

Synopsis: Beatriz Terrazas

Beatriz Terrazas is a photojournalist, writer and video producer. She was born in El Paso, Texas, and grew up in Las Cruces, N.M., and El Paso. Although she loved to write and take photographs as a child, she didn't consider a career in journalism until her third year at the University of Texas at El Paso, where she had been majoring in biology.

In 1982, she started her career as a photojournalist with the Fort Worth *Star-Telegram*, but even then she felt compelled to tell stories about underserved communities. After five years, she went to *The Dallas Morning News*, where she was a part of the team of writers and photojournalists who won the Pulitzer Prize for International Reporting in 1994. The series was about violence against women in nations around the world.

Again, she was drawn to writing and asked for the opportunity to write for the feature section of the newspaper, which she was allowed to do for several months before returning to photography. After being awarded a Nieman Fellowship in 1999, she spent a year at Harvard University, where she was allowed to sit in on any class that interested her.

At the end of that year, she returned to the *Morning News* as a writer.



She continued to write for the *Morning News* until 2006.

Terrazas and her husband, John Doty, own a video business, JMD Multimedia, which he started after leaving WFAA-TV in 1997. She serves as writer, producer, still photographer and coordinator for video projects for various clients. She also blogs, writes articles and book reviews, coaches writers and takes photographs.

For six years, she was a long-distance caregiver for her mother, who had Alzheimer's disease, and wrote about it in a blog called "My Mother's Brain."

Terrazas believes storytelling, whether through writing or photography, is important. "I think that we are all wired for story from the moment we hear our first nursery rhyme," she says. For her, the most important part of story is the theme, the universal element that is what a story is *really* about.

Her advice to those who would follow in her path is simple: "If you really want to learn to write well, you have to read a lot, and ... if you want to learn the visual, you have to watch a lot," she says. "Focus on

the foundation, which is putting together the good writing, putting together what makes a good photo, what makes a good photo story.” And ask others for support.

She would like to see journalism emerge from the present turmoil in a form that is more diverse.

Terrazas and Doty live in Southlake, Texas.