

## **“So you want to change the world with photography?”**

**A one-day symposium on radical and politically motivated photography, organized by Redeye, the North West Photography Network**

**22nd February 2003, Urbis, Manchester  
Report by Kath Grant**

There can be no doubting the dominance of instant TV, video and digital images in the coverage of world news - and there has been a devastating display of this once again in the continuous stream of pictures which have been depicting events in Iraq.

Yet, far from being submerged by this tidal wave of “instant news” technology, the more reflective role of radical and politically motivated photography seems to be undergoing a revival, even if photographers themselves are having to seek other outlets for their work instead of relying on the traditional channels of the mass media.

Around 130 people engaged in a series of passionate yet thoughtful debates about present day radical and politically motivated photography at Redeye’s third national symposium which was held at Urbis, the museum of the city, in Manchester on February 22nd.

It was entitled “So You Want To Change The World With Photography?” and the morning session looked at the work itself and the photographers making it while the afternoon concentrated on distribution. However, the issues proved to be so interlinked that many of the afternoon’s discussions were a continuation and development of those in the morning.

Introducing the event for Redeye, Paul Herrmann said the symposium had been a sell-out and this showed that people wanted to say and do something with photography. In times of uncertainty, perhaps people turned more to the timeless truth of photography, which was enjoying a kind of renaissance. People had stopped saying “Photography is dead” but, at the same time, the western world had almost reached “image saturation point”. It now spent more time avoiding images rather than looking for them and this placed a big responsibility on photographers and the images they chose to produce.

“Motivation and Production” was the title of the morning session which was introduced by Chris Boot, who chaired the symposium. Chris has worked for the Photo Co-op - now Photofusion - Magnum Photos and Phaidon Press. Two years ago, he started working independently, editing and producing photography books, including “A Broken Landscape” by Gideon Mendel and “Here is New York - a Democracy of Photographs”.

Chris turned to photography at the beginning of the 80s when movements such as the Anti Nazi League, CND, and identity politics were a meeting place for politics and photography.

He gave the example of issues surrounding gay people: they were not represented in the media at the time, so political photographers set about creating new boundaries of representation, making and distributing different kinds of images. It was all about enabling different groups and community organisations to represent themselves in a time when representation was dictated by media barons and journalists who didn’t understand the issues.

Chris said the terms being dealt with at the symposium - such as “politics” and “radical” - embraced different meanings for different people. The session would address three themes:

- Is photography a good vehicle for advancing social or political change?
- What form can a photographer’s engagement with the issues of the world take today?
- What do you want from photography?

## SIMON NORFOLK

The first speaker was Simon Norfolk who abandoned an academic career to work as a photographer. He began 13 years ago by taking pictures for left wing magazines but started doing landscape work in 1995 and produced "For Most Of It I Have No Words" about landscapes where there have been genocides. His photographs have been exhibited in the UK, across Europe and in the US. Two years ago, Simon won a World Press Award for pictures of the re-painting of Jodrell Bank Radio Telescope.

He told the symposium that he turned from sociology to documentary photography after being inspired by two photography books, "Fighting the Famine" by Mike Goldwater, and John Sturrock's "Blood, Sweat and Tears". Sturrock's book was about the miners' strike and showed Simon what he, as a socialist, could do through the medium of photojournalism.

Illustrating his talk with a series of striking photographs, Simon said he covered a wide range of stories for left-wing magazines, including Northern Ireland, the poll tax rebellion and race attacks. His anti fascist work led to coverage of BNP activities in London and he also took photographs at meetings addressed by the historian David Irving, known internationally as an apologist for the Holocaust.

Simon's transition from photojournalist to landscape photographer was initiated by a protestor he met outside Irving's meetings. Leon Greenman was a survivor of Auschwitz whose wife and son were murdered there. He always turned up to anti fascist protests wearing an "I Was There" badge and the dignity of his moral power persuaded Simon to visit Auschwitz.

Once there, he reflected on the different reasons why people visited the memorial and museum - for some, it brought back memories, for others it was a pilgrimage to pay homage to relatives they had never met. And, to depict the different meanings Auschwitz held for different people, he used the quiet landscape techniques of photography in his portrayals of the camp where there had been so much suffering.

"Photography is a simple medium and this was such a complex story. The question I asked myself was: 'How can I photograph it?' Then I found that, if I let these things alone, they spoke much more clearly and powerfully," he said.

His photographs of Auschwitz were eventually incorporated into the book "For Most Of It I Have No Words" along with other landscapes where there have been genocides - Rwanda, Cambodia, the Ukraine, Armenia and Namibia.

These photographs have been widely exhibited and so has his collection of colour photographs of Afghanistan. He used landscape techniques to create these images, too, although they are different from his work on genocide. In his portrayal of Afghanistan, Simon took on the role of an archaeologist, depicting the changes wrought in the country by different invaders in different historical periods - including the most recent interventions by the Russians and the Americans.

He said: "The war has been going on for so long there that you can pick out the historical differences in military technology in the damage that has been done to Kabul."

Simon still works for newspapers and magazines but much of his work is exhibited in galleries around the world or published in book form. "This way, I have more control over how the images are used," he says.

## MAGGIE MURRAY

The next speaker was Maggie Murray who has been a freelance photographer for many years. She has travelled widely and her pictures have appeared in books, magazines, teaching packs and exhibitions. Maggie has also been involved in various groups and collectives concerned with photography, politics and representation. These include Format Photographers, the only women's photography agency in Britain, which closed in December after 20 years.

Maggie told the symposium that the closure of Format could be seen as a failure but the agency ran for two decades and did some interesting work. Its ending was not totally negative because many of its original aims have now been achieved. It was set up at a time when representation of women in the media was extremely stereotypical and, although this is still the case in some quarters, the portrayal of women in today's society is much better than it was in the early 1980s. As Chris Boot remarked: "Format had a huge impact on the ways in which women were visualised."

The agency was a women's only collective for photojournalists who were working professionals and its challenge to the status quo was contained in the ethos of the organisation. Format offered women photographers an opportunity to develop their careers and tried to raise the public's consciousness of people who did not normally appear in the mainstream media.

Maggie told the symposium: "It was all about the politics of representation. We would look at a newspaper and it was instructive - how many women, black people, older people were there? Which page were they on, how were they represented?"

The Format photographers wanted control over the ways in which their images were used. Maggie said they did not sell pictures to The Sun and would have long conversations with people at The Guardian about the captions accompanying their photographs.

"We didn't think we could change the world, people who wanted to do that were working in community groups and international and political organisations. But we did use photography as part of that, to help them with their struggles," Maggie added.

She said that working collectively with community groups and political campaigns was not always easy and sometimes there would be arguments about whether photographs were acceptable or not.

"We were having to compete with images on TV and advertising hoardings, images out there in the rest of the world. We tried to bring real emotions and real ideas to our pictures."

She also learned that the cynicism developed by many seasoned photographers was not always negative as long as it did not prevent them from being creative or trying to making sense of the world through their images.

Maggie showed slides which illustrated the work she had done with Format. Some of the photographs, such as one of an older woman going over the wire at Greenham Common, weren't used at the time but had been published subsequently.

Her pictures included the first woman firefighter, women barristers, women vicars and women demonstrating during the miners' strike. There were also photographs of women who had suffered domestic violence and images of people with cancer who had turned to alternative medicine.

One joyful picture, which was taken at a local ANC meeting in South Africa during 1990, encapsulates Maggie's philosophy of photography.

She explained: "It was the first time these people had voted and suddenly they all got up and started dancing and singing, it was quite impromptu and the picture conveys their delight.

"That is what I want to do with photography. I want it to be about the issues and to be serious but I want to have a good time, too."

## TOM STODDART

Tom Stoddart's work has appeared regularly in international newspapers, journals, exhibitions and publications for the last 25 years. He covered the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Romanian Revolution, the build up to the last Gulf War and the first winter of freedom in Albania. In 1999, he became a founder member of the Independent Photographers' Group. His picture

essays on the Rwandan refugee crisis, the civilian victims of sanctions in Iraq, the women of Sarajevo and the training and covert operations of the Colombian anti-drug special forces have won many awards. His most recent publication is "The Road to Victory, the Campaign Trail of Tony Blair."

Tom told the symposium that photographs taken by Denis Hussey of the Daily Mirror inspired his choice of career.

When Tom was still at school in a small village on the North East coast where he grew up, Denis Hussey took photographs of the dying fishing industry for the Mirror and sent prints to the community.

"I thought they were beautiful and that it was what I would like to do. Twenty years later, I met Denis and thanked him for changing my life."

When he first started work on a local newspaper, Tom thought he might be a reporter. However, he realised that photographers were able to get out of the office much more and he reverted to his schoolboy ambition, learning his craft first on a weekly newspaper and then with an agency.

Later, he was a national tabloid photographer, taking pictures of celebrities and members of the royal family. It was a good life but he wanted more and then, in 1982, came a second life-transforming experience. He was sent to Beirut where he saw and took pictures of the terrible effects of war in the Lebanon and he knew that he wanted to concentrate on serious photojournalism.

He takes black and white pictures with a short lens because he wants to be as involved as possible with his subjects. "People always know I am taking their photographs, I never snatch pictures," he says.

Tom told the symposium that freelance photographers have to be mentally strong. They are often told not to go to countries where there is war or famine because they are already being covered by staff photographers or agencies.

He said: "Some photographers are more interested in what the camera can do for them rather than what they can bring back. I am entirely focused on my work and I try to bring back powerful pictures that people have to take notice of."

One of the biggest stories in the world today is people dying of Aids throughout Africa. Yet Tom is finding it difficult to find outlets for his pictures of this human catastrophe. "Magazines and newspapers want the story but they want you to make the pictures more palatable because their circulation goes down if they put something on the front which readers find too graphic."

He does not believe he can change the world with photography but he thinks the dripping effect of images of the victims of war, sickness and famine can embarrass politicians and possibly lead to change.

Tom showed his pictures of the siege of Sarajevo at the symposium. He feels the people there were badly let down by the West. "Daily life in Sarajevo was very scary and it was hard because there was no water, no meat, no dairy products and no electricity. War devastates buildings but it also devastates people and I felt ashamed when I returned and nothing had been done."

His portrayal of a woman putting her son on a bus to safety is harrowing but is an example of his determination to tell the story as it is and to show exactly what is happening.

Yet there are lighter notes in his work and one of his best known images of Sarajevo is the woman wearing a summer dress, high heels and pearls walking defiantly down a street plagued by snipers. It was used in a centre spread for Life magazine and the woman said that, by walking down one of the most dangerous streets in Sarajevo each day, she was showing that the people would never be defeated.

Tom says photographs can mean different things to different people at different times and cites pictures of Tony Blair during his election campaign, including the historic image of him in the plane going back to London when he realised he had won a landslide majority and could be in power for the next decade or more. "It will be interesting to see how these pictures are used in the future when Tony Blair and New Labour are judged by history."

## DISCUSSION

The panel's debate with the audience concluded the morning session. The three photographers agreed that their convictions and beliefs provided the energy for their work. Simon Norfolk said: "It shows in the pictures when a photographer doesn't care. You have to care to get the pictures - Rwanda was a frightening place but one of the things that drove me was that I wouldn't want to live with the person who failed to take those pictures."

When he is working, he has to believe he can make a difference. "Intellectually, I know I can't change George Bush's mind but, when I am taking the pictures, I have to believe they will have an effect, otherwise I wouldn't be able to do the work," he said.

Tom Stoddart takes his best pictures when he is angry and both he and Simon reiterated that the most important attribute of a freelance photographer is self-belief. As a freelance, you are on your own, you have to pay for your equipment - and often your own travel costs - and there is no guarantee of publication. Maggie Murray added: "I don't know what makes us do it. I suppose it comes down to the sort of person you are."

She described her experience in Rwanda when she was photographing aspects of agriculture and wanted to take pictures of women at work. She was told that they could "mock up" a picture and some men would illustrate the way the women worked. But she insisted on taking pictures of the women themselves.

Maggie said: "They said it was a long way, it was raining heavily and I'd have to walk up a steep hill, carrying all my photographic equipment. But I didn't mind - after all the women themselves had to walk up there, carrying babies and small children - and I wanted to get the real picture."

Simon Norfolk said there were always 1,000 reasons why you shouldn't go to the other side of the world to take a picture. If you wanted to succeed, you had to resist the doubters among your acquaintances and follow your instincts.

A member of the audience pointed out that photography was a method of communication and communication could help to change the world. He cited the internationally known picture of the little girl, shown screaming and running naked down the street, after the napalm attack in Vietnam and suggested that this was an example of a photograph that had changed the world.

The panel agreed it had helped influence the Americans' decision to pull out. Tom Stoddart said this photograph had been a stock picture which showed that even the most arresting images were not always used immediately.

Another example of the way in which the camera could be an instrument which brought about change was given by a member of the audience who spoke about the anti globalisation movement. The movement was strong and it was growing all the time but this would not have happened if on-the-scene images of protests around the world had not been published in print, shown on the Internet and in TV and video pictures.

One speaker from the floor asked about the relationship between text and image and said it was important that the photographer was in control because they were the closest to the story.

Simon said it was often difficult for a photojournalist to retain control once the pictures had been handed over and this was one reason why he had turned to books and galleries. "I don't have to fight any more to get my captions used."

Another question focused on the ethics of publishing pictures that were taken without people's knowledge in the middle of a disaster. Tom Stoddart said he never used a long lens but it was important that disasters were recorded, even if people who had been injured or killed were not able to challenge the photographs being taken.

However, Maggie said that photographers had to take responsibility for their pictures and think of the effect publication might have on the people who had been photographed and their families.

#### TIM GOPSILL

The afternoon session started with a contribution from Tim Gopsill, editor of *The Journalist*, the National Union of Journalists' magazine. Tim was elected to the post in 1988 and has been re-elected every five years since then. Previously, he worked as a freelance journalist and, at the NUJ, he is responsible for matters relating to press freedom, professional standards and accreditation.

Tim threw down the gauntlet to photographers, challenging them to be more subversive and assuring them that they would receive the full backing of the NUJ if they were arrested whilst taking a picture.

He reminded the symposium of the American newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst's dictum that: "News is what somebody, somewhere wants to suppress - all the rest is advertising." Tim said the same could be said of photography.

He suggested that some of the most subversive photography is done by the paparazzi because they break the rules of access laid down by celebrities and their agents. Similarly, the Hello pictures of the wedding of Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta Jones could also be described as subversive, he said.

Tim said the most striking domestic picture in recent weeks had been the photograph of the February peace march in London, which had made all the front pages of the Sunday newspapers. It was not a great anti war photograph but it was a picture that would be remembered because a million people had come out onto the streets to protest against the proposed conflict.

Many of the most memorable pictures from award winning photographers had come from their work around the world but he argued that more could be done to depict the social reality of Britain in 2003.

He admitted that TV and video had made life more difficult for photographers and said moving images had more impact than stills. "To get into print, photographers have to produce a single, startling image that makes people sit up and take notice. These should be pictures that the powerful don't want you to take, whether it's the Government, the police, a showbusiness agent, property owner or football club."

Tim said it was a photographer's right to take pictures of all areas of life without restriction but, although the tabloids asserted this right when it came to "doorstepping" or photographing celebrities, there was a danger that in other areas it could fall into disuse.

He cited the case of Fay Godwin, the landscape photographer who fought the National Trust's insistence that she pay a fee for taking pictures on land which, although it is managed by them, is owned by the public. At Heathrow Airport, photographers can be stopped from taking pictures if they don't have a permit and, two years ago, the Greater London authority tried to introduce a similar arrangement in Trafalgar Square.

Some photographers had talked about organising a mass trespass in Trafalgar Square and Tim said this was the sort of direct action which would have to be taken if they were to retain their rights to take pictures without constraint.

"Not enough photographers are getting themselves arrested," he told the symposium. "A few years ago, the NUJ was getting a case every few weeks but there has been a fall off.

Have the police become more reasonable or are photographers not pushing their luck enough now? It's the job of every journalist to push their luck."

He said photographers would have the backing of the NUJ and the UK Press Card scheme. On the whole, the NUJ had a good record when it came to the defence of photographers who had been arrested by the police for doing their job.

He did warn, however, that photographers could only expect union support if they were acting as a professional photojournalist and not as an activist. A few years ago, this line had become blurred in the case of a photographer who was also an animal rights' protestor and the NUJ had taken the member's card off him.

Tim promised: "With that understanding, the union is solidly behind radical photographers - go and get yourself arrested and we'll bail you out."

#### ANDREW WIARD

Andrew Wiard is a freelance photographer who has contributed for many years to a variety of national newspapers and magazines. He shared some of his experiences of distribution with other photographers at the conference, describing the realities of getting campaigning pictures into the press in the era of digital photography. If they wanted their images published nationally, they had to get their photographs to the picture desk as soon as possible after the event.

He gave the example of the photograph of the anti war march: the first picture from that demonstration went in the newspapers and it stayed in the later editions.

"You can have a really good picture but, if you don't get it in early enough, it won't be used unless it is very special. Picture editors have a flood of photographs coming in and there has to be some reason why they go for yours," Andrew said.

But he reminded photographers that, even if they did not get their pictures in the newspaper or magazine they were aiming for, they could still be used in the future as stock images.

He added: "This happens frequently. For instance, there was one photograph I did of street fighting Fascists which didn't make the papers at the time but has been used since as a stock picture."

But he warned about the growing dominance of the two billionaire-owned digital agencies, Getty and Corbis, which had taken over a lot of the smaller, traditional agencies through which photographers sold their stock pictures.

They try to impose their own terms on payment and copyright and photographers are working together to resist this.

Andrew said he did not believe photography could change the world - but it could transform the way people viewed it. The reason there had been so many people on the London peace march was because the public was now fully aware of the consequences of war.

"They know what it's like because they have seen the pictures of past conflicts, this is the power of photography," he said.

Historically, public opinion had been kept under control because the public did not really know about the reality of war. In the 21st century, it was impossible for a British prime minister to advocate war against Iraq without millions of people knowing what it would entail because they had seen it before in newspaper, magazine and TV images.

Andrew said: "Day after day, week after week, these images add up and change the way that people think. This is the role of the radical photographer. Wherever you happen to be, there are stories to be told. While everyone else is ignoring them, it's the photographer's job to go

out and capture them.”

## JESS HURD

The final speaker was Jess Hurd, a freelance photographer who has contributed 2,500 images to [www.reportdigital.co.uk](http://www.reportdigital.co.uk), the online social issues and labour movement photolibrary. She is also a regular contributor to the online independent media centre, [indymedia.org.uk](http://indymedia.org.uk)

She was TUC photographer of the year in 2000 and a staff photographer on Socialist Worker between 1996 and 2001. Her work has included photographs of asylum seekers and the anti globalisation movement. She has exhibited at the John Kobal Foundation Photographic Portrait Awards, in the National Portrait Gallery, at the Foundry in Shoreditch and in London Guildhall University.

Jess distributes her photographs through the alternative media because the mainstream press did not cover grass roots movements properly and its reports and images were often distorted.

“The anti war demonstrations across the globe are an extension of the anti capitalist movements for social change. Normally, the alternative press, such as the Socialist Worker, would have been the only papers to cover these events properly but the sheer scale of the peace protests have forced the images into the mainstream media.”

She covered major political events in the UK, Northern Ireland and Europe for the Socialist Worker but, as a freelance, many of her images are now distributed through Report Digital. She is also commissioned by campaigning organisations and has covered anti globalisation protests in Genoa and Prague.

Like Simon, Jess has exhibited her photographs in galleries and has recently been working with artists and photographers on a major anti capitalist exhibition in London.

Jess has turned to alternative sources of distribution in an attempt to counter the bias of the corporate media. She said radical photojournalists faced editorial censorship in the mainstream press, as well as pressures on the ground from the forces of law and order, when covering politically sensitive stories.

She quoted Noam Chomsky who, in “Our Media, Not Theirs”, wrote that the right to information was essential to a truly functioning democracy and that there should be free and open discussion which was not filtered by “the state-corporate nexus that has effectively shaped the mass media into instruments of class power and domination.”

Jess showed the symposium examples of her work with refugees and the anti globalisation movement. She said the left wing press had challenged stereotypical images of refugees found in national newspapers like the Mail and the Express. The tabloid circulation was stifle proper debate in national newspapers but, as a photojournalist working for the Socialist Worker, Jess went into the Sangatte refugee camp and helped people tell their own stories in a way that would not have been possible in the mainstream media.

Her images of destitute refugees in Manchester were included in an exhibition in which Jess took part last year.

“I have no problem going from news journalism to an exhibition space,” she said.

She praised the work of Salgado who has been criticised in some quarters as the creator of “coffee table books”, but Jess said he had put a human face to descriptions of the “tide” of refugees in the mass media - and his pictures also showed refugees as the victims of war.

One of the most important pictures Jess has taken is of the 23 year old Genoese man, Carlo Guilliani, who was shot dead during a protest outside the G8 Summit in July 2001.

This picture was carried in the global press and Jess also entered it for the John Kobal Photographic Portrait Awards. The decision to include the photograph in the exhibition was

controversial and Jess had to argue about its placement because it was so high up the wall that no-one could see it.

"This is an illustration of how you have to fight in any arena for your images," she said.

Three people offered to buy the photograph but she refused to sell it because she could not bear to think of it hanging on someone's living room wall.

"Placing the image of a murdered Carlo Giuliani in the gallery did upset people. But that was the purpose of the picture - to jar, to remember and to bear witness. However, I did not think it was right to sell it to an individual buyer," Jess added.

Dozens of journalists covered the event in Genoa but it also saw the flowering of European activist based journalism - in the form of Indymedia - which extended the work already being done by independent media centres in the US and Australia.

It is "do-it-yourself journalism" which, through the Internet, digital imaging and other channels, reflects and collates reports from events such as the anti globalisation and Stop the War demonstrations.

Jess has contributed to UK Indymedia but says it does have its problems. She thinks some of the sites in the network are better than others and important issues can get lost in "the dross of poor quality entries." There are also difficulties with the authorship of articles - some people use pseudonyms and what they publish cannot be held to account. In addition, professional photographers have to be vigilant about their copyright and the danger of giving away their images.

But, on the whole Jess welcomes Indymedia, saying: "It is an exciting development in exciting times and should not be dismissed."

## DISCUSSION

Before the start of the afternoon's debate between the panel and the audience, there was a moving contribution from Shahidul Alam, from the Bangladeshi photographic agency, Drik, which is the Sanskrit word for "vision".

Shahidul, who also runs the Pathshalla School of Photography, described how he came from a middle class family in Bangladesh and had taught Chemistry in London, where he gained his PhD, before turning to photojournalism when he returned home to help document the popular resistance to General Eishad's military regime.

Newspapers were censored by the regime and, for two weeks, there were none at all. Yet reporters and photographers continued to work and they found a small gallery where they put up their pictures so that people could see them. There was queue over a mile long and altogether 400,000 people visited the exhibition.

"They came because it was about the people's movement and about the things that mattered to people," Shahidul said.

He urged photographers at the symposium to document what was happening around them, saying that a single image could act as a catalyst and lead people to question the status quo. "Photographers should be grounded in their own society. Little things **can** make a difference," he said

He described how once, when he was teaching photography to children, he showed pictures of people carrying bodies from a garment factory after a fire. Children had been working in the factory and they suffocated because the exits were locked and they could not get out.

"One of the children I was teaching asked what had happened to the owner and said that, if she had a camera, she would take a picture of him and get him put in jail. That little girl believed she could right a wrong with a picture and it demonstrates the influence

photography can have," he added.

Shahidul, who was thanked by Chris Boot for his thoughtful analysis of what it means to have a social and political mission in photography, has been a World Press Photograph judge on three occasions.

He founded the Drik agency and photo library in the Bangladeshi capital, Dhaka, in the late 80s and photojournalists from all over the Third (or Majority) World are involved. Their aim is to create images which replace the prevailing view of the Third World as "fodder for disaster reporting" and to show that it is a vibrant source of human energy. The agency also challenges and exposes the global economic system.

The final discussions of the day covered the viability of a photographic political agenda, the dividing line between activism and professional journalism and the marketing possibilities for photography in museums and the art world.

Commenting on a remark that photography had been replaced by instant images from TV, one member of the audience said television pictures flickered from viewer's minds in the same way they flickered off the screens. The TV image did not remain - but a really striking photograph was never forgotten.

"Photographers will not fail as long as they have something to say and they make their images different," he added.

Summing up the day, chair Chris Boot thanked Simon Norfolk, Maggie Murray and Tom Stoddart for showing such powerful work and describing their journeys in photography.

Simon had moved from his work as an investigative photojournalist exposing the extreme right in Britain to his discovery of a quieter, less rhetorical and large format approach to political and historical issues. Maggie, a committed feminist, had thrown light on some of the complexities of having a political mission in photography and Tom had described his conversion from tabloid to campaigning photographer after a life-changing assignment in the Lebanon.

Chris said the afternoon session did not stick strictly to the theme of distribution but moved the morning's debate forward in a number of different directions.

Tim Gopsill had argued for subversive photography that refused to accept rules laid down by the state or by a celebrity contract of access and he noted that fewer photographers were challenging these rules.

Jess Hurd had described her work in the anti globalisation movement and discussed issues connected with alternative online media while Andrew Wiard spoke about the realities of getting campaigning photography into the press in an era defined by digital capabilities.

Chris added that, although the day did not articulate a consensus of all the problems or offer up an absolute solution, it provided a forum for an interesting and lively dialogue about the issues.

"It proved that photography has not given up on politics but rather the opposite: it suggested a revival in the fortunes of political photography post September 11th and in a new era of activism.

"With the richness of the stories told, the number of ideas contributed and the sincerity of all participants, the day added up to an inspiring and exciting sense of possibility," he concluded.

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