




Photo: Brian Finke

Finke Photographs Faces of the Friendly Skies

By Jim Merithew 
02.12.08 | 12:00 AM

SARA, ICELANDAIR

Brian Finke's new book, *Flight Attendants*, is about to be released by [powerHouse Books](#), and we took the opportunity to talk with him by e-mail.

Wired News: Brian, do you remember your first recollections of wanting to be a photographer?

Brian Finke: I started taking pictures when I was a teenager and then came to New York City when I was 18 years old to go to art school and study photography.

WN: Tell us a little bit about the path that brought you to where you are today.

Finke: After completing my book on cheerleaders and football players in 2003, I started photographing *Flight Attendants* shortly thereafter.

WN: A good portion of [your work](#) deals with Americana themes, cheerleading, football, bodybuilding. Can you tell us about how you chose the *Flight Attendants* theme and if you used a different approach with this subject.

Finke: I am drawn to subjects that describe our culture. While photographing cheerleaders I became interested in the costuming and pageantry involved around the sport. During this time I also began traveling a lot to photograph on assignment for publications. And while traveling I became interested in photographing flight attendants.

WN: Can you share with us what drives you and who your influences, past or present, are?

Finke: Early influences were photographers W. Eugene Smith and Robert Frank. The impact of their images inspired me to become a photographer.

WN: Can you tell us a little about the technical aspects of your work?

Finke: I shoot exclusively on film, Fuji Pro H 120mm, with [Hasselblads](#). I work very closely with an assistant using [off-camera Quantum Q flashes](#) that are synched with [Pocket Wizard radio slaves](#). I also sometimes mix the Q Flashes with an on-camera Canon 580 EX2 flash.

WN: And finally, Brian can you tell us one thing people would be surprised to know about you?

Finke: I'm hanging out in a church parking lot, early on a Sunday morning, writing this -- while on assignment in Georgia.

