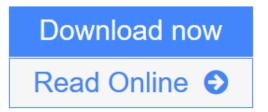


Field Guide to Covering Local News: How to Report on Cops, Courts, Schools, Emergencies, and Government

Fred Bayles



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In a time of upheaval for journalism, local news is flourishing. People want to know about the chemical spill on the highway, the kidnapping trial in district court, the cuts in the school budget. News organizations have a constant need for both professional and citizen journalists who can report those stories accurately and interestingly.

In the latest installment of the Field Guide,/i> series, Fred Bayles takes you step-by-step through the process of identifying and covering the events and issues that matter most to your community. For the five local beats cops, courts, emergencies, schools, and government you ll learn where to go for information and how to organize and present the stories your neighbors want and need.

An overview of tools and techniques include tips on how to find sources, conduct interviews, work with editors, tap the power of the crowd and think multimedia. Then, for each beat, you ll get specifics on: People: The best official and unofficial sources of info, and what to ask them. Places: Where to go on the beat, and what to look for while you re there. Documents: Where to find records in offices and online, how to decipher and use them. Stories: Overview of common story types and how to go beyond them. Resources: Glossary of key terms, checklists, helpful web links.

Additional features expand your knowledge base: Beat Backgrounders sort out the basics, like the difference between civil and criminal cases. Judgment Call prepares you for the tough ethical questions a journalist faces every day. From the Beat/Source provides tips from an experienced reporter or shares the insights of a public figure in the know. On the Web features online reporting and presentation, blogging worth emulating. Assignments build confidence and knowledge.

Good stories are everywhere. With the *Field Guide to Covering Local News*, find them, report them, and show your audience why they matter. Local news helps people become better citizens, and helps journalists master the skills they ll use for their entire careers. Grab this book and get started.



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