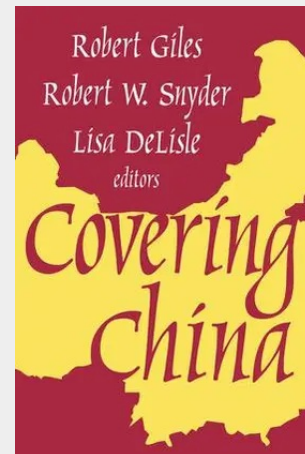


Covering China

The relationship between China and the United States has been marked by a lack of mutual comprehension that stretches from America's missionary paternalism in the early twentieth century to the fears and fascinations of the present. Throughout the twentieth century China has attracted the attention of American journalists, from the first China hands who covered an ancient country lurching into the modern world, to the chroniclers of World War II and the Chinese civil war, to the reporters who today explore the contradictions of China's economy. Covering China looks at the questions, concerns, and conceptions of all the generations of American reporters against the backdrop of Chinese history and China's own media. Covering China is divided into three sections. "Histories" takes up the events, anniversaries, and processes that have shaped Chinese and American media coverage over the century. Included here are chapters focusing on the civil war and analyzing American reporting in the 1930s and 1940s in their many viewpoints, as well as in the decades when China was closed to American journalists. Other chapters consider the influence on journalism of various political movements from the anti-Western May 4th movement of 1918 to the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989. "Communicating" explores the challenges of explaining China to Americans and America to the Chinese. Among the topics covered here are the Chinese media reaction to the Clinton scandal, the status of Hong Kong as a window between China and the West, Communist efforts to control public opinion in the media, and the pioneering role of Pearl S. Buck in interpreting China for American readers. The concluding section, "Issues," examines important stories now emerging in China that will matter to both journalists and China watchers, including the changing roles of Chinese women, little-covered instances of ethnic unrest, and the complexities of economic and environmental stories. The variety of points of view expressed in Covering China is a testament to the vigor of contemporary writing on China. As one contributor notes, American media coverage of China needs to challenge existing assumptions and be ready for the unexpected. By doing so, journalists can minimize the sense of shock that erupts in America at each swing of Chinese history. Covering China will be of interest to China area specialists, journalists, and cultural historians. Robert W. Snyder is managing editor of the Media Studies Journal, a historian, and author of Transit Talk: New York's Bus and Subway Workers Tell Their Stories. He has taught at Princeton University and New York University.


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