

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE IALJS

LITERARY JOURNALISM

VOL 1 NO 2

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR LITERARY JOURNALISM STUDIES

FALL 2007

ENTERING OUR SECOND YEAR

A number of new initiatives for our growing association

By John Bak, Nancy 2 (France)

If the IALJS watchword for 2006 was "serendipity," then one can certainly make the argument that it has surely been "momentum" for 2007.

On the Monday following the annual IALJS convention (held this year in Paris), I already began receiving e-mails from members of the association inquiring when we



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

would start work on the IALJS 3 Call for Papers. As is typical of his generosity and indefatigable nature, David Abrahamson took the lead and, along with Alice Trindade, submitted a draft version of the CFP a week or so later, which the organizing committee eventually adopt-

ed. By mid-June, the new CFP, entitled "Literary Journalism: Theory, Practice, Pedagogy," was posted on the IALJS website <www.ialjs.org> and sent to various listservs around the world. If you have not yet marked your calendars (15-17 May 2008), please do so, as Alice and Isabel Sores Santos have promised conference attendees an enriching visit, both professionally and culturally speaking. We hope to see everyone in Lisbon next May.

Of course, IALJS's progress has not stopped there. If you consult the IALJS website, you will notice several changes. Working from Susan Greenberg's, Bill Reynolds's and my suggestions at the organizational meeting in Paris, IALJS has added a "Links" page to

other important literary journalism sites (some of which have reciprocated the gesture and have added our link to their site), a "Contacts" page, a "Newsletter" page (see below), a "Facts Sheet" page (which you can download and print out for promotional purposes when you attend other conferences), and a "Conference" page, which offers separate links to the 2006 and 2007 conferences. On each of these last two links, one can consult the conference program (the 2007 version even includes some abstracts of the talks), as well as various photos taken at the conference and short videos of many of its presenters. A video presentation of Norm Sims's keynote speech (and John Hartsock's introduction) delivered at the Paris 2007 conven-

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website, so please send
suggestions

tion has also recently been made available. We hope to keep improving the IALJS website, so please do not hesitate to send me your suggestions <john.bak@univ-nancy2.fr>.

Most of you have received the inaugural issue of *Literary Journalism: The Newsletter of the International Association for Literary Journalism Studies*. Thanks to the Herculean efforts of David Abrahamson and Bill Reynolds, the newsletter was launched within a month of the Paris convention. I think we would all agree that it is of the highest professional quality, and we have both editors to thank for that. As was decided in Paris, the newsletter will serve as the official spokesperson of IALJS and its activities (the eventual journal, *Literary Journalism Studies*, will serve as its academic forum), and its co-editors have plans to publish it as a

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JOIN THE IALJS LISTSERV

To receive e-mail notices of association matters and other information, you are invited to subscribe to our dedicated listserv. To join, please send a one-line message (with no subject) reading... **SUBSCRIBE IALJS YourFirstName YourLastName** ...to the following address... **LISTSERV@LISTSERV.IT.NORTHWESTERN.EDU** In return you will receive an automated e-mail indicating that your free subscription is in effect.

INTELLECTUAL HISTORY PRIZE

The International Society for Intellectual History is offering an annual prize to honour the contribution of the late Charles Schmitt to intellectual history. The prize is £3,500, plus £350 worth of Routledge books, and a year's free membership of ISIH. The paper awarded the prize will be published in *Intellectual History Review*. Eligibility is restricted to graduate students and those who have submitted their Ph.D. within two years of the closing date for the prize. For more information, contact Stephen Clucas <s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk>. The closing date for the prize is 31 December 2008.

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WWW.IALJS.ORG

FUTURE SITES FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCES

The following future IALJS convention venues have been confirmed or are under consideration. For more info, please see <www.ialjs.org>.

2009: IALJS Annual Convention at Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, USA, 15-16 May 2009.

2010: IALJS Annual Convention at Roehampton University, London, UK, 14-15 May 2010.

2011: IALJS Annual Convention at Ryerson University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 13-14 May 2011.

LET US KNOW YOUR PANEL IDEAS!

It may seem ridiculously premature, but, believe it or not, *now* is the time to start thinking about the kinds of programming you'd like to see at next year's IALJS annual convention in Lisbon, Portugal. Any and all ideas are certainly welcome. Please write up your suggestions for proposed panels and e-mail them to Program Chair Susan Greenberg <s.greenberg@roehampton.ac.uk>.

REPORT FROM THE IALJS TREASURER

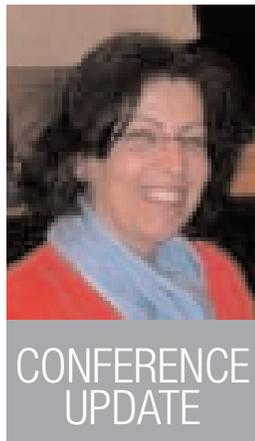
As of 1 September 2007, Treasurer Bill Reynolds reports that the financial circumstances of our association are as follows: Total revenue since our founding in the summer of 2006: **\$2460.00**, including \$200 in receivables; total outlays, actual and encumbered: **\$796.00** (of which **\$512.00** involved the May 2007 annual conference in Paris); and total funds balance in our treasury as of this report: **\$1664.00**. In addition, the association currently has **31** paid-in-full members.

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PLANNING FOR THE LISBON CONVENTION

The venue will be Portugal, and the timing will again be mid-May

By Alice Donat Trindade, TU-Lisbon (Portugal)



CONFERENCE UPDATE

Bem-vindos a Portugal. Welcome to Portugal! After two years in France, IALJS members voted to have our next meeting in Lisbon at our University, which means that, on behalf of Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas, TULisbon, I warmly welcome

all future participants! Our Institute, where different areas of the social sciences, media and management are studied, is happy to host IALJS's Third International Conference, "Literary Journalism: Theory, Practice, Pedagogy" on 15-17 May 2008 (see the *Call for Papers* on the next page). This is part of our internationalization policy, an aspect of the "Bologna spirit" that is now an ongoing process for most European Universities.

Like most manifestations of human culture, Literary Journalism is a genre that has been practised all over the world under different designations. Moreover, it often underscores the relevance of individual per-

spectives on ordinary events, much in line with Raymond Williams's famous phrase: "Culture is ordinary." The source of its unique motifs is often the every day lives of common citizens, a treasure that rarely is found in conventional journalism.

The two previous conferences were excellent opportunities to debate and further publicize a type of writing that may have been under-appreciated in both academe and in journalism. Due to the efforts of our association President John Bak and Vice President David Abrahamson, as well as the contribution made by scholars (and IALJS members) such as Norman Sims and John Hartsock, we have already come a long way since the first Conference in Nancy. Paris was a milestone, as it increased our membership three-fold and broadened the scope of national origins.

Hopefully, our Lisbon conference will enjoy an even higher number of participants from all continents. Portugal once sailed the seven seas, searching for new continents and other peoples. Our own journalists and nonfiction writers have reported extensively on our own experience here, in the westernmost country in Europe, and elsewhere in the world. It is now our turn to welcome you — both practitioners and academics — to Lisbon, and we will do all we can to be certain that you find your visit with us a success. ♦

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE (tentative)

Wednesday 14th May 2008

Session 0	15.00 – 17.00	IALJS Executive Committee Meeting
	19.00 – ?	Informal drinks and dinner

Thursday 15th May 2008

Session 1	8.00 – 8.45	Welcome and Introduction
Session 2	9.00 – 10.00	Poster/Work-in-Progress Session I
Session 3	10.15 – 11.15	Research Paper Session I
Session 4	11.30 – 12.30	Keynote Speech
Lunch	12.30 – 14.15	
Session 5	14.15 – 15.15	Panel I
Session 6	15.30 – 16.30	Poster/Work-in-Progress Session II
Session 7	16.45 – 17.45	Research Paper Session II
Session 8	18.00 – 19.00	IALJS Executive Committee Meeting (?)
	19.00 – ?	Informal drinks and dinner

Friday, 16th May 2008

Breakfast	8.00 – 8.45	Scholars' Breakfast (optional)
Session 9	9.00 – 10.00	Panel II
Session 10	10.15 – 11.15	Poster/Work-in-Progress Session III
Session 11	11.30 – 12.30	Research Paper Session III
Lunch	12.30 – 14.15	
Session 12	14.15 – 15.15	Poster/Work-in-Progress Session IV
Session 13	15.30 – 16.30	IALJS Annual Members Meeting
Party	16.45 – 18.00	Conference Reception
Dinner	19.00 – ?	Conference Banquet

Saturday, 17th May 2008

Session 14	9.00 – 10.00	Panel III
Session 15	10.15 – 11.15	Research Paper Session IV
Session 16	11.30 – 12.30	Closing Convocation
Lunch	12.30 – 14.15	
Tour	14.15 – 17.15	Lisbon Tour
	19.00 – ?	Informal drinks and dinner

CALL FOR PAPERS FOR 2008 IALJS CONFERENCE

A new theme and a call for papers, works-in-progress and panel proposals

CALL FOR PAPERS

International Association for Literary Journalism Studies

“Literary Journalism: Theory, Practice, Pedagogy”
The Third International Conference for Literary Journalism
Studies

Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas
Universidade Técnica de Lisboa - TULisbon

Lisbon, Portugal
15-17 May 2008

The International Association for Literary Journalism Studies invites submissions of original research papers, abstracts for research in progress and proposals for panels on Literary Journalism for the IALJS annual convention on 15-17 May 2008. The conference will be held at the Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas at the Universidade Técnica de Lisboa (TULisbon), Lisbon, Portugal.

The conference hopes to be a forum for scholarly work of both breadth and depth in the field of literary journalism, and all research methodologies are welcome, as are research on all aspects of literary journalism and/or literary reportage. For the purpose of scholarly delineation, our definition of literary journalism is "journalism as literature" rather than "journalism about literature." The association especially hopes to receive papers related to the general conference theme, "Literary Journalism: Theory, Practice, Pedagogy." All submissions must be in English.

The International Association for Literary Journalism Studies is a multi-disciplinary learned society whose essential purpose is the encouragement and improvement of scholarly research and education in Literary Journalism. As a relatively new association in a relatively recently defined field of academic study, it is our agreed intent to be both explicitly inclusive and warmly supportive of a wide variety of scholarly approaches.

Details of the programs of previous annual meetings can be found at:

<http://www.ialjs.org/conferences07.html>

<http://www.ialjs.org/conferences2006.html>

I. Guidelines for Research Papers

Submitted research papers should not exceed 7,500 words, or about 25 double-spaced pages, plus endnotes. Please regard this as an upper limit; shorter papers are certainly welcome. Endnotes and bibliographic citations should follow the Chicago

Manual of Style. Papers may not be simultaneously submitted to any other conferences. Papers previously published, presented, accepted or under review are ineligible. Only one paper per author will be accepted for presentation in the conference's research sessions, and at least one author for each paper must be at the convention in order to present the paper. If accepted, each paper presenter at a conference Research Session may be allotted no more than 15 minutes. To be considered, please observe the following guidelines:

(a) Submission by e-mail attachment is required, in either an MS Word or Adobe PDF format. No faxes or postal mail submissions will be accepted;

(b) Please include one title page containing title, author/s, affiliation/s, and the address, phone, fax, and e-mail of the lead author.

(c) Also include a second title page containing only the paper's title and the paper's abstract. The abstract should be approximately 250 words in length.

(d) Your name and affiliation should not appear anywhere in the paper [this information will only appear on the first title page; see (b) above].

II. Guidelines for Poster/Work-in-Progress Presentations (Abstracts)

Submitted abstracts for Poster/Work-in-Progress Sessions should not exceed 250 words. If accepted, each presenter at a conference Poster/Work-in-Progress session may be allotted no more than 10 minutes. To be considered, please observe the following guidelines:

(a) Submission by e-mail attachment is required, in either an MS Word or Adobe PDF format. No faxes or postal mail submissions will be accepted;

(b) Please include one title page containing title, author/s, affiliation/s, and the address, phone, fax and e-mail of the lead author;

(c) Also include a second page containing only the work's title and the actual abstract of the work-in-progress. The abstract should be approximately 250 words in length.

III. Guidelines for Proposals for Panels

(a) Submission by e-mail attachment is required, in either an MS Word or Adobe PDF format. No faxes or postal mail submissions will be accepted;

(b) Panel proposals should contain the panel title, possible participants and their affiliation and e-mail addresses, and a description of the panel's subject. The description

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YOU CAN HELP BUILD A NEW HOME FOR THE GENRE

The chair of our Membership Committee says "Go and spread the word!"

By Isabel Soares Santos, TU-Lisbon (Portugal)



MEMBERSHIP
CAMPAIGN

When it all started back in 2005, little did we know that, from a dozen of enthusiastic-proud-to-be-taking-part-in-a-pioneering-event founding members, we would almost

treble our numbers in the first year of our existence. Mesmerized as we are by this course of events, it is with great pleasure that we notice that IALJS has members in fourteen countries, both North and South of the equator, East and West of the Atlantic and

down there where the Pacific meets the Indian Ocean.

And what does all this geographical dispersion mean? Well, it means that the study of literary journalism is disseminated everywhere, and that for the first time ever there is a place in which we are welcome and no longer feel as the oddities studying a hybrid form of journalism. This is probably the greatest advantage of being a member of IALJS. Here we are not frowned upon by literary scholars or shunned by the academics of journalism. Being a member of IALJS means that literary journalism is a field of expertise stepping out and asserting its rightful claim. Moreover, your membership in IALJS acknowledges the potential of a field that holds endless study possibilities. It is also taking part in a unique association—the

one, only and first—devoted in its entirety to literary journalism.

To keep this tidal wave rolling we gladly welcome all those who might want to join us. Being scattered as we are, IALJS is our forum, and we can all play our part in helping recruiting new members. Therefore, if you know of prospective new members just have their names, affiliation and contact sent to the Membership Chair <isantos@iscsp.utl.pt> and a formal invitation to join IALJS will be sent with a request to fill in the membership form (see next page). Remember that our membership year runs from 1 January to 31 December and that by this coming December we will be notifying all of our current members to renew their memberships.

We hope to see you all, and more, in Lisboa! ♦

CALL FOR PAPERS *Continued from previous page*

should be approximately 250 words in length;

(c) Panels are encouraged on any topic related to the study, teaching or practice of literary journalism;

(d) SPECIAL NOTE: A panel on the subject, "Representation and Mediation in the Texts of Literary Journalists," is already under consideration. Anyone interested in participating as a panelist is invited to contact the Conference Program Chair (e-mail address below).

Evaluation Criteria, Deadlines and Contact Information

All research paper submissions will be evaluated on originality and importance of topic; literature review; clarity of research purpose; focus; use of original and primary sources and how they support the paper's purpose and conclusions; writing quality and organization; and the degree to which the paper contributes to the study of literary journalism. Similarly, abstracts of works-in-progress and panel proposals will be evaluated on the degree to which they contribute to the study of literary journalism. Submissions from students as well as faculty are encouraged.

Please submit research papers or abstracts of poster/works-in-progress presentations to:

Prof. Alice Trindade
Universidade Técnica de Lisboa (Portugal)
2008 Conference Research Chair, IALJS
E-mail: <atrindade@iscsp.utl.pt>

Please submit proposals for panels to:
Susan Greenberg
Roehampton University (United Kingdom)
2008 Conference Program Chair, IALJS
E-mail: <s.greenberg@roehampton.ac.uk>

Deadline for all submissions: No later than 1 December 2007

For more information regarding the conference or the association, please go to <http://WWW.IALJS.ORG> or contact either:

Prof. John Bak
University of Nancy2 (France)
President, IALJS
E-mail: <john.bak@univ-nancy2.fr>

Prof. David Abrahamson
Northwestern University (USA)
Vice President, IALJS
E-mail: <d-abrahamson@northwestern.edu>



International
Association for
Literary Journalism
Studies

IALJS Membership Form

Please fill out form and return (by mail, fax or e-mail attachment) with dues payment to address below.

Your name _____ Title (Dr., Prof., Mr., Ms., Mrs., Miss) _____

University/School/Department _____

Current home address (street number, city, state/province, country) _____

Phone (include int'l code) Home _____ Work _____ Cell _____

Fax phone _____ E-mail address _____

Area(s) of teaching/researching interests _____

Membership Categories: Members receive all IALJS announcements, including information about conferences, IALJS Newsletter, and the IALJS journal, *Literary Journalism Studies*.

Please check category: US\$ 40 or 35 Euros: Regular Member (Faculty member)
 US\$ 40 or 35 Euros: Associate Member (Professional member)
 US\$ 15 or 12 Euros: Student Member (Master or Doctoral level)
 US\$ 15 or 12 Euros: Retired Faculty Member
 US\$100 or 75 Euros: Sponsoring Member (to support the IALJS general operating fund)

Please Note: Because your IALJS membership dues are apportioned to various publication accounts, as well as for operating expenses, the U.S. Postal Service requires that you sign off on this procedure. Please sign below.

Signature _____ Date _____

PAYMENT METHODS: Check or Wire Transfer

1. Make Check Payable, in U.S. Funds only, to IALJS.

Please mail check with completed form to:

Bill Reynolds, IALJS Treasurer
School of Journalism, Ryerson University
350 Victoria Street
Toronto, Ontario
CANADA M5B 2K3

2(a). Wire Transfer (Outside U.S.)

From your bank, send wire transfer, using Swift Code #CHASUS22, to IALJS account #705981314. Please notify the treasurer by email, reynolds@ryerson.ca, with date of wire transfer and federal wire number.

2(b). Wire Transfer (U.S.)

From your bank, send wire transfer, using Routing #071000013, to IALJS account #705981314. Please notify the treasurer by email, reynolds@ryerson.ca, with date of wire transfer and federal wire number.

PLEASE NOTE: Unfortunately, the IALJS cannot accept payment by credit card at this time.

READING LIST

A number of our colleagues in the discipline have particular favorites in the

broad canon of literary journalism that they have found to have special meaning both in and out of the classroom. Their nominees are the books and/or articles they find uniquely useful examples of the craft. We asked a few for their choices, and, for your reading pleasure and possible classroom use, the results follow.

- Madeleine Blais (Massachusetts-Amherst, USA) nominates "**The Marriage Cure**" by **Katherine Boo** from the 18 August 2003 issue of *The New Yorker* for its "gripping and detailed look at how poverty affects females and the government's bizarre plan to make things better."
- William Dow (American-Paris, France) recommends a poem, **Muriel Ruykeyser's "The Book of the Dead."** First published in her 1938 volume, a book entitled *U.S. 1*, the work is "an experimental tour de force that fuses poetry with non-literary language drawn from journalism."
- Walt Harrington (Illinois-Urbana-Champaign, USA) suggests **The Power Broker** by **Robert Caro** to illustrate "how supposedly boring history, biography, psychology, public policy and politics can become storytelling" and **Barry Lopez's Arctic Dreams** for its "surgical precision and documentary detail."
- Mark Massé (Ball State, USA) is happy to recommend **Philip Capputo's "Black Badge of Courage"** from the September 1995 issue of *Esquire* for its "excellent use of status and sensory details in characterization, description and dramatization."
- Sonja Merljak Zdovc (Ljubljana, Slovenia) very much admires **Anne Hull's "A Better Life"** which appeared in the *St. Petersburg (Fla.) Times* on 9-11 May 1999. An extended three-part newspaper piece, the story is a touching exploration of the personal dimension of America's immigration issue. Moreover, Sonja says that she believes that it is "an excellent example of the 'literary' in a piece of journalism."

THE PURPOSE OF PUBLICATION

A number of IALJS authors explain their scholarly intent

By Bill Reynolds, Ryerson (Canada)

One of the exciting aspects of the IALJS is that its conferences have quickly become a genuine meeting place for literary journalism scholars to discuss their latest work. This is true of most conferences, but academics interminably have had difficulty in establishing literary journalism as a legitimate niche of scholar-



RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

ship. The ability to meet annually and exchange views at such a professional, high-calibre, yet warm level is therefore doubly rewarding. Still, in the zeal to create such an ambitious organization, we seem so busy plotting the contin-

ued success and growth of our little project that we often do not have the time to talk to each other about research. We do not do the academic's equivalent of stopping to smell the roses, that is, finding out what our colleagues have been finding out.

With this in mind, I offer what might become a series of columns wherein a few IALJS members tell us in more detail what they've been up to, as well as *why* they do what they do. This quarter, we checked in with Sonja Merljak Zdovc (Ljubljana, Slovenia), David Abrahamson (Northwestern, U.S.A.) and Jenny McKay (Stirling, Scotland) to find the origins of their passion for literary journalism.

Jenny McKay wrote a chapter on Daniel Defoe for *The Journalistic Imagination: Literary Journalists from Defoe to Capote to Carter*, published this month by Routledge. Her interest in Defoe's journalism goes back several years. Because she focused on medieval English at university, McKay didn't come across Defoe's *The Storm* until much later, when she noted a reference to it

while re-reading *Robinson Crusoe*. "I was intrigued to see how this early weather story might relate to the kind of journalistic reporting I was now engaged in on a regional daily newspaper," she says. "I finally tracked down a copy in Oxford's Bodleian Library, read it and was fascinated. It offers modern theoretical discussions about the relation between writing based on truth and that which is fiction can also be explored through the text. I was keen to introduce journalism students to it, and my chapter for this book developed as a result.

"One of the most exciting things about the research journey is that you don't know where you will end up, nor do you know what you will see along the way or even who you will meet. In reading about Defoe I found myself at a conference of scholars of nineteenth-century literature who were tolerant of my amateurish historical and literary knowledge and from whom I learned a lot. My motivation for doing research is one that Defoe would have understood: curiosity. I want to know more—more about journalism, its contribution to literature, to history and to society. I want to find out why things are as they are and also to ask occasionally what if they weren't as they are.

"If you're lucky, research brings you into contact with others who share your obsessions and can introduce you to theirs."

Sonja Merljak Zdovc's latest work, "The Use of Novelistic Techniques in Slovene Journalism: The Case of the Magazine *Tovaris*," was published in *Journalism Studies* (April 2007). Her article developed out of her doctoral thesis. "It was supposed to be only about Tom Wolfe," she says. "I found there was much more to it, especially since I was doing something similar during my everyday work at the national daily newspaper, *Delo*. I say similar, as I am writing feature stories, not literary journalism. We

Continued on facing page

don't have the money or time for longer pieces, but I try to put a little something in my short pieces.

"After defending my thesis I was invited to teach in the Journalism department, and I realized I needed to write articles for scholarly publications. Somebody mentioned that an interesting aspect of my thesis was the subversive role of Slovene literary journalists in the socialist system, so I began to expand that part."

Merljak Zdovc discovered a type of writing in the weekly *Tovari* that was similar to the New Journalism—telling nonfiction stories employing techniques of fiction—but the motivation behind the pieces was different from Wolfe's clarion call for greater depth of meaning in journalism. Rather, this variant was developed out of political necessity: "Since the journalists could not openly state their opinion of the political system, they wrapped it up in a story that had novelis-

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tic techniques typical of the short stories from the era of social realism."

Merljak Zdovc says she has decided to continue working in the field. "This summer I was working on two conference papers," she says, "and both of them were somehow related to literary journalism, as I believe in the genre. As a reader and as a journalist I am positive that the future of journalism lies in this form."

David Abrahamson's "Magazine Exceptionalism: The Concept, the Criteria, the Challenge," was published last month in *Journalism Studies*. Here is how he describes its essence: "In this age of convergence, when we are told that all media will somehow merge, it may be useful to remember that magazines, as a

media form, are unique. And one important aspect of that uniqueness is the fact that the long-form journalism they publish is a special window into the times in which they were published. Further, some very special pieces—many of which are considered literary journalism—not only reflected, but also helped shape, their times."

Abrahamson wanted to write about this topic because he felt it was resonating well with the times. "Long-form journalism has long been regarded as something other than 'real' journalism," he says. "In the minds of some, magazines are second-class citizens, while real journalists work for newspapers. But as newspapers struggle to remain relevant and conventional/objective journalism finds fewer and fewer devotees, it is quite possible that part of the solution for 'saving' journalism will be a greater reliance on long-form techniques, approaches and sensibilities. We may even be on the cusp of a new Golden Age of Literary Journalism."

Abrahamson has had this idea for some time, but thought it pertinent to circle back and re-examine long-form writing's impact. "It's a canard," he says, "but scholars are often accused of dining out for a whole career on a single idea or two. It's not really true. But we do often revisit an old idea when examining it in a new light seems to provide new answers to new questions. I began thinking about what I term 'magazine exceptionalism' in the late 1990s, but it only recently occurred to me that it might be especially relevant as we attempt to move beyond the existential angst afflicting much of journalism today."

Circling back started innocently enough, but soon developed into something more than just a kernel of thought—a possible lesson for all new and aspiring scholars, Abrahamson believes. "The work was originally written as a lecture, a conference keynote speech," he explains, "but I was asked by a journal editor if I might be willing to 'de-oralize' it for peer-reviewed publication. Which I was happy to do.

"The fact that some written work might lack footnotes or other scholarly structures and conventions does not necessarily mean that it can't be published in learned journals. More and more publications are open to interesting work in a variety of forms." ♦

FELLOW SCHOLARS

What follows is a somewhat random list of colleagues we've identified as interested in literary journalism. Some are IALJS members; others we hope will be.

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SCHOLARS *Continued from Page 7*

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER *Continued from Page 1*

quarterly. As such, we will need plenty of material to fill its pages. So please send in anything you have that is related to your work specifically in literary journalism, or reports on conferences that you have attended where literary journalism was discussed. Also desired are short pieces on the following: teaching tips for literary journalism, informal book reviews, literary journalism related photos and apocrypha, etc. The newsletter will only survive if we all take an active part in contributing to it. NB: the first few issues of the newsletter will be widely distributed free of charge for marketing purposes, but in the future only paying IALJS members will receive it—although archives of the newsletter will be made available on the association's website.

Also in the month of June, IALJS continued to spread its name around Europe. Responding to a recent call for seminar proposals for the 2008 ESSE (Europe Society for the Study of English) conference, I submitted a proposal for the following workshop entitled "Literary Journalism and the Canon":

While literary journalism has generally been considered an American phenomenon, whose writers include Capote, Mailer, Wolfe, Agee and Didion, today it is practiced and studied worldwide. And as journalists look more and more to literary devices to tell their stories, and fiction writers to immersion reporting to lend a phenomenal reality to their narratives, scholars of literary journalism have concerted their efforts to define the genre's emerging academic discipline. One immediate issue has surfaced: how will the classic examples of literary journalism over the last century or more be regarded within a given nation's growing literary canon? This seminar will examine to what extent literary journalists past and present—from the U.S. and the U.K., but also from Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa—have contributed to palliating the quarrel of fact versus fiction and have (re)shaped our notion of what constitutes a national "literature."

The ESSE <www.essenglish.org> is the parent organization of each European nation's academic association for the study of English, and it organizes biennially a week-long congress that brings together English departments throughout Europe to discuss literary, cultural, historical and linguistic matters related to the English-speaking world. In August 2008, ESSE-9 will be

held at the University of Aarhus in Denmark. It is our hope that the proposal will be accepted, not only because we will be making IALJS a more visible name, but also because we will be tapping an underrepresented source in IALJS today: English departments.

In fact, the majority of IALJS members, as well as those who presented at IALJS 2 in Paris, come from journalistic or communication backgrounds. And yet there is an enormous potential for members from English departments around the world who read or teach literary journalism but who have not yet recognized the genre's research potential or who do not know where to submit their papers for presentation or their articles for publication. While IALJS is unflagging in its mandate toward internationalism, its *lingua franca* remains English and, as such, will likely draw future members from English departments throughout the world,

A balance
 between literature and
 journalism
 produces a hybrid essential
 to our success

just as it has done members with journalistic backgrounds. What I would like to do before my tenure as your president is up is to begin recruiting more English department academics. Without them, IALJS will risk losing its balance between "literature" and "journalism," a hybridity essential for its continued success. A similar appeal will soon be made to the Modern Language Association (MLA), which hosts its annual congress in North America and brings together various English Departments there.

Plans for the coming months at IALJS include preparations for IALJS 3 in Lisbon in May 2008, a third issue of its newsletter, a book project collecting various articles from IALJS 1 and 2, and, crucially, the launching of *Literary Journalism Studies*. I hope we can count on your continued support and efforts to keep IALJS one of the fastest growing international associations in academia today. ♦

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THE “MINI-LECTURE” APPROACH TO TEACHING

A way to bridge the classroom gap between the writing workshop and the seminar discussion

By Kathy Roberts Forde, Minnesota (U.S.A.)

If you teach a course in literary journalism, you know the confusing labyrinth of choices that must be made in crafting course content, learning objectives, writing assignments and assessments. Many of these choices depend, of course, on the size of your class, your other teaching, research, and service obligations, and the unique



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needs of your student population. For example, you must determine how many writing assignments you can require, how robust a drafting process you can institute, how deep and thorough your responses to student work

can be. You must also decide how much of the course should be devoted to reading representative works of literary journalism, how much to “talking with” literary journalists either through published interviews or class visits, and how much to helping students develop their own writing and reporting skills in this genre.

All are important decisions, and you must make them based on your own particular institutional circumstances. In acknowledging these decisions, I mean to suggest that there is not any one “correct” or “best” way to teach literary journalism. But I do have a modest tip for teaching literary journalism that may be useful in most teaching situations: the mini-lecture.

Let me explain. In the literary journalism course I teach at the University of Minnesota, students read many works of American literary journalism from the late nineteenth century to the present, as well as writers’ discussions of their experiences and methods (I hope one day to include writers from other countries as well). Students also write four short works of literary journalism. The course shifts between seminar-style discussions of the “great works” and interviews we have read and writing workshops in which we critique each others’ work or focus in-depth on the promises and challenges of a particular narrative technique. These discussions and workshops constitute the bulk of what we do in class, but I supplement these with what I have come to think of as the unifying thread of the course: the mini-lecture.

At strategic moments throughout the semester, I shift from my dominant teaching mode, which is “guide on the side,” to the more traditional and professorial stance of “sage on the stage.” In these moments, I employ a 10 to 20 minute mini-lecture in which I attempt to provide students with information that synthesizes the course in important ways. For example, I discuss historical knowledge of literary journalism in the American press tradition; tools for ethical thinking and decision-making; and methodologically sophisticated reporting and narrative techniques. Often the mini-lecture is conducted with the help of PowerPoint slides; sometimes I simply “hold forth” on a subject I suggest is important for students to understand and to consider. Almost always a mini-lecture is followed by student discussion of a work of literary journalism that allows us to explore in-depth, and in an applied way, the subject contemplated in the mini-lecture itself.

When we read Stephen Crane and

Richard Harding Davis, for example, I present a mini-lecture on the emergence of American literary journalism in the late nineteenth-century press (John Hartssock’s book *A History of American Literary Journalism* is an excellent resource). Students love learning about the significant differences (and modest similarities) in newspaper content, reporting standards and conventions, notions of the function of the press in society, and writing techniques between then and now. In that same mini-lecture, I discuss briefly the tremendous social pressures and dislocations of the late nineteenth century as well as the changing shape and role of the American literary marketplace within these great social transformations. This mini-lecture provides students with the historical context they need to understand what Crane and Davis were doing in their literary reportage. When we read significant literary journalistic works of the post-Depression years and the New Journalism movement of the 1960s and early ‘70s, I provide additional historical primers. Following our reading of works that demanded the author’s particular attention to ethical concerns regarding reporting methods or narrative techniques (for example, an excerpt from Alex Kotlowitz’s *There Are No Children Here*), I present a list of such ethical issues that often arise in the context of literary journalism and suggestions for “best practices” in dealing with them (see Mark Kramer’s essay “Breakable Rules for Literary Journalists” in the anthology he co-edited with Norman Sims, *Literary Journalism*).

These are simply a few of the mini-lectures I have developed so far in my teaching of literary journalism. I will develop others as my course evolves. The challenge has been, and will be, to use mini-lectures to bridge the gaps between seminar discussions and writing workshops, to provide a unifying, coherent and intellectually engaging context for student reading and writing. ♦

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