it can be legitimate to name that person first, then name the others from left to right.

— Double-check the spelling of names—are they consistent with spelling in the article?

— Never guess what a subject is thinking or make assumptions about their emotional state—chances are you will be wrong!

— It is a convention of news writing style that captions should always be written in the present tense.

— Keep captions short and to the point. Do not waffle.

— Use active voice and active verbs.

— Ensure information in a caption does not conflict with information in the story a photograph relates to.

Photojournalism ethics

Photographs have been faked and retouched for as long as there has been photography. But the advent of digital cameras and use of computer programs such as Photoshop have made faking and retouching easier. Memorable examples of faked photographs include a 1982 photograph on the front cover of *National Geographic* magazine in which the Egyptian pyramids were moved closer together to make the image fit the page. In 2006 there was an infamous example in which a photographer working for Reuters news agency manipulated a photograph to make it more dramatic by adding heavy plumes of black smoke billowing from buildings in Beirut after an air attack on the Lebanese capital. Reuters subsequently sacked the photographer and issued a 'picture kill' notice while also withdrawing the photograph from its website. The agency apologised and said, 'The image had been digitally altered using the cloning tool in Photoshop so that it showed more smoke' (Reuters 2007).

A few years earlier, there had been what became a famous example of a digital manipulation undertaken by some newspapers for the opposite reason—to sanitise an image to make it less dramatic and less disturbing than it actually was. The photograph was shot by *El Pais* photographer Pablo Torres Guerrero immediately after the 2004 Madrid train bombing. The colour image, which was circulated

internationally by Reuters, showed a wrecked train and dead and injured people in a railway yard. In the lower left of the photograph was part of a human thigh and femur. Some newspapers published the photograph as it was. Others manipulated it to either remove the image of the body part; cover it with type; replace it with railway ballast stones; print the photograph in black and white so the thigh was less noticeable; or crop the photograph so tightly the body part was not shown. Poynter Institute visual journalism group leader Kenneth Irby said editors who removed or disguised the thigh and femur believed the photograph was too gruesome, and publishing it without manipulation would have been in bad taste because it would have upset some of the people who viewed it (Irby 2004). He said the manipulation happened despite it being a policy at Reuters that organisations which subscribed to its service should not electronically manipulate a photo to change its content. Newspapers that published the image unchanged included *The Washington Post*, which printed the picture in full colour on its front page, as did Spain's *El Pais*. Irby (2004) said such newspapers felt it was important for readers to see the reality of terror.

Journalists have four sources of news photographs: those taken by their own organisation's professional photographers, images from wire services, photos they take themselves, and contributed photographs. Contributed images are from two main sources: public relations firms and advertisers, and members of the public. If a news organisation and its photographers and photojournalists are ethical and do not manipulate their own photographs in ways that distort truth, the most likely source of faked or (as was highlighted in Chapter 6) misrepresented images are contributed photographs. Problems are exacerbated when photos which have been faked but in which the manipulation has not been detected are subsequently transmitted by news agencies. John Long, then ethics co-chair and a past president of the US National Press Photographers' Association (NPPA), warned more than a decade ago that: 'Our readers and viewers no longer believe everything they see. All images are called into question because the computer has proved that images are malleable, changeable, fluid.' But:

> Once the shutter has been tripped and the moment has been captured on film, in the context of news, we no longer have the right to change the content of the photo in any way. Any change to a news photo—any violation of that moment—is a lie. Big or small, any lie damages your credibility (NPPA 1999).

There is no parallel organisation to the NPPA in Australia, but the Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance (MEAA)'s *Journalists' Code of Ethics* applies equally to photojournalism as it does to all journalism. As explained in detail in Chapter 4, it says respect for truth and the public's right to information are fundamental tenets of journalism, and journalists should report and interpret honestly striving for disclosure of all essential facts (Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance 2013a).

One of the greatest disincentives to photographic fraud is closely related to the computer technology that makes digital faking possible. While computers, the web and internet make rapid dissemination of photographs possible, they also make it easy for photographs to be digitally examined by experts around the globe.

Ethical codes aside, and while there will be scandals from time to time about faked photographs, one of the greatest disincentives to photographic fraud is closely related to the computer technology that makes digital faking possible. While computers, the web and internet make rapid dissemination of photographs possible, they also make it easy for photographs to be digitally examined by experts around the globe. Some of these experts, and certainly many bloggers and websites such as Snopes.com and MuseumofHoaxes.com, delight in exposing fakes—something that should make prospective image manipulators think twice, especially if they value their names and their jobs!

Finally, when should you not take photographs? Details are explained in Chapters 16 and 17, but generally it is illegal to take photographs in courtrooms and even court buildings; to take photographs if trespassing on private land; to photograph subjects engaging in 'private acts' in situations in which they would not generally expect to be photographed; and to publish photographs that identify child victims of crime or victims of sexual offences. As explained in Chapter 16, it can also constitute *sub judice* contempt to publish a photo that identifies a person accused of a crime if there is doubt about whether that person or another person actually committed the crime.

While we do not own our own image and it is generally not a problem taking photographs of people in public places, it can be illegal if a photographer behaves offensively, in a threatening way, causes a public nuisance, or takes indecent photos. Also be careful taking photographs of children. While it is not generally illegal to photograph a child in a public place, community concerns about paedophiles photographing children and publishing pictures via the internet have made child photography a sensitive issue. Unless circumstances of a breaking story dictate otherwise, as they did in relation to the Vietnamese girl Kim Phúc, the common sense approach is to seek parental permission before photographing minors. It should also be borne in mind that large shopping centres are private property and

management can prohibit photographs being taken. Shop and gallery owners can also prohibit photos being taken on their premises. But photographs of the insides of shops and shopping centres can be shot by a photographer who is outside in a public place, such as on a footpath in a public street.

Total packages

One of the biggest advantages in becoming self-sufficient as a photographer and writer is that a photojournalist—and particularly a freelance photojournalist—who can write well and take high-quality photographs can supply total packages of stories and images. Thus a journalist who owns her or his own SLR camera, a portable computer or tablet with a wireless broadband account, and a good mobile phone can become a self-sufficient unit. That journalist has much more to offer than a rival who can only supply words.

And two final tips relating to photojournalism. First, most cameras have plenty of memory, so take many shots of the same subject using a range of different camera settings and different camera angles. Doing so will increase your chances of fluking the ultimate photograph! Second, and this is particularly important if freelancing, find out what file format the organisation(s) you supply photographs to prefers. The most common formats are:

- JPEG, which is the favoured format for images published online, on mobile devices and in newspapers. This is also a near-universal format supported by almost all photographic software and by major camera manufacturers including Nikon and Canon. Eismann, Duggan and Grey recommended setting cameras in which there are file format options to save images at the highest possible quality JPEG format, which is often labelled 'large' (Eismann, Duggan & Grey 2004, p. 27).
- RAW is a generic but brand-specific file format supported by different camera manufacturers. While RAW files are high quality, they can generally only be processed with brand-specific software.
- Photoshop handles different formats but it also supports its own PSD file format.