

inside



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## *Christiane Amanpour's four decades of fearless reporting at CNN*

By *Erica Hernandez*



Chief International Anchor Christiane Amanpour in Afghanistan in 2006. (Brent Stirton/Getty Images for CNN)

The name **Christiane Amanpour** is synonymous with CNN. The chief international anchor has been with the company for 40 years this month.

During her storied career, **Amanpour has exposed the brutality of the Bosnian War**, documented the violence in Iraq since the start of the Gulf War in 1991, and interviewed countless **world leaders** and **changemakers** — though she's quick to point out that she's still eagerly

awaiting a sit down with Vladimir Putin, Xi Jinping or Kim Jong Un. Her fearless and uncompromising coverage has earned every major television journalism award there is.

Amanpour describes her early days at CNN as feeling like she was part of a startup that was disrupting and revolutionizing the media landscape. She joined the network in 1983, just three years after CNN began broadcasting news 24/7. Since then, she's worked her way up from a news assistant in Atlanta to anchoring the award-winning global affairs show "**Amanpour.**"

But she's never lost her curiosity for the truth, nor her thirst for being out in the field.

"I knew from the beginning that I wanted to be a foreign correspondent, a war correspondent," Amanpour said. "Having that single-minded goal, I jumped all the hurdles and all of the obstacles necessary to keep making it to my goal. Then I got there, and a whole other level of responsibility descended on my shoulders. I work for CNN, one of the most powerful platforms in the world. I need to exhibit responsible journalism. I always consider myself responsible, but when you work for a platform that is so powerful, you really have to understand the impact of your work."

Amanpour reflects on the privilege and responsibility she's had as a leader of international news coverage for the world's most trusted global news network.

## **What piece stands out when you look back on your four decades at CNN?**

I would say the most important body of work that I've done was the nearly four years of the war in Bosnia. I understood early on who the victims and aggressors were.



*Amanpour interviews Bosnian Serb army commander Ratko Mladic, nicknamed the "butcher of Bosnia," in 1993.*

By being truthful and neutral in our reporting we managed to change the way Bosnia was viewed, the way the siege of Sarajevo was revealed, and to help change American and Western policy by highlighting the horrors such as the massacres. For me, this is very important because I believe my job is to be curious, to be motivated and to report on all sides to figure out what is going on. Once you figure out what's going on, you have to make that clear over and over again, even if it's not fashionable or popular. That was a huge learning curve for me.

Bosnia is also where I came out with my truthful versus neutral mantra, which is the same mantra I've used in my reporting ever since.



***“My job is to be curious, to be motivated and to report on all sides to figure out what is going on.”***

***- Christiane Amanpour, chief international anchor***



## You've been doing such impactful reporting from Ukraine. What's it been like to be out in the field covering its war with Russia?

I have been to Ukraine four times since the war started and I must say, each trip has come at a very vital time. My first trip was in March of 2022, a month after Russia launched the war, while I feel my most recent one has been a turning point in the war.

It came amid the Ukrainian counteroffensive, and my job was to try to get below the headlines and investigate if that was actually going to plan. By the end of the week that I was there, a **National Security Council spokesman said that the Ukrainians were making good progress** in their counteroffensive. I went and was able to investigate a sort of prevailing conventional wisdom about how the counteroffensive **wasn't doing well**.

We made a difference by being there. For me, that's important because there's a lot of nuance to all these important stories that we cover — whether it's war, a humanitarian crisis or politics. I felt that I had to get to the bottom of the nuance, which is not to say the counteroffensive is a stroll in the park. It's massively difficult.

Ukraine should have had much more of the weapons systems that they would need in this counteroffensive. They should have had them much earlier. But nonetheless, they're doing the very best they can with what they have.




## Tell us what advice you have for people consuming news and trying to stay informed in this hyperpartisan era?

I feel extremely sad, and it's not just in the United States — it's in Egypt, in Russia, wherever you want to look.

Journalists are also being pulled into those silos, and that's a real shame because that's not our role. Our audience also bears the responsibility now for seeking the most trusted information out there, like CNN. For 43 years, the network has been delivering the best journalism that it possibly can to the world. People know that by and large they're going to go to CNN and get the facts and get the storytelling. It's our job to provide that information without overly politicizing — it's the audience's job to search for that. They have to want to get the kind of journalism that stands the test of time.

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 *As Russian missiles began barraging Ukraine, the country's ballet dancers faced a choice. They could pick up arms and join the war effort or wage a different battle. Christiane Amanpour examines the issue on **"The Whole Story with Anderson Cooper - Ukraine: Dancing in Defiance"** airing Sunday, September 17, at 8 p.m. ET.*

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When she looks back on her decades at CNN, Amanpour says she has no regrets.

"Whether it's in the first Gulf War, or the second Iraqi invasion. Whether it's Bosnia, whether it's Africa, Rwanda, Somalia or Afghanistan. In all those places that we've covered, my job was to tell these stories through the eyes of the actual individual," Amanpour explained. "People tell the human story literally to help give voice to those who just don't have a voice, and their stories wouldn't be heard otherwise. We are the eyes and ears of our audience. I am really proud, and I loved every single minute of it."

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*- Edited and produced by Kyle Almond, Tricia Escobedo and Kimberly Richardson*



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