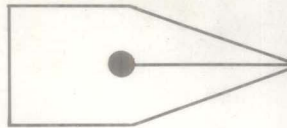


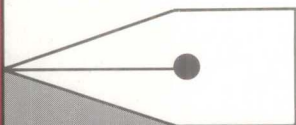
CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

FOR WRITERS

A Comprehensive Guide to the
Exciting Careers Open to
You as a Writer



Indispensable and Realistic
Information on Nearly 100
Specific Writing Jobs



Details on Salaries, Skill Requirements, Advancement
Prospects, Labor Unions, Special Opportunities for
Women and Minorities and Much More

ROSEMARY GUILLEY

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR WRITERS

Rosemary Guiley



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Career Opportunities for Writers

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PREFACE

How to Use this Book

Purpose

Career Opportunities for Writers presents one of the most comprehensive catalogs of writing jobs available in a single volume. It does not focus on a single field of writing, but covers 91 jobs in eight major fields. Jobs are not merely summarized in a paragraph or two but described in detail, including duties, salaries, prerequisites, employment and advancement opportunities, organizations to join, and opportunities for women and minorities. It is intended to help both aspiring writers who are seeking entry-level jobs as well as experienced writers who are interested in making career changes.

Generally the jobs included in this book are open to persons with appropriate educational credentials (usually a bachelor's degree) and up to five or so years of experience. These are predominantly entry- and middle-level positions. Senior and high-executive positions are not included because of the more limited job opportunities and increased prerequisites for such positions.

Sources of Information

Research for this book included interviews with numerous professionals in various fields, as well as surveys, reports, facts, and other information obtained from professional associations, trade unions, and the federal government. Some professional associations generously made available their own library resources, which provided a wealth of detailed information. In addition to this, the author herself has worked as a writer, journalist, or editor in the following fields, either on staff or on a freelance basis: newspaper and magazine journalism; advertising trade news and sales promotion; corporate communications; ghostwriting and collaboration; and scriptwriting.

The job descriptions are based on representative samples of actual job positions. In general writing jobs are broad in their responsibilities, and they can vary greatly from one employer to another. In many cases, a writing job is what the employee makes of it. Jobs at small firms tend to be broader in scope than those in large, structured companies and organizations. The descriptions in this book note some

of the wide ranges of duties and responsibilities for various types of jobs.

Organization of Material

This book has nine parts: eight cover different fields and industries which employ many writers; the last section consists of appendices listing educational institutions and scholarships, associations and unions, periodicals, and a bibliography of additional sources, all pertinent to writing careers. While most of the 91 jobs listed are based solely on writing and editing skills, a few are writing-related; that is, in addition to substantial writing and editing skills, they require other skills or education. Some of the jobs that fall into this category are sales-oriented positions, research positions, and jobs requiring technical, legal, academic, or foreign language training. The Introduction gives an overview of job opportunities for writers, as well as explaining employment trends for the next decade or so.

The largest section of the book is the first, Media and Information Services, which includes 34 jobs in print and broadcast journalism. Other sections list jobs in book publishing; arts and entertainment; business communications and public relations; advertising and marketing; federal government and through congressional patronage; scholastic, academic, and nonprofit institutions; and freelance, specialized, and writing-related fields. Writing jobs in the U.S. military services are not included in the federal government section because of their similarity to civilian government jobs. Military employment opportunities and statistics are explained in the Introduction.

Explanation of Job Descriptions

Each job description follows a basic format and is complete unto itself; the reader does not have to consult another section of the book to get a complete picture of a particular job. Therefore, readers may encounter some repetition from job to job within a given industry.

Jobs are listed by their predominant title, followed by a Career Profile, which summarizes main duties, alternate titles, salary ranges, employment prospects, advancement prospects, and prerequisites

of education, experience, and special skills. A Career Ladder diagram shows a typical career path, including the positions above and below each job. If a job is entry level, school or other related positions are listed as preceding it.

The Position Description is a narrative that describes typical job duties and responsibilities, working hours and conditions, and optional duties which may or may not be part of an individual job. It includes peers and superiors, and it indicates the frequency of overtime or travel, wherever pertinent.

Salaries explains income ranges and factors, such as individual skills, size of employer, or geographic location, which affect how much a particular job may pay. Salary ranges are based on averages, and readers may find positions that pay less or more than the figures cited in this book.

Readers will find particularly helpful the sections on Employment Prospects and Advancement Prospects. Some jobs may sound terrific or be very glamorous, but they also may be extremely difficult to obtain. Others may prove to be dead ends, with advancement difficult or impossible. These are important factors to weigh in any job search.

Education describes academic requirements for various jobs. In most cases, writers who have earned undergraduate degrees in liberal arts or communications will qualify; some jobs require other educational backgrounds. Graduate degrees are seldom required, and some writing jobs require only high school diplomas.

In addition to education, many jobs require prior experience. The Experience/Skills section describes what background is essential or helpful in competing for a job. Previous experience may not be required for many entry-level positions, but candidates who have had some kind of related experience—even on collegiate, volunteer, or community levels—often have significant competitive advantages. In addition, this section spells out the skills and qualities employers look for, attributes which enhance prospects for success in particular fields.

There are many and increasing job opportunities for women and minorities in writing occupations, and the Minorities/Women's Opportunities section describes these. The detail of information available varies from field to field, depending on the survey work done by professional associations and unions. The federal government keeps specific statistics only for its own job positions, but it does keep gen-

eral, broad statistics for the private-sector work force. In some cases, statistics may not be available for groups of jobs, but trends noted by associations, unions, publications, and other authorities in the field are reported.

Most writers do not belong to a union. Those who do, work for organized fields such as print and broadcast journalism, film and television entertainment, schools, and government. Even in those areas, unionization is not uniform throughout. Many writers do, however, belong to one or more professional associations, where they meet others who have similar jobs, exchange information and ideas, and make contacts. The Unions/Associations section, which ends each job description, lists the major associations of interest to professionals in a particular field, as well as the most likely unions, if any, that would represent them in wage negotiations.

Appendices

Appendix I, "Educational Institutions," lists 367 colleges, universities, and educational institutions, in every state and the District of Columbia, which offer undergraduate degrees in major areas of communications—broadcasting, advertising, public relations, education, technical and specialized journalism, newspaper and magazine journalism, as well as courses in publishing. The list does not include every institution which offers courses or degrees in communications; of the 3,200 colleges and universities in the U.S., more than 2,000 have offerings for students interested in communications. The list also does not include two-year colleges, since most jobs require or give preference to degree-holders from four-year institutions.

The list gives each institution's address and telephone number, as well as the major programs, sequences, and courses of interest to writers. Also noted are scholarships available to communications students and a list of organizations that can provide additional educational information.

Appendix II, "Professional, Industry, and Trade Associations and Unions," lists more than 140 major organizations for writers, editors, and those in the writing-related fields included in this book.

Appendix III, "Major Trade Periodicals," groups such periodicals according to field or industry.

Finally, Appendix IV is a Bibliography of sources that give additional career and salary information.

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INTRODUCTION

THE JOB OUTLOOK FOR WRITERS

If you've chosen writing as your career, you have some exciting and challenging possibilities ahead for you. We are living in the Age of Information and Communication, and persons with strong writing and editing skills will be in demand for many types of jobs throughout at least the next decade. Computers and high technology are opening new areas of job opportunities. Some writing fields are expanding at a rate higher than the average for all jobs; a few are in decline. Overall, however, most writing jobs will continue to grow at a moderate or better than moderate rate.

The job opportunities will not be without strong competition, but don't let that scare you. Writing is and has always been a glamorous pursuit, whether one seeks to be a novelist, journalist, or public-relations executive. Competition has always been keen, even for jobs that pay less-than-glamorous salaries.

Where the Jobs Are—Most Promising and Least Promising

According to the federal government and various trade sources, the best job opportunities for writers and editors during the next decade or so are in television broadcasting, technical writing, and public relations and corporate communications. Excellent opportunities also exist in marketing research and the paralegal field, both of which require education and/or training in addition to writing and editing skills. Technical writing also requires scientific or technical expertise.

Fields which are on the decline in job opportunities, either due to economic conditions, budget cutbacks, or shifts in population demographics, include secondary school and collegiate teaching and administration, historian pursuits, and librarianship. Librarians who learn computer technology and database management may find new opportunities in computerized libraries for corporations and professional and industry associations. Writing jobs with the federal government, even technical writing and editing positions, are expected to remain at present levels throughout the 1990s. And congressional-patronage jobs—appointments by members of Congress to their personal staffs as press secretary, leg-

islative assistant, or administrative assistant—are extremely difficult to come by. It's not uncommon for several thousand applicants to compete for one- to three-dozen staff jobs in a single congressional office.

Other writing jobs—in newspaper, magazine, and book publishing, radio broadcasting, and advertising—are expected to maintain a moderate growth rate.

What Kind of Education Do You Need?

Writers hail from a very broad educational background. Undergraduate degrees are preferred or required for nearly every kind of writing position. Most journalists attend schools of journalism or communications—"J-schools" as they are called in the trade—and earn undergraduate degrees. Other journalists, editors, and writers have liberal-arts backgrounds or major in English, political science, history, or social sciences. Some even earn degrees in business or economics.

Schools of communications offer one or more "sequences" or programs which allow students to specialize in particular areas, such as news editorial, broadcasting, film, speech, advertising, or public relations. These courses provide training in occupational techniques and skills necessary on the job.

As a result, however, many graduates are well educated in techniques but lack the broad and in-depth education needed for many jobs. For example, a journalist ideally should have a solid background in history and political science in order to put news events into perspective. In fact, a renewed emphasis on liberal arts and other general studies is being advocated now by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications, which evaluates and accredits many of the nation's collegiate communications programs.

In addition to communications, history, and liberal arts, academic studies are determined by one's areas of interest and choice of specialization. Playwrights may major in theater or fine arts. Technical writers need scientific and engineering knowledge. Publishing courses are available at many institutions, and several summer institutes around the nation offer intensive training. Writers who wish to

teach must earn certificates of education or graduate degrees. In all cases, students also must meet general university requirements for graduation.

College freshmen cannot enroll in most journalism schools, since they usually spend their first year taking general classes. Entry qualifications for such schools are above-average grades for both high school and other college courses, and demonstrated ability in writing, grammar, and reading skills.

According to the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund, more than \$3 million in scholarships are available to journalism students, including \$205,000 for minorities. (See Appendix I for a list of some of the colleges and universities which offer scholarships.)

For most writing jobs, undergraduate degrees are sufficient—but graduates with the highest grades have the best chances for the best jobs. A master's degree in communications does little to advance a career except in teaching and academic work, market research, technical writing, and other specialized fields.

Whatever your educational choices, it's a good idea to get training on a video display terminal or word processor. More and more, writing is being done electronically in the media and business worlds. While these skills can be learned on the job, graduates familiar with the new technology will have a competitive edge in being hired. (Note: It's not necessary to know how to *program* computers; knowing how to use the technology for writing, editing, and transmission functions is what counts.)

Journalism: The Dream Job of Many

Ask the nation's college students majoring in communications what kind of work they want to pursue, and most of them will answer "journalism." Whether it's newspapers, wire services, magazines, television, or radio, journalism is preferred over public relations, advertising, or other nonmedia jobs.

And, the chances are fairly good that those graduates will get media jobs. Since 1978, half of all journalism graduates have found media jobs, according to surveys by the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund and Gallup. In 1983, there were a total of 17,700 graduates.

In the journalism field, newspapers and news services remain the largest media employers, hiring 14 percent of journalism-school graduates; they are followed by radio and television stations, which each hire 6 percent, then magazines, which hire 2 percent. Most of the newspaper hirelings start out on

small dailies or weeklies; large newspapers seldom hire journalists right out of college. There are about 1,710 daily newspapers in the U.S., and some 8,000 or more weeklies and biweeklies. According to the American Newspaper Publishers Association (ANPA), newspapers employed a total of 424,800 persons in 1982, 259,500 males and 165,300 females. About 15 percent of those employees work in the editorial or newsroom departments, and another 10 percent work in the advertising and promotion departments. Even though newspapers have been feeling a budget squeeze, and a number of dailies have folded or merged with other papers (at least 32 have merged operations since 1978), the ANPA estimates there will continue to be about 2,400 job openings a year for newspaper reporters for the next few years.

Newspaper journalism is still a white male profession, despite significant gains made by women in the past two decades. It wasn't long ago that women reporters and editors were confined to society and life-style sections, moving from there to other traditionally female concerns such as education. Today, women account for 30 to 40 percent of newsroom staffs; many command important assignments or "beats." But they still hold only 3 to 6 percent of key decision-making editorial posts.

Minorities have made even less progress in newspaper jobs. The American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) has been surveying minority employment since 1978, and it finds the rate static at about 5.6 percent. As of 1983, 60 percent of all daily newspapers had yet to hire a minority person on the news staff. ASNE, which administers a Minority Professional-in-Residence Program, is working towards a goal of "truly integrated newsrooms" by the year 2000.

Despite the current lower status of women and minorities on many newspapers, the opportunities for employment and advancement are good and, due to focused attention on and awareness of the situation, should improve. But, regardless of sex or race, most beginning journalists will find their jobs fall far short of the Watergate-style investigative glamour portrayed in movies and books. On the whole, news reporting jobs are interesting, exciting, and continually challenging, but they require a great deal of routine work as well. Working hours can be around the clock—evenings, "overnights (from late night to early morning)," and weekends. However, the experience of dealing with diverse topics and situations, plus interviewing, researching, and or-

ganizing information in a hurry, is invaluable. Experienced journalists are in an excellent position to move into other writing/editing career fields.

Salaries average from in the high teens to high twenties for most positions. They can go much higher for journeymen (someone with five or more years of experience). At major newspapers, salaries can be \$42,000 or more a year for such experienced journalists. The Newspaper Guild, which negotiates wages for many journalists, has set \$1,000 a week as the goal wage for minimums for journeymen.

Job prospects are expected to be very good in broadcasting, especially television, which is an expanding field. There are 10,531 commercial and educational broadcast stations on the air in the U.S., including 9,382 radio stations and 1,149 television stations. In addition, there are approximately 5,800 cable systems. In 1983, there were 160,947 persons employed full-time in broadcasting, including 50,089 professionals (reporters, announcers, and news writers).

Both women and minorities fare better in broadcasting than in newspapers, though top jobs still tend to go to men. In all fields of broadcasting, including cable TV as well as commercial and non-commercial TV and radio, the percentage of women professionals working full-time ranges from 21.3 percent to 45.4 percent; according to the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), the percentage of minorities in broadcasting goes from 11.4 percent to 15.7 percent. The highest percentages of women and minorities work for noncommercial TV and radio; many women also work in cable TV.

Television reporting jobs are perhaps the most glamorous journalism jobs of all—and some of the most fiercely competitive. Graduates can expect to start at very small stations; large stations and networks usually require several years of experience. Success can rise and fall on ratings, especially for the coveted position of anchorperson. As in newspaper reporting, television reporting carries constant deadline pressure. In addition to reporting skills, television reporters must have camera presence and good speaking ability.

Well publicized are the high salaries earned by the big stars in television—hundreds of thousands for anchorpersons in big-city markets, and millions for network anchors—but such salaries are far and away the exception rather than the rule. Beginners in small markets can earn as little as \$8,000 a year. Top reporters earned an average of \$18,980 in 1983, according to the Radio-Television News Directors

Association, although many experienced reporters in major markets earn yearly salaries in the thirties and forties.

Television news is often criticized for its headline approach to the news and its show-business sensationalism. Charles Kuralt, leading correspondent for CBS News, told journalism students in 1984 to “think twice” before choosing television news as a profession. Television news as it is practiced at many stations, he said, is not for “serious journalists.” Nevertheless, television will undoubtedly continue to appeal to many aspiring journalists.

Radio should not be overlooked as a good journalism career field. During the last few years, news has become increasingly important at many radio stations, and the “news/talk” format has grown considerably in popularity. Salaries for beginners average \$12,700 to \$13,600 a year. Top newscasters can earn up to \$40,000 or more.

Magazine writing and editing jobs are much harder to come by than other journalistic positions. There are an estimated 2,000 consumer publications and thousands more business, trade, scientific, and technical journals. Jobs on large, prestigious publications are highly competitive; the best job bets for college graduates are small magazines, which require little or no experience for many positions. Turnover on small magazines tends to be high, which creates job openings.

Women dominate the staffs of many publications (probably because of low pay), though men still hold most of the top posts. The field has few minorities. Average salaries for associate editors range from about \$12,000 to \$16,000, while more experienced senior editors earn an average \$30,000 to \$40,000.

A word should be said about videotex journalism. Videotex is a method of delivering news, information, and shopping services electronically via video display terminals. Text usually must be formatted to fit screen requirements, and it may be accompanied by computer-generated graphics. There are several major videotex systems in operation, such as The Source and Knight-Ridder's Viewtron, and many newspapers have been experimenting with them for several years. Videotex was once hailed as the wave of the near future, but growth has been much less than expected, particularly in the home market where consumers have resisted the costs of the services. A much better market for such systems is now seen in business and industry. Videotex does offer new job possibilities for computer-trained journal-

ists who can write to fit screen formats. A videotex news operation is similar to a news wire service, such as Associated Press or United Press International. Employment and advancement opportunities may grow considerably in this field, depending on penetration of the business market and the success of newspaper trials.

Public Relations and Advertising: High Pay Potential

The second most popular career choice for journalism graduates is public relations, which employed about 7 percent of the 1983 journalism-school graduates. The profession has gained steadily in prestige, a considerable improvement over years past when public-relations executives were commonly called "flacks." Today they're most likely called "communicators," and they can command good salaries and important posts at many businesses and corporations.

Business has increasingly recognized the importance of good public image and press relations, and many companies have increased staff and budgets devoted to this work. The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) estimates that up to 37 percent of the public relations jobs filled in 1983 were new positions. In times of recession or economic downturn, however, public relations is vulnerable to cutbacks.

Public relations attracts many journalists who desire career changes. The working hours are better and the compensation higher than is average for most reporters. The field attracts many women, and it provides excellent job opportunities to both women and minorities. The IABC profiles the typical communicator as a 34-year-old woman who is in a managerial position, earning an average \$24,800. Although beginning salaries can be as low as \$10,000, most starting pay tends to be higher than that for beginning journalists. Many PR jobs pay in the \$18,000 to \$40,000 range, with experienced and top professionals earning much more.

Nearly half of the more than 140,000 communicators currently employed work for corporations; 12.5 percent work for associations or nonprofit organizations. The rest work, in decreasing-percentage order, for financial institutions, hospitals and medical centers, educational institutions, public-relations consulting firms and agencies, as well as government agencies. Less than 1 percent is self-employed.

Advertising, the third choice of journalism-school

graduates, has a glamour all its own. The industry employs approximately 160,000 persons, according to the American Advertising Federation. About 80,000 work at advertising agencies, where nearly all advertising is created; others work primarily for business and industry, retail advertisers, the media, and services and supply organizations. New York is considered the mecca of the advertising agency world, though Chicago, Los Angeles, and Texas boast major advertising communities. Most college graduates interested in advertising careers will find work at small and medium-sized agencies.

The high-pressure atmosphere at many advertising agencies favors young, energetic, highly creative persons, some of whom make meteoric rises, acquiring positions of great responsibility and compensation. The burnout factor is high too, and job security is low, dependent on client changes.

According to the federal government and American Marketing Association, most advertising jobs are expected to grow at a moderate rate. An exception to this are marketing-research jobs; vital to advertising, they are increasing at a fast rate. Job applicants will need degrees in marketing or related statistical-analysis fields—preferably graduate degrees at that.

Beginning copywriters earn an average of \$10,000 to \$16,000, while more experienced professionals can earn up to \$45,000 or more. Beginning research analysts can command \$12,000 to \$17,000 to start; with experience many earn \$36,000 or more.

Publishing: From Textbooks to Works of Art

Time was when publishing was called a "gentleman's pursuit." It was dominated by male editors who published a few thousand titles a year (12,000 in the early 1950s). While it was probably never as leisurely a business as many people like to think, it is now much changed from decades past. There's been a dramatic increase in the volume and types of books published; the rise of women as book editors is a modern phenomenon; and the increasingly commercial nature of the \$7.5-billion-a-year business is another more recent development. Today a job at a publishing house can be just as pressured and hectic as a job on a magazine or newspaper. Editing skills are emphasized over writing skills.

For those who enjoy reading and working with words, publishing offers some intensely rewarding jobs. The industry employs about 72,000 editorial workers altogether, and more than half of them are

women. The volume of titles published has grown from 14,000 in 1961 to about 45,000 in 1983.

New York City is the undisputed capital of book publishing, the place where the most and best job opportunities can be found. Publishers, however, are located throughout the U.S., with other major centers existing on the West Coast and in the Midwest and Southeast. Altogether, there are some 10,000 publishers—but only 1,300 of them are considered to be active and publish more than three titles a year; a mere 100 of them command 60 to 70 percent of the entire publishing business.

The book industry is comprised of much more than the popular nonfiction and fiction titles found in bookstores, drugstores, supermarkets, and newsstands. Many editors work on religious books, reference books and encyclopedias, scholastic textbooks, juvenile books, or for subscription, direct-mail, or book-club operations.

Beginning editors are assigned lower-level tasks, and they seldom work directly with authors. The more prestigious books and authors are assigned to more experienced editors. The range of responsibilities depends on the size of the editorial staff and the number of titles published annually. It is not uncommon for an editor to be in charge of several dozen books a year.

An estimated 3,000 to 4,000 job openings occur in publishing each year, but the overall low pay of the positions is discouraging to many journalism graduates and others interested in the industry. An entry-level editorial assistant makes an average of \$10,000 to \$16,000, while an experienced senior editor earns from \$23,000 to \$55,000, sometimes more. Most of the middle-range editing jobs fall in the high-teens-to-mid-twenties income bracket.

Despite the salaries, publishing jobs attract many applicants who are lured by the prospects of developing talented authors and best-selling books, and creating works of lasting value. Competition is particularly keen in the New York marketplace. Graduates of prestigious summer publishing institutes at Radcliffe, New York University, and University of Denver have the best chances for placement—as high as 90 percent.

Writing for the Federal Government or Military

The U.S. government employs about 11,400 persons in major civilian communications positions, but prospects are not good for new job openings through the 1990s. Budget cutbacks are reducing the size of the work force at many agencies, and

numerous jobs are available only as employees retire or quit. Even technical writing and editing, a growing discipline in the private sector, is expected to have little or no job growth in the federal arena.

Nearly 80 percent of all federal employees work in the United States but outside Washington, D.C.; 17.3 percent work in the District of Columbia, and 3.2 percent work abroad. Many communications positions are in headquarters locations in the District of Columbia area.

In all the federal jobs classified as “information and arts,” women account for 40.2 percent and men for 59.8 percent. The percentage of minorities ranges from about 8 to 16 percent in most “information and arts” jobs. Minorities account for a high percentage—29 to 52 percent—of federal interpreters, translators, and language specialists.

Pay for federal white collar jobs depends on two factors: grade and level. The grade assigned to a position depends on the scope of duties and responsibilities; the previous experience required, if any; and the agency involved. Different federal agencies have varying payroll budgets. Grades range from 1 to 18, though most fall between 1 and 15. Levels depend on individual performance evaluations and the length of time a person spends in a particular job. Levels range from 1 to 10. An employee must spend a minimum period of time at each level before becoming eligible to advance to the next. Levels 1 through 3 require a minimum of one year each; levels 4 through 6 require two years each; and levels 7 through 10 require three years each. Entry-level white collar jobs can pay as little as about \$9,000 a year, (grade 1 level 1) according to the 1984 salary schedule, though most professional positions begin at approximately \$13,900 (grade 5 level 1). The maximum in 1984 for most positions was \$66,400. Senior executives are paid according to a different, higher salary schedule. Salaries are increased each year according to a cost of living index, unless they are frozen by executive order. Job applicants must pass civil-service exams to qualify for jobs; educational and previous-experience requirements vary.

The U.S. armed forces offer many communications positions similar to those in civilian areas, including reporting, writing, editing, public affairs, broadcasting, audiovisual, and supervisory jobs. The U.S. Army alone employs between 4,700 and 5,300 people in such positions; this includes about 1,000 persons in print and broadcast journalism jobs. Of the Army journalists, women account for 237 print positions and 70 broadcast positions; mi-

norities account for 68 print positions and 22 broadcast jobs. Pay depends on years in service, skill level, and pay grade; most jobs range from \$7,157 to \$27,644.

All military journalists are trained at the Defense Information School (DINFOS) in Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana. The roots of DINFOS go back to 1946, when the Army established its own Information School, which was later followed by schools set up by the Air Force and Navy. DINFOS was established for all military branches in 1964, and it has trained more than 23,000 students for positions around the world. In 1979, DINFOS was accredited as a certificate-granting institution by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. DINFOS offers training in print and broadcast journalism, audiovisual skills, and public affairs.

Is Self-Employment for You?

If you're thinking about going out on your own, it's good to know that a demand for self-employed writers, such as freelance journalists, authors, novelists, playwrights, and scriptwriters, is expected to continue. Be advised, however, that competition will remain tough, though the rewards can be great for those who are successful. You don't need to be a best-selling author or screenwriter to make a good living on your own.

What you do need is determination, self-discipline, perseverance, and some savings built up to tide you over periods when you're not making money. Freelancing is often a roller-coaster ride, with money coming in irregular chunks. Prudence is a byword for freelancers. When a big chunk of money comes in, you have to resist the temptation to spend a lot of it freely—it may be the only income for a long period of time.

Many freelancers start out part-time while they are holding down a full-time job. Then, when clips and contacts have been established, they launch themselves full-time. It can still take several years to get fully established and be able to mine regular sources of income. Having a working spouse helps, too.

Few freelancers rely on one type of writing for income. For one thing, it's too risky—sources can dry up. Also, some work may produce quick, short-term cash flows, such as business or magazine-article writing, while other work, such as book writing, requires longer time commitments. If freelancing appeals to you, either on a full- or part-time basis, the following occupations, in any combination, may be of interest to you: author, ghostwriter/collaborator, scriptwriter/screenwriter, playwright, lyricist/jingle writer, poet, freelance writer, technical writer/editor, stringer, syndicated columnist, communications consultant, or translator. You can also freelance public relations and advertising copywriting. (For details, check the job descriptions in Section III, "Arts and Entertainment," and Section VIII, "Freelance, Specialized, and Writing-Related Fields.")

Writing: Constant And Gratifying Challenges

No matter where you start, writing is a versatile skill that can lead in many directions to many opportunities. Writing is seldom dull. It brings constant exposure to new ideas, people, and situations; it provides a never-ending learning environment. And it offers the challenge of presenting those ideas and information to an ever-changing audience.

French novelist Julien Green once said, "Thought flies and word goes on foot. Therein lies all the drama of a writer."

NEWSPAPERS AND NEWS SERVICES
