

# Eventually the brain gives you an answer on Page A14



While my intention was to write another in a series of posts about women and how they make decisions, I feel the need to interrupt that train of thought (or more accurately my brain feels the need to interrupt that train of thought).

Yesterday my newspaper came as usual, and as usual I gave it a quick scan. Preferring Google News, my eyes hurried over the pages but stopped just long enough to catch the title on page A14 **“Stories of their Lives”**.

Having just watched a video on the importance of storytelling for Internet marketing, my eyes lingered. While I thought it was my eyes lingering, it really was my brain holding my attention just long enough to catch the words *“Dickey Chapelle.”*

I didn’t recognize that name, but there was something about Chapelle that I recognized right away. You would think that would be enough to motivate me to read on. Nope, I flipped the pages and abandoned the paper for something else (what it was I don’t remember, but I do remember later coming back to page A14.)

There was that name again but underneath there was someone else’s name and a photo. I scanned quickly again – he had some connection to amateur writers, poetry and winning an award. Nothing of interest here for me so I put the paper aside again.

**But, my brain would have none it.**

*Ever wonder why you are doing something and haven’t the slightest idea of why you are doing it?*

*Don’t try to figure it out, it’s your brain working from its memory banks on what it is suppose to do for you.*

So, here I am a few hours later scrounging around for page A14. I go back to the photo image. I see the two names – nothing connects. Below is an excerpt of his poem. Forgive me all you poetry lovers I have yet to acquire the love, but my brain focused my eyes on the first line much to my objection.

**First line:** Why was she in Vietnam?

**Last line:** Why did the CIA squash over 800 of her pictures?

Oh, my precious little brain. All these years I wondered about her and now you've given me the answer. Who was she and why had she come to speak. What was I doing there that day passing by and stopping to listen only to her. There were so many people on the campus hill that day and I thought I had heard her introduced as **Vicky Chapelle. That's who I had been looking for.**

She spoke about the Vietnam War. She was a photojournalist who had been there and returned to tell us what was really happening.

It's like a snapshot in time. My brain easily brings forth her image, the sound of her voice and her words of reckoning. Of all my college memories, it was hers' that I so easily returned to whether I wanted to or not.

It was a nagging in the back of my brain for which I had no explanation.

I had heard the next year that she had died but knew nothing more until page A14.

Once, I had her name everything I needed to know was at my fingertips to be found.

### **Dickey Chapelle (1919-1965) abbreviated obituary**

- graduated first in her class at age 16 from MIT having earned a full scholarship to study aeronautical design
- photojournalist and war correspondent for National Geographic
- first female war correspondent covering World War II, the Korean

conflict and Vietnam

- posted with the Marines during [World War II](#), on Iwo Jima and Okinawa
- took up parachuting at the age of 40 to cover guerilla conflicts
- first female reporter to win approval from the Pentagon to jump with American troops in Vietnam
- outspoken anti-communist with strong pro-American views
- first war correspondent killed in Vietnam (land mine while on patrol with a platoon)

(<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/topics/chapelle/>)

My brain's memories stayed with me all these years and yet my brain always knew that I wanted to know more. And when the answer was there to be found, my brain made me find it.

Your brain will do that for you too, if you just give it some time.

by Joyce Hansen