**FAFS**

“Photojournalists, also called news photographers or visual journalists, take pictures of newsworthy subjects for publication. Photojournalists may be employed by magazines, newspapers or other media outlets. They may be freelancers, selling their photos to news sources. Photojournalists work where news is happening, rarely working in an office. Carrying cameras wherever they go, Photojournalists are always ready to capture interesting images that describe or comment on a situation.” (Graduate Degrees, Undergraduate Degrees, Career Education Programs. 07). Photojournalist can be comparable to news anchors; they’re telling the news right when it happens. You may not see what they see at the moment, but with their camera, they can capture anything. Ideally, one should obtain a Bachelor of Arts in Photography, Photojournalism or a related field, to warrant full coverage of basic skills and prepare one for professional practice and internships. “This profession also allows one to work from almost anywhere, whether that be one’s hometown, one’s own country, or from any particular location in the world. If photographers can get to the stories and content they want to cover, they can do this work from anywhere.” ("NPPA: Careers in Photojournalism." National Press Photographers Association.). Being a photojournalist gives you a lot of freedom; one can get assigned a job, but snap the picture in their own view.

Picking which career for oneself is difficult, but narrowing to specific field of jobs that need photojournalist is quite the challenge. From magazines to newspapers, weddings to news cite; your choices vary. However, in today’s economy the most important aspect of a possible career is stability. In 2007, there were only 6,000 Photojournalists employed nationwide with periodicals, newspapers, book and directory publishers, which also happen to be the second-largest employer for Photojournalists. Therefore the job openings are broad; this is due to how selective the corporations are. Photojournalist have to acquire certain standards that meet the job. “The NPPA suggest that individuals should be open to mentoring and networking opportunities, workshops and critique services that will give them an advantage and edge when searching for employment opportunities.” ("NPPA: Careers in Photojournalism." National Press Photographers Association.). This career opens up possibilities for you to work in. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) as of December 2009, the photojournalism job market was projected to grow at an average rate between the years of 2008 and 2018.

Formal education is recommended for photojournalist. A degree program from a reputable photography school usually helps you build a portfolio, which is a must if you want to get a job. Your portfolio should demonstrate your expertise with a wide range of photographic subjects, and should cover a range of project scopes – a single photograph of a bank robbery alongside a photo essay of a long-term construction project. The sooner you can get your photography published, the better, even if you don't get paid at first. And you should learn the latest equipment, too, like scanners, digital cameras and internet technology. In addition, you will need to learn how to design images with color, as well as how to utilize color management files with professional software.

Photojournalism takes a combination of talent and training. One needs both an artistic vision and an understanding of how to communicate news effectively to the public. Photojournalists can be “self-trained or attend college for training.”(National Press Photographers Association, NPPA, www.nppa.org). A Bachelor of Arts in Journalism with a Photojournalism concentration or a Bachelor of Arts in Visual Communications can be a good starting point for learning Photojournalism. These degree programs include courses on photographic techniques, foundations of journalism and ethics in journalism.

“About 40 percent in 1996, were self-employed, "freelancers." Approximately 17 percent NPPA professional members consider themselves freelance photographers.” ("NPPA: Careers in Photojournalism." *National Press Photographers Association*). Basically, anyone can do this. If you have the right artistic ability for this job, you can join the freelance photographer. Being a photojournalist contains courage and sacrifice. “Some photographers work in uncomfortable or even dangerous surroundings, especially news photographers covering accidents, natural disasters, civil unrest, or military conflicts. Many photographers must wait long hours in all kinds of weather for an event to take place and stand or walk for long periods while carrying heavy equipment. News photographers often work under strict deadlines.” ("Careers - #195 - PHOTOGRAPHER." *SOM - State of Michigan*. Michigan Department of Career Development, 2003). One can’t always be sure what will happen to their equipment in these types of situations, or even to oneself. This is why it takes sacrifice; one must go to extraordinary measures to get a job done. Considering self employment pertaining to photojournalism is not a bad idea at all. “Self-employment allows for greater autonomy, freedom of expression, and flexible scheduling.” ("Careers - #195 - PHOTOGRAPHER." *SOM - State of Michigan*. Michigan Department of Career Development, 2003). One can run into problems with this though; “However, income can be uncertain and the continuous, time-consuming search for new clients can be stressful. Some self-employed photographers hire assistants who help seek out new business.” ("Careers - #195 - PHOTOGRAPHER." *SOM - State of Michigan*. Michigan Department of Career Development, 2003).

Training for photojournalist vary, they all have the same concept though. There are a few different ways to train; from self-taught to a bachelor’s degree; photojournalist can make their way up to the top. With the Internet, on-line courses, software manuals and a vast array of professional workshops, being self taught may be more accessible that ever before. For those who learn best on their own, this might be the most effective method. Going to college is always more promising for a job, but with photojournalism, it’s who does the job best. “Many state universities and art institutes offer formal college degrees with photojournalism majors. The advantage here is a set of progressively challenging courses over time; instructors who act as coaches and mentors to take students to the next level; and an array of like-minded students who share a vision in which students can compare work and ideas. For students who like a focused, structured environment, a two to four year immersion in a formal program might be the best solution.” ("NPPA: Careers in Photojournalism." *National Press Photographers Association*.) There are more and more classes that will help one out with getting better at this career. “These voices insist photography and journalism can be learned later. In the beginning, they say study government, politics, international relations, sociology, anthropology, psychology, economics, English, foreign languages or any number of other subjects that will prepare one to work out in the world. The theory here is, if you can think and if you can write, you can probably find work if you’re good.” ("NPPA: Careers in Photojournalism." *National Press Photographers Association*.)

According to the Occupational Outlook Handbook, the median annual earnings for salaried photographers were about $30,600 in 1996. The middle 50 percent earned between $21,000 and $46,500. The top 10 percent earned more than $75,100 while the lowest 10 percent earned less than $14,500. Salaried photographers work full time and earn more than the majority of freelance photographers. A survey by the Radio and Television News Directors Association Foundation found that television photographers' pay ranged from $12,000 to $83,000 with an average of $22,700. Being a photojournalist isn’t always guaranteed the best money, but it’s doing something you love. You can get into different fields with photojournalism, and have jobs on the side. Portraiture, for example, gives you exercise on taking pictures and getting meaning from it. “Nobody gets rich as a photojournalist. Still, you don't need to starve; according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, *www.bls.gov*, the median yearly salary for photographers employed by newspapers in 2004 was $32,800. That's not a fortune, but it's not poverty level, either.” ("Photo Journalist: Job Outlook for the Photojournalism Career Field." *Education-Portal*.) Photojournalism gets you by, depending on whom you work for, or can make a fortune. “More and more newspapers and magazines are growing their Internet operations, meaning that in the coming years more photojournalists will be needed to provide photographs for Web-based content. ("Photo Journalist: Job Outlook for the Photojournalism Career Field." *Education-Portal*.)

In May of 2008, photojournalist earned an average of $29,440, a high of more than $62,430 and a low of less than $16,920. If later down the road you figure photojournalism isn’t for one self and want a higher paying career, you can try out architecture, artist and related works, [commercial and industrial designers](http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos290.htm), fashion designer, graphic designer, and television, video, and motion picture camera operators and editors. Photojournalists who are already in a news setting environment can also try [news analysts, reporters, and correspondents](http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos088.htm).

Photojournalist need to have certain characteristics to make their job easier. A sense of curiosity gives one help in getting to know their subject or subjects. When taking pictures, you don’t want to press a button and call it a day, but you want to know the situation or a person more than what is not already obvious. You can snap the picture in a whole different perspective when you know the story first. You can organize your stories with a nice flow in which the events would be best with an artistic aptitude. “Today's society is increasingly reliant on computer technology. The world of the photojournalist is no different. Many newspapers now send their photojournalists on assignment with a digital camera, a computer and satellite cell-phone to enable nearly instantaneous transmission back to the newsroom. And television stations bring satellite trucks with them on assignment for live feeds. In fact, for print journalists, the desktop publishing specialist is one of the 10 occupations with the fastest employment growth between 1996 and 2006.”( "NPPA: Careers in Photojournalism." *National Press Photographers Association*.). This shows mechanical aptitude and quick thinking and adaptability. One needs to be able to adapt to his or her surrounding’s easily.

The practice of journalism requires an understanding of larger social, political and cultural issues in society. Business, or small business, can be taken as a minor. This will help teach you a lot of things you'll need to know if you ever go freelance. Before you enter college, there are some tests that may come to be helpful for you. College and Universities require certain scores on one’s Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) and American College Testing (ACT) to get in. An average of 1050 on your SATs is required for most universities and an average of 21 on you ACTs. PowerPrep and collegeboard.com can help review over these tests so one can be prepared.

There are several different schooling choices one has for higher education. College, University, Community, and Vocational; all different types but have a similar purpose. A university is one’s best bet for the highest level of education. Universities have a wider range of courses to choose from as well. The University of Phoenix is a suggested school fit for aspiring photojournalist and you can even take your courses on-line if you please. The cost annually is only $13,440; a lot lower than most schools. This University is also in a large city with 500,000 populating the area; you’re bound to meet new people. Another good quality university is Northern Arizona University. It’s in the beautiful city of Flagstaff in Arizona where every year’s a white Christmas. Annually, schooling there is $19,808 and they offer seven different types of on-campus housing. 89% of first-year students end up living on-campus. The city is small with only 50,000 – 249,999 people populating the area. Northern Arizona University offers a wider range of housing compared to the University of Phoenix and a less busy environment. The University of Phoenix area is not as cold as the Flagstaff area is though; you just have to do through the summer.

Both, University of Phoenix and Northern Arizona University have a free on-line application. University of Phoenix has no application date whereas Northern Arizona University’s is March 2011. If one might struggle with financing school, FAFSA can be a lot of help. FAFSA stands for, Free Application for Federal Student Aid, and the federal government uses this form to determine your eligibility for financial aid. This includes grants, work-study, scholarships and loans. All you need to complete this form is one’s social security number, driver’s license, income tax returns, bank statements, and investment records. Also, scholarships can help out greatly. There’s no limit on to how many scholarships you can apply to and how many you can get. Scholarships are free money, so why not take the time to apply?

Photojournalism takes time and effort. With schooling, jobs, internships; there’s always something that will be keeping you busy. There’s 4 years going into making your bachelor’s degree and when you’re not working on getting your bachelors, you can look for an internship. Schooling will cost you a pretty penny, but if you end up with the right job from your training, it will all pay off.