CHAPTER 5

PHOTO GRAPHY

PHOTOGRAPHY

INTRODUCTION

We recommend that teachers devote one class to chapter one, human rights exercises, before they embark on this chapter. Each separate class or exercise has clearly outlined aims, objectives, length and NCCA key skills. We have also highlighted the material needed for each class or exercise. All handouts referenced in the classes can be found in the handout section at the end of this chapter.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Photography plays a powerful role in the examination of human rights; it can serve as a tool of investigation and exposure, provoke dialogue, and provide a level of conceptual insight that is immediate and extremely affecting. Photography gives those experiencing human rights abuses a means to communicate their story.

As teachers, when showing your class a film you should be aware of the following:
1. To avoid the development of insensitivity due to the exposure to negative imagery teachers should try to balance this with positive imagery of cases where human rights are being enjoyed;
2. Teachers should also explain to the students that pictures cannot tell the whole story, and in some cases they may conceal a great deal;
   Shocking and violent images may overwhelm students. Here, I suggest being both understanding to those students who have trouble with violent images, but also to be clear that being shocked, saddened, and uncomfortable may be part of the learning process, particularly on the subject of genocide.

OVERALL AIM OF THE SECTION

To examine human rights issues through the use of photography and media images.

Voice Our Concern And Photography
The Project By Hugh Mcelveen

"We got the students to think about what faith and religion meant to them. From the ensuing discussion that followed we drafted a brief questionnaire to give to local religious representatives to fill in. We brainstormed the questions that they wanted to ask. We decided that they should be inquisitive not confrontational. The purpose was to gain an understanding of religious values that we do not necessarily share. When we visited places of worship we observed what signs, symbols and objects that we saw. Crosses, crescents, stars, tables, altars, chairs, mats, pews and so on. We observed which of these symbols or objects appeared in more than one type of place of worship.

In a class period we discussed our observations and the answered questionnaires. The students thought about what common threads they found in their answers and those of the religious representatives? What visual symbols were common to the places of worship? How do you think you can bring these threads of common faith into images? Do you think by understanding what we have in common (what unites us) that we can create a greater respect for and acceptance of religious differences? What emerged from this research was an exploration by Scoil Mhuire of Islamic and Christian demonstrations of prayer. A common thread is that both faiths humble themselves in prayer by either bowing or kneeling."

Hugh McElveen

CLASS 1
VOICE OUR CONCERN PHOTOGRAPHY

◉ AIM
Students will begin to think about how we are all abled or disabled by certain characteristics.

🎓 OBJECTIVES
Students will have
- Thought about living with different kinds of physical and mental abilities;
- Observed how photography can stimulate discussion on human rights issues.

💡 NCCA KEY SKILLS
Information processing, communication, critical and creative thinking and group work.

📇 MATERIAL NEEDED
UHDR (handout section 5.1, pg 128).
Can I, Could I (handout section 5.2, pg 129).
VOC case study (handout section 5.3, pg 131).

🕐 LENGTH
Full Class

STEPS:
1. Split your class into groups of three or four;
2. Hand out the 30 word version of the UDHR, (handout section 5.1, pg 128);
3. Give each group a copy of the Can I, Could I? Sheet to fill in. (handout section 5.2, pg 129);
4. Ask each group to look at the photo of the staircase and get them to discuss the image:
   - What do they see in the photo?
   - What do they think it is trying to say?
   - What has this image to say about disability and access?
5. Tell the students that this photograph was taken by Transition Year students at Loreto College, St. Stephens Green, as an image of how the issue of access affects people with disabilities: Read out the piece below written by students from the previous *Voice Our Concern* project;
6. Assign a disability to each group, e.g., blindness, deafness, limited physical movement, learning difficulties, mental illness. Ask the members of the group to assume that they each suffer from the same disability and to fill out the Can I, Could I? form together and to undertake the following activities;
7. Consider how the specific physical/mental disability makes it difficult for a person to participate in certain activities, e.g., going to a film, play or concert; sight-seeing, hill-walking, etc;
8. Investigate how accessible the building is to people with disabilities, including visitors, parents, and pupils. What needs to be done to make their building more accessible? They can draw a plan of the school and show what alterations are necessary to make it user-friendly for people with the particular disability. (As a follow-up, students can interview employers or members of disability organisations about the rights of people with disabilities).

Source: Adapted from an original activity in Our World Our Rights, Amnesty UK.

After Class Activity

Bring in, and ask students to bring in, a wide selection of newspapers (local, national and international; tabloid and broadsheet), magazines (men's and women's; general and teenagers'), and news pages from the web on the following topics: images of Africa, women and men, young people, and asylum seekers and refugees.

"We decided…. to focus on the topic of people with disabilities and how their human rights can sometimes be denied. Throughout our project we focused on taking photographs that expressed the daily living of people with disability and the problems presented to them by access."

Transition Year student, Loreto College, St. Stephens Green

Photo taken by Transition Year students, Loreto College, St. Stephens Green; with Frank Miller, Dublin 2006. © Amnesty International.

CLASS 2
A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH TO PHOTOGRAPHY

◎ **AIM**

Students will be introduced to a human rights based approach to imagery and photography.

👝 **OBJECTIVES**

Students will have
- Engaged in thinking about human rights through the use of imagery;
- Explored how imagery can create stereotypes;
- Developed their photographic work;
- Analysed the potential of imagery to present positive and negatives images;
- Thought about how imagery can be used to advance human rights.

💡 **NCCA KEY SKILLS**

Information processing, communication, being personally effective, critical and creative thinking and group work.

📷 **MATERIAL NEEDED**

Images from newspapers brought in. Glue, scissors, paper and camera, (if available). Students can use their mobile phone cameras if they do not have a digital camera.
Guide to taking a good photo (handout section 5.6, pg 134).
History of Photomontage (pg 122).
VOC case study (handout section 5.3, pg 131).
Questions for Group Consideration (handout section 5.4, pg 132)
Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages (handout section 5.5, pg 133)

🕑 **LENGTH**

Full Class

EXERCISE 1

STEPS:

1. Spread the images from research work out on the floor of the classroom or across a number of tables;
2. Divide students into 4 groups and assign a subject to each one:
- Group 1- Africa
- Group 2- Women and men
- Group 3- Young people
- Group 4- Asylum seekers and refugees
3. Each group should look for images and language through which their subject is portrayed. They should then select some examples of images and headlines to present to and discuss with the rest of the class;
4. Hand out questions for consideration for the class, (handout section 5.3, page 131).
4. Hand out Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages (handout section 5.5, pg 133).

© Anne Molloy Amnesty International.

EXERCISE 2

STEPS:

1. With the images taken from the newspapers ask the students to create a photomontage;
2. Explain how photomontage is made: This is the process where you make one image from a combination of other images. Cutting and joining a number of other photographs together makes the image, see photomontage steps below;
3. The end picture can be photographed so that the final image is a photographic print;
4. Read out to the students the history of photomontage, see below;
5. Hand out photography tips (handout section 5.6, pg 134).

Research Work For Those Intending To Do The Photographic Project

• Students should begin experimenting with their cameras and visualize how they want to depict their chosen article;
• As part of a longer project students should consider how they can translate their article of the UDHR into a billboard or campaign poster that raises public awareness;
• Students should consider if they need props: make-up, clothes or classmates to appear in their images?

Research For Students Not Intending To Do The Photographic Project

• Ask students to collect images from newspapers, magazines, and the web. Ask the students to collect images relating to identity, immigration, young people, asylum seekers, refugees, homelessness, poverty and inequality. These images will be used to produce a photomontage that illustrates the students' thoughts on articles in the UDHR.

PHOTOMONTAGE

Photomontage: is an art form in which images from several photographs or prints are collaged together to create a new meaning. One of the most renowned artists who used Photomontage was John Heartfield. Heartfield used his collage work as a political medium to protest against the violent and greedy nature of governments. He first used his art to satire the exploits of the German Army in World War One and then he focused his attention on Nazi Germany. His photomontages satirised Adolf Hitler and the Nazis and often subverted Nazi symbols such as the swastika in order to undermine their propaganda messages.

PHOTOMONTAGE STEPS

1. Ask the students to begin experimenting with the images they brought in, moving them around on a piece of paper, layering, etc;
2. Students can develop these images into a new image;
3. They will need to consider the billboard model, and how their imagery will work on this rectangular shape;
4. As students define their concept and image ask them to write a short piece about their art.

At the end of the project students should be able to present an individual or group image that depicts how they feel about an article taken from the UDHR.

Ali Griffin, Newpark Comprehensive, Blackrock, Co. Dublin, Ireland. 2009. © Amnesty International.

CLASS 3
CREATE A HUMAN RIGHTS INSPIRED IMAGE

⊙ AIM

Students will be introduced to peer designed images inspired by human rights values and begin their photographic project.

🖐 OBJECTIVES

Students will have

• Examined other students' photographic work;
• Explored how human rights laws and values can be represented in images;
• Studied Amnesty International campaign image (handout section 5.8, pg 138);
• Used the inspiration from looking at other students' work to motivate them to begin their own project;
• Creatively engaged with human rights issues;
• Brainstormed and planned how they will photograph their image/make their photomontage.

💡 NCCA KEY SKILLS

Information processing, communication, critical and creative thinking and group work.

📷 MATERIAL NEEDED

All materials are from the handout section associated with this chapter.
It would be a good idea to also have a notebook.
UHDR (handout section 5.1, pg 128).
Images from Newpark Comprehensive (handout section 5.7, pg 137, pg 122, pg 126).
Amnesty International Campaign (handout section 5.8, pg 138).
VOC case study (handout section 5.3, pg 131).

🕑 LENGTH

Full Class

EXERCISE 1

STEPS:

1. Provide the thirty-word declaration (handout section 5.1, pg 128) to each student;
2. Case study: Show the students the images produced by Newpark Comprehensive and discuss the human rights images that they have composed (handout section 5.7, pg 137, pg 122, pg 126);
3. Discuss how Amnesty International uses photography as a key element of its campaigns and use image provided (handout section 5.8, pg 138).

EXERCISE 2:

STEPS:

1. Ask the students to pick out 2/3 articles from the UDHR they want to work with;
2. Brainstorm in small groups on how they would compose their image;
3. Use a notebook to write down ideas etc;
4. Ask the students what story do they want their image to tell?
5. Do they remember images from other sources that may inspire their photo?
6. Ask students/teachers to bring in cameras or their camera phones for next class;
7. Classes who do not intend to do the whole project can brainstorm ideas for what they may do for their photomontage;
8. For classes intending to do the photographic project, remind them of the photographic tips.

Follow Up

Students who have cameras can begin practicing with their camera or continue composing their image. Ensure that students come to the next class prepared (if possible with some images already taken). Ensure that students bring their notebooks to class. Remember the guidelines on how to take a good photo.

CLASS 4
CREATE A HUMAN RIGHTS INSPIRED IMAGE

⊙ AIM
Students will be introduced to a human rights based approach to imagery and photography.

📖 OBJECTIVES
Students will have
• Chosen an article from the UDHR and express their thoughts and feelings about it;
• Executed their plans on how they will present this article in photographic images;
• Experimented with images and develop a finished product;
• Presented their image in the form of a human rights campaign.

💡 NCCA KEY SKILLS
Information processing, communication, being personally effective, critical and creative thinking and group work.

📷 MATERIAL NEEDED
All materials are from the handout section associated with this chapter.
Access to a computer (if possible).
Creative engagement case study (to be read out to the class) (pg 125).
Images from Newpark Comprehensive (handout section 5.7, pg 137, pg 122, pg 126).
Amnesty International Campaign (handout section 5.8, pg 138).

🕐 LENGTH
Full Class

STEPS:

1. Begin by discussing with the students how their project is advancing;
2. Brainstorm with the class and develop their ideas from their notebooks;
3. Ensure that the students record all their work in their notebooks, as this method of recording ideas is important in the artistic process;
4. Get students to begin creating their image, with their cameras or in photomontage;
5. Download their images to a computer (if possible);
6. Print students' images in black and white or colour;
7. Ask the students to present their image to the class;
8. Ask students to write a short piece about their image, and define the concept behind it and the human right it represents;
9. At the end of the project students should be able to present an individual or group image that depicts how they feel about an article taken from the UDHR.

CRE CASE STUDY

"In 2006, Transition Year students in Pobalscoil, Neasáin, Baldoyle worked for a module with an enthusiastic teacher and a professional photographer, who had an excellent rapport with young people. After an introduction to the basic techniques of using a camera, the students were given the brief to take, within a specific time-frame, images that inspired them in their locale. This was an opportunity for independent learning, self-expression and a growth in the understanding of their community. They acquired competence with the medium and confidence in their own artistic decisions. The outcome was a striking exhibition in the local library, with images of north Dublin – the people, the seascapes, suburban corners, everyday life - that were entertaining, beautiful and laden with social commentary."

HANDOUTS

PHOTO GRAPHY

HANDOUT 5.1
UDHR – 30 WORDS

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises
Class 1: *Voice Our Concern* **Photography** / pg 118
Class 3: **Create a Human Rights Inspired Image** / pg 123

LIFE DIGNITY SECURITY FREEDOM
RESPECT JUSTICE EQUALITY REMEDY
PROTECTION FAIRNESS FAIR-TRIAL
RESPONSIBILITY WORK ASYLUM
CONSCIENCE IDENTITY MOVEMENT
HUMANRIGHTS EXPRESSION FAMILY
PARTICIPATION DEMOCRACY HOME
SOLIDARITY LEISURE EDUCATION
PRIVACY WELFARE HEALTH CULTURE

HANDOUT 5.2
CAN I, COULD I?

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises
Class 1: *Voice Our Concern* **Photography** / pg 118

Disability:

CAN I...	NO, BECAUSE...	YES, IF...
Become a professional ballet dancer		
Travel by public transport without difficulties		
Make a fashionable outfit		
Climb Mount Everest		
Read a book written in Urdu		
Play the piano		

CAN I...	NO, BECAUSE...	YES, IF...
Become a famous artist		
Play in a team at the World Cup final, representing Ireland		

Source: Adapted from an original activity in Our World Our Rights, Amnesty UK.

HANDOUT 5.3
CASE STUDY: READ HOW PREVIOUS VOICE OUR CONCERN STUDENTS CAME UP WITH THEIR IDEAS

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises
Class 1: *Voice Our Concern* **Photography** / pg 118
Class 2: A Human Right Based Approach to Photography / pg 120
Class 3: Create a Human Rights Inspired Image / pg 123

As part of our Amnesty International Photography Project, we decided to focus on the topic of people with disabilities and how their human rights can sometimes be denied. We feel that it is a problem in society that is often ignored or given little attention. We also wanted to focus on a topic that might apply to us personally, as most members of the project know at least one person with a disability.

We decided it would be beneficial to the project if someone were to spend a day in the life of a person with a disability. One of the girls spent her day using a wheelchair to see what it would be like to live without the use of her legs. She found a lot of her day's activities different and sometimes daunting, but the experience was very beneficial for the project and she was glad to be a part of it. Another girl in the project spent some of her time with patches over her eyes. She was eager to know how she would manage to negotiate her way around some areas of the city centre with little or no assistance and what difficulties she would encounter. She found the experience a bit overwhelming and said that she had to use her other senses such as hearing and touch for extra help while she was walking on her own.

One of the guest speakers spoke to us about what it means to be a person with a disability in a world where people aren't always very aware of the complications of a disability. She explained how disability is often seen as focusing on a person's impairment, which 'causes barriers that disables them from taking part in mainstream activities'. However, we learned that disability is in fact when 'people who have impairments experience a disadvantage caused by environmental or social barriers that disable them from fully taking part in mainstream activities'.

Throughout our project, we focused on taking photographs that expressed the daily living of a people with disabilities and the problems presented to them by access. Our photographs covered a range of situations from the disability itself right through to the barrier of access. All the members of the project were made aware of the problems faced by people with disabilities in our society.

Transition Year '06, Loreto College St Stephen's Green, Dublin.

HANDOUT 5.4
QUESTIONS FOR GROUP CONSIDERATION

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises
Class 1: *Voice Our Concern* **Photography** / pg 118
Class 2: A Human Right Based Approach to Photography / pg 120

Questions For Group 1- Africa To Consider
- What events are being shown in the images of Africa you have come across?
- Are they positive or negative?
- Do the photos respect the dignity of the people shown?
- Do they generate pity, shock or any other emotion? Do any of the pictures show people as helpless or dependent on charity or aid? Or are people shown as working to solve their own problems but benefiting from support? How do these images influence your impressions of Africa? What stereotypes have you come across for this group? Do these images validate or contradict these stereotypes?

Questions For Group 2 - Women And Men To Consider
- What differences are there in the images of women and men you have come across? What are the men in these images doing? What are the women doing? Who are the men photographed (politicians, models, victims, celebrities, fathers?) Who are the women photographed (politicians, models, victims, celebrities, mothers?) Look at newspaper sports sections. How many pictures of men are there? How many of women? What images are typically used on the front of women's magazines? What kinds of images are typically used on the cover of men's magazines? What effect does this have? What differences in language are there in references to men and to women?
- What stereotypes have you come across for this group? Do these images validate or contradict these stereotypes?

Questions For Group 3 - Young People To Consider
- In which contexts are photos of young people used in the newspapers you have looked at? Are the images positive or negative? Do they reinforce or counter stereotypes? How are the images of young people in young people's magazines different from those in newspapers? What stereotypes have you come across for this group? Do these images validate or contradict these stereotypes?

Questions For Group 4 - Asylum Seekers And Refugees To Consider
- In which contexts do photos of and stories concerning refugees and asylum seekers appear in the material you have looked at? Are the images and language positive or negative? Do they reinforce or counter stereotypes? Do the images and stories reflect the diversity of experience and background of asylum seekers and refugees? What is the effect of these images and language? What stereotypes have you come across for this group? Do these images validate or contradict these stereotypes?

HANDOUT 5.5
DÓCHAS CODE OF CONDUCT ON IMAGES AND MESSAGES

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises
Class 1: *Voice Our Concern* **Photography** / pg 118
Class 2: A Human Right Based Approach to Photography / pg 120

Guiding Principles

Choices of images and messages will be made based on the principles of:
• Respect for the dignity of the people concerned;
• Belief in the equality of all people;
• An acceptance of the need to promote fairness, solidarity and justice in images.

Accordingly, in all our communications and where practical and reasonable within the need to reflect reality, we strive to:
• Choose images and related messages based on values of respect equality, solidarity and justice;
• Truthfully represent any image or depicted situation both in its immediate and in its wider context so as to improve public understanding of the realities and complexities of development;
• Avoid images and messages that potentially stereotype, sensationalize or discriminate against people, situations or places;
• Use images, messages and case studies with the full understanding, participation and permission of the subjects (or subjects' parents/guardian);
• Ensure those whose situation is being represented have the opportunity to communicate their stories themselves;
• Establish and record whether the subjects wish to be named or identifiable and always act accordingly;
• Conform to the highest standards in relation to human rights and protection of vulnerable people.

HANDOUT 5.6
GUIDE TO TAKING A GOOD PHOTO

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises
Class 2: A Human Right Based Approach to Photography / pg 120

You don't need a fancy camera to take a great photo. Just your imagination and some time. With digital cameras you can take lots of photos and review them as you go so don't be afraid to experiment. These tips give you some ideas of how to take great photos as well as how to draw attention to the message of your photo.

Use Your Feet

The closer you get to the subject of your picture the clearer your subject is and the more detail you can see. This can have a big impact on your message. Standing close to your subject gives you more information on the subject. Standing back from your subject shows more of the surrounding environment and the subject's place in it

Use The Flash – When The Sun Is Shining

If you're lucky enough to be taking your photos on a sunny day it can cast a shadow over parts of your photos. By using the flash you can make sure your subject isn't darker than your background.

Look For Lines

When looking at a photo your eye is naturally drawn along lines. These occur everywhere if you look for them diagonal, straight or curved and can add depth and structure to your photo.

Keep It Simple

Try to eliminate any distractions in the background of your photo. A simple photo focuses the eye and draws attention to your subject and message.

Find A Frame

You can draw attention to the subject of your photograph by framing it. Use the natural surroundings at hand, such as bushes, windows, trees or even a doorway, to add meaning and focus to your subject.

Experiment With Angles

Experiment by taking different photos of the same thing from different angles. It can result in very different photos that can bring a new perspective to your subject and have a big impact on the message of your photo.

HANDOUT 5.7
CASE STUDY: VOICE OUR CONCERN PHOTOGRAPHY

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises
Class 3: Create a Human Rights Inspired Image / pg 123
Class 4: Create a Human Rights Inspired Image / pg 124

"Looking at Article 2 of the UDHR it's easy to see what is being stated "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status" thus meaning everyone is entitled to human rights no matter who they are or how different they may be. Contrary to this, people are still constantly abused and excluded because of their differences.

An issue that has been causing conflict in recent months has been the acceptance of gay marriage. The main theme of this project was to capture freedom of expression of sexuality or the freedom to express your chosen genderised behaviour. For example, men having a feminine nature or women acting masculine as well. Genders exploring one another and in doing so breaking the stereotyped roles of what are female or male customs.

The photograph is of a toolbox containing a few hammers, spanners, etc, but alongside this there is also lots of make-up, jewelry and fancy patterned clothing. The picture mixes up tools that are usually associated with male specific and female specific identities. However I mixed up the two to convey that people should be allowed to express their personalities and sexualities no matter what they are."

Ciara Hickey, Newpark Comprehensive.

"The collage made of different colored heads and faces... different nationalities.... taken from magazines, newspapers, leaflets.... The heads were all placed on a large piece of card, and made into one big head, and then photographed. Then the image was photoshopped with a mosaic effect."

Ali Griffin, Newpark Comprehensive.

Rachel Sotherland, Newpark Comprehensive, Blackrock, Co. Dublin, Ireland 2009. © Amnesty International.
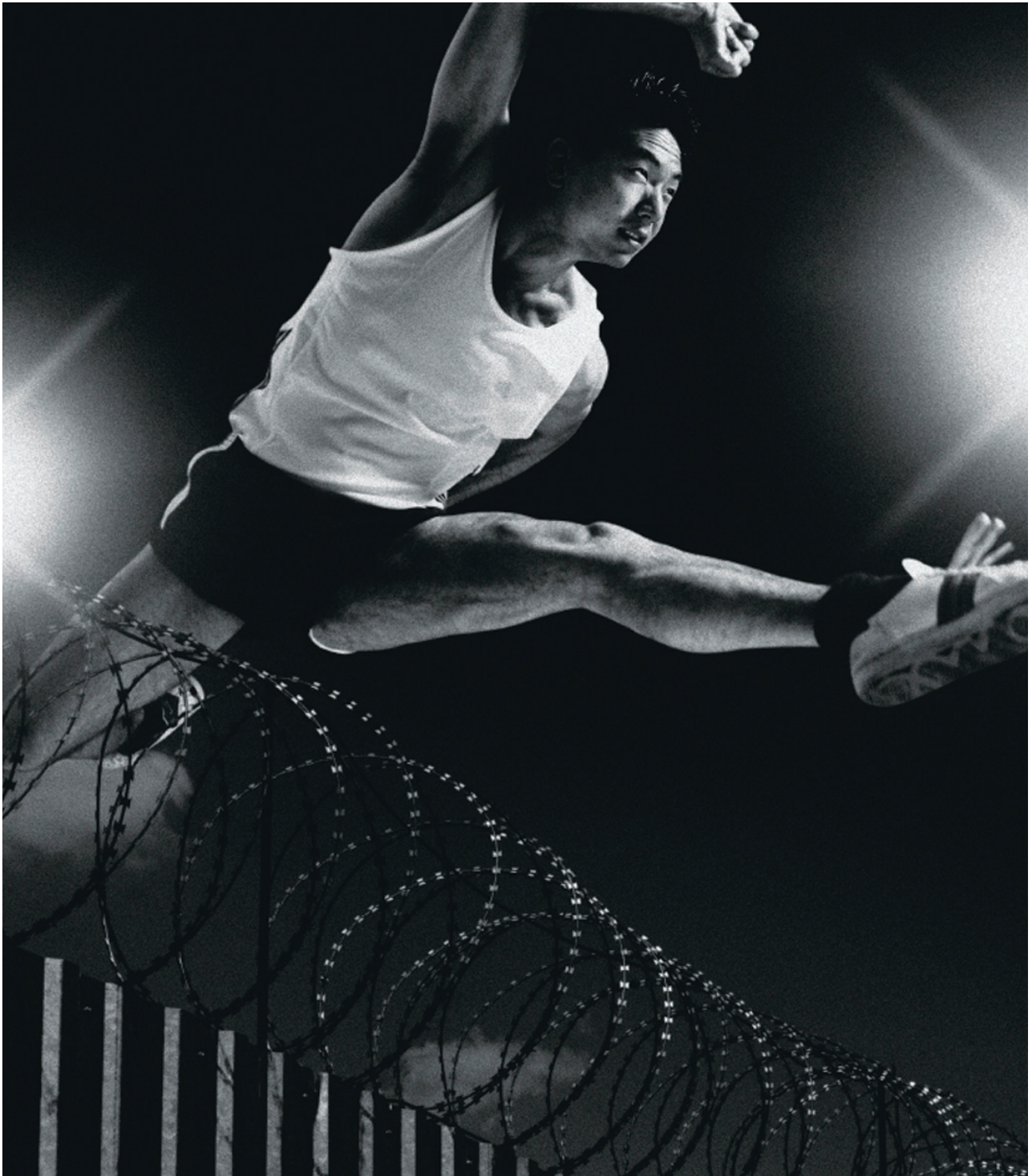
HANDOUT 5.8
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN IMAGE

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises
Class 1: *Voice Our Concern* **Photography** / pg 118
Class 3: **Create a Human Rights Inspired Image** / pg 123

Hurdling over barbed wire, an image created by Amnesty International Belgium, for use in the Bejing Olympics. © Amnesty International.