



John Simpson

BBC World Affairs editor, broadcaster, author and columnist

John Simpson, the BBC's World Affairs Editor, is a household name and the most distinguished foreign correspondent of the age. Recognised as the "David Attenborough" of news, John is a multi-award winning, veteran news broadcaster (and accomplished author) who has covered almost every major event of the world from the 1960s to the present day.

John's biography

John Simpson's background

His seminal [reports](#) on the Big moments of recent history make up an illustrious list to include the Iranian Revolution, the First and Second Gulf Wars, the Fall of the Soviet Union and the Berlin Wall, the end of Apartheid in South Africa, the Genocide in Rwanda, the wars in the former Yugoslavia and the Tiananmen Square massacre in Beijing.

John's stories of war and revolution are many and varied: he walked into Taliban-occupied Kabul at the head of the BBC news [team](#) in 2001, having previously infiltrated Afghanistan dressed in a burka. He accompanied the Ayatollah Khomeini on his plane from Paris to Tehran to depose the Shah of Iran, he danced on top of the Berlin Wall in 1989; he watched at close range the missiles raining down on Baghdad in the First Gulf War.

An eye-witness of the many wars in the Middle East and Afghanistan, the Irish troubles and the South African and Rhodesian struggles, as well as the many other major revolutions in the former East Block of Europe and Latin America, it is safe to assume that 'whatever the Headline of the Daily news might be, John will be there.'

John has reported from 140 countries and interviewed 200 world leaders and dictators ranging from Michael Gorbachev and Vladimir Putin, Nelson Mandela, British Prime Ministers and U.S. Presidents to Fidel Castro, Colonel Gaddafi, Robert Mugabe and Saddam Hussein.

He met successive heads of the IRA, Hezbollah, Hamas, Taliban and of the Medellin and the Cali Drug Cartels at the height of their power. Osama bin-Laden offered to pay anyone to kill him in 1989.

He also interviewed Yasser Arafat under Israeli bombs in West Beirut and the slain Prime Minister of Israel Yitzhak Rabin in Jerusalem.

It hasn't just been war and strife: John has rounded Cape Horn in a small boat and man hauled a sledge in the Arctic. He lived with a previously uncontacted tribe in the farthest reaches of the Amazon. He reported on the first sunrise of the new Millennium on a desert island in the South Pacific.

John was made a CBE for his reporting in 1991. He has won numerous awards, such as three Baftas, the International Emmy and Peabody in the U.S., the RTS Journalist of the Year, twice, – to name but a few. Twelve universities have awarded him honorary doctorates, St. Andrews, Nottingham, Southampton, Exeter and Leeds, to name some. He was also made a Freeman of the City of London. He is an Honorary Fellow of Magdalene College, Cambridge.

He has written multiple books incl. his memoir "A Mad World, My Masters," which was in the Sunday Times Best Seller List for 6 months, "Moscow, Midnight" and "Our Friends from Beijing", which was published in the summer of 2021.

He was amused by being on GQ Best-Dressed Men of the Year list.

In 2022, John's new current affairs programme 'Unspun World with John Simpson' started airing weekly on BBC2.

John's talks

- **Broadcasting and Communications**
- **Anecdotes of his Life and Experiences**
- **Global Trouble Spots**

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