

Meet

Jason Johns Photojournalist

Age: 32

Current Hometown:
Strafford, VT

Other Jobs Held: veterinary assistant, reforestation worker, school bus driver, elementary school teacher

Hobbies/Interests: reading, travel, all types of photography

Strengths: creative, curious, empathetic, open-minded, patient, analytical, good problem-solver, good at thinking on my feet



How do you use your strengths in your job?

It takes creativity to make compelling photographs of everyday events, and curiosity and empathy to find meaningful stories. Because photojournalists seek to document situations without influencing them, we often have to improvise to make the best of less-than-ideal conditions. It takes patience to wait for events to unfold, and good problem-solving skills to quickly adapt to changing situations.

What was your biggest learning challenge in school?

I had a tendency to put off work until the last minute. The night before assignments were due I'd pull everything together in one marathon session. It has always taken the pressure of an impending deadline to motivate me, so it's fitting that I've ended up working for newspapers where meeting deadline is a daily concern.

What motivates you to go to work?

From day to day, I never know where I'm going to go, whom I'm going to meet or what event I'm going to photograph. The variety of the day is rewarding, and the constant challenge of learning to be a better photographer and a stronger storyteller keeps me motivated.

Every job has specific skills. What do you need in yours?

On the most basic level, a photojournalist must have the technical skills to use cameras, lenses and lighting equipment effectively. Beyond that, the job requires creativity, an understanding of how light, composition and storytelling moments work together to make successful images, and a feel for how multiple images work together to advance a visual narrative. More than I ever anticipated, it takes strong interpersonal skills to relate to subjects from all walks of life and put them at ease so they will allow a stranger with a camera into their personal space.