PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
by Keith Lee

Introduction
This assignment asks students to read, then select an article from the UNDHR, and finally, to produce a Public Service Announcement (PSA) that promotes awareness or encourages positive action in support of Human Rights. It is intended to be a group project, with good discussion among group members paramount to the PSA’s success. The final form is to be a small PSA poster that illustrates an aspect of the selected UNDHR article, using the persuasive qualities of appropriate photographic lighting, models and props.

This lesson can be taught at a variety of skill levels, depending on the desired degree of visual sophistication and the amount of time allotted for this project. The lesson is intended for intermediate photography students who are learning to design with light and already have a foundation in basic camera operation.

Essential Questions
Photography Techniques SLOs:
• Identify various studio lighting equipment and demonstrate knowledge of their specific use and purpose.
• Set up and arrange studio lighting equipment in a creative and technical manner that clearly depicts the volume, texture, and/or shape of a 3D object.
• Produce a realistic job bid with a budget that reflects awareness of the multiple costs associated with a commercial project.

Learning Outcomes
Students learn how to employ photographic techniques and the skillful use of lighting to communicate a specific message. Students deepen their understanding of a specific UNDHR article by having to interpret and express it in a visual manner.

Procedures
• Present the UNDHR
• Form groups of 4-5 students
• Each group selects an article from the UNDHR to illustrate
• Each group brainstorms ideas for possible ways/themes to illustrate the selected article, with each group member contributing their vision for the PSA
When one idea is generally agreed upon to pursue, discussion takes place as to what the mood will be, the model(s) required, and any props necessary. This is an important point at which the instructor needs to visit each group and hear the various strategies under discussion. Each group’s idea must be vetted by the instructor to ensure that students are employing a viable strategy. Some ideas don’t translate well visually and the instructor must lead the group in thinking about how best to tell the message visually.

- Students then divide up responsibilities for gathering props, finding models, and directing the technical aspects of lighting as well as the overall photography shoot.
- Students meet and photograph their idea.
- After editing and post-production, a finished PSA poster is printed.
- A class critique session reviews each group’s chosen UNDHR article and reflects on how well the PSA expressed their idea.

Assessment

A class critique session with instructor and students joining in to discuss the success of each project.

Materials

- An internet search of PSA images; sample images uploaded
- Cameras, lighting equipment, props and models, and an appropriate shooting location.
Only a Child

Adama Drabo was 16 years old when he was hired as a cook, or so he thought. What should have been a white apron were instead combat fatigues and he from then on he had been forced into the conflict in Mali. When he tried to escape home he was arrested and physically abused. International pressure possibly saved Drabo from being executed but he is still being
child soldiers

detained indefinitely for “his protection.” Drabo’s story from the organization Red Cross’s website could possibly be seen as a fortunate one, as other children in Mali’s and dozens of other countries had more horrific stories to tell, and because some children who could tell these stories have already lost their lives.

As modern firearms became more advanced, their weight dropped, and the prospect of child soldiers became more practical. The lighter weight of assault rifles such as the iconic AK47, allowed for children as young as eight to carry these weapons. Children in war were less demanding on resources than grown men. They ate less food and are easier to manipulate. According to a BBC interview with Myo Win, a child soldier in the Burmese conflict, he was drugged and forced into combat. Drugging is a common practice since it gives children a sense of courage and fearlessness making them easier to follow suicidal orders. Those who were too scared to follow orders were beaten after the gunfight or were shot on the spot.
But most alarmingly, as children age during their time as a soldier, they become more obedient and loyal to their ruthless commanders. This is true for children recruited during their early teens as well. This is documented well in a BBC special report on the conflict in Sierra Leone. According to Emily Blunt, these young soldiers were especially feared by the adults they fought against. These rebels attracted disgruntled and disillusioned young men from an impoverished countryside. Blunt stated it in stark reality, “To have a gun gave them power and the chance to avenge them on a society that offered them very little.” The ragtag group of young rebel soldiers quickly dispatched a trained army of Nigerians prepared for conventional conflict, cementing their horrific reputation.
In the photo above, a child cries because he is being disarmed. The very fact that he believes that the ability to exact violence gives him power and status shows the traumatic wounds inflicted to him. This illustrates the fact that risk of physical injury or death is not the only inherent gamble with being a soldier. Child soldiers all face post traumatic experiences after their tenure in combat and are often hunted by other militias and are ostracized by their families, if their loved ones have not been executed already. And if they are rehabilitated into society, many child soldiers have missed years of education, and face problems reintegrating with society. All these rights taken away from them could be summarized by their loss of their childhood, and the love and care that should have come with it. This is grimly illustrated in the following photo, juxtaposing the life he should have led, by the life he is being forced to lead right now.
But to make sure children in these war torn countries are no longer exploited as soldiers, it is important to look at the causes of these conflicts.
YOU COULD COVER IT UP...

- **One in every four women** will experience domestic violence in her lifetime.*

- An estimated **1.3 million women** are victims of physical assault by an intimate partner each year.**

- The **majority (73%)** of family violence victims are female. Females were **84%** of spousal abuse victims and **86%** of abuse victims at the hands of a boyfriend.***

OR YOU COULD CALL 1-877-384-3578


** CDC* Domestic Violence Against Women in the United States, 2005. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Atlanta, GA.