



WINOGRAND *Quotes*

There is nothing as mysterious as a fact clearly described, in Edward R. Tufte, *Envisioning*

While I am photographing I see life.

That's is what I deal with.

I don't have pictures in my head.

I don't worry about how a picture should look, I let that take care of itself.

It's not about making a nice picture.

A piece of time in space well described, but not what is happening.

There isn't a photograph in the world that has any narrative ability.

They do not tell stories, they tell you what something looks like, to a camera.

The minute you relate this thing to what was photographed, it a lie.

It's two-dimensional, it's the illusion of a literal description.
It's a picture problem, it's part of what makes things interesting.
You don't learn anything from repeating what you know.
All what a photograph does, it describes light on surface.
That's all there is. And that's all we know of anybody.
I don't have pictures in my head, you know.
I am stuck with my psychology, you know.
I don't lay myself on the couch to figure out why am I doing this or that.
Whatever it is I cant seem to do enough of it. It's a pleasure.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YQhZcKzbM9s>

The decision is to encourage the psychopath in oneself, to explore the domain of experience where security is boredom and therefore sickness, and one exists in the present, in that enormous present which is without past or future, memory or planned intention, the life where a man must go until he is beat, where he must gamble with his energy through all those small or large crisis of courage and unforeseen situations which beset his day. CC 12/1988
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I always have an overall sense of the frame, and everything in it, even though at any given instant my attention is probably at no more than one spot. But I know the ten figures that are there. I know exactly how they're arranged. At any given instant my attention could be at the turn of this head, but I know if something comes in on the edge. MN in Woord & Beeld 177

How do I say it? The way I would put it is that I get totally out of myself. It's the closest I come to not existing, I think, which is the best -which to me is attractive. MN in Woord & Beeld 179

You can be a stranger everywhere and anywhere, even at home, which has always astonished me. When I take a photograph I pay little heed to where I am. Camera International 4/85 16

Once again it's a problem of form and content. In a way content is a struggle to rationalize form, or the opposite, and outstanding photo's always hover on this crest, attain this limit. In the entire history of art, it's like that. It's the problem of every work of art, and even more fascinating, is has been like this throughout the ages. A good photographer instinctively finds an answer to this problem. You can't learn this kind of thing. It's very strange. Camera International 4/85 18

I photograph in order to see what things that interest me, look like as photographs. FG 23

I look at the pictures I've done up to now, and they make me feel that who we are and what we feel and what is to become of us just doesn't matter. Our aspirations and successes have been cheap and petty. I read the newspapers, the columnists, some books, I look at the magazines (our press). They deal in illusions and fantasies. I can only conclude that we have lost ourselves, and that the bomb may finish the job permanently, and it just doesn't matter, we have not loved live.

I cannot accept these conclusions, and so I must continue this photographic investigation further and deeper. This is my project. (Statement in an application for a Guggenheim Fellowship) FG 34

I am pretty fast with a camera when I have to be. However I think it's irrelevant. What if I said that every photograph I made was set up? From the photograph you can't proof otherwise. Every photograph could be set up. If one could imagine it, one could set it up. The whole discussion is a way of not talking about photographs.

In the end, maybe the correct language would be how the fact of putting four edges around a collection of information or facts transforms it. A photograph is not what was photographed, it's something else. BD 180

Just think how minimal somebody's family album is. But you start looking at one of them, and the word everybody will use is 'charming'. Something just happened. It's automatic, just operating a camera intelligently. You've got a lot going for you, you see. By just describing well with it, something happens. BD 185

I really try to divorce myself from any thought of possible use of the stuff. That's part of the discipline. My only purpose while I'm working is to try to make interesting photographs, and what to do with them is another act -a later consideration. Certainly while I'm working, I want them to be as useless as possible. BD 187

I don't think of them as projects. All I'm doing is photographing. I have boxes of pictures that nothing is going to happen to. Even Public Relations. I mean, I was going to events long before, and I still am. BD 191

When the woman is attractive, is it an interesting picture, or is it the woman? BD 187

But it is not a coverage. It is a record of my subjective interests. BD 186

Surviving, that's all I have in mind right now.

(Flourishing too?)

That's unexpected. But I'm surviving. I'm a survivor. That's the way I understand it. BD

Finally it came to him that he was powerless, insignificant, helpless- and that knowledge liberated him. FG 20

Life is more interesting than the theories that purport to explain it. FG 33

What seems on paper a chronology of troubles and failures, punctuated occasionally by under-appreciated success. Those who knew him. FG 34

"A photograph," he said, "is the illusion of a literal description of how the camera saw a piece of time and space." MN, workshop 1976

Never feel bad about missing pictures when I change films. There are no pictures when I reload. MN, workshop 1976

At the same time, as he passed from shadow into sunlight into shadow again, he was constantly adjusting his meter-less camera. It was second nature to him. In fact, his first comment right out the door was, "nice light--1/250 second at f/8." MN, workshop 1976

Never shoot without looking, however fast you are. You'll lose control over your framing. MN, workshop 1976

I couldn't believe he had time to look in his viewfinder, and watched him closely. Indeed, Winogrand always looked in the viewfinder at the moment he shot. It was only for a split second, but I could see him adjust his camera's position slightly and focus before he pressed the shutter release. He was precise, fast, in control. MN, workshop 1976

I never develop film right after shooting it. I deliberately wait a year or two. So I have virtually no memory of the act of taking an individual photograph. Else I might choose a picture because I remember how good I felt when I took it, not necessarily because it was a great shot. You make better choices if you approach your contact sheets cold, separating the editing from the picture taking as much as possible. MN, workshop 1976

I never go out saying "I want to photograph X today," because this would create preconceptions and prevent me from being open to seeing other things. I work with no preconceptions about what would be a proper photographic subject or how a photo should look. I photograph something to see what it will look like photographed. MN, workshop 1976

Treat editing photographs as "an adventure in seeing" and enjoy the whole process. Tension between the form and content of a photograph makes it succeed. The most successful art is almost on the verge of failure. MN, workshop 1976

Don't worry about stereotypes, photograph what interests you, there is no loose, there is no loose, always life is below, the world is no loose, so, don't worry about it, you don't have to work. MN workshop 1982

I try to, I think in a certain sense teaching is suggesting how to be free: to be on type from these kind of ideas. That's you have to wake out. MN workshop 1982

If you follow what you're interested in though and doing all for it, you'll find out what to deal with and how to, and you might wind up doing original work, if you deal with the world in terms of your interest; and not about how pictures look, that takes care of itself. MN workshop 1982

If your inspiration comes from how pictures look, that's what you're going to make: you're going to make pictures that look a certain way that you have seen. Guy Quebec Workshop 1982

If you come out from being interested in the thing, right, you don't have a guarantee, we are not talking about anything easy: to be able to work without making the pictures you know, that are already in your head, is a big discipline, it's a discipline. MN workshop 1982

When you're photographing, you don't want a lot of ideas in your mind, you want to deal with lots of fun in front of the camera. MN workshop 1982

That's what I'm saying right now again: that's a discipline, to work without (other pictures), the pictures you know in your head, and to not worry, take that picture, don't talk so far of it, don't say: who needs another picture of an old man, don't talk, if you look at the pictures when you have it (on contact sheet) and that's an interesting picture, you can ask, but take it, take it. You have plenty of time not to print it, but if you don't take it, you don't have a chance!" MN workshop 1982

The way I understand it, a photographer's relationship to his medium is responsible for his relationship to the world is responsible for his relationship to his medium. Public Relations 110

What is safe to eat: No one can murder eggs, and almost no one can murder fried chicken. PR 7

People who have met Winogrand (...) might be tempted to say that he roars when he talks; but of course he does not. He just speaks with fire, pith, and logic -and at a level everyone around him can easily hear. He thinks rapidly, with a kind of rolling, speculative display, and uses his wit in flourishes to illuminate and then, more often than not, to undermine what he just has said.

His curiosity is passionate, prodding, and for those who expect a conventional civility from it, harsh. He is impatient with intentions, anyone's, and instead observes "what people do." At times it appears that the only mystery he allows into life is the simple one of not knowing what is happening behind his back, but he turns around to see what that might be as often as a cat would. (...) But there is more than this - it is his unrelenting force, as well as the preposterous consistent quality of his attention to everything around him. There is something so straight, blunt, and disturbing about his energy, something so anarchic about what seems to propel it, that if we consider it at all, it seems that we must either qualify it, and call it abnormal, or simplify it, and give it the shape of a myth. PR 8

All that flesh! I died. I had never seen anything like that before. I couldn't believe it. And then, when we got onstage, on the bandstand- with the music, the makeup, the smells -the only sensual thing that didn't happen was touch. I have to say that I felt like my face was being smothered in thighs. I think I 've never gotten over that. That afternoon -I'll never forget it. PR 9

A photojournalist has to know how to make only two pictures: the first 'a big headshot' and the second, a man walking down a beach, looking thoughtful. PR 10

Evans work stunned me. That was the first time I was ever moved by photographs. I don't mean that I wanted to cry; I don't mean that by being moved. It is the first time I was aware that photographs themselves could describe intelligence. PR 10

There is little difference between the pictures I have been asked as a photojournalist and those set up for the agencies. Both were designed to manipulate an audience. Such pictures are illustrations that simply, if effectively, supported captions. PR 11

Photography is always out there. It's a way to get out of yourself. PR 12

As he thought of it, he was engaged in a project, a speculative investigation, an attempt to define and control a photographic method. But the work he produces in the service of this idea was also an open, repetitive description of his confinement. PR 12

I was stunned as if someone had walked up to me and pointed a gun to my face. At that point, I found out I was nothing. I had nothing to say about what would happen to my life. And it was liberating. I was nothing. Which meant I was free. Which meant: "Live your life." PR 12

A photograph of something is not the thing photographed. PR 13

There is nothing as mysterious as a fact clearly described, in Edward R. Tufte, *Envisioning Information*
e high. p190

CC *Creative Camera 12/1988*
AP *Aperture, Snapshot*
BD *Barbaralee Diamondstein*
FG *Figments of the Real World MR*
GQ *Guy Quebec workshop 1982*

PR *Public Relations*
CI *Camera International 4/85*
MN *Maurice Nio in Woord & Beeld*
Mason Resnick, workshop 1976