposure (0).

Full Manual Mode: You can accomplish the same result using manual exposure control. In manual mode, fill the frame, or spot if using spot metering, with a midtone object that is in the same light as your subject. Adjust aperture or shutter speed, or both, to zero out your meter reading.

By experimentation, I came to my own conclusions. If you want to put the sun to your back, go ahead. Just remember, it takes light make an exposure, but the shadows create the dimension. Approach each scene by reading the light source first; explore the space, shift, and watch (**Figure 4.17**).

If you slow down enough to move through these motions, you'll begin to see light in a whole new way. Shoot toward or into the light to create breadth and mood. When possible, use color to convey the emotion of the scene or to push your subject forward or backward; cool colors fall back and warm colors jump forward. To distinguish the importance of your subject in their environment, avoid drastic crops into their body, while perhaps cropping others. Even your lens selection should play a part in how you want to relay the story.

Light is as fundamental to photography as an understanding of aperture and shutter speed. Great lighting is a big factor in creating a great photograph. A photograph of any subject can be improved or worsened by a change in the light in which it is photographed. To best understand how this happens, you must understand the four fundamental qualities of light: intensity, color, direction, and contrast.

Light has intensity

Intensity, the first of the four qualities, is perhaps the easiest to understand. Light can be bright or it can be dim. However, the intensity can change based on your relationship to the light source. Imagine yourself in the desert on a cloudless, sunny day. The light here is, no doubt, very bright. Now imagine yourself walking into a palm grove on that same day. The deeper in you go, the less intense the light becomes. The intensity of the sun has not changed. However, by placing palms between you and the light source, you have effectively filtered or reduced the intensity (**Figure 4.18**).

Light has color

What we consider to be white light is actually made up of equal parts of light of all colors. Again, warmer colors have a forward-moving effect, whereas the cooler colors tend to fall back. You can use this to isolate or draw attention to your subject. **Figure 4.19** demonstrates how a small amount of red can pull the viewer's eye.

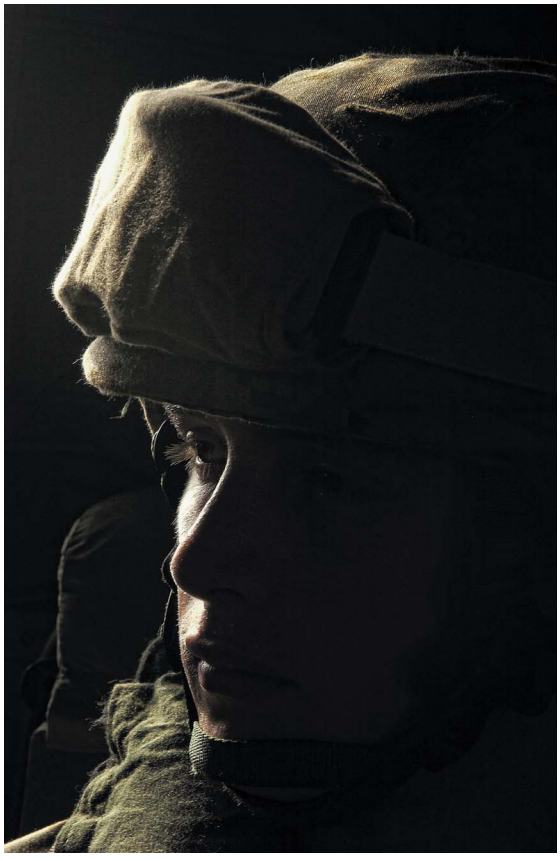


FIGURE 4.17 Marine Lance Corporal Taylor K. Truen rides aboard a Marine Corps CH-53E helicopter near Camp Lemonier, Djibouti.

Lens (mm): 70, ISO: 200, Aperture: 11, Shutter: 1/80, Program: Manual

FIGURE 4.18 A U.S. Army soldier hunts down enemy forces in the palm groves in Buhriz, Iraq. This image demonstrates the theory of filtered or reduced light intensity. The sunlight has not changed overhead. However, the palms of trees over the subject's head successfully diffuses the intensity of the existing light.

Lens (mm): 38, ISO: 400, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/500, Program: Aperture Priority

FIGURE 4.19 Soldiers use a corkboard to post American and European currency with their names signed on them and messages to other military units. (Photo by Andy Dunaway)

Lens (mm): 18, ISO: 100, Aperture: 4, Shutter: 1/100, Program: Manual

In the Trenches: Dark Times

It was well after midnight when I arrived at a small combat outpost located outside a highly volatile village in Diyala Province, Iraq. I'd never met, nor documented, this particular Army unit, and it was my first time at this specific location. I was assigned to photograph these lone soldiers holding ground against the enemy. From my research, I learned the village of Buhriz was the epicenter of all enemy activity, and they were the first line of defense against the trafficking of weapons and bombs into the city. Beyond that, it was up to me to find and capture the story.

I was met by a group of somber, almost morose, soldiers covered with coal soot from head to toe. They seemed happy to see a new face, but not as excited to see my camera. After we became acquainted, they were more at ease with my presence and began to give me the rundown on their daily operations. In quick summation, the soldiers lived and operated out of a private residence, whose occupants fled when the enemy fighters began their killing spree of innocent men, women, and children. The soldiers did their best to preserve the remnants of homeowner's personal belongings and stored them on the first floor, which filled the ground-level rooms from floor to ceiling with chairs, tables, couches, cribs, and other basic household furnishings. Further illustrating the family's hasty, courageous escape were the family portraits left behind, gathering dust on the table, and the bullet holes that riddled the wall nearby. It was obvious the soldiers were impacted by their surroundings, but my intuition said there was more to the story than a group of soldiers cooped up in a creepy house.

It was too dark to shoot pictures that night, and blackout conditions made using any white light impossible. Instead, I pulled up to an upside-down apple box the soldiers used as a card table and played a round of spades. The bitter cold night air forced me to wear every item of clothing I'd brought, and I wrapped my sleeping bag around my torso for good measure. The only source of heat was a small potbelly stove they rigged using an ammo can and some old piping. Needless to say, it leaked like a sieve, and within an hour I looked like a coal miner.

As we played cards and smoked cigarettes, the soldiers revealed to me that one of their teammates had been killed by a sniper only hours before my arrival. I was shocked, but not entirely. My intuition was correct. In essence, they were stuck in their own lightless hell with only their thoughts to pass the time. In that moment, I knew that was the story. My challenge then was to illustrate that story in one picture.

As the sun began to rise, rays of light began to peak through the sandbags that surrounded the stove's pipe. With daylight safely upon them, the soldiers switched on a dim overhead bulb that managed to illuminate some of the caveman art they'd created with the soot on the walls. I stepped back to observe the light as the soldiers gathered around the stove to warm themselves. They began to talk about their friend they'd lost and exchanged fond memories. I picked up my camera, metered the small pool of light emitted from the outside, and waited. One soldier's face caught the sunlight and stood out among the sea of darkness. They continued to laugh at funny anecdotes and shared what they would miss about their fallen comrade; then the room went silent. All seemingly lost in thought, they bowed their heads in remembrance. That was the critical moment (**Figure 4.20**).

Their body language speaks volumes, but it's the light that makes the picture so evocative and telling. Photography is subjective, but I feel the dark shadows represent their loss and the struggle they were enduring in that moment, while the small pool of light on the soldier's face illustrated the ray of hope they had inside for the future.

FIGURE 4.20 A short time after a member of their team was killed in action not too far from where they stand, soldiers continue to stand guard in the watch tour of an Iraqi police station in Buhriz, Iraq.

Lens (mm): 17, ISO: 800, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/13, Program: Manual

Insights: Full Frontals and More

Frontal lighting is the most elemental form of lighting. Although it can be great go-to lighting for some, it can also be flat, shadowless, and featureless. I'll only use this type of lighting if I'm stuck in press pool and have no other choice or it lends itself to the feel of the photograph. **Figure 4.21** is an example of frontal lighting.

Side lighting can be used by the photographer to show shape, texture, and form. Side-lit subjects create their own shadows and therefore a highlight side and a shadow side. This self-induced shadow allows the subject's true shape and form to show (**Figure 4.22**).

Back lighting can reveal shape and form differently, and in some cases will make your subjects appear to glow. One interesting side effect of backlighting is what we call "rim light." Rim light occurs when the source for the backlight is slightly above the subject and is the thin strip of highlight along the upper edge (the rim) of the subject. Rim lighting adds definition to the edges of the subject and can help to separate the subject from the background (**Figure 4.23**).

FIGURE 4.21 Marine Corps recruit José Delgado stands near the obstacle course at Parris Island, South Carolina.

Lens (mm): 70, ISO: 400, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/6000, Exp. Comp.: -0.5, Program: Aperture Priority

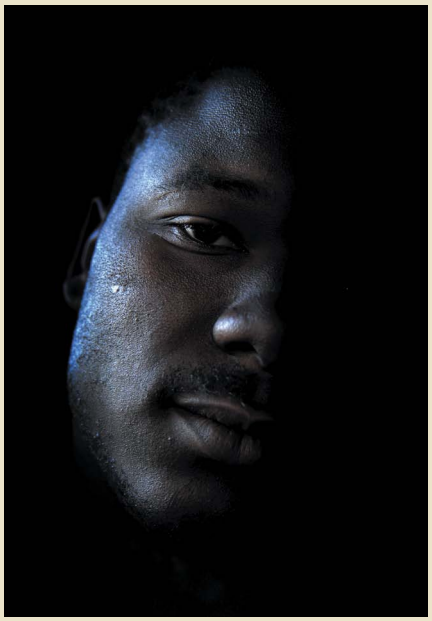


FIGURE 4.22 U.S. Army Sgt. Vashon Bolton waits for his squad relief at the Iraqi police station in Buhriz, Iraq.

Lens (mm): 24, ISO: 400, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/80, Program: Manual

FIGURE 4.23 U.S. Army Spec. Quinton Green looks for weapons and bomb-making materials during a cordon and house-to-house search in Sadiyah, Iraq.

Lens (mm): 30, ISO: 200, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/800, Program: Manual

FIGURE 4.24 After being relieved from guard duty, U.S. Army Spec. Orlando Garcia takes a smoke break at the Iraqi police station in Buhriz, Iraq.

Lens (mm): 55, ISO: 400, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/60, Program: Manual

Light has direction

When we express the direction of light, we always do so from the perspective of the subject. Front light is that light which strikes the front (or camera side) of the subject. Sidelight is light that strikes the subject from either the left or right sides. Back light is light that illuminates the back (opposite camera) side of the subject.

Simply because you're shooting uncontrolled action in natural light does not mean you relinquish the power to move yourself into a better light direction. If a window lights your subject straight on with flat light, move yourself until the light is short or rimming your subject's face. It's that simple (**Figure 4.24**).

Light has contrast

Observing the shadows is the easiest way to identify contrast. Distinct, deep, hard-edged shadows are evidence of harsh light. The harsh light of bright, cloudless sunshine is difficult to photograph in, especially if that harsh light is also sidelight. It can

be difficult to come up with an exposure that will show detail in the shadows and not overexpose the highlights. Likewise, it can be difficult to expose for the highlights without completely losing the shadows. It's up to you as the photographer to choose the most pleasing, and sometimes least adverse, alternative. When faced with no other choice than to shoot in high-contrast light, I try to find unique ways to work around the unattractive lighting.

For instance, **Figure 4.25** was taken around one o'clock in the afternoon and not a cloud in sight. I had no choice but to shoot under terrible lighting conditions. So I opted to disguise the nasty light with the environment around my subject—in this case, bars on a window.

Soft light—the light of an overcast day for instance—is the quality of light most photographers prefer (**Figure 4.26**). Soft light seems to wrap around and envelop subjects. It's great for color because there are no hot spots or overexposed areas to detract from a subject's true color. Light, whether bright or dim, always has direction and color. Although I can appreciate soft light situations, they aren't my favorite. I prefer more direct, contrast-laden light. Shadows are what I build my pictures around to create mood and dimension. If I choose to use a softly lit image, it's because the moment outweighs the light.

FIGURE 4.25 A U.S. Army soldier rummages through the rubble of a bombed-out building during a cordon and search for weapons caches and anti-Iraqi forces in Old Baqubah, Iraq.

Lens (mm): 23, ISO: 200, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/2500, Exp. Comp: -0.3, Program: Aperture Priority

FIGURE 4.26 Marine Corps recruit David Briones stands in formation during physical training at Parris Island, South Carolina.

Lens (mm): 66, ISO: 400, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/1500, Exp. Comp.: +1.0, Program: Aperture Priority

Coloring Your Characters

Photographers can bring any color forward or push it back, depending on what other spatial tricks they use. An object with a complicated contour is more interesting and appears to be heavier than one with a simple contour. A small complex object can balance a large, simple object. Hues that are lighter at maximum saturation such as yellows, oranges, and reds appear larger than those that are darker at maximum saturation like blues and purples. When a color expands visually, it may also seem closer to the viewer than those that seem to contract, leading to the common statement that warm colors appear closer and cool colors fall back.

FIGURE 4.27 A U.S. Air Force B-2 Bomber flies with two F-117 fighter aircraft. (Photo by Andy Dunaway)

Lens (mm): 55, ISO: 3200, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/13, Program: Manual

Value

A color's value is the lightness and darkness of a color. For example, imagine a red apple on your kitchen counter with one light falling on it from overhead. The part of the apple nearest the light will be lightest in value because it reflects the most light. The part of the apple opposite the light will be the deepest in the shadow and thus darkest in value.

So now let's apply that theory from the red apple to an airplane. The same concept applies. You can use the available light to change your subject's value. The plane pictured in **Figure 4.27** looks rather menacing because the part of the plane closest to the sun happens to be the back, which makes the identifiable "face" of the aircraft elusive.

Monochromatic

Monochromatic refers to one color in varied tones such as varied reds or varied blues. A monochromatic color scheme uses only one hue (color) and all values (shades or tints) of it for a unifying and harmonious effect.

When someone references the word "pictorial," I immediately think about graphic lines, repetition, and dramatic use of color. This includes the use of monochromatic color choices, as **Figure 4.28** demonstrates. Throughout the image are varied shades of yellowish-orange tones. Though the brightness is varied, the color is not, which contributes to the image's dramatic mood.

FIGURE 4.28 As the sky turns ominous, U.S. Army Sgt. Kyle Ellison searches the roof of a local's house for weapons during an assault against anti-Iraqi forces in Buhriz, Iraq.

Lens (mm): 40, ISO: 640, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/1250, Program: Aperture Priority

Insights: I Feel in Color

Warm Color Spectrum: Warm colors such as red, orange, yellow, and even white suggest warmth and seem to move toward the viewer and appear closer. I use warm colors to draw more attention to my subjects and, when possible, situate them in front of dark, cool colored backgrounds to further pull them forward. In the case of **Figure 4.29**, I used the reds, oranges, and yellows to further illustrate the soldier's youth, inexperience, and energy.

- Red: This color is often associated with apprehension or wariness. It also evokes powerful ideas and emotions such as passion, energy, blood, and war. Red is a good color to use for accents that need to draw the eye's attention.
- Orange: This color is considered aggressive and conveys energy. To the human eye, orange is a hot color, so it gives the impression of heat.

Cool Color Spectrum: Colors such as blue, purple, and green suggest coolness and seem to recede from a viewer and fall back. Cool colors are usually calming and soothing but can also express sadness. I use cool colors to help evoke the mood of the situation I'm in. For example, in **Figure 4.30**, the sergeant is alone and solely responsible for the rest of the soldiers under his command. The green helps further identify him as a solitary military man with steadfastness and reliability.

- Blue: This is a color of reliability, strength, knowledge, and conviction. Blue works well as both a background and accent color in your photographs.
- Green: Dark green is commonly associated with the military and money. Green suggests stability, endurance and, as opposed to red, connotes safety.

FIGURE 4.29 An Iraqi army soldier searches a local's bedroom during a foot patrol in Buhriz, Iraq.

Lens (mm): 17, ISO: 800, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/15, Program: Aperture Priority

FIGURE 4.30 From his command tank commander's position, U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael Gibson directs a convoy of M1A2 Abrams tanks down a road in Kahn Bani Sahd, Iraq.

Lens (mm): 17, ISO: 800, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter 1/30, Program: Aperture Priority

FIGURE 4.31 A U.S. Air Force B-1B Lancer drops a GBU-38 munitions on a torture house used by al-Qaeda forces in northern Zambraniyah, Iraq. (Photo by Andy Dunaway)

Lens (mm): 116, ISO: 100, Aperture: 4, Shutter: 1/500, Exp. Comp.: -1.0, Program: Aperture Priority

Color movement

Color can create a sense of movement. When the values in a work jump quickly from low key to high key, a feeling of excitement and movement is created. When all of the values are close together, the work seems much calmer. When you want to create movement with color, remember to use values of pure hues as well as those of tints and shades. Movement creates the illusion of action or physical change in position (**Figure 4.31**).

FIGURE 4.32 A barrel full of human waste burns on the outer perimeter of a forward operating base in Afghanistan. (Photo by Andy Dunaway)

Lens (mm): 28, ISO: 100, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/125, Program: Manual

Color coordination

Complementary colors are two colors opposite one another on the color wheel—for example, blue and orange, yellow and purple, or red and green. When a pair of high-intensity complementary colors are placed side by side, they seem to vibrate and draw attention to the element. Not all color schemes based on complementary colors are loud and demanding. When complementary colors are used in photojournalism like in **Figure 4.32**, you can take a drab topic and illustrate the subject uniquely.

The 10-Frame Methodology

I used to be a spastic shooter who'd shoot a picture, and move, shoot another picture, and move again. It wasn't until one of my mentors suggested I slow down, stay in the moment, and follow through that I self-implemented the 10-Frame Methodology. It is my guideline for solving nearly all photographic problems while on assignment. The concept is simple. Slow down and become more deliberate in your photography. Don't jump on the first item or scene that you see. Spend some time looking for the best subject or greatest vantage point. Spend more time looking and less time shooting. Once you've found the ideal composition, sit and wait for the right moment. Let the action come to you. Make 10 frames without moving your composition. If you commit to making a picture, then really commit (**Figure 4.33**).

FIGURE 4.33 A U.S. Army soldier stands guard near a window while his buddy takes a break in front of the television, which is playing Iraqi cartoons, during a raid in Baqubah, Iraq.

Lens (mm): 17, ISO: 800, Aperture: 2.8, Shutter: 1/100, Program: Manual

I'll walk into a situation and assess what's happening—not only with the subjects but with the light, too. I'll move around the room until I find the best possible vantage point and advantageous light. Once I'm satisfied, I'll hunker down. I can look back at a day's take and see sequences of various scenarios where I haven't moved a millimeter (**Figure 4.34**).

In high-stress situations, it's easy to let the pace of actions happening around you dictate how quickly you shoot. You go from being selective and thoughtful to the "spray and pray" method: shooting randomly without any idea of what you're actually doing. You slam the shutter release button at anything that moves and pray it turns out. That's when it's important to remind yourself that there's always something going on. There are always moments you'll miss. All you can do is be ready to make a successful picture when the time is right and the action unfolds in front of you.

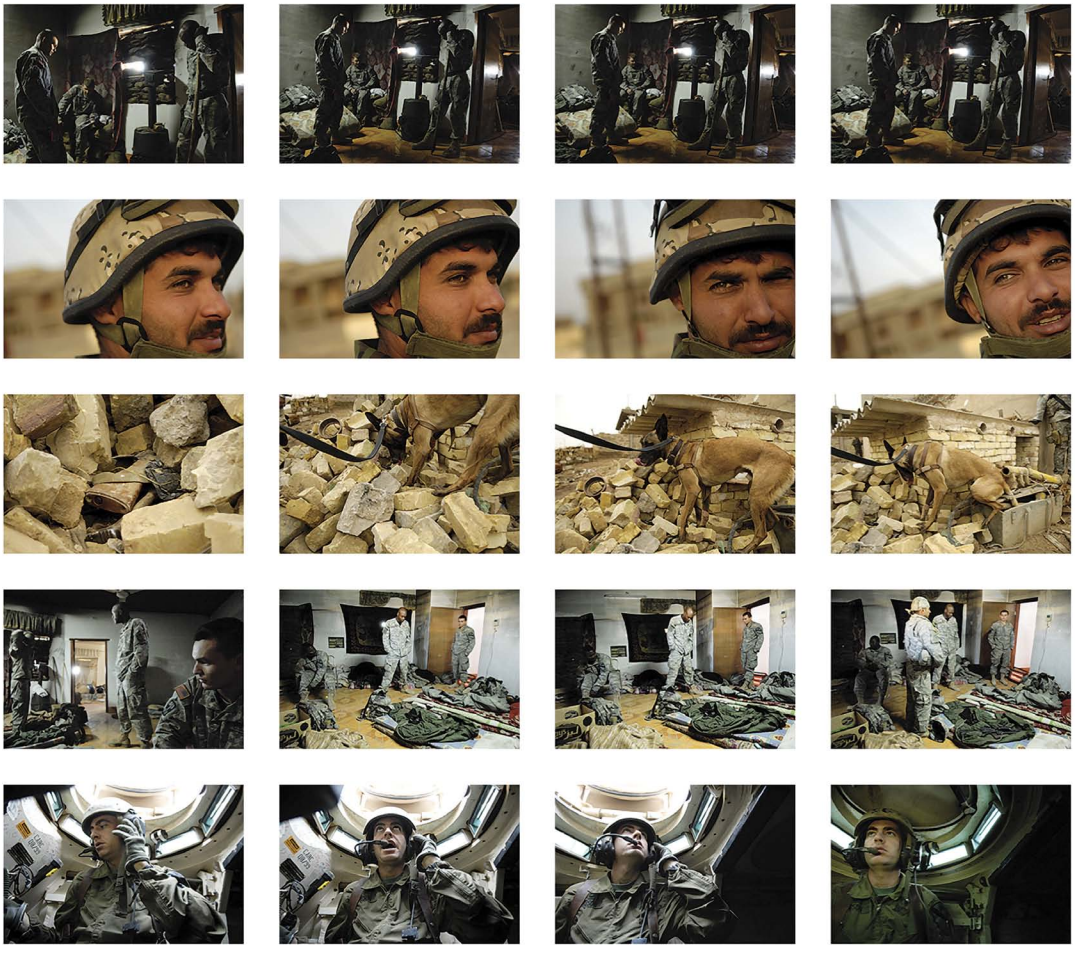
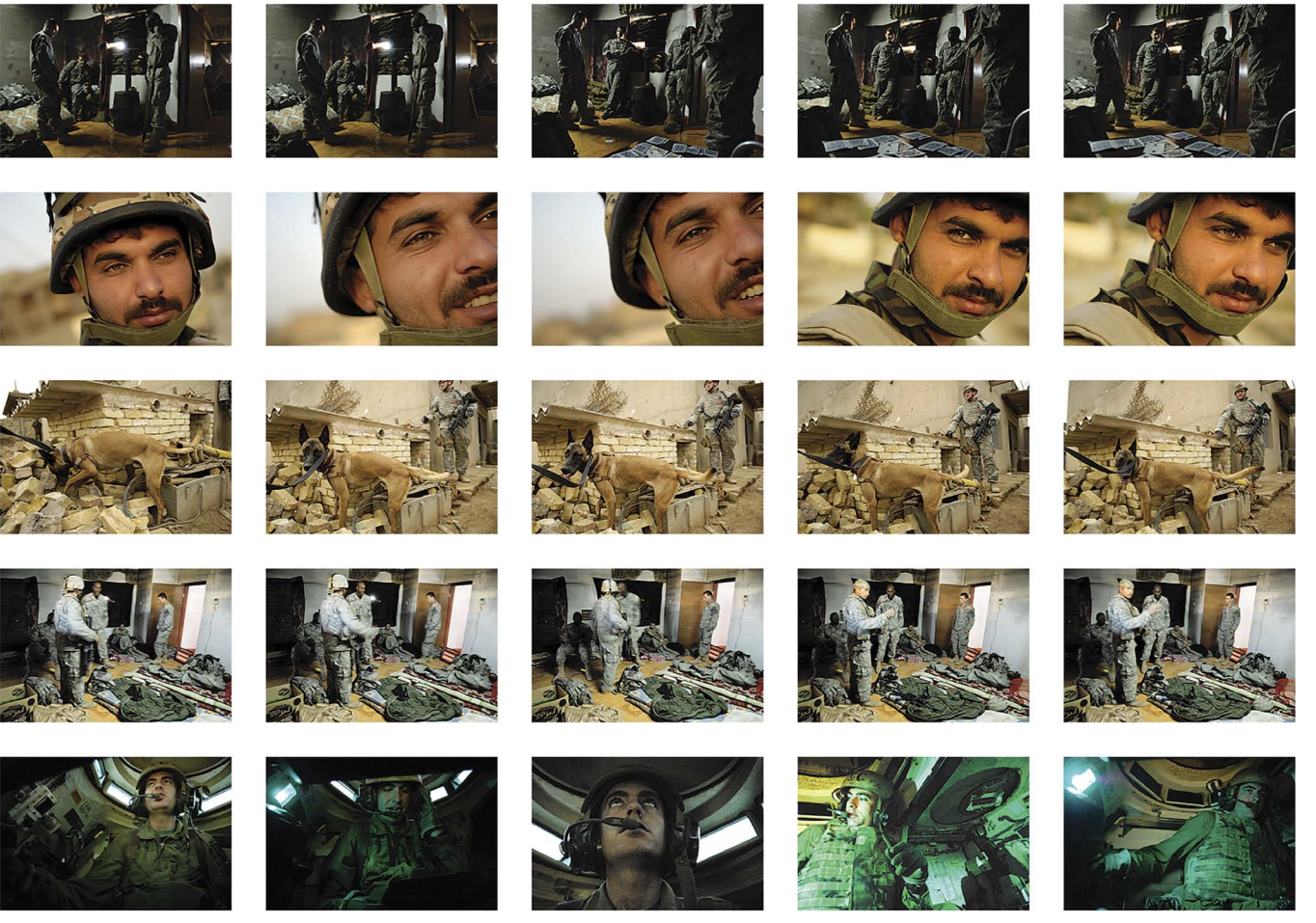


FIGURE 4.34 This is one of my contact sheets, which shows how I use the 10-Frame Methodology while shooting. The variances of the action happening in each frame are small, but those little differences pay huge dividends in the end. After all, it is the simple change of gesture, posture, or expression that transforms the entire mood of the picture.

My final thought for this chapter is to be patient and allow time for all of the factors we discussed to fall into place. Be an observer of light and color—use it to convey a message or emotion. Your technical routine must become second nature so your mind can be free to focus on the story.

Once you settle into a scene, think about how to make a picture that best tells your subject's narrative without bias, as creatively as possible. Focus on the action as it comes into your frame; let the action come to you—don't chase the action. When it feels right, release your shutter.

When you're in an out-of-control situation, you're still in control of your camera. Be present enough in the situation to know the dangers around you, yet block out the unnecessary distractions that may detract your focus. Set yourself up for success. The world will continue to spin even if you're not shooting. So take the time to put yourself in the best possible place to capture the story and it will come to you.



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