



Wasting Police Time

David Copperfield

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Ever wondered why you can't find a policeman when you need one?

PC David Copperfield has the answer...they're all inside the station, writing reports, photocopying, stapling and filing - when they're not getting caught up in the petty squabbles of the underclass.

Wasting Police Time is his hilarious and shocking diary of life as a modern British bobby. It's the first book to spill the beans about the way senior police officers waste our money while fiddling the crime figures and scrambling to meet bogus Home Office targets.

Copperfield's Chief Constable won't like it and neither will the government. But honest taxpayers - sick of being fleeced while criminals rule our streets - will relish every word.

Wasting Police Time Details

Date : Published October 1st 2006 by Monday Books

ISBN : 9780955285417

Author : David Copperfield

Format : Paperback 256 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Humor, Mystery, Crime, True Crime, Autobiography, Memoir

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From Reader Review Wasting Police Time for online ebook

Katy Noyes says

As much as I enjoyed reading this, I also admit to feeling uncomfortable at times too.

It was exactly what I was expecting - anecdotes from the front line of policing, a world-weary copper telling it 'like it is', lots of cynicism, humour, pathos, and simmering frustration.

It was the author/narrator himself who made me a little twitchy. Under his alias, he's recorded daily life in the Thin Blue Line as a regular guy seeing the petty squabbles, alcohol and drug-fuelled incidents and paperwork-filled workdays in the police force. It's his mental image of his 'clients' (my quotation mark) that had me squirming. We all know the sort of crimes that are committed, the likely types of people probably committing the majority of them, PC Copperfield does sometimes show empathy and huge patience. But maybe I'm being too P.C. myself, reading how he labels and pre-judges, dismisses and writes off. Too naive of me? Maybe.

Anyway. Now I've said that, the book is a pretty convincing insight into the daily life of a best policeman. Though if you believe Copperfield, very little time is spent on the streets, instead spent filling in endless forms for rubber stamping and duplicating. This point is hammered home repeatedly. It veers between funny and repetitive.

When he does get onto the streets, we see a lot of repeat customers, some quite shockingly juvenile behaviour from adults, and it's hard not to feel embarrassed by our fellow citizens.

Copperfield obviously isn't afraid to speak his mind, encourage debate and discussion with his warts-and-all stories, and while his writing is funny and readable, his voice is at times confusing - pictured him as a fifty-something copper and was surprised when he revealed himself to be a thirty-something married man who likes evenings at home playing scrabble.

Still, I've plumped for four stars. I laughed and squirmed. I learned a bit. I thought a bit. I appreciate the policemen we have and what they try to do... Even if they are in it for the pension. And the occasional biscuit or curry.

Petra X says

The book is a collection of posts from David Copperfield's blog. It is interesting to see that the people at the top have created ever-increasing paper trails to cover their fat arses in case of trouble, and that this has taken the place of actual policing. In common with most organisations, any person in charge of a department will seek to increase their power by increasing the number of staff they are responsible for, who will then, if all goes well, need their own management structure. The police support, have been very successful in this and now policemen in the UK are vastly outnumbered by clerks, secretaries, and other people more desirous of a corner cubicle than the beat on the street.

The author is a great admirer of American policing which gave me plenty to think about as I was not

previously a fan of anything involving guns. The sheer brutality and humiliation shown on US tv of policing - arrest, handcuff, police cells for ... oh, a traffic offence, a little weed, shouting too loud in a bar, is just anathema to me. As the police are the other side of the criminal coin, Al Capone's famous quote applies equally to them:

"You can get much farther with a kind word and a gun than you can with a kind word alone."

Nigel says

Police Farce

I'm sad to say this is spot on. Many will read this and believe it to be a work of complete fiction. Those who have been employed by any British constabulary in any capacity in the past decade will read it and will constantly be unconsciously nodding their heads. If you are interested in what policing in the UK is really like and have a laugh in the process, read this book.

P.C. Surname says

As a servicing police Constable myself, I really enjoyed this book and took inspiration from it for my own book. The stories the author portrays are brutally accurate and reflect exactly what a front line police officer in the UK does. To succeed in this job officers have to have a sense of humour - otherwise they would be driven insane - and PC David Copperfield has a wicked one! I know people have criticised the book as too cynical and at times negative, but sometimes honesty comes at a price. Very easy reading and enjoyable for anyone remotely interested in the subject matter.

Urban Cowgirl says

This book gives all the reasons you might need for never attempting to turn your blog into a book. Boring and repetitive, the main message of this book is that the police have to do a great deal of paperwork. Why it takes the author 300 pages to make this point, I don't know.

I won't even go into how worried you should be that someone with such an appalling grasp of civil liberties, and the relationship between state and individual, is a policeman. If I were to meet the author I would point out that firstly, it isn't section 8 of the Human Rights Act that gives a right to privacy. It is Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Secondly, repealing the Human Rights Act (which the author advocates) won't do what the author thinks it will. All the the HRA does is give individuals the right to directly found an action on violation of their Convention rights in a domestic court. Repealing the HRA only means individuals would have to head to the European Court to have their case heard on the point. It would not take away their legal rights.

I would expect an officer of the law to know the difference.

Hopefully the author will think twice before he claims on one page to be a civil libertarian while on the next page railing against the very notion of human rights. The author is apparently under the illusion that it is

somehow the very concept of human rights which forces his life to be a tissue of bureaucracy.

Possibly the man is Melanie Phillips in disguise, which could be why I felt quite unwell after putting this book down.

Chris says

This is a brilliant book about the life of a modern-day bobby in Britain. The funniest things in life are true and this book is hilarious because everything PC Copperfield bemoans about being a modern police officer is true; the boozing, anti-social behaviour, antics of chavs and beaurocracy within government and police are all real and sadly not going away anytime soon

If you are interested in a career in the police read this book! If you still want to be a copper after reading it you deserve to get in!

Paul Bryant says

Ordinary British copper writes blog which becomes a book. I didn't read this from end to end, it's extremely repetitive. It actually forms part of the PC debate (no puns please) and with sledgehammer weary blokeish humour which very quickly wears out its welcome, it exposes how painful government is these days. Here's what happens:

First, the politicians. The (British) Labour government has the (90%) rightwing newspapers on their back day in day out about how rubbish they are. Plus, the public generally hate their politicians with a deep and dearly bought hatred. The Labour government genuinely wants to do good things, they're not actually rogues out to fleece the nation's coffers*, so they need to prove the things they do are actually good and are actually working, and not just wasting vast amounts of taxpayers' money. So they set targets - "when we were elected in 1997 only 55% of seven year olds could tie their own shoelaces and now ten years later the figure has risen to 61% and on a like for like basis in deprived areas the true figure is 63%" - that kind of thing, times a million.

Second, the police. They're at the front line of a lot of what goes on in society. The front line of crime prevention, of course, but also the front line of political correctness (partly because their behaviour in the past has been so appalling we have realised we need to police the police a whole lot more than we used to), and also the front line of proving that the government's policies are correct. Hitting targets or improving statistics are the sine qua non of British politics. Has violent crime risen? Are we winning the war on drugs? Has Britain gone to the dogs? If so, exactly how many dogs? Were any of them Dalmatians? How many illegal immigrants are there anyway, Home Secretary? You don't know? Resign, resign!

So what the police are asked to do is fill out a gazillion forms to make sure they are a) recording crime correctly and b) treating people decently, especially people who they used to treat appallingly, such as, for instance, say, black people. This takes a whole lot of time, and coppers like the author think it's all nonsense and they should be out on the streets catching crims and not back at the nick typing up reports and trying to decide if the person they're questioning is of Bangladeshi or Pakistani or Indian origin and ringing round for an interpreter and a "responsible adult" to sit in on the interview since the suspect is 15 years old. And of course the bellicose public agree with the worldweary "it's PC gone mad" cops. But they the public just love to make snap judgements based on prejudice. Whereas me, I weigh up books like this very carefully before I

chuck them in a box and take them to Oxfam.

* This was written before the expenses scandal broke and it turned out they all were fleecing the nation's coffers.

John Kirk says

This book is quite informative, and there are some funny bits even though the general outlook is quite bleak. It does get a bit repetitive, which illustrates how much time is spent on paperwork, but isn't particularly interesting to read. It's based on a blog, so I recommend reading that first to see whether you like the author's style. If you do, be aware that there's extra content here, so you're not just paying for stuff that you've already read.

Michael Harry says

Not only does he go on and on about the same things, he isn't funny at all.

This is the Daily Mail view of Britain. It always strikes me that the people who outwardly say they're patriots and conservatives etc; do the most to run the country down at every opportunity. Phrases like "this is what's wrong with modern Britain" or "broken Britain" is what you get from them. There's nothing wrong with Britain that any casual flick through of history (or a few Dickens novels) would say wasn't always so. This harking back to some golden age of zero crime and no locks on the doors is a fantastical myth. This idealic heartbeat world he actually tries to sell as real history that has all been corrupted... it's pure Daily Mail fiction. And this is a guy who was policing in a small provincial town talking about how quiet and dominated by frivolities the job is. No wonder he buggered off to Canada.

The smug sense of superiority that comes through when he talks of this "underclass" who live on council estates and are the embodiments of the guests on the Trisha show (he says this) is revolting. It's as if he sees the people as subhuman creatures he is the zoo-keeper of and not individuals he's supposed to protect and serve. He finds the people beneath him and their antics sources for our amusement. It's incredibly classist.

The way he rants and rails constantly at diversity training as if that were the problem, and not the inherent racism, sexism in society itself. The way he pretends all police (he damn near says all of them) are good guys who don't need such lessons and he resents them, is a worry to me because it clearly isn't true. Women still don't report rapes and abuse because of the patronising sexist nonsense from certain police and police still harass minorities and speak offensively to them. This is know daily. I don't need to read some provincial from "newtown" telling me it isn't so.

If I didn't actually know police myself and have police family I'd find it a worrying and troubling book. But I do and thankfully they aren't the pessimistic, judgemental, superior asses this writer is.

Thumbs down from me.

Spurnlad says

Entertaining insight into the rubbish front line police have to put up with.

Steven Ryan says

Funny and true

Christian says

An absolutely hilarious and shocking insight to the British Police. This is a book that doesn't criticise the officers or the intentions, just the incompetence and inefficiency of the police system. A system which results in abject failure and often does little to deter crime. A must read.

Jenny says

I loved Wasting Police Time - perhaps the reviewers who didn't like it missed the point of it.

It is witty, sarcastic, shocking, depressing, scary and most of all true. Perhaps it just fits in with my sense of humour.

If you have ever wondered what it is like to be a police officer in Britain in the 21st century read this book.

Jayne Charles says

Whilst it does seem a bit repetitive in its themes, repetitiveness seems to be the order of the day in the police force. Another job I definitely wouldn't fancy doing after reading this! It's very very funny - my favourite bit was the checklist of things to do before having the police round. Also it's wonderfully un-PC (pun not intentional) with its comments about plasma screen TVs in the corners of council house living rooms, and the reference to overheating in such rooms (the sort of fuggy heat you 'only get when nobody is paying the heating bill'. Brilliant!)

K.A. Krisko says

The first part of this book was really quite amusing. The author has a dry, witty sense of humor, and the treatment of police bureaucracy seemed tongue-in-cheek. However, by halfway through the book I wasn't so sure but that he believed some of his frankly appalling statements about those who commit crimes, the poor, and the disadvantaged. He doesn't seem to see any utility at all in recording the results of interviews,

investigations, or evidence collections. I found myself siding more and more with the bureaucracy he was denigrating. Unfortunately, the second half of the book was so repetitive that it could have been done away with altogether and it wouldn't have affected anything.
