

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE IALJS

# LITERARY JOURNALISM

VOL 7 NO 3

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR LITERARY JOURNALISM STUDIES

SUMMER 2013

## IT WAS WONDERFUL TO SEE YOU

*Our annual conference in Finland  
set a standard of excellence.*

By Bill Reynolds,  
Ryerson University (Canada)

One of the pleasant notes I received after IALJS-8, from a first-time conference participant, reminded me of why this association's annual conference is important



### PRESIDENT'S LETTER

and perhaps even essential to so many of us: "Just wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed being a part of the IALJS-8 this year," it read. "It was a terrific experience for me—the panels, discussions, and the people." Yes, the panels, the discussions, the people—that would seem to be the conference's three core nuggets. Or, well, since people make up the panels, and people do the discussing, maybe those three nouns can be boiled down to one: people.

I am not entirely sure why this is so, but the literary journalism conference tends to bring out the most magnanimous of feelings. We tend to open our hearts and minds to other ideas. We tend to try to look at literary journalism from the other's point of view, to try to see what they are seeing, as opposed to remaining inside what we ourselves are seeing the other fifty-one weeks of the year. I suppose this occurs because this is what happens when you put a whole lot of people (but not too many, so we can all still talk to each other) in the same room for a few days, and exactly the point of creating and fostering a worldwide literary journalism organization—to better understand its history, its teaching, its influence on a world scale.

I believe our conference does indeed get better every year. From the quality of the presentations, to the amount of new knowledge being presented, to the excellent discussions

following the presentations, it seems to me that we, as an organization, are learning every year how to speak the language of enquiry, and improve the vocabulary of the language of enquiry, and thus grow literary journalism as a discipline.

I also want to formally acknowledge the excellent preparation and hard work of our colleague Maria Lassila-Merisalo, who as host brought off the proceedings so brilliantly (and calmly). Maria's additional work over the years—building, editing, modifying and updating our conference "bible"—has been invaluable, but the conference at University of Tampere must be considered her finest achievement. Bravo, Maria. And I want to thank Dean Heikki Hellman of the School of Communication, Media and Theatre at University of Tampere for his generous assistance and support of the conference. I want also to thank Robert Boynton, director of the literary reportage program at New York University, for his keynote address, "Notes Toward a Supreme Nonfiction," and generously participating in all aspects of the conference. It was a delight to have the author of *The New New Journalism* on board.

Finally I want to acknowledge the consistently amazing work our IALJS executive committee does all year long, from the Call for Papers to building the conference program, from panels to works-in-progress to research papers, your tireless efforts are much appreciated by everyone. All the best. ♦



## FUTURE IALJS CONFERENCE SITES

**IALJS-9:** American University of Paris, Paris, France, 15-17 May 2014.

**IALJS-10:** University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota, U.S.A., 7-9 May 2015.

**IALJS-11:** Northwestern University Qatar, Doha, Qatar, 19-21 May 2016 (pending).

**IALJS-12:** University of Technology Sydney and Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia, 11-13 May 2017 (pending).

**IALJS-13:** University of Nova Gorica, Slovenia, 17-19 May 2018 (pending).

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT FOR 2013

We are happy to be able to report that our association's membership, as of 31 May 2013, including all IALJS-8 attendees at the Tampere, Finland conference, totals 125 paid-in-full members from 26 countries around the globe.

## INSIDE

- 2 IALJS-8 Annual Conference
- 5 IALJS-9 Call, May 2014 in Paris
- 8 *The Next Wave*
- 9 2013 Annual Business Meeting
- 10 *Global Literary Journalism*
- 11 IALJS/ACLA at University of Toronto
- 13 *LJS* Journal Call for Submissions
- 14 Video-streaming at IALJS-8 Meeting
- 15 Conference Note: *WLA Journal*
- 16 Research Essay: Immersion
- 24 2013 Awards Committee Resolution
- 26 *Literary Journalism Across the Globe*
- 27 2013 IALJS Membership Form
- 28 IALJS Officers and Chairs, 2012-14
- 30 Teaching Tips

WWW.IALJS.ORG

## 2013 IALJS ANNUAL CONVENTION IN FINLAND

*The University of Tampere hosts our eighth international conference.*

*By Isabelle Meuret, Université Libre de Bruxelles (Belgium)*

The eighth edition of our annual conference organized at the University of Tampere from 16-18 May was an immense success. The diversity of topics addressed, and the range of experts gathered on the occasion are evidence that the association is thriving, both qualitatively and quantitatively. It was a great privilege for me to take up the Research Chair position, which Isabel Soares had been so elegantly holding for four productive years. May she be thanked in these lines for her sound advice and precious assistance throughout the preparation of the IALJS-8 annual conference.



IALJS-8  
CONFERENCE

Getting back to Europe, after Canada, meant that the number of submissions slightly decreased, which is essentially attributable to the economic downturn and the constant limitation of travel costs for delegates. Still, we were delighted to keep our concurrent programming, by organizing five parallel sessions, exactly like last year. We received 47 proposals (38 works-in-progress and nine research paper proposals) and accepted 30—as were the additional seven panel proposals which covered a variety of subjects, from war reportage to profiles and sources.

Also, we were enthralled to repeat our Toronto experience by singling out a Host Panel's session, chaired this

*Text continues on Page 4*

---

Literary Journalism  
 Summer 2013 Vol 7 No 3  
 Editors: Bill Reynolds and David Abrahamson  
 ISSN 1941-1030 (print)  
 ISSN 1941-1049 (online)  
 © 2013 The Newsletter of the International Association  
 for Literary Journalism Studies. All rights reserved.

---



ABOVE, THE FOOD AND WINE AT THE THURSDAY RECEPTION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TAMPERE WAS MARVELOUS. IN THE CENTER, FACING THE CAMERA IS JOHN BAK OF THE UNIVERSITÉ DE LORRAINE, THE FOUNDING PRESIDENT OF IALJS. HE IS FLANKED BY RESEARCH CHAIR ISABELLE MEURET OF THE UNIVERSITÉ LIBRE DE BRUXELLES AND PROGRAM CHAIR ROB ALEXANDER OF CANADA'S BROCK UNIVERSITY, BOTH OF WHOM WERE ESSENTIAL TO MAKING IALJS-8 SUCH A SUCCESS.

BELOW, PANELISTS MILES AND ROBERTA MAGUIRE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-OSHKOSH AND NEW YORK UNIVERSITY'S ROB BOYNTON LISTEN TO A QUESTION FROM THE AUDIENCE. THE CONFERENCE VENUE WAS ONE OF THE MORE RECENT BUILDING'S OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TAMPERE CAMPUS..



*Continued on next page*

# THE NEWSLETTER OF THE IALJS

## IALJS-8 CONFERENCE *Continued from previous page*



ABOVE LEFT, THE KEYNOTE SPEECH OF THE CONFERENCE WAS DELIVERED BY ROBERT BOYNTON OF NEW YORK UNIVERSITY. ITS TITLE WAS "NOTES TOWARD A SUPREME NONFICTION: TEACHING LITERARY REPORTAGE IN THE 21ST CENTURY." ABOVE RIGHT, A SMILING PRESIDENT BILL REYNOLDS OF RYERSON UNIVERSITY WELCOMES ALL OF THE IALS-8 ATTENDEES. FAR LEFT, MATEUSZ ZIMNOCH OF POLAND'S JAGIELLONIAN UNIVERSITY AND, NEAR LEFT, BILL CAREY OF ROEHAMPTON UNIVERSITY PRESENTED THEIR RESEARCH IDEAS AT THE FRIDAY BREAKFAST.



ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CONFERENCE FOR MANY WAS THE FRIDAY "BREAKFAST FOR YOUR THOUGHTS," HOSTED BY NORMAN SIMS AND TOBIAS EBERWEIN, LEFT, IT WAS AN INFORMAL OPPORTUNITY FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS SUCH AS SARA PRIETO OF SPAIN'S UNIVERSIDAD DE ALICANTE TO PRESENT THEIR WORK AND TO ASK FOR ADVICE FROM THE MORE THAN ALMOST TWO DOZEN FACULTY SCHOLARS IN ATTENDANCE. THE CONVERSATION WAS LIVELY, INTERESTING AND EXPLICITLY AND WARMLY SUPPORTIVE..

*Continued on next page*

IALJS-8 CONFERENCE *Text continued from Page 2*

time by Maria Lassila-Merisalo: "Generation Textual: Rock & Roll, Pop Music, Literary Journalism and Contemporary Culture," a panel put together by Melissa Nurczynksi, as well as the President's Panel, "Women's Reportage and Public Memory: From the late 19th century to the 1940s," moderated by Leonora Flis. These panels fascinatingly brought together researchers from various backgrounds and traditions. The "international" dimension of IALJS is surely one of its strengths. In Tampere, we also welcomed new participants from Poland and Sweden.

From the diversity of our panels, some interesting directions can be traced. First of all, the question of subjectivity emerged as a staple in research on literary journalism. The opening session was devoted to the question of agency, and the profile panel discussed the interviewer's position and commitment to the story. We were also blessed to attend veteran Roberto Herrscher's personal account of the Falklands war (*The Voyages of the Penelope*, Südpol 2007), which brought a few tears in the audience. We were equally intrigued by David Abrahamson's evocation of the journal, *War, Literature, and the Arts*, which is definitely a platform for literary journalism and firsthand accounts of wars, a topic to which John Bak devoted two panels. War narratives, without any doubt, are instrumental in the development of the discipline.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the subject of race, which underpinned the panel chaired by Roberta Maguire, undoubtedly one of the key moments in our conference. Tackling the issue of adversity in African-American journalism, or the fate of natives in America, the heritage of South Americans and the question of blacks in South Africa, is a unique characteristic of IALJS.

IALJS now has four awards (including cash honoraria) for research in literary journalism studies. The prizes were granted in Tampere: The Greenberg prize went to Antero Pietila and Stacy Spaulding, for best research article; the Best Paper by a Graduate Student prize went to Holly Schreiber; the Best Article in *Literary Journalism Studies* in 2012 was awarded to Orlando Pérez González, and the Best Article in the *Literary Journalism* newsletter was granted to William Dow.

DURING THE 2013 ANNUAL MEETING, AWARDS CHAIR ISABEL SOARES OF THE TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY LISBON PRESENTED ONE OF TWO NEW AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH. SOON AFTER, THE ONE REMAINING ORDER OF BUSINESS WAS FOR PRESIDENT BILL REYNOLDS TO EXPRESS EVERYONE'S THANKS TO MARIA LASSILA-MERISALO FOR HER TERRIFIC JOB AS THE HOST OF IALJS-8.



Congratulations to all of them.

But before bringing this report to a conclusion, I would like to hail our memorable "Breakfast for Your Thoughts" as a particularly successful moment. Graduate students Bill Carey (Roehampton University, U.K.), Gillian Rennie (Rhodes University and Stellenbosch University, South Africa), Mateusz Zimnoch (Jagiellonian University, Poland) and Sara Prieto (Universidad de Alicante, Spain) generously shared their research projects with us.

Last but not least: Robert S. Boynton (New York University, U.S.A.) presented his keynote speech, "Notes Toward a Supreme Nonfiction: Teaching Literary Reportage in the 21st Century." His illuminating talk beautifully echoed and stimulated IALJS's mission of dissemination of literary journalism knowledge across the globe, through our practices as scholars and practitioners.

So we will see you next year in Paris, which promises to be another exceptional conference. ♦

WILLIAM DOW OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF PARIS AND UNIVERSITÉ PARIS EST MARNE-LA-VALLÉE, PRESENTED A FASCINATING PAPER ON "RICHARD WRIGHT'S LITERARY JOURNALISM." BILL AND THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN PARIS WILL BE THE HOST OF NEXT YEAR'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE. PLEASE SEE THE MEETING'S CALL FOR PAPERS ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE.



## **CALL FOR PAPERS**

**International Association for Literary Journalism Studies**

**“Literary Journalism: Local, Regional, National, Global”  
The Ninth International Conference for Literary Journalism Studies (IALJS-9)**

**The American University of Paris  
Department of Comparative Literature and English / Department of Global Communications  
Paris, France**

**15-17 May 2014**



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 2014. The conference will be held at the American University of Paris in Paris, France.

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: Local, Regional, National, Global." 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)

*Continued on next page*

### **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 in MS Word is required.** No other format or faxes or postal mail submissions will be accepted.
- (b) Include one separate 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 using MS Word is required.** No other format or faxes or postal mail submissions will be accepted.
- (b) Include one separate 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 in MS Word is required.** No other format or 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. See [http://www.ialjs.org/?page\\_id=21](http://www.ialjs.org/?page_id=21).

*Continued on next page*

CALL FOR PAPERS *Continued from previous page*

---

#### IV. 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. All submissions will be blind-juried, and submissions from students as well as faculty are encouraged.

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

Prof. Isabel Meuret, Université Libre de Bruxelles (Belgium)  
Research Chair; e-mail: [<imeuret@ulb.ac.be>](mailto:imeuret@ulb.ac.be)

**Please submit proposals for panels to:**

Prof. Rob Alexander, Brock University (Canada)  
Program Co-Chair; e-mail: [<ralexand@brocku.ca>](mailto:ralexand@brocku.ca)

#### **Deadline for all submissions: No later than 1 December 2013**

**For more information regarding the conference or the association, please go to <http://www.ialjs.org> or contact:**

Prof. Bill Reynolds, Ryerson University (Canada)  
IALJS President; e-mail: [<reynolds@ryerson.ca>](mailto:reynolds@ryerson.ca)

Prof. Norman Sims, University of Massachusetts – Amherst (U.S.A.)  
IALJS First Vice President; e-mail: [<sims@honors.umass.edu>](mailto:sims@honors.umass.edu)

Prof. Isabel Soares, Universidade Técnica de Lisboa (Portugal)  
IALJS Second Vice President; e-mail: [<isoares@iscsp.utl.pt>](mailto:isoares@iscsp.utl.pt)

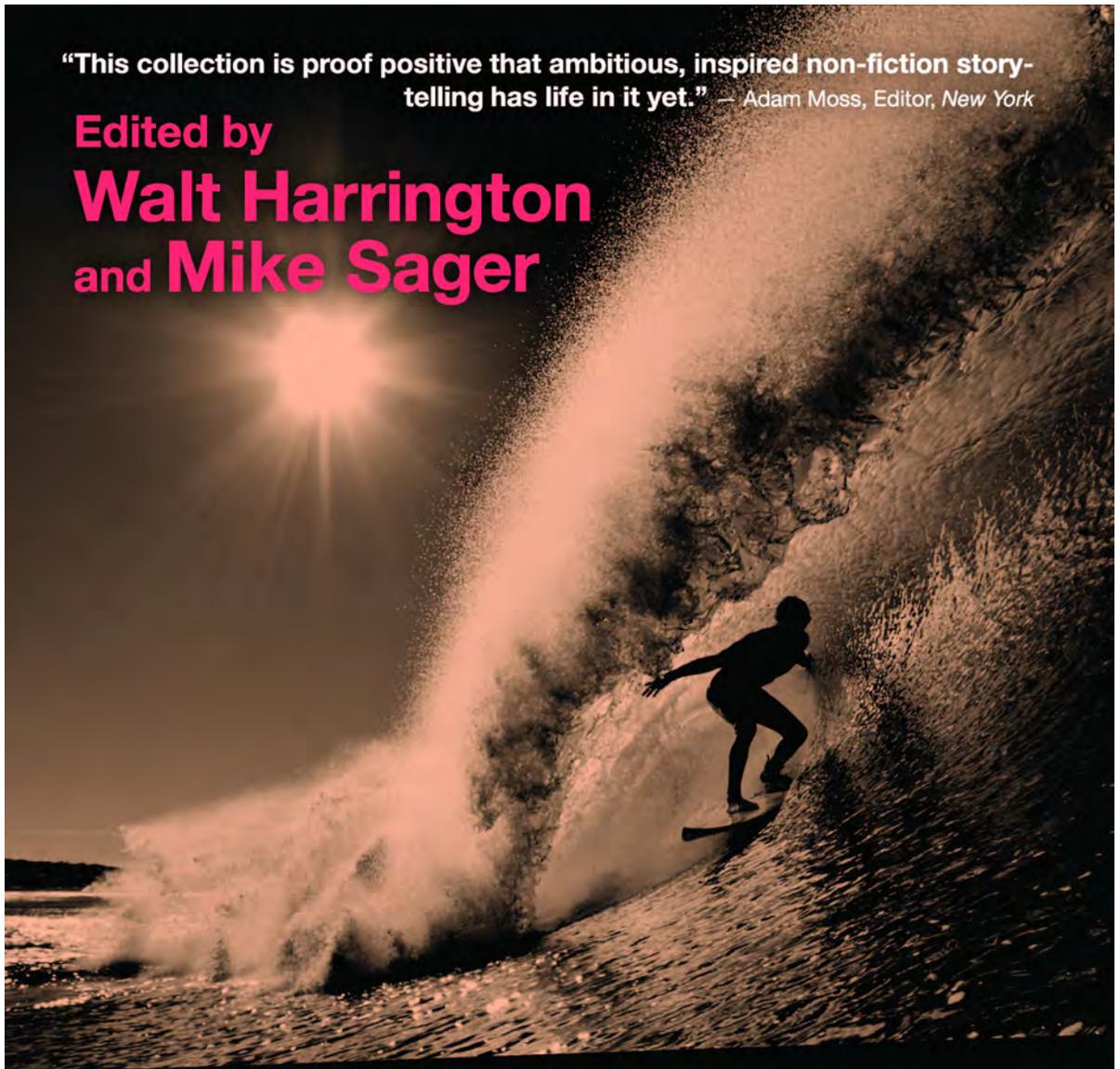
Prof. David Abrahamson, Northwestern University (U.S.A.)  
IALJS Secretary; e-mail: [<d-abrahamson@northwestern.edu>](mailto:d-abrahamson@northwestern.edu)

Prof. Alice Trindade, Universidade Técnica de Lisboa (Portugal)  
IALJS Immediate Past President; e-mail: [<atrindade@iscsp.utl.pt>](mailto:atrindade@iscsp.utl.pt)

Prof. John S. Bak, Nancy-Université (France)  
Founding IALJS President; e-mail: [<john.bak@univ-nancy2.fr>](mailto:john.bak@univ-nancy2.fr)

**"This collection is proof positive that ambitious, inspired non-fiction story-telling has life in it yet."** — Adam Moss, Editor, *New York*

**Edited by  
Walt Harrington  
and Mike Sager**



# Next Wave

**America's New Generation of  
Great Literary Journalists**

**"Some mighty great journalism here. I just wish I had assigned more of it."**  
— Graydon Carter, Editor, *Vanity Fair*

## IALJS ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

*Minutes from meeting held at IALJS-8 in Tampere, Finland on 17 May 2013.*

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

President Bill Reynolds called the 2013 annual business meeting of the International Association for Literary Journalism Studies to order at 4:40 p.m. Secretary-Treasurer David Abrahamson distributed the minutes of the 2012 IALJS annual meeting at Ryerson University in Toronto. It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes, and the motion to approve carried unanimously. Bill then thanked Maria Lassila-Merisalo of the University of Tampere for her extraordinarily successful efforts as the host of IALJS-8. Also in his introductory remarks Bill spoke movingly of our gratitude.

David gave the annual treasurer's report. The current bank balance is \$45,672.55, which includes \$21,012.12 in interest-bearing savings accounts and \$15,105.75 in certificates of deposit; pending accounts payable include the printing and mailing of the journal and expenses for IALJS-8. The association currently has 124 members (down from 133 last year) from 26 countries. Forty-two percent are from the United States, and 58 percent from nations other than the U.S.

Research Chair Isabelle Meuret reported that 30 acceptances from 47 submissions for IALJS-7, an acceptance rate of 63 percent. Isabelle thanked the 2013 jury members for their work, as well as the members of the Greenberg Prize jury, which awarded the 2013 honor to Stacy Spaulding of Towson University and Antero Pietila of the Baltimore Sun. Isabelle also presented Holly Schreiber of Indiana University with the 2013 Prize for the Best Research Paper by a Graduate Student, a new IALJS award. In addition, she noted that the IALJS-9 submission deadline is 1 December 2013. Program Chair Rob Alexander reported that seven panels (from eight proposed) were programmed this year. He also noted that organizing the panels into concurrent sessions, some paired with works-in-progress sessions, seemed to work well. In addition, he suggested that we continue to include at least one panel on pedagogy, and the possibility was raised of programming one panel in French at next

year's conference in Paris.

Awards Chair Isabel Soares explained the work of her committee and thanked its members for their work. She then presented two new IALJS awards: the 2013 Prize for the Best Article in Literary Journalism Studies, the association's journal, to Juan Orlando Perez Gonzalez of the University of Roehampton, and the 2013 Prize for the Best Article in Literary Journalism, the association's newsletter, to Bill Dow of the American University in Paris. She also reported that altogether the four awards, including their honoraria and stipends, will cost the association \$1,000 each year. The new Publicity Chair Lindsay Morton of Avondale College (Australia) spoke about social media possibilities.

Literary Journalism Studies editor John Hartsock reported that the journal's ninth issue (Vol. 5, No. 1) had been mailed prior to the conference and that the journal's acceptance rate is a credible 33 percent. Associate editors Roberta and Miles Maguire reported they are working on a new searching interface for the bibliography and that they have succeeded in having the journal included in the PLoS (formerly ISI) database. In addition, Roberta noted the special Fall 2013 issue (Vol. 5, No. 2) of the journal will focus on African-American literary journalism. Nancy L. Roberts, the LJS book review editor, sent word that she is very open to suggestions for books to review. David reported that, with Bill Reynolds's invaluable assistance as co-editor, the quarterly newsletter, *Literary Journalism*, continues to prosper. Bill reported that our IALJS.ORG, webmaster, Nick Jackson, is doing a superb job.

Graduate Committee Chair Tobias Eberwein reported that the breakfast for graduate student members was a success. Bill Dow reported that, as IALJS-9 Host Committee Chair, he and the American University in Paris are looking forward to welcoming the association to France next year on 15-17 May 2014. It was also reported that Tom Connery has confirmed that the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota will host

IALJS-10 on 7-9 May 2015.

Joint programming was the next item on the agenda. Rob Alexander reported the successful IALJS panel at the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA) meeting at the University of Toronto in late March entitled "Positioning Global Literary Journalism" and mentioned there will be a call soon for an IALJS session at next year's ACLA conference in April 2014 at New York University. It was also reported that there will be an all-day IALJS session in August 2013 at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) convention in Washington, D.C. organized by Josh Roiland; the theme is "Literary Journalism and the Politics of Transparency." John Bak noted that there will be an IALJS session at the biennial conference of the European Society for the Study of English (ESSE) in September 2014 in Kosice, Slovakia; its theme will be "Literary Journalism: Explaining Second Cities to Themselves." This is in keeping with the IALJS policy of alternating participation with ESSE and AEJMC.

Under old business, Publications Chair Alice Trindade reported that starting with the Spring 2014 issue Bill Reynolds will assume the role of editor of LJS. Alice also led a round of applause thanking John Hartsock for his superb service as the founding editor of the journal. There being no new business to be brought before the annual business meeting, Maria Lassila-Merisalo was given one more warm and enthusiastic ovation for her wonderful work in hosting IALJS-8, and at 5:25 p.m., Bill offered a reminder that we hope to see everyone in Paris in May 2014 and then called for a motion of adjournment, which was moved, seconded and unanimously approved. ♦

*Respectfully Submitted,*



*David Abrahamson, Secretary  
International Association for  
Literary Journalism Studies*



# Global Literary Journalism

Exploring  
the Journalistic  
Imagination

EDITED BY  
Richard Lance Keeble  
& John Tulloch

Peter Lang Publishing Broadway, New York, NY 10006  
(800) 770-5264, [customerservice@plang.com](mailto:customerservice@plang.com)  
\$46.95 (paper), ISBN 978-1-4331-1867-8

## IALJS/ACLA AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

*A successful joint session at the American comparative Literature Association annual meeting.*

By Joshua Roiland, Notre Dame University (U.S.A.)

This past April, members of IALJS convened in Toronto for the second time in less than a year to hold sessions devoted to literary journalism. On the heels of last year's successful conference at Ryerson University in May 2012, the IALJS sponsored two sessions at the 2013 American Comparative Literature Association conference held at the University of Toronto. The theme of this year's ACLA conference was "Global Positioning Systems." What initially appeared to be a challenging rubric for paper topics,



IALJS  
OUTREACH

revealed itself to be a wonderful forum for the discussion of global literary journalism.

Eight scholars from four different countries came together for the two-day meeting. The paper topics were as diverse as the panelists' personal geographies. The first day of the conference featured conference organizer Rob Alexander's

(Brock University, Canada) paper "De-Mapping the Journalist/Source Relationship in Literary Journalism" examined Susan Orlean's connection with *The Orchid Thief* protagonist John Laroche through a Lacanian lens. Fellow Canadian, and IALJS President Bill Reynolds (Ryerson University, Canada) discussed Toronto-based magazines in his paper "View from the Centre of the Universe: Is it Necessarily Narrow?" His presentation interrogated the notion that Toronto-based literary journalism is too preoccupied with the centre and does not represent the whole of the country. Miki Tanikawa (Waseda University, Japan) presented a longitudinal analysis entitled "Growing Feature Content in Leading U.S. Papers" which argues that newspapers in the U.S. are increasingly running longform narratives over hard news. The session was rounded out with Ignacio Corona's (Ohio St. University, U.S.A.) paper, "Global Positioning Among the Modernista



Chroniclers" examined the representation of the Orient in the chronicles of modernistas, such as Gómez Carrillo, Tablada, and Rebolledo.

Day Two of the conference saw Pascal Gin (Carleton University, Canada) discuss the selected works of Albert Londres, Blaise Cendrars, Emmanuel Carrère and François Bon via the polysemic figure of positioning, which evokes practices of spatialization, rhetorical stances and a sense of engagement with global transformations in his talk "On Location: (Global) Positioning and the Performance of Presence in Literary Journalism." Mileta Roe's (Bard College at Simon's Rock, U.S.A.) presented her paper "Writing What They Know" which examined the phenomenon of *expert journalism*, especially in science writing. She examined the medical school diaries and *New Yorker* articles of surgeon Atul Gawande. Priscila Gimenez

*Continued on next page*



FOUNDED IN 1827, THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO IS CANADA'S PREMIER RESEARCH UNIVERSITY. ABOVE, A CEREMONIAL GATE LEADS TO A PLEASANT TREE-LINED DRIVE, WITH 19TH-CENTURY STREET LIGHTS LENDING A DISTINCTLY EUROPEAN FEEL. THE UNIVERSITY HAS MORE THAN 65,000 UNDERGRADUATES AND 15,000 GRAD STUDENTS. LEFT, WITH ITS PROMINENT TURRETS AND TOWERS, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE IS PROUD OF THE FACT THAT IT IS THE "FOUNDING COLLEGE" OF THE UNIVERSITY.

IALJS/ACLA *Continued from previous page*



(Universidade do Estado de São Paulo, Brazil) explored the cultural exchange between the Brazilian and French presses in the 19th century history and the social contexts that contributed to creation of a weekly serial *Semana Lirica* in the Brazilian newspaper *Jornal do Commercio* in her paper “The Cultural Transfer Between France and Brazil in the Rubric of the Theater Serials.” And Josh Roiland

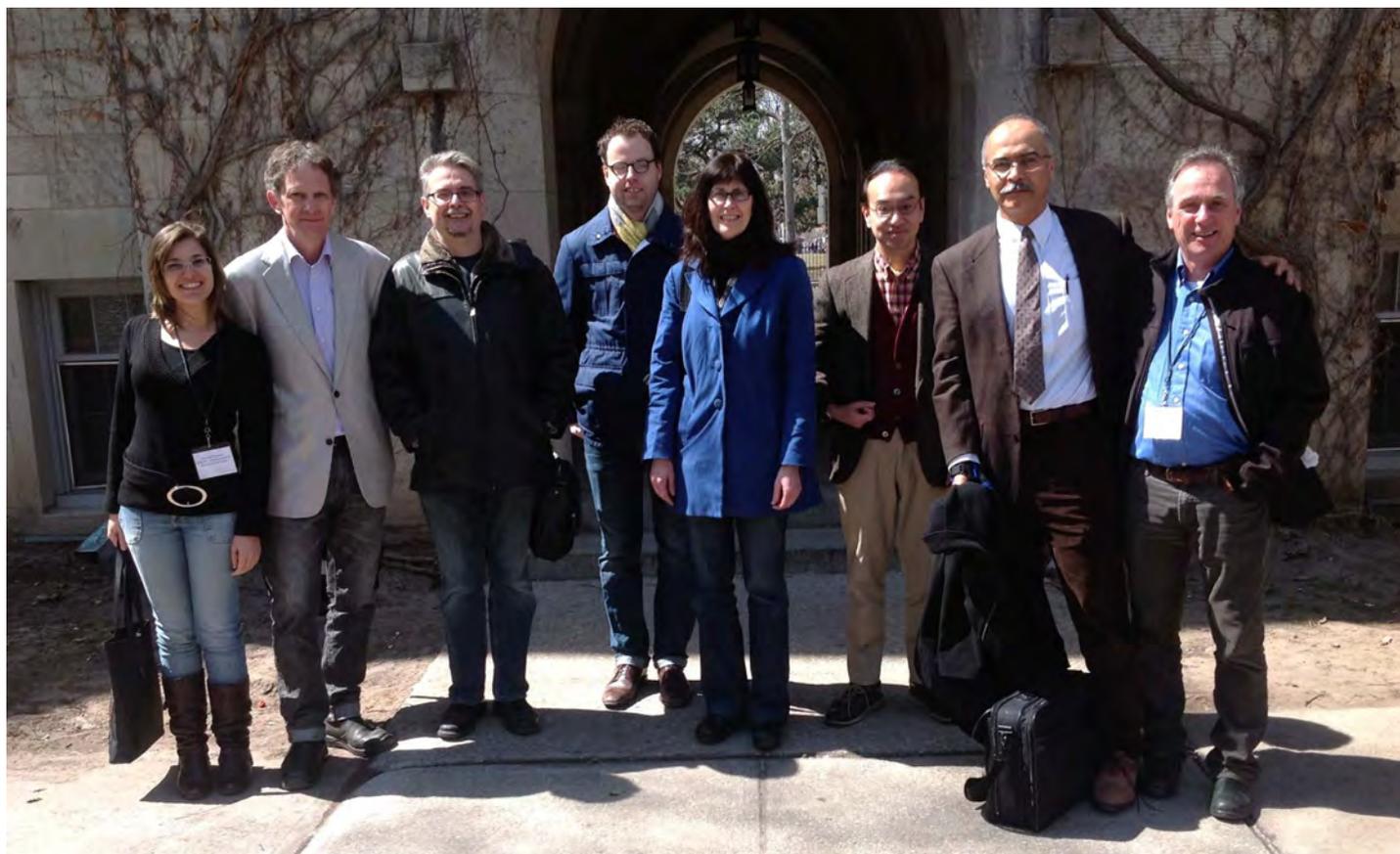
(University of Notre Dame, U.S.A.) talked about the significance of California as a touchstone for Joan Didion’s moral philosophy in his paper “More than a Spot on the Map: The Cultural Geography of Joan Didion’s California.” He argued that the golden state instilled an definable and structured ethical code in Didion that remained constant even as her personal politics and geography have shifted.

Roiland also introduced a new technology at the conference, UStream, which is a live broadcasting application that will allow IALJS to stream conference proceedings across the world for those who cannot attend particular conferences. Unfortunately, UStream’s IALJS debut was a bit unsuccessful due to the fact that the sessions were housed in a basement conference room where the wireless signal was too weak to transmit live video. However,

plans were put in place to use this technology to broadcast IALJS-8 from Tampere, Finland in mid-May. While the conference is in session, viewers can go to <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/ialjs> to watch panel presentations.

Finally, as is the case at all IALJS events, the highlight of the conference was a dinner party that Bill Reynolds and his wife Laura Lind held for the group in their Toronto home. Longtime IALJS members and new associates spent a leisurely evening getting acquainted over drinks Reynolds’s grilled Korean beef skewers—not a native Torontonion dish, but quite appropriate for a conference dedicated to GPS. ♦

ABOVE, U OF T’S FAMOUS THOMAS FISHER RARE BOOK LIBRARY. BELOW, FROM LEFT: PRISCILA GIMENEZ (UNIVERSIDADE DO ESTADO DE SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL), BILL REYNOLDS (RYERSON UNIVERSITY, CANADA), PASCAL GIN (CARLETON UNIVERSITY, CANADA), JOSH ROILAND (UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME, U.S.A.), MILETA ROE (BARD COLLEGE AT SIMON’S ROCK, U.S.A.), MIKI TANIKAWA (WASEDA UNIVERSITY, JAPAN), IGNACIO CORONA’S (OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, U.S.A.), AND ROB ALEXANDER’S (BROCK UNIVERSITY, CANADA).



Call for Submissions

## *Literary Journalism Studies*

*Published by the International Association for Literary Journalism Studies*

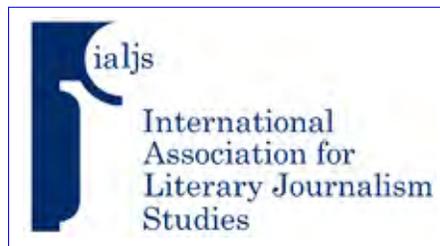
**Literary Journalism Studies**, a peer-reviewed journal sponsored by the International Association for Literary Journalism Studies (IALJS), invites submissions of scholarly articles on literary journalism, which is also known as narrative journalism, narrative nonfiction, literary reportage, reportage literature, New Journalism and the nonfiction novel, as well as literary nonfiction that emphasizes cultural revelation. The journal is international in scope and seeks submissions on the theory, history and pedagogy of literary journalism throughout the world. All disciplinary approaches are welcome.

To encourage an international dialogue, the journal is also willing to consider publishing short examples or excerpts of literary journalism accompanied by a scholarly gloss about a writer not widely known outside his or her country. The example or excerpt must be translated into English. The scholarly gloss must be between 1,500 and 2,500 words long and indicate why the example is important in the context of its national culture. Together, both the text and the gloss must not exceed 8,000 words in length. The contributor is responsible for obtaining all copyright permissions, including from the publisher, author and translator as necessary.

E-mail submission (as an MS Word attachment) is mandatory, and submissions should be between 4,000 and 8,000 words in length, including notes. A cover page indicating the title of the paper, the author's name and institutional affiliation, and contact information must accompany all submissions. The author's name should not appear on the required 250-word abstract or on the paper itself, as all submissions will be blind reviewed. All submissions must be in English and follow the *Chicago Manual of Style (Humanities)*. Submissions will be accepted on an ongoing basis. Contributors of articles selected for publication will receive one copy of the journal. Copyright reverts to the contributor after publication with the provision that should the submission be subsequently republished reference is made to initial publication in **Literary Journalism Studies**. Please e-mail all submissions and/or related queries to:

**Bill Reynolds**  
***Literary Journalism Studies***  
**152 Macdonell Ave.**  
**Toronto, Ontario M6R 2A6**  
**CANADA**  
<reynolds@ryerson.ca>

**BOOK REVIEWS:** The journal will include a book review section and invites short reviews of 1,000-2,000 words on both the scholarship of literary journalism and recent original works of literary journalism that deserve greater recognition among scholars. Book reviews are not blind reviewed but selected by the book review editor based on merit. Reviewers may suggest book review prospects or write the book review editors for suggestions. Usually reviewers will be responsible for obtaining their respective books. Book reviews and/or related queries should be e-mailed to Nancy L. Roberts at <nroberts@albany.edu>.



**PICARD TO KEYNOTE  
CARDIFF CONFERENCE**

A conference on "The Future of Journalism: In an Age of Digital Media and Economic Uncertainty" will be held on 12-13 September 2013 at the Cardiff School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies at Cardiff University in the U.K. The fourth in a series of biennial research-based conferences, of special note is the fact that the plenary speaker will be Robert Picard, a leading specialist on media economics and Director of Research at The Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford, UK. In addition, he is the author and editor of more than 20 books including *Media Clusters: Spatial Agglomeration and Content Capabilities* (2011) and *Value Creation and the Future of News Organizations: Why and How Journalism Must Change to Remain Relevant in the Twenty-First Century* (2010). He also is the editor of the *Journal of Media Business Studies* and the founding editor of the *Journal of Media Economics*. The subject of his plenary lecture will be "Funding the Future of Journalism." For more information, please see <<http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/jomec/conference/futureofjournalism/>>.

**MEETING ON MEDIA  
VALUE IN SPAIN**

The 7th International Conference on Communication and Reality will be held in Barcelona on 13-14 June 2013 at the Blanquerna School of Communication Studies at Ramon Llull University. The theme of the conference will be "Breaking the Media Value Chain." The title refers to the need to explore new directions to better understand and identify the new interdependencies, dynamics and radical changes taking place in the public sphere—a sphere which after all is tantamount to the media, the cinema, broadcasting, television, public relations and advertising. This paradigm is based on the numbers of readers, viewers and users which the mass media can "sell" in exchange for advertising revenue. Due to the advent of the social media, it can be argued that this value chain has now entered a critical phase. For more information, please see <http://cicr.blanquerna.url.edu/>.

**A PAIR OF DISCOVERIES AT IALJS-8:  
VIDEO-STREAMING THE CONFERENCE AND  
AN UNUSUAL LEARNED JOURNAL**

*You'll be able to watch the sessions in real time or at your leisure.*

*By Joshua Roiland, Notre Dame University (U.S.A.)*



The eighth annual conference of the International Association for Literary Journalism Studies wrapped up in late May, and we were able, after some experimentation, to ensure that all of the recorded panels from this conference are now archived on our

IALJS UStream page. You can watch them all at the following web address: <<http://www.ustream.tv/channel/ialjs>>.

You will see the panel title listed above the video, and, if you click on the video, you'll get more information including the moderator and the panelists.

The IALJS-8 conference was the first time we streamed the sessions live online, and it was a great success. More

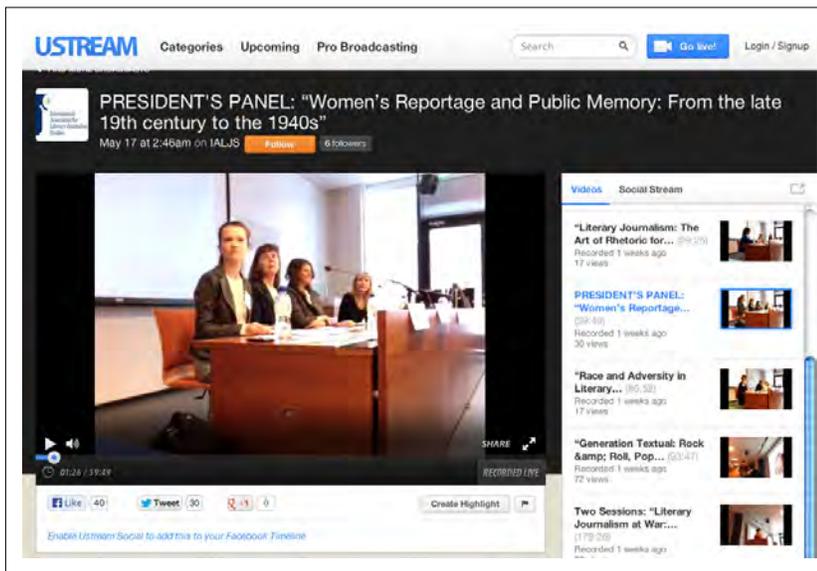
than 450 people worldwide have logged on to watch videos live or view archived panels—and the number will surely increase further.

Hopefully, this will become a staple in our IALJS community and bring more scholars around the world into the association and our ongoing conversation about global literary journalism.

Our next conference stream will occur this August when IALJS sponsors a workshop made of three consecutive panels. The them will be "Literary Journalism and the Politics of Transparency," and the session will be co-sponsored by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) at its annual conference in Washington, D.C. We'll send a note with more information on those sessions when the date nears.

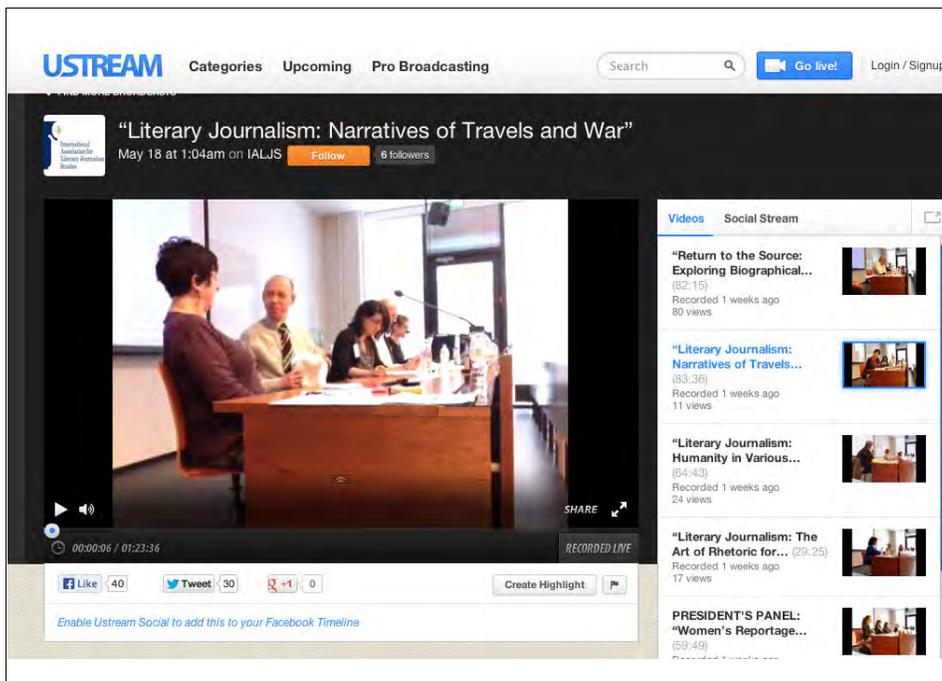
Again, for those of you who helped us test out and finally master the intricacies of the relatively new "UStream" streaming software, as well as those who were patient

*Continued on next page*



THIS SCREEN SHOT SHOWS WHAT THE USER INTERFACE LOOKS LIKE. NOTE THAT IT INCLUDES NOT ONLY THE SELECTED SESSION BUT ALSO A RIGHT "RAIL" OF OTHER SESSIONS AVAILABLE. AN ADDITIONAL SCREEN SHOT CAN BE FOUND ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE.

DISCOVERIES *Continued from previous page*



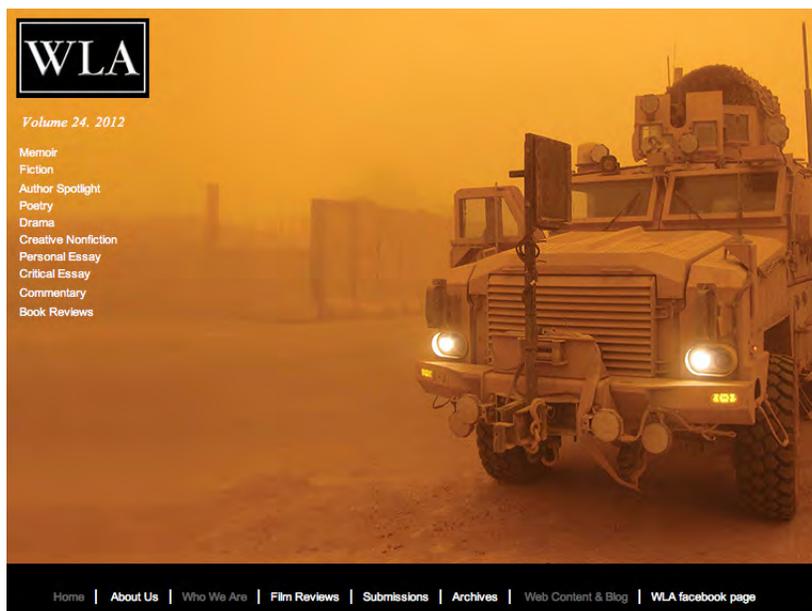
with our early efforts, many thanks for your interest and support of literary journalism across the globe.

**WLA JOURNAL**

Another noteworthy item of information that emerged from the IALJS-8 conference in May was a presentation on the existence of a unique learned journal entitled *War, Literature and the Arts: An International Journal of the Humanities*. Edited and published by the Department of English and Fine Arts at

the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, CO, its *raison d'être* is to try to understand the language of war through the lens of the humanities. As a result, it has been a venue for some extraordinary literary journalism.

For more information, the semi-annual journal has an on-line edition; the url is <<http://www.wlajournal.com>>. For a free print copy, please write to the editor, <[donald.anderson@usafa.edu](mailto:donald.anderson@usafa.edu)>. ♦



WAR, LITERATURE AND THE ARTS, A LEARNED JOURNAL PRODUCED BY THE U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY, HAS BEEN PUBLISHED FOR MORE THAN TWO DECADES; ITS MISSION, TO EXPLORE THE INTERSECTION OF WAR AND BOTH FICTION AND NONFICTION PROSE AND POETRY.

**SHARP CONFERENCE IN U. OF PENNSYLVANIA**

The 21st Annual Conference of the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing will be held on 18-21 July 2013 and the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. The title of the meeting is "Geographies of the Book," and the conference will emphasize digital projects related to book history and bibliography. These may include research tools, apps and software, bibliographies or databases, corpora of media or texts, digitization initiatives and interactive interfaces. For more information, please contact the SHARP Program Committee at <[sharpupenn2013@gmail.com](mailto:sharpupenn2013@gmail.com)> or see <<http://www.library.upenn.edu/exhibits/lectures/SHARP2013/index.html>>.

**JOURNALISM HISTORY MEETING IN JULY**

A conference entitled "Redefining Journalism in the Era of the Mass Press" will be hosted by the Department of Journalism and the Centre for the Study of Journalism and History at the University of Sheffield on 5 July 2013. The focus of the meeting will be two key trajectories arising from the change or stasis in the role perceptions of journalism that occurred between 1880 and 1920 with the rise of the mass press. Specifically, the conference aims to discuss how we now define journalism at the end of the 19th century from our contemporary and comparative perspective. For more information, please see <<http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/journalismhistory>>.

**'EUROPE AND ITS WORLDS' CONFERENCE IN THE NETHERLANDS**

The Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies at Radboud University Nijmegen in the Netherlands will jointly host an international conference on 16-18 October 2013. The theme of the meeting is "Europe and its Worlds: Cultural Mobility in, to and from Europe." At the core of this theme is the question of how Europe has always consisted of different worlds, how it differs from the rest of the world, and how it interacts with other worlds. For more information, please write to <[european-ditsworlds@let.ru.nl](mailto:european-ditsworlds@let.ru.nl)>.

# NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF EXTENDED ETHNOGRAPHIC IMMERSION

*Literary journalism pay a heavy price for their art.*

By Mark Massé, Ball State University (U.S.A.)

Literary journalists rely on saturation reporting, extended ethnographic immersion and narrative writing techniques, such as characterization, description and dramatization to tell true stories that enhance readers' worldviews.<sup>1</sup> Of all the techniques that distinguish a literary journalist from a conventional reporter, extended ethnographic immersion is arguably the most critical for providing opportunities to



REFLECTIVE  
ESSAY

secure long-term access, to establish personal connections with sources, to conduct in-depth information gathering and to observe the descriptive details and personality traits necessary to craft a dramatic narrative. To produce successful literary journalism (also known as literary nonfiction or creative nonfiction), it can be argued that the writer must achieve two goals—journalistic credibility and artistic merit. A fact-based narrative should both

inform and enlighten the reader.

Literary journalists may spend weeks, months, even years immersed in their ethnographic study of individuals, groups, communities and institutions. In his book *The New Journalism*, Wolfe recalls authors such as Jimmy Breslin and Gay Talese who “developed the habit of staying with the people they were writing about for days at a time, weeks in some cases. They had to gather all the material the conventional journalist was after—and then keep going. It seemed all-important to be *there* when dramatic scenes took place to get the dialogue, the gestures, the facial expressions, the details of the environment. The idea was to give the full objective description, plus something that readers had always had to go to novels and short stories for: namely, the subjective or emotional life of the characters.”<sup>2</sup>

Given the requirement for in-depth reportage, what is the impact on the literary journalist of such long-term immersion with stressful, hazardous stories? Physical harm, including death, is a genuine risk facing war correspondents, as reflected in the recent high-profile fatalities of Western journalists covering hostilities in the Middle East. But what about the often-unexplored emotional consequences of spending significant periods of time exposed to tragedy and trauma? The negative (physical and psychological) effects of extended immersion on literary journalists working in harm's way were the focus of this qualitative research study.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

*Trauma Journalism: On Deadline in Harm's Way* (Massé, 2011) examined the impact of stress, trauma and intervention on U.S. and international journalists covering conflict, crime, disaster, terrorism, war and other tragedies. The book included primary research and anecdotal evidence on journalists affected by their frontline reporting. In-depth profiles were featured on print and broadcast journalists, researchers and reform advocates in the U.S., Canada, Europe, Australia and Africa. Central to his discussion was an analysis of the two predominant perspectives regarding the role of journalists in covering tragedy and trauma. Traditionalists emphasized craft attitudes and a responsibility to distance themselves from their stories. News media reformers, educators and other innovators represented a second distinctive “school of thought” in the profession, acknowledging a valid role for empathy and emotional engagement in trauma journalism coverage.<sup>3</sup>

---

The text  
concluded with guidelines  
for journalists  
and resources for trauma  
journalism

---

The 2011 text acknowledged the contributions of former journalists and academics Simpson and Coté, who in 2006 wrote a book for working media professionals that combined research on trauma, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and secondary traumatic stress with recommendations for enhanced newsgathering and writing. The book included detailed first-hand accounts

from journalists who had covered large-scale tragedies such as 9/11 and the Oklahoma City bombing. The text featured several chapters on journalistic practices (e.g., interviewing, writing print and broadcast stories) and sections on violence, rape and covering children. It concluded with guidelines for journalists and resources on trauma journalism.<sup>4</sup>

The emotions and experiences of war correspondents was the focus of a 2006 book by Feinstein, a Canadian psychiatrist. The text described the physical and psychological hazards facing these front-line journalists, the damage to their personal and professional lives and how this negative impact is often overlooked or minimized by supervisors, peers and colleagues, or assumed to be an integral part of journalism's norms, attitudes and values (e.g., bravado and denial). Subjects covered included what motivates risk-taking behavior, the stresses facing reporters in the field and the inadequate support systems typically in place for those who encounter trauma on the job.<sup>5</sup>

Award-winning CBS and ABC News foreign correspondent Laurence reviewed the impact of his years reporting on the Vietnam War in a detailed 2002 autobiography that documented his enduring personal struggles resulting from cover-

*Continued on next page*

IMMERSION *Continued from previous page*

age of tragedy and trauma.<sup>6</sup> In his 2002 autobiography, Stewart described a reporter's experiences in "hot spots" such as Kashmir and Kabul, including details on how he survived a near-fatal shooting and how his life and perspective on war coverage changed.<sup>7</sup> Another vivid first-person account was published by Spinner in 2006. The female war correspondent and *Washington Post* staff writer discussed her nine months of reporting from Baghdad, Fallujah, Kurdistan and Abu Ghraib. Spinner noted the daily challenges of life in a war zone, including discussion of the impact of living with violence over an extended time period. She addressed the emotional toll that affected her, her colleagues and family.<sup>8</sup>

The narratives of young journalists who covered the tragedy of the 9/11 attacks in New York City were contained in a 2002 anthology edited by Bull and Erman. It featured emotional stories of contributors, many of whom were at the scene of the collapse of the World Trade Center towers, describing the anger, excitement, terror and depression that accompanied their reporting.<sup>9</sup>

Although not all trauma journalists would be classified as literary journalists, their work typically meets the definition of dramatic narrative nonfiction, including complication and conflict (both external, such as crime, disaster and war and internal, such as resultant psychological issues), compelling characterization (ordinary individuals facing extraordinary circumstances) and a narrative arc (how the journalists are affected and changed as a result of their coverage).

Reporting on tragedy and trauma has been integral to the history of literary journalism. Narrative nonfiction authors have been subjected to physical harm or injury and have often endured significant emotional consequences, even disabling psychological effects in their coverage of disturbing and dangerous stories.

**ROLE OF EXTENDED IMMERSION**

The literary journalists studied in this paper (Capote, Didion, Herr and Conover) maintained extended ethnographic immersion in their given subjects over the course of weeks, months and years. In *True Stories: A Century of Literary Journalism*, author Norman Sims describes the advantages and the risks of such research by highlighting the methods of literary journalist Ted Conover:

*Conover uses techniques from anthropology, particularly participant observation, to create his portraits of cultural communities. ... In Newjack, he trained as a New York State prison guard and worked at Sing Sing prison. ... Conover's use of participant observation techniques puts him in a*

---

In his  
book, Herr describes  
his intimate  
connection to their troops he  
accompanied in battle

---

*special category among literary journalists.*"<sup>10</sup>

*By living, working and traveling with the subjects of his journalism, Conover creates a surface tension between himself and his subject. He also gains a knowledge that is not available either to the participant or to the observer. In Conover's case, not only has he ridden the rails with hobos, migrated across a dangerous border with Mexican workers and been a guard at Sing Sing, he also followed the AIDS highway in Africa with truck drivers who were the mechanism by which the disease moved from central Africa to the coast — not to mention being in Rwanda during a bloody civil war. 'I think a degree of risk-taking both makes the material richer — you find out things other writers won't learn — and it adds excitement to the narrative. If we are, after all, writing narrative nonfiction, there will be an interest in things going wrong. That's always been my compensation when disaster strikes. ... But I'm not insane. I don't seek out the overloaded ferry*

*that's going to sink on its next crossing. But at the same time I'm not traveling for my amusement as much as to see things that interest me and to bear witness to them in some way.*"<sup>11</sup>

Michael Herr, author of the best-selling book (*Dispatches*) on the Vietnam War, comments on how immersive journalism produces insightful, truthful and empathetic narratives: "Conventional journalism could no more reveal this war than conventional firepower could win it, all it could do was take the most profound event of the American decade and turn it into a communications pudding, taking its most obvious, undeniable history and making it into a secret history. And the very best correspondents knew even more than that." He writes that the "best and the bravest correspondents were also usually the most compassionate, the ones who were most in touch with what they were doing."<sup>12</sup>

In his book, Herr describes his intimate connection to the troops he accompanied in battle:

*All right, yes, it had been a groove being a war correspondent, hanging out with the grunts and getting close to the war, touching it, losing yourself in it and trying yourself against it. I had always wanted that, never mind why, it had just been a thing of mine and I'd done it; I was in many ways brother to these poor, tired grunts, I knew what they knew now, I'd done it and it was really something. ... They didn't always know what to think about you or what to say to you, they'd sometimes call you 'Sir' until you had to beg them to stop, they'd sense the insanity of your position as terrified volunteer-reporter and it would seize them with the giggles and even respect.*<sup>13</sup>

*They only hated me, hated me the way you'd hate any hopeless fool who would put himself through this thing when he had choices, any fool who had not more need of his life than to play with it in this way.*"<sup>14</sup>

A literary journalist's immersion in his or her story relies on long-term access and trust and credibility with

*Continued on next page*

IMMERSION *Continued from previous page*

sources. Ted Conover's intensive participant observation differentiates his methodology from a more distanced ("fly on the wall") type of ethnography. Note the description of Conover's complex relationship with his work environment as a corrections officer in Sing Sing Prison, in these excerpts from his book *Newjack*:

*But I wanted to like it, because gallery work was the essential job of jailing. Forget running a gate or being an escort or doing construction supervision or transportation or manning a wall tower—a good robot might almost do those. The real action was on the gallery looking after inmates. To do this job well you had to be fearless, know how to talk to people, have thick skin and a high tolerance for stress. Nigro had told us that whenever prison administrators wanted to know what was really going on in a prison, what the mood of the inmates was, they asked the gallery officers. We were like cops on a beat, the guys who knew the local players, the ones who saw it all.<sup>15</sup> But I was also caught between two warring impulses: the incuriosity that made the job easier and an anthropologist or social worker's fascination with the twists of life that created a criminal and led him to such a place.<sup>16</sup>*

As Sims cites in *True Stories*, writers such as Michael Herr and Joan Didion were "sending back reports from the front lines; they ended up on the psychological barricades whether they were in Vietnam [as Herr was] or not, and their breakdowns tended to happen on the pages of their journalism."<sup>17</sup>

Gerald Clarke, who wrote the 1988 biography of Truman Capote, includes similar comments on the psychological impact of the extended (six-year) immersion on Capote: "If he had known how long *In Cold Blood* would take—and what it would take out of him—he would never have stopped in Kansas, Truman later wrote. He would instead have driven straight through—like a bat out of hell."<sup>18</sup>

In the 1980s, Didion chronicled her struggles reporting on the tragic civil war in El Salvador. Sims describes the

impact on Didion of reporting from a "land of prolonged violent revolution and repression in the eighties where thousands had died and even more had simply 'disappeared.'" Didion recounted how after a visit to a morgue where victims' bodies ended up, threatening uniformed agents of the military trapped her in her car:

*I did not forget the sensation of having been in a single instant demoralized, undone, humiliated by fear, which is what I meant when I said that I came to understand El Salvador the mechanism of terror.<sup>19</sup>*

About fifteen years earlier, Didion had admitted to having been evaluated at a psychiatric clinic as a person

---

Perhaps the most famous literary journalist to suffer long-term disabling effects of covering tragedy was Truman Capote

---

who "feels deeply that all human effort is foredoomed to failure, a conviction which seems to push her further into a dependent, passive withdrawal."<sup>20</sup>

Michael Herr's self-revelatory writing in *Dispatches*, his chronicle of the Vietnam War, provides intriguing insight into the impact of trauma on the immersion journalist. In *True Stories*, Sims quotes Herr: "I was pretty crazy when I came back. For a long time I was, in fact, very crazy."<sup>21</sup> Sims explains that Herr returned from Vietnam in 1969 with plans to write his book. Then he ran into several problems, "not the least of which was the famous post-Vietnam syndrome."<sup>22</sup>

Although he had completed about two-thirds of his book when he returned, it took him until 1977 to complete the work of literary journalism. During this time, Herr endured "paralysis, a 'massive collapse' and depression." He required psychoanalysis to deal with

his post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).<sup>23</sup> Herr was somewhat unique in pursuing therapy to deal with his PTSD. As author Eric James Schroeder (*Vietnam, We've All Been There: Interviews with American Writers*), has noted: Few people talked about war correspondents (such as Herr) suffering from the psychological disability known as PTSD.<sup>24</sup>

Perhaps the most famous literary journalist to suffer long-term disabling effects of covering tragedy and trauma was Truman Capote, author of the best-selling book *In Cold Blood*. For six years, Capote was intimately connected to and immersed in the lives of convicted murderers Dick Hickock and Perry Smith. In his 1988 biography of Capote, Gerald Clarke writes:

*After In Cold Blood he was no longer able to summon the energy to perform that magic act (i.e., using his imagination to manufacture his happiness). Nostalgia descended into sorrow, and to those who knew him well he seemed to be in perpetual mourning, overwhelmed by a sense of loss that was no less keen because he could not say precisely what it was that had been taken from him.*

Capote's friend Phyllis Cerf told biographer Clarke quite simply: "He never really recovered from that book."<sup>25</sup> In *True Stories*, Sims concludes that literary journalists such as:

*Capote, Herr and Didion all suffered difficult personal and psychological reactions as a result of such intense involvement with the people and the cultures they were reporting on. As they researched their stories, they were not separate from the worlds they were researching: they were participants.<sup>26</sup>*

Although it is not possible to be definitive about whether literary journalists, such as Capote, Didion, Herr or Conover suffered psychological setbacks because of their empathy, emotional involvement, psychological transference, or any combination of these factors, their accounts serve as a cautionary tales for other journalists covering tragedy and trauma in-depth over extended periods

*Continued on next page*

IMMERSION *Continued from previous page*

of time.

METHOD

Statements for analysis were gathered via book excerpts from four literary journalists (Capote, Didion, Herr and Conover). These authors were selected based on the researcher's familiarity with their work, given his experience as a practitioner of literary journalism, a professor of the genre for 15 years and a longtime member of the International Association for Literary Journalism Studies (IALJS). In addition, these four authors were discussed by literary journalism historian Norman Sims in his 2007 text, *True Stories*.<sup>27</sup> All of these literary journalists are notable for their documented, extended ethnographic immersion.

Capote died in 1984. Two of the authors (Didion and Herr) are now in their seventies, although when they were writing their books (*Salvador* and *Dispatches*), they were in their forties and twenties, respectively. Capote was 41 when *In Cold Blood* was published. Ted Conover, 54, belongs to a generation of contemporary literary journalists who came into prominence decades after the "New Journalists" of the 1960s and 1970s.

Using purposive (non-probability) sampling, the researcher selected excerpts intended to reflect the damaging impact of extended immersion on the four authors. The negative effects were listed in nine categories: Addiction, Anger, Anxiety/Stress, Depression, Family/Interpersonal Problems, Fear of Death/Injury, Illness/Injury, PTSD and Violence.

The study of literary journalist immersion effects utilized elements of the researcher's methodological approach employed in an exploratory 2009 qualitative study that analyzed statements from in-depth interviews and published accounts of 36 U.S. and international journalists who had covered tragedy and trauma. A purposive (non-probability) sample examined the motivation for their coverage, the effects of such coverage on journalists and the coping techniques employed by affected journalists, as well

as the lessons for other journalists, their media audiences and communities of affected news consumers.<sup>28</sup>

NEGATIVE EFFECTS

Following the order of the nine categories of negative effects presented above, the first such unpleasant outcome to be considered will be:

1. ADDICTION

• Capote: "But Truman did not want to live without alcohol and drugs [sedatives, cocaine]. Life with them was intolerable, but life without them was unthinkable."<sup>29</sup> "In the hours and days before his death

---

Working in a prison  
changed Conover's home life.  
He realized that he  
was about to deploy use-of-force  
on his own son

---

[on 25 August 1984] he had consumed great quantities of drugs: Valium, Dilantin, codeine, Tylenol and two or three different barbiturates."<sup>30</sup>

2. ANGER

• Conover: "Something in me sort of snapped. All day long I was disrespected by criminals; I felt that home should be different. I ran up the stairs and picked him up by his pajama tops outside her door. 'When I say no, you will listen!' I whispered angrily, giving him a spank, surprising myself. I had never done that before, and it surprised him, too. He burst into tears. This woke his sister. I was furious, and I ordered her to go back to sleep. She didn't obey, either. The house was filled with sobs. 'Into your room,' I ordered my son, and carried him bodily when 'he refused to comply.' A use-of-force on my own son, I realized the moment after it happened. There were

better ways to handle the situation, I knew, but none that I seemed capable of at that time. I asked him to lie down with me in his bed so I could read him another book, and eventually he did. Then he held on to my arm, kind of tight. I felt like crying into his shirt, breaking down, sobbing for a good hour. I turned my head and read the story."<sup>31</sup>

"It was an excuse, an evasion, a way not to examine the fact that I'd never been meaner or more vulnerable."<sup>32</sup>

"There were so many unresolved angry exchanges in Sing Sing, so much that never got settled. How many times had I heard an inmate or an officer say, semi-facetiously, 'I'm gonna set it off!' Light a fuse! Start a little chaos! In some warped and exaggerated form, it seemed like the same kind of impulse as getting wild on a Saturday night, letting off steam after a week of tension or boredom."<sup>33</sup>

"'Conover!' called Larson, laughing, as I walked madly by. 'Calm down! You're gonna have a heart attack!' If it had been anyone else, he would only have succeeded in pissing me off. But in that moment, I finally got it. Fuck getting the porters out. Fuck writing up one last Misbehavior Report. Fuck the executive team. Given my lame-duck status, none of it really mattered. I stopped, turned around. I took a deep breath and went back to Larson's cell, leaned against the bars. A problem I'd had from day one, I knew, was taking it all too seriously. Perfectionism was unattainable on a gallery in B-block. Getting yelled at now and then—whether by sergeants, other officers, or inmates—was just life, especially in Sing Sing."<sup>34</sup>

"I thought about my anger and frustration after I'd been slugged in A-block, my fantasy of the building and its contents going up in flames."<sup>35</sup>

3. ANXIETY/STRESS

• Capote: His friend Phyllis Cerf told biographer Clarke: "Eventually it [*In Cold Blood*] began to own him. Emotionally, it became something bigger than he could

*Continued on next page*

IMMERSION *Continued from previous page*

handle."<sup>36</sup>

"He never really recovered from that book. Until then he had been able to cope with all of his problems extremely well. But it was very destructive for him, especially when those boys wanted him to witness their hanging. I don't know why he put himself through that, but he did. He thought that he was tougher than he was and that he could take it. But he couldn't. That book started the unsettling of his life. He began to live—I don't know—recklessly."<sup>37</sup>

"Returning to Long Island in October [1978], Truman once again was paralyzed by anxiety. 'I'm followed by fear and terror, which hits my chest and then goes up to my throat,' he said. 'I think a lot—not just a little, but a lot—about killing myself. I'm obsessed with the idea of dying, and I wake up hoping that I will die.'<sup>38</sup>

• Didion: "These are the details—the models and colors of armored vehicles, the makes and calibers of weapons, the particular methods of dismemberment and decapitation used in particular instances—on which the visitor to Salvador learns immediately to concentrate, to the exclusion of past or future concerns, as in a prolonged amnesiac fugue."<sup>39</sup>

• Conover: "I disclosed what I was doing to only a handful of people. Most of my friends had no idea. I'd never done that before, and I hope I don't have to do it again. *Newjack* helped me understand why so many undercover narcotics agents get divorced, go to jail, and seem to have their lives fall apart: Secrecy is destructive. Only a critically important story can justify it. (Of course, reporters rarely disclose everything. If reporters always said exactly why they were calling, they would rarely get the information they need.)"<sup>40</sup>

"When the recruit arrives he is plunged into an alien environment, and is enveloped in the situation 24 hours a day without relief. He is stunned, dazed and frightened. The severity of shock is reflected in 17-hydroxycortico-steroid lev-

els comparable to those in schizophrenic patients in inpatient psychosis, which exceed levels in other stressful situations. The recruit receives little, or erroneous information about what to expect, which tends to maintain his anxiety."<sup>41</sup>

"That was the first of the thousand dodges and sorry-I-can't-talk-about-its I'd have to make over the next thirty or so months as my life split into two parts, neither of which could know about the other."<sup>42</sup>

"Prison got into your skin, or under it. If you stayed long enough, some of it probably seeped into your soul. ... I had thought that being only a visitor to the world of corrections, I would be

---

Didion suffered  
an attack of vertigo, nausea  
and the feeling  
she was going to pass out.  
Psychiatry responded.

---

immune to this syndrome. My whole project, after all, was to keep one foot in and the other out, to be self-consciously aware that what I was doing was an experience, not my life. It's called participant observation, this research method of anthropology. Every afternoon upon arriving home, I sneaked in the back door so that my two young kids wouldn't hear me and planted myself in front of the computer for an hour or so, taking notes and settling into my real skin. I breathed in the smell of the books on my shelves and counted the days until I had a weekend off, counted the weeks until I could take a vacation, counted the months until the year was over."<sup>43</sup>

4. DEPRESSION

• Capote: Biographer Gerald Clarke writes: "After *In Cold Blood* he was no longer able to summon the energy to perform that magic act (i.e., using his imagi-

nation to manufacture his happiness). Nostalgia descended into sorrow, and to those who knew him well he seemed to be in perpetual mourning, overwhelmed by a sense of loss that was no less keen because he could not say precisely what it was that had been taken from him."<sup>44</sup>

• Didion: "In 1979, Didion provided the best example of the conundrum faced by writers whose personal histories inform their journalism. In the introduction to her book *The White Album*, named after the famous Beatles album, she recounted how she felt, beginning in about 1966 during the early years of the New Journalism era and running through 1968, a time when she kept house, wrote articles and was named 'a woman of the year.' Then she suffered 'an attack of vertigo, nausea and a feeling that she was going to pass out' and was evaluated at a psychiatric clinic as a person who 'feels deeply that all human effort is foredoomed to failure, a conviction which seems to push her further into a dependent, passive withdrawal.' It was a world of protests, race riots, police riots, cultural upheaval, Black Panthers dying in police raids, war, assassinations, missing people, body counts and political controversy, a world where the center could not hold. 'By way of comment,' Didion said, 'I offer only that an attack of vertigo and nausea does not now seem to me an inappropriate response to the summer of 1968.'<sup>45</sup>

• Herr: "Back in the World now, and a lot of us aren't making it. ... We came to fear something more complicated than death, annihilation less final but more complete, and we got out. We got out and became like everyone else who has been through a war: changed, enlarged and (some things are expensive to say) incomplete. ... I think that Vietnam was what we had instead of happy childhood."<sup>46</sup>

"They were always telling you that you mustn't forget the dead, and they were always telling you that you shouldn't let yourself think about them too much. You couldn't remain effective

*Continued on next page*

IMMERSION *Continued from previous page*

as a soldier or reporter if you got all hung up on the dead, fell into patterns of morbid sensitivity, entered perpetual mourning. ‘You’ll get used to it,’ people would say, but I never did, actually it got personal and went the other way.”<sup>47</sup>

5. FAMILY/INTERPERSONAL PROBLEMS

• Conover: “But inside is a bad place for stress. This is very obvious in retrospect, but it wasn’t obvious on those nights after we got the kids to bed. I wouldn’t volunteer details of my day, and when she [wife, Margot] tried to update me on her life, often I would just tune her out. I found myself impatient in a way I couldn’t explain. I didn’t want to hear about the minutiae of her day. There wasn’t room in my brain for what seemed trivialities. Black moods would come out of nowhere and envelop me. I tried to hide them by acting civil, but ‘civil’ came off as chilly and robotic. One day we were driving back to the city from a visit with friends upstate. I’d had the weekend off for a change—a chance to relax, be with Margot and the kids. But in the middle of the Saw Mill River Parkway, with all of them asleep, I was seized with the closest thing I’ve ever had to a panic attack. What if I got assigned to R-and-W tomorrow? I thought. The feeling of dread was a dense cloud that blocked my view of everything around me. I slowed down, tried to repress it. I’d been away from R-and-W for a couple of weeks now. There was no reason Holmes would stick me over there again. The odds were ten to one, twenty to one. I turned on the radio, tried listening to the news.”<sup>48</sup>

“I had no time or patience anymore for any of them, her or the kids, she charged. I had never been in a harder situation in my life, I responded. Couldn’t she see? There was no room in my head for it! You’re not just oblivious, she responded, you’re ridiculously rigid and prickly. And with that, I got hostile. You have no idea, I answered, no idea what this is like. And I thought, how dare she complain when I’m working so hard to hold myself together, to maintain a calm

exterior? Maybe that’s because you don’t tell me what it’s like! She shot back. Four more months, I answered wearily. Can we just hang on four more months and then it will be over. Can you deal with it for that long?”<sup>49</sup>

6. FEAR OF DEATH/INJURY

• Didion: “In her reports from El Salvador, a land of prolonged violent revolution and repression in the eighties where thousands had died and even more had simply ‘disappeared,’ she talked about how it felt to be her in this place and time. She visited a notorious body dump, where she watched a woman learning how to drive a Toyota pickup

---

She visited  
a notorious body dump,  
where she  
watched a woman learning how  
to drive a pickup truck

---

truck—the kind of vehicle often used to secretly drop bodies off a cliff. After a visit to the morgue, where such bodies ended up, threatening uniformed agents of the military trapped her in a car. Sitting with her husband on the porch of a Mexican restaurant one night, she was unnerved by the sight of armed men on the street and the realization that the candle on the table cast the only pool of light on the street, making them an easy target. They resisted blowing it out. ‘Nothing came of this,’ she said, ‘but I did not forget the sensation of having been in a single instant demoralized, undone, humiliated by fear, which is what I meant when I said that I came to understand in El Salvador the mechanism of terror.’”<sup>50</sup>

“Terror is the given of the place. Black-and-white police cars cruise in pairs, each with the barrel of a rifle extending from an open window. ... Every morning *El Diario de Hoy* and *La*

*Prensa Grafica* carry cautionary stories. A mother and her two sons hacked to death in their beds by eight desconocidos, unknown men. The same morning’s paper: the unidentified body of a young man, strangled, found on the shoulder of the road. Same morning, different story: the unidentified bodies of three young men, found on another road, their faces partially destroyed by bayonets, one face carved to represent a cross.”<sup>51</sup>

“During the week before I flew down to El Salvador a Salvadoran woman who works for my husband and me in Los Angeles gave me repeated instructions about what we must and must not do. We must not go out at night. We must stay off the street whenever possible. We must never ride in buses or taxis, never leave the capital, never imagine that our passports would protect us. We must not even consider the hotel a safe place: people were killed in hotels. She spoke with considerable vehemence, because two of her brothers had been killed in Salvador in August of 1981, in their beds. The throats of both brothers had been slashed.”<sup>52</sup>

“Any situation can turn to terror. The most ordinary errand can go bad. Among Americans in El Salvador there is an endemic apprehension of danger in the apparently benign.”<sup>53</sup>

• Herr: “‘This spring will be the worst of the war, the most savage, the bloodiest time of all, but no one here will admit it,’” he said on January 7, 1968. His next letter to [*Esquire* editor Harold] Hayes came a month later from the formerly beautiful city of Hué about a week after the start of the Tet Offensive, when the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese attacked major cities and captured the American embassy in Saigon. Herr asked Hayes to hold the articles he had sent for publication; everything had changed. The most experienced correspondents were ‘shattered by the offensive,’ and Herr had not expected it despite his prediction of a bloody spring. ‘I lost my non-combatant status in the

*Continued on next page*

IMMERSION *Continued from previous page*

Delta on the first day of the offensive, during an ambush, and I have passed through so many decimated towns and cities that they get all mixed up in my mind,' he wrote."<sup>54</sup>

"You could be in the most protected space in Vietnam and still know that your safety was provisional, that early death, blindness, loss of legs, arms or balls, major and lasting disfigurement—the whole rotten deal—could come in on the freaky-fluky as easily as in the so-called expected ways, you heard so many of those stories it was a wonder anyone was left alive to die in firefights and mortar-rocket attacks."<sup>55</sup>

"You could die in a sudden blood-burning crunch as your chopper hit the ground like dead weight, you could fly apart so that your pieces would never be gathered, you could take one neat round in the lung and go out hearing only the bubble of the last few breaths, you could die in the last stage of malaria with that faint tapping in your ears, and that could happen to you after months of firefights and rockets and machine guns. ... You could be shot, mined, grenaded, rocketed, mortared, sniped at, blown up and away so that your leavings had to be dropped into a sagging poncho and carried to Graves Registration, that's all she wrote. It was almost marvelous."<sup>56</sup>

• Conover: Writing about his fellow prison guards, "In the culture of COs [corrections officers], when someone acts dishonorably, he or she 'meets you in the parking lot.' That's shorthand for an after-work beating. Almost every day I feared I would be found out and met in the parking lot. I didn't have a book contract while I worked in the prison, nor did I want one. If I ended up in the parking lot, I didn't want to be responsible for a book that I couldn't produce."<sup>57</sup>

"Sing Sing was a world of adrenaline and aggression to us new officers. It was an experience of living with fear—fear of inmates, as individuals and as a mob, and fear of our own capacity to fuck up. We were sandwiched between two groups: Make a mistake around the

white-shirts and you would get in trouble; make a mistake around the inmates and you might get hurt."<sup>58</sup>

7. ILLNESS/INJURY

• Capote: In Sims's *True Stories*, literary journalist Madeleine Blais notes: "Capote said somewhere that he felt writing the book, or more precisely, living with the details of that story so intimately for so long, catapulted him into ill health and led to the insomnia and substance abuse that dogged him during his final years. ... In the end, the author (Capote) may have driven himself nearly insane with the question: what purpose is served by making art out of something so vile?"<sup>59</sup>

---

I was  
pretty crazy when I came  
back. For a  
long time I was, in fact,  
very crazy

---

8. PTSD

• Capote: His friend Phyllis Cerf told biographer Clarke: "Eventually it [*In Cold Blood*] began to own him. Emotionally, it became something bigger than he could handle."<sup>60</sup>

"He never really recovered from that book. Until then he had been able to cope with all of his problems extremely well. But it was very destructive for him, especially when those boys wanted him to witness their hanging. I don't know why he put himself through that, but he did. He thought that he was tougher than he was and that he could take it. But he couldn't. That book started the unsettling of his life. He began to live—I don't know—recklessly."<sup>61</sup>

• Herr: "The way Herr described himself in the beginning of *Dispatches*—'Day one, if anything could have penetrated that first innocence I might have taken the next plane out. Out absolutely.'—was not

an overly dramatized fictionalization, but a realistic portrait of a guy going crazy. ... 'I was pretty crazy when I came back,' Herr told an interviewer. "For a long time I was, in fact, very crazy.' Herr returned from Vietnam in 1969 with plans to write his book. Then he ran into several problems, 'not the least of which was the famous post-Vietnam syndrome,' Herr later said. He had two-thirds of the book done when he returned, and yet it took him until 1977—a time in which he endured paralysis, 'massive collapse,' depression and psychoanalysis—to finish it. Posttraumatic stress disorder among Vietnam veterans was not well treated, although many suffered from it and as many as 20 percent of Iraq War veterans do as well. Few talked about war correspondents suffering from the same psychological disability."<sup>62</sup>

9. VIOLENCE

• Conover: "Deadly physical force was okay to use in three instances: to prevent an escape; in self-defense; or to prevent arson. Arson? 'Arson is serious because an inmate could burn a whole building down, maybe one with people in it,' said Kirkley. Well, yes. But it was hard to imagine the scenario. An inmate, perhaps surrounded by empty gas cans stopping to light a match. 'Stop or I'll shoot!' we could yell. And if he didn't stop, we could kill him."<sup>63</sup>

"In other words, between a quarter and a third of the inmates had killed somebody. Other violent felons had committed rape (93) or sodomy (38) or a variety of crimes including robbery, assault, kidnapping, burglary and arson."<sup>64</sup>

"You feel it along the walls inside, hard like a blow to the head; see it on the walls outside, thick, blank and odorless; smell it in the air that assaults your face in certain tunnels, a stale and acrid taste of male anger, resentment and boredom."<sup>65</sup>

"My take on it, working in a place where physical confrontation was always possible, was that most men,

*Continued on next page*

IMMERSION *Continued from previous page*

meeting other men, instantly asked themselves: Could I beat him in a fight.”<sup>66</sup>

“Violence and the potential for violence were a stress on inmates and officers, but not on all of them and not all the time. There were moments when, due to the constant tension of prison life and the general lack of catharsis, violence and the potential for violence became a thrill. It had been a long, hot summer in B-block—a long, low wave of attacks and reprisals and then lockdown to let everything cool off. Following almost every series of incidents, officers would search the yard, the gym and other places inmates congregated and prepared for battle, looking for weapons. Usually, we would find scores of them—in trash cans, under rocks, on ledges, or just beneath the dirt. Sometimes our efforts seemed to forestall the next move, sometimes not.”<sup>67</sup>

DISCUSSION

The negative effects of extended immersion on the four literary journalists studied depended on a variety of factors, including the duration, proximity and level of participation in regard to conditions threatening one’s health, safety and welfare. Demographic issues, such as age (as noted in Method) and gender, did not appear to affect the intensity of feelings nor the documented physical or psychological impact of long-term coverage. Joan Didion, Michael Herr and Ted Conover were at greatest risk of physical/psychological harm (primary trauma effects) when researching their stories documented in this study. Truman Capote was at the least risk of physical injury, given the details of his six years of research.

Psychological trauma (including vicarious or secondary traumatization) is dependent on a person’s early life experiences, education and professional training, mental/spiritual strength and individual resilience, personality and other character traits. Each of the authors manifested varying levels of anxiety/stress, fear and depressive tendencies. Joan

Didion discussed that several years prior to going to El Salvador during the dangerous period in the early 1980s, she had been evaluated at a psychiatric clinic as a person who “feels deeply that all human effort is foredoomed to failure, a conviction which seems to push her further into a dependent, passive withdrawal.”<sup>68</sup>

In Capote’s case, the ongoing stress of spending six years covering brutal murders allegedly led him to substance abuse and a premature death. Joan Didion, Michael Herr and Ted Conover disclosed their feelings of fear and intimidation, given the demands of their story subjects. Didion and Herr dis-

---

Some are very forthcoming  
about their  
psychological problems that  
resulting from their  
extended immersion in their stories.

---

cussed their concerns about being seriously injured or even killed while on assignment in El Salvador and Vietnam, respectively. Similarly, Ted Conover chronicled his ever-present awareness of the risks of being assaulted and fatally injured while working as a corrections officer in the violent subculture of Sing Sing Prison. Conover wrote about his fears not only of being hurt but also of losing control and injuring others. He discussed his anger and hostility on and off the job and the family/interpersonal problems caused by his demanding immersive work at the prison.

Truman Capote and Michael Herr were very forthcoming about their psychological problems that resulted from their extended immersion in their stories. Capote’s friends and colleagues also discussed his significant physical and emotional decline in biographies, such as Gerald Clarke’s *Capote*.

Michael Herr’s disclosure in *Dispatches* of his Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) after years on the frontlines in the Vietnam War was remarkably prescient and a precursor of revelations of military personnel, police, firefighters and other first responders much later in the twenty-first century. By commenting on his mental health problems—“I was pretty crazy when I came back...For a long time I was, in fact, very crazy”<sup>69</sup>—and his efforts to address those issues with psychoanalysis in the 1970s, Herr’s revelations were rare for any individual in that era, much less a journalist working in a profession that prided itself on stoicism and distanced objectivity.

This type of commentary would be praised decades later by news media reformers in 2012, who today advocate that journalists receive proactive hostile environment training and proper safety precautions. Central to this reform effort, urging a “culture of caring” for journalists and their sources, is an appeal to those affected by trauma to discuss their emotional reactions and to seek intervention (e.g., counseling) when and where needed. The study of these four notable literary journalists and their reactions to the rigors of their work provides additional, timely evidence of the risks and hazards of covering tragedy and trauma.

FUTURE STUDY

As noted at the outset, this qualitative research focused on the negative impact of extended ethnographic immersion on four literary journalists. The positive effects of in-depth reporting, such as friendship, personal and professional growth and productivity were not discussed in this study. Future research could compare and contrast positive

*Continued on next page*

**AWARDS COMMITTEE'S  
2013 RESOLUTION**



IALJS  
AWARDS

The IALJS Awards Committee, deliberating on an annual budget of \$1,000, decided that the underlying objective would be to highlight the best research on literary journalism produced in the course of a year and made public through the official channels of IALJS: the annual

conference, *Literary Journalism Studies* and the quarterly newsletter of the association. The committee's conclusions are a first step in the recognition of the success of our field of study, as well as of the association itself.

Therefore, it has been duly decided and confirmed by the IALJS Executive Committee that:

- Each year's **Greenberg Prize** winner will be offered the opportunity to publish their paper in *Literary Journalism Studies* (upon complying to make the necessary revisions suggested by the journal's editor). The winner will also receive a one-year waiver of the IALJS membership fee and the conference costs pertaining to registration, Breakfast for Your Thoughts and the Conference Banquet plus an honorarium of \$100. The value of this award is approximately \$350.

- A **Best Paper by a Graduate Student** prize will be awarded at each annual conference. The winner will receive a one-year waiver of the IALJS membership fee and the conference costs pertaining to registration and the Conference Banquet plus a research stipend of \$260. The value of this award is approximately \$350.

- The best articles published each year in *Literary Journalism Studies* and the IALJS newsletter, *Literary Journalism*, will also receive the association's recognition. The respective editors will nominate the best three (3) articles published in a calendar year, submitting them to the Awards Committee which will select the Best Journal Article and Best Newsletter winner. (Note: The Greenberg Prize winner cannot be nominated). The winner of the **Best Journal Article** award will receive a \$250 honorarium. The winner of the **Best Newsletter Article** award will receive a one-year waiver of the IALJS membership fee. ♦

**IMMERSION** *Continued from previous page*

and negative effects of long-term access to challenging journalistic subjects.

Another limitation of this study is that purposive sampling was employed in the selection of the four literary journalists and excerpts of their work. Different results may be derived from future analysis of published accounts of other narrative nonfiction authors.

Other suggestions for future study include in-depth interviews with literary journalists to explore not only the effects of extended immersion but other factors including the motivation for such assignments, coping techniques and recommendations for future immersive reporting.

Also, the use of standardized survey questions might provide additional data to enhance the body of knowledge on the impact of extended ethnographic immersion in covering tragic and traumatic literary journalism stories. ♦

**ENDNOTES**

1. Mark Massé, "Literary Journalism: Learning the Basics," *Writer's Digest*, March 2002, 28-30.
2. Tom Wolfe, E. W. Johnson, editors, *The New Journalism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), 21.
3. Mark H. Massé, *Trauma Journalism: On Deadline in Harm's Way* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2011).
4. Roger Simpson and William Coté, *Covering Violence: A Guide to Ethical Reporting About Victims and Trauma* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), x-xi.
5. Anthony Feinstein, *Journalists Under Fire* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).
6. John Laurence, *The Cat From Hue: A Vietnam War Story* (New York: Public Affairs, Perseus Books Group, 2002).
7. Ian Stewart, *Ambushed: A War Reporter's Life on the Line* (New York: Algonquin Books, 2002).
8. Jackie Spinner, *Tell Them I Didn't Cry: A Young Journalist's Story of Joy, Loss and*

*Survival in Iraq* (New York: Scribner, 2006).

9. Chris Bull and Sam Erman, eds., *At Ground Zero: 25 Stories From Young Reporters Who Were There* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 2002).
10. Norman Sims, *True Stories: A Century of Literary Journalism* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 306-7.
11. *Ibid*, 307-8.
12. Michael Herr, *Dispatches* (New York: Avon Books, 1978), 234.
13. *Ibid*, 220.
14. *Ibid*, 222.
15. *Ibid*, 219.
16. *Ibid*, 221.

---

Further research could compare and contrast the positive and negative effects of challenging assignments

---

17. Norman Sims, *True Stories: A Century of Literary Journalism* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 247.
18. Gerald Clarke, *Capote: A Biography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1988), 548.
19. Norman Sims, *True Stories: A Century of Literary Journalism* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 254-55.
20. *Ibid*, 257.
21. *Ibid*, 252.
22. *Ibid*, 252.
23. *Ibid*, 252.
24. Eric James Schroeder, *Vietnam, We've All Been There: Interviews with American Writers* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1992), 40.
25. Gerald Clarke, *Capote: A Biography* (New York: Simon & Schuster,

*Continued on next page*

IMMERSION *Continued from previous page*

- 1988), 402.
26. Norman Sims, *True Stories: A Century of Literary Journalism* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 257.
27. Ibid.
28. Mark H. Massé, "On Deadline in Harm's Way: A Qualitative Study of Trauma Journalists," AEJMC Convention, August 2009.
29. Gerald Clarke, *Capote: A Biography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1988), 533.
30. Ibid, 546.
31. Ted Conover, *Newjack: Guarding Sing Sing* (New York: Random House, 2000), 244.
32. Ibid, 245.
33. Ibid, 276.
34. Ibid, 301-2.
35. Ibid, 309.
36. Gerald Clarke, *Capote: A Biography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1988), 341.
37. Ibid, 397. (Note: These excerpts also used in "Section 8. PTSD." Not considered mutually exclusive as a negative effect of extended ethnographic immersion.)
38. Ibid, 515.
39. Joan Didion, *Salvador* (New York: Vintage Books, 1983), 14.
40. Mark Kramer and Wendy Call, editors, *Telling True Stories* (New York: Penguin Group, 2007), 37.
41. Ted Conover, *Newjack: Guarding Sing Sing* (New York: Random House, 2000), 12.
42. Ibid, 14.
43. Ibid, 243.
44. Gerald Clarke, *Capote: A Biography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1988), 402.
45. Norman Sims, *True Stories: A Century of Literary Journalism* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 256-7.
46. Michael Herr, *Dispatches* (New York: Avon Books, 1978), 260-1.
47. Ibid, 270.
48. Ted Conover, *Newjack: Guarding Sing Sing* (New York: Random House, 2000), 246-7.
49. Ibid, 247.
50. Norman Sims, *True Stories: A Century of Literary Journalism* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 254-5.
51. Joan Didion, *Salvador* (New York: Vintage Books, 1983), 14-15.
52. Ibid, 77.
53. Ibid, 105.
54. Norman Sims, *True Stories: A Century of Literary Journalism* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 248.
55. Michael Herr, *Dispatches* (New York: Avon Books, 1978), 13.
56. Ibid, 143.
57. Mark Kramer and Wendy Call, editors, *Telling True Stories* (New York: Penguin Group, 2007), 38.
58. Ted Conover, *Newjack: Guarding Sing Sing* (New York: Random House, 2000), 95.
59. Norman Sims, *True Stories: A Century of Literary Journalism* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 241.
60. Gerald Clarke, *Capote: A Biography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1988), 341.
61. Ibid, 397.
62. Norman Sims, *True Stories: A Century of Literary Journalism* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 242.
63. Ted Conover, *Newjack: Guarding Sing Sing* (New York: Random House, 2000), 32.
64. Ibid, 61.
65. Ibid, 171.
66. Ibid, 247.
67. Ibid, 275.
68. Norman Sims, *True Stories: A Century of Literary Journalism* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 257.
69. Ibid, 252.

EDITOR'S NOTE

The Kindle edition of Mark Massé's new novel, *Whatever Comes*, an Irish-American author's sentimental fool's journey to find love and success in 1970s Cleveland, has been recently published. The paperback edition was published on 1 June 2013.

TEACHING TIPS

*Continued from Page 30*

"I don't like repetition." The Argentine editor made a dramatic pause, looked at the other participants and me and asked rhetorically: "Isn't this why we are all journalists?"

I believe that if we learn how to trace the road back to how and why we remember some things and forget others, we might learn how to become memorable writers.

And then I repeat a lesson the great Columbia professor Sig Gissler used to say: "When you come back from reporting, try sitting and writing the lead before opening your notebook." It makes sense: if you have to read your notes in order to remember what you have just been told, how can you expect your article to be memorable?

By the end of that first class, the students have all spoken in class, even the shyest. And they all know something about their mates, and have learned to listen to others. Who knows which stories I will hear next year, and which ones the new students will remember? I will go into the classroom without knowing how it will end. That is perhaps one of the reasons why I teach narrative journalism. ♦

BOOK AND PUBLISHING MEETING IN SEPTEMBER

The Eleventh International Conference on Books and Publishing will be held 26-27 September 2013 at the University Library Regensburg—the largest academic library in the region and is an established leader in digitalization and database information systems—at Universität Regensburg in Regensburg, Germany. This interdisciplinary conference will bring together academic and practice-based scholars, including international lecturers, researchers, teachers, leaders and practitioners. For more information, please see <<http://booksandpublishing.com/the-conference>>.

# Literary Journalism across the Globe

## *Journalistic Traditions and Transnational Influences*

Edited by  
JOHN S. BAK AND BILL REYNOLDS

**A**T THE END OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, several countries were developing journalistic traditions similar to what we identify today as literary reportage or literary journalism. Yet throughout most of the twentieth century, in particular after World War I, that tradition was overshadowed and even marginalized by the general perception among democratic states that journalism ought to be either “objective,” as in the American tradition, or “polemical,” as in the European. Nonetheless, literary journalism would survive and, at times, even thrive. How and why is a story that is unique to each nation.

Though largely considered an Anglo-American phenomenon today, literary journalism has had a long and complex international history, one built on a combination of traditions and influences that are sometimes quite specific to a nation and at other times come from the blending of cultures across borders. These essays examine this phenomenon from various international perspectives, documenting literary journalism’s rich and diverse heritage and describing its development within a global context.

In addition to the editors, contributors include David Abrahamson, Peiqin Chen, Clazina Dingemans, William Dow, Rutger de Graaf, John Hartsock, Nikki Hessel, Maria Lassila-Merisalo, Edvaldo Pereira Lima, Willa McDonald, Jenny McKay, Sonja Merljak Zdovec, Sonia Parratt, Norman Sims, Isabel Soares, and Soenke Zehle.

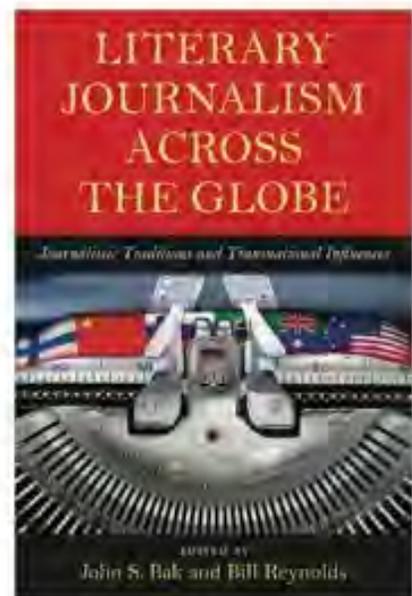
---

*“This book makes a major contribution to literary journalism scholarship, with a pathbreakingly broad international focus and commendable attention to developing a conceptual framework.”*

—NANCY ROBERTS, University of Albany, SUNY

---

JOHN S. BAK is professor of American literature at Nancy-Université in France. BILL REYNOLDS is assistant professor at the School of Journalism, Ryerson University, Toronto.



**University of Massachusetts Press** Amherst & Boston  
320 pp., 3 illus., \$28.95 paperback, ISBN 978-1-55849-877-8

[www.umass.edu/umpress](http://www.umass.edu/umpress)



## 2013 IALJS Membership Form

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title (Dr., Prof., Mr., Ms., Mrs., Miss) \_\_\_\_\_

University \_\_\_\_\_

School/Department \_\_\_\_\_

Work address (street, city, state/province, country) \_\_\_\_\_

Home address (street, city, state/province, country) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (include intl. code) Home \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Fax phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Area(s) of teaching/research interest \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Categories:** The annual IALJS membership coincides with the **calendar year** (no pro-rating is available). Members receive the *Literary Journalism* newsletter, the *Literary Journalism Studies* journal, all IALJS announcements and conference CFPs.

Please check category: \_\_\_\_\_ US\$ 50: Regular Member (Faculty member)  
\_\_\_\_\_ US\$ 50: Associate Member (Professional member)  
\_\_\_\_\_ US\$ 25: Student Member (Master or Doctoral level)  
\_\_\_\_\_ US\$ 25: Retired Faculty Member  
\_\_\_\_\_ US\$100: 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: PayPal/Credit Cards or Check:**

#### **1. PayPal and Credit Cards:**

Payments may be made via PayPal (and credit cards). Please see "Membership Payments" at <http://www.ialjs.org>. Please also fax completed form (above) to Bill Reynolds, IALJS Treasurer, School of Journalism, Ryerson University: **+01-416-979-5216**.

#### **2. Make Check Payable, in U.S. Funds only, to "IALJS"; please mail check with completed form to:**

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

## IALJS OFFICERS AND CHAIRS, 2012-2014

### PRESIDENT

Bill Reynolds  
Ryerson University  
School of Journalism, 350 Victoria St.  
Toronto, Ontario M5B 2K3  
CANADA  
w/+1-416-979-5000 x6294, h/+1-416-535-0892  
reynolds@ryerson.ca

### FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

Norman Sims  
University of Massachusetts, Amherst  
Commonwealth Honors College  
Amherst, MA 01003  
U.S.A.  
w/+1-413-545-5929, h/+1-413-774-2970, fax/+1-413-545-3880  
sims@honors.umass.edu

### SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

Isabel Soares  
Technical University Lisbon  
Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas  
Pólo Universitário do Alto da Ajuda, Rua Almerindo Lessa  
1300-663 Lisboa  
PORTUGAL  
w/+351-213-619-430  
isoares@iscsp.utl.pt

### SECRETARY-TREASURER

David Abrahamson  
Northwestern University  
Medill School of Journalism, 1845 Sheridan Rd.  
Evanston, IL 60208  
U.S.A.  
w/+1-847-467-4159, h/+1-847-332-2223, fax/+1-847-332-1088  
d-abrahamson@northwestern.edu

### CHAIR, RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Isabelle Meuret  
Université Libre de Bruxelles  
Campus du Solbosch, ULB CP123, avenue F.D. Roosevelt 50  
1050 Bruxelles  
BELGIUM  
w/+32-(0)2-650-4061, fax/+32-(0)2-650-2450  
imeuret@ulb.ac.be

### CHAIR, PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Rob Alexander  
Brock University  
Department of English Languages and Literature  
St. Catharines, Ontario L2S 3A1  
CANADA  
w/+905-688-5550 x3886  
ralexander@brocku.ca

### CHAIR, PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

Lindsay Morton  
Avondale College  
Department of Humanities & Creative Arts  
Cooranbong, New South Wales 2265  
AUSTRALIA  
Fax/+61-(02)-4980-2118  
lindsay.morton@avondale.edu.au

### CHAIR, ESSE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

John Bak  
Université de Lorraine  
Centre de Télé-enseignement Universitaire (CTU)  
42-44, avenue de la Liberation, B.P. 3397  
54015 Nancy  
FRANCE  
w/+33-(0)383-968-448, h/+33-(0)383-261-476, fax/+33-(0)383-968-449  
john.bak@univ-nancy2.fr

### CHAIR, AEJMC ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Joshua Roiland  
University of Notre Dame

Department of American Studies  
Notre Dame, IN 46556  
U.S.A.  
h/+1-314-550-9156  
jroiland@nd.edu

### CO-CHAIRS, CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Hilde van Belle  
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven  
Thomas More University College Antwerp  
Sint-Andriesstraat 2 / 2000 Antwerp  
BELGIUM  
w/+32-3-206-0491  
hilde.vanbelle@lessius.eu

David Abrahamson  
Northwestern University  
Medill School of Journalism, 1845 Sheridan Rd.  
Evanston, IL 60208  
U.S.A.  
w/+1-847-467-4159, h/+1-847-332-2223, fax/+1-847-332-1088  
d-abrahamson@northwestern.edu

### CHAIR, GRADUATE STUDENT COMMITTEE

Tobias Eberwein  
Technische Universität Dortmund  
Institut für Journalistik, Emil-Figge-Str. 50  
D-44227 Dortmund  
GERMANY  
w/+49-231-755-6987, h fax/+49-231-755-5583  
tobias.eberwein@udo.edu

### MEMBERS, NOMINATING COMMITTEE (includes FIRST VICE PRESIDENT)

Isabelle Meuret  
Université Libre de Bruxelles  
Campus du Solbosch, ULB CP123, avenue F.D. Roosevelt 50  
1050 Bruxelles  
BELGIUM  
w/+32-(0)2-650-4061, fax/+32-(0)2-650-2450  
imeuret@ulb.ac.be

Isabel Soares  
Technical University Lisbon  
Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas  
Pólo Universitário do Alto da Ajuda, Rua Almerindo Lessa  
1300-663 Lisboa  
PORTUGAL  
w/+351-213-619-430  
isoares@iscsp.utl.pt

### WEBMASTER

Nicholas Jackson  
205 R. St. NW, BSMT  
Washington, DC 20001  
U.S.A.  
cell/+1-815-341-8122  
nicholas.b.jackson@gmail.com

### MEMBERS, AWARDS COMMITTEE

Isabel Soares (chair)  
Technical University Lisbon  
Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas  
Pólo Universitário do Alto da Ajuda, Rua Almerindo Lessa  
1300-663 Lisboa  
PORTUGAL  
w/+351-213-619-430  
isoares@iscsp.utl.pt

Maria Lassila-Merisalo  
Lassilantie 53  
13430 Hameenlinna  
FINLAND  
cell/+358-50-525-5819  
maria.lassila-merisalo@iki.fi

Norman Sims

**IALJS OFFICERS AND CHAIRS, 2012-2014** *Continued from previous page*

University of Massachusetts, Amherst  
Commonwealth Honors College  
Amherst, MA 01003  
U.S.A.  
w/+1-413-545-5929, h/+1-413-774-2970, fax/+1-413-545-3880  
sims@honors.umass.edu

**MEMBERS, PUBLICATION COMMITTEE**

Alice Donat Trindade (chair)  
Technical University Lisbon  
Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas  
Pólo Universitário do Alto da Ajuda, Rua Almerindo Lessa  
1300-663 Lisboa  
PORTUGAL  
w/+351-213-619-430, fax/+351-213-619-442  
atrindade@iscsp.utl.pt

Rob Alexander  
Brock University  
Department of English Languages and Literature  
St. Catharines, Ontario L2S 3A1  
CANADA  
w/+905-688-5550 x3886  
ralextander@brocku.ca

Thomas B. Connery  
University of St. Thomas  
Department of Communication and Journalism  
2115 Summit Ave.  
St. Paul, MN 55105  
U.S.A.  
w/+1-651-962-5265, h/+1-651-647-0048, fax/+1-651-962-6360  
tbconnery@stthomas.edu

**EDITOR, LITERARY JOURNALISM STUDIES**

John Hartsock  
State University of New York College at Cortland  
Department of Communication Studies  
Cortland, NY 13045  
U.S.A.  
w/+1-607-753-4103, h/+1-607-749-6756, fax/607-753-5970  
hartsockj@cortland.edu

**ASSOCIATE EDITORS, LITERARY JOURNALISM STUDIES**

William Dow  
American University of Paris  
Department of Comparative Literature  
147, rue de Grenelle  
75007 Paris  
FRANCE  
w/+33-1-4062-0600 ext 718  
william.dow@wanadoo.fr

Miles Maguire  
University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh  
Department of Journalism  
Oshkosh, WI 54901  
U.S.A.  
w/+1-920-424-7148  
maguirem@uwosh.edu

Roberta Maguire  
University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh  
University Honors Program / Department of English  
Oshkosh, WI 54901  
U.S.A.  
w/+1-920-424-7364  
maguire@uwosh.edu

**BOOK REVIEW EDITOR, LITERARY JOURNALISM STUDIES**

Nancy L. Roberts  
University at Albany (SUNY)  
Department of Communication  
1400 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12222  
w/+1-518-442-4884, h/+1-518-583-8965, fax/+1-518-442-3884

nroberts@albany.edu

**MEMBERS, BOARD OF ADVISORS**

John Bak (founding president)  
Université de Lorraine  
Centre de Télé-enseignement Universitaire (CTU)  
42-44, avenue de la Liberation, B.P. 3397  
54015 Nancy  
FRANCE  
w/+33-(0)383-968-448, h/+33-(0)383-261-476, fax/+33-(0)383-968-449  
john.bak@univ-nancy2.fr

Thomas B. Connery  
University of St. Thomas  
Department of Communication and Journalism  
2115 Summit Ave.  
St. Paul, MN 55105  
U.S.A.  
w/+1-651-962-5265, h/+1-651-647-0048, fax/+1-651-962-6360  
tbconnery@stthomas.edu

Jo Bech-Karlsen  
BI Norwegian Business School  
Department of Communication, Culture and Languages  
N-0442 Oslo NORWAY  
w/+47-90-566-907  
jo.bech-karlsen@bi.no

Susan Greenberg  
University of Roehampton  
Department of English and Creative Writing, 80 Roehampton Lane  
London SW15 5PH  
UNITED KINGDOM  
w/+44-20-8392-3257  
s.greenberg@roehampton.ac.uk

Richard Lance Keeble  
University of Lincoln  
Lincoln School of Journalism, Brayford Pool  
Lincoln LN6 7TS  
UNITED KINGDOM  
w/+44-(0)1522-886-940  
rkeeble@lincoln.ac.uk

Jenny McKay  
University of Sunderland  
Research Centre for Media and Cultural Studies  
Sunderland SR6 0DD, Scotland  
UNITED KINGDOM  
w/+44-(0)191-515-2157  
jenny.mckay@sunderland.ac.uk

John J. Pauly  
Marquette University  
Office of the Provost, 106 O'Hara Hall  
Milwaukee, WI 53201, w/+1-414-288-3588, cell/+1-414-313-7949  
fax/414-288-6400  
john.pauly@marquette.edu

Alice Donat Trindade  
Technical University Lisbon  
Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas  
Pólo Universitário do Alto da Ajuda, Rua Almerindo Lessa  
1300-663 Lisboa  
PORTUGAL  
w/+351-213-619-430, fax/+351-213-619-442  
atrindade@iscsp.utl.pt

Doug Underwood  
University of Washington  
Department of Communication, Box 353740  
Seattle, WA 98195  
U.S.A.  
w/+1-206-685-9377  
dunder@u.washington.edu

## A LESSON FOR THE FIRST CLASS OF THE TERM

*Who am I? Who are you? What do I remember? Why?*

By Roberto Herrscher, *Universitat de Barcelona (Spain)*

My new students enter the classroom as if they were walking on shattered glass, and sit in a horseshoe-shaped disposition. “*Buenos días,*” I say. They usually come from a dozen countries and four or five mother tongues. The program, a University of Barcelona one-year Master’s course modeled on and done jointly with Columbia’s Journalism School, is in Spanish.



TEACHING TIPS

First, the usual round of presentations: In one minute, please tell the class

who you are, where you come from and why you are here. Some recite their CVs or explain why they chose the program. But quite a few start telling stories: a conversation with a grandfather, a bitter discussion with a boss in the newsroom, a teacher that inspired him, an anecdote about the sorry state of the press in her country.

And then, when they think it’s all over, the exercise really starts. I tell them that a mad editor has decided to have a story written about that first day in class, and that there should be a stand-out pull-quote in the middle of the page: something that one of their classmates said, something that might draw the attention of the reader.

Of course, it can be paraphrased. I ask them to write it down and to stick to their choice even after somebody mentions a great quote they had missed. This is when I say the name of the exercise: it is called “The art of memory.” Usually three or four get the most votes. In the third part of the class, the most important for me, I ask: “Why do you think you chose the phrase you did? Why do you think so many of you chose that one?” Among the first reasons, there’s always one student who talks about substance, and another one who mentions style. One winner told a great story, and another one said something that most people think, but said it

---

There should be a stand-out pull-quote in middle of the page to draw the attention of the reader

---

in a beautiful, powerful or innovative way.

I can still remember the winners of the class of 1999-2000: a man in his thirties said he first felt the urge to tell stories when, as a casino croupier, he was asked to train croupiers in the new casinos of Saint Petersburg, after the fall of the Soviet Union. “Shouldn’t

we tell them to go home to their family?” an old Communist hand asked him, when he finally understood the logic of the casino. The students laughed uneasily, and nobody forgot the scene. The other student was a very young Sociology major, who said he had dreamed of being a painter but instead of hands, he claimed he was “born with two left hoofs.”

But that is not all. Most of my students say they had chosen stories or thoughts that they identify with. They found a secret link, a connection to their own thoughts or stories. It can be positive identification—people whose lives they can relate to, people whose ideas mirror their own *weltanschauung*—or negative identification, a life not worth living, ideas so radically different that you can barely conceive anybody could think that way.

I used this exercise at the García Márquez Foundation in Colombia once, and an Argentine editor used his minute to tell the story of a carpenter who, when asked to make 12 identical chairs, said the price was higher than that for producing one different chair for 12 customers. “You don’t understand; each of 12 identical chairs should be cheaper than selling 12 different ones,” the customer argued. “But I like to create, to do the chair that suits me today, to ask the wood how it wants to be carved,” the carpenter said.

*Continued on Page 25*

---

LITERARY JOURNALISM  
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR  
LITERARY JOURNALISM STUDIES  
SUMMER 2013 VOL. 7 NO. 3

