

Finding the News: Adventures of a Young Reporter

Peter Copeland

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As a decades-long newspaper reporter, Peter Copeland covered some of the biggest stories of the late twentieth century. He was part of the last generation of foreign correspondents in the heyday of the profession. He shares those experiences in his engaging memoir *Finding the News*.

Structured around key periods in his journalism career, Copeland's book covers a few experiences in depth, beginning with his first days as a breaking-news reporter with City News Bureau in Chicago. He moves to a Scripps paper in El Paso before becoming a Mexico-based correspondent. As his international-reporting responsibilities expand, he covers events like the US invasion of Panama to oust Manuel Noriega, the first Gulf War in Iraq, and the marines's peacekeeping mission in Somalia.

His reportorial skill comes through most via the in-the-moment storytelling. Copeland focuses less on high-level views of events than he does on the challenges of reporting events on the ground. He details building relationships with military commanders and gaining their trust, showing how that led to better access. But he also writes about the difficulties of going to the bathroom on a deployment or finding a phone line to transfer an article from a war zone to headquarters back home.

Beyond assignments, Copeland details the larger challenges of a reporting life, from the strain of being away from his wife and children to the changes to the news business model that were caused by the internet and a never-ending news cycle.

Throughout, *Finding the News* makes a case for the importance of real journalism and serious reporters who come to a story with questions. It's both a valentine to an important profession and a behind-the-scenes look at how a career in the field comes together.

JEFF FLEISCHER (September / October 2019)

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