

What is it Like to Be a Journalist During the “Fake News” Era? Not Easy. | Annenberg

By Hailey Reissman

August 15, 2022

Jeanna Sybert grew up the child of two journalists. Her father spent his career as a news desk copy editor at the *Pittsburgh-Post Gazette* and her mother is currently a managing editor for a small paper outside of Pittsburgh. As she thought about her career, Sybert resisted going into journalism as she witnessed the challenges her parents faced in the field. She decided she wanted to go into film. But as an undergraduate at the University of Pittsburgh, she found her way back to journalism. She took a class in communication and rhetoric and soon was writing a senior thesis on U.S. news coverage of the Syrian civil war.

She still didn't want to be a journalist, but she found she enjoyed studying journalism — how it affects culture, politics, and global conversation. She was curious about reporters' individual choices: Why report on death? Why cover finance? Why include one detail and exclude another? Why choose to write for a magazine or a major newspaper or a local paper?

Now a doctoral candidate at the Annenberg School for Communication, Sybert studies labor conditions for journalists in the United States. Though many see journalism as a duty or a calling or simply a pursuit of the truth, it's a job like any other, Sybert says.

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