Multimedia Storytelling: Slideshow Assignment

The slideshow is one of the dominant visual storytelling methods in use in online journalism. More and more, these slideshows are accompanied by audio from interviews as well as natural or ambient sound. The audio slideshow is a genre reserved for CM210 Multimedia Storytelling I. This semester we begin with the basics: still photos, accompanied by tightly written cutlines, that taken together tell a story with journalistic integrity.

Objectives: Students will practice and learn (1) the fundamentals of photojournalism, (2) the role of photo sequencing in effective visual storytelling, and (3) the basics of writing cutlines for photos.

The Assignment.

1. Select a story of interest to the campus community that lends itself well to visual storytelling. The story should meet at least one of traditional news value.

2. The story will be told as a PowerPoint slideshow. (This is not the standard tool used for online journalism, but is the one we will use in order to keep technical complications to a minimum.)

3. The story should consist of no fewer than nine photos, each with a cutline of one or more complete sentences.
   a. Photos should be in focus and well exposed and composed. Photos should include selections from each of the sequences—wide/overall, medium, close-up, and detailed.
   b. Cutline should do more than state the obvious about the photo. The first sentence usually adds context or information about the situation in the photo and is in present tense. Second sentences often add information that advances the story or provides additional information. These sentences are usually in past tense.

4. The design of the slides should be consistent.
   a. Each slide should retain the head (or title) for the slideshow. This keeps the story unified.
   b. Each slide should reserve the same space for photos. (This does not mean that every photo has to fill that space in the same way.)
   c. Each slide should provide the same space for cutlines. Do not change the size, color, or spacing of cutline text.
   d. Keep slide design clean and simple. No background patterns or PowerPoint themes. Black or dark gray backgrounds show off photos well. White backgrounds provide a very clean appearance but may not show off color photos as well as black or dark gray.

5. See the rubric on the back for evaluation criteria for the assignment.
**Assessing Slideshows with Cutlines**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPONENT</th>
<th>A Standard</th>
<th>B Standard</th>
<th>C Standard</th>
<th>D-F Standard</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reporting</strong> (25%)</td>
<td>Content (5 W’s) is complete, accurate. Helpful context and background provided</td>
<td>Content is mostly complete, accurate. Viewer may feel some need for additional context or background.</td>
<td>Content is mostly complete, accurate, but some editorializing is detectable.</td>
<td>Reader is left with unanswered questions. Blatant editorializing may be evident.</td>
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<td><strong>Narrative</strong> (25%)</td>
<td>The project tells a compelling story of interest to the community with journalistic integrity. The story has news value.</td>
<td>The project tells a story of interest to most community members with journalistic integrity. News value may be minimal.</td>
<td>The project at least resembles a story. It may not hold much interest for community members and has little news value.</td>
<td>The project resembles a gallery or scrapbook of assorted images rather than a story. The subject is of little interest to anyone but the reporter.</td>
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<td><strong>Cutlines/Text</strong> (20%)</td>
<td>Cutlines succinctly provide all essential info. They provide interesting details that add meaning to the photos without editorializing or stating the obvious.</td>
<td>Cutlines provide all essential info. They avoid stating the obvious and editorializing. They may be a bit wordy but do not contain errors of convention or style.</td>
<td>Cutlines omit essential information. They may state the obvious or editorialize. Errors in convention and/or style are evident. Inappropriate verb tenses may be used.</td>
<td>Cutlines are flabby and imprecise. They state the obvious and editorialize. They do little if anything to move the narrative ahead. There are lots of errors in convention &amp; style.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Photography</strong> (20%)</td>
<td>Photos are sharp (as appropriate), well-cropped and properly exposed. They capture in interesting ways the moments essential to telling the story.</td>
<td>Photos are sharp, well-cropped and properly exposed for the most part. They capture the moments essential to telling the story.</td>
<td>Several photos are out of focus, poorly composed and/or poorly exposed. They leave unfilled gaps in the story.</td>
<td>The photos are mostly of poor quality. They may have a common subject but do not really present a narrative.</td>
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<td><strong>Overall Design</strong> (10%)</td>
<td>The design is consistent throughout. It shows off the photos. Text is easy to read. The overall design complements the story.</td>
<td>The design is consistent throughout. Text is easy to read. The overall design does not detract from the photos or the story being told.</td>
<td>The design has some inconsistencies. Text may be somewhat hard to read. Some design elements detract from the photos or the story.</td>
<td>The design varies from slide to slide. Design elements are so intrusive that they inhibit the viewer's enjoyment of the project.</td>
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**Comments:**