

Jodieann J. Stephenson
Write UP Draft 12/6

Jodieann's Humans of New York Experiment

All of us have a story to share, however, not many of us are afforded the chance to share their stories. Often times, many of us are silenced because of religion, sexual orientation or out of fear. And then there are those who find courage to share their stories. Today, many stories are widely shared online, which can become a viral phenomenon. The development of new technologies has changed the way individuals share their stories. Traditional ways of sharing stories by publishing memoirs or being interviewed are not as common these days. One of the way individuals share their stories is by participating in photo blogs such as Humans of New York by Brandon Stanton, which has changed the narrative of photojournalism. Photojournalism is a particular form of journalism (the collecting, editing, and presenting of news material for publication or broadcast) that employs images in order to tell a news story. These sites allow viewers to engage with the stories by liking, sharing and commenting.

The photo blog Humans of New York allows viewers and users a chance to engage with the story on a deeper level. By exploring successful story sharing in the blog Humans of New York, I will write an analysis of best practices of the blog. In doing so, I will apply these best practices to three images that will be shared via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and my personal Blog Black Attire Aficionado. Specifically, I will analyze if the story was successful which will be defined by how many times the image was viewed, how many likes it received, the amount of times it was favored, how many comments the image received.

My definition of success in photojournalism is the amount of times a photo has been liked on Instagram and Twitter and how viewers engage with the image whether it is by commenting, sharing the image or if they repost the image. A successfully received story online is one that makes viewers engage in the story. This image can be circulated through many different platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and popular blog and can end up on the TV.

Deliverables

1. A **Word Document** on Humans of New York's Best Practices
2. A **comparative analysis** of Humans of New York and Jodieann's version of Humans of New York.
3. **Three images** created that mirrors Human of New York. The images will be located on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Black Attire Aficionado
4. A **reflection** of my success or failure with creating a image
5. All of the project components will be housed on Jodieann Stephenson's e-portfolio site

Project Time Line

Week of the 15th

A.) Explain the history and mission of the photo blog Humans of New York (HONY)

- Define what is photojournalism
- List new technologies in new media that change the traditional way of storytelling
- Explore HONY via blog, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram
- Select an image from HONY that successfully captures the story on loss
- Write a analysis of best practices used by HONY

Week of the 22nd

A.) Explain Jodieann's Definition of Success

- What is Jodieann's Definition of Success?
- Create the **Success Guidelines**
- Explain what social media sites will be used for the purpose of the project
- Select a story topic to create image

B.) Work on ePortfolio site

- Choose a image and theme to update on main site
- Write a introduction and career section of ePortfolio site

Week of the 29th

A.) Prospecting phase- Find three individuals to share their story on loss to create stories that are similar to the photo blog. There will be three photos by three different individuals who will share a story on loss.

- Interview a prospect on the subject of loss and share a photo with a caption similar to Humans of New York which will we shared via:
- **Facebook**- The image will be tracked on Facebook, by recording how many likes it received, how many comments it received and whether it was remixed.
- **Instagram**- The image will be tracked on Instagram, by recording how many likes it received, how many comments it received and whether it was remixed.
- **Twitter**- The image will be tracked on Twitter by recording how many times it was viewed, how many retweets it received or how many times it was favored.
- **WordPress**-The image will be tracked on Black Attire Aficionado by recording how many times it was viewed, how many times it was reblogged it received and how many times it was favored.

Week of the 6th

Explain the findings on unsuccessful or successful user engagement via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Black Attire Aficionado.

- Work on ePortfolio site
- Complete Reflection Draft
- Merge Progress Report 1, 2, and 3 together
- Write Abstract
- Write Presentation

In the week of 11/29 after returning from a relaxing break, I returned feeling very excited. During the evening of 11/30 I worked on my second progress presentation. In the second progress report, I wrote candidly about my struggles with having a clear understanding of my project and the end results. I wrote about the ways in which the project made me more disciplined. There were certain elements of the project that was to have been completed however due to timing it was not completed. Also on 11/30 I posted my first image rendition of Humans of New York photo. I interviewed a male friend of mine who is twenty-three years old. He was super excited to share his thoughts on loss. Earlier in the day, after my internship, I met him in China Town, New York where he interns. I took a photo of him from the back because he did not want to show his face. He did not feel comfortable with his face in the photo, which is understandable. I took the photo and asked him to send me his quote via text on loss.

The quote: #1 The Loss of Time



“The worst kind of loss is the loss of time, because it’s constant and never ending, you won’t stop losing time until you die. This can drive one crazy as your goals becomes more immediate and crunched under the weight of time. Time lost also manifests itself in moments spent with others, it’s a little scary how long we can go without seeing someone or doing something and be instantly reminded of that once we see the person or participate in that activity again. Our memories remind us of how fast time flies and how if we don’t use it responsibly we can waste a lot of time, as time waits for no one.”#HumansofNewYork

This photo was shared via these four social media platforms [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [Black Attire Aficionado](#). I posted the image and the quote from participant #1 along with the hashtag ([#HumansofNewYork](#)). The response was surprising. For the first few moments when I shared the photo via Instagram which was shared to [Facebook](#), there was no response. I was worried that no one would interact with the image which would make my project unsuccessful. Within the next hour my photo received likes on both platforms.

The photo via [Instagram](#) received 11 likes and 3 comments. Three instagrammers participated in the conversation. Many found the quote on loss to be “powerful”. I did not engage with any of the commenters because Brendan Stanton does not engage with users, it is one of the strategies I listed in my Humans of New York Best Practices, which will be shared on my ePortfolio site on 12/15. I found the photo shared on Instagram to be successful because it received likes and users engaged with the photo. On the platform [Facebook](#), I received 9 likes within a matter of minutes. There was no user engagement on this platform. I did not find this very successful because I have over 700

Facebook friends and was quite surprised by the lack of response. On **Twitter**, I took a different approach to sharing the image. I posted the image with a short sentence from the quote and linked it to my personal blog **Black Attire Aficionado** using Bitly and the hashtag #HONY so that anyone searching the hashtag would see the tweet. The photo shared via Twitter, received over 100 impressions (the amount of times people saw the tweet on Twitter), and received over 10 user engagements such as clicking the link, the hashtag and the media (the photo). I would say that the image was successful to some degree because over 100 people saw it but no one engaged. I screenshot these findings and posted it to my blogpost **Coming to Grips: Projection Reflection-Round 2**. The following day I met with professor Belli to discuss the progress of my project, I received feedback to revisit my proposed timeline where I did not complete the deliverables. Also, I was advised to write my best practices on the blog Humans of New York. Later that evening I reworked my blog post but for some reason it was not updated. I did not find this out until 12/3 after I presented my Prezi presentation. Also after my presentation, I received feedback from my class that was very positive. In the feedback, I was told that the project had a clearer understanding than before. Samantha mentioned that she would have a prospect for me because I was unable to find someone to share his or her story on loss.

On 12/5 I created my second image using my own quote. I decided to write about myself because I could not find anyone and I thought it would be more intimate. On the subject of loss, I wrote about losing my ability to laugh during hard times. I did not want to do the traditional story on relationship. I chose a photo that was taken during the summer and wrote.



The quote: # 2 The Loss of Laughter

“I’m afraid of losing my ability to laugh during moments of hard times. My laugh is what I cherish most of all. Sometimes there are people who come into your life whose purpose is to destroy you and by some miracle it changes you. Often times this can make you a better person and other times it can make you bitter. My laugh is infectious and youthful and losing it is a constant fear of mine . . .” [#humansofnewyork](#)

This photo was shared via these four social media platforms Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Black Attire Aficionado. I posted the image and the quote from participant #2 along with the hashtag ([#HumansofNewYork](#)). The response was immediate. For the first few moments when I shared the photo via Instagram that was shared to Facebook, it received over 20 likes. The responses were “love that smile, hearts <3 <3, I love this picture, you’re glowing and you’re absolutely right keep smiling”. I would say this was a great start, I will continue to monitor it because I have over 700 friends. The photo via Instagram received over 30 likes with only one Instagram comment. I was expecting a more intense response because the photo was of myself and I thought my friends would have engaged more. On Twitter, I took a different approach to sharing the image. I posted the image with a short sentence from the quote and linked it to my personal blog Black Attire Aficionado using Bitly and the hashtag [#HONY](#) so that anyone searching the hashtag would see the tweet. The photo shared via Twitter, received over 60 impressions and 2 twitter engagements. I would say that the image was successful to some degree because over 60 people saw it but no one engaged.

The quote: # 3 The Loss of a Grandmother

“Losing my grandmother was one of the worst feelings in the world. She was like a second mother to me. She raised me and lived right downstairs from me. All I knew was her being there. She moved to Canada a few years before her passing. It was sudden and out of nowhere and by far one of the worst things that I would have found out. She had an aneurysm. We went to Canada right away to be by her side. When I saw her it wasn't her, she wasn't herself and she was not conscious. It's a horrible feeling seeing someone you love so much in that type of state. I was in the room with her and some family when she passed.



A Granddaughters Loss

My heart was sinking and I felt like I was dying inside. When we heard the machine go off I knew she was gone. I felt like I died inside. I starred at her and spoke to her in her ear before she went. It wasn't easy to deal with at all. But thank God I had my son, Aiden there to hug and kiss and keep me strong and keep my mind busy. I know she's in a better place, I just think it was too early for her to leave. It's not an easy thing to deal with losing someone you love so much. I am grateful she was able to be here when my son was born and she knew him for a year and a half. I still miss her to this day but I smile knowing she's watching over my family and me. I know she sees my son growing up and is proud of the job I'm doing as a mother. I see her in my dreams and sometimes feel that she's around, either by smell or just feeling her presence.” #HumansofNewYork

This photo was shared via these four social media platforms Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Black Attire Aficionado. I posted the image and the quote from participant #3 along with the hashtag (#HumansofNewYork) on social media sites. The response was slower than I expected. I expected it would have a lot more engagements because it was a quote on the loss of a loved one which I'm sure many people have experienced at some point in their life. For the first few moments when I shared the photo via Instagram which was shared to Facebook, it received 8 likes. The responses were "I love this!". I would say this was a great start, I will continue to monitor it because I have over 700 friends and it is a great read. The photo via Instagram received over 10 likes with only one Instagram comment. Because the quote was very long, I broke it up into 2 parts. On 12/6 I posted part one and will post part 2 on 12/7. One of the best practices I found in my analysis of HONY was that for long quotes Brandon Stanton broke it up into short quotes and would post the rest the following day.

In some ways I was expecting a more intense response because the quote was powerful. On Twitter, I took a different approach to sharing the image. I posted the image with a short sentence from the quote and linked it to my personal blog Black Attire Aficionado using Bitly and the hashtag #HONY so that anyone searching the hashtag would see the tweet. The photo shared via Twitter, received over 40 impressions and 2 twitter engagements. I have not determined the success of this image because there is one more part to post.

The section below will be completed on 12/12 because I want to give users more time to engage with the images. The results of each image will be in the Presentation.

Recap of **Image 1** Loss of Time on Social Media Sites

Facebook-

Twitter-

Instagram-

Black Attire Aficionado

Recap of **Image 2** Loss of Laughter on Social Media Sites

Facebook-

Twitter-

Instagram-

Black Attire Aficionado

Recap of **Image 3** Loss of a Grandmother on Social Media Sites

Facebook-

Twitter-

Instagram-

Black Attire Aficionado

Resources

Hariman, Robert and Louis, John. “[Visual Rhetoric, Photojournalism, and Democratic Public Culture](#)” Rhetoric Review. Web. Indiana, 2001.

The article “Visual Rhetoric, Photojournalism, and Democratic Public Culture” by Robert Hariman and John Louis analyses how Rhetoricians have traditionally directed their attention on the power of words in a ever-changing digital space. The assessment provides an insight to the role that iconic photographs are portrayed within American culture. Many photographs reflect a unique visual literacy, which shape our understanding towards specific events in each of our lives. By doing so, visual images tend to influence behavior, identity, but they are paramount in photojournalism as we shift into the Age of New Media.

The article is useful for providing a unique perspective on photojournalism and suggests how iconic images can affect the viewer’s emotional reservations. Although, a visual image intensifies the visual experience of a viewer, it can present an unwarranted challenge. Perhaps this could be useful to think about the visual structures and their positioning in American culture and how it shapes our perception of certain individuals and events.

Abbott, Tristan. “The Importance of Storytelling, Big and Small.” Econtentmag. Web. August 2014.

Econtentmag’s writer Tristan Abbott, provided an in-depth look at the importance of storytelling for the reader and the writer regardless of mediums. The ability to tell a good story is paramount for a writer to be heard while getting their opinion out. The article claims “large, macro-level facts supporting stories, such as nation-wide economic data, are effective in demonstrating large problems, but can often feel empty and leave readers or consumers of content feeling like the story lacks a personal touch.” <http://www.econtentmag.com/Articles/Editorial/Commentary/The-Importance-of-Storytelling-Big-and-Small-98660.htm>

This article is relevant because it mentions the importance of storytelling, which is key to understanding in the creation of content. It is the writer’s discretion for the type of style they use to tell a story but effective storytelling is preferred. This is also useful for anyone who wants to learn the basics of telling a story whether for their personal use or for their professional careers— it’s an important skill for all.

Riesland, Erin. “Visual Literacy and the Classroom.” John Hopkins School of Education.

Web. <http://education.jhu.edu/PD/newhorizons/strategies/topics/literacy/articles/visual-literacy-and-the-classroom/>

The article “Visual Literacy and the Classroom” is a thoughtful article that explores visual literacy within education while also shedding light on what it means to literate in the new of technology. The shift to mass technologization has led to unprecedented shift to new media and multimedia applications being used. Erin Riesland suggests we should redefine visual literacy while accounting for the new types of technology that have visual literacies embedded in them.

Understanding and exploring new technologies that can help redefine visual literacy in the classroom and beyond is key to progressing in the new age. This content of this article is useful for professors, teachers, educators who work with students in higher education and in traditional schools because they can reshape their curriculum to integrate more visual literacy modules and best practices for their students. While some techniques may not work depending on the course description or the professor’s discipline, it does provide students a chance to become familiar with the changing world of new media from earlier on so that they know what to expect.

“What is Photojournalism?”wiseGEEK. Web

<http://www.wisegeek.org/what-is-photojournalism.htm>

wiseGEEK, is a team of researchers, writers, and editors who offer clear answers on a variety of questions. The wiseGEEK researchers offer a snapshot explanation of photojournalism, it’s the most direct and clear explanation on the web. They describe photojournalism as “a branch of journalism characterized by the use of images to tell a story. Photojournalists are scattered all around the world within various careers such as documentary photographers or wedding photographers all with the purpose of capturing that kodak moment to tell a story.

wiseGEEK is a site used to simplify complex questions by provide clear and concise answers. This website is useful because it is easily accessible and the information is straight to the point. Not only does wiseGEEK provide you with answers, it also provides you with hyperlinks to get more information and other similar interests. This can be a fundamental resource center if someone needs a simplification on a topic.

Jones, Corrine. “Brandon Stanton’s New York Stories.” The Guardian. Web. November 213.

<http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2013/nov/03/brandon-stanton-humans-of-new-york-pictures>

The article “Brandon Stanton’s New York Stories” by Corrine Jones successfully paints a candid assessment of Human’s of New York’s Brandon Stanton. It highlight the popularity of Stanton’s blog which he refers to as “more of a storytelling blog than a

photography blog.” The story of Stanton’s discovery to his passion is very organic and commendable. He took a chance and tried something that was never done which worked out in his favor. This approach to storytelling is different, perhaps we are all a combination of the stories we have read or seen.

This article successfully showcases the ideal storytelling blog. It is a blog that with stories from people all around the world wanting to be heard. It gives these individuals a chance to have a voice, which is all most people want. Also, it is very useful because he asks his prospects very important interview questions. For beginners this may be a source to reference to for a few thought-provoking questions.

Choi, Amy. “The Art of Storytelling According to the Founders of Human’s of New York and StoryCorp.” Ideas.TED. Web. July 2015.

<http://ideas.ted.com/the-art-of-storytelling-according-to-the-founders-of-storycorps-and-humans-of-new-york/>

TED Talks and TED Ideas are a division of TED, a nonprofit devoted to spreading ideas around the world. The article examines the success of two powerful storytellers such as Human’s of New York’s Brandon Stanton and Storycorps’ Dave Isay. These two pioneers have successfully give a voice to many once voiceless individuals and a chance to share their stories. One of the claims in the article from Dave Isay is to “create an intimate culture where trust is paramount.” By doing so, interviewees are in a comforting ecosystem where they are truly able to be themselves.

This article is useful for formulating your own storytelling channel. It can provide a general guideline of how to engage in thoughtful discourse while you interview someone. From an ethical standpoint it reminds interviewers to remember that they are building report with their interviewees who require an organic, comforting and trusting environment to successfully share their stories.

Cohen, James and Kenny, Thomas “Producing New and Digital Media- Your Guide to Savvy Use of the Web.” Chapter 6: Multimedia Storytelling. Focal Press Taylor and Francis Group 2016

The authors Cohen and Kenny successfully introduces multimedia storytelling to novice individuals. The chapter goes into details about the ever-evolving storytelling ecosystem, the current age of multimedia storytelling medium. In the chapter, they introduce the idea of “the beta person,” which is “*you*,” someone you can relate to in the image. It give the beta persona a chance to connect through an image or traditional broadcasting. There are humanizing characteristic that makes the beta persona relatable. This provides an interesting look at a phenomena that no one discusses. It leads to “are we searching for ourselves in other individuals? The “beta persona” is important to keep in mind because it can be used as a theory of how we relate to and interpret other individuals. Perhaps,

examining this beta persona can shed some light on how it could possibly help reconstruct our biases.

This chapter is useful for various reasons such as the early stages of digital storytelling, the new age of digital storytelling, how to create a successful narrative within the new space, the personalities that are created within the new space, the virality of these online personalities, and businesses demand for successful multimedia storytelling just to name a few. In addition, it offers content composers a new perspective on the ever-changing world of new media. This book will already be outdated because technology and information is instantly changing.

Blais, Caroline, Caldara, Roberto, Fiset, Daniel, Jack E., Rachael, and Scheepers Christoph. "Culture Shapes How We Look at Faces" Plos. Web. August 2008

<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0003022>

This article is incredibly insightful; it provides an exceptionally candid look at how culture has shaped how we look at faces. Over the span of our lives we have come into contacts with thousands of individuals of various background that have led to a categorization of those communities. A major factor that has led to this reinforcement of categorization is culture. Culture plays an unfortunate role and adds to our biases. Humanity has consciously and subconsciously conditioned ourselves to recognizing individuals based on their faces and in turn we have given them labels to make the categorization easier, which causes biases.

This article is useful for people who are interested in learning about the history of face recognition tools, the different face structures of certain cultures, why we are fascinated by certain traits of an individual.