

# John Simpson CBE

## Journalist and BBC's World Affairs Editor

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## About

John Simpson is an accomplished public speaker and enthralls audiences across the world with his lively and entertaining talks and lectures. With over 30 years experience in international journalism he has the ability to cover topics from highly factual and intense World Affairs to more light-hearted and amusing tales from his extensive travels.

John Simpson is the BBC's World Affairs Editor, the senior member of a team of London-based foreign and specialist correspondents. In a BBC career spanning more than 30 years - he joined as a trainee journalist in 1966 - John has earned a reputation as one of the World's most experienced and authoritative journalists. His first job with the BBC was as a trainee sub editor in Radio News in 1966. John has reported from more than 100 countries across the globe, from 30 war zones and has interviewed numerous controversial world leaders including Saddam Hussein, Osama Bin Laden, Nelson Mandela, Margaret Thatcher, Mikhail Gorbachev, Yasser Arafat, Colonel Gadhafi, Ayatollah Khomeini, Robert Mugabe and the Emperor Bokassa.

One of John's more recent and demanding major assignments was reporting from Afghanistan during the fall of Kabul. John also reported from Belgrade during the Kosovo crisis of 1999. He was one of only a handful of journalists to remain in the Serbian capital when the authorities expelled those from Nato countries at the start of the conflict. "As everyone else was pulling out I decided I would just stay put and see what happened," he said. For the next 12 weeks he filed reports every day and often round-the-clock for all BBC services, and was the first BBC journalist in a war zone to answer questions from Internet users via BBC News Online.

In April 2000, he was named RTS (Royal Television Society) Journalist of the Year for his reporting of the conflict. In a career which makes visiting trouble spots a way of life, John says he rarely fears for his safety - even when a Palestinian soldier ordered him to kneel in the road and held a gun to his head and, just recently, when a 'friendly fire' anti-tank bomb was dropped and detonated a few yards from him in Iraq, killing his translator and showering John with shrapnel.

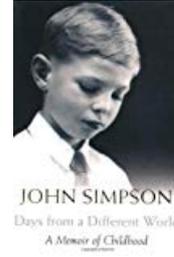
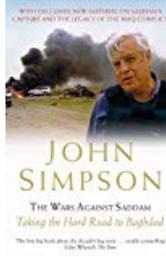
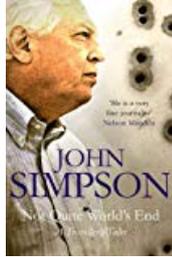
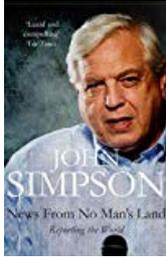
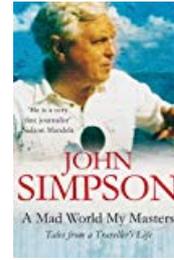
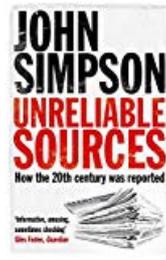
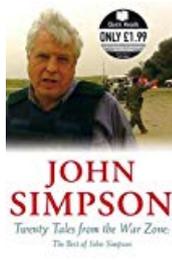
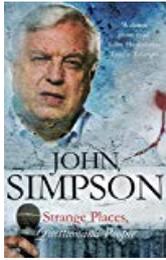
Other close shaves include being shelled in Afghanistan, attacked with poisonous gas in the Gulf and dodging the bullets in Tiananmen Square. John also had the honour as a young reporter of being punched by Harold Wilson for asking whether he was about to call an election.

John was appointed World Affairs Editor in 1988 following periods as Diplomatic Editor and presenter of the Nine O'clock News. Before that he worked as a correspondent in South Africa, Brussels and Dublin.

John received a CBE in the (1991), and is one of only two people to have been twice named the Royal Television Society's 'Journalist of the Year' (1991 and 2000). Among his other awards have been three BAFTA's, a Golden Nymph Award for his reporting of Ayatollah Khomeini's return to Iran (1979), a Peabody Trust Award for news (1999), a special jury's award at the Bayeux War Correspondents Awards (2002) and most recently an International Emmy Award for News Coverage for his report on the fall of Kabul for BBC's Ten O'Clock News.

Born on 9 August 1944, John was brought up in London and Suffolk, and educated at St Paul's School and Magdalene College, Cambridge where he read English and edited the magazine *Granta*. In September 1999, Magdalene College awarded John an honorary fellowship.

## Books and DVD's



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