

Notes

Lighting techniques are utilized to achieve a desirable appearance of a subject. You could make a person look better, or if preferred, worse.

Lighting for portraits:

- 1) **key light** – lighting used to make the subject look better, however you interpret “better”; to create a “modeling effect” on the subject; creates highlights, shadows, contrast, and *patterns* which serve to correct/manipulate variations in the face
 - a) **Ex.** “a small shadow on a face can shrink an enormous nose”
 - b) Marv and John were using “hot lights” ~300W (very hot)
- 2) **fill light** – lighting used to control the contrast, or how much discrepancy there is between the lighter and darker areas of the subject; a fill light can simply be a white reflected surface that is held close to the opposite side of the key light; likewise, the lack of a reflected surface, best achieved with black velvet, will aid to create more contrast from the light and dark sides of the face
 - a) low key: high contrast, dark shadows, dark background
 - b) high key: low contrast, low shadows, light background
 - i) lighting can be anywhere in between these two extremes
- 3) **background light** – lighting used to separate the subject from the background; also known as separation light; makes the subject pop out; helps to create the 3D effect in a 2D image
- 4) **hair light** – positioned somewhere behind the subject to add brilliance, detail, and/or texture to hair

Additional comments

In uncontrolled settings, photographers have learned how to move to use the directional lighting for effects.

There is always a lit side and a dark side of every face. Most profiles will have a good side and a bad side.

A **pattern** is a way of utilizing light in a technical fashion to create effects on a subject. There are many common patterns that photographers use.

- **Broad lighting** is when you are photographing from the lit side of the face.
- **Short lighting** is when you are photographing from the dark side of the face.
 - One trick photographers use to slim faces is to photograph from the dark side of the face.
- **Soft lighting** is more flat and falls on the subject towards a more direct angle.
- **Harsh lighting** is less flat and falls on the subject at less direct angles.

Common types of patterns:

- 1) **Ringaround** – typically softer lighting that creates a circle of light that illuminates the face in a circular fashion.
- 2) **Split** – harsh lighting that divides the face in half
 - a) subject may require fill lighting
 - b) use of reflective/non-reflective surfaces can help to balance
- 3) **Rembrandt** – very classical lighting that is similar to split, but angled less harshly so that highlights on the far side of the face are slightly illuminated (creates triangle on opposite cheek)
- 4) **Paramount** (*aka Dietrick lighting, butterfly lighting*) – high frontal lighting used for classical movie star portraits; creates a butterfly-like shadow from the nose on the upper lip

Additional comments:

Determine how bright, or not bright the lighting in the room is and adjust for it.

Typical camera settings for portraits:

- usually shot at aperture settings of **F8** or **F11**
- shutter speed should not be slower than **1/30ths**
- ASA/ISO should be set at **100** or **200**

Available light should be used to model the face. A 2D picture should “pop out” in 3D and look life-like.

Headshots should be made with a zoom lens or fixed macro (typically 85mm-130mm.) 50mm is similar to what we perceive with our vision. Smaller zooms distort the face by stretching it towards the edges of the camera, like a fisheye lens.