

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE:
HOW SUBJECT REACTIVITY INFLUENCES VISUAL JOURNALISM

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Abstract

People are reactive to cameras and their reactivity seems to increase when they also see the camera operator. This reactivity, as a form of impression management, can cause tension with visual journalism, which aims to convey information authentically and accurately. Six photojournalists at a community newspaper in the Midwest identified a set of 22 variables that have the potential to influence subjects' reactivity while being photographed. Photojournalists have complete control of only two of these variables, the equipment they bring to produce images and their visibility, such as when they choose to photograph unaware subjects from long distances with telephoto lenses or with remote cameras. Photojournalists can potentially influence 13 of these variables, such as aspects of their appearance, presentation, and knowledge of the subject or issue. They have no control over the remaining seven variables, including the subject's desire for impression management, demographic characteristics, and prior media exposure. The photographers also reported that, consistent with social constructionism theory, subjects were more comfortable with or afforded better access to journalists who shared traits with them. Journalists can use the variables they have influence over to make up for dissimilar subject-photographer characteristics and improve the interaction.

Chapter one: Introduction

People alter their behavior when they know they are being observed (Bromley, 1993). This social psychological phenomenon, as a form of impression management, involves reputation, self-esteem, identity, freedom, and social order. Goffman (1974) used the phrase “presentation of self” to describe the ways social actors present an impression and an identity to others. However it is conceptualized, this dynamic can produce tension with journalism, in general, and photojournalism, in particular, because these processes aim to convey information accurately and honestly (Maniscalco, 2010). While one’s presentation of self is not necessarily the opposite of accurate or honest behavior, subjects may tend to control behaviors to present a positive representation to the photographer and, in turn, the broader audience reached by those who see the photographer’s work.

Cameras are reactive measurement devices (Penner, Orom, Albrecht, Franks, Foster, & Ruckdeschel, 2007) and subjects respond differently even when being passively recorded, such as by security or observational cameras mounted in ceilings. This reactivity may intensify in journalistic situations, when photographers have more freedom to independently control how the image is produced, as opposed to the often-static framing of security and observational cameras. When photographers raise their cameras, their subjects often alter their actions and become more self-aware, as a function of being observed. In psychological fields, this awareness is known as social surveillance and is known to heighten public self-awareness and promote socially desirable responding (Gervais & Norenzayan, 2012).

Cameras capture not only one's likeness, but, potentially, one's vulnerability as well. Seemingly mundane events, such as a commute to work or an evening walk, can be captured just as easily as more significant events, such as someone's final breaths. Humans are diverse, multi-faceted creatures, and the fear of reduction to a single expression, gesture, or action might be daunting to these subjects or others with influence over them, such as the parent who tells their kid, "Hey, you need to act right, because there's this person here trying to take your picture and they're going to put you in the newspaper" (Nwachukwu, 2015). Coupled with photography's inherent subjectivity (Schwartz, 1992) and potential lack of comprehensive context, subjects perhaps fear the camera, or potentially, are afraid of seeing themselves portrayed as they truly are.

Since the foundation of formal journalism education, journalists have conceptualized themselves as stewards of the public trust (Williams, 1914) and have imposed standards, including accuracy and fairness, upon themselves through various codes and guidelines that have been formalized and adopted by numerous professional associations in the past 100 years. On the visual front, photojournalists can easily record a scene that can be accurate but contextually unfair. For example, a man at a vigil might be crying one moment, and then, when he sees a photojournalist raise his or her camera, he might wipe away his tears. If the photographer captured that scene, it would be accurate because it showed a man who had stopped crying, but it wouldn't be contextually fair. The man was crying and, arguably, only stopped because of the photojournalist's action. Even when not intentionally meaning to do so, visual journalists can influence the environments and subjects they cover.

Influence on the journalism produced is a multi-faceted process. Photojournalists are the obvious influencers, but subjects also wield considerable power over their depictions. Some tend to become more theatrical while others become more reserved when they are aware that they are being photographed (Baseler, 2015). The public at large often has contrasting expectations of journalists and how they operate (Heider, McCombs, & Poindexter, 2005), which can lead to unfair or oversimplified depictions. Part of this expectation likely stems from journalism's conflict between its identities as an industry, occupation, ideology, and academic discipline (Deuze, 2005). Because people understand journalism differently and employ their knowledge differently based on occupation, industry, popular culture, and personal ideology, it is not surprising that the public has different expectations of what journalists "want." Cameras, for example, are ubiquitous in the production of entertainment, cinema, surveillance, medical, and a host of other industries and professions, so the public likely does not associate them, and thus understand them, exclusively through a journalistic context. Differing styles of journalism and communications, including public relations and broadcast work, also further muddles the public's expectations and perceptions of photographers. This can manifest itself through subjects who offer to pose, restage an event, or alter their intended actions when they realize someone is observing them with a camera.

Rationale

Why do these issues matter? Without a solid understanding of the factors that influence news content, a journalist's work can oversimplify the subject or issue, can create, reinforce, and perpetuate stereotypes, and can fail to accurately document the subjects and issues portrayed. Factors intrinsic to journalists, such as gender, ethnicity,

sexual orientation, etc., impacts, directly or otherwise, the media content produced (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). These factors shape professional backgrounds and experiences, which can influence professional roles and ethics, attitudes, values, and beliefs, and the journalists' power within a media organization. If these factors affect journalists and their coverage, it is logical to assume that the characteristics of non-journalists also impact similar areas.

Because people's identities and characteristics affect their behavior (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996), and because they respond differently when cameras are present (Penner, Orom, Albrecht, Franks, Foster, & Ruckdeschel, 2007), they might become more aware of their identities when journalists are present (Rothberg, 2015). A subject might think, perhaps correctly, that their words, when recorded in the captions, and actions, as recorded in a still frame, are representative not only of them, but also of their community and the demographic characteristics they represent. That is, they act not only as Sally Mae, the individual, but as a potential symbol for a larger group, whether based on broad gender or ethnic characteristics, or more nuanced physiological or psychological ones. This is because prior exposure influences future interaction (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995), such as when someone stereotypes someone based on past interaction with others who share similar characteristics. Though subjects wield influence in how they are represented, through such factors as granting or limiting access, selecting and controlling the environment, and altering their behavior in front of the camera, the photographers have the ultimate responsibility in representing subjects fairly and thus are my primary research interests.

Chapter two will introduce the literature and research questions. Chapter three will detail the study's research methodology while chapter four outlines the study's results. Chapter five presents analysis and perspectives for how the study fits within the literature and provides professional implications of the research. It also outlines limitations and opportunities for future study.

Chapter two: Theory and literature

Philosophical worldview

Of the four main philosophical worldviews summarized by Creswell (2014)—postpositivism, transformative, constructivism, and pragmatism—I embrace the constructivist worldview. This approach heavily emphasizes subjects and their values. It is a humble approach. Constructivists don't go into situations assuming and categorizing. Rather, they inductively explore answers through broad and open-ended questions. It aims for understanding, incorporates multiple participant meanings, and integrates social and historical construction (Creswell, 2014).

Worldview characteristics.

In the constructivist framework, subjects behave more according to nurture than nature. That is, historical knowledge and social interaction shape their behavior more than biological factors. When children smile for a camera, it is due to nurture (social conditioning and later, impression management), rather than nature. "For each of us, when we first see the world in meaningful fashion, we are inevitably viewing it through lenses bestowed upon us by our culture" (Crotty, 1998). "Our culture brings things into view for us and endows them with meaning and, by the same token, leads us to ignore other things."

Compared to reporters, who can represent their subjects via telephone conversations, email messages, and other forms of non face-to-face communication, photographers often have a more intimate and comprehensive view of the subjects and their experiences. Because of this unique experience, I am also interested in incorporating

elements of phenomenological research, which has roots in philosophy and psychology and contributes to knowledge by exploring the “lived experiences of individuals about a phenomenon as described by participants” (Creswell, 2014, 14). This approach offers substantial freedom in data collection and analysis, including exploration of the photojournalists’ aesthetic expressions (the photography they produce), which I can then analyze for indicators of subject awareness and relevant contextual variables.

Other approaches considered.

The transformative worldview is a more radical version of the constructivist approach (Creswell, 2014, 9). It argues that research must be melded with politics and advocates for change to help marginalized populations. The transformative worldview is not an appropriate lens for journalism research because journalism in a democracy, as conceptualized through the “objective” journalistic role, publishes news and information rather than advocates for a specific position or on behalf of a certain interest group (Christians, Glasser, McQuail, Nordstreng, & White, 2009). In this role, journalism can and should expose problems and shed light on the plight of marginalized groups, but not advocate. It can expose corruption and the plight of marginalized groups, but its role is not to tell people what to do about those problems. Under this role, advocacy should be reserved for opinion pages and columnists.

Cameras as reactive measurement devices (Penner, Orom, Albrecht, Franks, Foster, & Ruckdeschel, 2007), impression management as it relates to social identity and interpersonal interactions (Schlenker, 1980), and objectivity in photojournalism (Schwartz, 1992) have all received research attention, yet these disparate elements have yet to be synthesized and analyzed as they relate to one another. A relative dearth of

academic research has been written on photojournalism, and the research that does exist is often written by non-photographers. Additionally, due to strong commercial pressures (Irby, 2004) many photo editors care primarily about the “end result” and either are not interested, do not know (in the case of freelancers, for example), or cannot (due to budget and deadline constraints) invest the time to find out how the photographer created the image.

Photography inherently, either through conscious or unconscious human interaction or technical limitations, communicates distortions and deceptions, yet because of society’s visually driven culture (Irby, 2004), it is used more widely than ever by individuals without formal training or education in media ethics. Because of this, the public perception of what is photojournalism and the role that human interaction has on photojournalism has been minimized and poorly understood. Through examining past literature, one can understand how much influence human interaction has on image accuracy and better understand what questions to answer in order to maximize image credibility and improve the public’s perception of photojournalism’s integrity.

This research will, as Creswell (2014) puts it, build bridges between related topics. Because of the lack of published academic research on cameras as reactive devices in a journalistic context, the general industry trend that largely ignores how visuals are produced, and because my study incorporates grounded theory and phenomenological elements, the literature review in this inductive study is not as foundational as it is to theoretically oriented studies (Creswell, 2014).

Three core concepts, perception, framing, and credibility, inform the discussion of awareness and its effect on visual accuracy. These three concepts will be analyzed

primarily through two theoretical frameworks – social constructionism and frame analysis. Photojournalism, defined as reporting photographically for the news media (Newton, 1998), includes both still and video footage; however, for the purpose of this research, the focus will be exclusively on still imagery for two reasons. First, still images can be more powerful and salient than a video report from the same event (Irby, 2004) and thus are more deserving of study. Second, because of the use of tripods, cables, assistants, artificial lighting, microphones and other highly visible equipment, it is often not possible to produce journalism without the subject’s awareness or, often, direct attention, as in broadcast news.

Perception

People’s perceptions of the media, its roles, and objectives, influences how they interact with and regard journalists (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). For example, society once regarded cameras as infallible communicators and referred to photographers as “camera operators” rather than “picture makers” (Schwartz, 2003). This choice of language reflected society’s view at the time that photographers were merely technicians of an otherwise independent machine rather than being free-thinking individuals intimately engaged in a creative process. Society’s view shifted again with photography’s transition from a chemical to a digital process. Digital sensors rendered obsolete the need for darkrooms or specialized technicians to process and develop film, and, through this disruptive technology, photography became a process that could be entirely self-managed, economical, and time-efficient (Lucas & Goh, 2009). The internet and personal computer also revolutionized how media could be stored and transmitted, which further increased photography’s popularity and usefulness in addition to changing how the

general public consumed and regarded the media (Van Dijck, 2008). This shift from a technician-craftsman model to a consumer one lacking formal training or education changed photography from a safeguard of historical memory to a personal communication platform and further increased the media's subjectivity (Van Dijck, 2008).

As awareness of subjectivity increased, so did skepticism about the accuracy of portrayals and representations created by the media (Marland, 2012). From the social constructionism viewpoint, humanity should be critical of "taken-for-granted" knowledge (Burr, 2003). If subjects do not perceive photographers as willing to challenge assumptions and stereotypes, they might be more guarded and less vulnerable with them, which can impact the quality of the journalism produced.

Framing

Framing is a way of organizing information that makes humans more perceptive of some characteristics while being less perceptive of others (Goffman, 1974). Framing, in all of its forms, can have pronounced effects on media accuracy. The most obvious is how the photojournalist composes a shot and portrays information. The information that is included, excluded, emphasized, or deemphasized all contributes to the frame and how it is perceived. Less obvious is the unintentional framing that occurs through forces external to the photographer. Coordinated media events that appear alongside representations of slogans, symbols, and insignia are one example of unintentional (or at least often unavoidable) framing; politicians that speak in front of a usually highly curated audience are another.

Unintentional framing.

According to one of the first definitions of framing (Goffman, 1974), framing is both subjective and unintentional. For, Goffman, frames guide the perception of reality and are unconsciously adopted and applied to events in which humans subjectively participate. A conceptual "rift" exists between how researchers conceptualize the source of frames (Reese, Gandy, & Grant, 2001). Agenda-setting researchers conceptualize frames as an object's attributes (Ghanem, 1997) and focuses on audience understanding, while framing researchers focus more on the frame-makers themselves, in this case, the journalists (Reese, Gandy, & Grant, 2001). Frames can influence awareness (Goffman, 1974). For example, depending on how it is framed, people might see a crowd of customers lined up at the midnight opening of a store and process it very differently. Some might wonder what the store sells, how long the people have been there, and what kind of deals motivated the customers to sacrifice their time and comfort by standing out in the cold all night, while others might focus on the patrons' apparel or body shapes.

Frames are not static, and can be dynamically updated based upon new information or stimuli (Goffman, 1974). Goffman and other researchers in the 1970s and '80s continued the strain of contending that frames were unconscious; however, due to the apparent difficulty posed by measuring unconscious frames, later researchers tended to adopt views that emphasized the intentional, and thus, more observable (and measurable) framing actions of humans.

Intentional framing.

Scholars defined framing in the '90s as active selection of perceptions that were influenced by causal interpretation or moral evaluation (Entman, 1993). Scholars

disagree, though, about the nature of frames that are actively constructed. Critics of framing theory (Durham, 2001) argue that frames negatively limit the perception of the event and do not allow for a rich diversity of perspectives to be incorporated. Proponents of frame theory (Snow and Benford, 1988) instead view framing as scaffolding that supports the narrative, providing organization, structure, and focus. Photojournalists typically adopt an eye-witness frame (Newton, 1998) that seeks to document events with as little interaction as possible. Newton states that photojournalists operate under at least two assumptions. The first is that the photojournalist portrays his or her subjects accurately, fairly, and objectively. The second is that the photographer bears a responsibility and a right to obtain photographs that fulfill these requirements so that a broader audience can also experience the scene as the photographer saw it.

Photojournalism ethics dictate that only events that happen without the photographer's involvement should be published and labeled as news (Newton, 1998). Social science research has shown, however, that objectivity is unobtainable. It is a "myth, a social ritual, and organizational routine, or a fall-back ideology to protect hurried journalists in everyday practice" (Goffman 1996, 8). Because complete objectivity can never completely be attained, photojournalists are left with the task of balancing some inherent subjectivity with the desire to honestly document a situation and avoid misleading viewers.

Even if photojournalists don't interact with their subjects and only record the event that unfolds before them, the photographs can still show evidence of framing and bias. The scene and surrounding environment can also be manipulated for strategic purpose. For example, imagine that a president at a large research university is scheduled

to deliver a speech about the university's justification for spiking tuition well above the inflation rate during the fifth consecutive year. Photographers are present and will record whatever scene evolves in front of them. If the university president delivers the speech sitting at a desk, flanked by national, state, and university flags, and does so from the intimacy of his or her office, the audience will likely view the images very differently than if the president delivered the same speech from the steps of the administration building and a horde of angry students stood behind the podium, armed with signs protesting the tuition hike. Pseudo-events where journalists are invited to document an event surrounded by iconography, symbolism, and slogans are becoming more commonplace (Grabe, 2009).

Because others can influence photographers' message almost as much, if not more than, the photojournalists themselves, the journalists are responsible for communicating not only the message, but sufficient surrounding context so that the audience has as much information as possible to make informed decisions based on the image or images. If this is not possible through the images themselves, the photographer may also communicate supplemental information in the form of captions and accompanying descriptions. Though photographers may not always be the ones framing a scenario, or have direct control on how a scene is externally framed, their organization's ethical codes dictate that the photographers accurately communicate the situation and any questionable framing, through accompanying text, if the audience would benefit from the extra information. The Pointer Institute for Media Studies, for example, recommends that photographers and photo editors consider publishing explanatory captions that could "illuminate how the photograph came to be taken, which might not be apparent by

looking at it.” in the hopes that the caption would “help put the image into a broader, more accurate context” (Irby, 2004).

Media credibility

Credible visual journalism is faithful, accurate, and comprehensive (National Press Photographers Association, 2015). Early forms of visual media, such as sketches and illustrations, suffered attacks on their credibility, because their creators employed considerable artistic freedom and did not accurately convey a scene or situation (Gross, 2003). Written regulations, unwritten codes of conduct, and labeling conventions were all created to maintain and ensure photojournalism's credibility (Gross, 2003).

Barriers to the credibility of journalism include a subject, or in some cases, an entire audience, that is aware of a photographer's presence, and changes their behavior as a result. There are countless times when photojournalists are assigned to events and the subjects know that they are being covered, such as any kind of character profile assignment, many process stories, and almost all political events. Younger kids might innocently stop and smile, thinking that the photojournalist wants a picture just like his or her parents might take to hang on the refrigerator, while older subjects might actively try to manipulate a journalist's coverage for political or economic purposes. Because the subjects can play a role in the accuracy of an image, journalists might need to serve as educators and ambassadors of journalistic principles and ethics (Newton, 1998). Traditionally, journalists are taught to not interact with their subjects and to be distant, third-party observers (Newton, 1998). This lack of interaction can also influence the photos, though.

I was shooting this one veteran this one time and he was being really tight. All the photos were just terrible, so I put the camera down and got to know him, talked to him, and then afterwards, he was totally fine and that affected the photos.

(Sturtecky, 2015).

Photographers who take a more interactive and proactive approach often do so through modest self-deprecation and vulnerability. One photographer Newton interviewed said he approaches his subjects like this: “I am open and honest and feel when I approach my subjects, I give them the total respect they deserve and tell them what the story is” (1998, 33). Another photographer said that his actions could potentially impact the whole industry, and so being aware how the consequences of unethical journalism practices might affect others and how others’ actions might affect his subject’s demeanor toward him were critical to comprehend. A third photographer said that he doesn’t try to convey truth with his camera, because truth is relative. Rather, he tries to educate people about their surroundings and elicit an emotional response, whether it is rage, annoyance, or enlightenment (Newton, 1998).

Awareness, at its most basic level, influences whether a subject knows they are being watched and their actions recorded. More advanced levels of awareness might include if the subject is aware of the photographers’ ideological or ethical perspectives and how those might influence conscious compositional decisions. Because cameras can be reactive, photojournalists would benefit from knowing how awareness can impact credibility and how to create credible images while still adhering to the ethical guidelines the profession has established.

Research questions

Understanding what factors influence camera reactivity, how photographers can achieve more authentic journalism, and who takes responsibility for the journalism produced will potentially benefit the photographer, the subject, and the media produced, as well as those who consume and interact with it.

RQ1: What factor or factors do photographers think influence whether a subject will change his or her behavior when being photographed?

RQ2: How do photojournalists increase the likelihood that a subject's behavior is genuine?

RQ3: Who do photographers think are responsible for ensuring the accuracy and fairness of the content produced?

RQ4: To what degree do photographers recognize participation in the study affected their photography?

Chapter three: Methodology

Explanation and rationale

A qualitative approach is especially appropriate for this study, as it is the research methodology most suited to obtaining rich data about the “values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular populations” (Mack et al., 2005:1). In contrast to quantitative methods, qualitative methods enable researchers to study constructs, such as religion, sexual orientation, cultural conditioning, and ethnicity, and how these intangible characteristics might influence a person’s behavior. Qualitative research does not aim to produce generalizable findings, nor is it capable of doing so (Mack, et al., 2005). It focuses intensely on a specific issue and aims for depth rather than breadth. “Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (Creswell, 2014, 4). My research involves elements of ethnography because I am observing how behavior has changed over time, specifically, how student-photojournalists’ perceptions and content change during a six-week period where they are enrolled in the staff photojournalism course at the *Columbia Missourian*, a community media outlet produced by journalism students at the Missouri School of Journalism. A qualitative approach is appropriate because it focuses on individual meaning-making, is inductive in structure, and can adequately render the complexity of an ever-changing environment where photojournalists work. Qualitative methods are also aptly appropriate for phenomena that have been little-studied (Creswell, 2014).

Two qualitative methods were used to explore the issues of subject awareness and its affect on journalistic accuracy: interviews and a content analysis. The initial round of open-ended interviews took place the week of May 18, 2015, and was followed by a content analysis of the work produced by the photojournalists interviewed and a series of photo elicitations and follow-up interviews that were conducted the week of June 22, 2015. The initial interviews and image analysis allowed me to build inductively from specifics to broad themes. These themes also informed the follow-up interviews and photo elicitations at the semester's end.

Choice of publication.

While Columbia supports many publications, none are as well suited to this study's research goals as the *Missourian*, because of its target audience and access potential. Community newspapers are either small dailies or weeklies that concern themselves with local news, such as city council meetings, K-12 education, crime, club sports, and weather, as opposed to national or international issues (Armstrong, 2006). Other publications in Columbia, such as *VOX* or the *Columbia Business Times*, are niche publications that target a specific audience that is likely to exhibit behavior atypical of everyday humans. For example, *VOX* is informally known as an arts and culture publication, so the artists and musicians that are often featured are more likely to have experienced prior media exposure and are less suited to the purposes of this study. The *Tribune*, Columbia's other daily newspaper, does not afford the same access to processes, outtakes, and subjects that the *Missourian* does.

Research setting.

During the summer of 2015, I worked as an assistant director of photography (ADOP) in the visuals department of the *Missourian*. A staff of six students made up the backbone of the *Missourian*'s visuals department that summer. These students, both graduate and undergraduate, were enrolled in a class that allowed them to visually document the community and its inhabitants through several shifts each week. They worked on both assigned projects and self-generated enterprise features, in addition to covering breaking news. Each photojournalist typically interacted with several dozen subjects during his or her weekly shifts. The staff photojournalists are supervised by the ADOPs, who report to the director of photography, Brian Kratzer. Through working approximately several dozen hours each week as an ADOP, I had ready access to the newsroom, visuals department, and staff photojournalists that worked there. I also had intimate knowledge of the news production process, from conception to execution, production, presentation, and analysis, which informed and formed my research interests.

Interviews

I interviewed each staff photojournalist twice during the course of the summer 2015 semester. During the first interview, conducted during the week of May 18, I asked the photojournalists about their interactions with subjects and the subjects' awareness of them and their cameras. Considering priming theory and its role in future interactions, I wanted to see if the photojournalists were more likely to be aware of their own actions and how they might impact the accuracy and fairness of the news they produce after having been interviewed about them. I used the following list of questions as the backbone of the interviews:

- Do you think photojournalists intentionally or unintentionally influence the accuracy or fairness of the news they produce? How so?
- Who is responsible for ensuring the accuracy and fairness of the content produced?
- Have you observed a subject implicitly or explicitly express discomfort about being visually recorded? What were the circumstances? How did you respond?
- How do you feel about long lenses and catching people unaware?
- Where are people most comfortable when being photographed?
- How aware do you think your subjects are of their personal attributes/identities while being photographed?
- Does being photographed change how people see themselves?
 - Is this true in the moment as well as after the fact (like when they see the images)?
- Does the size of the camera and/or lens make a difference in how people react to the camera?
- Are people more casual around a smartphone than they are in front of a long telephoto lens?

Rather than rely on structured interviews that are geared toward providing uniformity and generalizable knowledge, the study instead employ in-depth interviews, which were more open-ended and allowed for follow up questions, as appropriate (Lofland & Lofland, 1995). Interviews, especially open-ended ones, are particularly suited for exploring complex, detailed, and nuanced information (Patton, 1990). Additionally, in-depth interviews are excellent resources for examining subject experiences, knowledge, expectations, perceptions, and priorities (Patton, 1990).

Image analysis/coding procedures

Between the first and second interviews, I analyzed images the photojournalists created during the first five weeks of the summer semester. During this timeframe, the students completed about two dozen assignments and produced 48 to 92 published media items. In her continuum of control classification, Bell (2015), categorizes photojournalism into the following five types: sports, spot news, features, portraits, and illustrations. Because my research interests focus on documentary photography where subject-to-photographer interaction is possible, I did not analyze any sports, portrait, or illustration assignments. These criteria also ruled out most press conferences, demonstrations, media tours, etc. I selected at least one image from every eligible assignment—an average of 7.2—to analyze and discuss with the photographer, paying special attention to images that demonstrated camera awareness on the part of the subject and reflected a wide diversity of demographic characteristics and photographic techniques.

I analyzed the images first by location. Using Smith and Winchester's (1998) typology of space, I sorted images according to whether the subject appeared in a gendered space and in public or in private. As physical strength and rationality are regarded as key components of masculinity in the West (Smith and Winchester, 1998), industries such as construction, commerce, and transport, engineering, and technology were categorized as male spaces. Work that originated in the home or was enhanced by emotion or creativity, such as the apparel, arts, and beauty industries, was categorized as feminine.

Organization of the images by space allowed an understanding of how much, if at all, location had on determining a subject's actions when being photographed. I was also looking at the images for evidence of subject awareness, such as direct eye contact with the camera, smiling or otherwise acknowledging the photographer's presence, etc., and how the photographer's approach changed (if at all) as the subject's awareness changes.

Follow-up interview/photo elicitation

By conducting a follow-up interview during the week of June 22, 2015, I was able to analyze if and how these staff photojournalists' understanding of and awareness toward their subjects (and vice versa) had evolved and changed. In addition to the interviews, by also analyzing the visuals the photojournalists produced and incorporating these visuals into the interviews, through the photo elicitation methodology, I had have another dimension of meaning to interpret, especially considering visuals are sometimes more reflective of the journalists' understanding and philosophy than their spoken words might be.

Verbal-only communication can be limited by the subject's memory and recollection accuracy. In contrast, photo elicitation can aid memory recall and improve the subject's narrative (Collier, 1979). Because photo elicitation allows exploration of the relationship between subjects and their environment (Auken, 2010), it, along with the accompanying caption, can be used to identify where the subject is. I could then ask the photojournalist if this was a regular location for the subject and what the subject's comfort level was in it. The familiarity of a subject in his or her environment and corresponding comfort level might influence behavior and was thus relevant to this study's stated research goals. Two variations of photo elicitation exist: researcher driven

and participant driven (Auken, 2010). In the first variant, the researcher is responsible for the selection of the images, while in the second one, the subject takes the responsibility upon themselves and selects which images to analyze and reflect upon. This study made use of the first variant only.

I asked the following questions during the elicitation portion of the interview:

- Is the subject in a public or private space? How did this impact their awareness?
- Is this a regular location for the subject? What was their comfort level in it?
- Is the subject in a gendered space? How did that impact awareness?
- How did subject or photographer mobility impact subject reactivity?
- How did the photographer's vantage point or angle impact the subject's reactivity?
- Did any shared or different characteristics between you and the subject impact the shoot?
- Did the presence of others in proximity to the subject affect the subject's comfort or awareness?
- How do you feel about direct subject-to-camera eye contact?
 - What do you think editors think about this?
 - What percent of your assignments do you walk away from with pictures of people looking at the camera? How many of these are published? Why?
- Besides direct eye contact, what are other characteristics of camera-aware subjects?
- What about cameras makes people aware of them?
- How do you perceive remote or mounted cameras? How do you think your subjects perceive them?
- To what extent did your participation in this study affect your photography?

Ethical/IRB considerations

As this research study involved elements of ethnography, and thus interaction with humans, care was taken to promote transparency of information while protecting the privacy of the individuals interviewed and taking steps to shield them from potential negative repercussions. Because open and complete communication requires a safe environment (Asacker, 2004), research informants were informed that any sensitive personal information shared would be redacted and/or generalized. Ethnographers refer to interview subjects as “informants” because “they provide insider knowledge on their subculture (Brekhus, 2003, 2). I submitted and received approval through December 2015 to conduct a pilot study during the spring 2015 semester from the University of Missouri’s Institutional Review Board, and filed an amendment and received approval to replicate the study for the summer 2015 semester.

Chapter four: Results

Of the six staff photojournalists interviewed, three of them were male and three were female. Four were White, one was Asian, and one was South American. Experience levels varied widely, providing a rich mix of orientations and perspectives. Each staffer's average length of experience making photographs in a news context totaled 977 days, or 2.68 years. The median experience length was 2.5 years. The range for the sample was from eight days to eight years.

Regarding the content analysis, out of 44 locations, 28 were public spaces and 16 were private spaces. 20 of these spaces were categorized as male, 17 were female, and 7 were gender-neutral. The male photographers exhibited a slight preference for photographing in spaces that matched their gender. They made photos in 8 masculine locations and 7 feminine ones. The female photographers exhibited a slight preference for photographing in spaces opposite their gender. They photographed in 12 masculine spaces and 10 feminine ones.

The photographers' own assessments of the space generally matched but was sometimes more nuanced than my own, since they often had additional contextual information that they gleaned from being present that was not reflected in the photo, such as the activity that was going on before or after they made the image. The photographers broadly characterized images of people exercising, holding guns, fishing, building and guarding as masculine. Conversely, ones showing primping, painting, gardening, and nurturing were classified as feminine.

RQ1: What factor or factors do photographers think influence whether a subject will change his or her behavior when being photographed?

The photographers identified a set of 22 variables that have the potential to influence subjects' reactivity. The photographer has complete control of only two of these variables. He or she can potentially enjoy partial control of 13 of these variables, but has no control over the remaining seven variables.

Equipment.

Of the 22 variables the photojournalists identified, a photographer could potentially control only two of them completely: equipment and visibility. Regarding equipment, the photographers generally thought the bigger and fancier the cameras, the more attention they'll draw. They noted that some people might be more comfortable being photographed with professional equipment, because the images made were more likely to get published and receive better presentation than, for example, smartphone snapshots.

If you come in with a big, old camera, in certain situations, that can put people at ease. 'Oh, you're a professional. You've got a big camera.' Particularly with people in wealthier areas. It can lend you some credibility and put people at ease a little more. (Photographer Six¹).

When working on long-form projects with subjects, photographer six recommended starting with professional gear, to quickly establish credibility, and then transitioning to smaller and more mobile equipment, such as a point-and-shoot or mobile phone, to deftly capture more intimate moments once the subject is used to the photographer.

¹ Photographers were assigned random numbers to protect their identities. Refer to "Appendix A" for descriptions of the photographers.

Visibility.

When it comes to visibility, photographers control this chiefly through the use of telephoto lenses and remote cameras. Using long glass can be beneficial when a photographer needs to capture a moment without disrupting a scene. “I like catching people unaware because you normally get more honest, more natural, where they’re not reacting to the camera on purpose or subconsciously” (Photographer Three).

The downsides of telephoto lenses, according to the photographers, are that they attract more attention, can impair mobility, and can be used by shy photographers or lazy photographers to bypass connecting individually with subjects.

As someone who is so scared to talk to someone and who frequently doesn’t get all the information I need because I’m too scared to keep the conversation going, having a shorter lens, for me, makes me have to go up to them. It’s easy to have a long lens and catch people unaware and not talk to the subject. (Photographer One).

All the photographers interviewed said they didn’t usually pay attention to mounted or remote-controlled cameras, partially because of their ubiquity, but also because a camera without a visible operator was perceived as less threatening.

Most of the time people don’t notice them (mounted cameras). They’re there, but they become white noise and people blank it out. They’re aware they’re being watched, but people don’t want to think about it. (Photographer Six).

One photojournalist made a distinction between awareness and visibility.

Whenever you're in a room with someone— whenever you're in closer contact— there's definitely a possibility that they'll act differently than if they didn't see you" (Photographer Five).

Thus, a subject could be aware that they're being observed, but because they can't physically see the camera operator, the effect of visibility on reactivity was lessened.

Photographers have some control of the following thirteen variables: the time spent between photographer and subject, the subject-photographer interface, the photographer's knowledge of the issue, appearance, implicit or explicit views on the issue at hand, intent, the location where the pictures will be made (potentially including whether they're made in a public space, private space, gendered space, or a location familiar or unfamiliar to the subject), how the photographs are published, the photographer's angle/vantage point, mobility, and the proximity of others besides the subject in the frame.

Time.

The photographers regarded the time exchange between the photographer and the subject as an extremely significant and important component to subject reactivity. The staffers agreed that, the longer they spent with a subject, the greater likelihood that the subject's behavior was genuine. "You stay there long enough that, eventually, they stop putting on a show" (Photographer Four). While spending extended periods of time with a subject can provide understanding of what they're doing and what is "normal" to them, it can also result in a too-casual relationship being established. "The longer you stick with a situation or subject ... you run the risk of befriending them" (Photographer Four), which can lead the journalist to self-censor and not portray the subject authentically. "You have

to gain access but maintain enough distance that you can stay objective, if possible” (Photographer Four).

Subject-photographer interface.

The interaction between the photographer and his or her subject can influence reactivity and can be influenced by the photographer’s actions or lack of action. Whether the photographer approaches before or after photographing a subject, the photographer’s demeanor and how he or she interacts with others in proximity to the subject can all influence the subject-photographer interface. Some photographers are more aggressive in handling subjects’ reactivity, by refusing to photograph them when they show outward signs of reactivity or by engaging in a stare-down with subjects who make eye contact with the camera. Others are more lenient. “I think you always have to let them play for the camera,” Photographer Four said. “If they’re posturing and you don’t shoot, they’re going to wait until you’re ready to shoot again and then they’re going to keep doing it.” Photographers can manipulate their interaction through the type of speech they use and how it’s articulated, through gestures and mannerisms, and through transparency in responding to subjects’ questions.

Photographer’s knowledge, appearance, views, and intent.

Photographers have control over their appearance, views on an issue, intent, and how much they know about a topic or subject, though they might not have as much control over how the subject perceives each of these variables. The photographer’s appearance, including if and how they choose to display their press affiliation, can massively affect subjects’ reactivity. Decked out with an oversized lanyard and press badge, a man in a park photographing children might be regarded with considerable less

suspicion than one lacking obvious symbols of professional affiliation. Similarly, choices about body hair, attire, or tattoos and piercings, can affect subjects' comfort.

Appearance has a lot to do with it. During an earlier assignment for another photo class, my partner and I went to a bounce house. She was short, petite, maybe 5'3". Very pretty. She was photographing kids all the time. For the first part, I was helping her with the lights and she was photographing no problem. I started photographing and maybe got two shots before someone came up and said, 'What are you doing?' (Photographer Four).

Some of this difference in treatment might result from gender, which is explored more fully in the "Demographic characteristics" section, but it likely also stems from the photographer's choice of how he presents himself. For example, Photographer Four recounted how he's had facial hair since 2000 and, at the time of the incident, had a beard that's almost a foot long. As facial hair epitomizes masculinity and is culturally viewed as a symbol of dominance and aggression, the subjects' response likely stemmed from more than purely gender differences. "Targets with facial hair were perceived as more aggressive, less appeasing, less attractive, older, and lower on social maturity than (those with) clean shaven faces," according to a 1996 study of the evolutionary significance and social perception of male facial hair (Muscarella & Cunningham, 1996).

Location.

The photographers agreed that location can influence reactivity, and came up with the following broad conclusions about the type of space: people are more comfortable when they're in spaces or scenes where they're more familiar than the photographer

(photographer four) and are generally more comfortable being photographed in public rather than private spaces.

People are most comfortable being photographed in public spaces. You're kind of prepared for being seen. At home, you have a completely different sense of who you are and what you're doing. Home is a safe spot. People are, generally, more inherently scared of photographers going in their private spaces. Outside, you're putting yourself out there (Photographer One).

Another reason subjects might prefer public spaces is because they have less responsibility for a public environment and are thus less vulnerable. While homes and offices are often unique to the individuals occupying them, public spaces are rarely personalized to a recognizable degree, so subjects can more effectively present the image they desire without any conflicting messages showing up in the background.

The photographers thought gendered spaces played a smaller role overall in subject reactivity and were influential less often compared to other attributes of the space, such as whether it was public or private. The effect of gendered spaces was most pronounced, the photographers said, when subjects appeared in spaces traditionally associated with the opposite gender. Photographer Three documented the Bianchi Cup competition this year in Columbia, which she defined as a masculine space full of men shooting firearms. "Shooting is a thing men do," Photographer Three said. "I only photographed one girl competing. She was a little shy. That could have been because she was competing in a masculine space." Even though the photographers thought gendered spaces played a smaller role overall in reactivity, it is important to note that an overwhelming majority of the spaces where the photographers worked were gendered.

Only 15 percent of the spaces were gender-neutral, and the remaining 85 percent had some socially constructed gender association.

Publication mode.

Many photographers thought subjects perceived the process of being photographed as less frightening than the potential of where and how the images might be distributed. “Knowing what you’re going to do with the images is even more important than knowing why you’re making them” (Photographer Four). Publication intent can be a tricky issue to navigate, considering that some subjects might alter their behavior based on their perceptions of the publication outlet or its editorial style. “Subjects not knowing intent can be problematic, but, if they do understand your intent, you run the risk of them changing their behavior based on them knowing your intent” (Photographer Four).

Angle and vantage point.

Members of the general public, when photographing, tend to photograph from chest-height (Photographer Four). Photojournalists routinely shirk these norms for largely pragmatic reasons and occasionally editorial ones. Photographers understand that they can often clear up a busy or distracting background from shooting low. They know that photographing from above can make a subject look more unassuming, but also more flattering. A photographer’s choice of angles can not only influence reactivity purely because they are often unusual, but also because more visually literate subjects can understand how the photographer’s choice of angle affects how they are depicted.

When I discovered low-angle, I thought everything had to be low-angle. It makes everything look cool and powerful. But now, I put more thought into why I use low angles. In this photo, I’m trying to get more content into the frame rather than

make him look like a hero, like you might do with an athlete. Anytime you're standing up and they're seated, that's kind of a power issue. If you're too low, you're putting them up on a pedestal. I try to be cognizant of that (Photographer Five).

Mobility.

Restrictions on mobility are somewhat commonplace in numerous documentary photography situations, such as court, press conferences, and crime scenes, which all present restrictions on where and for long photographers can work. Subjects, too, sometimes have their mobility affected, such as when working in tight spaces, like scaffolding or ladders, or when confined to a space while in transit. The staff photographers thought subjects were more comfortable when they had some control over their position in relation to the photographer's.

People feel more comfortable when you're restricted, because they can choose where to stand in relation to you. If you're free to move around them, they can get nervous. They don't know what might be next (Photographer Four).

One photographer recalled a cramped boat trip where she, a reporter, and two fishermen, shared a small space while floating down Missouri's Moniteau Creek². "In a tight space, it was harder. Because we were in a small space, you couldn't really hide anything. Yeah, I was locked in a small spot, but so were they" (Photographer One). The mere illusion of control can also help. "Even if they're OK with being photographed, the knowledge that they can leave is important. It makes them more empowered when they know they can escape if they so desire, but they're choosing not to" (Photographer Six).

² See Figure 1 in "Appendix B."

Proximity of others in the frame.

Humans are social creatures. “People have that herd mentality. When you’re in a group, you’re OK” (Photographer Four). Having other people in the frame, whether the subject knows them or not, who are experiencing the same thing as the subject can be comforting. One photojournalist was assigned to photograph a group of kids in a local school who were spending the day transforming, by way of face paint and props, into animals from a selected habitat they were studying. The photographer happened upon a mother with her child at the scene, who said she would have been hesitant to be photographed had her daughter not been with her in the frame.

The mom would have probably been less comfortable being photographed if her daughter hadn’t been present. It’s kind of a common refrain for a lot of women.

Women are held to such a high standard that some can be very anxious about having their photo taken, particularly when they notice it’s going to be published publicly” (Photographer Six).

A person’s comfort seems to increase exponentially as the number of people in the frame increases. “Almost assuredly, when you have a group of people to photograph, it’s a lot easier than if you’re doing a solo portrait” (Photographer Six).

Though they enjoyed partial control over 13 variables, the photographers had no control over these following seven: the subject's desire for impression management, the possibility of generalizing or making the subject unfairly representative of a larger group, the subject's prior exposure, and demographic characteristics, including ethnicity, age, gender, and socio-economic status.

Desire for impression management.

People recognize the staying power of photography. The photographers said people regard it as a more salient media than video or written text and are aware of its long-lasting and possibly iconic potential.

People try to present their good side because they know that photography is permanent. This is how you're going to be remembered. They try to control that situation as much as possible, and, when someone captures something that, one, they don't want you to see, or, two, didn't even know that's how they were, that causes a problem. That shocks and maybe even scares them a little bit if they didn't know that had that side. (Photographer Four).

Our familiarity with ourselves can lead us to amplify positive qualities while muting negative ones. A photographer, or any other removed party, likely has a more stark and critical assessment of a subject than they do.

When we look at ourselves in a mirror, there's a good deal of self-editing that happens. At least for me. I look different in a mirror than I do in a photograph. Some sort of process changes things. I think photography is more of a true representation. It's the difference between when you hear your voice speaking and when you hear your voice on tape. Particularly when I was growing up, I had a much stronger southern accent. Listening to my voice speaking, it sounded to me just like Peter Jennings or Dan Rather. Then I listen to myself on tape and I think, 'Oh, jeez. I'm the biggest hick ... I'm never talking ever again.' I think it's similar to that. It gives us a truer representation of how we appear. Depending on how insecure someone is, it could be either a good thing or bad thing. Everyone has

their little bit of vanity. It's something we all need to work on getting over.

Photography does tend to show us a truer representation of how we appear to others rather than just looking in a mirror. (Photographer Six).

Possibility of being generalized or made representative of a larger group.

Some minority subjects shy away from media coverage because they think their story will not be uniquely told or because White journalists prefer other White sources and regard minority sources as less credible (Tuchman, 1978). The male and White photographers interviewed didn't think subjects were overly aware of their attributes and affiliations while being photographed. The females who were also ethnic minorities disagreed.

Affiliation absolutely makes a difference. Even if I'm just interviewing them and haven't even taken the photo yet, all of a sudden, they're concerned about how they're going to appear as this affiliated person. When we were interviewing the Golden Knights (A U.S. Army parachute team), we talked to this one guy, Mike, for days and he was super cool and, all these things he was saying, we were like, 'That's great. I can't wait to interview him on camera.' The minute we did, his whole personality, his tone, everything he said was completely different. Every time we turned off the recorder he was back to his normal self again, because he was hyper aware of how he was representing the organization he was with.

(Photographer One).

The White males' responses seemed to evidence complementary projection at work. Previous research (Holmes, 1968) found that projection cannot happen with a trait of which the subject is unaware. Thus, if someone has not experienced generalization or

overly broad representation, they will not think others have either. By incorporating a mix of research informant perspectives, including the variables of experience, gender, age, ethnicity, and education, the effects of complementary projection were mitigated.

Similarly to the Golden Knights representative above who derived affiliation from his professional identity, people can also form identities based on their demographic characteristics.

People, especially adults in the working world, have some other identity, like I'm an employee of this company, or a representative of this. Even with ethnicity. There have been times with me as a South American person where I'm being asked questions and it's clear I'm the minority. It's like, 'Oh god, am I answering the question for all the Latin American community?' I know I'm not, but sometimes it feels like you are depending on what story is being told. The minute you have a camera pointed at you, that's probably one of the first things they think. They become more guarded. (Photographer One).

Photographer one also said people might be less concerned with affiliation when they are younger because they don't have their identities fully formed. Subjects can also inherit affiliation based on their geographic location. "Depending on the location, they (subjects) should assume they're being affiliated with whatever location they're at. (Photographer Three).

Demographic characteristics.

The photographers named gender, age, ethnicity, and socio-economic status as factors that could influence reactivity. The photographers overwhelmingly agreed that

subjects were, on average, more comfortable with photographers who shared similar demographic characteristics.

I think they're more comfortable with shared characteristics, even with just coming up and talking to you about what you're doing. If you went to a certain event and looked a certain way, they might not even talk to you. They might just remove their kid. (Photographer Four).

The photographers regarded age as significant because it was a predictor of socialization and the amount of cultural conditioning a person has experienced.

The more similar you are, the more approachable you are. The changes with age. Kids will walk up and talk to anybody. The comfort level, based on similarities and differences, changes with age and personal experience. She might not see skin or gender difference because those differences are taught. Visually, she understands my skin color is different, but it means something different at her age than does at my age or to someone who is 60 (Photographer Four).

Socio-economic status can also potentially affect comfort. If, for example, a subject has a low socio-economic status, the concerns of survival and providing for their families are likely bigger concerns than being photographed (Photographer Two).

Though the photographers all said they thought subjects were more comfortable with photographers who shared similar demographic characteristics with them, certain shared qualities are not equally as important, depending on the situation.

I'm working on a project right now where I'm following a guy named Will. He's a year younger than I and is black. Anytime I'm with Will and his coach, who's white, I still feel closer to Will because he's closer to my generation. His coach,

though he's white, is like 40 and it's not as easy for me to talk to him. In that situation, the more relevant thing is generation, not skin color. (Photographer Five).

Prior exposure.

Past experience not only with media, but with cameras, photographers, public relations professionals, and depictions of these elements in popular culture can all influence how subjects react.

The thing that I've encountered most often is shooting jubilation at a high school game. We're in playoffs right now. Kids will start celebrating for the cameras. That's not true. You don't want to use those photos because they're reacting to your presence. A real reaction to them celebrating is good and, they can almost look the same way, but you've got to look at it and be mindful of when it's happening. I've never seen a newspaper still photographer do it—I've seen TV people do it—directly influencing and encouraging, at sports, the crowd to react, the crowd to cheer. I've actually made that photo unintentionally once when I was much younger. I didn't run it. I found out what happened. I heard a big cheer behind me, swung around, shot, and then noticed the TV guy was trying to rile them up. That's a delete photo. On a more serious note, I know people who have had instances where bad behavior, such as civil unrest in riots, protests, where people would start doing things because media was there. Playing for the cameras, literally. (Photographer Six).

After analyzing the results of the interviews, it seems, if the photographers act

according to established ethical guidelines (National Press Photographers Association, 2015), such as the mandate to not actively influence a scene, they have less absolute control than might be initially imagined. Out of the 22 variables the photojournalists identified, they maintain complete control over only about 9 percent of the interaction. This contrasts with the 32 percent of the interaction they have no control over and the 59 percent of the interaction that both parties influence. Because the subjects enjoy more control over the variables than do the photographers, the old model of journalistic objectivity as a detached, hands-off process seems ineffective for portraying subjects humanely and authentically. If journalists only rely on the 9 percent of the interaction in their control, they risk becoming pawns to the subjects or portraying them coldly and clinically.

RQ2: How do photojournalists increase the likelihood that a subject's behavior is genuine?

While RQ1 looked at the factors that might affect subjects' reactivity, the second research question concerned itself with how photographers could support genuine behavior in the hopes of achieving more accurate and authentic journalism. The photographers identified 11 ways that they respond when subjects were uncomfortable or extremely reactive in front of the camera. Photographers with multiple years of experience dealt with reactive subjects by being vulnerable with them, establishing rapport, spending time with them, being open and honest about intentions, and determining the cause of discomfort in the hopes of remedying it. The two photographers with the least experience said they ignored, humored, or tried to find a new subject when someone was uncomfortable in front of the camera or extremely reactive. These latter

strategies might achieve a modicum of success, but they likely ignore the root cause of the subjects' discomfort.

The most commonly cited method for increasing authenticity was spending more time with the subject. If the photographers and subjects only meet once, the subjects have the decided advantage. They can, depending on their environment, considerably vary their presentation, actions, and personality to achieve the depiction or result they wish. Such manipulation is often not practical over extended periods of time and with repeated subject-photographer interaction, though, so photographers that spend more time with their subjects and revisit them have a greater likelihood to gauge and encourage authenticity.

Knowledge and understanding about the topic and subject at hand were critical, too, according to the photographers.

What also helps with that is knowing about the subject or topic before you go in. If you don't, you'll fall prey to what they want you to see. This happens a lot with Asian or African countries with lip plates. They don't that anymore for religious or cultural reasons. It's because of tourists. If you understand that before you go, you'll be able to better handle that situation. You gotta have knowledge before you go. (Photographer Four).

The photographers said that the interaction should be a mutual exchange of vulnerability, trust, and self-disclosure. Subjects should not walk away from an interaction feeling like the photojournalist knows their whole life's story while they know nothing about the photographer. By offering up bits of one's own life story and empathy, where appropriate, the photojournalists can make the interactions less like clinical

endeavors and more relational, which should also positively influence the journalism's quality.

One of the ways you make someone open up to you is to open up to them. It's a very, very dangerous line to toe. You have to make someone feel comfortable talking to you and be genuine, but you don't want to create this inappropriate relationship. It's this weird situation where I want to, in one sense, appear vulnerable, so they look at me as a person rather than as this intimidating photographer with this machine come to exploit their life. I want to appear as this genuine person, so they're genuine with me and open up to me to some extent. (Photographer One).

The photographers said that subjects tend to clam up when they see a photographer disappear behind a camera, so some photographers try to maintain eye contact with the subject as much as possible, often by "shooting from the hip" or otherwise creating space between the photographer and the camera. This can allow the subject to feel like the photographer has their full attention and their story is being heard and appreciated rather than coldly documented and recorded without empathy or connection. The photographers also thought, when possible, adequate time should be invested into interactions with subjects, so that rapport and mutual vulnerability can develop and that accountability can be better ensured. By visiting multiple times and observing the subject in different environments, the photojournalists said they have a better likelihood of gauging and ensuring authentic and more accurate subject representation.

RQ3: Who do photographers think are responsible for ensuring the accuracy and fairness of the content produced?

The photographers agreed that both the subjects and photojournalists bore responsibility but disagreed about the amount of responsibility each party should bear. On one extreme, one photographer thought the responsibility lay solely with the photographer, another thought that no single party bore more responsibility than the other, while the others thought one or more parties shared responsibility, though in unequal amounts.

It's kind of a shared responsibility between the photographer and the subjects. As a photographer, you can't necessarily grill your subjects and ensure they're representing themselves completely truthfully. At the same time, you need to make sure you're not overshadowing what they're trying to portray with your own judgments about them. It's a compromise between the two (Photographer Five).

Some photographers also thought that editors and others involved in the production process beyond the photographer should also claim some responsibility. Time was also a factor. The photographers said that, during brief subject-photographer interactions, the amount of responsibility was lessened. If the subject and photographer had more heavily invested time in the process, the photographer bore a greater responsibility to accurately and authentically portray the subject, because of the greater access and vulnerability the subject afforded the photographer.

The photographer with the most experience was also the most cynical in his outlook. "People are always going to lie to us. Even if they're not lying, they're always going to try to frame things in a way that fits their agenda" (Photographer Six).

Photographers with less experience tended to more equally distribute the responsibility and think that it should be collaboratively shared.

The difference in responses stems primarily from experience and perhaps, secondarily, from gender and gender expression. Less experienced photographers who are still learning and developing technical skills are likely less confident and rely more on the taken-for-granted truth of the subject's representation. Experienced photographers are more likely to realize the subjectivity of the representation and the many factors that can influence it. They might try to "visually verify" their subject's behavior, by identifying characteristics or traits the subject claims are accurate and putting them to the test by photographing them in situations where the validity can be assessed. For example, if a politician says he or she is pro-union, the photographer might try to photograph the politician meeting with factory workers in their natural environment rather than photographing him or her in their office. The other subjects in the frame, and their responses to the primary subject, can be telling and useful in determining and ensuring accurate portrayals.

Concerning gender and gender expression, since women are associated with communal qualities while men are associated with dominance, control, self-reliance and individualism (Eagly & Carli, 2007), gender or gender expression might also play a role in how responsibility is perceived and executed. Females, for example, might be more likely to collaboratively share responsibility while men, on the other hand, might be more likely to view responsibility as the obligation of a sole individual.

RQ4: To what degree do photographers recognize participation in the study affected their photography?

Responses spanned the gamut and didn't seem to correspond with age or experience. Two photographers who self-identified as having made news photographs for fewer than two weeks didn't think the study affected their photography at all. "It hasn't really changed anything," the first photographer said. "I still approach things in the same way. I don't want to sound like too much of an egoist, but I think I have a pretty good way of what I do." Conversely, a photographer with about four years of photographing in a news environment said the following:

You definitely made me think about different things. The questions you asked. I was processing on some level, but maybe subconsciously. You made me think about different aspects of a scene, like the gender and stuff, I'd never thought about at all. Now when I shoot, I think about, 'Oh, what am I shooting?'

Definitely the questions you asked made me process some of the scenes I've been on a little more, which is good. There's so much going on, that so much of it just goes over my head. Now I think things through a little more (Photographer One).

A fourth photographer said the study increased awareness of subject's reactivity, while a fifth reported thinking more about the subject's perception of the photographer more than before the study. The sixth photographer was not able to assess the impact of the study on the work process.

I have no idea. I went to a photography workshop and remember thinking at the end of it, 'Man, I just spent a lot of money and this didn't change anything,' but then a few months later, I looked back at my portfolio and I could see the dividing

line from before and after. The change in our work, photographically, isn't something you can notice at that time, just when you look at it months later. At the time, we're too close to it. It's never this one instant. It's something that happens gradually. Ask me in a year. It's quite likely that it caused me to change or approach things differently, but I won't know until I look back and can notice it. (Photographer Six).

Time is not a container, according to Husserl (1991). It can rather be thought of as a melody, containing individual notes or points, but also bars, phrases, movements, and scores that provide a greater or more complete understanding than a single note or group of notes. Thus, while a singular experience, such as an interview, or even several of them, might not have much meaning, when combined with future experiences, interactions, and self-reflection, it becomes synergetic.

Chapter five: Conclusions

Photojournalism is a subjective process, but the number of potential variables that can affect subjects' reactivity is surprising. The interviewing process began with obvious and rather safe assumptions, such as the importance of time and establishing rapport with the subject, but through interviewing more than a dozen visual journalists in a pilot study and six more in this subsequent main study, more nuanced and subtle variables, such as mobility and vantage point, were discovered.

Social constructionism

Consistent with the social constructionism theory, the photographers placed heavy importance on demographic characteristics and how these might influence the subject-photographer interface. Factors like age, race, and gender, according to the photographers, mattered to subjects and influenced how they reacted to the photographer. In some cases, these variables mattered more than the interaction itself, meaning, for example, that a photographer who shared demographic characteristics with a subject was welcomed, accepted, or given preferential access or treatment simply because of those characteristics and not because of any favorable interaction between the two.

Humans prefer homogeneity and are more comfortable around those who share similar traits, according to the photographers. If photojournalists only document people who share visual or other similarities, they perpetuate negative stereotypes and fail to accurately portray their communities. A preference for similarity is a culturally conditioned rather than biological condition. "Gender and race are learned. I don't think you're born with them" (Photographer Five). This has definite practical implications.

Though subjects might prefer interacting with journalists who share characteristics, not all characteristics are immutable as demographic ones. We share other similarities that, should we choose to divulge them, can build bridges and mend wounds and misconceptions that society inflects. When an issue with the black community arises, it doesn't require the newsroom's black reporter or photographer to cover it. Any observant, ethical, and humane journalist can cover the issue but should use the expertise and experience of his or her colleagues—of any race or ethnic background—to complement their coverage and ensure a rich, fair, and balanced depiction. Photographers can use the organic and ever-evolving nature of social constructionism to challenge stereotypes and document a world where people are treated based on their actions rather than the status of their immutable characteristics.

The study reaffirmed earlier research (Schwartz, 2003) that society has a socially constructed and evolving perception of those who use cameras. One photographer thought intent was critical in determining perception and that the public has a vague, at best, understanding of a photojournalist's intent. "People might not be able to tell journalists and PR people apart" (Photographer Three). The delineation among media production professions has been further muddled by market segmentation (Bird, 2009). A growing number of photographers can no longer survive on the wages from a single media outlet, and, as a result, many media professionals hire themselves out for freelance portrait or commercial work to supplement their income. Citizen journalists and bloggers, too, who usually lack formal education and adherence to professional codes, further dilute the public's understanding of classical photojournalism, its roles, and methods.

Historically, photography was used by the public primarily to document and archive memories. Now, with the ubiquity of cameras, photography is used by the public more to communicate ideological messages than to archive memories (Villi, 2007). The public might expect photojournalists to follow this trend and expect them to make photographs with an explicit viewpoint rather than simply document the scene and let the audience interpret what they will. This viewpoint is supported by the number of individuals who directly engage with the camera or photographer during an assignment. The photographers interviewed reported that as high as 20 percent of their outtakes showed people directly engaging with the camera through eye contact and that almost all assignments resulted in at least some subject-to-camera eye contact. If more people were aware of photojournalism's purpose and the intent of its practitioners, these numbers might be lower.

Priming theory

During the pilot study, every photojournalist interviewed said the study greatly impacted their photography or thought process; that thinking about these questions and applying them to their own shooting made them more aware and able to pre-visualize a situation and how they might respond. During this second study, the photographers said priming theory did not play as universal a role. Rather than having less impact with more experienced photographers, the opposite was true. Some photographers with years of experience found new insight and understanding while some with mere days of experience reported no effect at all. This might be due to the nature of learning and knowledge, which is pyramidal. Perhaps photographers cannot devote large quantities of attention to more subtle aspects of photojournalism, such as ethics or the impact of their

actions, if they are still struggling with technique. When photographers are focusing on the physical operation of the camera or on applying compositional or framing techniques, they are less likely to have time, energy, or focus to devote to more high-level concepts.

Framing theory

Though priming theory didn't play as universal a role in this second study, framing theory certainly did. Each of the 22 variables the photographers identified can be understood and analyzed through the concept of framing. Whether a picture story looks rushed or intentional and thoughtful reflects the dynamic nature of frames. How a photographer frames him or herself to a subject through the level of self-disclosure and through attributes such as knowledge of the issue, appearance, and intent, can impact the journalism produced. Geospatial frames potentially affect how the subject is perceived, their comfort, the affiliations they inherit from an occupied space, and how they respond when, through proximity, they share the frame with others.

Credibility

Without education, awareness, advocacy, labeling protocols, and ethical guidelines, the public might very well regard all camera operators as the same and lack the capacity to distinguish photojournalism from any other type of visual communication. The actions of a single photographer affect more than a single outlet or audience. They have the potential to affect the industry as a whole and its global audience that is connected through digital technology. The type of photograph, as well as its publication format, can both be predictors of its credibility (Reaves, 1995). It is important the public understands the nuances of how publication type and image category affect visual ethics. If they know, for example, that portraits are commonly retouched while documentary

images are not, they are more likely to understand and appreciate how news photography is set apart from commercial endeavors and to regard the former as more credible.

Photojournalists should be ambassadors of the tenets they adhere to and spread awareness and education to those they interact with. Likewise, photo editors should create and adopt labeling protocols so the production process is transparent and easily understood.

Professional implications

Subjects who participated in the study, and those who analyze its results, are likely more aware of the influence that both photojournalists and subjects have on the outcome of the subject-photographer interaction and the images made. Knowing what variables affect behavior allows one the opportunity to manipulate them. Once photographers are aware of the dynamic and ever-evolving nature of frames, they can react and organically respond, as appropriate, to structure a frame that is relevant to the situation. This might entail the photographer consciously selecting a geospatial frame where the subject is more likely to be authentic or limiting one's mobility to provide more control and comfort to the subject so that the playing field is more balanced and the journalism's quality is bettered. It might also mean that a photographer who knows going into a situation that their demographic characteristics, constructs, or other variables are at odds with their subject's will have to use the remaining variables at their command to compensate.

Limitations and opportunities for future research

This study identified and analyzed the factors that, from a photographer's perspective, influence subject reactivity. It did so with a small sample size (six photographers) from one media outlet in the Midwest. The study could be replicated in

the future with a larger sample size and with multiple media outlets. Future research would also benefit from incorporating the subjects' own perspectives and opinions about how and why they respond when being photographed in a journalistic context. Similar variables identified in this study could be analyzed as they apply to different types of media and situations, such as video or broadcast journalism. This study only examined the variables' effects on documentary photography where some subject-to-photographer interaction is possible. Other avenues for exploration include sports journalism and some types of breaking or spot news, where little to no interaction or control of the subject is possible.

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Appendix A: Descriptions of photographers

1. Photographer One is a female undergraduate. She said she has four years of making photographs in a news context and is an ethnic minority.
2. Photographer Two is a female graduate student. She said she has been making news photographs for one and one-half years. She is also an ethnic minority.
3. Photographer Three is a female graduate student who had fewer than two weeks of news photography experience at the time of the first interview.
4. Photographer Four is a male graduate student who had eight days of news photography experience at the time of the first interview.
5. Photographer Five is a male graduate student who self-described his news photography experience as spanning “maybe two and one-half, three years.”
6. Photographer Six is a male graduate student who started freelancing his senior year of college, in 2006. Not including almost a year’s worth of layoff time, he said he had been working as a staff photographer since June 2007, or for slightly more than eight years.

Appendix B: Figure



Figure 1. Image used with permission of Photographer One and the Columbia Missourian.

Appendix C: Interview transcripts

Photographer One interview transcript:

Do you think photojournalists have an influence on the accuracy of the visuals they produce?

Absolutely. Because of all the decisions that we make in taking the photo and all post-production. The way you crop something will affect the context. You can crop the entire context of a scene out and that's your decision. It can completely change the tone. Just like writers always have more information than they're going to put. They're using their news judgment to craft the story. Photojournalists do it the same way, but not with words. With light and color. There are many decisions that go into a photojournalist's work that will affect the overall meaning of a story.

Who's responsible for the accuracy?

It's a series of people. It comes down to the photojournalist who's taking the image, but then there's also a level of responsibility that falls on the photo editor and beyond.

How about the subjects themselves?

You have a completely different relationship with a subject who you've been following for a year than with someone you're seeing at a breaking news event. The level of awareness the person has to a camera pointed at them is obviously going to impact it. It all comes down to the photojournalist because they're the one

with the instrument in their hands. There's definitely something to be said about how people conduct themselves in front of the camera. I had a friend who's a photographer shooting a scene. I liked at these photos she had and was like, 'Oh that's such a good expression.' She's like, 'Yeah, I kind of worry though, because I feel that part of the reason he was so expressive was because he knew he was being photographed.' In that sense, the subject has a little sense of control, regardless if we like it or not. We have to be aware, as photographers, to the factors that aren't under our control of a button.

Does the amount of responsibility shift the longer you work with someone?

The responsibility is always on the photographer, but the longer you know someone, you can kind of tell (if the behavior is genuine). It's a relationship. A relationship is a two-sided thing, it's not just 'What's the photographer able to do.' After you've been shooting for months, say, there is a clear relationship being developed. I know we kind of don't like to say that, because, 'you're not supposed to have a relationship with your subjects,' so it's obviously not a romantic relationship or a friendship, but there is kind of a relationship between the person photographing and the person being photographed. You know that person you've been around them. There's a clear relationship there. Through that, you have the subject getting more used to the camera being there, maybe to the point that they don't even notice it.

You just forget about it because it's been there for so long or they're getting less intimidated by it. Time would really affect, I think, how a person conducts themselves in front of a camera, how aware they are of the camera, and how comfortable the photographer is telling and gauging 'is the person being genuine'? Is this photo saying something accurate?'

How does vulnerability impact accuracy?

That's something I struggle with a lot. I feel awkward being with a camera. I always say I'm more scared of my camera than the subject probably is. Try to build rapport. Each has a different way to do that. One of the ways you make someone open up to you is to open up to them. It's a very, very dangerous line to tow. You have to make someone feel comfortable talking to you and be genuine, but you don't want to create this inappropriate relationship. It's this weird situation where I want to, in one sense, appear vulnerable, so they look at me as a person rather than as this intimidating photographer with this machine come to exploit their life. I want to appear as this genuine person, so they're genuine with me and open up to me to some extent.

How do you feel about long lenses and catching people unaware?

I'm not a fan of it for two reasons. One, I don't feel comfortable with a long lens as a photographer. I'm working on that. Two, as someone who is so scared to talk to someone and who frequently doesn't get all the information I need because I'm too scared to keep the conversation going, having a shorter lens, for me, makes me

have to go up to them. It's easy to have a long lens and catch people unaware and not talk to the subject.

Where are people most comfortable being photographed?

Probably public spaces. You're kind of prepared for being seen. At home, you have a completely different sense of who you are and what you're doing. Home is a safe spot. People are, generally, more inherently scared of photographers going in there private spaces. Outside, you're purposely putting yourself out there.

How about gendered spaces?

No, unless it's someone who's outside that gendered norm. If there's someone who's the only woman in a male space, I could see that having an effect, where they feel more pressure being photographed in that situation.

How aware do you think subjects are with their personal attributes/identities when being photographed?

A camera lens being pointed at you almost automatically makes you more aware. You're not thinking about it until you're photographed. Affiliation absolutely makes a difference. Even if I'm just interviewing them and haven't even taken the photo yet, all of a sudden, they're concerned about how they're going to appear as this affiliated person. When we were interviewing the Golden Knights (A U.S. Army parachute team), we talked to this one guy, Mike, for days and he was super cool and, all these things he was saying, we were like, 'that's great. I can't wait to interview him on camera.' The minute we did, his whole personality, his tone, everything he said was completely different. Every time we turned off the recorder

he was back to his normal self again, because he was hyper aware of how he was representing the organization he was with. People, especially adults in the working world, have some other identity, like I'm an employee of this company, or a representative of this. Even with ethnicity. There have been times with me as a South American person where I'm being asked questions and it's clear I'm the minority. It's like, "oh god, am I answering the question for all the Latin American community?" I know I'm not, but sometimes it feels like you are depending on what story is being told. The minute you have a camera pointed at you, that's probably one of the first things they think. They become more guarded. I think everyone is really hyper aware of who I'm representing.

You mentioned age. Do you think people are less concerned when they're younger because they don't have their identity fully formed yet?

Yeah, and also, if I'm a teenager working at Gap, I don't really care. I don't think of myself as a representative of Gap. I'm a minimum-wage worker. I'm not a representative. My employer might think of it differently, but I don't.

Photographer Two interview transcript:

Do you think photojournalists influence the accuracy of the journalism they produce?

I think so. If the journalists take pictures and aren't satisfied, they might continue taking photos, the subjects might notice, and some will react to the camera that you keep releasing the shutter. They might notice, smile, or pose.

Who is responsible for the accuracy of the images?

The photojournalists and the subjects.

How long have you been taking pictures in a news context?

One and half years.

Have you ever observed a subject be reactive or uncomfortable when being photographed?

They are not comfortable when I take photos of them. It depends if they notice you or not. It also depends if you're only taking photos of one person or a group of people. If it's a group of people, they might not be as uncomfortable. The story I did last semester, that artist, I was only photographing her, so she wants to perform like an artist. She will be more careful about how she looks. Her appearance.

How do you respond?

I will pause a little bit. Just stop a little bit. They might think I stopped photographing them and continue what they're doing before, and then, I can take pictures.

How do you feel about long lenses and catching people unaware?

I think it's useful. They don't notice you if you use a long lens. I think it's more authentic and accurate if they don't notice you.

Where are people most comfortable being photographed?

It depends on the person. When I was photographing a single black mom, the whole family was so comfortable and natural, because they don't really care about me being there photographing them. That's really awesome if they ignore me. I was at their home and they were just doing what they were doing. The mom was breastfeeding her baby and she didn't care at all that I was there photographing that. That's authentic. They don't care, maybe, because they don't care what the photos are for. They're kind of a low-income family and they're really busy with their living. They were just doing their jobs so they don't pay attention. Maybe some people, like public figures or people who really care how they look in the photographs, they might act not very authentic.

You were photographing her breastfeeding and she didn't mind. If you were a man would that have made a difference?

Oh yeah. Gender can play a role in people's comfort. Many times they don't notice me because I'm a woman and not very tall. Not very noticeable.

Would you say subjects who are more similar to the photographers are more comfortable?

Yeah. I think so.

Have you noticed any difference between photographing in public versus private?

I think they're more comfortable in their homes. They feel more relaxed at their home.

Do you think people are more aware of their attributes or identities when they're being photographed?

Maybe the veterans. I photographed many veterans this weekend. They are quite aware that they stand for veterans (symbolically). I don't think students are as aware. Because there are so many students here and students are not that special. Veterans, especially at an event to honor veterans, are more special than the students.

Do you think the size of the camera or lens impacts how people feel?

If you use a very large, long lens or camera, they think you might work for a media organization. If you use a small camera, they might not recognize you if you're only holding a phone. They don't see it.

Photographer Three interview transcript:

Do you think photojournalists intentionally or unintentionally influence the accuracy of the journalism they produce?

Yes. The photographer could lie, which would be severely impacting the accuracy.

If they're the only one there, covering the event, they're the only one there to verify how something went down.

How about subjects? Do they have a responsibility?

That's a good question. You could think about it a couple different ways. As photojournalists, you don't want someone posing the picture, posing the action in the visual being used. Some of that is if the subject sees the camera, they shouldn't stop and smile and pose for it, although some people will and that's hard to avoid sometimes. Whether it is the duty of the subject; I would say it's the duty of the subject to be truthful. They are going to be somewhat affected by knowing there's a photographer following them around. I've had people I've been photographing ask to review the photos to ensure that the people in the images weren't portrayed wrong in that split-second the photographer makes an image. In a video, sometimes all those split seconds are a big deal, but if you capture it as a still, people might interpret it incorrectly. I've had situations where subjects ask to have a little more control about whether something is depicted accurately or it's one of those split seconds where something goofy happened and I just happened to catch it as a photographer.

How long have you been photographing in a news context?

What is this, week two?

In your two weeks of experience, have you had people who have been reactive to the camera?

Yes. Today I was photographing elementary school students. Some of them—especially the boys—would stop and pose and do thumbs up or just a goofy face. A few of them would duck out of my way and I was like, “You don’t have to duck. I’m trying to photograph you as you walk by this certain thing.” There’s been some other situations where people will react to the camera. For the elementary schoolers, I just took their pictures when they were being goofy, because I knew they would keep doing it until I took their photo. If they ducked, I just said, “Don’t worry about it,” and moved on. Other situations, it hasn’t been that big of a deal, where they are looking or interacting with the camera has ruined the overall thing I was trying to capture. It might have just been one or two images, which either didn’t need to be used or it was OK to use them.

How do you feel about long lenses and catching people unaware?

You have to be careful that you don’t catch someone unaware in either a bad circumstance or where they’re actually on private property or something like that. I like catching people unaware because you normally get more honest, more natural, where they’re not reacting to the camera on purpose or just subconsciously because they know there’s a photographer following them. I really like those natural interactions; natural reactions that happen. Sometimes, having

the longer lens allows you to get that, while otherwise, you wouldn't get the same feeling or they see the camera and be distracted and the moment would be ruined.

Where do you think people are most comfortable when being photographed?

Probably when they pay to have it done. At the same time, people think, "Oh, I have to look good because I'm getting my portrait taken." I would probably say, besides where people have gone out and sought to have their photograph taken, in a place where they're comfortable. Not necessarily home, but somewhere where things are going on that they're comfortable with but that's also engaging. So they're engaging with whatever activity they're doing, that they're comfortable with, and they're not noticing the camera as much, as long as it's not invading their space.

How aware do you think your subjects are of their affiliations when being photographed?

That's a good question. Depending on the location, they should assume they're being affiliated with whatever location they're at. At bigger events or with people at a park, they probably wouldn't assume they're associated with anything, unless a specific event was going on at the park and they somehow looked like they belonged. If they were wearing an event-specific shirt, for example.

OK. We've talked about location-based, or geographic, affiliation. How about demographic affiliation or work employment?

They might, but it might not come across in the photo until I come talk to them. They would create their own affiliation by talking to me. They might associate

more with their own personal affiliations, even if they're not visually apparent in the location or what they're wearing. They might be more aware of their affiliations than I would be.

Do you think being photographed changes how people see themselves?

Maybe. If they're photographed infrequently, probably not a whole lot. Especially in our society with selfies and people photographing others a lot and posting them all over, a lot of people have seen photos of themselves that are surface-level photographs as opposed to long-term documentary into the life of someone specifically, when that person first sees the results of that longer, more in-depth study, they might have a different view of themselves. Generally, for the most part, people, because of the mass of images we have available in our society, it probably won't change their perception too much, unless it's one moment that's really shocking. You need the more in-depth to get to that change, probably.

Does the size of the camera or lens affect how people react?

If someone just has a cell phone camera, they're probably expecting it to go on social media, if it's a friend, or just won't think much about it. If I have a more professional looking camera, they're be like, "Oh, this person's serious. Where are these photos going?" Similarly to cell phones, the small, point-and-shoot cameras that everyone has—they're going to think the photo won't get spread as widely as with a more professional camera.

Photographer Four interview transcript:

Do photojournalists influence the accuracy of the journalism they produce?

I think they do, without question. They do influence it. Whether it's intentionally or unintentionally goes to one, the photographer, and two, what they're covering. If it's something they have no interest in, they're there just to cover it because they were assigned to. That's different than if they have something that they're interested in or have a point that they're trying to make. If they're trying to change something through their photography, they're not going to be as passive about letting certain things go through and not others. If they find out what they believe is not right, it takes a pretty big person to admit that they were wrong and not a lot of people will do that. They'll try to show what they're trying to prove. Even the term "fact" is so loose. There's no such thing as "fact." There's "fact" to you and there's "fact" to me, but there's not "fact."

Who's responsible for the accuracy of the images?

Everyone is responsible for the accuracy. With the subject, depending on the circumstances, they might be pretending or putting on a show because they have a certain point they're trying to make. The photographer has to be able to see that, if that's what's taking place, and counteract that. If the photographer has a point of view, they have to maintain accuracy and keep themselves out of it as much as possible. Objectivity and subjectivity are a lot closer than a lot of people might like to think. Not one person has more responsibility than another.

How long have you been taking photos in a news context?

Since Tuesday (eight days ago).

When people react to you or the camera, how do you respond?

I think you always have to let them play for the camera. If they're posturing and you don't shoot, they're going to wait until you're ready to shoot again and then they're going to keep doing it. You shoot a couple frames to let them know you got what they wanted and then just stay there long enough that, eventually, they stop putting on this show. The longer you can stick with a situation or subject, you're going to get a better understanding of what they're doing, but you also run the risk of befriending them and then, 'I don't want to show them in a negative light.' You have to gain access but maintain enough distance that you can stay objective, if possible. You have to humor them for a little while until they're doing with their posturing. What also helps with that is knowing about the subject or topic before you go in. If you don't, you'll fall prey to what they want you to see. This happens a lot with Asian or African countries with lip plates. They don't that anymore for religious or cultural reasons. It's because of tourists. If you understand that before you go, you'll be able to better handle that situation. You gotta have knowledge before you go.

Where did you think people are most comfortable in front of the camera?

They're most comfortable in a situation in which they're more familiar than the photographer. People are more comfortable when they have a grasp on their own motivations.

How about public versus private space; gendered spaces?

A lot of people confuse public spaces and themselves as private citizens. They don't understand the boundaries. I think people are more comfortable in public. People have an understanding of public and private and private is more tricky, because it's them removed from what they're doing.

How do you feel about long lenses and catching people unaware?

I'm not a fan of catching people unaware. There are some situations that you have to shoot the moment—you can't go up and say, 'Hey, I'm going to be doing this,' because then you affect the situation. Longer lens attract more attention and seem more secretive than shorter ones and being close. It's all about intent. If you're intending to deceive the person and that's why you have to be so far, that would fall under something that's unethical.

How aware do you think your subjects are of their personal attributes or identities when being photographed?

They think they know what you want to see and that's what they present to you, but I don't think they are fully aware of how they act. When my parents used to argue, my mom would always say, 'Well this is all I said.' But this is *how* you said it. It's a matter of yeah, you know what took place, you know how you look and how you act, but you don't know that is perceived by other people. We watched one of the videos in fundamentals of Richard Avedon when he did the portrait series ("American West") and he showed the lady her portrait and she was like, 'That's not me.' because he caught a side of her that she was either unaware of or

didn't think that was a true representation of who she was. A split-second photo to sum up someone's entire existence ... is that fair? It's true. It's an accurate representation of that segment in time, but what does that mean in the whole span of that person's life? That's why people try to present the good side, because they know that photography is permanent. The idea that this is taking a piece of your soul. This is permanent. This is how you're going to be remembered. Show them your good side, because photography has that power of permanence. Photos are still perceived, pretty heavily, as being accurate, truthful, this is what happened types of things. They try to control that situation as much as possible and, when someone captures something that, one, they don't want you to see, or two, didn't even know that's how they were, that causes a problem. That shocks and maybe even scares them a little bit if they didn't know they had that side.

We talked about subjects as individuals. How about subjects as representatives of groups? Do you think people think of themselves as representatives of broader groups or symbols and does that influence how they act?

News publications are terrible about this. Whenever there's something with the black community, especially FOX on one side and NBC on the other, they'll have an argument and then they'll bring on one person that fits the demographic they're talking about. The other one will do it the other way, they'll have someone that disagrees, but it meets the same demographic. These (two individuals) represent everybody. There's no way you can do that. Everybody is their own individual.

Unless it's talking about a professor who is the official spokesperson for this group, there's never going to be a situation where you can say "this represents everybody." Anytime I can relate something to SouthPark, I always do. They had an episode where one of the dads ending up saying the "N" word. He apologized to Jesse Jackson and his son was arguing with one of the students and was like, "It's OK. My dad apologized to Jesse Jackson." The black kid was like, "Jesse Jackson is not the emperor of black people" and then walks away. The (white) kid then says, "he told my dad he was." There are people that believe they are (representative of a demographic characteristic), but those are the ones that are the least qualified to say that. If you believe you represent anything beyond yourself, you're completely off, completely lost. You can be part of something, but you can never be the main voice. I have a big problem with the "spotlight" people.

Does the size of the camera or lens affect how people respond?

Without a doubt it does. If you're out with a point-and-shoot, people aren't aware of you. If you're set up with a tripod and 70-200 and then you go out and stand in the same spot, same distance, with your iphone, people are going to be oblivious to you. The bigger and fancier the cameras are, the more attention they'll draw. I think people assume that if you have a professional level camera, there's something that's going to be done with that photo, whether in a publication or somewhere else. People are always like, "is it going to be online?" It's going to live forever. There are connections that people make with the size of the camera, with usage. If you say, "Oh, I'm just shooting for fun." The camera matters less

and less. Crime shows like CSI where people are shooting from a mile away and they can enhance it enough to see the tag on your shirt, that scares people a bit. That's the biggest issue with drones. People are uneducated about what does this actually do? What is it for? There's nothing that education can't fix, but without it, they're just left to their own devices and what they're told by people in the spotlight.

Photographer Five interview transcript:

Do you think photojournalists have an influence on the accuracy of the images they produce?

To an extent, yes, because I don't necessarily believe in the whole, "fly on the wall" thing. In most cases, you're going to be noticed. In more intimate situations, it's definitely more difficult to fit into the old cliché of the "fly on the wall."

Especially in the 21st century, people are very camera-conscious. In the age of selfies, everyone wants to look their best when there's a camera around. Yeah, they definitely do.

Who's responsible for the accuracy of an image?

It's kind of a shared responsibility between the photographer and the subjects. As a photographer, you can't necessarily grill your subjects and ensure they're representing themselves completely truthfully. At the same time, you need to make sure you're not overshadowing what they're trying to portray with your own judgments about them. It's a compromise between the two.

How long have you been making photos in a news context?

Maybe two and a half, three years?

Have you ever experienced someone who was uncomfortable or reactive to the camera?

I'm sure I have. I'm having a hard time bringing one specific instance to mind.

How do you respond?

It's a little bit awkward sometimes. When I was younger, maybe I would try to shy away, try to hide the camera a little bit. As I've grown and matured, I realized that only makes the situation worse, 'cause it makes you look like you're doing something you're not supposed to do. A lot of times, maybe I'll shoot for a while, try to get some candid stuff, if someone notices me and it's an unavoidable situation, I'll definitely go out and talk to them. That way, they know what I'm about. I'm not just some creep with a camera. I try to be open about it. About my intentions. Any hope they'll be understanding of that.

How do you feel about long lenses and catching people unaware?

At sporting events or airshows, people have sort of an expectation to be photographed, so it's OK. When someone is completely unaware—if you're hiding in a bush and shooting into someone's window—obviously that's stepping over the line. If there's some sort of a 9-11 emergency and the photographer happens to be there on the street, what responsibility do you have to the newspaper versus taking advantage of a poor situation in someone else's life?

Do you think the quality of the accuracy varies significantly with the subject's awareness?

That's a good question. A lot of people here in Columbia who are used to journalists and photographers being all around, maybe they don't care so much. Maybe someone in a smaller town, or even a bigger city, somewhere where they don't get a lot of media coverage, they're not sure of what your intentions are.

Yes, whenever you're in a room with someone — whenever you're in closer contact — there's definitely a possibility that they'll act differently than if they didn't see you.

We talked about prior exposure and how it can impact subjects' comfort. Do journalists have a responsibility to educate the public about their motivations and intentions?

I think, to a certain extent, you have to educate the people you're around. A lot of people don't understand the difference between a photographer for a newspaper and a paparazzi. (*sic.*) There's this negative connotation that the media is always looking to over exaggerate and dramatize things. There is a need to educate people about what your intentions and values are. You're not going to sit there and have a 20-minute conversation with them, but just a brief, "Here's who I am. Here's what I'm about."

Where are people most comfortable when being photographed?

Public events. Generally, people going to public events know that there are going to be cameras and a chance that they're going to be seen by other people. It's not just like, "I'm going to go to Walmart in hole-y pants or sit at home and watch a movie." If you're going out to a concert or fair, I feel like people are probably more open to being photographed in those situations.

Does being photographed change how people see themselves?

I think so, because people have an image of themselves based on the pictures they take of themselves or maybe that their family members take of them. Sometimes, a photojournalist or news photographer doesn't necessarily see things that same way. Everyone's got a different eye, especially someone who makes a profession from being able to see things uniquely. When you see a picture of yourself from a professional, it does give you a different perspective on things. It's probably in a way that you've never seen it before.

Do you think people are more or less aware of their affiliations or demographic characteristics when being photographed?

I think that people might be aware of the contrast between their own demographics and those of the person that has the camera. That can definitely be an issue.

Does the size of the camera or lens make a difference in subject comfort?

I think so, definitely. Outside of photography circles, there's not a great understanding of the tools you have to use sometimes. Sometimes, people will say, "is that lens necessary?" I think people probably see a big camera or lens and feel intimidated. Whenever you have a 50 prime, that's a pretty small lens and people, generally speaking, are usually less guarded when you come with a smaller lens. I've been told before, when I'm trying to get into an event, and I'd be digging through my pockets for my credential and they would tell me, "Oh, just go ahead. I can see you have a big camera." Apparently, I don't need a press pass if I have a big lens.

Photographer Six interview transcript:

Do you think photojournalists impact the accuracy of the visuals they produce?

Definitely, if they're not careful. From the photojournalist perspective, you have to be aware of when people are reacting to your presence. It's like Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle, the act of observing something automatically changes it. You being there is always going to change things. As a journalist, you've got to look at it critically and ask yourself, "Has my presence changed things to the degree that this isn't truthful anymore?" The thing that I've encountered most often is shooting jubilation at a high school game. We're in playoffs right now. Kids will start celebrating for the cameras. That's not true. You don't want to use those photos because they're reacting to your presence. A real reaction to them celebrating is good and, they can almost look the same way, but you've got to look at it and be mindful of when it's happening. I've never seen a newspaper still photographer do it—I've seen TV people do it—directly influencing and encouraging, at sports, the crowd to react, the crowd to cheer. I've actually made that photo unintentionally once when I was much younger. I didn't run it. I found out what happened. I heard a big cheer behind me, swung around, shot, and then noticed the TV guy was trying to rile them up. That's a delete photo. On a more serious note, I know people who have had instances where bad behavior, such as civil unrest in riots, protests, where people would start doing things because media was there. Playing for the cameras, literally.

Whose responsibility is the accuracy of the images?

That's always the journalist's responsibility. People are always going to lie to us. Even if they're not lying, they're always going to try to frame things in a way that fits their agenda. As a journalist, it's our job to figure out, what's their agenda and how do I make sure I'm not being their pawn. Just because someone has an agenda, that doesn't necessarily mean what they're saying isn't true. It ain't always easy. It's not always going to happen. People are going to trick us, but, that's our job, is to try to avoid it. It's impossible to always avoid it, we're always going to mess up; mistakes are going to be made. We're going to get tricked by people intentionally or unintentionally, we might not be completely cognizant of what we're doing, but that's not excuse not to try and to keep working toward perfection. Perfection is impossible, but we should always be trying to move toward it. Who else can we trust to do that? To improve the profession, we have to look at how to do things better.

How long have you been working as a journalist?

I started freelancing my senior year in college, 2006, and, not counting layoff time, which is almost a year's worth of time, I've been basically working staff since June 2007. More than eight years.

During those eight years, have you ever had someone express discomfort about being photographed?

Oh, yes. Regularly.

How did you respond?

I try to be like, “Oh, come on, you look fine.” Joke with them. Be lighthearted and don’t pressure them. Find out if it’s a humble brag, where they really want to be in the newspaper but they don’t want to seem like it, or if it truly is someone who is uncomfortable. When it comes to people who have suffered a loss or a tragedy, that’s completely up to them. It’s a feature photo, I don’t care. A kid eating a hotdog—that doesn’t matter. If someone doesn’t want to be in the paper, they don’t want to be in the paper. On the flipside, there are people who really didn’t want to be in the paper—criminals or people who had been arrested—and I really didn’t care at all. Oddly enough, the person who was arrested for committing a double-homicide didn’t want his photo taken and I could really care less. Not everyone wants their photo taken. Most of the time, it’s not an issue. A lot of people have never been photographed by a professional photographer before. They’re thinking “bad selfies” or point and shoot. When they look at it, they’re like, “Oh, wow. That’s really good.” That’s one of the only times I’ll show someone the image on the back of the camera, if they’re really apprehensive about it and I can show them, “See, you look good.” Most of the time I don’t do that. I don’t want to get people’s approval, but I want them to feel comfortable and like the image. Most of the images I’m making, I don’t want them to think it’s a bad image. It’s their photo; it’s not mine.

Do you think people are aware of their characteristics or affiliations when you're present?

I think people tend to think more about their physical characteristics. Their own anxieties and what they see as their faults. Very rarely when I'm working with someone are they like, "Oh, this is going to make all of 'X' look bad." They're more worried about, "Does these jeans look my butt look big? Oh man, I have a zit. Does my hair look OK?" Most people are mostly concerned with their own physical appearance and of looking silly. A lot of the portrayals in television and movies aren't exactly nice about this profession. Some people think we'd be like a tabloid and put an embarrassing photo up just to do it. Everyone wants to look good. People want to look good in their driver's license photos, so if you're putting them on the front page of the newspaper, they really want to look good. One of the tricks I do is, I'll tell people, I'm going to take your camera on three and then take the picture at two.

How do you feel about long lenses and catching people unaware?

I'm fine with it. I usually try to take people's photos before they're aware. I feel comfortable doing it because I do go up, approach that person, and get their name. It might be a little different if I was just going around taking images and not interacting with the person at all in any shape or form. If someone is like, "Oh, please don't use that photo," I'll be like, "Is there a reason why? Are you afraid you look bad? Do you want to see it?" I've taken photos of people who had a legitimate safety reason to not have their photo put up on the internet. I do feel it's

important to interact with the person on some level. I like to get the image before they become aware because it takes several minutes for someone to forget I'm there taking images. If I'm at a park taking photos of children, I want to talk to the parents first. A lot of the time, I'll talk to the parent, get permission, and then circle back a few minutes later. If I start shooting right away, they're reacting to my presence. I'll pretend to get a text on my phone or pretend to do something else until they stop thinking about me taking photos. I'll check Facebook or Twitter for a few minutes until they go back to what they're doing. Most of the time, I try to hit people before they even know I'm there.

Where do you think people are most comfortable being photographed?

When I was working on my term project, my subject wasn't particularly comfortable with me in her house because it was always dirty. It wasn't that she wasn't comfortable with me being in her house, just me photographing in her house. Other people are most comfortable in their house. Particularly if you're doing a portrait, that's something you can do—ask them where they are most comfortable. Some people are going to be comfortable just about anywhere. Others are going to be uncomfortable just about everywhere. It's about talking with your subject and how to make them comfortable where you need to be.

Do you think being photographed changes how people see themselves?

Yeah. When we look at ourselves in a mirror, there's a good deal of self-editing that happens. At least for me. I look different in a mirror than I do in a photograph. Some sort of process changes things. I think photography is more of a true

representation. It's the difference between when you hear your voice speaking and when you hear your voice on tape. Particularly when I was growing up, I had a much stronger southern accent. Listening to my voice speaking, it sounded to me just like Peter Jennings or Dan Rather. Then I listen to myself on tape and I think, "Oh, jeez. I'm the biggest hick ... I'm never talking ever again." I think it's similar to that. It gives us a truer representation of how we appear. Depending on how insecure someone is, it could be either a good thing or bad thing. Everyone has their little bit of vanity. It's something we all need to work on getting over. Photography does tend to show us a truer representation of how we appear to others rather than just looking in a mirror.

Do you think the size of the camera or lens impacts subject reactivity?

Yeah, in both good and bad ways, depending on the person. If you come in with a big old camera, in certain situations, that can put people at ease. "Oh, you're a professional. You've got a big camera." Particularly with people in wealthier areas. It can lend you some credibility and put people at ease a little more.

Compared to using a smaller, lighter kit, it does make you more obtrusive and you show up more. It's a toolbox. There's a lot of different hammers for a reason. You don't want to use a sledgehammer when you're trying to put finishing nails in.

Look at how you want to present yourself and how that can accomplish what your goals are. The different ways we put ourselves out there have a different effect.

We need to look at that and see how that changes to get the kind of access, response, and trust that we want. How do we get our subjects to trust us? Big

cameras could be a part of it in the beginning. I could see going in with a lot of gear in the beginning to say, “I know what I’m doing. I have the gear to prove it” and then moving away from that so, when you’ve earned the trust of the subject and they know what you’re doing, go and do it with your phone, or smaller cameras, smaller lenses, to get the images you actually want. It’s like when you hang out with your subjects and not even making photos. You’re just getting them used to you being there.