

Frederic Larson was a working photojournalist for the San Francisco Chronicle for 30 years. Like most staff shooters for major metropolitan papers he covered everything in my daily assignments from fires to football, from earthquakes to celebrities. He has received numerous awards for his work, which also has been included in ten books. But the most satisfying photography for him was is my documentary work ... stories I've developed on my own.

It is through my documentary work that he has met people who have inspired me and given my work a new passion, people of unwavering spirit who survive despite horrible situations.

His documentary work on the survivors of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings resulted in my being named a 1988 Pulitzer Prize finalist. It also won him the highest honor in the Associated Press Sweepstakes from the news executive council of California and Nevada, and it was the heart of my portfolio that earned me the California Press Photographer of the Year for 1989. He was able to document the survivors' struggles, nearly 50 years after the bombings, because I was the first photojournalist to win a grant from the Hibakusha Travel Grant Program.

That story inspired him to do a photo story on people who are allergic to the world, a condition known as environmental illness. After spending a year on the project, He was named a finalist for the W. Eugene Smith World Understanding Award. That photo story, along with a series documenting life in the toughest neighborhood in San Francisco, the Tenderloin, once again won him the title California Press Photographer of the year for 1990. He was named finalist again in 1998 for W. Eugene Smith Award for a portfolio of Haight & Ashbury Street children of San Francisco. He was tributed the title of 1991 Photographer of the Year from Bay Area Press Association for a portfolio of work that included photo-stories of Romanian children and the Oakland fire. For six months in 1992, he worked on photo-story about "Manhood," in northern California, which was fund by the Nikon Sabbatical awards.

While the recognition and awards he has received in his photography has been nice, they are not the reason Larson does what he does. The stories he has documented and hope to continue documenting are those that provoke discussion and bear witness to those without the power or voice to be heard on their own.

