

The Bookseller news editor Maia Snow talks about the 'definite left turn' in her career

By **buraeraidris** -



"It kind of went exactly as I planned. But the problem is, when you achieve everything you've planned by the time you're 23, what do you do?" (Image credit: Maia Snow)

Although only 28 years old, news editor for *The Bookseller*, Maia Snow has already spent a decade covering news. From crime scenes to the book world, her career path has been anything but ordinary. Buraera Ahsen chats with Maia Snow about how a last-minute application changed everything.

1) Did you always want to be a journalist?

Yes and no. I loved science at school; truth be told, I wasn't great at English. I had been writing for the *Nottingham Post's* youth section since I was 15, so I was torn between becoming an engineer or a journalist. Then, I did some work experience at Mercedes-Benz in Germany and hated it. At that moment, I decided it would probably be journalism.

I enjoyed the fast-paced nature of journalism.

The plan was to go to university to study physics and pursue a master's in journalism. I was just lucky enough that it all worked out as planned.

2) You said joining *The Bookseller* was a definite left turn for you. Can you explain?

Before joining *The Bookseller*, I had worked in traditional newspapers for 10 years.



I started at 18 with the Nottingham Post, worked there throughout university, and then went to *LeicestershireLive* at 22. Most of my career was spent in a hard news environment, covering crime scenes, court cases, and later, world news at the *Daily Express*, including Ukraine and October 7th.

During the year and a half I covered world news, it became a bit overwhelming.

It was exciting, but I wanted to pursue something calmer and more enjoyable. Transitioning from hard news to B2B required a complete shift in my thinking. I had to relearn what news meant because this audience wanted to read stories that I would've previously considered boring.

3) Your role now, how did you get it?

I get the Cision job alerts (emails), and the listing for this job came through on the day of the deadline. I've always been a big reader, so I literally applied on the last day, went through a few interviews, and got the job. If I hadn't seen it on that last day, I wouldn't be here.

4) What does your average day look like?

My day starts at about 8:30 a.m., and our morning newsletter goes out at about 9:15 a.m. I log on a little early to make sure nothing has come in overnight.

Then, I will speak to my team of reporters, and they will prioritise their day. The rest of my day involves checking my email, seeing if anything big drops in, going through what publicists send us, looking for stories, fielding any questions from our reporters, and prepping the newsletter list for the following morning.

We usually wrap up at about half-four, which is really nice. And that's the thing about working in B2B: you don't have to do shifts anymore. I have a sleep schedule now, it's amazing.

5) How did you work your way up to becoming a news editor? What was the path like?

It kind of went exactly as I planned. But the problem is, when you achieve everything you've planned by the time you're 23, what do you do?

I didn't see beyond being a content editor. I got that job at *MyLondon* when I was 24. I did that job for two and a half years, and I loved it. It is by far the best job I have ever had and probably ever will have.

And then *MyLondon* underwent huge staff cuts. At that point, I was going through major personal life stuff and didn't know what to do. The job at the *Daily Express* came up and perhaps it wasn't right for me because I didn't really enjoy the subject matter too much or working at a national – it was really tiring.

So, things went to plan...and then they didn't. If you'd told me at 22 that I'd be working in a B2B [magazine](#) seven years later, I wouldn't have believed you.

When things happen in your personal life, and your favourite job might not exist anymore, you suddenly have to reassess. Things happen for a reason, and if they hadn't, I wouldn't have ended up in this job, which I love for different reasons.

6) What would you say has been a turning point in your career?

My job at *MyLondon*. I was lucky to join when the site was expanding rapidly. It was a news website that didn't have a history. It didn't have any expectations, so we could all go in there enthusiastically, full of ideas, and basically do what we wanted. Yeah, you had to cover the news, but we could do it in our own way.

I met my best friend there. I am going out for drinks with friends I made there – none of whom work at [Reach](#) anymore, but we are all still hanging out. I think that says a lot about what kind of place it was.

7) Where do you see yourselves in 5 years?

Honestly? I don't know but I could see myself staying in this role for a while. If I were to move on, it might be a shift away from journalism entirely – maybe writing a book or going into teaching, becoming a journalism lecturer.

Right now, I have a good job, it's good people, good hours and it's books. You can't really beat that. It's my fourth job in six years...I think I'm ready to stay for a while.

8) What's something you wish you knew starting out in journalism?

That feedback isn't personal. If a senior manager or somebody more experienced gives you feedback, it's not a personal attack. It is helpful, and I understand that now, being a manager myself. I give feedback because I want to help them. When I was 22, I couldn't believe they had just criticised me.

If you have somebody willing to help and develop you, it's a good manager.

9) What's your take on the future of the industry and AI in journalism?

I think the industry is getting better at evolving, and dare I say the word AI – however, specifically in book publishing, it is not being used in the best way.



Unfortunately, that is probably going to be the future, and as much as I am personally reluctant, if people don't adapt, they're going to get left behind. If AI can free up admin jobs and give more people time to be original, then that's great. After all, the only thing AI can do is recreate ideas that already exist.

As for magazines, I don't believe they are dying simply because the people in this industry are too smart to ignore progress. They can see it coming.

