

Rangefinder

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GOT IDEAS?



Ruth Anne Kocour in a dialogue with her faculty this afternoon.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADAM MASLOSKI

YOU HAVE A GREAT IDEA, a few solid contacts, and a story that you want to tell, but that is only half the battle. Now you are charged with convincing your editor of all of these things. In doing this, a good story pitch goes a long way.

"I want to know why I need to know the story and why it needs to be told now," said Joany Carlin, editor for the Oregonian's Home and Gardens magazine. More importantly, Carlin said, what about the topic will interest the reader or the viewer?

"It doesn't matter if I like it; what matters is whether or not it will impact other people."

The number of contacts varies from story to story, but knowing that you have a subject's cooperation is important to an editor. For example, "If the story is about a family, you should know that you

have access to the family and that they are alright with you being there.

"You have to be able to articulate *how* the story can be done," said Carlin. There are different stories for different photographers, thus you need to convince your editor that you are the one to tell the story that you have proposed. Don't be afraid to discuss concerns, warning your editor of any challenges that you foresee contributes to an editor's confidence in a photographer, said Carlin.

"The photographer should be able to answer any questions that I ask," said Carlin. It's a classic case of 'the more you give the more you get'. "If you are armed with more information we are more likely to give you the time, space, and support to do what you need to do," she said.

A Moving Target

Gabriela Hasbun, arrives at team C, with faculty members, Melissa Farlow and Lois Raimondo, at 1 p.m. armed with a story idea.

She had a hard time collecting ideas for a story proposal. It is interesting to see how, after talking with her faculty members and answering their questions, her story differs from the one that she brought to the table.

Gabriela begins her proposal by talking about a family. The man is dying and she would like to photograph the process. Her title might be, "Letting Go" or "Goodbye". She pitches a story that involves the man and his relationship with his wife. Her committee suggests that Gabriela shift



her focus to the woman instead. The faculty members express concern that pictures of the man might become static.

Time is a factor, so they consider what of interest might happen within six days. The life of the wife is going to be very different; she will be on her own, ruling the business that she owns with her husband. She also has a daughter. The committee members think that the mother/daughter relationship would be interesting to explore, even more interesting than the dying husband. Now the story has a new title that emphasizes the wife's point of view.

Team C advises Gabriela to get more information about this topic, but Gabriela continues to think about photographing the dying father and including his relationship with his daughter. As a compromise, her editors advise Gabriela to focus on the daughter's point-of-view.

Eddie Adams: 1933-2004

Eddie Adams died yesterday at the age of 71 of Lou Gehrig's disease.

Throughout his career, Adams worked for Time, Parade, and the Associated Press. He photographed in 13 wars and made portraits of presidents ranging from Richard Nixon to President Bush and other famous



newsmakers, including Pope John Paul II, Anwar Sadat, Fidel Castro and Mikhail Gorbachev.

He was a Pulitzer Prize winner in 1969 for a Saigon execution image, the most remembered of more than 500 honors he received in his career, which also included a 1978 Robert Capa Award and three George Polk Memorial Awards for war coverage.

"Sometimes a picture can be misleading because it does not tell the whole story," Adams said about the photograph in an interview for a 1972 AP photo book. "I don't say what he did was right, but he was fighting a war and he was up against some pretty bad people."



Professor Bill Kuykendall
University of Maine, Orono

Dear Bill:

The 56th Missouri Photo Workshop is underway in beautiful Hermann, Mo. And the "new crew" is doing just fine. You'd recognize the routine. There are 40 excited and slightly anxious participants—"the shooters" as we called them in days of yore.

There is a terrific faculty, all tried and true, imparting hard earned wisdom. You'd recognize them all. They are the "kinder, gentler" generation of educators, here because they live and love of photojournalism. (As Randy Olson said, they don't do it for the pay.)

You'd recognize the small-town hospitality. Hermann greeted the traveling troupe at a welcome picnic (brats and kraut) at the immaculate city park: on the Missouri River.

Visiting with our hosts, I picked up a dozen story ideas that I'd like to be out investigating this morning.

Just as it was when we made our initial trial run as co-directors of the workshop in Caruthersville, Mo., the workshop has a school building for the week. (They booted out Senior Citizens, who normally eat their lunch here.)

Another reminder from that Bootheel town is that Lois Raimondo is back. This time as an experienced, brave world-traveling, working photojournalist. As you recall, she was a first-time shooter, making what must have been her first picture story of what we probably agreed at the time was an impossible story. What she learned on the "wrong-side of the tracks" in Caruthersville she now applies in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Oh, sure the new crew is screwing with the routine. Just as we tinkered with the system Cliff & Vi handed us, Jim & Dave are messing with traditions. Participants already been assigned to the faculty teams. And, they already had their first group meetings.

Can you believe it, the barbershop system of faculty assignments, "The next open chair is yours," is gone.

I'm sure we worried Cliff & Vi with our tinkering, for example toning down the intensity of the intimidation. But, by golly, I think they are making improvements.

I recalled last night in opening remarks that when I attended – was it only 43 years ago – in Cape Girardeau we were in transition from Rolleiflexes to little-bitty 35-mm cameras. This workshop embraced the digital world. No more film drops. No dangerous wet labs. It is flash cards and Macs. Now, instead of chem. spills and HazMat teams, it is worries about power surges and locked up computer systems.

Some things don't change. The faculty has already imparted loads of useful information. Good story ideas are popping up. Excited participants are being calmed and pointed into new directions for their lives.

And, someplace in this town there must be a perfect bowl of oats.

Your fellow co-director emeritus.

Duane Dailey



Tips from Carol

If you are having problems with your camera, take a deep breath. Carol has some things to keep in mind.

1. DON'T OVERCOMPLICATE! If you borrowed a camera, take twenty minutes and get familiar with where all of the functions are—it will help you calm your digital nerves. "Remember pictures are pictures, all the same rules apply to digital," Carol said.

2. Metering issues? Keep your subject in mind while you are metering. Put thought into what kind of exposure you want to use. Multi-pattern metering is great, but not always the appropriate meter to use because it tries to balance exposure to give both highlight and shadow detail. Try spot or center-weighted metering as well.

3. Digital does not have the same latitude as color negative film. To keep detail in an important highlight area, underexpose slightly or use custom #24 to lower the contrast. This will help hold the highlight detail.

4. The balancing act. To white balance, look at the light on your subject and set the camera accordingly. "You only have 400 frames, so take the time to expose and you will have better files!"



