# Photograph somewhere you are very uncomfortable

There are all kinds of successful photographic approaches where the photographer is quite comfortable when taking his or her pictures. I don't think André Kértesz, for example, ever felt uncomfortable when taking a photograph. Someone like Brassaï, however, had a bodyguard with him at various times. So much of good photography happens when one begins to overcome one's personal limitations. Students tend to be very shy, particularly when photographing people they don't know. They often retreat to photograph in empty, abandoned places where no one will bother them.

To do photography for the most part one must maneuver one's body around to actually be in the right spot to take a picture. The photographer must be physically in front of something. So often it seems that students are not getting themselves in front of the things that really interest them because they aren't quite brave enough. I try to remind them that passion can't really exist in the absence of risk, the feeling of risk. Over the years a few of my students have gone to dangerous neighborhoods and clubs, to slaughterhouses, or visited their estranged parents, but most of them never really address this assignment directly or fully — many find clever ways to avoid it. But perhaps this assignment gives them something to think about.