**CUNY Graduate School of Journalism**
Photo elective
Fall 2011
Assignment #4/5: Shooting News

From press conferences to demonstrations to breaking news, the news assignment – as distinguished from the feature assignment or the portrait – is how photojournalists spend most of their time.

Shooting news well is very much about understanding what editors, designers and subscribers (in the case of wires services and photo agencies) expect, and what they usually expect is variation around a formula.

For the press conference or speech, you should try and provide a variety of images that includes vertical horizontals, close-ups and wider shots. We also discussed in class left-facing and right-facing pictures. I realize there is no vertical in the example below. Note the use of telephoto (close-ups) and wide-angle lenses.
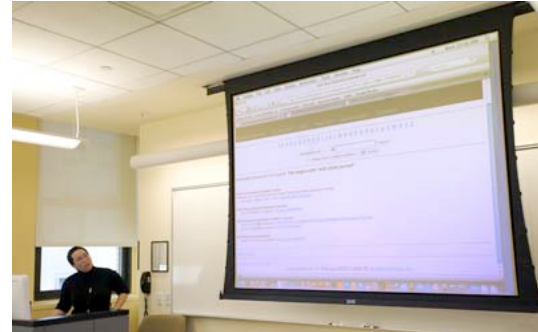
Think animated moment. Think logo or prop that might indicate visually what the speech or press conference is about. Think about elements in the surrounds and light that you might be able to use to make it a more compelling image on a graphic level

With panel discussions try and get not just an overall shot of the panel but animated headshots of each of the speakers as well as interaction between two or three of the participants (This panel below was being broadcast so I could only shoot for about a minute before it went live)
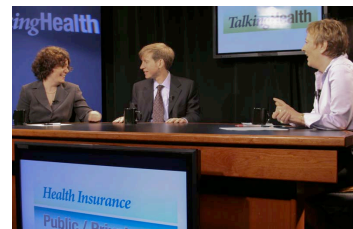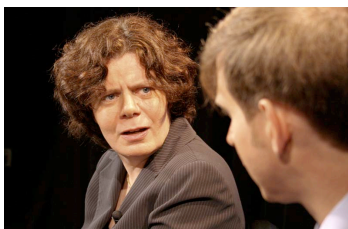
With spot news stuff you want to try and illustrate cause and effect in the same image. In other words, if an ambulance runs into a bust stop, you want to show both the cause – the ambulance – and the effect – the damaged bus stop in the same image. Think drama. Think layers. You might also think about images that are constructed to be more symbolic – maybe just the ambulance siren or FDNY logo on the front quarter panel in the foreground and out of focus with the bus stop in the background. Below are pix of a car/bus accident in Germany. In the image on the right, firefighters are looking through the wreckage.

Finally, demonstrations, rallies and protests. It is often more effective – and easier on a compositional level – to find a single person or small group of people that are animated and focus on them as symbolic of the event rather than try and get an image of big crowds (although if you can find an elevated position to show the size of crowd, that's often a good shot). Again, think animated moment. Thing prop to illustrate specifically what the event is about.

You should submit four to six final images WITH CAPTION INFORMATION.