

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE IALJS

# LITERARY JOURNALISM

VOL 4 NO 1

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR LITERARY JOURNALISM STUDIES

WINTER 2010

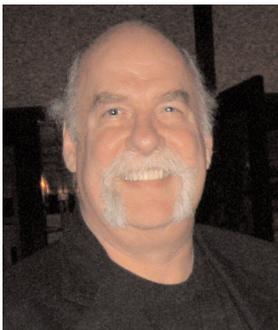
## CELEBRATING A MEMBER MILESTONE

*Coming soon: Our fifth conference and our one-hundredth member.*

*By David Abrahamson, Northwestern (U.S.A.)*

By the time you read this brief essay, our learned society will most likely have reached a milestone. Admittedly, it will just be another marker on the path we first ventured down together more than four years ago. But I do suspect it will be cause for at least a modest

celebration. The item in question? We may have enrolled our one-hundredth paid-in-full member of IALJS. Starting from the dozen or so who answered the conference Call sent out by our dear friend John



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Bak in 2005, our association's growth has been heart-warmingly linear. And when we meet for IALJS-5 at our 2010 annual conference in London at Roehampton University, there will have to be at least one especially rousing toast to our collective good fortune.

Speaking of IALJS-5, our host, Roehampton's Susan Greenberg, has already started to make arrangements and, with the assistance of Maria Lassila-Merisalo of the University of Jyväskylä, this will certainly be our best annual meeting yet. For a little information on Roehampton University's unique history

please see Page 7 inside. And if anyone needs to be enticed into enjoying some of the sights of London, Page 2 inside awaits you. The title theme of IALJS-5 is "Literary Journalism: Perspectives and Prospects," and the meeting's complete Call for Papers can be found on Page 3.

As in the past, the conference follows a Thursday-Friday-Saturday-till-noon schedule and will run from 20 to 22 May 2010. Isabel Soares, the chair of our Research Committee, and Norm Sims, our Program chair, report that research papers, abstracts for works-in-progress sessions, and panel proposals have already begun to be submitted. The final submission deadline is 31

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Please mark your calendar.  
The deadline  
for submission for the  
conference  
is 31 January 2010

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January 2010, so please do not delay. We look forward to seeing you in May.

One last item of business is the Volume One, Number Two issue of *Literary Journalism Studies*. Under editor John Hartssock's steady eye and with Ryerson University's Bill Reynolds serving in a new role as executive editor, the copy of the Fall 2009 issue of journal that is included in your annual dues is on its way to you. We hope it meets with both your interest and approval.

In closing, please permit me to once again suggest that I would warmly welcome any suggestions or ideas you might have to ensure IALJS's continued success. ♦

## TREASURER'S YEAR-END REPORT

As of 1 December 2009, Treasurer Bill Reynolds reports that the total balance in our treasury is \$14,506.12, and the association currently has 99 paid-in-full members. **Please note: For all members, the 2010 IALJS membership fees are due 1 January 2010.** Please see "Payments" at <[www.ialjs.org](http://www.ialjs.org)>.

## CONFIRMED SITES FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCES

The following future IALJS convention venues have been confirmed.

**IALJS-5:** Roehampton University, London, U.K., 20-22 May 2010.

**IALJS-6:** Université Libre de Bruxelles, Brussels, Belgium, 12-14 May 2011.

**IALJS-7:** Ryerson University, Toronto, Canada, 17-19 May 2012.

**IALJS-8:** University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida, U.S.A., 9-11 May 2013.

**IALJS-9:** University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä, Finland, 15-17 May 2014.

**IALJS-10:** Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia, 7-9 May 2015.

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[WWW.IALJS.ORG](http://WWW.IALJS.ORG)

## 2010 ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM'S CAPITAL

*The many unique attractions of London Towne.*

By Rachel Koontz, Northwestern University (U.S.A.)

### CITY SIGHTS

Throughout its history, tourist perception of London has had its shifts: from a

rainy Roman town founded on history and monarchy to a thriving metropolis and financial center of Europe. It's an expensive city, an exciting city, a crowded city in which you'll hear several languages walking down the street—ten if you've just arrived in Heathrow Airport. Re-branding of the city under the Blair administration as part of the "Cool Britannia" movement of the 1990s has increased the pop cultural appeal of



London, though many visitors still enjoy a visit to the well-known sites and historical spots. You can't come home without the photos where

you rode the Underground, posed next to the silent and stoic guards at Buckingham Palace or stuffed your friends into a red telephone box, right?

But perhaps in addition to making the rounds at well-known sites like the Tate Modern museum of art, the River Thames, the London Eye wheel, with its spectacular view above the city, or Westminster Abbey in its Gothic glory,

TWO OF THE CITY'S SIGNATURE SIGHTS SPORT A STRIKING RED: THE BUCKINGHAM GUARDS (ABOVE) AND THE DOUBLE-DECKED BUSES.

Literary Journalism  
WINTER 2010 Vol 4 No 1  
Editors: Bill Reynolds and David Abrahamson  
ISSN 1941-1030 (print)  
ISSN 1941-1049 (online)  
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you might hunger for the London you haven't heard about from all your friends who have visited before. Where's the "other" London, the city beyond *Frommer's* or *Fodor's* perspective?

In addition to the bustle and the necessary afternoon tea, you might consider checking out a Roman road at St. Bridges Church, a historic and quiet site; a stroll through Hampstead Heath, one of the city's most well-preserved parks; or a hike up The Monument, especially if you enjoy a view cheaper and less crowded than the Eye. The southwest village of Richmond offers a leisurely chance to stroll riverside and wander through shops and cafés. And for the early risers and food enthusiasts, a trip to the Smithfields Meat Market, where tradesmen have been buying and selling cuts for over 800 years, might be the perfect escape from "typical" London.

Today's London holds a vast cultural landscape ready to be explored, with everything from traditional attractions such as the Tower of London and Big Ben to hole-in-the-wall pubs and music venues underground. As Oscar Wilde put it, "The man who can dominate a London dinner table can dominate the world." Samuel Johnson said of the city: "By seeing London, I have seen as much of life as the world can show." Perhaps that is the



THE WORLD FAMOUS TOWER BRIDGE OF LONDON STRIKES A DRAMATIC POSE AT EVENING'S LAST LIGHT, PERFECT FOR A VISITOR'S CAMERA.

most attractive aspect of a major European capital city like London: here, there is most certainly a little bit of something for everyone. ♦

#### IALJS- 5 CONFERENCE SCHEDULE SUMMARY

##### Wednesday, 19 May 2010

Session 0 16.00 – 18.00 Executive Committee Meeting

##### Thursday, 20 May 2009

Sign in 8.00 – 9.00 Pick up conference materials  
Session 1 9.00 – 9.15 Welcome and Introduction  
Session 2 9.15 – 10.15 Work-in-Progress Session I  
Session 3 10.30 – 11.30 Research Paper Session I  
Session 4 11.45 – 12.30 Keynote Speech  
Lunch 12.30 – 13.45  
Session 5 13.45 – 14.00 Status Report: *Literary Journalism Studies*  
Session 6 14.15 – 15.15 Work-in-Progress Session II  
Session 7 15.30 – 16.30 Panel I  
Session 8 16.45 – 17.45 Work-in-Progress Session III  
Session 9 18.00 – 19.00 *Literary Journal Studies* Staff Meeting

##### Friday, 21 May 2009

Breakfast 7.30 – 8.30 Scholars' Breakfast (per reservation)  
Session 10 9.00 – 10.00 Panel II  
Session 11 10.15 – 11.15 Work-in-Progress Session IV  
Session 11 11.30 – 12.30 Research Paper Session II  
Lunch 12.30 – 14.15  
Session 13 14.15 – 15.15 Work-in-Progress Session V  
Session 14 15.30 – 16.30 President's Address & Annual Business Mtg  
Reception 16.45 – 18.00 Conference Reception  
Dinner 19.00 – 21.00 Conference Banquet (per reservation)

##### Saturday, 22 May 2009

Session 15 9.00 – 10.00 Panel III  
Session 16 10.15 – 11.15 Work-in-Progress Session VI  
Session 17 11.30 – 12.30 Closing Convocation  
Lunch 12.30 – 13.30  
Tour 13.30 – 18.15 London Tour

## **CALL FOR PAPERS**

**International Association for Literary Journalism Studies**

**“Literary Journalism: Perspectives and Prospects”  
The Fifth International Conference for Literary Journalism Studies (IALJS-5)**

**Roehampton University  
School of Arts  
Centre for Research in Creative and Professional Writing (ReWrite)  
London, U.K.**

**20-22 May 2010**



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 20-22 May 2010. The conference will be held at the School of Arts at Roehampton University in London, U.K.

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: Perspectives and Prospects." 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 an 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 variety of scholarly approaches.

Details of the programs of previous annual meetings can be found at:  
[http://www.ialjs.org/?page\\_id=33](http://www.ialjs.org/?page_id=33)

### **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 Work-in-Progress Presentations (Abstracts)**

Submitted abstracts for Work-in-Progress Sessions should not exceed 250 words. If accepted, each presenter at a conference 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 should be approximately 250 words in length;
- (c) Panels are encouraged on any topic related to the study, teaching or practice of literary journalism;

*Continued on next page*

**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. Isabel Soares  
Universidade Técnica de Lisboa (Portugal)  
2010 Conference Research Chair, International Association for Literary Journalism Studies  
E-mail: <isoares@iscsp.utl.pt>

**Please submit proposals for panels to:**

Prof. Norman Sims  
University of Massachusetts, Amherst (U.S.A.)  
2010 Conference Program Chair, International Association for Literary Journalism Studies  
E-mail: <sims@journ.umass.edu>

**Deadline for all submissions:** No later than 31 January 2010

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

Prof. David Abrahamson  
Northwestern University (U.S.A.)  
President, International Association for Literary Journalism Studies  
E-mail: <d-abrahamson@northwestern.edu>

Prof. Alice Trindade  
Universidade Técnica de Lisboa (Portugal)  
Vice President, International Association for Literary Journalism Studies  
E-mail: <atrindade@iscsp.utl.pt>

Prof. John Bak  
I.D.E.A., Nancy-Université (France)  
Past President, International Association for Literary Journalism Studies  
E-mail: <john.bak@univ-nancy2.fr>

**2010 IALJS CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM**  
**20-22 May 2010**  
**Roehampton University, School of Arts, London, U.K.**

<b>1.a. PRE-REGISTRATION FEES (MUST BE POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE 31 MARCH 2010)</b>	Please indicate the applicable amounts:
Current IALJS Member – <b>\$120 / 80 Euros</b> <i>(rate for those already having paid their 2010 dues)</i>	
Current IALJS Member retired – <b>\$100 / 65 E</b> <i>(rate for those already having paid their 2010 dues)</i>	
Student with research paper on program – <b>\$30 / 20 E</b> <i>(Includes a one-year IALJS membership)</i>	
Student without paper on program – <b>\$60 / 40 E</b> <i>(Includes a one-year IALJS membership)</i>	
Non-IALJS member – <b>\$170 / 110 E</b> <i>(Includes a one-year IALJS membership)</i>	
Spouse/Partner – <b>\$50 / 35 E</b> <i>(This fee is required only if a spouse will be attending scheduled research sessions and/or panels)</i>	
<b>1.b. REGISTRATION FEES POSTMARKED AFTER 31 MARCH 2010</b> <i>(Note: Meals &amp; special events may not be available to those who register after 31 March 2010)</i>	
Current IALJS Member – <b>\$155 / 105 Euros</b> <i>(rate for those already having paid their 2010 dues)</i>	
Current IALJS Member retired – <b>\$135 / 90 E</b> <i>(rate for those already having paid their 2010 dues)</i>	
Student with research paper on program – <b>\$65 / 45 E</b> <i>(Includes a one-year IALJS membership)</i>	
Student without paper on program – <b>\$95 / 65 E</b> <i>(Includes a one-year IALJS membership)</i>	
Non-IALJS member – <b>\$205 / 135 E</b> <i>(Includes a one-year IALJS membership)</i>	
Spouse/Partner – <b>\$85 / 55 E</b> <i>(This fee is required only if a spouse will be attending scheduled research sessions and/or panels)</i>	
<b>1.c. ON-SITE REGISTRATION – \$180 / 120 Euros for IALJS members, \$230 / 155 E for non-members</b> <i>(Note: Meals &amp; special events may not be available to those who register on site)</i>	
<b>2. SPECIAL EVENTS:</b> <i>Please indicate the number of meals required next to each item below</i>	
<b>Number of meals needed:</b>	<i>Regular</i>
<i>Vegetarian</i>	
Scholars Breakfast* (Friday)	Number attending x \$15 / 10 Euros
*NOTE: The Scholars Breakfast is a pleasant collegial IALJS tradition at which graduate students present their work and career goals to the association's faculty members.	
Conference Banquet (Friday): <i>This year's somewhat less-formal conference banquet will not require prior registration. Payment will be due at conclusion of meal.</i>	
Make registration checks payable to "IALJS" <span style="float: right;"><b>TOTAL ENCLOSED:</b></span>	
Please return completed form with a check or bank transfer payable to "IALJS" to >>>	<b>BILL REYNOLDS,</b> IALJS Treasurer School of Journalism Ryerson University 350 Victoria St., Toronto, Ontario M5B 2K3 CANADA Tel: +01-416-979-5000 x6294 Fax: +01-416-979-5216 reynolds@ryerson.ca
To register on-line via PayPal, please see "Payments" at <b>WWW.IALJS.ORG</b>	<b>A selection of hotels listed by Roehampton University include:</b> Best Western Lodge Hotel - <a href="http://www.thelodgehotellondon.com">http://www.thelodgehotellondon.com</a> Holiday Inn Express/London Hammersmith - <a href="http://www.ichotelsgroup.com/h/d/ex/hotel/lonhs">http://www.ichotelsgroup.com/h/d/ex/hotel/lonhs</a> Holiday Inn Express/Wandsworth - <a href="http://www.ichotelsgroup.com/h/d/ex/1/en/hotel/lonwd">http://www.ichotelsgroup.com/h/d/ex/1/en/hotel/lonwd</a> Hotel Lily - <a href="http://www.hotellily.co.uk/">http://www.hotellily.co.uk/</a> London Penn Club - <a href="http://www.pennclub.co.uk/">http://www.pennclub.co.uk/</a> Novotel London West - <a href="http://www.novotellondonwest.co.uk/">http://www.novotellondonwest.co.uk/</a> Travel Inn/Putney Bridge - <a href="http://www.premierinn.com/pti/hotellinformation.do?hotellid=23883">http://www.premierinn.com/pti/hotellinformation.do?hotellid=23883</a>  London Tourist Board - <a href="http://www.visitlondon.com/">http://www.visitlondon.com/</a> B&Bs in SW London - <a href="http://www.barnesbedandbreakfast.co.uk/">http://www.barnesbedandbreakfast.co.uk/</a>
<b>3. REGISTRATION INFO</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Address/Department</b>	
<b>School/University</b>	
<b>City, State, Zip, Country</b>	
<b>Phone</b>	
<b>E-mail Address</b>	
<b>Name of Spouse (if attending)</b>	

## OUR HOST FOR IALJS-5

### *A brief history of Roehampton University.*

By Amanda NeMoyer, Northwestern University (U.S.A.)

WELCOME  
TO  
ROEHAMPTON

The story behind Roehampton, London's only campus university, is far from ordinary.

In 1975 four teaching colleges came together to create Roehampton Institute, a school affiliated with the University of London. Eventually the institute became part of the Federal University of Surrey, changing its name to the University of Surrey Roehampton. The Roehampton campus was very independent from the original Surrey in Guildford, so it was not long before administrators applied for an individual title for the school. Finally, in 2004, Roehampton University was reborn.

The fact that Roehampton has its roots in teacher training has not been lost to time, as the School of Education is internationally known for its Teacher Education and Early Childhood Studies programs. But with the addition of years to the life of Roehampton's modern form, so too has there been the addition of numerous other courses of study. Now there are the School of Arts, the School of Business and Social Sciences, and the School of Human and Life Sciences—providing students with a multitude of fields, helping the school's approximately 6,700 undergraduate students make informed



decisions about their futures, and its 1,800 postgraduate students move closer to reaching that future.

Though defined as a campus university, one in which academic buildings, student residences and research facilities are all located together, Roehampton's campus is spread across 54 acres of southwest London. The four original campuses that came together in 1975 still exist, three clustered together, with Whitelands College just a ten-minute walk away. The sprawling campus includes buildings from the Georgian period as well as much newer, state-of-the-art academic and athletic facilities. In addition to the quality buildings already on campus, Roehampton is in the midst of a multi-million pound redevelopment, in which a new library and a new fitness center will be constructed.

The strategic plan of Roehampton University states its mission with commendable clarity: "challenging, inspiring and supporting students to grow as individuals and to be responsible citizens and leaders in a complex world." Though the school in its current form is technically still in what might be called its infancy, the developments that have been made since its initial creation are setting the stage for Roehampton to realize its vision in the very near future. ♦

A number of our colleagues in the discipline have particular favorites in the broad canon of literary journalism

### READING LIST

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.

- Jon Marshall (Northwestern University, U.S.A.) suggests **John Hersey's *Hiroshima***, which retains its raw strength more than 50 years after it was first published. He also recommends **Lane DeGregory's *The Girl in the Window*** from *The St.*

*Petersburg Times* (31 July 2008), which uses lean sentences to craft powerful images.

- Mitch McKenney (Kent State, U.S.A.) is attracted to quick-hit daily literary journalism such as "**A Working Man's Diploma**" by **Tom Hallman** of *The Oregonian* (29 September 2000) and "**Baby's Birth Broke the Speed Limit**" by **Roy Wenzl** of *The Wichita Eagle* (2 July 2004): "Two examples where a reporter used dialogue and detail to turn a routine news assignment (a college graduation and a woman giving birth in an SUV) into something memorable."

- Michele Weldon (Northwestern, U.S.A.) recommends **Joan Didion's *Slouching Towards Bethlehem*** (1968), "a collection of polished essays precisely conveying a sense of place; her writing about California as a culture is spare and expansive. Almost half a century later, **Alex Kotlowitz** performed similar magic in his descriptions of Chicago neighborhoods in *Never a City So Real* (2004), capturing perfectly the cadences, quirks and personality of a complicated city." She also suggests **Helle Lee's *In the Absence of Sun*** (2002), "an emotional and exquisitely rich guide on her journey to reunite her North Korean family," and **Norman Mailer's *Of a Fire on the Moon*** (1970), "which surely must have inspired the rock star of literary journalists, **Tom Wolfe**, in his writing of *The Right Stuff* (1979); Mailer's account of early astronauts on Apollo 11 has some of the most gently fiery phrasing I have ever read."



## ONE-DAY SEMINAR SET FOR MAY IN PARIS

A “JE” (or *journée d'étude*) entitled “Begging Description: Literary Journalism, Othering and the Order of Things” is scheduled for 7 May 2010 at Université Paris-Est in France.

The premise of the seminar is that, as a form evolved from a variety of authors and writing styles, literary journalism is an undervalued and under-theorized genre in which some of the most important nineteenth- and twentieth-century American fiction writers were immersed. Oddly, scholars have largely overlooked the complexity of literary journalism as a means of social, cultural and psychological representations that run throughout U.S. literature. As critic Kate Campbell has recently noted, “While ‘the media’ and undaunted popular imaginations... tend to bring journalism and literature together, literary studies have mostly kept them apart.” Given this continuing historical and critical neglect, this seminar will emphasize how journalistically infused texts (e.g., by such widely diverse authors as Frederick Douglass, Walt Whitman, John Dos Passos, Dorothy Day, Agnes Smedley, Richard Wright, James Agee, Tillie Olsen, Gloria Anzaldúa, Jane Kramer, Barbara Ehrenreich and others) have impacted the practice of literary representation. While suggesting possibilities for a critical idiom derived from such representations, the seminar hopes to explore how the very forces that seem to remove literary journalism from the realm of viable literary criticism actually bring into being a materially concerned, polemical mode of discourse with rich potential for literary study and cultural theory. For more information, e-mail Prof. William Dow at <william.dow@wanadoo.fr>.

## ARTS & SOCIETY CONFERENCE IN SYDNEY

The Fifth International Conference on the Arts in Society will be held on 22-25 July 2010 at the University of Sydney, Australia. The meeting will coincide with the Sydney Biennale. Created in 1973 as an international showcase for contemporary art, the Biennale’s aim is to develop and present a program that challenged traditional thinking and encouraged innovative, creative expression. The conference will also include numerous papers, workshops and colloquia. For more information, see <<http://www.arts-conference.com>> or e-mail <[colin.rhodes@arts-conference.com](mailto:colin.rhodes@arts-conference.com)>.

## LITERARY JOURNALISM IN THE NETHERLANDS

*The death of a Dutch columnist—and the public reaction to it—suggests the power of the written word.*

By Marcel Broersma, University of Groningen (The Netherlands)

A week of public mourning started in the Netherlands after the death of novelist and newspaper columnist Martin Bril, who died last April of cancer. Talk shows on national television were devoted entirely to Bril’s remembrance. Friends, fellow journalists and



AROUND THE  
WORLD

novelists honored him as a talented *litterateur*. And more than 11,000 readers left condolences on the website of *de Volkskrant*, the broadsheet in which Bril wrote a daily column. This huge public response to the death of a journalist is, of course, quite

remarkable, no matter what the country.

Although Bril had been ill for a long time and wrote a lot about his illness, people were shocked when he passed away. Reading the newspaper is a daily ritual, and for many readers the start of that ritual was to turn to Bril’s column. Reading the readers’ messages on the newspaper’s website suggests what he had meant to their lives. Most of them chose to praise his uncanny ability to get them to see the world in a different light. Little things that seemed unimportant and meaningless became suddenly significant when described in Bril’s concise and plain style.

Bril was an unusually gifted observer. He carefully followed the daily news agenda. He attended important trials and other news events. But he also visited places where one could gain a clear understanding of social trends like immigration, secularization or crime. And he loved to go to places where nothing ever happened—those typical Dutch villages

in which the clock of modernization seemed to stand still. He did not give his readers personal opinion or profound analysis, but told them just what he saw and heard. As he once said: “I love superficiality, as in: no profundity. On the surface happens much more than people think. That is because they don’t watch properly.”

Martin Bril was a clear exponent of literary journalism “the Dutch way.” At the start of the twentieth century a specific genre developed at the boundary between the journalistic and the literary fields. Inspired by the French *causerie*—literally, a chat—journalists who wrote novels as well or novelists who also practiced journalism had their own daily sections

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What connected  
their pieces was a superb  
style, a dash of  
irony and a highly personal  
authorial approach

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which they filled with various genres and subjects. Rie Brusse (1873-1941) wrote as easily about a visit the Dutch queen paid to a village destroyed by a tornado as he did about his own thoughts during a train trip. Simon Carmiggelt (1913-1987) was a master storyteller who wrote on a daily basis about the comedies and tragedies he overheard while drinking in bars. And Ischa Meijer (1943-1995) created an alter-ego—the fat man—and wrote about his personal affairs.

The one day these workers on the boundary between journalism and literature expressed an opinion, the next they would do an interview and the third day they would capture some personal observations. What connected their pieces

*Continued on next page*

**NETHERLANDS** *Continued from previous page*

was a superb style, a dash of irony and a highly personal authorial approach. They did not feel constrained to follow the journalistic routines and conventions that were supposed to guarantee an objective representation of social reality, but rather they searched for a more personal and “deeper” truth.

Dutch newspapers nowadays are packed with columns. Each newspaper wants its own daily chronicler, and many *literati* write weekly columns. Rarer are novelists who are hired as reporters on special assignments. In the 1960s, for example,

well-known novelists such as Cees Nooteboom and Harry Mulisch (both nominated for the Nobel prize year after year, though they never get it) reported on the Paris student protests of 1968 and the Eichmann trial in 1961, respectively. This year Max Pam follows in the footsteps of Mulisch by reporting the Demjanjuk trial in Israel. And quality newspaper *NRC Handelsblad* has hired Arnon Grunberg to write about both the war in Iraq and life in suburbia. The aim of both these writers and the media that hire them is to provide their readers with a different and “better”

representation of social reality than that available through ordinary journalism. And so it is perhaps a paradox that, by the use of literary techniques, journalism seems to be able to present a rendering of reality that it can not achieve through conventional journalistic forms.

Hence, the large and touching reaction to Martin Bril’s death by normally “silent” readers seems to underscore the point. Their deep sense of loss seems to confirm that, at its best, literary journalism offers us a clearer insight into all those things that truly matter. ♦

**CREATIVE NONFICTION CONFERENCE IN MARCH**

The College English Association will sponsor a conference, “Creative Nonfiction: Voices” at its annual meeting in San Antonio, Texas, U.S.A. on 25-27 March 2010. The conference theme is voices in nonfiction writing, and literary journalism will be one focus of the meeting, which the CEA defines thusly: “A blend of journalism and personal slant, literary journalism does not purport to tell the objective truth, but accepts that how one shapes a well-researched story is influenced by personal sensibility. Two early examples from the 1960s are Joan Didion’s “Marrying Absurd” on the marriage industry in Las Vegas the night before one could lower his draft status, and Tom Wolfe’s “There Goes (Varoom! Varoom!) That Kandy-Kolored (Thphhhhhh!) Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby (Rahghhh!)” on hot-rod culture in California. More recently, literary journalism has represented other countercultures. Michael Pollan’s *An Omnivore’s Dilemma*, for example, in which the author researches the United States’ industrial food system and presents an alternative.” For more information, contact CEA executive director Charles Ernst at <cernst@hilbert.edu>.

**SOCIAL SCIENCES MEETING IN HONOLULU**

The 9th Annual Hawaii International Conference on the Social Sciences will be held 2-5 June 2010 at the Hilton Waikiki Prince Kuhio Hotel in Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S.A. Sponsored by the University of Louisville’s Center for Sustainable Urban Neighborhoods, the conference will provide many opportunities for academics and professionals from the social sciences and related fields to interact with members inside and outside their own particular disciplines. The submission deadline for papers or proposals is 22 January 2010, and cross-disciplinary submissions with other fields are welcome. Examples of other disciplines include Anthropology, Area Studies, Communication, Economics, Education, History, International Relations, Journalism, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Women’s Studies and other areas of Social Science. For submission guidelines or additional information, please see <<http://www.hicsocial.org>> or e-mail <[social@hicsocial.org](mailto:social@hicsocial.org)>.



## ORWELL AND THE SPOOKS

*The author of Nineteen Eighty-Four may have known his subject very, very well.*

By Richard Lance Keeble, University of Lincoln (U.K.)

As Fleet Street celebrates the 60th anniversary of the publication of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*—with its extraordinary depiction of a Big Brother, “surveillance society”—it is interesting to consider Orwell’s murky relationship with the spooks. Just



GUEST  
ESSAY

before Christmas 1936 Orwell set off to fight for the Republican side in the Spanish Civil War. By that time, he had published *Down and Out in Paris and London*, *Burmese Days*, *Keep the Aspidochelone* and the *Road to Wigan Pier*—but he was still a relatively minor novelist, journalist and essayist, with a growing reputation in leftist circles. Yet in Spain he was closely watched, not only by a Communist secret agent but by a double agent working for both the British secret service, MI5 and the Nazi Vichy regime. Why? Orwell’s biographer Gordon Bowker relates how communist David Crook was given a crash course in surveillance techniques by Ramon Mercader

(who later ingratiated himself with Leon Trotsky in Mexico before killing him with an ice pick) and then used his job as war reporter for the *News Chronicle* to spy on Orwell and his Independent Labour Party comrades in the Trotskyist militia, POUM.

Crook took his orders from the Soviet espionage agency, then known as the NKVD and later renamed the KGB, according to Bowker. He insinuated himself into the ILP office in Barcelona and soon had the freedom of the office. During lunch breaks, he would steal files and have them photographed in the Russian embassy. Details of his activities are held in the KGB archives, although Orwell’s KGB file is still under wraps. Among his reports was an observation that he was ‘95 per cent certain’ that Eileen Blair, who married Orwell in 1936, was having an affair with George Kopp, another ILP member. Crook had been instructed by the Soviets to seek out the existence of affairs, as such information could enable the communists to black-mail vulnerable targets.

Crook’s reports on Orwell were normally passed on to Hugh O’Donnell, who was working directly for Moscow and whose codename was, incredibly, O’Brien. As Bowker comments: “It seems unlikely that Orwell ever knew that Crook was spying on him, or that his contact worked under that name, but the fact that the character in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* who first wins the confidence of Winston Smith and then betrays him, is given the name O’Brien must be one of the strangest coincidences in literature.”

### ORWELL’S CLOSEST COMRADE A DOUBLE AGENT

Adding to the mysteries are the recent revelations that George

Kopp, previously thought to be Orwell’s closest comrade on the Spanish frontlines, was in fact spying on him. Kopp actually helped save Orwell’s life after he was shot in the neck by a sniper in May 1937. And Kopp himself is generally reported to have been later captured by the Communists and tortured, supposedly on trumped-up charges. Winston Smith’s torture by rats in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is said to have been based on Kopp’s prison experiences in Spain. And yet papers discovered by a Belgium researcher suggest that Kopp was working for both the Vichy Deuxième Bureau (secret service) and MI5 in a case being run by Anthony Blunt. Just to complicate matters still further, Blunt himself was acting as a Soviet spy. Perhaps all this explains why Kopp survived his torture while so many of Orwell’s other POUM comrades were executed by either Franco’s fascists or by soldiers of the pro-Moscow Communist Party.

From the outbreak of the Second World War until 1942, Orwell’s wife, Eileen O’Shaughnessy, worked in the Censorship Department in Whitehall. Most biographers of Orwell mention this *en passant*, suggesting that she mainly took on the job so that she could be near her sister-in-law, Gwen, in Greenwich. But is it not a rather strange job (which included drawing information from letters and storing it in files) for the wife of a man so committed to freedom of

expression? Clearly she would have gone through security clearance to secure the job—just as Orwell did for his post in the Eastern Service of the BBC. As Bowker comments: “He was duly appointed ‘subject to the approval of ‘The College,’ the powerful BBC committee overseen by the secret service.”

### WAS ORWELL’S 1945 REPORTING ASSIGNMENT THE COVER FOR AN INTELLIGENCE MISSION?

Perhaps most interesting is Orwell’s assignment to the continent probably on an intelligence mission—though under the cover as a reporter for the *Observer* and *Manchester Evening News*—during the dying days of the Second World War in 1945. Its origins lie in the extraordinary relationship that Orwell developed with the millionaire *Observer* journalist, David Astor, whose father owned the newspaper and who was to be its celebrated editor from 1948 to 1975. Astor served during the early war years with the covert Special Operation Executive (SOE) and thereafter maintained close links with intelligence. In 1943, Orwell had been denied clearance to travel as a war correspondent to Africa. Now he was given the all-clear, though his health was far worse. Orwell’s biographer Bernard Crick comments: “He was

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been denied clearance to  
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given the all-clear

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*Continued on next page*

ORWELL *Continued from previous page*

dressed in the officer's uniform of a war correspondent, carried his typewriter and a single large suitcase. This time the requirement of an army medical seems to have been overlooked or waived."

Stephen Dorril, in his exhaustive history of MI6, reports that in 1944 Astor was transferred to a unit liaising between SOE and the resistance in France, helping the French underground in London spread the word to groups throughout Europe. While in Paris, perhaps inspired by Astor, Orwell attended the first conference of the Committee for European Federation, bringing together resistance groups from around Europe. The French novelist and editor of *Combat*, Albert Camus, was amongst those present. Astor, later in an interview with the author in December 1999, just before he died, was adamant that Orwell had no intelligence links and Peter Davison, editor of Orwell's twenty-volume collected works, commented: "I doubt if Orwell would be involved with intelligence—but that by no means says he wasn't."

Intriguingly, most of the men Orwell met in Paris were linked in some way with the intelligence services. One of them was Malcolm Muggeridge, who introduced him to the novelist P.G. Wodehouse. Muggeridge had been assigned to keep watch on Wodehouse, who was suspected of having Nazi sympathies following his broadcast during the summer of 1941 from Berlin for the American network, CBS. Orwell had written an article in defence of Wodehouse in February 1945 just before leaving for France (though it was not published until July 1945 in the *Windmill* magazine) and may have wanted simply to express his admiration for the creator of Jeeves and Bertie Wooster. Muggeridge (1903-1990) began his journalistic career as Moscow correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian* and during the Second World War served in the British Secret Intelligence Services in a variety of postings, including Brussels, Lourenco Marques in Portuguese East Africa and Paris. Later he worked closely with the CIA-funded Congress for Cultural Freedom and *Encounter* magazine. During the late 1940s he was the *Daily Telegraph's* Washington correspondent and became its deputy edi-

tor before a four year stint (1953-1957) as editor of the satirical journal *Punch*.

Orwell also met in Paris the philosopher (and fellow old Etonian) A.J. "Freddie" Ayer, who was in Paris for the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6), which was particularly concerned about the danger of a Communist coup. Another writer Orwell saw was Ernest Hemingway, whom he had previously met in Barcelona during the Spanish Civil War. The American novelist, who was serving as a war correspondent and staying at the Paris Ritz, had close links with members of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS, the forerunner of the CIA) and his son, Jack, was a member of the OSS. Carlos Baker's account of the meet-

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Orwell supplied  
the list of names to his  
friend who was  
working for the secret state's  
propaganda unit

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ing in his biography of Hemingway, based on a letter he wrote to the critic Hervey Breit on 16 April 1952, only adds to the mystery: "Orwell looked nervous and worried. He said he feared that the Communists were out to kill him and asked Hemingway for the loan of a pistol. Ernest lent him the .32 Colt that Paul Willerts had given him in June. Orwell departed like a pale ghost." Most evenings in Paris, Orwell dined with Harold Acton, whom he had known vaguely at Eton and who was working as a press censor for SHAEF (the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force).

Orwell's possible links with the security service (MI5) have been explored in detail by W.J. West. West reports a "retired CIA officer in Washington" asserting that Orwell worked for MI5 and suggests that he could have developed contacts with Maxwell Knight, head of MI5's Department B5(b) counter-subversion unit and a former pupil of Orwell's

prep school, St Cyprian's in Eastbourne. Yet Anthony Masters makes no reference to Orwell in his biography of Knight.

#### ORWELL AND THAT CONTROVERSIAL "LITTLE LIST OF SUBVERSIVES"

Speculation about Orwell's links with the secret services intensified after Michael Sheldon reported in his 1991 biography of Orwell that he had drawn up a "little list" of 36 people, briefly (and somewhat crudely) identifying their politics, religious affiliations, sexual preferences and possible Communist sympathies. Orwell's original list contained 105 names. Intriguingly, the British government still refuses to open up the notebook to public view. The "known" suspects include Labour MPs, the future Poet Laureate Cecil Day-Lewis, authors J. P. Priestley and John Steinbeck, journalist Richard Crossman, actors Michael Redgrave, Charlie Chaplin and Paul Robeson, actor and director Orson Welles, and the historians A. J. P. Taylor and Isaac Deutscher.

Orwell supplied the list to his friend, the sister-in-law of the author Arthur Koestler, Celia Kirwan (*née* Paget) in 1949 when she was working for the secret state's propaganda unit, the Information Research Department (IRD), recently established by the Labour government. However, John Newsinger notes: "It is most unlikely that Orwell realised the real nature of IRD at the time." Kirwan denied that the list ever reached the Foreign Office. Scott Lucas, in his critical Orwell biography, however, is unforgiving: "Far from being a one-off indiscretion, Orwell's list is the culmination of his response to the left from the 1930s onwards. Not only could he not cooperate with many fellow writers and activists, not only did he denigrate them publicly and privately, but he maintained a watch on them as possible subversives."

Whatever one's views on Orwell, does not all this throw a completely new perspective on *Nineteen Eighty-Four*? For here is one of the most famous warnings about the emergence of a ruthless, totalitarian state, dominated by its secret service, written by a man who probably had close links with the spooks. But then Orwell was a very witty man—and a master of irony. ♦

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## THE FIRST STEP, THE NEXT STEP

*Insights from the Poynter Institute's master teacher.*

By Lisa Kernek, Western Illinois University (U.S.A.)

At what point should long-form journalism be taught to beginning journalism students? I ponder this question because in the news-reporting class I teach, my students are learning to write in the inverted pyramid at the same



TEACHING TIPS

time they are reading stories that are not written in the inverted pyramid. I use the anthology, *America's Best Newspaper Writing: A Collection of ASNE Prizewinners*, edited by Roy Peter Clark and Christopher Scanlan. Near the end of the book, Clark and Scanlan write: "Reporters

have always tested the conventions of news writing. This anthology is filled with their work."

Many of the pieces in *America's Best Newspaper Writing* are long narratives that turn the inverted pyramid on its head. I interviewed Clark, one of the co-editors, in October about the timing of teaching the inverted pyramid and other story forms. Clark—who has taught writing for 30 years at the Poynter Institute in St. Petersburg, Florida and who spoke to me by telephone from his office at

Poynter—began by saying that a good writing curriculum should be developmental. "When you take a swimming class, there are certain basic elements that you want to master before you can learn the butterfly," Clark said. "There's a general agreement on the kinds of things that aspiring journalists should learn in a general order. I wouldn't teach investigative reporting before I would teach basic reporting."

But that doesn't mean that teaching basic reporting must be restricted to teaching the inverted pyramid, with its placement of the most important news at the top of the story. "The problem for me comes when the value of that form becomes magnified, so that it crowds out all other forms or other ways of thinking about reporting and writing," he said of the inverted pyramid. "I'm more likely to want to swim if I have an early experience of how much fun it is in the water."

He continued: "I worry that aspiring young journalists may get their first taste of writing and reporting and be unnecessarily discouraged by what they see and experience: It's boring, and it's formulaic." But, according to Clark, assigning great models of writing can have the undesired effect of causing students to think, "I'll never be able to do that." Such "super models" of writing, as he calls them, should be balanced with examples of student work.

"What's very, very important is that critical reading be conducted on two separate levels, the student models and the super models," he said. Reflecting on his own education in English literature, Clark recalled that most of the works he read were "super models," such as T.S. Eliot and Geoffrey Chaucer.

"One failure of that education was that we were never asked to take another step and look diagnostically at how the great writers were creating meaning. You kind of took their greatness for granted. It's not enough to say the structure of that sentence is interesting. It's that you can use this tool to make meaning in your own writing."



ROY PETER CLARK

When reading journalism, he said, "I'm

looking down beneath the surface of the text to see and to make visible to my students the machinery that creates the effects that the reader is feeling: reporting, collecting details, word order. It could be levels of diction that are used."

Beyond serving as a diagnostic tool, models of great writing offer a vision of a level of skill to aspire to later in a career. "It's fair to say that I'll never hit the golf ball the way that Tiger Woods does," Clark said. "But it was watching his astonishing athleticism and skill that allowed me to imagine being out on the course at all—and gave me the momentum to take a couple of lessons to go out and whack the thing around." ♦

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### LITERARY JOURNALISM

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR  
LITERARY JOURNALISM STUDIES  
WINTER 2010 VOL. 4 NO. 1

