

**CUNY Graduate School of Journalism  
Photojournalism Elective  
Spring 2012**

This week's four-part technical assignment is intended to advance your ability to manage motion through control of shutter speed – with a depth-of-field assignment thrown in for good measure.

You should file eight PROPERLY SLUGGED (lastname\_motion\_sequence#) images all together. File two images from each of the four parts of the assignment illustrated below. NOTE: It's always OK to include an extra image or two that didn't work out if you'd like to discuss what went wrong.

In addition to fulfilling the assignment's basic technical purpose, you should demonstrate an effort to create compelling compositions with your photos. If you work better with more specific guidelines, I'd suggest you shoot the assignment in a park.

Here are two examples from each of the four parts of the assignment:

**FREEZE MOTION**

The ability to freeze fast action when required is essential to good photojournalism. The shutter speed required to do this will change depending on the speed of the object photographed. The challenge for you is to work this out. The image on the left required a shutter speed of  $1/160^{\text{th}}$  of a second. The image on the right required a shutter speed of  $1/350$  sec.



**BLUR MOTION**

Sometimes a photographer may choose to selectively blur moving elements in a frame to suggest movement. There are two key components to doing this successfully: 1) you need to figure out a shutter speed that will give the desired amount of blur on the moving subject – too slow and the image will be ghosted, too fast and there will be no blur at all. 2) you need to stabilize the camera so that the stationary elements of frame remain sharp. Resting your elbow on your knee or another object will often do the trick.

Below are two examples of the effect.

In the image on the left the shutter speed was  $\frac{1}{2}$  a second. In the image on the right, the shutter speed was  $\frac{1}{100}$  of a second – taxis on 6<sup>th</sup> avenue move much faster than walkers in Times Square.



## PANNING

Panning is another effective way to convey a sense of motion. To pan the photographer pivots his body (and the camera lens) with an object as it moves by. If done properly the subject will appear sharp again a backdrop blurred along the trajectory of the subject's motion. It's like blurring motion in reverse -- the trick is to find a shutter speed that is fast enough to freeze the movement of the subject but slow enough to get the desired motion blur on the background

In the image on the left the shutter speed was  $\frac{1}{50}$  of the second. In the image on the right the shutter speed was  $\frac{1}{200}$ <sup>th</sup> of a second. The rate of the subject's motion can dramatically affect the required shutter speed.



## DEPTH-OF-FIELD

Shutter controls the photographer's ability to control motion. Aperture – along with the focal length of the lens -- controls the ability to increase or decrease depth of field. Shallow depth-of-field help separate a subject from a backdrop and cue the viewer into what is important in the image.

The bigger the aperture (smaller the number) the shallower the depth-of-field. An aperture of F/4 will yield much shallower depth-of-field than an aperture of F/22.

The effect is compounded by the focal length of the lens. A telephoto lens, say 140mm to 200mm will have a much shallower depth-of-field than a 17mm to 35mm lens at THE SAME aperture setting. If you want to maximize the effect of shallow depth-of-field, use a telephoto lens with a wide aperture setting.

The image on the left was taken with a zoom lens set to 185mm and an aperture of F/2.8. The image on the right was taken with a 24mm lens and an aperture of F/2.8 (The depth-of-field is shallow despite the wide-angle lens because the subject in focus in the foreground is so close to the camera and the kids in the background are relatively far away).



File four images for each of the four parts. That's 16 images total. Images should be uploaded to Flickr and posted to the assignment group by Saturday at 11:59:59 each week.