

A photograph of Annie Leibovitz, an older woman with short white hair and glasses, wearing a dark sweater. She is holding a professional camera with a flash attachment up to her eye, taking a picture. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene with green leaves and a blurred car.

MasterClass

ANNIE LEIBOVITZ

—

Teaches Photography





INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THIS WORKBOOK

The MasterClass team has created this workbook as a supplement to Annie's class. Each chapter is supported here with a review, resources for learning more, and assignments. We've also included a photo index, so that you can refer to the images you see in the chapter videos. The exercises in this workbook are designed to help you build a compelling photography portfolio.

MASTERCLASS COMMUNITY

Throughout, we'll encourage you to share work and discuss class materials with your fellow students in [The Hub](#) to get constructive feedback. You can also connect with other students in the discussion section beneath each lesson video.

ABOUT ANNIE LEIBOVITZ

Annie Leibovitz is one of the world's most esteemed photographers. Annie began working as a photojournalist for *Rolling Stone* in 1970, while she was still a student at the San Francisco Art Institute. She became *Rolling Stone*'s chief photographer in 1973. Ten years later, when she joined the staff of the revived *Vanity Fair*, she began developing a large body of work that expanded her collective portrait of contemporary life. In addition to her editorial work at *Vanity Fair* and *Vogue*, she created influential advertising campaigns. Several collections of her work have been published and exhibitions of her photographs have appeared at museums and galleries all over the world. She is the recipient of many honors, including the International Center of Photography's Lifetime Achievement Award, the first Creative Excellence Award from the American Society of Magazine Editors, the Centenary Medal of the Royal Photographic Society in London, the Wexner Prize, and the Prince of Asturias Award for Communication and Humanities. She was designated a Living Legend by the Library of Congress and made a Commandeur in the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French government.

PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY

“Your picture depends on what is in it, which has nothing to do with technology. That is the last thing you should worry about.”

—Annie Leibovitz

SUBCHAPTERS

- Objectivity: Where Is the Line?
- Historical Context
- “Capturing” the Person
- What Makes a Great Photograph?

CHAPTER REVIEW

A portrait has many elements. What might not be obvious is that it can contain elements of photojournalism, which on the surface seems to be the polar opposite of portraiture. Annie started out as a photojournalist. In this chapter, she discusses why she accepted her role as a portraitist and why she doesn’t feel limited by it.

It is accepted that a portraitist has a point of view. But any photographer has a point of view, including those who work as journalists. In practice, objectivity is relative. As one of the students says in a class conducted by Annie at the San Francisco Art Institute, “Where is the line?” Most of the students prefer personal work, but Annie is a big fan of photojournalism. She admires what appears on the front page of the *New York Times* every morning.

Annie has been working steadily for decades and has accumulated a body of work that is a record of the culture of our time. She has worked with some of her subjects at many different points in their lives over the years. Arnold Schwarzenegger, for instance, moved from the once outré world of bodybuilding to being a movie star and then the governor of California. His trajectory colored the way we look at the early portraits now. Historical context affects the meaning of pictures. The portraits of Caitlyn Jenner taken for *Vanity Fair* when she was announcing her transition to a woman record a very specific personal and cultural moment. The portraits of Zaha Hadid took on a different weight after she died.

The idea that one photograph can “capture” a person is, Annie says, baloney. She often runs more than one portrait, or even a series, which gives a better sense of the range of identities within one person. She says that she threw out the concept of the decisive moment some time ago.

LEARN MORE

- Check out the [NYT Lens blog](#).

2.

PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY

ASSIGNMENT

- If you look at hard copies of newspapers like the *New York Times*, cut out photos you find particularly striking or inspirational. Pin them to the walls of your workspace, file them away in a folder of materials to look back on, or paste them in your journal. Think about how they affect what you see.

3.

CREATING CONCEPTS

CHAPTER REVIEW

“You have to be prepared—to have an idea of who you are photographing and what they do.”

—Annie Leibovitz

SUBCHAPTERS

- Research
- Concepts
- Having a Role to Play
- Case Study: The Pirelli Calendar
- Case Study: Keith Haring

Annie began creating posed, conceptual photographs in the late 1970s, when she was making portraits for the cover of *Rolling Stone*. Her earlier work for the magazine was primarily reportage—observations of what was happening in front of her. Covers provided an opportunity for something different—a photograph that would convey a more specific comment on the subject’s life and work. This kind of portrait has both literal and allusive aspects. When Annie shot the comedian Whoopi Goldberg, she photographed her in a bathtub full of warm milk. Goldberg’s dark limbs and face emerge from a white sea. It is a startling image based on Goldberg’s heartrending, politically charged impersonations of a little black girl scrubbing her skin in the hope that she will become white.

Conceptual portraits are driven by an idea. Somewhere in the raw material of information about who the subject is and what he does is the nucleus of what the picture will become. It doesn’t have to be a big idea. It can be simple. For Annie, the series of portraits of poets she made for *Life* magazine in 1980 established a method of working that successfully accomplished what she was aiming for. Robert Penn Warren had been writing about death. His poems were infused with the fleshiness and fragility of living things. Her portrait of Penn Warren sitting on his bed, his shirt off, conveys that.

The key thing about a conceptual portrait is its connection to the subject. The idea begins with the person.

Conceptual portraits can be theatrical or subtle. For the 2016 Pirelli calendar, Annie went against tradition and photographed women of various ages who she chose because of their accomplishments. The Pirelli calendar, which is distributed in a limited edition to private clients by the Pirelli Tire Company, had for over 50 years been known for its photographs of nudes. Annie had photographed nude torsos of dancers for the 2000 calendar. In 2016, she was asked to photograph “distinguished” women. They were most certainly not asked to appear naked. The twist in Annie’s series was that the final photograph, which featured the comedian Amy Schumer, was a nude, but the model was not

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CREATING CONCEPTS

conventionally sexy. Schumer portrayed someone who had not gotten the memo that this year people were wearing clothes.

LEARN MORE

- Read the poetry of [Robert Penn Warren](#) and [Tess Gallagher](#) as Annie did in preparation for photographing them. Can you see the tone of their verse in Annie's images?
- Robert Penn Warren died not long after Annie photographed him. Photography and death have always had a close association. Consider the connection of the medium to death in Roland Barthes's *Camera Lucida*, and [learn about](#) the Victorian tradition of photographing the dead. Another article on the subject can be found [here](#).
- Annie discusses Robert Mapplethorpe's photos of Grace Jones, which were an inspiration for her portrait of Keith Haring. See more of the photographer's work [here](#).

ASSIGNMENT

- Consider photographing an older person in your community or in your life. As part of your preparation for the shoot, ask them to share photos of them taken when they were younger. How do the earlier photos inform how you approach photographing them now?

4.

WORKING WITH LIGHT

CHAPTER REVIEW

“I am constantly looking: ‘Where is the light coming from? What does it look like?’”
—Annie Leibovitz

SUBCHAPTERS

- Don't Focus on Equipment
- Using Natural Light as Your Teacher
- Keeping Your Kit Small
- Mixing Natural Light With a Strobe

Annie started out as a photographer by studying natural light. It helped her learn how to see and it is what she still studies when she goes on a shoot.

She tries to emulate natural light. She uses ambient light and adds a small key light on her subject, usually in the direction the natural light is coming from.

Adding too many lights to a room will often take away what the natural light offers.

With digital, you can get away with shooting in lower light, but it changes the image. It can make your photograph diverge from the ambience of the actual setting of the photograph.

Annie keeps her equipment kit small so that she can be flexible and adapt to the moment.

She uses different techniques to manipulate light. Her goal is to achieve a balance between her strobe and natural light.

Annie favors working on overcast days, when she will mix the strobe with flat ambient light. She doesn't like to wait for the “golden light” at the end of the day. She likes to start working in the early morning, when she has soft light and the option to work longer if she needs to. Even so, “You hardly ever get the right time of day,” she says. You just have to learn to deal with what is available.

LEARN MORE

- Annie tries to utilize natural light and she emulates it whenever she can. But that is not always possible. Discover what you should be aware of when shooting at night with these tips on shooting [landscapes](#) and [city scenes](#) after dark.

4.

WORKING WITH LIGHT

ASSIGNMENT

- In order to develop a better understanding of light, take a photograph of the same subject in the same place at three different times of day: early morning, noon, and early evening. Notice how the light changes in each photograph. How does the different lighting change the mood of the image and why? Which one do you prefer?

5.

STUDIO VS. LOCATION

CHAPTER REVIEW

“I’m an observer. I like to be somewhere. I like to see something unfold. I love the light changing. The studio doesn’t give me any of that. I don’t have enough to grab onto. I miss the storytelling aspect.”

—Annie Leibovitz

SUBCHAPTERS

- The Studio
- Simple Spaces and Compositions
- On Location
- Case Study: Gloria Steinem

When Annie had a studio, she made portraits that seemed to her to depend on composition more than personality. She didn’t feel comfortable in the studio as a portraitist. She missed being in a place that had something to do with the person she was photographing.

The shoot with the painter Agnes Martin in Martin’s studio in Taos, New Mexico, resulted in one of Annie’s favorite portraits. Martin hadn’t agreed to be photographed by the time Annie arrived, but after they had had lunch, she asked Annie to come to the place she worked every day. There were two rooms with a small bed and a chair. Annie asked Martin what she did there and she replied that she sat and waited to be inspired. That was the portrait that Annie made. The artist waiting for inspiration. It couldn’t have been taken anywhere else.

When Annie photographed Gloria Steinem, the plan was to use a location in Central Park where Steinem went to think and meditate. There was a rock that meant something to her. After the shoot, back in Steinem’s apartment, Annie realized that it was there, at her desk, that Steinem was most herself, surrounded by books and papers and the atmosphere of the busy activist she is.

Both the Martin and Steinem portraits are true, but Annie doesn’t think of them as definitive. “We are so complicated as human beings,” she says. “I can’t get it in one photograph.”

ASSIGNMENT

- Photograph someone in a neutral situation with a simple background and then again in a specific location that means something to them. How does a portrait created in a place with a studio-like feeling (it can be just a wall) differ from a portrait taken in a location that has some resonance for the subject?

6.

WORKING WITH YOUR SUBJECT

“There’s this idea that it’s the photographer’s job to set the subject at ease. I don’t believe in setting people at ease.”

—Annie Leibovitz

SUBCHAPTERS

- Checking the Picture on a Shoot
- When Is a Shoot Over?
- Being There
- Playing With the Subject

CHAPTER REVIEW

Subjects who are not used to having their picture taken are usually uneasy about being with a photographer. Even people who are used to it don’t like it that much. While Annie feels that some discomfort might make the picture more interesting, in general she finds that her subjects relax after a few minutes. For one thing, they know that she knows what she’s doing. They can trust her to take a good picture.

Trust is important. And respect. For instance, checking the back of the camera frequently to look at the picture might seem rude, unless you show the subject what you are looking at too. Making the subject stay for hours will not help things either. If things aren’t going well, it is better just to schedule another session.

How you conduct yourself is going to affect the shoot. Talking alone with the subject before things start is the best way to establish a fruitful rapport. Then when the shoot gets going, you can go back to your role as observer.

LEARN MORE

- Annie discusses photographing Queen Elizabeth. View those portraits for *Vanity Fair* [here](#).

ASSIGNMENTS

- Ask a friend or family member who is particularly shy about having their photograph taken to participate in a photoshoot with you. Explore ways of helping them through the experience.
- If you discovered any techniques for drawing out your subject, share them with your classmates in [The Hub](#). Perhaps they found techniques that would be useful to you as well.

7.

CASE STUDY: ANGELS IN AMERICA PHOTOSHOOT FOR VOGUE MAGAZINE

CHAPTER REVIEW

This chapter is a behind-the-scenes look at Annie's photoshoot of the cast of the 2018 Broadway production of *Angels in America*. The shoot takes place on a beach in the winter morning light. Annie has chosen the site and directs the subjects and the crew. *Angels in America*, which portrays characters caught up in the AIDS epidemic of the 1980s, was written by Tony Kushner. It was first performed in 1990 and has since been given several major productions as well as being turned into a television mini-series and an opera. The play's first part, *Millennium Approaches*, received the 1993 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. The production for Broadway in 2018 began the previous year at the National Theatre in London. It is directed by Marianne Elliott. The cast includes Andrew Garfield, Lee Pace, Denise Gough, Amanda Lawrence, and Nathan Lane.

8.

PHOTOGRAPHING PEOPLE WHO ARE CLOSE TO YOU

“Photographing the people close to you, the people who will put up with you, is probably the most rewarding work you will do. It may never be published, but it is the work that you should care about most and embrace.”

—Annie Leibovitz

SUBCHAPTERS

- *A Photographer's Life*
- As if the Camera Is Not There

CHAPTER REVIEW

Annie advises young photographers to stay close to home at first. She believes that they will get the results they want faster than if they work with people they don't know. The photographs she took of her family when she was young are important to her. And she believes that the photographs she published in *A Photographer's Life* in 2006 are her best work. That book was created after her companion, Susan Sontag, and her father died and her children were born. It contained both personal and assignment work. The juxtaposition encompassed the complete spectrum of her life as a photographer.

LEARN MORE

- Look at *A Photographer's Life*, the collection of Annie's photographs from 1990 to 2005. Think about how you would incorporate photographs of your family and friends into the other work you make.

ASSIGNMENT

- Who are the people who are closest to you? If they are willing to put up with you, try photographing them. Before you look at the pictures that you've taken, reflect on and write about what it meant to you to make them.

LOOKING BACK AT YOUR WORK

“Editing is so important.
Knowing what you have.”
—Annie Leibovitz

SUBCHAPTERS

- The Early Years, 1970–1983:
An Installation for the LUMA
Foundation in Arles, France

CHAPTER REVIEW

Early on in her career, Annie had a mentor, Bea Feitler, who she credits as an important influence on the development of her approach to her work. Bea was a Brazilian designer who studied at the Parsons School of Design in New York. One of her teachers there, Marvin Israel, became the art director of *Harper’s Bazaar* a few years after the legendary art director Alexey Brodovitch retired. Israel hired Bea and another young designer, Ruth Ansel, to be his assistants. Two years later, in 1963, Israel left the magazine and Bea and Ruth become co-art directors. They were both in their mid-twenties and had inherited one of the most important jobs in the magazine world.

For nearly a decade, Bea and Ruth were at the center of the culture explosion of the 1960s. Their inventive, inspirational work melded the worlds of fashion, rock music, experimental film, pop and op Art, and high culture. It is considered to be emblematic of the decade. Then, in 1972, Bea left *Harper’s Bazaar* and joined Gloria Steinem in launching the new *Ms.* magazine. Her energetic and sophisticated graphics helped put *Ms.* on the map.

It was during this time that Annie and Bea met. Bea gave Annie an assignment for *Ms.* and then Annie brought Bea in to help redesign *Rolling Stone*.

Annie credits Bea with teaching her how to edit her work. Not only in selecting the right frames from a shoot, but in assessing the body of her work. “Looking back” is a lesson Annie believes is invaluable. “You’ll be surprised,” Annie says. “There will be something there you didn’t expect to see.” And that knowledge will determine how you go forward.

The footage of Annie assembling a show of her early work for an exhibition at the LUMA Foundation in Arles, France, in spring of 2017 exemplifies the editing process on a vast scale.

THE TECHNICAL SIDE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

“My experience of learning in the darkroom with black-and-white film had limitations that were helpful. There were fewer choices. When digital came along, I didn’t jump into it. But it was obvious that this is what was going to be. If you do this for a long time, everything changes.”

—Annie Leibovitz

SUBCHAPTERS

- Transitioning Into Digital
- Use Digital Tools to Enhance Traditional Photography
- Focus and Sharpness
- Case Study: Monument Valley

CHAPTER REVIEW

“I’m interested in content and not so much the technical side of photography,” Annie says. Which doesn’t mean that she is wedded to out-of-date equipment. She misses her Mamiya RZ67 camera and Polaroid film, but she moved to digital pretty quickly. Working at the computer is simply a version of being in the darkroom, with different, broader parameters.

Annie doesn’t mind images that are sometimes not as sharp as they might be. She reminds students of the work of Julia Margaret Cameron, who printed her famous portraits of eminent Victorians in a shed in her backyard on the Isle of Wight. Cameron’s son was patronizing about his mother’s sometimes fuzzy pictures. He inherited her equipment and became a photographer himself. But, as Annie says, his pictures, which were much sharper than his mother’s, were also very boring. Julia Margaret Cameron, on the other hand, is now recognized as one of the most important figures in the history of photography.

LEARN MORE

- Read [this brief history](#) on Kodachrome film. Many analog photographers lament its loss.
- Annie talks about apertures in this chapter. If you’re a newcomer to photography, you can learn about apertures, as well as shutter speed and ISO, [here](#).
- Annie greatly admires the photographs of Julia Margaret Cameron. See her work and learn about her [here](#).

ASSIGNMENT

- Try an exercise Annie learned in art school. Make some photographs while you are blindfolded. Choose a small room to work in—it could be your bedroom. Blindfold yourself with a piece of cloth. Some of the photographs you take will be in focus and some will not. What appeals to you about them?

STUDENT SESSIONS

“What I remember about being in school is sitting in rooms with other photographers and having a sense of camaraderie. We would look at work together and sort of push each other on.”

—Annie Leibovitz

SUBCHAPTERS

- Photographing Family and Friends
- Learning How to See
- Being a Director
- Storytelling in a Series
- Don't Be Afraid to Go Back
- Connecting With the World Through Photography

CHAPTER REVIEW

As Annie critiques and discusses the photos taken by students at the San Francisco Art Institute, several important messages are conveyed. One is that some of the most valuable feedback you'll receive will come from your peers. Another is the importance of taking the opportunity you have to work with people who are close to you, as Emily did with her best friend. Maximize this time. Mengmeng created stunning imagery by giving her subjects a role to play. Her photographs were tied together because they were inspired by a statue. Kylie experimented with framing by using traditional film photography to capture street life. Mika was able to use connections in her family to take photographs of otherwise guarded subjects. Their photographs are proof that the latitude of photography is wide, and that you can create images that are unique to you and tell powerful stories.

ASSIGNMENT

- For Annie when she was a student at SFAI, connecting with other photographers and discussing work was an important part of the creative process. Connect with two or three other photographers—either in your local community or in [The Hub](#)—and share your work. Have a discussion with them about it, either in person or using a video conference service.

12–13.

CASE STUDIES

PART 1:

PHOTOGRAPHING ALICE WATERS

PART 2: DIGITAL

POST-PRODUCTION

CHAPTER REVIEW

“When we were talking about doing a new shoot for the MasterClass, Alice Waters’s name came up. I got excited because I wanted to go back again and tackle the idea of how to take a photograph of Alice.”
—Annie Leibovitz

Annie photographed Alice Waters many times over the years, but she never felt that she had made a truly successful portrait.

Alice is a pioneer of the farm-to-table food movement and a fellow MasterClass instructor. She has been photographed often in a garden, and Annie herself had photographed Alice in an apple orchard. This time she began thinking of Alice’s emblematic status. Posters for the Victory Gardens of World Wars I and II were considered. Annie also began looking at Julia Margaret Cameron’s portraits of women and discovered that the one that seemed most like Alice was in fact Alice Liddell, the model for *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*.

SUBCHAPTERS

- Building the Concept
- Inspiration
- Preproduction
- Music
- Lighting
- After the Shoot
- The Screen vs. a Print
- Color Temperature

The element that became most significant in the shoot was a peach. Alice had written about peaches in a recent memoir and peaches seemed to suggest her sensual qualities. Just the right peaches were obtained with some difficulty. The shoot took place in Alice’s front yard in Berkeley, California, with Edith Piaf singing in the background. The light that day was bright, but Annie tucked Alice into the shade of a bush. She held the peach.

Annie edits the contact sheets for the entire shoot and pares them down. When she works with the technician on the computer she tries to emulate the color and light that she saw in person. She does not want to see the strobe. She tries to strike a balance of color and light to create the most natural-looking image.

Editing the photo may never feel finished. Annie talks about there being another thing she might want to change, but she’s not sure what that would be.

12–13.

CASE STUDIES

PART 1:

PHOTOGRAPHING ALICE WATERS

PART 2: DIGITAL

POST-PRODUCTION

LEARN MORE

- When Annie was brainstorming concepts for her most recent shoot with Alice Waters, she referenced [posters from World War II](#), prompted by Alice’s discussions of Victory Gardens. Can you see the influences of these historic posters in her image?
- Read the article that accompanies Annie’s photo, [“Alice Waters on the Persuasive Power of the Peach.”](#)

ASSIGNMENT

- On this photoshoot, Annie collaborated with a close friend that she shares with Alice. The friend contributed to the concept and execution of the shoot. Try working with someone who has ideas about styling or some other aspect of the photograph. Your collaborator’s role can be informal, but let them help you put together the image. How does their creative input affect the outcome?

PHOTOGRAPHIC INFLUENCES

“When you’re a photographer, you see and you can’t stop seeing.”

—Annie Leibovitz

SUBCHAPTERS

- Henri Cartier-Bresson
- Robert Frank
- Richard Avedon
- Jacques Henri Lartigue
- Diane Arbus
- Alfred Stieglitz and Georgia O’Keeffe
- Sally Mann
- David Hockney on Photography

CHAPTER REVIEW

In this chapter, Annie goes through the photography books that are most important to her. “They are very, very important,” she says.

The “fathers of 35mm photography,” Henri Cartier-Bresson and Robert Frank, were Annie’s models when she was a student. She didn’t look to them for technical guidance. It was about seeing. Cartier-Bresson’s *The Decisive Moment* and Frank’s *The Americans* epitomized personal reportage, although they reflected very different temperaments. Cartier-Bresson is lyrical, joyous. Frank is darker. He was a European intellectual traveling across the American landscape and discovering uncomfortable truths.

Richard Avedon’s ability to reveal depths of personality in simple, straightforward portraits is what drew Annie to him. He was a magazine and fashion photographer who expressed himself most fully in his books. *Observations*, with commentary by Truman Capote, and *Nothing Personal*, which Avedon made in collaboration with James Baldwin, are classics of both book-making and portraiture.

Jacques Henri Lartigue’s *Diary of a Century* was for a long time Annie’s favorite book. It was edited by Avedon and designed by Bea Feitler, who was an important mentor to Annie. They created a narrative through Lartigue’s photographs that reflected a life of grace and charm—his parents in youth and old age, his lovers, his passion for cars and planes. It is an optimistic view of life.

Diane Arbus’s *Magazine Work* was published in 1984, over a decade after her death. The simply composed, intimate, unsettling portraits had a profound influence on Annie’s generation of photographers.

Alfred Stieglitz’s photographs of Georgia O’Keeffe, his wife and muse, are, Annie says, “probably the greatest portraits ever done as far as I’m concerned.” It is the level of trust and intimacy they exhibit that draws Annie to them. Intimacy is also the factor that Annie most admires in Sally Mann’s portraits of her children.

David Hockney is primarily a painter, but in the early 1980s he was obsessed with experimenting with a camera. The fragmented photocollages he made then struck Annie as “the closest thing I

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PHOTOGRAPHIC INFLUENCES

know to how the eye sees.” Hockney broke out of the rectangle of the frame and opened up our concept of vision.

LEARN MORE

- Annie cites Robert Frank and Henri Cartier-Bresson as great influences on her work and perception of photography. [Learn more](#) about Robert Frank and [hear](#) him speak about one of his most important projects, *The Americans*. Read a short biography of Henri Cartier-Bresson, master of the photo essay, and view some of his photographs [here](#).
- Read [this short biography](#) of Richard Avedon and view some of his work [here](#). Annie admires Avedon for his ability to “psychologically create a portrait out of nothing except the person and himself.” Avedon partnered with American writer, poet, and scholar James Baldwin in 1964 for [a book entitled *Nothing Personal*](#). You can read Baldwin’s text for the book [here](#).
- Take a look at Lartigue’s *Diary of a Century* and observe how a narrative was constructed through the arrangement of Lartigue’s photographs.
- Study Diane Arbus’s *Magazine Work*. Read Arthur Lubow’s biography of Arbus (*Diane Arbus: Portrait of a Photographer*, Ecco, 2016). View some of her most well-known photographs [here](#).
- Read about Alfred Stieglitz [here](#), and see some of his works, which shaped the American tradition of photography, [here](#). Learn more about Stieglitz’s portraits of Georgia O’Keeffe [here](#), then listen to [this podcast](#) on the letters the two exchanged, which have recently been compiled in *My Faraway One: Selected Letters of Georgia O’Keeffe and Alfred Stieglitz: Volume One, 1915–1933* (Yale University Press, 2011).

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PHOTOGRAPHIC INFLUENCES

ASSIGNMENT

- Annie was influenced by David Hockney's work—especially his study of perspective. He expanded the frame of a Polaroid camera. Try an exercise in perspective. Take your camera and point it left, right, up, and down, taking many photographs. Collage them together to create an image and see what it feels like to break the border of the rectangle or square frame of your camera.

15.

THE EVOLUTION OF A PHOTOGRAPHER

CHAPTER REVIEW

“During the years at Rolling Stone, I had a camera with me all the time. You can’t underestimate what it means to be young, to have all that energy, to be obsessed. It was my life.”
—Annie Leibovitz

Family photographs were an important element of Annie’s childhood. She still remembers the dozens of framed pictures on her grandmother’s piano. The picture that is most indelibly printed on her memory is of her mother’s family—eight children and their parents, lined up together on the Atlantic City boardwalk. It was the style of photography that she adopted naturally when she bought her first camera, in 1968. She was a student at the San Francisco Art Institute and was visiting her family in the summer after her freshman year. Her father was in the Air Force, stationed in the Philippines. One of the very first photographs she took (and later published in a book) was of four people—three American soldiers and a tiny local woman—lined up, as in a family portrait.

Annie was studying painting, but she was drawn to photography. She says that her camera gave her a sense of purpose. She could go out into the world, look around, take pictures, come back to the darkroom, and then discuss her work with other students. The immediacy was appealing. She learned how to see and how to frame what she saw in a 35mm rectangle.

Annie learned by doing. The style of photography that was admired at the art institute was personal reportage. Students were encouraged to photograph life around them. In the case of San Francisco in the late ‘60s, that meant photographing civil rights rallies, Black Panther meetings, and demonstrations against the Vietnam War. *Rolling Stone*, a brash and funky new magazine started by people not much older than Annie, published some of her pictures and began sending her on assignment. So her career started even before she was out of school.

The grounding in personal reportage colored Annie’s approach to assignment work. She was trained to photograph what interested her, and on assignment she looked for a way to tell a story that meant something. She remained in search of the compelling image.

15.

THE EVOLUTION OF A PHOTOGRAPHER

LEARN MORE

- Learn more about the history of photography, from the daguerreotype to the camera phone, [here](#).
- Annie was gripped by the power of photojournalism as a young woman. Read [this article](#), which contains a brief history of photojournalism. If you'd like to explore the work of history's most prominent photojournalists, use [this list](#) as a base to begin researching.
- Take a look at *Rolling Stone*'s archive of covers [here](#).

ASSIGNMENTS

- Annie still thinks about an old photograph of her mother's large family lined up on a boardwalk. It was taken by an anonymous photographer. She encourages you to think about what images you grew up with, the ways you were photographed as a child, and the ways your family was photographed. What old image or images—like Annie's boardwalk photograph—have affected your work? Why?
- If you don't already do so, consider taking your camera with you every time you leave your house. Keep it around your neck or in a bag that's readily accessible. Remember Annie's advice: trust what you see and find the best way to tell the story. Never let your brain talk you out of taking a picture. If you see a photo, take it! And don't analyze while you're shooting. Let your intuition guide you, and evaluate later.

CLOSING

CHAPTER REVIEW

Congratulations! You've finished your MasterClass with Annie Leibovitz! We hope you feel inspired to go out into the world and take photographs. We want to make sure that your experience with Annie and your classmates doesn't stop here. You can stay in touch with your peers by:

- Joining [The Hub](#) to connect with your classmates
- Contributing to lesson discussions at the end of each video
- Uploading your relevant assignments in [The Hub](#) for peer feedback
- Submitting an Office Hours question to Annie

YOUR FINAL ASSIGNMENTS

- Reflect on your experiences shooting various subjects throughout Annie's MasterClass. What did you learn? Which photographs are you most proud of? Make a selection of your work for your portfolio. When choosing images, consider the following questions, along with any others you feel are important: What makes the photo compelling? What about the framing and composition speaks to the viewer? What does the photograph express about the subject? Why is the photo special to you? What about the shoot do you remember most?
- Consider sharing your portfolio in [The Hub](#) with your classmates, and offering feedback on theirs. Try to be as honest and constructive as possible.

BOOKS FOR REFERENCE

Diane Arbus, edited by Doon Arbus and Marvin Israel (Aperture, 1972).

Diane Arbus: Magazine Work, edited by Doon Arbus and Marvin Israel (Aperture, 1984).

Richard Avedon, *Evidence 1944–1994*, with essays by Jane Livingston and Adam Gopnik (Random House, 1994).

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Richard Avedon and James Baldwin, *Nothing Personal* (Atheneum, 1964).

Richard Avedon and Truman Capote, *Observations* (Simon & Schuster, 1959).

Julia Margaret Cameron's Women, by Sylvia Wolf (The Art Institute of Chicago, 1998).

Henri Cartier-Bresson, *The Decisive Moment* (Simon & Schuster, 1952).

Bea Feitler, *O design de Bea Feitler*, text by Bruno Feitler (Cosac Naify, 2012).

Robert Frank, *The Americans*, with an introduction by Jack Kerouac (Grove Press, 1959).

David Hockney, *Cameraworks*, with an essay by Lawrence Weschler (Knopf, 1984).

David Hockney, *Hockney on Photography*, with conversations with Paul Joyce (Harmony Books, 1988).

Jacques Henri Lartigue, *Diary of a Century*, edited by Richard Avedon (Viking Press, 1970).

Sally Mann, *Immediate Family*, with an afterword by Reynolds Price (Aperture, 1992).

Irving Penn, *Centennial* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2017).

Irving Penn, *Worlds in a Small Room* (Grossman, 1974).

Georgia O'Keeffe, a Portrait by Alfred Stieglitz, with an introduction by Georgia O'Keeffe (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997).

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1. INTRODUCTION



John Lennon and Yoko Ono
New York City, December 8th, 1980



Carl Lewis
Houston, Texas, 1994



Jodie Foster
Ambassador Hotel, Los Angeles, 1996



Peter Tosh
New York City, 1979



Malala Yousafzai
Birmingham, England, 2016



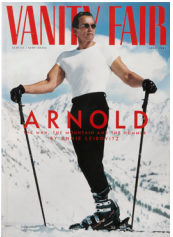
Rosie, Joaquin, and Julián Castro
San Antonio, Texas, 2013

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2. PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY



Arnold Schwarzenegger
Pretoria, South Africa, 1975



Arnold Schwarzenegger
Sun Valley, Idaho, 1997
Vanity Fair June 1997 Cover



Caitlyn Jenner
Malibu, California, 2015



Zaha Hadid
New York City, 2003

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2. PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY



Alexandra Fuller
Kelly, Wyoming, 2016



Sally Mann
Lexington, Virginia, 2015



David Hockney
Bridlington, East Yorkshire, England, 2013



David Hockney and John Fitzherbert
Bridlington, East Yorkshire, England, 2013

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2. PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY



Akke Alma
Las Vegas, Nevada, 1995



Akke Alma
Stardust Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada, 1995



Narelle Brennan and her daughters,
Sarah and Briana
Las Vegas, Nevada, 1995



Narelle Brennan
Stardust Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada, 1995



Linda Green
Las Vegas, Nevada, 1995



Linda Green
Bally's Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada, 1995



Susan McNamara
Las Vegas, Nevada, 1995



Susan McNamara
Bally's Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada, 1995

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2. PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY



Agnes Martin
Taos, New Mexico, 1999



Sarajevo
1993

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3. CREATING CONCEPTS



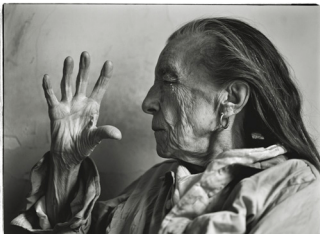
Rod Stewart
San Francisco, 1970



Grace Slick and Paul Kantner
Bolinas, California, 1970



Whoopi Goldberg
Berkeley, California, 1984



Louise Bourgeois
New York City, 1997



Robert Penn Warren
Fairfield, Connecticut, 1980



Tess Gallagher
Syracuse, New York, 1980



Meryl Streep
New York City, 1981

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3. CREATING CONCEPTS



Lauren Grant
White Oak Plantation, Yulee, Florida, 1999



June Omura
Rhinebeck, New York, 1999



Sadie Hope-Gund and Agnes Gund
New York City, 2015



Fran Lebowitz
New York City, 2015



Yoko Ono
New York City, 2015



Shirin Neshat
New York City, 2015



Amy Schumer
New York City, 2015



Amy Schumer and her sister, Kim Caramela
New York City, 2015



Amy Schumer
New York City, 2015

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3. CREATING CONCEPTS



Keith Haring
New York City, 1986



Keith Haring
New York City, 1986

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4. WORKING WITH LIGHT



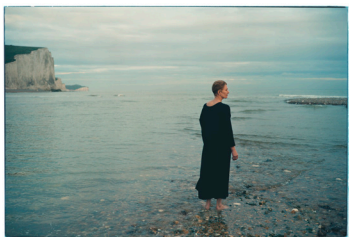
Jerry Garcia
New York City, 1973



Paul Kantner, Grace Slick and China
Bolinas, California, 1971



David Harris and Joan Baez
Los Altos, California, 1971



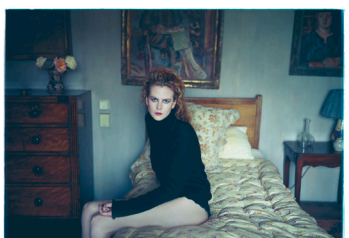
Vanessa Redgrave
Cuckmere Haven, East Sussex, England, 1994



Adele
London, 2015



Kristin Scott Thomas
Paris, 1997



Nicole Kidman
Charleston, East Sussex, England, 1997



Jack Nicholson
Mulholland Drive, Los Angeles, 2006



Lucinda Williams
Austin, Texas, 2001

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5. STUDIO VS. LOCATION



Tony Oursler
New York City, 2000



Robert De Niro
New York City, 2000



Al Pacino
New York City, 2000



Chuck Close
New York City, 2000



Lucinda Childs
New York City, 1999



LeBron James
Akron, Ohio, 2009



Gloria Steinem
New York City, 2015

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6. WORKING WITH YOUR SUBJECT



Bruce Springsteen
Philadelphia, 1999



Ben Stiller
Paris, 2001

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7. CASE STUDY: *ANGELS IN AMERICA* PHOTOSHOOT FOR *VOGUE* MAGAZINE



Cast of *Angels in America*,
American Broadway Production
Vogue, New York City, 2017

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8. PHOTOGRAPHING PEOPLE WHO ARE CLOSE TO YOU



Rachel Leibovitz
Waterbury, Connecticut, 1974



Marilyn Leibovitz
Dulles International Airport, Virginia, 1972



Samuel Leibovitz
Silver Spring, Maryland, 1972



Marilyn Leibovitz
Ellenville, New York, 1974



Marilyn and Samuel Leibovitz
Silver Spring, Maryland, 1977



Marilyn and Samuel Leibovitz
1976



Samuel and Marilyn Leibovitz
1974

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8. PHOTOGRAPHING PEOPLE WHO ARE CLOSE TO YOU



Marilyn Leibovitz
1976



Samuel Leibovitz
Silver Spring, Maryland, 1972



Susan Sontag
Wainscott, Long Island, New York,
1988



Susan Sontag
Mexico, 1989



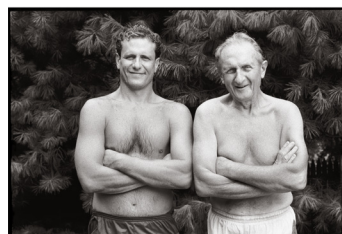
Susan Sontag and Sarah Leibovitz
New York City, 2001



Annie Leibovitz
Venice, 1994



Annie's Family
Early 1970s



Philip and Samuel Leibovitz
Silver Spring, Maryland, 1988



Marilyn Leibovitz
Clifton Point, New York, 1997

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10. THE TECHNICAL SIDE OF PHOTOGRAPHY



California
Early 1970s



Kim Kardashian, North West, and
Kanye West
Los Angeles, 2014



Monument Valley
Arizona, 1993



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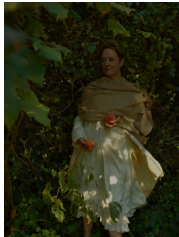
12-13. CASE STUDIES, PART 1: PHOTOGRAPHING ALICE WATERS, PART 2: DIGITAL POST-PRODUCTION



Alice Waters
Rocktown Apple Orchard, New Jersey, 1998



Alice Waters and Fanny Singer
Gillette, New Jersey, 2015



Alice Waters
Kensington, California, 2017

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15. THE EVOLUTION OF A PHOTOGRAPHER



Annie's mother's family, Atlantic City boardwalk
New Jersey, 1938



American Soldiers and Mary, Queen of the Negritos
Clark Air Base, The Philippines, 1968

San Francisco Art Institute, 1969-1971

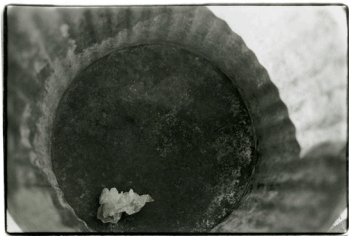


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15. THE EVOLUTION OF A PHOTOGRAPHER

San Francisco Art Institute, 1969-1971

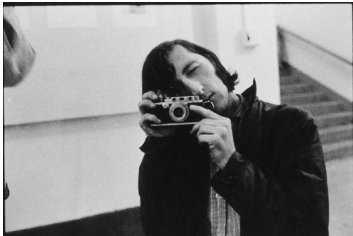


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15. THE EVOLUTION OF A PHOTOGRAPHER

San Francisco Art Institute, 1969-1971



Rolling Stone, early 1970s



Annie Leibovitz



Jann Wenner and Annie Leibovitz

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