

NIEMAN REPORTS

Nieman

**NIEMAN 1938–2018 JOURNALISM
THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE**

**Niemans on the
80 Pieces of
Journalism that
Had the Biggest
Impact on
Their Own Work**

NiemanReports

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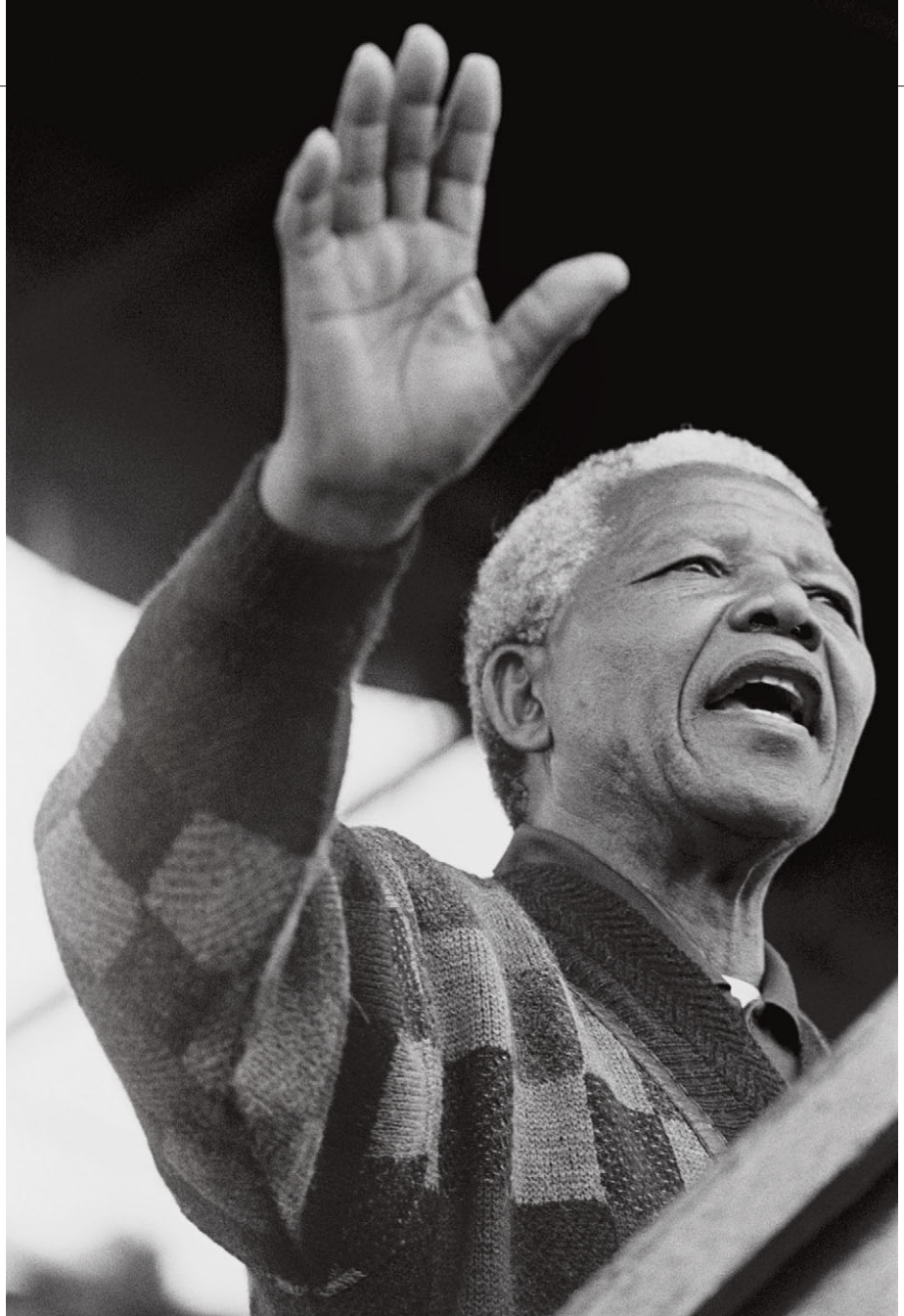
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Nelson Mandela is central to “Countdown to Freedom” by Danny Schechter, NF ’78

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TOP: PAUL WEINBERG/ANZENBERGER/REDUX
BOTTOM: “LIBERTY AND THE NEWS” © 1920 BY WALTER LIPPMANN. DETAIL FROM BOOK COVER REPRODUCED WITH PERMISSION OF DOVER PUBLICATIONS.

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BOTTOM: DOROTHEA LANGE FOR FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION/UNIVERSAL HISTORY ARCHIVE/UTIG VIA GETTY IMAGES

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A Global Curriculum That Has Shaped Generations of Journalists

Nieman Fellows reflect on the journalism that left an indelible mark on them

BY ANN MARIE LIPINSKI

HOW ARE GREAT journalists made? Whatever your image of an inspired origin story, it is unlikely to feature a young reporter sitting on the floor of her apartment reading a weekly from Omaha. But that was Dolly Katz in 1972 when the Omaha Sun broke an investigation of Boys Town, a charity for the homeless and troubled. After months of quiet investigation, the small paper published an eight-page report calling Boys Town a “money machine” that worked harder at growing its endowment than its programs. The Sun’s stories, which came on a tip from new owner Warren Buffett, would win a Pulitzer Prize, the first for a weekly newspaper.

Katz, then a young reporter at the Detroit Free Press, was inspired by the story out of Omaha, some of the first investigative journalism to carefully examine charitable spending. The work “demonstrated that the main ingredients for good journalism are a supportive publisher, energetic and determined reporters, and a commitment to exploring the full story,” she recalls. “The series was not a ‘gotcha’ moment; it was nuanced and fair.” More than four decades later, the 1977 Nieman Fellow remembers still the impact it had on her.

Great journalists are formed by great journalism, excellence being a catalytic force for good. For the Nieman Foundation’s 80th anniversary, we asked alumni for examples of journalism that influenced them, their beat, their country, or their culture. Katz and others responded with 80 extraordinary stories, photos, books, podcasts, cartoons, and more—the elements of an accidental curriculum that shaped generations of journalists and their work, in some cases Nieman-to-Nieman. Former curator

Bill Kovach, NF ’89, writes that after reading I.F. Stone’s crusading reporting he abandoned plans to become a marine biologist. Some years later, Kovach’s influential book “The Elements of Journalism,” co-authored with Tom Rosenstiel, would in turn be discovered by Indonesian reporter Andreas Harsono, NF ’00. Harsono would help to arrange its translation and the book is now required reading in many journalism schools in the region, “helping to nurture journalists in Indonesia.”

Among the joys of reading through these accounts are the vivid recollections from Niemaners of where they were when they discovered the work that would change them. So much media is disposable, designed to serve us for a day, an hour, a moment as

we scramble to the next breaking news alert. But these encounters had a rare indelible quality—journalism that endured.

Alison MacAdam, NF ’14: “I still remember where I was when I heard this story. It was night. I was driving alone—the best time to listen to the radio.”

Georg Diez, NF ’17: “I was sitting in a smelly hotel room somewhere in Vietnam, it was the early ’90s and I had met these lovely Israelis whom I joined on the path up North. I was lonely, I wasn’t happy. And I read Michael Herr’s ‘Dispatches.’”

Nina Bernstein, NF ’84: “I was then a reporter for New York Newsday, and I remember striding across Midtown Manhattan to the newsroom clutching the paper, galvanized by the explosive headline—‘The Death Camps of Bosnia.’”

Christopher Weyant, NF ’16: “I was a teenager prowling around in the back of a dusty used bookstore searching for cartoons. Sandwiched in the art section were two small shelves that held books of cartoons...It was there I stumbled upon a small collection of [Pat] Oliphant’s work, covering the first term of the Reagan administration. I fell in love.”

Alex S. Jones, NF ’82: “It was the mid-’60s and I was in college and ... [Tom Wolfe] was coming to speak... I was mildly interested as I had some writing aspirations, and almost without thinking I showed up to hear what



Tom Wolfe’s writing was “not like anything else journalistic”



A New York Times profile of Nicholas, far right, is a reminder of a journalist's calling "to amplify the voices of the unheard"

he had to say. ...It was life-changing because his writing was so new, so different, so not like anything else journalistic!"

THE DISCOVERIES WERE more than just memorable and for many signaled the start of professional transformation. It's as if in reading a book, viewing a documentary, or seeing a photograph, a threshold was crossed and there was no retreat. For some, change was immediate. Anita Harris, NF

“Great journalists are formed by great journalism, excellence being a catalytic force for good. For our 80th anniversary, we asked alumni for examples of journalism that influenced them, their beat, their country, or their culture

'82, saw "Harvest of Shame," the legendary Edward R. Murrow documentary on migrant workers, and recounts, "That night, I resolved to become a journalist." For others, exposure to new forms revealed dramatic new possibilities.

"Growing up in Nepal under the autocratic monarchy I did not know that journalists could tell stories about underdogs," writes Subina Shrestha, NF '17. Then, while studying in India, she came upon Palagummi Sainath's "Everybody Loves a Good Drought" and her world shifted. "I had never seen a journalist with such passion for finding stories of the people who had been systematically silenced... I realized that I did not even know my country."

Reading books by Cahuilla Indian editor and author Rupert Costo, recalled Tim Giago, NF '91, "made me understand more deeply that we, the Indian People, had to write our own books in order to bring out the parts of American history that were suppressed."

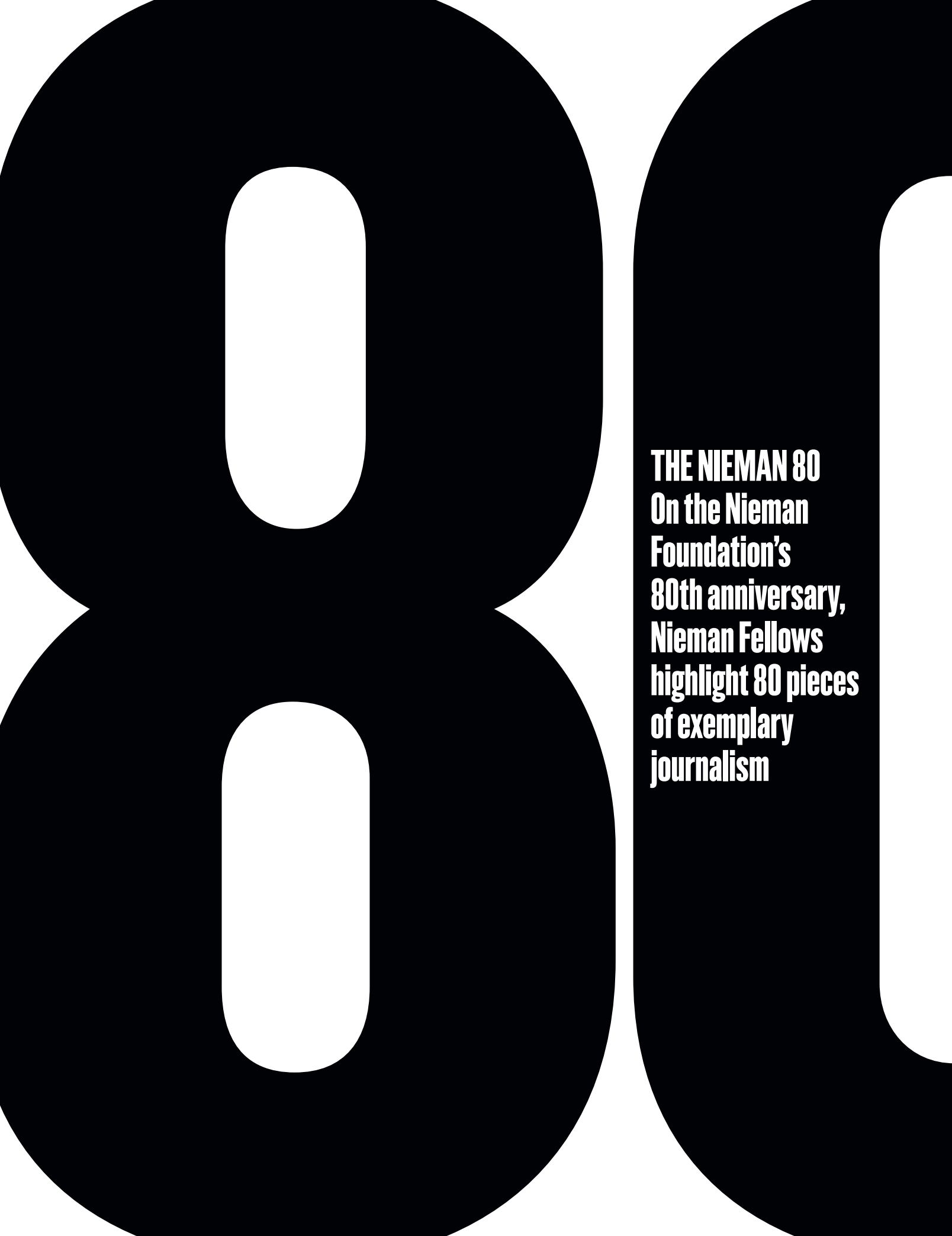
Lolly Bowean, NF '17, returns "over and over" to an Isabel Wilkerson profile of 10-year-old Nicholas on the South Side of Chicago as a guide to navigating her own

journalism in that city. "I read and re-read Wilkerson's profile repeatedly not only because it is a great blueprint, but it reminds me why I do this work: to amplify the voices of the unheard and to help communities better understand each other."

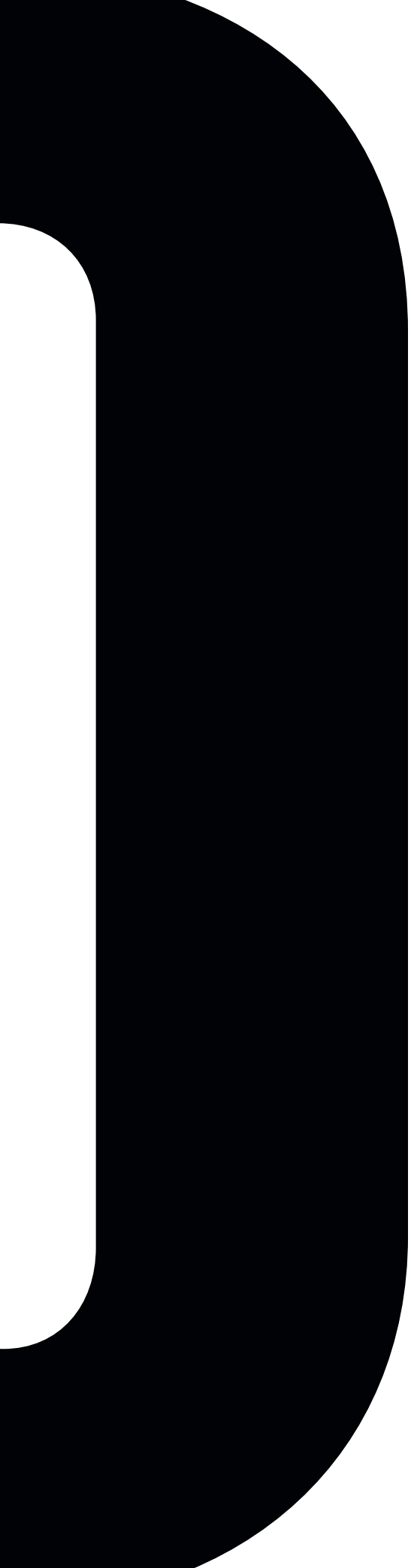
Gabe Bullard, NF '15, was on his Nieman fellowship, feeling "stuck" after years working with audio, when he heard an explosive new podcast by Sarah Koenig and with it a call to action. "When 'Serial' blew up, it was like a giant voice granting permission to do something different," recalls Bullard, "and challenging all us audio journalists to make something great."

Five years ago, as Nieman marked its 75th anniversary, the explosion of #MeToo stories had yet to be published and the internationally networked Panama Papers investigations had not been written. It is also true that "fake news" was not a weapon wielded from high office while conspiracy web sites masquerading as news found success.

Reporting moves fast as do its detractors, both with the power to persuade. Somewhere, future journalists are paying attention. ■

A large, bold, black graphic of the number '80' is centered on the page. The '8' is formed by two overlapping circles, and the '0' is a single large circle. The text is positioned to the right of the '0'.

THE NIEMAN 80
On the Nieman
Foundation's
80th anniversary,
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highlight 80 pieces
of exemplary
journalism



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UNCOVERING CORRUPTION AND ABUSE IN GOVERNMENT AND BEYOND

Soviet Army tanks parked in Moscow's Red Square after the August 1991 coup attempt against Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. In her recommendation, Julia Keller, NF '98, writes about why she admires Serge Schmemmann's coverage of the USSR's collapse for The New York Times

POWER





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Dorothy Thompson covered the rise of Hitler

Michael Fitzgerald, NF '11

DISCOVERED DOROTHY Thompson when I needed something from the 1930s to fill out a class I was teaching on narrative reporting. Her reports on the rise of Hitler were on a list of the best works of 20th-century journalism.

What luck! Thompson made interwar geopolitics read like a juicy conversation about the next-door neighbor's fight with the fellow down the block. In "I Saw Hitler," she writes that she's been trying to interview Adolf Hitler since 1923, and he won't talk to the foreign press. In 1932, when he grants her an interview, her problem becomes one shared by anyone who interviews someone famous—access is so closely controlled and answers so tightly scripted that the reporter gets almost nothing of interest. Thompson had to limit herself to three questions, submitted in advance.

When she finally meets him, he

was so unimpressive that she became convinced he could not possibly become dictator of Germany.

Thompson manages to make a narrative out of nothing. Her article caused a sensation when it was published in 1932 in *Cosmopolitan* (then a serious magazine). Even though



Thompson made interwar geopolitics read like a juicy conversation about the next-door neighbor's fight with the fellow down the block

she was wrong in that article about Hitler's prospects, she sees why his rise could happen. She writes about how much unhappiness there is in Germany with its democracy and economy and how many people actually want to see the monarch return.

After Hitler's ascension to power, her powerful reporting and charming condescension earned her a different distinction: in 1934 she became the first American journalist thrown out of Germany by Hitler's regime.

I SAW HITLER!

By DOROTHY THOMPSON
Cosmopolitan, March 1932
Farrar & Rinehard, 1932

EXCERPT

When finally I walked into Adolf Hitler's salon in the Kaiserhof Hotel, I was convinced that I was meeting the future dictator of Germany. In something less than fifty seconds I was quite sure that I was not.

It took just about that time to measure the startling insignificance of this man who has set the world agog.

He is formless, almost faceless, a man whose countenance is a caricature, a man whose framework seems cartilaginous, without bones. He is inconsequential and voluble, ill-poised, insecure. He is the very prototype of the Little Man.

A lock of lank hair falls over an insignificant and slightly retreating forehead. The back head is shallow. The face is broad in the cheek-bones. The nose is large, but badly shaped and without character. His movements are awkward, almost undignified and most un-martial. There is in his face no trace of any inner conflict or self-discipline.

And yet, he is not without a certain charm. But it is the soft-almost feminine charm of the Austrian! When he talks it is with a broad Austrian dialect.

The eyes alone are notable. Dark gray and hyperthyroid—they have the peculiar shine which often distinguishes geniuses, alcoholics, and hysterics. ■

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Katherine Fulton, NF '93

HAVE OFTEN been inspired by beautifully reported and written narrative histories that bring the “deeper news” to life. The one that made the greatest impact on me as a young reporter was Godfrey Hodgson’s magisterial book “America in Our Time,” his synthesis of what he had observed as a foreign correspondent from Britain. Looking back two decades, he taught me how to look for the forces and the threads underneath the surface of events. He moved me way beyond the stereotypes to understand how and

why America had been transformed during the 1960s. And he provided the most compelling explanation, even then, of the rise of conservatism that culminated in Ronald Reagan’s election and has shaped U.S. politics ever since. The story he told still informs my world view and inspires me, always, to look for ways to illuminate the underlying narrative.

AMERICA IN OUR TIME

By GODFREY HODGSON
Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1976

EXCERPT

In 1960, the United States had just enjoyed the most prosperous year in its history, as it had come to expect to do as a matter of course every year. The gross national product had passed \$500 billion for the first time. Yet the economic situation was not good. Growth had been sticky and

The rise and fall of President Richard Nixon is part of the history covered in “America in Our Time”

slow. Unemployment stubbornly refused to drop. People were talking about a recession. Balance-of-payments difficulties and foreign competition were beginning to cloud the future prospect. “This is the first time in my lifetime,” said William McChesney Martin, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, “that the credit of the United States has been questioned. A serious shadow lies over the American business picture.”

That was the conservative view of the outgoing administration. The professors of the New Economics who were packing up to come down from Cambridge and New Haven, and a few other places, to join the new administration, were more impressed by the opportunity than by the danger. They believed they knew how to guarantee uninterrupted prosperity, unlimited growth. That was the secret they thought they had divined from the theories of John Maynard Keynes. ■

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The story [Hodgson] told still informs my world view



Yvonne van der Heijden, NF '86

THE WORK THAT made a difference to me as a new journalist is “Der Aufmacher: Der Mann, der bei Bild Hans Esser war” (“Lead Story: The Man Who Was Hans Esser at Bild”) by Günter Wallraff. Calling himself “Hans Esser,” Wallraff went undercover to work for a few months as an editor at the German tabloid Bild-Zeitung. He describes in detail how stories were written and edited to boost cir-

ulation. Common practice at Bild is distorting the truth by giving undue weight to a small detail and tampering with the facts. Wallraff’s work as an investigative reporter underscored for me the importance of fact-finding as a fundamental of journalism.

DER AUFMACHER: DER MANN, DER BEI BILD HANS ESSER WAR (LEAD STORY: THE MAN WHO WAS HANS ESSER AT BILD)

By GÜNTER WALLRAFF
Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1977
Translated from German

EXCERPT

An editor at Bild, who Wallraff calls Thomas Schwindmann, gets word of a cold snap at a popular vacation spot. He sends reporter Michael Bartz to interview returning tourists. The



Wallraff’s work underscored for me the importance of fact-finding as a fundamental of journalism

Günter Wallraff holds a copy of Luegenblatt Zeitung (“Lying Pages”) news-paper, the design of which imitates tabloid Bild-Zeitung

headline—“Chaos, rain, hail”—is already written.

The first plane with Mallorca vacationers arrives, all tanned, all smiling. Bartz says: “I come because of the storm and the cold, because of the holiday that has fallen into the water.” The first tourist answers: “There was no thunderstorm, just amazing sun.”

Bartz sticks to it: “But we know that it was so. We have messages from our correspondents. Maybe you were not in Mallorca?”

But the plane did come from Mallorca and the other returnees tell only of bright sunshine. Bartz gives up. He calls his editor: “Mr. Schwindmann, there was no great storm and cold, they are all tanned.” Schwindmann responds: “Ask again, do not be so stupid!” ■

Taken from “Der Aufmacher. Der Mann, der bei BILD Hans Esser war” by Günter Wallraff (c) 1977, Verlag Kiepenheuer & Witsch, Cologne, Germany.



KLAUS SCHLAGMANN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dolly Katz, NF '77

IN AN INVESTIGATION published in 1972, the Omaha Sun, a weekly newspaper with not much money or staff, ferreted out the huge amounts of money Boys Town, a nonprofit to help at-risk boys, was collecting with its “he ain’t heavy, Father, he’s my brother” mass mailings, and how little was being used to improve the boys’ lives.

This Pulitzer Prize-winning package (“Boys Town—America’s Wealthiest City?”) demonstrated that the main ingredients for good journalism are a supportive publisher, energetic and determined reporters, and a commitment to exploring the full story. The series was not a “gotcha” moment; it was nuanced and fair and explored how approaches to child care and stewardship had changed over the years.

I read those stories when I was a medical reporter for the Detroit Free Press.

The Sun wrote an accompanying story about how it conducted the investigation, and I was impressed by the staffers’ excitement and decency and how they rented a special room for the reporters who were doing the story so they could keep it under wraps until it was published. The series made me realize that great journalism doesn’t necessarily require a lot of money and staff.



This package demonstrated that the main ingredients for good journalism are a supportive publisher, energetic and determined reporters, and a commitment to exploring the full story

Boys Town’s motto, “He ain’t heavy, Father, he’s my brother,” inspired this statue



BOYS TOWN—AMERICA’S WEALTHIEST CITY?

‘Give an account of thy stewardship...’

Luke, 16

By staff of Omaha Sun

Omaha Sun, March 30, 1972

EXCERPT

This is an account of the stewardship that Father Flanagan’s Boy’s Home, internationally renowned as Boys Town, has given to hundreds of millions of dollars donated by the American public in the 55 years of its existence.

Never in those years has Boys Town felt constrained to report to its millions of donors how the money was used. Unlike most major institutions which rely on public financial support, Boys Town has drawn deeper into secrecy—indeed has flatly refused questions about finances from donors and newsmen.

This is why the Sun late last year decided to take an in-depth look at

the affairs of the institution, perhaps the best-known privately-supported child-care home in America. The Sun dug through public records, talked to persons now and formerly acquainted with Boys Town’s operations, and finally confronted Boys Town’s leadership with the facts. The facts are that:

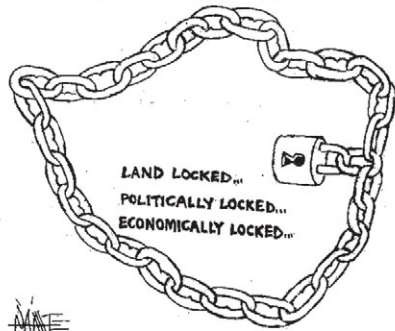
—Boys Town now has net worth of at least 209 million dollars, and perhaps more.

—Boys Town has a money machine that brings in some \$25 million a year from public donations and investment income.

—Boys Town increases its net worth by 16 to 18 million dollars a year. This is three to four times as much as it spends to take good care of its boys.

—Boys Town still continues to send out some 33 million letters a year telling Americans it needs their money (“\$1, \$2, \$5 or any amount you care to give”) to keep the wolf from the door. ■

ZIMBABWE...



Fungai Tichawangana, NF '16

GREW UP seeing Tony Namate's cartoons, and when, around 1991, he started doing independent political cartoons and then joined the Daily News, his work took on a major significance—not just on how I viewed the corruption and impunity of Zimbabwe's government but also on the landscape of Zimbabwean political commentary.

Namate's cartoons were bold, audacious, and sometimes made one worry for him. "Will he be safe? Will he get away with this?" one wondered. Namate and his Daily News colleagues were part of a wave of independent journalism that brought new dissenting voices into Zimbabwean media. In 2000 and 2001, the Daily News offices were bombed and, in 2003, the paper (founded by Geoffrey Nyarota, NF '04) was shut down by the government.

Namate's work has been recognized around the world. In 2004, he received the Courage in Editorial Cartooning Award by Cartoonists Rights Network International.

"The main point of a cartoon," Namate once said, "is to be a link between the politicians and the masses." His work continues to do that and he remains an inspiration for journalists and cartoonists around Africa and the rest of the world. ■

BOOK

THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLODS: POLITICAL CARTOONS FROM ZIMBABWE ('98 - '05)

By TONY NAMATE
Lion Press in collaboration with
New Zimbabwe Media Limited, 2011

Tony Namate's cartoon, which originally appeared in the Zimbabwe Independent in November 2002

Naomi Darom, NF '16

BY THE TIME I read "No Logo" in 2005 I had been working in advertising for five years, and came to question what my brain power was being used for. At the time I worked in a small ad agency near Tel Aviv. Clients included small real-estate companies and baby-clothing brands; as I tried for the umpteenth time to peddle a new suburban development, I asked myself, Why? Why was this work necessary? I certainly wasn't the first ad-woman to have ever felt so, but I couldn't put my malaise into words.

Klein gave me words. Her book is composed of four parts (No Space, No Choice, No Jobs, and No Logo), outlining how international corporations infiltrate every aspect of contemporary life; brand themselves for first-world customers while outsourcing jobs to the developing world; and use their vast resources to take over entire markets. It was an exhaustively researched evisceration of the world I was a part of, quickly weaponized by anti-globalization activists. I couldn't stop talking about it.

Klein gave me another gift. The advertising industry does not look kindly on cogs questioning the machine; if you're experiencing qualms, here's a line of creatives who will replace you. But Klein showed me a path for using my critical tendencies to do good. The year I read her book, I left advertising for journalism. The change had been brewing for some time, but Klein supplied the ideological catalyst—and many useful anti-corporate arguments to hurl at



Klein showed me a path for using my critical tendencies to do good. The year I read her book, I left advertising for journalism

anyone questioning the change I was making. Sanctimonious? Perhaps, but also very effective.

NO LOGO: TAKING AIM AT THE BRAND BULLIES

By NAOMI KLEIN
Picador USA, December 1999

EXCERPT

For the longest time, the making of things remained, at least in principle, the heart of all industrialized economies. But by the eighties, pushed along by that decade's recession, some of the most powerful manufacturers in the world had begun to falter. A consensus emerged that corporations were bloated, oversized; they owned too much, employed too many people, and were weighed down with too many things. The very process of producing—running one's own factories, being responsible for tens of thousands of full-time, permanent employees—began to look less like the route to success and more like a clunky liability.

At around this same time a new kind of corporation began to rival the traditional all-American manufacturers for market share; these were the Nikes and Microsofts, and later, the Tommy Hilfigers and Intels. These pioneers made the bold claim that producing goods was only an incidental part of their operations, and that thanks to recent victories in trade liberalization and labour-law reform, they were able to have their products made for them by contractors, many of them overseas. What these companies produced primarily were not things, they said, but images of their brands. Their real work lay not in manufacturing but in marketing. This formula, needless to say, has proved enormously profitable, and its success has companies competing in a race toward weightlessness: whoever owns the least, has the fewest employees on the payroll and produces the most powerful images, as opposed to products, wins the race. ■

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Chong-ae Lee, NF '13

IN 2001 I covered a story about an 8-year-old girl who had been raped by older boys in her neighborhood. It was then that I became aware how little I knew about what victims go through or how we as journalists should approach a victim suffering psychological trauma. I became increasingly interested in this issue. The next year a colleague and I focused on the psychological trauma resulting from physical and mental abuse experienced by combat policemen during their training and we produced “What’s Happening to the Combat Policemen?” for the news-magazine program “News Chujuk” (“News Pursuit”). In Korea, all men have to serve in the army or become

a combat policeman. We caught the police trainers abusing the conscripts by kicking them in the head or other vital points so the bruises would not show. We discovered that there had been more suicides among combat policemen than ever before and more combat policemen were showing signs of mental illness. It was the first program in Korea to focus on psychological trauma. The National Police Agency apologized and improved its training.

The role of journalists in reporting on psychological trauma is a subject I focused on during my Nieman year. I took an anthropology course about memory and politics and I was led to books such as “Trauma and

Police stand guard near a rally in Seoul in March 2017. The physical and mental abuse experienced by policemen during training is the subject of “What’s Happening to the Combat Policemen?”

Recovery” by Judith Herman and “This Republic of Suffering” by Drew Gilpin Faust. I was able to interview Dr. Frank Ochberg, a leader in this field. I returned to Korea as a pioneer, developing guidelines for journalists covering traumatic events such as the 2014 sinking of the Sewol ferry carrying high school students on a class trip. Now, finally, psychological trauma and the role of journalists in covering it is a social issue acknowledged and discussed in my country. ■

TV REPORT

WHAT’S HAPPENING TO THE COMBAT POLICEMEN?

Produced by HEE JUN YOO and CHONG-AE LEE
Aired on *Seoul Broadcasting System*, Nov. 29, 2002

Jason Grotto, NF '15

ONE OF THE defining moments of my journalism career came when I read “The Great Tax Giveaway” by the legendary Philadelphia Inquirer reporting duo Don Barlett and James Steele. I was in graduate school at the time, and although the series had been written a decade earlier it resonated with me in a way that few other stories had before or since and would become a template in forging my own work.

The series tackled the massive, 1986 overhaul of the federal tax code, unearthing obscure provisions in the Internal Revenue Code that benefitted specific, wealthy individuals as well as corporations. Tax laws, like budgets, are moral documents. They gauge the sentiments of a society, and here were two dogged reporters exposing the underbelly of a political class that curried favor with the wealthy while praising itself for its sense of right and wrong.

The overhaul “reaches deep into our national sense of justice—and gives us back a trust in government that has slipped away in the maze of tax preferences for the rich and powerful,” said Rep. Dan Rostenkowski

(D-Ill.), chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee and a political titan from my hometown of Chicago who would later spend 17 months in prison for mail fraud.

The series taught me two things: First, the power of effectively wielding irony in investigative stories—holding up two opposing ideas to expose hypocrisy. Lawmakers said the tax overhaul was fair; Barlett and Steele showed it wasn’t. The second thing the stories taught me was that it is possible to tackle subjects of great importance even if, on the surface, they appear dry. Tax law might sound mundane to some, but Barlett and Steele captured its vital importance, revealing it as a reflection our values.



[The series] resonated with me in a way that few other stories had before or since

Investigative reporting team James Steele and Don Barlett won two Pulitzers for their work at The Philadelphia Inquirer, including for their investigation into the 1986 overhaul of the federal tax code

THE GREAT TAX GIVEAWAY: HOW THE INFLUENTIAL WIN BILLIONS IN SPECIAL TAX BREAKS

By DON BARLETT and JAMES STEELE
The Philadelphia Inquirer, April 10, 1988

EXCERPT

Imagine, if you will, that you are a tall, bald father of three living in a Northeast Philadelphia rowhouse and selling aluminum siding door-to-door for a living.

Imagine that you go to your congressman and ask him to insert a provision in the federal tax code that exempts tall, bald fathers of three living in Northeast Philadelphia and selling aluminum siding for a living from paying taxes on income from door-to-door sales.

Imagine further that your congressman cooperates, writes that exemption and inserts it into pending legislation. And that Congress then actually passes it into law.

Lots of luck.

The more than 80 million low- and middle-income individuals and families who pay federal taxes just don’t get that kind of personal break. Nor for that matter do most upper-middle-class and affluent Americans.

But some people do. ■



Stan Grossfeld, NF '92

CAN CLOSE my eyes and still see the classic W. Eugene Smith portrait of the mother bathing her daughter who was deformed by mercury poisoning in Minamata, Japan.

It is forever seared into my soul.

The black and white photograph first appeared in *Life* magazine. It later became part of Smith's book, "Minamata," which documented the chemical plant pollution of Minamata Bay. More than 1,000 people who ate the fish there died.

Smith, who passed away in 1978, was the amazing *Life* photojournalist who perfected the art of the photo essay. This book was the visual equivalent of Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring" and brought world attention to pollution issues.

As a rookie photographer, I attended one of Smith's lectures in the mid-1970s. He talked about how the goons of Chisso Corp. had severely beaten him with pipes to try to stop his work.

I was moved to tears at his passion and courage.

After his slideshow, I shyly approached the stage, scared and intimidated by the photo legend. But I forced myself to talk with him.

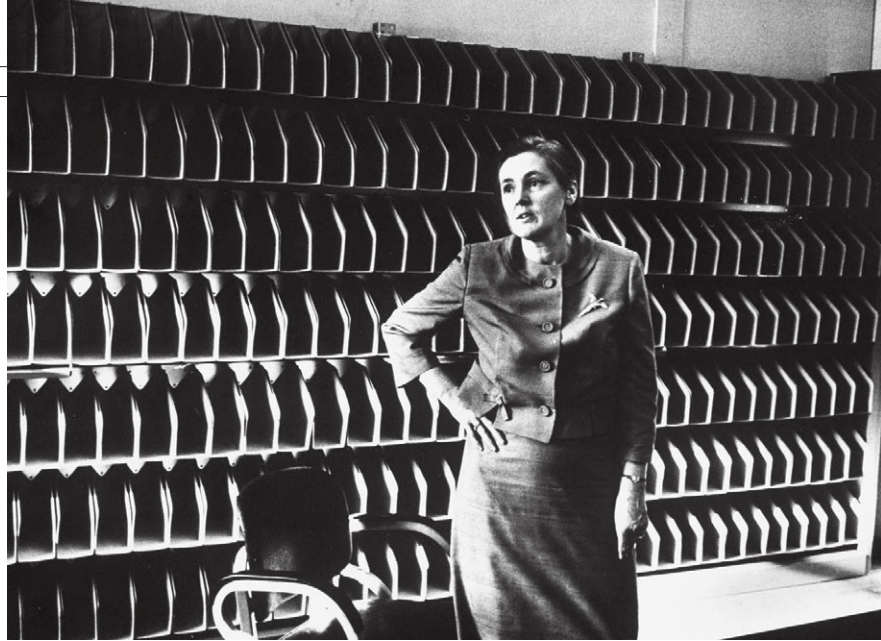
He was fragile and soft-spoken. He told me he had a metal plate in his head and he was depressed. His wife Aileen finished the book for him and co-wrote some of the text.

It was the last photo essay by one of the greatest photojournalists of all time.

The images and the chat had a profound effect on me. Smith taught me that photographs definitely make a difference, but there are risks that have to be weighed.

Sometimes a physical and emotional toll has to be paid to do the right thing. ■

FDA reviewer Dr. Frances Oldham Kelsey fought to keep thalidomide, which caused serious birth defects, off the U.S. market



Morton Mintz, NF '64

BEGAN IN journalism at The University of Michigan student newspaper and became a fan of investigative journalist I.F. Stone's weekly newsletter and the way he mined government documents to break stories. After 12 years at two St. Louis newspapers, I moved on to *The Washington Post*, which, in the summer of 1962, published my story about how "the skepticism and stubbornness" of Dr. Frances Oldham Kelsey, a Food and Drug Administration medical officer, "prevented what could have been an appalling American tragedy."

Eight months after the application for marketing thalidomide was filed with the Food and Drug Administration, the terrible effects of the drug abroad were widely reported in this country. Fortunately, Kelsey had blocked its introduction here.

My story led to greatly heightened recognition among the press and public of the need for sustained government regulation of the pharmaceutical and medical device industries, as well as the need for

congressional oversight of that regulation. The story and the reaction it elicited led me to focus on the safety of not only pharmaceuticals but medical devices and tobacco.

'HEROINE' OF FDA KEEPS BAD DRUG OFF MARKET

By MORTON MINTZ
The Washington Post, July 15, 1962

EXCERPT

This is the story of how the skepticism and stubbornness of a Government physician prevented what could have been an appalling American tragedy, the birth of hundreds or indeed thousands of armless and legless children.

The story of Dr. Frances Oldham Kelsey, a Food and Drug Administration medical officer, is not one of inspired prophecies nor of dramatic research breakthroughs.

She saw her duty in sternly simple terms, and she carried it out, living the while with insinuations that she was a bureaucratic nitpicker, unreasonable—even, she said, stupid. That such attributes could have been ascribed to her is, by her own acknowledgement, not surprising, considering all of the circumstances.

What she did was refuse to be hurried into approving an application for marketing a new drug. She regarded its safety as unproved, despite considerable data arguing that it was ultra safe. ■



Kelsey prevented what could have been an ... American tragedy

PHOTOGRAPHY

MINAMATA

By W. EUGENE SMITH
Life magazine, June 2, 1972



Bill Kovach, NF '89

IZZY STONE TAUGHT a generation of reporters the bedrock principle that a reporter should never start with the presumption that people in powerful positions tell the truth. Digging deeper and more broadly into public documents others did not see or ignore, he consistently reported facts missed by national newspapers in his *I.F. Stone's Weekly*, published from 1953 to 1971. His reporting on McCarthyism, civil rights, and the military-industrial complex provided a model for a generation of independent investigative journalists. Returning home disillusioned after four years of service in the Navy



[Stone] consistently reported facts missed by national newspapers in his *I.F. Stone Weekly*

during the Korean War, I had planned to study marine biology. But that plan was hijacked when a friend working on the local newspaper introduced me to Izzy Stone's work.

LYNDON JOHNSON LETS THE OFFICE BOY DECLARE WAR

By I.F. STONE
I.F. Stone's Weekly, June 9, 1965
 Excerpted in "The Best of I.F. Stone"
PublicAffairs, 2006

EXCERPT

There seems to be a peculiar division of labor here in Washington. The President makes peace speeches and the Pentagon makes foreign policy but the unpleasant task of declaring war is left to the poor State Department. The news that U.S. troops in Vietnam have been authorized to engage in full combat is the news that we are embarking on a new war. Article I, Section 8, of the Constitution, that half-forgotten document, put the power to declare

Investigative journalist I.F. Stone holds a map of Southeast Asia while working at his Washington home in 1966

war in the hands of Congress. Its members might insist at least that they have the right to hear declarations of war from some official higher up than the press officer of the State Department. It is hard to find any Constitutional or administrative reason to explain why Robert J. McCloskey, the press officer, should have been pushed suddenly into the pages of history by being assigned the task of announcing at his daily usually routine and almost always boring, noon press briefing that we were no longer advising or patrolling or defensively shooting back in Vietnam but going full-scale into war. As a major decision, it should have been announced at the White House. As a change in military orders, it might have been made public at the Pentagon. As a hot potato, both seem to have passed it on to the State Dept. There in turn it was passed on down from the Secretary through the many Assistant Secretaries to the lowest echelon available. Maybe the higherups are hoping it will be called not Johnson's or McNamara's but Bob McCloskey's war. ■

Jieqi Luo, NF '15

THE DEATH OF Detainee Sun Zhigang” from 2003 was such a tremendous benchmark, shiny and high, for Chinese journalism. The story led to the initiation of a civil movement calling for an end to a controversial law that authorized local policemen to immediately detain and deport anyone who fails to present an ID card, temporary residential permit, or employee card.

A great number of citizen activists, journalists, and scholars joined the effort, their voices converging, angry and loud. The central government was pressed to reform this uncivil law. Yes, progress was made but at a high cost for journalists.

Politicians took revenge, and the leaders of Southern Metropolis Daily were imprisoned for years on trumped-up corruption charges.

The 2003 story makes me so proud to be a journalist and it reminds me of the importance of remaining committed to the pursuit of truth. As censorship and the threat of getting jailed keeps growing, journalists, even those willing to go to jail, are left with little opportunity to publish stories promoting change. So many articles and news posts have been censored and blocked soon after their uploading, leaving the lonely “404” code on a blank web page.

It is a gloomy time of “404.” An increasing number of journalists



The 2003 story makes me so proud to be a journalist and it reminds me of the importance of remaining committed to the pursuit of truth. ... I am inspired to keep pushing forward

are leaving reporting while a small group of them is keeping up the struggle. When I think of “The Death of Detainee Sun Zhigang,” I am inspired to keep pushing forward, inch by inch.

THE DEATH OF DETAINEE SUN ZHIGANG

By CHEN FENG and WANG LEI
Southern Metropolis Daily, April 24, 2003
Translated by MIA LI

EXCERPT

Sun Zhigang, 27, graduated from college just two years ago.

At 10 o'clock on the evening of March 17, 2003, he left home for an Internet café as he usually did. Over the next three days, he found himself at three places where he had never been: Huangzhoujie police station in the city of Guangzhou, the city's repatriation transfer station, and the emergency clinic for detainees.

What exactly happened to Sun Zhigang at those three locations over the three days is something that he will never be able to tell us, for he died at the clinic on March 20.

His body, yet to be cremated, still lies in a funeral home.

Homeless men sleep at a train station in Zhengzhou in 2012. Sun Zhigang was detained under China's custody and repatriation system, which largely targeted migrants and homeless people

Sun Zhigang had only arrived in Guangzhou some 20 days ago. After graduating from Wuhan University of Science and Technology in 2001 and working in Shenzhen, he had traveled to Guangzhou to work for a clothing company.

Being new to the city, he didn't yet have a temporary residence permit. When he left home that night, he didn't have his ID card on him either.

At about 11 o'clock that night, Mr. Cheng, Sun's housemate, received a call from Sun, who told Cheng that he was detained at the police station due to not carrying a temporary residence permit.

Sun asked Mr. Cheng to “bring my ID card and cash” to bail him out. Mr. Cheng and another colleague immediately rushed to the police station. It was almost midnight when they arrived.

For reasons still unbeknownst to us today, Mr. Cheng was told by the police that “Sun can't be released on bail even with ID.” Seeing many detainees being released on bail, Mr. Cheng pleaded with other officers. However, they took a look at Sun, who was still being questioned, and said “not this one” without providing any explanation. ■



Claudia Méndez Arriaza, NF '12

WHEN I READ “Murder Comes for the Bishop” by Francisco Goldman, I was 22 and in my first year as a journalist. The criminal investigation and the trial following the murder of Bishop Juan Gerardi Conedera contained the whole story of my country: the vices and the virtues of a post-war society.

I immediately wanted to emulate Goldman as a storyteller. Every single detail that amazed me in his story was nothing but the result of deep reporting engaged with the truth, a quest for justice through journalism.

MURDER COMES FOR THE BISHOP: WAS THE MOST PROMINENT HUMAN-RIGHTS ACTIVIST IN GUATEMALA KILLED BY A HOMOSEXUAL LOVER, A GANG OF CHURCH THIEVES, OR AN ARMY HIT SQUAD?

By FRANCISCO GOLDMAN
The New Yorker, March 15, 1999

EXCERPT

On the afternoon of April 26th last year, a few hours before he was bludgeoned to death in his parish-house garage, Bishop Juan Gerardi Conedera was drinking whiskitos and telling stories at a small gathering in

the back-yard garden of a friend’s house. Bishop Gerardi’s stories were amusing and sometimes off-color. He was a chistoso, a joker. “In a meeting with him, you would get this whole repertory of jokes,” Father Mario Orantes Najera, the Bishop’s vice-parish priest, told police investigators two days later. “I wish you could have known him.” Guatemalans admire a man who can tell chistes. A good chiste is a defense against despair and the inner solitude that comes from not being able to speak one’s mind. Guatemalans have long been known for their reserve and secretiveness, even gloominess. “Men remoter than mountains” was how Wallace Stevens put it in a poem he wrote after visiting Guatemala. Two separate, gravely ceremonious, phantasmagoria-prone cultures, Spanish Catholic and Mayan pagan, shaped the country’s national character, along with centuries of cruelty and isolation. In 1885, a Nicaraguan political exile and writer, Enrique Guzman, described the country as a vicious police state, filled with so many government informers that “even the drunks are discreet”—an observation that has never ceased to be quoted because it has never stopped seeming true. ■

Carlos Eduardo Huertas, NF '12

LIKE SO MANY revolutionary entrepreneurial endeavors, CONNECTAS began in a basement. It was there in Lippmann House that I sketched out a work plan. The nonprofit CONNECTAS, launched in 2013, is now the main collaborative journalism platform in Latin America.

“Big Tobacco Smuggling,” by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, was a model for the kind of journalism I aspired to. In 2000 and 2001, a team of reporters in six countries gained access to thousands of internal tobacco industry documents to produce a series of stories that chronicled how tobacco companies worked with criminals to smuggle cigarettes around the world in an effort to expand their markets.

My goal was to build a powerful network of “journalistic camaraderie.” Now it involves more than a hundred journalists in 15 countries in the region. With this community, CONNECTAS has produced more than 250 stories that have brought to light hidden issues in Latin America.

Part of our mission is to identify and highlight cross-border problems, such as a million-dollar shipment to Mexico of illegal Peruvian timber. CONNECTAS also has supported investigations such as Aristegui Noticias’ “La Casa Blanca de Peña Nieto” (“Peña Nieto’s White House”), a story that proved to be a turning point in Mexicans’ perceptions about some of their president’s conflicts of interest. Identifying abuses of power is another major goal, one that we accomplished with an investigation of human rights abuses in Venezuela, a story that was picked up by The Washington Post. We also focus on telling stories in different formats,



Part of [the Connectas] mission is to highlight cross-border problems

An indigenous woman places a poster of Bishop Juan Gerardi Conedera at a Catholic church in Guatemala City in April 2006 to mark the anniversary of his murder



such as using 360-degree cameras to show the impact of the deforestation in Colombia's Guaviare jungle. That story was published in coordination with *El Tiempo* in Colombia.

The participation of CONNECTAS in global investigations such as the Panama Papers and the Paradise Papers, led by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, further underscores that the era of the "lone wolf" in journalism is over. The engine that started in the basement of Lippmann House has set in motion a transformative dynamic to foster better journalism in the Americas.

FROM SOUTH TO NORTH: THE AMAZON TIMBER TRAFFICKING TRAIL

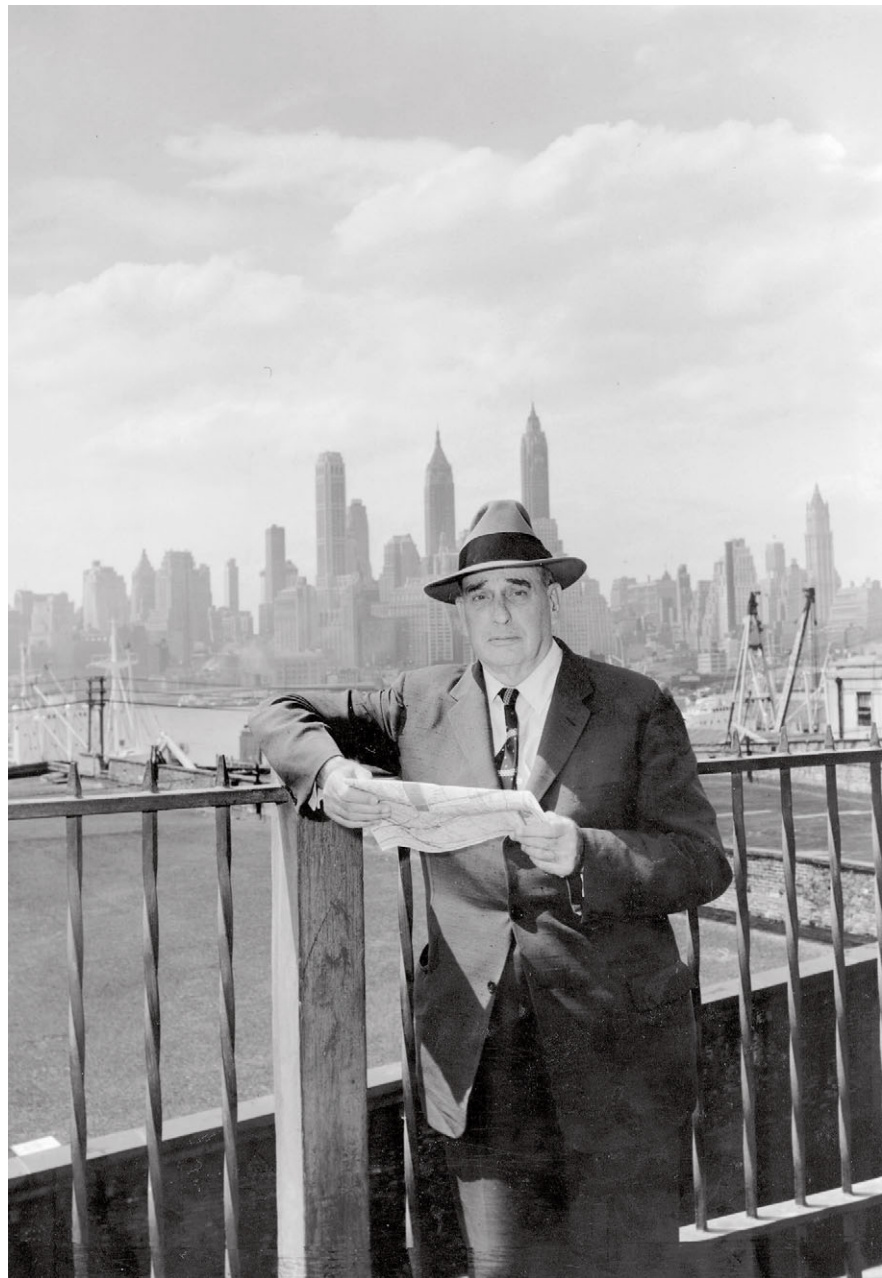
By NELLY LUNA AMANCIO
and PRISCILA HERNÁNDEZ
Connectas, Nov. 3, 2017

EXCERPT

In the port of Tampico, in the troubled northern Mexican state of Tamaulipas, the final touches were made to an audacious international strategy that led to the clearance of a million dollar shipment of timber of illegal origin that had been impounded through "Operation Amazon," the largest seizure of its kind in Latin America. It consisted of timber from the Peruvian jungle, an amount equivalent to the freight capacity of 60 semi-trailers. The irregular maneuver enabled the cargo—subject to a confiscation order issued by Peruvian prosecutors—to be delivered to a group of powerful Mexican businessmen.

This investigation by Ojo-Público, com of Peru, W Radio, and the Latin American CONNECTAS journalism platform confirms that the shipment was cleared through the intervention of Mexican and Peruvian diplomats behind the back of the justice system in Peru. Much of the wood that arrived at Tampico had been exported by a Peruvian company—Inversiones La Oroza. A week earlier, its imports to the United States had been banned by The Office of the United States Trade Representative because it had traded timber of illegal origin through the port of Houston. ■

Robert Moses,
then New York
City's park
commissioner,
photographed at
Pierrepoint Plaza
Park in Brooklyn,
N.Y. in 1956



David Hawpe, NF '75

THE JOURNALISM THAT most influenced me was Robert Caro's book "The Power Broker." One of its messages is that Robert Moses had enormous, expansive influence on the city of New York, its shape and substance, but his personal impact was not fully revealed until Caro, NF '66, wrote the book about him. I always recommend it to young journalists because it is a cautionary tale about the need to ferret out the exercise of power, the need to find those who are making things hap-

pen and shed light on their activities. There's never been a more important time for American journalists to do that. There is always a need not only to speak truth to power but also to speak truth about the power brokers. ■

BOOK

THE POWER BROKER: ROBERT MOSES AND THE FALL OF NEW YORK

By ROBERT CARO
Alfred A. Knopf, 1974



Wenxin Fan, NF '16

THE STORY “WHO Owns Luneng?”, now back online, was censored immediately after *Caijing Magazine* published it in January 2007. At newsstands, the magazine was bought up not by readers, but by people who didn’t want others to read it. On the internet, it was deleted with only the headline remaining. The story is one of the early ones about the ties between money and power in China, an enduring theme in award-winning reporting produced by Chinese and foreign journalists.

This one didn’t get a trophy, but it deserves a place in the history of China’s journalism. It’s a rare story on how state assets, in this case a state-owned utility company worth \$10 billion, was sold to private companies linked to top officials at the astonishing bargain price of half a billion dollars. The story didn’t stop such behavior, yet it shed light on

how public assets were put into private pockets, a theme reporters have returned to again and again. I’d like to believe this is a significant story that has encouraged that kind of coverage.

WHO OWNS LUNENG?

By LI QIYAN and WANG XIAOBING
Caijing Magazine, Jan. 6, 2007
Translated by MIA LI

EXCERPT

The last snow of the year fell on the city of Jinan, capital of Shandong Province, on December 30, 2006. Advertising screens with the name “Luneng” flank the city’s major avenues, shining through the falling snowflakes. Their light looks especially dazzling on the cold streets in the dead of night.

Having risen from its expansive home province of Shandong in recent years, Luneng is a conglomerate with

At Jinan Olympic Sports Centre in Jinan, China, fans cheer during a 2016 match between FC Seoul and Shandong Luneng, which is one of many holdings of the Luneng Group

subsidiaries in coal power, mining, real estate, construction, finance, and sports. The name “Luneng” is well-known to power industry insiders and passersby alike. What is not well-known is the fact that this mammoth enterprise has quietly undergone a change in ownership.

Not only does Luneng now exceed the size of its parent company Shandong Power Group, it also is bigger than local giants such as Shengli Oil Field, Yanzhou Coal, and the Haier Group. According to the National Statistics Bureau, at the end of 2005 Luneng was the biggest enterprise in Shandong with total assets of 73.8 billion yuan.

Little does the outside world know, however, that this gargantuan enterprise has not been a state-owned or an employee-owned enterprise for years. Via a series of carefully orchestrated maneuvers by a few Luneng insiders, two Beijing-based companies, Beijing Shouda Energy Group and Beijing Guoyuan United, now own 91.6 percent of Luneng. ■

Paula Molina, NF '13

IT'S LATE AT night. I have school tomorrow, and I know it's time for me to be in bed. But I'm sitting in the family car with my dad. There's a blackout. We hear the sound of police sirens, and from afar, the pots that people beat against the military regime.

We are not going anywhere that night. We are listening to the car radio. The dim light of the device illuminates our faces as my father spins the dial and, between the static and the music, finds the voices of the Radio Cooperativa journalists.

Mine is a memory that many Chileans have. From the '70s through the '80s, Cooperativa was the voice of a nation that chose not to surrender to the silences and lies that tyrannies need to prevail.

"Weren't you afraid?" I ask Cooperativa host Sergio Campos decades later. "We were afraid, of course," he replies. "But we did our job."

It took courage to do that work. Cooperativa informed us of many atrocities. It kept its audience company and empathized with us. When the opposition movement called for people to turn off the lights in their houses to oppose the regime, the radio played a popular love song which called precisely for that (in a romantic context, of course). In the midst of tensions, Cooperativa shared half a smile with its audience. The hosts, journalists, technicians, and the audience together transformed a news outlet into an institution.

Radio Cooperativa not only inspired me. In time, I became one of its voices. Sometimes, I ask myself if I or any of us, if necessary, could be that voice of a nation: one that a father and a daughter listen to, their faces barely illuminated, as they turn on the radio in the midst of a dark, long night. ■

RADIO JOURNALISM

RADIO COOPERATIVA

Chile, under General Augusto Pinochet's regime, 1973-1990

Laura Lynch, NF '00

FIRST SAW the magnificent three-part documentary series "The Champions" when I was in journalism school in Ottawa. It stood far apart from any other Canadian journalism I had seen, heard, or read up to that point. Master documentarian Donald Brittain illuminated recent Canadian history in a way that was not only informative but also dramatic and amusing. It brought alive

the often overlooked parts of our nation's history and its players, allowing me to see Canada as more than a dull little nation that had no drama or excitement. It taught me about more than politics; as a journalist-in-training it showed me the power of storytelling. When I became a political journalist covering Parliament, I tried to emulate that style of sharp, pointed analysis, of creating valuable context, of carefully crafted phrases and vibrant images. I am certain I never lived up to Brittain's standards but just reaching for them made me a better journalist. ■



["The Champions"] brought alive the often overlooked parts of our nation's history and its players

DOCUMENTARY

THE CHAMPIONS

Written and directed by
DONALD BRITTAIN
National Film Board of Canada, 1978



"The Champions" reveals the behind-the-scenes drama of the 1980 Quebec referendum deciding whether Quebec should pursue sovereignty from Canada

María Ramírez, NF '18

“THE MONEY SHOT” is a story about the male porn industry in Los Angeles and the suicide of one of its stars. It made me appreciate how the craft of a good reporter can make a story relevant and understandable to her most unsuspecting reader, one as uninterested in the subject as I was. Susan Faludi’s piece is also a good example of how to write about abuses against people who usually don’t get any sympathy without giving in to any temptation to sensationalize or simplify. Her writing is particularly effective in transporting the reader to the scenes she describes. The piece is about crude facts but her writing has a poetic rhythm.

THE MONEY SHOT

By SUSAN FALUDI
The New Yorker, Oct. 30, 1995

EXCERPT

Behind an unmarked door lies a room the size and shabby complexion of a one-man private detective agency; dust-covered vertical blinds quiver in stale air circulated by a floor fan. A tired gray-blue carpet with a permanent crease down the middle is flanked by two chipped desks, each with an overflowing ashtray and a

five-line phone, which blinks and rings ceaselessly from nine to six. The company sign with a blue-globe logo, has presided over the street for fourteen of the firm’s nineteen years, an exemplar of discreet advertisement from a more decorous time: “Figure Photography Films. Wanted: Figure Models for Immediate Placement. 986-4316. Suite 203.” The ad is for the World Modeling Talent Agency, central casting for the nation’s pornographic film, video, and magazine industries.

The agency has survived, in spite of the Old World gentility suggested by its sign, by accommodating the appetites of the ghost across the street. In a world where desire is packaged in videocassettes and marketed in malls, where self-worth is quantified by exposure, World Modeling has become the last-chance opportunity for a generation desperately seeking “immediate placement.” It is both the backstage door to the current American dream and an emergency-escape hatch for a capsizing American economy. Which is why World Modeling these days lures not just women but men. More men, in fact, than women. More men than this industry of feminine glamour can even begin to absorb. ■



Porn star Ron Jeremy, one of the subjects of “The Money Shot,” pictured in Los Angeles in July 1995

Andreas Harsono, NF '00

INDONESIA’S TRANSITION SINCE 1998 from the Suharto military dictatorship to democracy has presented journalists with many challenges. Indonesia’s Press Council estimates the country now has 43,000 news organizations from fewer than 300 in 1998. In addition, Indonesia is the largest Twitter nation in Asia.

In 2005 when I was reporting on East Timor militias in Kupang on Timor Island, I met Dion D.B. Putra, the editor in chief of Pos Kupang (“Kupang Post”), the local newspaper. Putra brought me to his office, proudly showing me a book, “Sembilan Elemen Jurnalisme,” the Indonesian translation of Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel’s “The Elements of Journalism.”

“Pak Jakob gave me this book—the guidance of our journalism,” he told me, referring to Jakob Oetama, the owner and co-founder of Kompas Gramedia Group, the largest newspaper network in Indonesia, which also controlled Pos Kupang.

It was a gratifying moment for me. In 2001, I had written a widely-read review of the book and subsequently helped to arrange that translation. Over the years, I have come across the translation in more than four dozen other locales in Indonesia, from newsrooms in big cities to correspondents in remote and dangerous areas. The book—which is required reading in many journalism schools on Java, Sumatra, and Sulawesi islands—is helping to nurture journalists in Indonesia. ■

BOOK

THE ELEMENTS OF JOURNALISM: WHAT NEWSPOPLE SHOULD KNOW AND THE PUBLIC SHOULD EXPECT

By BILL KOVACH and TOM ROSENSTIEL
Crown, 2001
“Sembilan Elemen Jurnalisme”
Translated by YUSI A. PAREANOM
(*Pantau Foundation*), 2001



Jerrold Schecter, NF '64

WHEN "KHRUSHCHEV REMEMBERS" first appeared in Life magazine and as a Little, Brown book, in 1970, about five years after he was ousted from power and forced to live 20 miles outside Moscow in a fenced-in compound, the articles and the book created a sensation. Produced from 180 hours of audio tapes, it was the first account by a Soviet leader to reveal the inner workings of the Kremlin. They could not be called memoirs since Khrushchev was not authorized to send his memoirs abroad. His family and friends insisted that no details be revealed on how the memoirs were created. The Publisher's Note stated, "The publisher is convinced beyond any doubt, and has taken pains to confirm, that this is an authentic record of Nikita Khrushchev's words."

As Time magazine's Moscow bureau chief, I was instrumental in acquiring and secretly validating the authenticity of Khrushchev's terrifying revelations of how Stalin's excesses led to the collapse of the Soviet Union. As a journalist, I strug-

gled to confirm the authenticity of the tapes. Time had them all voice-printed to confirm that they matched Khrushchev's voice at a United Nations speech in New York City.

What I took away from the memoirs, which turned into a total of three volumes, was that Khrushchev played an instrumental role in destroying Soviet communism with his revelations, which he intended to salvage and restore his own place in history.

KHRUSHCHEV REMEMBERS, VOL. 3

By NIKITA SERGEEVICH KHRUSHCHEV
Translated and edited by
JERROLD L. SCHECTER with
VYACHESLAV V. LUCHKOV
Little, Brown and Co., 1990

EXCERPT

Our ships went to Cuba right through an armada of the American fleet. The Americans didn't touch them and didn't check them. In October [1962] we had nearly completed the transportation operation. The nuclear warheads were dispatched while the

Nikita Khrushchev, who led the Soviet Union during the height of the Cold War, pictured in Moscow in 1965

atmosphere was red-hot. Every hour I expected they would capture our ships, but they didn't. We installed the forty-two missiles.

We could have delivered a powerful strike against the United States, but the United States would no doubt have responded with a counterattack equal to, or even greater than, ours.

In spite of all the noise, we pushed ahead with the operation. [Foreign Minister] Andrei Andreyevich Gromyko was in New York at a United Nations session. It was a difficult moment; storm clouds were gathering. Gromyko was invited by [Secretary of State Dean] Rusk to Washington. Our position was neither to confirm nor to deny the presence of missiles. In answer to a direct question, we would deny. Later we were accused of perjury and dishonesty, but who was accusing us? The United States, which encircled us with its military bases, ought to be the last one to accuse us of that. Did the Americans ever take the trouble to inform us before they built their bases? ■

Reprinted with the permission of Little, Brown and Company.



A cartoon by Dudley Viall depicts Namibian President Hage Geingob and his furniture purchases totaling hundreds of thousands of dollars

critical as he urges Namibians to buy Namibian products in furtherance of his “growth at home” policy.

Such lavish spending is widely perceived as preposterous in a country that is one of the poorest in the world. I believe even the president is embarrassed enough that he himself most likely will not stand in the way of proposals to limit his privileges.

GEINGOB'S TAX-FREE FURNITURE

By SHINOVENE IMMANUEL
The Namibian, March 16, 2018

EXCERPT

President Hage Geingob bought a bed for N\$120,000, as part of a N\$1.6 million splash on his furniture imported tax-free through people implicated in Namibia's N\$3.5 billion tax evasion, fraud, and money laundering scheme.

The luxury goods were bought from China, shipped to Walvis Bay and, according to people familiar with this transaction, transported to President Geingob's private residence by his friend and business partner, Jack Huang.

Huang is among the people implicated in the country's biggest tax evasion case.

Although the President obtained an exemption from paying import duty, the transaction raises questions about abuse of privileges, as well as the loss of money to the country through spending on top-of-the-range luxury goods.

Experts said Geingob would have paid around N\$950,000 in value-added tax and import duty for importing the furniture.

Geingob's office refused to answer detailed questions sent to them this week, saying this is a private transaction which the President paid for by “using his funds for his private residence”.

The office did not answer questions on what Huang's role was, and whether the President was comfortable with the transaction, knowing that it was linked to people accused of involvement in fraud and money laundering. ■

Courtesy of The Namibian.

Tangeni Amupadhi, NF '07

IN MY 11 years at The Namibian, Namibia's largest daily newspaper, we have never published an investigative story that was more widely read than one earlier this year about a \$10,000 bed and other furniture worth more than \$100,000 that the president bought for himself.

Namibian President Hage Geingob wasn't forced to resign or even apologize, but he is unlikely ever again to brush off our queries with the “none of your business” or “it's my private property” reply that he gave us when we first asked him to explain the purchases. Many readers seem to now appreciate that the president may not have broken the law using tax exemptions to buy himself furniture. Yet the story made

a case against unethical conduct and abuses of power.

The leader of the official opposition has made clear that his party will propose changes to the laws to curb entitlements and ensure that laws are not widely interpreted to allow the president to spend at will on foreign imports.

For me, the story (“Geingob's Tax-Free Furniture”) stands out for the heated debate it stirred over whether our newspaper went too far in writing about the president's private property. The president's supporters invoked “invasion of privacy” as a defense. Critics came to our aid, pointing out that not only was the law interpreted to favor the president, but he was being hypo-

Julia Keller, NF '98

AS CULTURAL CRITIC at the Chicago Tribune for a dozen years, I was sometimes called upon to write the big, epic think pieces that necessarily follow in the wake of big, epic events. The dawn of the new millennium. Columbine. The White Sox winning the World Series.

I'm not kidding about that last one. Sports are a big deal in Chicago.

Anyway, when the Big Thing happened, my editors beckoned. I was the go-to gal for the "What does it all mean?" piece. Because I was able to pull it off, some onlookers thought that I enjoyed it, and that it was easy.

I didn't—and it wasn't.

The panoramic view is the hardest job in journalism. That's why I so admire Serge Schmemmann's eloquent, deeply informed summary of the fall of the Soviet Union in the Dec. 26, 1991, edition of *The New York Times*. In it, he wrote of a country "stripped of its ideology, dismembered, bankrupt and hungry—but awe-inspiring even in its fall."

He was writing in real time, as the statues crumbled and the bells

In August 1991, months before the collapse of the Soviet Union, a soldier stands guard next to protestors in Moscow

tolled. He didn't have the luxury of pipe-and-slippers retrospect.

Such articles require both a wide-angle lens and an electron microscope, as one must capture not only the grand, historical sweep but also the small, telling nuances—and then knit them together to create a piece that tells us something we don't already know (so many of these efforts end up stating the obvious), and does so with poetry and fire. Schmemmann did that, and I've never forgotten his profound and illuminating account of a 20th-century milestone.

THE SOVIET STATE, BORN OF A DREAM, DIES

By SERGE SCHMEMMANN
The New York Times, Dec. 26, 1991

EXCERPT

It is easy now, gazing over the smoldering ruins of the Soviet empire, to enumerate the fatal illusions of the Marxist system. Yet the irresistible utopian dream fired generations of reformers, revolutionaries and radicals here and abroad, helping spread Soviet influence to the far corners of the globe.

Until recently, rare was the third world leader who did not espouse

some modified Marxist doctrine, who did not make a regular pilgrimage to Moscow to join in the ritual denunciations of the "imperialists."

Much of it was opportunism, of course. In the Soviet Union as in the third world, Communism offered a handy justification for stomping on democracy and keeping one party and one dictator in power.

Yet it was also a faith, one strong enough to survive all the injustices done in its name. Lev Kopelev, a prominent intellectual now living in Germany, recalled in his memoirs how prisoners emerged from the gulag after Stalin's death firmly believing that at last they could start redressing the "errors" of Stalinism and truly building Communism.

And only last March, Mr. Gorbachev would still declare in Minsk, "I am not ashamed to say that I am a Communist and adhere to the Communist idea, and with this I will leave for the other world."

The tenacity of the faith testified to the scope of the experiment. It was a monumental failure, but it had been a grand attempt, an experiment on a scale the world had never known before. ■

Serge Schmemmann © 1991 *The New York Times*.



PETER TURNLEY/CORBIS/IVCG VIA GETTY IMAGES

James S. Doyle, NF '65

THE LEADERSHIP OF our government became unhinged after 9/11/2001. It took me a long time to face that, and even longer to figure out how and why it happened.

I knew Jane Mayer's Wall Street Journal political reporting and its consistent high quality. She dug deep. She went to *The New Yorker* and her stories were longer, more detailed, groundbreaking.

She published her book "The Dark Side" in 2008, and the narrative stunned me. She disclosed in startling detail how Vice President Dick Cheney exploited the failures of intelligence and leadership to widen the American national security state, flout the Constitution, roll the Congress, and nudge the press and public to meekly accept torture as national policy.

The effect of the book on us journalists (even retired) was a slow burn that still is smoldering.

As staff members look on, U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney speaks to President Bush by phone on 9/11 inside the White House's operations center

THE DARK SIDE: THE INSIDE STORY OF HOW THE WAR ON TERROR TURNED INTO A WAR ON AMERICAN IDEALS

By JANE MAYER
Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2008

EXCERPT

Any fair telling of how America came to sacrifice so many cherished values in its fight against terrorism has to acknowledge that the enemy that the Bush administration faced on September 11, and which the country faces still, is both real and terrifying. Often, those in power have felt they simply had no good choices. But this country has in the past faced other mortal enemies, equally if not more threatening, without endangering its moral authority by resorting to state-sanctioned torture. Other democratic nations, meanwhile, have grappled with similar if not greater threats from terrorism without undercutting their values and laws.

But to understand the Bush Administration's self-destructive response to September 11, one has to look particularly to Cheney, the doomsday expert and unapologetic

advocate of expanding presidential power. Appearing on Meet the Press on the first Sunday after the attacks, Cheney gave a memorable description of how the administration viewed the continuing threat and how it planned to respond.

"We'll have to work sort of the dark side, if you will," Cheney explained in his characteristically quiet and reassuring voice. "We've got to spend time in the shadows in the intelligence world. A lot of what needs to be done here will have to be done quietly, without any discussion, using sources and methods that are available to our intelligence agencies—if we are going to be successful. That's the world these folks operate in. And, uh, so it's going to be vital for us to use any means at our disposal basically, to achieve our objectives."

Soon afterward, Cheney disappeared from public view. But his influence had already begun to shape all that followed. ■

Excerpt from "Panic" from *THE DARK SIDE: THE INSIDE STORY OF HOW THE WAR ON TERROR TURNED INTO A WAR ON AMERICAN IDEALS* by Jane Mayer, copyright © 2008 by Jane Mayer. Used by permission of Doubleday, an imprint of the Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, a division of Penguin Random House LLC. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of ICM Partners.



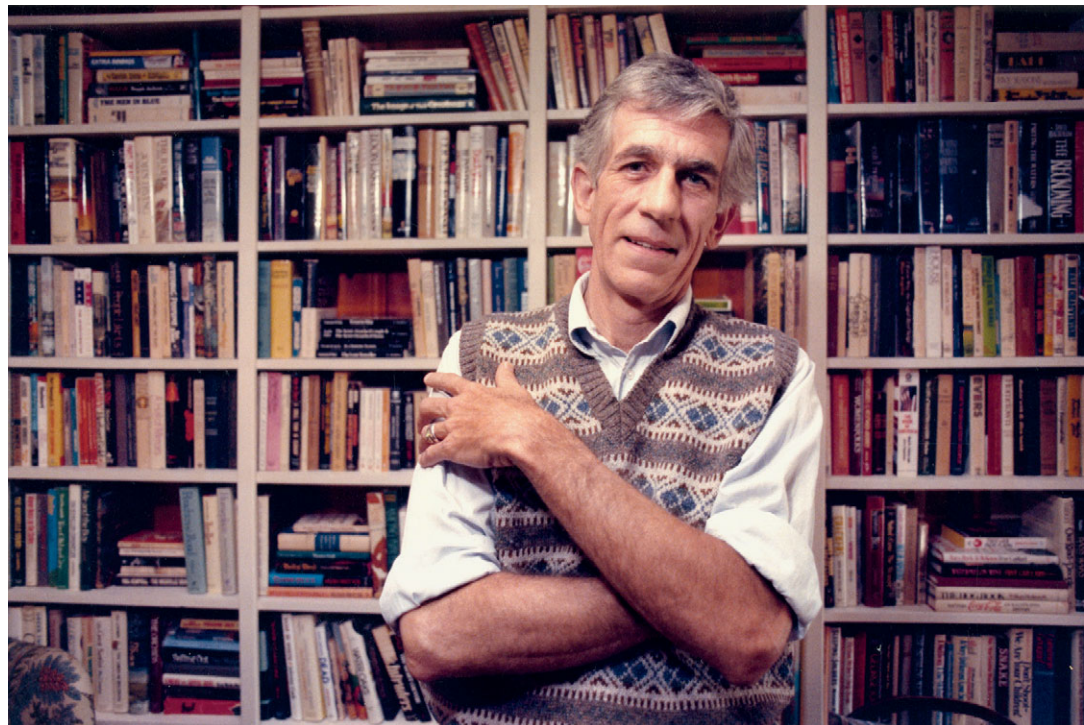
DAVID BOHRER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/THE WHITE HOUSE

Steve Oney, NF '82

ONE OF THE eternal struggles for journalists is between the need to belong to something bigger than themselves and the urge for independence. Nearly every reporter hopes to be part of a like-minded organization—whether newspaper or online news site—that offers professional support and camaraderie, not to mention a regular paycheck and health insurance. At the same time, most chafe at the restrictions and monotony of working for the information factory. How many city council meetings or high school basketball games can you cover before you start to die? This is the conundrum Paul Hemphill (Nieman class of 1969) addresses in his bitterly trenchant essay, “Quitting the Paper.” Hemphill, the featured daily columnist at *The Atlanta Journal* during the late 1960s, was once the most widely read journalist in the South. He pounded out six columns a week, and at their best they were literature on deadline. Ultimately, however, he wanted to take a stab at writing books. In “Quitting the Paper”—which appeared in 1974 in *Southern Voices* (an excellent but short-lived glossy) and which I devoured as a journalism student at the University of Georgia—Hemphill makes the case for going



One of the eternal struggles for journalists is between the need to belong to something bigger than themselves and the urge for independence. ... In “Quitting the Paper,” Hemphill makes the case for going it alone



Atlanta author Paul Hemphill photographed in his home in 1989

it alone. His brief, while somewhat melodramatic (Hemphill was always the star of his own movie) and slightly dated (in the 1970s, the news biz was so healthy you could leave a good job confident that if your ambitions faltered you'd find another just as good), captures the never-ending tension between journalistic stability and freedom. The chilling kicker about Birmingham News sports editor Benny Marshall says it all. From the moment I finished the piece, I knew I would never be a lifer anywhere.

QUITTING THE PAPER

By PAUL HEMPHILL
Southern Voices, 1974

EXCERPT

Late one night in the fall of 1969, with the rain splattering against the front window and the gray light of a television set dancing across the bar, I sat in a booth at Emile's French Cafe in downtown Atlanta with a feisty young newspaper reporter named Morris Shelton and methodically proceeded to get paralyzed on Beefeater martinis. By now this had become a daily ritual. I was thirty-three years old. I was the featured columnist for the *Atlanta Journal*, the largest daily

newspaper between Miami and Washington. I had been one of a dozen journalists around the country to be selected to study at Harvard under a Nieman Fellowship the previous year. I fancied myself a Jimmy Breslin of the South, cranking out daily one-thousand-word human dramas on everything from flophouse drunks to Lester Maddox, sufficiently loved and hated by enough people to have that sense of pop celebrity with which most newspapermen delude themselves. I had the most envied newspaper job in Atlanta, if not in the South, and now and then I would see a younger writer in a town like Greensboro or Savannah or Montgomery imitating my style just as I had once stolen from Hemingway and Breslin and too many others to talk about. I had been sloppy and inaccurate, from time to time, but I had also written some good stuff. I had hung around all-night eateries and gone to Vietnam, and hitchhiked and lain around with hookers and shot pool with Minnesota Fats and sat in cool suburban dens with frustrated housewives.

And yet, with the next column due by dawn, I had run out of gas. ■

Reprinted with permission from the estate of Paul Hemphill. The piece was originally published in *SOUTHERN VOICES*, then reprinted in *TOO OLD TO CRY*, a collection of his journalism published by Viking in 1981.



Kalpana Jain, NF '09

ENTERED JOURNALISM in the late 1980s—about 40 years after India gained freedom from British colonial rule. The media environment, in large part, was shaped by this colonial history. Many English language newspapers were launched by colonists for colonists, and at the same time, challenging those narratives was a tradition of vibrant journalism, led by Mahatma Gandhi.

When I first got a job as a journalist for an influential English daily, *The Times of India*, newspapers were mostly focused on politics, and newsrooms were dominated by men. My role models at the time were a handful of women reporters taking up issues, what were then called “soft” issues, related to gender, environment, children.

One of them was Sheela Barse, a pioneering Mumbai-based investigative reporter, whose early articles appeared in an English daily, *Indian Express*. She reported tirelessly on many social conditions at the time, particularly relating to children and the legal situation.

Not many journalists at the time

were investigating stories about prison conditions and access to information was highly restricted. She approached the courts to get permission to interview prisoners in jails in central India. I remember reading her powerful stories on child prostitution. She relentlessly reported on children lodged in jails across India. At the time, different states in India had different laws and many did not prohibit juveniles being put in jails with adult convicts. Her reporting led to laws being changed and children being freed. Barse sub-



[Sheela Barse's] journalism left a deep imprint. To me, she illustrated the power of good journalism in bringing about change

Protestors in New Delhi in 2007 demand a halt to the evictions of forest communities. Sheela Barse extensively covered land-use and tribal rights issues

sequently reported on land-use and tribal rights issues.

Her journalism left a deep imprint. To me, she illustrated the power of good journalism in bringing about change.

REINVENTING DISPLACEMENT

By SHEELA BARSE
The Hindu, July 1, 2005

EXCERPT

Expulsion is traumatic, dislocation stressful. Displacement under compulsion is rarely without agony and extensive violation of human rights. In this country where thousands of square kilometres have been cleared of impoverished human beings to set up mostly eco-system damaging infrastructures, uprooting is akin to amputations without anaesthesia, left untreated, open-fleshed and festering hidden inner deformities. If the haemorrhaging stops, gangrene sets in. Millions of the ‘project-affected’ tribals have suffered so. Hence no matter how precious the cause, responsible citizens cannot but be hostile to the removal of peoples as if they were dispensable pawns cluttering a chessboard. ■

Christopher Weyant, NF '16

IT WAS THE mid-1980s when I read my first Pat Oliphant cartoon. I was a teenager prowling around in the back of a dusty used bookstore searching for cartoons. Sandwiched in the art section were two small shelves that held books of cartoons—mostly compilations of newspaper comics and old New Yorker cartoons. It was there I stumbled upon a small collection of Oliphant's work covering the first term of the Reagan administration. I fell in love.

Swirling on these pages was a perfect mix of art and opinion. In a single, inky stroke, Oliphant's masterful brush line could be both brutally powerful and fragile. He effortlessly created sublime caricatures of politicians like Reagan, Watt, Kissinger, and Arafat that somehow looked more like them than they actually did. His visual metaphors and dramatic compositions were almost

operatic—big, bold drawings that cut straight to the heart of any political issue, and were delivered with a touch of humor. Oliphant changed my understanding of what an editorial cartoon could be.

Years later, I had become a political cartoonist and was working for a newspaper in Washington, D.C. I had worked through the Clinton years and now found myself struggling in the post-9/11 environment. In these early days, tone was so difficult to negotiate for cartoonists. The nation, and my editor, wasn't ready for the sharper end of a cartoonist's pen.

But then Pat Oliphant created what I consider to be one of the greatest



His visual metaphors were almost operatic

Christopher Weyant considers Oliphant's cartoon, published days after 9/11, to be "a somber, profound, and prescient warning"

editorial cartoons of the last hundred years. Simple in its execution, it shows a tattered, embattled Uncle Sam, a reference to a cartoon he drew the day after the 9/11 attacks, but this time, Uncle Sam, sleeves rolled up, holds the sword of war, ready to swing. Behind him, a small, vulnerable child with an American flag stands watching as Uncle Sam says, "Watch out for the backswing, kid."

What seems to be a gentle critique is actually a somber, profound, and prescient warning on what we were about to unleash. Oliphant found the perfect balance of tone and voice. He made it possible for me to understand how to deliver cutting satire in a way that my readership, still reeling from the attacks, could digest until they were able to handle more. ■

CARTOON

WATCH OUT FOR THE BACKSWING, KID

By PAT OLIPHANT
The Washington Post, Sept. 17, 2001



LOOKING AT BIAS AND LISTENING TO SELDOM-HEARD VOICES

Twenty-six females of color who founded companies were featured in the April 2018 issue of Vanity Fair. Lisa Stone, NF '02, traces the origins of the photo and similar coverage to a 2016 ProjectDiane report, Kathryn Finney's "The Real Unicorns of Tech: Black Women"

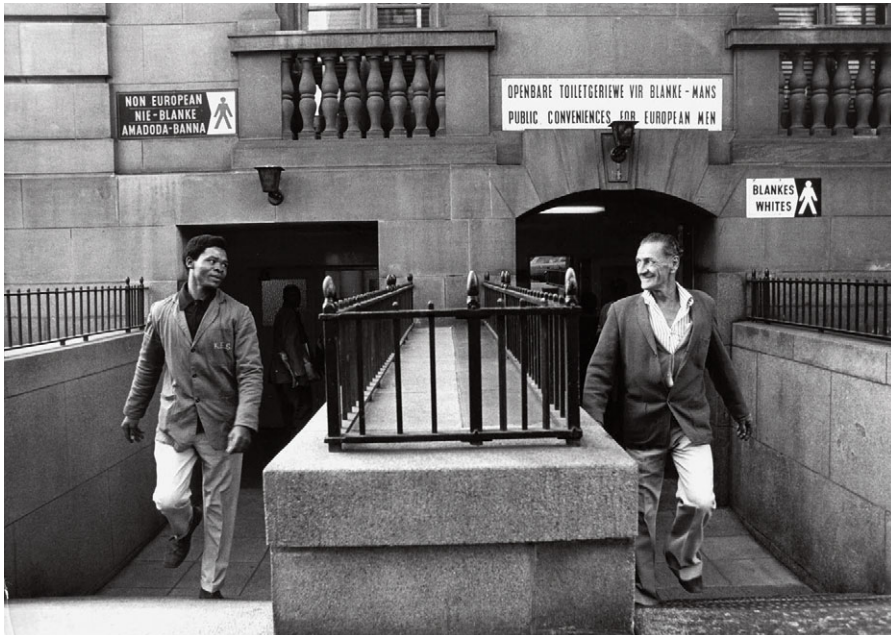
RACE





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Harald Pakendorf, NF '69

JOE LELYVELD'S REPORTING for The New York Times—which he drew on for his book “Move Your Shadow”—brought home a truism. Real stories are about people. In the 1970s we were becoming increasingly critical of the South African government’s policy of apartheid. But the people who suffered most from it did not really appear as people. They were what we wrote about in an impersonal way. Joe’s piece made clear how it affected people in their daily lives. We did then humanize our stories more but to this day I regret that we did not do so on a much bigger scale.



Joe Lelyveld’s reporting [on South Africa] for The New York Times brought home a truism. Real stories are about people

MOVE YOUR SHADOW: SOUTH AFRICA, BLACK AND WHITE

By JOSEPH LELYVELD
Times Books, 1985

EXCERPT

To catch the first Putco bus from the Wolverkraal depot in KwaNdebele, the photographer David Goldblatt and I calculated, we would have to leave the Bundu Inn (a white hostelry that went “international” after finding itself in a homeland) no later than one-thirty in the morning. It is then that KwaNdebele’s first “commuters” start to stir. [...] The black settlers of the new state who boarded the bus near there had to ride about 95 miles before transferring to local buses that would take them to factories where they worked, in areas where they were forbidden to live. That meant a minimum of 190 miles every working day in buses designed with hard seats for short hauls on city streets. They were fortunate in a sense — they did have work — but they were spending up to eight hours a day on buses. The distance they traveled annually, I calculated, came to more than a circumnavigation of the globe. ■

Excerpt from *MOVE YOUR SHADOW* by Joseph Lelyveld. Copyright © 1985 Joseph Lelyveld, used by permission of the Wylie Agency LLC.

In 1977, Johannesburg had separate toilet facilities for blacks and whites



South Africa’s Nelson Mandela acknowledges a crowd of supporters days before being elected president in 1994

Phillip Martin, NF '98

THE LATE DANNY Schechter’s examination of apartheid-era South Africa shaped my path from radio intern in the 1970s to senior investigative reporter at WGBH in Boston exploring social injustice. Schechter, NF '78, provided analyses and views of the anti-apartheid movement not filtered through a U.S. State Department Cold War lens. Like I.F. Stone and William Worthy, NF '57, Schechter was an iconoclast whose most critical explorations of injustice were made outside of mainstream journalism. Though his Emmy-winning television show of the late 1980s, “South Africa Now,” was broadcast on some PBS stations, Schechter’s aggressive anti-apartheid coverage terrified quite a few public broadcasting station managers, who rejected the program. But Schechter was on to something.

I was in Johannesburg in the spring of 1994 as a representative of an NGO when a bomb went off a block from my hotel. With Schechter and four other journalists, I hurried to the site of the explosion which had been set off by a shadowy group trying to derail the historic elections. Schechter unmasked the group responsible, among other key revelations, in his award-winning documentary “Countdown to Freedom,” co-written with Rory O’Connor. Though I had first explored journalism as an intern for Schechter in 1977, it was in 1994 that I returned to the fold, first as a commentator for NPR’s “Morning Edition” and as a senior editor for PRI’s “The World” in 1995. It was the probing investigations of Schechter, especially during those 10 days in South Africa, that made the greatest difference in my own life and helps explain why I do what I do today. ■

DOCUMENTARY

COUNTDOWN TO FREEDOM: 10 DAYS THAT CHANGED SOUTH AFRICA

Directed by DANNY SCHECHTER
Written by DANNY SCHECHTER and RORY O’CONNOR
Released October 1994





Megan O'Grady, NF '12

WHEN I MET Brit Bennett, in 2016, it was to discuss her first novel, “The Mothers,” a Baldwin-inspired tale of the friendship between two Southern California girls growing up amid all kinds of absences. But Bennett, then only 26, had already made her name with hot-button non-fiction—a New York Times op-ed on race and swimming pools; a meditation on white intention for Jezebel that garnered a million hits in three days—essential reading that sought to ground our present racial moment in a bigoted American past we prefer to think of as distant. Writing directly into our collective shame and ambivalence, she was able to make us feel the dehumanizing intimacy of racism, as well as its perversity and absurdity, as she unearthed its intransigent roots.

Bennett, whose African-American parents had both worked in law enforcement, felt it was important to write about these things, but was also well aware of how “translating black pain for white readers,” as she put it, took her away from other kinds of writing she might be doing, echoing Toni Morrison’s famous observation of the function of racism being distraction. Of the many brilliant, blistering think pieces on racial injustice I’ve read in the last few years, it’s the

quietly devastating essay Bennett wrote for The Paris Review website back in 2015, “Addy Walker, The American Girl,” that I keep returning to as a journalist, teacher, and mother. Inspired by the memory of a doll she once received for Christmas—“Addy,” for many years was the only black doll in Mattel’s wildly popular, history-themed American Girl Doll collection—Bennett explores the history of black dolls, including the civil rights-era doll tests used to demonstrate the effects of segregation on children. A meditation on the many ways in which racial pain is taught, passed on to the next generation even before it has stopped believing in Santa, the essay reminds us that in America, even innocence itself is racially privileged.



It’s the quietly devastating essay Bennett wrote that I keep returning to as a journalist, teacher, and mother

Addy Walker, the only black doll in American Girl’s original history-themed collection, is depicted on the cover of “Welcome to Addy’s World”

ADDY WALKER, THE AMERICAN GIRL

By BRIT BENNETT
The Paris Review, May 28, 2015

EXCERPT

In 1864, a nine-year-old slave girl was punished for daydreaming. Distracted by rumors that her brother and father would be sold, she failed to remove worms from the tobacco leaves she was picking. The overseer didn’t whip her. Instead, he pried her mouth open, stuffed a worm inside, and forced her to eat it.

This girl is not real. Her name is Addy Walker; she is an American Girl doll, one of eight historical dolls produced by the Pleasant Company who arrive with dresses, accessories, and a series of books about their lives. Of all the harrowing scenes I’ve encountered in slave narratives, I remember this scene from “Meet Addy,” her origin story, most vividly. How the worm—green, fat, and juicy—burst inside Addy’s mouth. At eight years old, I understood that slavery was cruel—I knew about hard labor and whippings—but the idea of a little girl being forced to eat a worm stunned me. I did not yet understand that violence is an art. There’s creativity to cruelty. What did I know of its boundaries and edges? ■

Originally published on the Paris Review Daily.

Lisa Stone, NF '02

THE APRIL 2018 issue of *Vanity Fair* featured a photo of 26 Black women entrepreneurs—each of whom had raised more than \$1 million in capital. I trace the origins of that historic photo to “The Real Unicorns of Tech: Black Women,” the 2016 ProjectDiane report by Kathryn Finney, founder of *digitalundivided*, with Marlo Rencher.

Finney’s pivotal report, sponsored by Go Daddy, studied 88 tech startups led by Black women. The report confirmed the extraordinary accomplishments of these women, who represent the fastest growing group overall of American entrepreneurs and small-business owners. It also identifies the severe obstacles faced by U.S. women who are African-American entrepreneurs. These include lack of access to funding for startups and lack of access to startup accelerators.

In the wake of the #metoo and #timesup movements, Finney’s act of independent journalism has inspired coverage of Black women entrepreneurs by the venture capital press. It seems pretty clear to me that if Finney hadn’t led this research, debunking Silicon Valley’s self-proclaimed meritocracy and validating the achievements of Black women despite these barriers, the press wouldn’t be paying attention to this subject.

As a white entrepreneur, I have not experienced what Black women have. Yet until recently, despite my track record as a five-time serial entrepreneur, I was invisible.

Indeed, 17 years ago, when having created a community of 25 million women for Hearst-backed *Women.com*, I was the first internet journalist named a Nieman Fellow, the prevailing opinion in journalism and in tech was that women would never go online in large numbers.



Finney’s act of independent journalism has inspired coverage

THE PROJECT DIANE REPORT 2016: THE REAL UNICORNS OF TECH: BLACK WOMEN

By KATHRYN FINNEY
with MARLO RENCHER
digitalundivided, Feb. 2016

EXCERPT

Black women Founders have the drive and skill to lead successful startups that can have a profound impact on their communities. However, they continue to be severely undercapitalized with little to no structures to acquire the funding and social capital necessary to scale a successful startup.

The tech industry is quite myopic when it comes to inclusion. The industry sees diversity and inclusion primarily as a human resource issue, but not a market opportunity. As a result, the industry tends to fund inclusion initiatives, and leaders, that

focus more on assimilation into current systems rather than those with bold ideas for diverse market penetration and adoption. This limited view of the impact inclusion can have on the tech industry is a major reason for its dismal diversity employment and funding numbers.

But this isn’t just a “tech” problem, foundations and civic institutions also are complicit by funding legacy organizations to do work they don’t have the skill set to do and investing in projects that give great optics, but few measurable outcomes. Stop funding one-off “hackathons” and start funding fully developed programs like *Girls Who Code* and *AllStar Code*. For every “diversity/inclusion event” you fund, also fund programs like *DID’s BIG* accelerator. For every “business grant,” become limited partners in funds like *Impact America*. ■

Kathryn Finney’s ProjectDiane report highlights tech startups led by black women



Tim Giago, NF '91

THE FEVER FOR gold caused the Lakota people's loss of the Sacred Black Hills of South Dakota as well as the near destruction of the indigenous peoples of South and Central America and California. In Alaska during the gold rush of 1897, prospectors flooded into the state, killing any indigenous person who got in their way.

This is not taught in history books because it shows an extremely ugly side of America that historians choose to ignore.

To learn my own history as a Native American, I turned to the books of the great Cahuilla Indian newspaper editor and author Rupert Costo, my mentor and friend. "The Missions of California: A Legacy of Genocide," co-written by him and Jeannette Costo, made me understand more deeply that we, the Indian People, had to write our own books in order to bring out the parts of history that were suppressed.

The book gained little recognition because it was about a topic most Americans do not want to hear about. America wants only to show its good side to the rest of the world. But I suggest that you read "The Missions of California" and Costo's "Indian Treaties: Two Centuries of Dishonor" to more clearly understand the history of the indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere. I am a journalist today seeking truth and justice because of Rupert Costo.

THE MISSIONS OF CALIFORNIA: A LEGACY OF GENOCIDE

By RUPERT COSTO
and JEANNETTE COSTO
Indian Historian Press, 1978

EXCERPT

For two hundred years the native people of California have borne the stigma of "Mission Indians." The names of their nations and tribes are Hupa, Kumeyaay, Cahuilla, Pauma, Malki, Cupa, or Pamó, to name a few.

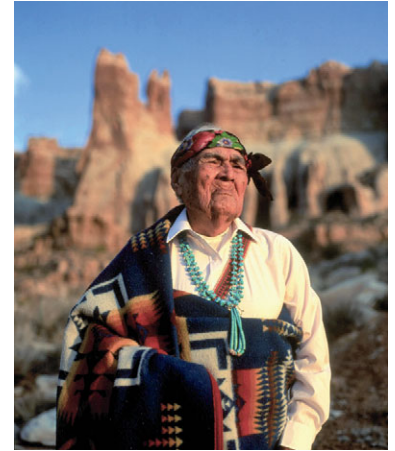
But with the advent of the Spanish invasion and the introduction of the mission system, these tribes were ignored at the least, and obliterated as tribes at the most. Thus, the outer habiliments of the hated mission system remained into Mexican terminology, and today exists even in the literature and legal references in American terminology.

The architect of the mission system was Fr. Junipero Serra, who has become a symbol of 18th century feudal forced labor and abuse to the Indians, and a symbol of successful foreign domination to the establishment society.

In order to install Serra as a valid, respectable holy man of the most humane objectives and conduct in his life, the Roman Catholic Church has been engaged in a project seeking to have him declared a saint. ■

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An elder of Zuni, a Pueblo Indian tribe, in a shot from "Surviving Columbus"



Conroy Chino, NF '84

LITERATURE WAS MY first love, but journalism fulfilled a purpose—the chance to right wrongs. I became aware of the visual power of television and the spoken word. I was influenced by the long-form pieces I saw on "60 Minutes." A product of the '60s, I became deeply aware of the plight of Native American people—oppression at the hands of the federal government and repressive policies that resulted in the loss of language, lands, and traditional tribal lifestyles. I turned to history and read the record.

There were no other Native American TV reporters in the country that I was aware of when I was selected for a Nieman fellowship. My year at Harvard gave me the chance to broaden my world view, raise my consciousness, and learn from my colleagues. I took classes in history, politics, and South Africa's apartheid.

I returned to New Mexico more confident about my work and my profession, still questioning authority and the official word, and very eager



Literature was my first love, but journalism fulfilled a purpose—the chance to right wrongs. I became aware of the visual power of TV

Indigenous Chilkat porters pose with a miner on the Chilkoot Trail in 1897, during Alaska's gold rush



to continue the unsettled search for truth. I won an Emmy and a national award from the Investigative Reporters and Editors.

A special projects reporter for a TV station in Los Angeles, I was part of the team that produced “Surviving Columbus: The Story of the Pueblo People.” It was not only my story, but the story of many others who felt a need to tell the complete historic account of what occurred after the first encounter between Europeans and Pueblo People. It was an opportunity to tell the world about Pueblo People and to provide their perspective, and perhaps, even their version of history. A two-hour PBS documentary was rare, but to hear the collective voices of Pueblo People on film was even more rare.

SURVIVING COLUMBUS: THE STORY OF THE PUEBLO PEOPLE

Taped by KNME-TV and the Institute of American Indian Arts
Directed by DIANE REYNA
Hosted by CONROY CHINO
Aired on PBS Oct. 12, 1992

EXCERPT

Conroy Chino: I was born and raised [in Acoma, New Mexico] in this house coming up over here, so, close to the tracks. And, I remember as a kid standing outside my mother’s house and watching trains go by, sleek red and silver trains. It’s the village where I grew up. Played among these fields, played with mostly children here, and brings back a lot of memories.

I remember going to school and being taught that Columbus discovered America, a land populated by brutal savages who had to be conquered, converted, and civilized. In the official version of history, it always seemed better to be white than to be Indian. But at night when I came home to my family, my grandparents, especially my great-grandfather, would tell us stories and legends, myths about our past, about our history, that began long before Christopher Columbus set sail, before Spain was a nation, and even before Christ was born.

This, then, is our story. My story. A living story. A story of how Pueblo people have survived. ■

After she and a friend took a child’s bike and scooter that were sitting outside, Sade Jones—who had never been arrested before—was rated a “medium risk” for future crime by AI software



Amy Webb, NF ’15

BY ANY MEASURE, we are living through a golden age of journalism and the impact is palpable. But as we enter the third era of computing—otherwise known as artificial intelligence—it’s more important than ever for journalists to push beyond our misplaced optimism and fears and uncover the hard truths about the future we’re building. This is why ProPublica’s “Machine Bias” series was both fascinating and fundamental. Investigating algorithms, the data sets, the artificial intelligence (AI) frameworks, and the people whose values already live inside our machines is impossibly difficult work. ProPublica was able to show what we all knew anecdotally: that our AI systems are riddled with bias, automated bias leads to real-world social and economic injustices, and that there’s no real effort in place to fix existing fundamental flaws. This team proved why transparency is paramount as we ask machines to do our thinking for us.

MACHINE BIAS

By JULIA ANGWIN, JEFF LARSON, SURYA MATTU, and LAUREN KIRCHNER
ProPublica, May 23, 2016

EXCERPT

On a spring afternoon in 2014, Brisha Borden was running late to pick up her god-sister from school when she spotted an unlocked kid’s blue Huffy bicycle and a silver Razor scooter. Borden and a friend [Sade Jones] grabbed the bike and scooter and tried to ride them down the street in the Fort

Lauderdale suburb of Coral Springs.

Just as the 18-year-old girls were realizing they were too big for the tiny conveyances—which belonged to a 6-year-old boy—a woman came running after them saying, “That’s my kid’s stuff.” Borden and her friend immediately dropped the bike and scooter and walked away.

But it was too late—a neighbor who witnessed the heist had already called the police. Borden and her friend were arrested and charged with burglary and petty theft for the items, which were valued at a total of \$80.

Compare their crime with a similar one: the previous summer, 41-year-old Vernon Prater was picked up for shoplifting \$86.35 worth of tools from a nearby Home Depot store.

Prater was the more seasoned criminal. He had already been convicted of armed robbery and attempted armed robbery, for which he served five years in prison, in addition to another armed robbery charge. Borden had a record, too, but it was for misdemeanors committed when she was a juvenile.

Yet something odd happened when Borden and Prater were booked into jail: A computer program spat out a score predicting the likelihood of each committing a future crime. Borden—who is black—was rated a high risk. Prater—who is white—was rated a low risk.

Two years later, we know the computer algorithm got it exactly backward. Borden has not been charged with any new crimes. Prater is serving an eight-year prison term for subsequently breaking into a warehouse and stealing thousands of dollars’ worth of electronics. ■



Nicholas Quah, NF '17

WHAT A FRATERNITY Hazing Death Revealed About the Painful Search for an Asian-American Identity” was the article that broke me wide open. I was born and raised in Malaysia, but I have lived here in the United States for nearly 10 years now—and given that I’ve married an Idahoan, it’s almost certain that I’ll spend the rest of my life in this strange land. As such, I’m going through the peculiar process of trying to fit the narrative of my life within the wider scheme of American life. This is, of course, a challenging proposition on any level, but I’ve found it particularly difficult to grapple with the contextual terms of my ethnicity: I’m Asian, but not Asian American. I belong to a racial minority, but one whose narrative doesn’t factor much within broader conversations about race in America. I’m an immigrant in search of upward mobility, but one who shares blood with people from a nation on a complicated rise. (I’m ethnically Chinese.) All this amounts to a simmering... let’s call it emptiness, one I did not fully recognize I felt until I read Kang’s painful, search-

ing, and relentless feature on what these Asian kids did to themselves in the pursuit of a larger narrative for their identities, which remains so agonizingly far from clarity.

The article gave voice to an American narrative that I, for the very first time, identified with. And it feels like armor against the emptiness.

WHAT A FRATERNITY HAZING DEATH REVEALED ABOUT THE PAINFUL SEARCH FOR AN ASIAN-AMERICAN IDENTITY

By JAY CASPIAN KANG
The New York Times Magazine, Aug. 9, 2017

EXCERPT

Asians are the loneliest Americans. The collective political consciousness of the '80s has been replaced by the quiet, unaddressed isolation that comes with knowing that you can be born in this country, excel in its schools, and find a comfortable place in its economy, and still feel no stake in the national conversation. The current vision of solidarity among Asian-Americans is cartoonish and blurry and relegated to conversations at

Awards and a photo of Michael Deng, who died after a fraternity hazing ritual, are displayed at his family’s home in Queens

family picnics, in drunken exchanges over food that reminds everyone at the table of how their mom used to make it. Everything else is the confusion of never knowing what side to choose because choosing our own side has so rarely been an option. Asian pride is a laughable concept to most Americans. Racist incidents pass without prompting any real outcry, and claims of racism are quickly dismissed. A common past can be accessed only through dusty, dug-up things: the murder of Vincent Chin, *Korematsu v. United States*, the Bataan Death March and the illusion that we are going through all these things together. The Asian-American fraternity is not much more than a clumsy step toward finding an identity in a country where there are no more reference points for how we should act, how we should think about ourselves. But in its honest confrontation with being Asian and its refusal to fall into familiar silence, it can also be seen as a statement of self-worth. These young men, in their doomed way, were trying to amend the American dream that had brought their parents to this country with one caveat: *I will succeed, they say. But not without my brothers!* ■

Jay Caspian Kang © 2017 The New York Times.

Rick Tulsky, NF '89

In 1985 I encountered a book unlike anything I had ever read. "Common Ground" by J. Anthony Lukas, NF '69, took a critical issue—race relations—and told the story in the most unforgettable of ways.

Lukas identified three families and reported how court-ordered busing to integrate the Boston public schools affected them. Step by step, he reported the decisions of city officials and judges that led to the busing order and then the impact, step by step, on an African-American family, an Irish-American family, and a liberal Protestant family.

The dramatic story told much about who we are as a people, and how we see "others." On the day the busing ordered by U.S. District Judge W. Arthur Garrity was to begin in 1974, thousands of protestors showed up on Boston Common, pelting U.S. Senator

Edward Kennedy with tomatoes and eggs when he sought to calm tensions.

Lukas was part of the wave of journalists that, as Tom Wolfe documented in "The New Journalism," helped push reporters away from the stifled formal reliance on press conferences and official pronouncements, from the reporter as stenographer to something much more.

COMMON GROUND: A TURBULENT DECADE IN THE LIVES OF THREE AMERICAN FAMILIES

By J. ANTHONY LUKAS
Alfred A. Knopf, 1985

EXCERPT

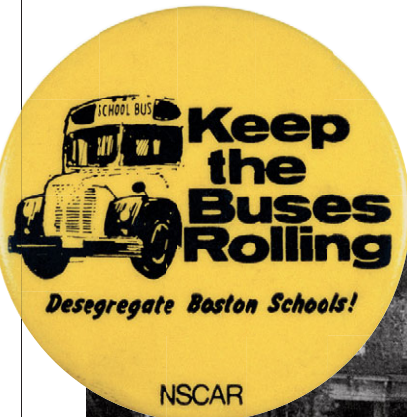
George, whose street name was Sly, and his brother Richard, known as Snake, had been out on Prescott Street, playing stickball against the factory wall, when a little kid had come by with a transistor radio, chanting in a monotone, "Dr. King is dead, Dr. King is dead." At first the brothers jeered, "Get out of here, you little bugger," and lashed the

← A button in support of desegregating Boston's schools. Below, Students enter a South Boston school on the first day of court-ordered busing, imposed to desegregate schools, in 1974

ball harder and higher against the concrete. But when the kid stuck the radio in their faces they heard it too. Although they were only twelve and fourteen, they knew enough about Martin Luther King to feel an acute sense of loss.

Their mother, Rachel Twymon, wept when she heard the news in her apartment on Prescott Street in Orchard Park. When her eight-year-old daughter, Cassandra, said, "Ma, he wasn't a member of our family, so why are you crying?" she replied, "Because, Cassandra, what he got killed for makes him my big brother, because he wanted all of us to be equal." She started to tell Cassandra that there were other reasons why she felt particularly close to King, reasons that went back fifteen years to the days she had known the young theological student they called Martin. But her recollections were interrupted by a knock on the door as two policemen from District 9 appeared to tell her, "They're breaking into your store, Mrs. Twymon. You better get on down there." ■

Excerpt from "Chapter 2: Twymon" from COMMON GROUND by J. Anthony Lukas, copyright © 1985 by J. Anthony Lukas. Used by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of the Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, a division of Penguin Random House LLC. All rights reserved.



Maria Henson, NF '94

HAVING GROWN UP in North Carolina and required as a child to learn the history of my state, I couldn't help but be horrified upon learning of a bloody, national event left out of my schoolbooks.

In 2006 I was living in California when my Nieman friend, Melanie Sill (NF '94), then editor and senior vice president of *The News & Observer* in Raleigh, told me about the special supplement the paper had printed in November, as had *The Charlotte Observer*. It was called "The Ghosts of 1898: Wilmington's Race Riot and the Rise of White Supremacy," by historian Timothy B. Tyson.

It recounted the truth about the events of Nov. 10, 1898. The local citizens of what was then the state's largest city, with its abundance of successful black businesspeople, hadn't "rioted." They were the target of the powerful white establishment in North Carolina, including newspapers, which launched a statewide propaganda campaign. Sustained vitriolic rhetoric and fearmongering in newspapers led a mob to burn down a black-owned newspaper, murder African-Americans, and overthrow Wilmington's city government. It was a coup d'état in the United States, the only successful one historians cite in

our country's history.

The massacre solidified segregation and fueled the Jim Crow movement. As the "Ghosts" special report says, *The News & Observer's* publisher then, Josephus Daniels, heralded the ascension of "the party of the White Man," and the massacre marked a turning point.

I make sure my news literacy students at Wake Forest University see this special report. I want them to know how the press can go horribly astray—not just in places like Rwanda in the hours before the genocide—but in the United States. "The Ghosts of 1898" presents a case of democracy betrayed, leaving newspapers over a century later apologizing for their sins.



"Ghosts" presents a case of democracy betrayed, leaving newspapers over a century later apologizing for their sins

White rioters in 1898 stand in front of the burning offices of *The Daily Record*, a black-owned newspaper in North Carolina

THE GHOSTS OF 1898: WILMINGTON'S RACE RIOT AND THE RISE OF WHITE SUPREMACY

By TIMOTHY B. TYSON
The News & Observer, Nov. 17, 2006

EXCERPT

On Nov. 10, 1898, heavily armed columns of white men marched into the black neighborhoods of Wilmington. In the name of white supremacy, this well-ordered mob burned the offices of the local black newspaper, murdered perhaps dozens of black residents—the precise number isn't known—and banished many successful black citizens and their so-called "white nigger" allies. A new social order was born in the blood and the flames, rooted in what *The News & Observer's* publisher, Josephus Daniels, heralded as "permanent good government by the party of the White Man."

The Wilmington race riot of 1898 stands as one of the most important chapters in North Carolina's history. It is also an event of national historical significance. Occurring only two years after the Supreme Court had sanctioned "separate but equal" segregation in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the riot marked the embrace of virulent Jim Crow racism, not merely in Wilmington, but across the United States. Despite its importance, the riot has remained a hidden chapter in our state's history. It was only this year that North Carolina completed its official investigation of the violence. In addition to providing a thorough history of the event, the report of the Wilmington Race Riot Commission recommended payments to descendants of victims. And it advised media outlets, including *The News & Observer*, to tell the people the truth about 1898.

Those truths include that what occurred in Wilmington on that chilly autumn morning was not a spontaneous outbreak of mob violence. It was, instead, the climax of a carefully orchestrated statewide campaign led by some of the leading figures in North Carolina's history to end interracial cooperation and build a one-party state that would assure the power of North Carolina's business elite. ■





Tara Pixley, NF '16

BYOND 7 BILLION,” the Los Angeles Times’s five-part series, melds excellent writing with stunning visual journalism. It connects global overpopulation to terrorism, environmental collapse, starvation, politicization of birth control, and much more. I consumed the articles with mounting horror over the seemingly incorrigible problem of overpopulation, but also pride over the work being done by fellow journalists. Yet I wondered about the choice to exclude the U.S. and other nations from this study of a world issue. To focus on the effects of human overpopulation in Africa and Asia and ignore its impact in Westernized regions was to imply to some degree that we in the West are both unaffected by it and not in some way responsible for it. I wondered what might have been possible to understand about our potential role in producing and perhaps working to solve this global problem if those behind this series had started or ended at home.

I teach the “Beyond 7 Billion” piece to my journalism students because it is both exemplary in its approach and emblematic of the problems we must

overcome in American journalism to become the guiding light for informed and engaged citizenship. As a piece of multimedia journalism and an intersectional approach to a problem that affects all humans, it was a lovely marvel. However, in our attempts to document the story of humanity, we must end the belief that the story is “out there” and recognize that we, as journalists educated in and working for Western outlets, are implicated in each story of human overreach, environmental decline, and social struggle.

BEYOND 7 BILLION: FERTILITY RATES FALL, BUT GLOBAL POPULATION EXPLOSION GOES ON

By KENNETH R. WEISS
Los Angeles Times, July 22, 2012

EXCERPT

JAIPUR, India—Ramjee Lal Kumhar and his bride, Mamta, first laid eyes on each other inside a billowing wedding tent festooned with garlands of marigolds.

He was 11 years old. She was 10. Their families had arranged the

Newborns at a Manila hospital, nicknamed “the baby factory” because of the high rate of children being born there

marriage. The couple delighted their parents by producing a son when they were both 13. They had a daughter 2½ years later. To support the family, Ramjee gave up his dream of finishing school and opened a cramped shop that sells snacks, tea and tobacco on the muddy road through his village.

At 15 and finally able to grow a mustache, Ramjee made a startling announcement: He was done having children.

“We cannot afford it,” he said, standing with arms crossed in the dirt courtyard of the compound he shares with 12 relatives, a cow, several goats and some chickens in the northern state of Rajasthan.

Horrified, his mother and grandmother pleaded with him to reconsider.

“Having one son is like having one eye,” his grandmother said. “You need two eyes.”

How many children to have is an intensely personal matter, often a source of family debate. But the decisions made by Ramjee, Mamta and others their age will have repercussions far beyond their own families and villages.

They are members of the largest generation in history—more than 3 billion people worldwide under the age of 25. ■

CHRONICLING
WAR, GENOCIDE,
AND THE
HUMAN COST

CONFLICT





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A propaganda poster features China's Red Army. Paul Lieberman, NF '80, writes about the impact of Edgar Snow's "Red Star Over China," a first-person account of Chairman Mao and his troops in 1936



Abdul Waheed Wafa, NF '11

MY CHILDHOOD IN Afghanistan coincided with a communist regime under which we had access only to government-sponsored media, including TV, radio, and a couple of newspapers—all tools for government propaganda. My understanding of journalism then was as a profession that works for and praises the government.

In December 2001, a team from The New York Times traveled to Bamian, Afghanistan's central highland. The Times reporter Barry Bearak touched the lives of ordinary residents in those mountainous villages; he listened to their stories, their pain, and their struggle to survive. His story was an inspiration to me and an introduction to the independent journalism which I engaged in for more than a decade.

WHERE BUDDHAS FELL, LIVES LIE IN RUINS TOO

By BARRY BEARAK
The New York Times, Dec. 9, 2001

EXCERPT

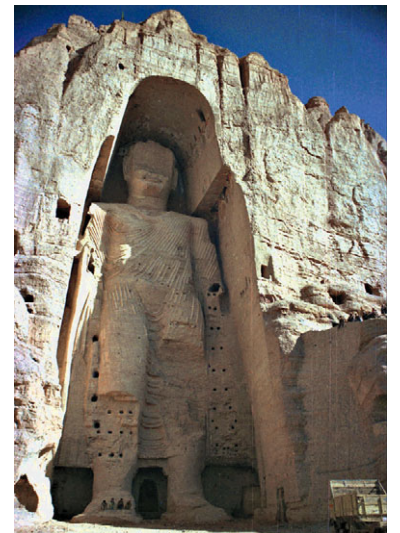
The giant Buddhas perished in this storied valley. For 1,500 years, the two statues stood in their sandstone niches and stared across the rugged plain toward the snowy peaks of the Baba mountains. The Taliban destroyed them last spring, making precise incisions to strategically place the explosives.

But the Buddhas were only the best known and most visible of the Taliban's victims in this remote region of central Afghanistan. Within months, other terrible crimes were committed here. Ethnic hatred was the grisly wellspring for methodical murder and devastation.

A local Afghan girl sits in front of the site of a 2001 Taliban explosion. Below, the ancient Buddhist statue that was destroyed

For three and a half years, the Taliban have restricted entry into this battlefield. Only in recent days have outsiders traveled the mine-bedeveled roads to survey the havoc. What they see is scorched earth. Little is left of the hamlets on the heaving single lane west of Bamian except ashes and mud. Decomposed bodies are still being found on the frozen soil. ■

Barry Bearak © 2001 The New York Times.



Robert H. Giles, NF '66

AS WORLD WAR II stretched into 1944, it became part of the daily ritual in our household on Cleveland's west side to keep up with the war news in the town's two newspapers, the Cleveland Press and the Cleveland News.

The afternoon dailies had the latest news from the European theater, stories about bombing raids on German cities and movements of infantry divisions. This was the stuff that drove the active imagination of a 10-year-old.

The Press's most popular feature was the battlefield correspondence of Ernie Pyle, who wrote about the lives of ordinary soldiers and the hardships they endured.

One day in early January 1944, Pyle's story ("The Death of Captain Waskow") was there on page one, telling of the death of 25-year-old Capt. Henry Waskow. He was killed in Italy on December 14, 1943; it took several weeks for Pyle's dispatch to reach his newspaper readers. It became a classic of war reporting.

Captain Waskow was a company commander who was beloved by his men. Pyle told how, under a full moon, his men "laid him on the ground in the shadow of a low stone wall." Then his men came close and "looked into their dead captain's face" and said things like, "I sure am sorry, sir."

Tears rolled down my cheeks. It is a story I have read again and again. It has meant so much, I think, because it conveys the comradeship and loyalty that exists among fighting men. They are surrounded by death and violence, but Pyle always seemed to find in them an enduring spirit of humanity.



Ernie Pyle wrote about the lives of ordinary soldiers and the hardships they endured

THE DEATH OF CAPTAIN WASKOW

By ERNIE PYLE
Cleveland Press, Jan. 5, 1944

EXCERPT

AT THE FRONT LINES IN ITALY, January 10, 1944 – In this war I have known a lot of officers who were loved and respected by the soldiers under them. But never have I crossed the trail of any man as beloved as Capt. Henry T. Waskow of Belton, Texas.

Capt. Waskow was a company commander in the 36th Division. He had led his company since long before it left the States. He was very young, only in his middle twenties, but he carried in him a sincerity and

Ernie Pyle, center, talks with Marines on a Navy transport en route to Okinawa in 1945 during World War II



gentleness that made people want to be guided by him.

"After my own father, he came next," a sergeant told me.

"He always looked after us," a soldier said. "He'd go to bat for us every time."

"I've never knowed him to do anything unfair," another one said.

I was at the foot of the mule trail the night they brought Capt. Waskow's body down. The moon was nearly full at the time, and you could see far up the trail, and even part way across the valley below. ■

Excerpt from ERNIE'S WAR: THE BEST OF ERNIE PYLE'S WORLD WAR II DISPATCHES by David Nichols, copyright © 1986 by David Nichols. Used by permission of Random House, an imprint and division of Penguin Random House LLC. All rights reserved.

Paul Lieberman, NF '80

EDGAR SNOW AVOIDED grandiosity when he achieved one of the great scoops of the 20th century by hooking up with China's Red Army in 1936. "I do not intend to pronounce the verdicts of history," he said. Snow traveled by decrepit train, donkey caravan, and a wobbly horse along precarious hillside paths before



Snow achieved one of the great scoops of the 20th century

reaching Mao Zedong, the peasant-born intellectual turned revolutionary living in two map-filled rooms whose only luxury was a mosquito net.

Outsiders debated whether Mao and his comrades were potential saviors of the world's most populous country or "little Red devils" who were tools of the Communist regime in Moscow. Thus Snow's modest goals for his months shadowing Mao and his troops: "What were the Chinese communists like, anyway?... Social prophets, or mere ignorant peasants blindly fighting for an existence? How did the Reds dress? Eat? Play? Love?... Was it a disciplined Army?" I read "Red Star Over China"

in the mid-1960s when Mao had advanced a long way from hiding in a hut but still was—along with Snow's pioneering portrayal—the object of worldwide debate. For a budding journalist, however, the lessons were clear: You had to get away from the comfort of the office, and steer clear of pontificating from afar, if you were going to serve your readers.

RED STAR OVER CHINA

By EDGAR SNOW
Left Book Club, 1937

EXCERPT

During my seven years in China, hundreds of questions had been asked about the Chinese Red Army, the Soviets, and the Communist movement. Eager partisans could supply you with a stock of ready answers, but these remained highly unsatisfactory. How did they know? They had never been to Red China.

The fact was that there had been perhaps no greater mystery among nations, no more confused an epic, than the story of Red China. Fighting in the very heart of the most populous nation on earth, the Celestial Reds had for nine years been isolated by a news blockade as effective as a stone fortress. A mobile Great Wall of thousands of enemy troops constantly surrounded them; their territory was more inaccessible than Tibet. No one had voluntarily penetrated that wall and returned to write of his experiences since the first Chinese soviet was established at Ch'alin in south-eastern Hunan, in November 1927.

Even the simplest points were disputed. Some people denied that there was such a thing as a Red Army. There were only thousands of hungry brigands. Some denied even the existence of soviets. They were an invention of Communist propaganda. Yet Red sympathizers extolled both as the only salvation for all the ills of China. In the midst of this propaganda and counter-propaganda, credible evidence was lacking for dispassionate observers seeking the truth. ■

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A Chinese Communist Party poster featuring Chairman Mao and revolutionaries

SWIM INK 2/CORBIS VIA GETTY IMAGES



Wahyu Dhyatmika, NF '15

THE MASS KILLINGS in Indonesia in 1965-'66 left a deep mark on the nation's collective psyche. Watching the documentary "The Act of Killing" about the atrocity when it was first screened in Indonesia in 2013, I felt shaken and nauseous. At the same time, I stayed alert because a vigilante group had threatened to storm the theater and stop the screening.

Not only does the film deal with a very controversial issue—the massacre of hundreds of thousands of Indonesians accused of being members or sympathizers of the

Communist Party—but one of the killers, Anwar Congo, is the main storyteller. He explains in graphic detail how he killed his neighbors and other people he knew simply because they had a connection to a communist.

Since I was a child growing up in Bali, the story of the massacre had always been a taboo topic. It was a story so terrifying and grotesque that it haunted our lives and made us ashamed of who we are. My father's generation—children when this atrocity occurred—grew up trying to forget it ever even happened.

When "The Act of Killing" was released, we welcomed it with a sigh of relief. Finally, the full story was told. From Congo's narrative, we can see the beleaguered killer's mind, caught between bigger forces, including a master puppet, who directed the killings from afar. Unable to make sense of the situation, Congo gives up, shuts his eyes, and gleefully follows instructions to murder his own people.

Tempo, the magazine that I work for, interviewed Congo and filmmaker Joshua Oppenheimer and

A still from "The Act of Killing" shows dancers with Anwar Congo, right, one of the perpetrators of mass killings in Indonesia

exposed similar killers, other Anwar Congos, in other parts of the country. The documentary forces everyone to open their eyes, to see what happened, and how it has shaped us. It's time to face our demons.

THE ACT OF KILLING

Directed by JOSHUA OPPENHEIMER
Produced by WERNER HERZOG
and ERROL MORRIS
Released Sept. 1, 2012

EXCERPT

[Death squad leader in Indonesia] Anwar Congo: Did the people I tortured feel the way I do here? I can feel what the people I tortured felt. Because here my dignity has been destroyed, and then fear comes, right there and then. All the terror suddenly possessed my body. It surrounded me, and possessed me.

Joshua Oppenheimer: Actually, the people you tortured felt far worse, because you knew it's only a film. They knew they were being killed.

Anwar Congo: But I can feel it, Josh. Really, I feel it. Or have I sinned. I did this to so many people, Josh. Is it all coming back to me? I really hope it won't. I don't want it to, Josh. ■



The documentary forces everyone to open their eyes, to see what has happened, and how it has shaped us. It's time to face our demons



Nina Bernstein, NF '84

In 1992, ROY Gutman broke the story of Serbian-run concentration camps where mass executions took place, documenting their place in a campaign of murder, rape, and expulsion designed to eliminate Muslims from most of Bosnia.

I was then a reporter for New York Newsday, and I remember striding across Midtown Manhattan to the newsroom clutching the paper, galvanized by the explosive headline—"The Death Camps of Bosnia." Gutman, Newsday's sole European correspondent, had broken away from the press pack covering the siege of Sarajevo to investigate accounts of ethnic cleansing. He had doggedly followed a trail of cattle car deportations to survivors of killing camps like Omarska.

When I arrived in the newsroom in that exalted state, my editors asked if I would go to the former Yugoslavia for a month to help advance the story. "Yes!" I breathed. Surely if we reported out the story, the world would have to intervene.

It turned out that Western governments unwilling to risk casualties had ways of defusing a public outcry. The State Department was "unable to confirm" what it studiously avoided learning. Experts blamed "centuries of incomprehensible blood hatred" for a conflict fomented by neo-fascist propaganda over state-controlled news media. Jewish groups split over the evocation of the Holocaust as a goad to action.



[Gutman's] stories summon us to journalism that challenges the public conscience, even when it doesn't change the world

Relatives of those killed in Omarska release white balloons honoring the victims on the 22nd anniversary, in 2014, of the closing of the detention camp

Congress failed to hold hearings on whether "ethnic cleansing" met the international definition of genocide, and diplomats announced peace agreements that went quietly unenforced. Genocidal killing would continue for three more years before international intervention.

But the international uproar over Gutman's work, magnified by TV footage of emaciated Bosnian prisoners, had a powerful effect: the Serbs closed the most notorious camps. His stories summon us to journalism that challenges the public conscience, even when it doesn't change the world.

THE DEATH CAMPS OF BOSNIA

By ROY GUTMAN
New York Newsday, Aug. 2, 1992

EXCERPT

ZAGREB, Croatia — The Serb conquerors of northern Bosnia have established two concentration camps in which more than a thousand civilians have been executed or starved and thousands more are being held until they die, according to two recently released prisoners interviewed by New York Newsday.

The testimony of the two survivors appeared to be the first eyewitness accounts of what international human rights agencies fear may be systematic slaughter conducted on a huge scale. New York Newsday has not been able to visit the camps. Neither has the International Red Cross or any other international agency.

In one concentration camp, a former iron-mining complex at Omarska in northwest Bosnia, more than a thousand Muslim and Croat civilians were held in metal cages, without sanitation, adequate food, exercise or access to the outside world, according to a former prisoner who asked to be identified only as "Meho." The prisoners at the camp, he said, include the entire political and cultural elite of the city of Prijedor. Armed Serbian guards executed prisoners in groups of 10 to 15 every few days, he said.

"They would take them to a nearby lake. You'd hear a volley of rifles. And they'd never come back," said Meho. ■

Michael Petrou, NF '18

COMIC STRIPS IN the newspaper were my entry drug into journalism when I was a child in the 1980s. I then begin experimenting with baseball box scores, and by the time I was 11 or 12 I had developed an addiction from which I would never be able to extricate myself.

But if I had to pick one piece of journalism that made a difference to me, I would choose “Homage to Catalonia” by George Orwell. Published less than a year after Orwell left Spain, when the civil war there still raged, it has the immediacy of traditional journalism, and it’s valuable for that: Orwell attempts to be an



**Orwell has a fine eye
for detail and anecdote**

honest observer in the face of enormous social pressure to toe one line or the other. And with the passage of time we know he got a lot right. But what endures more than that is the intimacy of his portrayal of men in that war, at that time and place: the filth and boredom, but also the generosity and comradeship.

He does this with a fine eye for detail and anecdote, but also because he doesn’t disguise his affection for those he writes about. There are scenes and passages I can recall easily from memory, and there are few books I return to as often.

HOMAGE TO CATALONIA

By GEORGE ORWELL
Secker and Warburg, 1938

EXCERPT

In the Lenin Barracks in Barcelona, the day before I joined the militia, I saw an Italian militiaman standing in front of the officers’ table.

He was a tough-looking youth of twenty-five or six, with reddish-yellow

hair and powerful shoulders. His peaked leather cap was pulled fiercely over one eye. He was standing in profile to me, his chin on his breast, gazing with a puzzled frown at a map which one of the officers had open on the table.

Something in his face deeply moved me. It was the face of a man who would commit murder and throw away his life for a friend—the kind of face you would expect in an Anarchist, though as likely as not he was a Communist. There were both candour and ferocity in it; also the pathetic reverence that illiterate people have for their supposed superiors. Obviously he could not make head or tail of the map; obviously he regarded map-reading as a stupendous intellectual feat. I hardly know why, but I have seldom seen anyone—any man, I mean—to whom I have taken such an immediate liking. ■

Members of the POUM, an anti-fascist political party, guard party headquarters in Barcelona in 1936

Excerpt from HOMAGE TO CATALONIA by George Orwell. Copyright © George Orwell, 1936. Reprinted by permission of Bill Hamilton as the Literary Executor of the Estate of the Late Sonia Brownell Orwell. Copyright © 1952 and renewed 1980 by Sonia Brownell Orwell. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. All rights reserved.





Robert Socha, NF '17

“1920 DIARY” BY Isaac Babel has resonated with me for many years. Babel was a Russian-born journalist and writer of Jewish descent. At age 26 he was embedded with the Bolshevik Army going West, aiming to conquer Europe. The Red Army’s march to the West was stopped in the summer of 1920 by the Polish military. Isaac Babel’s official job was to write for a state press agency. His more important job was to write—with deep humanity—a secret diary documenting the brutality, cruelty, and senselessness of the war. If the diary had been found at the time, the author would have been immediately shot as a traitor (indeed, he was shot years later by the communists, but for a different reason). What I have learned from repeatedly reading Babel’s diary is the power of the disciplined and minimalist language

he used to depict the inhumanity of the war, speaking truth to the brutal and primitive power of the soldiers, the army, and the war itself.

1920 DIARY

By ISAAC BABEL (edited by Carol J. Avins, translated by H. T. Willetts)
Yale University Press, 1997

EXCERPT

AUGUST 28, 1920. KOMAROW

Evening—at my landlord’s, a conventional home, Sabbath evening, they didn’t want to cook until the Sabbath was over.

I look for the nurses, Suslov laughs. A Jewish woman doctor.

We are in a strange, old-fashioned house, they used to have everything here—butter, milk. At night, a walk through the shtetl. The moon, their lives at night behind closed doors.

Vladimir Lenin, in Moscow’s Sverdlov Square in 1920, gives a speech to Red Army members leaving for the front during the Polish-Soviet War

Wailing inside. They will clean everything up. The fear and horror of the townsfolk. The main thing: our men are going around indifferently, looting where they can, ripping the clothes off the butchered people.

The hatred for them is the same, they too are Cossacks, they too are savage, it’s pure nonsense that our army is any different. The life of the shtetls. There is no escape. Everyone is out to destroy them, the Poles did not give them refuge. All the women and girls can scarcely walk. In the evening a talkative Jew with a little beard, he had a store, his daughter threw herself out of a second-floor window, she broke both arms, there are many like that.

What a powerful and magnificent life of a nation existed here. The fate of the Jewry. At our place in the evening, supper, tea, I sit drinking in the words of the Jew with the little beard who asks me plaintively if it will be possible to trade again.

An oppressive, restless night. ■

Wonbo Woo, NF '16

ROBERT KRULWICH IS best known today as the co-host of NPR's "Radiolab." But before launching the pioneering podcast and radio show with his friend Jad Abumrad, Krulwich was a longtime correspondent for ABC and CBS News. And he was every bit as innovative in television as he has been on the radio.

On April 9, 2003, in the midst of the Iraq War, a statue of Saddam Hussein in Baghdad's Firdos Square was brought down. Live coverage of the event was broadcast around the world, mostly portraying it as the symbolic end to a war that would continue for more than eight years. It's an event that has been well-scrutinized, most notably by Peter Maass in *The New Yorker* in 2011.

I was working at ABC's "World News Tonight with Peter Jennings" at the time. Sometime that afternoon, Jennings asked Krulwich to file a story for the show about the significance of that image. With only a few hours until air, Krulwich, his producer, Justine Schiro, and editor, Charlie Marcus, set about watching every angle they could find of the moments leading up to the statue's coming down, making careful note of small details and chronology, and doing what they could to report it from afar.

While many news stories latched on to the narrative that jubilant crowds of Iraqis brought the statue down in celebration of their liberation, Krulwich's story told the truth: amidst a small group of excited locals, an American military vehicle pulled it down.



The story was prescient, precise, and compelling. To me, it's one of the best examples of why visuals are so important in video storytelling

The three-minute story ("The Story Behind Saddam Hussein's Fallen Statue"), written and edited in just two hours, was prescient, precise, and compelling. To me, it's one of the best examples of why visuals are so important in video storytelling, and a great example of innovative, smart, short-form TV news.

THE STORY BEHIND SADDAM HUSSEIN'S FALLEN STATUE

ABC News, "World News Tonight with Peter Jennings"
By ROBERT KRULWICH, JUSTINE SCHIRO, and CHARLIE MARCUS
April 9, 2003

EXCERPT

Robert Krulwich: It all began here in downtown Baghdad. A small crowd is gathered near a thirty-foot-high Saddam Hussein. And two men who just happen to have a twelve-foot ladder with them, the first one hoisted himself up onto the pedestal, followed by another guy in blue—who just makes it—and then a third man just happens to have—look to the right there—what looks like a long, two-inch-thick rope. Next, with the aid of their ladder, the guys throw the rope up over Saddam's right shoulder,

Kirk Dalrymple of the U.S. Marines watches as the statue of Saddam Hussein falls in Baghdad's Firdos Square in 2003

der, then over Saddam's left shoulder, and then they cinch it together into a kind of loose noose, while all around the circle, from a distance, Marines are calmly watching as an extremely large man arrives with a sledgehammer and begins pounding the pedestal. Then there's a tug-of-war over who gets to pound next. Had the statue fallen at this moment, it would have looked like the Iraqis liberating themselves, but then a US tank retrieval vehicle shows up—these are designed to pull heavy equipment out of sand or mud—so up goes the crane. A U.S. Marine scrambles up—he's followed, you notice here, by an Iraqi—the Marine turns and motions, "No, no, go down," and waves him away. Seconds later, that soldier is handed an American flag which, in a light wind, stays on Saddam's face. Had the statue fallen at this moment, the world would have seen an image of American conquest. But after a minute and 32 seconds, you can see the soldier look down—"Stop," he seems to be told, "Take it down." "Down?" And he removes it. And he instead gives Saddam an Iraqi flag as a scarf for a couple of minutes. But when it is finally time for the statute to come down, there are no flags. ■

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Emily O'Reilly, NF '88

AT FIRST GLANCE, “Lost Lives,” this extended piece of journalism in book form, looks like a simple list of names with some brief notes attached to each entry, but to me it is one of the most profoundly moving works I have ever read on the conflict in Northern Ireland or indeed on any other conflict.

Through the simple device of recording every killing that took place from the late 1960s to the early 2000s, the co-authors reveal a tapestry of conflict and suffering that is mesmerizing in its clarity and impact.

There is no editorializing, just a recitation of the facts but which nonetheless delivers an enormous emotional punch as it presents the heartbreaking reality of the lives and deaths of so many people long forgotten by all but their families and friends. And the list includes everyone from the innocent to those involved in terrorism and members of the security forces. Every “lost life” is remembered, every human being honored.

Its superficial simplicity also masks the enormity of the effort in tracking every detail of every death. It took seven years to research and compile.

As a journalist, and one who had

covered Northern Ireland at the height of the conflict, this had a profound impact on me, reminding me of the grief that remains when the headlines have long since faded away.

LOST LIVES: THE STORIES OF THE MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN WHO DIED AS A RESULT OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND TROUBLES

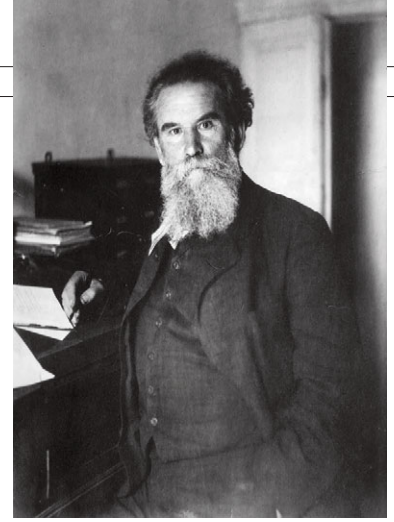
By DAVID MCKITTRICK, SEAMUS KELTERS, BRIAN FEENEY and CHRIS THORNTON
Mainstream Publishing, 1999

EXCERPT

August 16, 1976
Gerald McGleenan, Armagh
Civilian, Catholic, 22, single, plumber

He caught the full force of the explosion as he stood outside his home in St Patrick’s Street, Keady. A keen hurler with the local Red Hand team, he had played for them in a county senior championship the previous Sunday. He was buried in the cemetery beside St Patrick’s Church in Keady after a funeral mass. Among the pallbearers was his brother for whom he was due to act as best man at his wedding a few days later. The wedding was postponed. ■

Journalist Vladimir Korolenko looked into the case of a Jewish man accused of ritual murder and took a stand in defense of him



Alisa Sopova, NF '17

WHEN I THINK about what influenced me as a journalist, a classic example of excellent Russian journalism—which is, I believe, extremely relevant now—comes to mind.

In an undergraduate class on the history of Russian journalism, I discovered the works of Vladimir Korolenko, a prominent journalist and human rights advocate during the early 20th century. I was particularly impressed by his series of publications on the high-profile anti-Semitic Beilis trial in 1913. In this trial, initiated by extreme nationalists and based on popular anti-Semitic sentiments, a Jewish man from Kiev, Menahem Mendel Beilis, was accused of the ritual murder of a child. Korolenko investigated the case and took a public stand in defense of Beilis. He also wrote an open letter titled “Call to the Russian People in regard to the blood libel of the Jews,” which many public intellectuals of the time signed. Korolenko’s actions played a significant role in the acquittal of Beilis.

Why did it strike me so deeply?



Korolenko has been a symbol of the principle that, as a journalist, you shouldn't blindly accept the mainstream narrative

Local women walk past houses in Belfast that had been set afire in 1971



TOP: FINE ART IMAGES/HERITAGE IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES BOTTOM: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Because it's easy to be liberal and pro-diversity when it is mainstream. What is difficult is going against the mainstream. Uncovering a false accusation that has state power and public opinion behind it requires common sense, humanism, courage, and a readiness to go against the current.

Today, politicians and members of society still easily place all kinds of "bad guy" labels on groups of people whom they perceive as threats. And very few journalists have enough intelligence and courage to begin public discussions on whether these accusations are true. Since my student years, Vladimir Korolenko and his coverage of the Beilis trial has been a symbol of the principle that, as a journalist, you shouldn't blindly accept the mainstream narrative, but instead subject it to verification according to universal human values.

THE BEILIS CASE: THE JURY HAS REPLIED

By VLADIMIR KOROLENKO
Russkiye Vedomosti, Oct. 29, 1913

These selected excerpts translated from Russian by Alisa Sopova

EXCERPT

Amid great tension, the Beilis trial is coming to its end. All the traffic around the court is blocked. Even street cars are not being let through. There are troops of mounted police and rangers on the streets. The requiem for the murdered baby Andryusha Yuschinsky is planned at 4 p.m. in St. Sophia Cathedral, with the bishop expected. From the street on which the court is located, a mob of people gathers at the cathedral. Here and there torches flare up over the crowd. Dusk is falling among an ominous disturbance.

The mood in the court grows even more tense, spreading out to the city.

Around 6 p.m. the reporters race out. The news spreads lightning fast that Beilis is acquitted. All of a sudden the mood on the streets changes. Multiple groups of people can be seen congratulating each other. Russians and Jews merge in common joy. The threat of a pogrom near the cathedral fades away. ■

Abu Khaled, a fighter belonging to the PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine), during the filming of "The Enemy" in Gaza in 2014



Maciek Nabrdalik, NF '17

IN THE SUMMER of 2015 while I was in Greece documenting the refugee crisis I had a disturbing encounter with another photojournalist. He said he doesn't like it when refugees arrive happy, jump out of the boat, and take selfies. "I don't even take my camera out. This is not what refugees look like," he said. After he told me that one of his images had recently been published on the front page of a prominent newspaper, I felt demoralized, wondering if it had fed the stereotypes that make people afraid of refugees. What if the people of my native Poland, for instance, I wondered, felt a kinship with refugees and realized that refugees often are not so different from them? Would it be easier to accept refugees as neighbors? These questions haunted me. I realized that most of the visual journalism I see reinforces, not challenges, stereotypes.

While I was thinking about new ways of visual storytelling that could make me a better journalist, I experienced "The Enemy," a virtual reality installation by Karim Ben Khelifa, NF

'13. "The Enemy" allows audiences to engage with soldiers from across enemy lines. It is designed to help people discover a shared humanity between opposing combatants in conflict zones around the world. Viewers see three-dimensional lifelike manifestations of the combatants and hear them explain what they are fighting for.

It's one of the very few pieces of visual journalism I can think of that addresses not only the consequences of war but also causes and makes the audience participate and care. It is one of the most ambitious immersive documentary projects that I've come across and it left a deep impression on me. It challenges audiences' assumptions about who fights in wars, why, and at what cost. It has inspired me to look for new ways of collaborating and visual storytelling. ■

VIRTUAL REALITY

THE ENEMY

By KARIM BEN KHELIFA
World premiere May 2017 at the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris



Johanna van Eeden, NF '15

I T IS APRIL 1994. I'm a final year student at a university in South Africa—on the threshold of a career in journalism. It is eerily quiet on campus. Most of the students have left for home. I'm staying behind, in the small student town of Potchefstroom, to cover the first democratic election for the local newspaper. It is exciting and scary and exhilarating to write the first draft of history.

In 2014—20 years later—I am attending a class at Harvard's Kennedy School on the leadership system. The system is all about leaders, followers, and context. We learn about different followers, and as part of the reading on bystanders, I discover Samantha Power's essay on Rwanda in *The Atlantic*, "Bystanders to Genocide."

It is beautifully crafted, telling the horrific story of the April 1994 genocide in Rwanda. While South Africa was on the brink of a new dawn, a nightmare was unfolding in Rwanda. What had been, to me, a vague piece of history of a country far away came alive in the words of the writer. It left

me with an incredible sadness and an overall awareness of the roles of bystanders. As journalists, we can try to be objective. But one thing we should never be is silent bystanders.

BYSTANDERS TO GENOCIDE

By SAMANTHA POWER
The Atlantic, Sept. 2001

EXCERPT

In the course of a hundred days in 1994 the Hutu government of Rwanda and its extremist allies very nearly succeeded in exterminating the country's Tutsi minority. Using firearms, machetes, and a variety of garden implements, Hutu militiamen, soldiers, and ordinary citizens murdered some 800,000 Tutsi and politically moderate Hutu. It was the fastest, most efficient killing spree of the twentieth century.

A few years later, in a series in *The New Yorker*, Philip Gourevitch recounted in horrific detail the story of the genocide and the world's failure to stop it. President Bill Clinton, a famously avid reader, expressed

Young Rwandans watch as U.S. Army Rangers deliver water to the Kibumba refugee camp in 1994

shock. He sent copies of Gourevitch's articles to his second-term national-security adviser, Sandy Berger. The articles bore confused, angry, searching queries in the margins. "Is what he's saying true?" Clinton wrote with a thick black felt-tip pen beside heavily underlined paragraphs. "How did this happen?" he asked, adding, "I want to get to the bottom of this." The President's urgency and outrage were oddly timed. As the terror in Rwanda had unfolded, Clinton had shown virtually no interest in stopping the genocide, and his Administration had stood by as the death toll rose into the hundreds of thousands.

Why did the United States not do more for the Rwandans at the time of the killings? Did the President really not know about the genocide, as his marginalia suggested? Who were the people in his Administration who made the life-and-death decisions that dictated U.S. policy? Why did they decide (or decide not to decide) as they did? Were any voices inside or outside the U.S. government demanding that the United States do more? If so, why weren't they heeded? And most crucial, what could the United States have done to save lives? ■

Dina Temple-Raston, NF '14

YOU DON'T FIND books; books find you. That's what essayist Joseph Epstein told us in our writing classes at Northwestern. All these years later, I still think he's right. Barbara Tuchman's "Stilwell and the American Experience in China, 1911-1945" found me in the late 1980s; it was the book that inspired me to sell nearly everything I owned and go to China, just to see it for myself. I became a China correspondent and it would be years before I would set foot in the United States again. As a biography, the Stilwell book is very good—it had news. Tuchman constructed a portrait of Stilwell gleaned from diaries and letters that had never been released. And the book was prescient. Tuchman laid out the mistakes that plagued America's foray into China, from the hundreds of millions of dollars used to shore up its crumbling economy, to the senseless killing during the Rape of Nanking, to the Pentagon's assurances to the American people that Chiang Kai-shek was a hero for the cause of freedom and democracy. But I only realized later that she was actually hinting at the debacle in Vietnam. The Stilwell book was published in early 1971, some six months before The New York Times released the Pentagon Papers revealing that the Johnson administration had systematically not told the truth, not only to the public but also to Congress, that the U.S. had played an active role in the 1963 overthrow and assassination of President Ngo Dinh Diem of South Vietnam, and that the bombing campaign in North Vietnam was not going nearly as well as advertised. Once that happened it changed how people

Lt. Gen. Joseph Stilwell, commander in chief of U.S. forces in India, Burma, and China, pauses for a smoke while on a tour of Burma in 1944

viewed Tuchman's book. It made them wonder how we could have learned so little from our history.

STILWELL AND THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IN CHINA, 1911-1945

By BARBARA W. TUCHMAN
Macmillan, 1971

EXCERPT

In July 1944, at the height of the Second World War, the United States Government officially requested Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek to place an American, specifically Lieutenant General Joseph W. Stilwell, in command of all China's armed forces. The proposal was unprecedented: no American had ever before directly commanded the national forces of an ally. It was the more extreme because General Stilwell, already a figure of accomplishment, controversy and feuds in

the China-Burma-India theater, was known to be persona non grata to the Generalissimo who had previously asked for his recall.

China's case, however, was considered "desperate," demanding "desperate remedies." To keep China in the war, salvage something of her combat potential and prevent the consolidation of Japan's hold on the mainland were objects essential to both American strategy and post-war policy. "The future of all Asia is at stake," President Roosevelt said in his message to Chiang Kai-shek, "along with the tremendous effort which America has expended in that region. He was fully aware, he added, "of your feelings regarding General Stilwell" but "I know of no other man who has the ability, the force and the determination to offset the disaster that now threatens China." ■

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It was [Tuchman's book] that inspired me to sell nearly everything I owned and go to China

Victor McElheny, NF '63

A REPORTER'S FATEFUL question on March 31, 1954 led to the story that had more influence on my lifetime of science reporting than any other. The answer, symbolizing an age driven by science, ricocheted around the world the next day. It most likely influenced humanity's almost immediate, unspoken decision that we would not blow ourselves up in a thermonuclear holocaust.

The occasion was the official public statement about the United States' test of a 15-megaton hydrogen bomb on March 1, 1954, on the southern Pacific atoll of Bikini. A bomb using the hydrogen fusion process was a thousand times more powerful than an atom bomb. It had become a military reality less than nine years after America dropped the first two atomic bombs on Japan in August 1945.

A freshman at Harvard, I read the story on the front page of the April 1 New York Times in my college dorm.

With President Dwight Eisenhower standing beside him, chairman Lewis Strauss of the U.S.

Atomic Energy Commission had been asked by a reporter: "What happens when the H-bomb goes off? How big is the area of destruction in its various stages?"

Strauss replied, "It can be made as large as you wish, as large as the military requirement demands, that is to say, an H-bomb can be made as large enough to take out a city." The assembled reporters shouted, "What?" One of them asked, "How big a city?" Strauss replied, "Any city." The questioner shot back, "Any city? New York?" Strauss said, "The metropolitan area, yes."



A reporter's fateful question on March 31, 1954 led to the story that had more influence on my lifetime of science reporting than any other

A map shows the extent to which a hydrogen bomb could devastate the New York, New Jersey, Connecticut tri-state area

People knew of the test already, because the unexpectedly large release of radiation had forced evacuation of neighboring atolls. But now the whole world could sense the scale of the threat and recoil from it, eventually demanding—in the Test Ban Treaty of 1963—cessation of all tests of nuclear explosives in the air, the oceans, and space.

A good case can be made that the stark picture Strauss painted for reporters helped humanity decide that the job was not to win a duel with clouds of H-bombs but rather to survive on humanity's only platform, Earth.

H-BOMB CAN WIPE OUT ANY CITY, STRAUSS REPORTS AFTER TESTS

By WILLIAM L. LAURENCE
The New York Times, April 1, 1954

EXCERPT

WASHINGTON, March 31—The United States can now build a hydrogen bomb big enough to destroy any city.

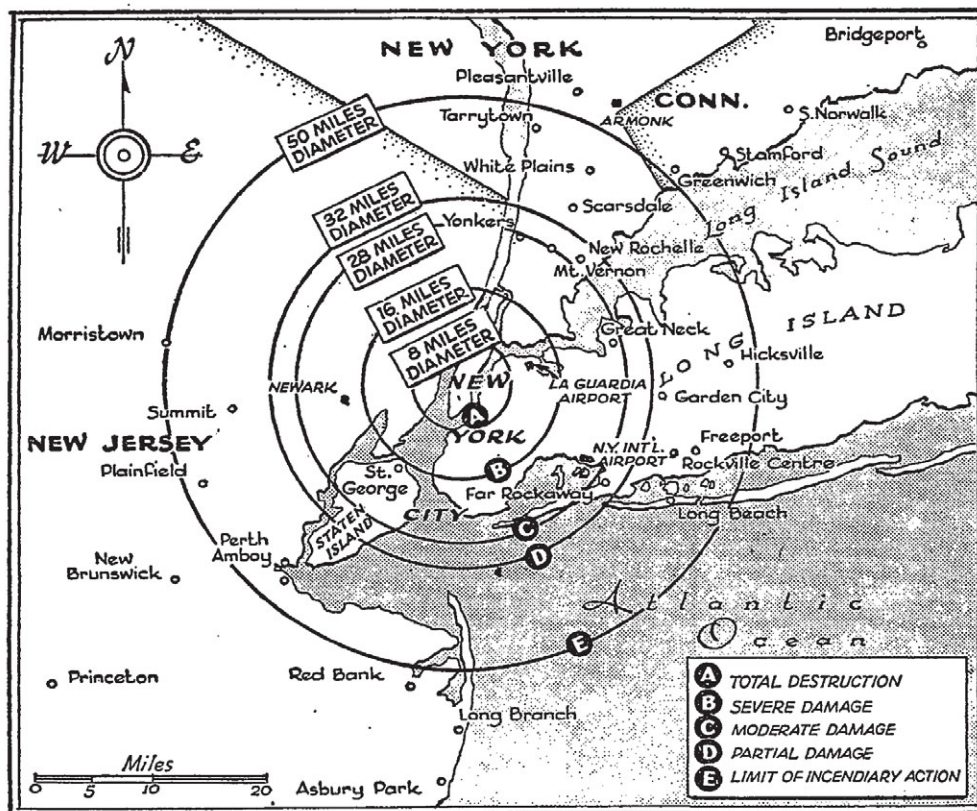
In revealing this today, Rear Admiral Lewis L. Strauss, chairman of the United States Atomic Energy Commission, hinted that such a bomb could be delivered by plane.

The bomb tested at the Eniwetok proving grounds on March 1, Admiral Strauss announced, provided a "stupendous blast in the megaton range." He said it was "double that of the calculated estimate." A megaton is equivalent to 1,000,000 tons of TNT.

The explosive power attained in the test was reported by a member of the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy as twelve to fourteen megatons. This represents an explosive force 600 to 700 times that of the bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. [...]

Despite the hydrogen bomb's enormous power, Admiral Strauss said, the test was "at no time out of control." Furthermore, he gave the nation and the world the assurance given to him by scientists that it was "impossible for any such test or series of tests to get out of control." ■

William L. Laurence
© 1954 The New York Times.





Ray Jenkins, NF '65

THE 31,000-WORD article filled the entire Aug. 31, 1946 issue of *The New Yorker* magazine—the first anniversary of the detonation of the first atomic bomb at the close of World War II. Although there was no advance publicity of the article, the issue quickly sold out on New York's newsstands as word of mouth spread. Subsequently the article was published as a book which is still in print today.

Hersey, who was 32 at the time, told the story of the nuclear holocaust through the eyes of six survivors whom he interviewed exhaustively. For this, Tom Wolfe considered Hersey to be one of the forerunners of the New Journalism of the '60s and '70s. Hersey considered his work plain old journalism.

"Hiroshima"'s impact is incalculable. Many scholars consider Hersey's beautifully told story to be a major factor in bringing a war-weary humanity to its senses and possibly preventing a repetition of the horror that Hiroshima—and, shortly

thereafter, Nagasaki—endured in August of 1945.

HIROSHIMA

By JOHN HERSEY
The New Yorker, Aug. 31, 1946

EXCERPT

At exactly fifteen minutes past eight in the morning, on August 6, 1945, Japanese time, at the moment when the atomic bomb flashed above Hiroshima, Miss Toshiko Sasaki, a clerk in the personnel department of the East Asia Tin Works, had just sat down at her place in the plant office and was turning her head to speak to the girl at the next desk. At that same moment, Dr. Masakazu Fujii was settling down cross-legged to read the *Osaka Asahi* on the porch of his private hospital, overhanging one of the seven deltaic rivers which divide Hiroshima; Mrs. Hatsuyo Nakamura, a tailor's widow, stood by the window of her kitchen, watching a neighbor tearing down his house because it lay

One month after the U.S. dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, skeletons of trees dominate the landscape

in the path of an air-raid-defense fire lane; Father Wilhelm Kleinsorge, a German priest of the Society of Jesus, reclined in his underwear on a cot on the top floor of his order's three-story mission house, reading a Jesuit magazine, *Stimmen der Zeit*; Dr. Terufumi Sasaki, a young member of the surgical staff of the city's large, modern Red Cross Hospital, walked along one of the hospital corridors with a blood specimen for a Wassermann test in his hand; and the Reverend Mr. Kiyoshi Tanimoto, pastor of the Hiroshima Methodist Church, paused at the door of a rich man's house in Koi, the city's western suburb, and prepared to unload a handcart full of things he had evacuated from town in fear of the massive B-29 raid which everyone expected Hiroshima to suffer. A hundred thousand people were killed by the atomic bomb, and these six were among the survivors. They still wonder why they lived when so many others died. ■

Excerpt from "A Noiseless Flash" from *HIROSHIMA* by John Hersey, copyright © 1946, 1985, copyright renewed 1973 by John Hersey. Used by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of the Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, a division of Penguin Random House LLC. All rights reserved.



Tom Lea's painting "That 2,000 Yard Stare," which appeared in *Life* magazine in 1945, inspired the phrase often used to refer to the blank, detached gaze of traumatized soldiers

Stuart Watson, NF '08

WHEN I WAS just a kid growing up in Albany, Georgia, I pulled down from my dad's bookcases a coffee-table book published by *Life* magazine. On page 460 in "The Second World War" was "That 2,000 Yard Stare," a painting by Tom Lea. Long before the hellish aftermath of war got the name post-traumatic stress disorder, Lea captured it. I never forgot the image.

You can find photographs of soldiers, sailors, and Marines with the same blank stare from World War I when it was called shell shock or Korea when it was called battle fatigue or Vietnam when it began to be called PTSD or Iraq when it began to be treated, but in this painting it is distilled and transmitted in a way that forever burned it into my memory.

Four decades later I discovered my biological father (not my adopted dad) had been wounded by a mortar shell in the Battle of Peleliu, where Lea first saw the 2,000-yard stare. My father died of alcoholism, 25 years after he was wounded in action.

Lea was a civilian who had never been in ground combat before Peleliu. He hit the beach between waves of Marines under constant fire. He was armed with nothing but a Ka-Bar knife and a sketch pad. His principal mission for 48 hours was to stay alive and remember enough details to produce sketches, the source of 10 oil paintings.

Lea's editor told his staff to "Print every damn one of them in color, and then I never want to see them again."

When we think of the iconic images of World War II, many think of Joe Rosenthal's photo of the flag raising at Mount Suribachi. I don't. I think of Tom Lea, what he risked, and what he captured. His painting of the real cost of war is rarely exhibited. ■

PAINTING

THAT 2,000 YARD STARE

By TOM LEA
Originally published July 11, 1945,
Life magazine



Gary Knight, NF '10

"VIETNAM INC." CHANGED the way I looked at what photojournalism could be. It had a point of view, subtle and clearly stated, but definitely not overstated. It was the result of years of

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE TOM LEA INSTITUTE, EL PASO, TEXAS



PHILIP JONES GRIFFITHS
/MAGNUM PHOTOS

hard work, grunt work, immersive and visceral. It was a consequence of the life experience of the photographer, Philip Jones Griffiths, an ardent Welsh nationalist, who identified with the plight of ordinary Vietnamese, and I think also with the blue-collar soldier and Marine. It was work that demanded going right to the heart of the matter. “Vietnam

Inc.” could not have been made by someone not willing to be present right in the middle of everything that was terrible, or someone who wasn’t desperate to understand what was going on. It required an intellect, a gift to observe and translate, and the ability to be culturally aware, something that a lot of journalism and photography doesn’t have.

A U.S. serviceman watches a Vietnamese woman and child in a village in Quang Ngai province in 1967

Other genre-changing forms of journalism included Michael Herr’s “Dispatches” and John Laurence’s CBS TV documentary “The World of Charlie Company.” ■

PHOTOGRAPHY

VIETNAM INC.

By PHILIP JONES GRIFFITHS
Collier Macmillan, 1971



Bill Marimow, NF '83

WHEN I FIRST read this front-page dispatch by Sydney H. Schanberg of *The New York Times* in May 1975, I was covering the labor beat for *The Philadelphia Inquirer* and still honing the most basic tools of reporting and writing for a newspaper. In this piece (“Grief and Animosity in an Embassy Haven”), written after the Khmer Rouge had taken over Cambodia’s capital, Phnom Penh, Schanberg wrote about the agonizing two weeks that he and 800 other foreigners had spent inside the French Embassy, with depleted food supplies, a lack of running water, and uncertainty about their fates. I was awed by the poignancy and the precision of Schanberg’s reporting. A baby was born during

his confinement; another baby died. A dozen marriages were performed, primarily to prevent either bride or groom from being banished to the countryside. Military men who had served the Cambodian government were removed from the compound to be executed. I marveled at Schanberg’s courage to remain in Phnom Penh after the rebels had ordered all foreign journalists out of the country. For this piece and others, Schanberg was the recipient of the Pulitzer Prize for International Reporting in 1976, a well-deserved recognition for his stellar reporting and writing and the courage to stay with his story.

GRIEF AND ANIMOSITY IN AN EMBASSY HAVEN

By SYDNEY H. SCHANBERG
The New York Times, May 9, 1975

EXCERPT

Throughout our stay the Communists continued their campaign of proving their primacy—refusing to let French planes land with food and medical supplies, refusing to allow us to be

People take refuge in the French Embassy in Phnom Penh after communist troops seized the city in 1975

evacuated in comfort by air instead of by rutted road in the back of military trucks, and, finally, shutting down the embassy radio transmitter, our only contact with the outside world.

At the same time they did not physically harass or abuse us—the only time our baggage was searched was by Thai customs officials when we crossed the border—and they did eventually provide us with food and water. The food was usually live pigs, which we had to butcher.

Though the new rulers were obviously trying to inflict a certain amount of discomfort—they kept emphasizing that they had told us in radio broadcasts to get out of the city before the final assault and that by staying we had deliberately gone against their wishes—but there was another way to look at it. From their point of view we were being fed and housed much better than their foot soldiers were and should not complain.

But complain we did—about the food, about each other, about the fact that embassy officials were dining on chicken and white wine while we were eating plain rice and washing it down with heavily chlorinated water. ■

Sydney H. Schanberg © 1975 *The New York Times*.



I marveled at Schanberg’s courage to remain in Phnom Penh

Linda Robinson, NF '01

MY NINTH-GRADE civics and American history teacher Miss Keister gave me “Winners and Losers” by Gloria Emerson, among the many articles and books she constantly offered me. She fed my interest in history as well as current international affairs, and—apart from my parents—was the single biggest influence shaping my college and career trajectory. “Winners and Losers” was perhaps the book that definitively tilted me toward journalism and international affairs, and specifically societies in conflict. At that time, in high school, I realized that I’d just missed one of the seminal experiences of our country—the Vietnam War—and Gloria’s book helped me “see” it firsthand. She captured in her photos and prose the searing experience of war for those living in that place, both the Vietnamese and the soldiers we sent to fight on behalf of South Vietnam and the anti-communist cause. I spent the first years of my journalism career in Central America covering the anti-communist wars there.

Being a woman out in the middle of a war zone did not strike me as a strange idea since I had seen Gloria’s work. In most talks I give the question inevitably surfaces, why do you do what you do? I guess I should just say “Gloria Emerson.”

WINNERS & LOSERS: BATTLES, RETREATS, GAINS, LOSSES, AND RUINS FROM THE VIETNAM WAR

By GLORIA EMERSON
Random House, 1976

EXCERPT

Somewhere in 1971, in a village called Duc Duc, there was a captured nurse handcuffed to a girl of sixteen. It was the nurse I thought of for too long: even now I can remember something about her face and the color of the jacket she wore—it was not black but a greenish shade. There were handcuffs pulling the nurse and the girl together: they were made by Smith and Wesson. Her husband had been a soldier with the National Liberation Front, she had moved with him and

A young boy stands in what remains of his home in Duc Duc after North Vietnamese troops attacked the village in 1971

his unit, the nurse said. There had been hardships, she had lacked medical supplies. Coconut milk had once been used in transfusions because there was no blood, the nurse said. Her voice was matter-of-fact. She did not expect pity. The nurse acted as if now she was afraid of nothing. When the Saigon government troops stared at her, she turned her back on them, so the girl handcuffed to her had to shift too. The soldiers did not like what the nurse called them, but they did nothing, standing there in a little schoolboy frieze, arms on each other’s shoulders.

So often I remember the nurse, so much later in places that had nothing to do with Duc Duc, that some Americans in the antiwar movement became impatient. Once I even mentioned her in a restaurant on Mott Street, wondering if she had endured. I was advised not to be foolish, to stop being morbid, I must realize that others had taken her place, the friends said, as if that was the point, as if it was the space she left that haunted me. ■

Reprinted from *Winners & Losers* by Gloria Emerson
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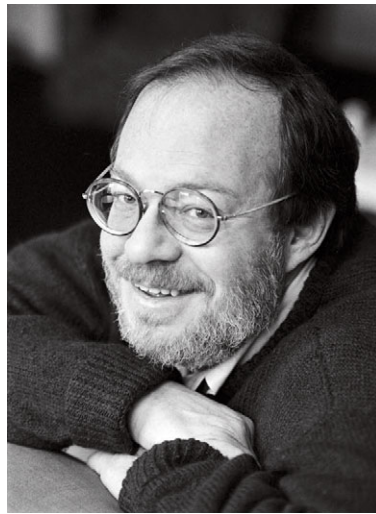


Georg Diez, NF '17

I WASN'T THE best time of my life, and then again it was, in the way that you realize only later, after it is over. I was sitting in a smelly hotel room somewhere in Vietnam, it was the early '90s and I had met these lovely Israelis whom I joined on the path up north. I was lonely, I wasn't happy. And I read Michael Herr's "Dispatches." What struck me most, apart from the history that reached across the decades and the intimacy of his voice, was the sense of doubt and even dread that Herr was able to express while driving his story forward with a prose that was both vivid and reflective. I wasn't a journalist then, and I am not sure I knew I would be one. And later, when I became one, I wasn't a war reporter like Herr, even if for a while I entertained the thought that I could be, that I should be, that this was the only valuable journalism. It was pure narcissism, of course. Never could I have done it. I became a theater critic instead. Quite the opposite in a lot of ways, in most ways actually. But what I took from that book and what remained with me was the sense that you could build whole worlds from paper and words, it was paper then, it is still words, and those worlds can be both exterior and interior at the same time, they can live in both spheres, for the others to see and for you to suffer, or, less dramatic, to feel. It is this sensibility that Herr gave me as a gift. It was hard earned for him.



What struck me most was the sense of doubt and even dread that Herr was able to express... while driving his story forward with a prose that was both vivid and reflective



Michael Herr recounts his time as a Vietnam War correspondent in "Dispatches"

DISPATCHES

By MICHAEL HERR
Alfred A. Knopf, 1977

EXCERPT

Going out at night the medics gave you pills, Dexedrine breath like dead snakes kept too long in a jar. I never saw the need for them myself, a little contact or anything that even sounded like contact would give me more speed than I could bear. Whenever I heard something outside of our clenched little circle I'd practically flip, hoping to God that I wasn't the only one who'd noticed it. A couple of rounds fired off in the dark a kilometer away and the Elephant would be there kneeling on my chest, sending me down into my boots for a breath. Once I thought I saw a light moving in the jungle and I caught myself just under a whisper saying, "I'm not ready for this, I'm not ready for this." That's when I decided to drop it and do something else with my nights. And I wasn't going out like the night ambushers did, or the Lurps, long-range recon patrollers who did it night after night for weeks and months, creeping up on VC base camps or around moving columns of North Vietnamese. I was living too close to my bones as it was, all I had to do was accept it. Anyway, I'd save the pills for later, for Saigon and the awful depressions I always had there. ■

Excerpt from "Breathing In" from DISPATCHES by Michael Herr, copyright © 1977 by Michael Herr, used by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of the Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, a division of Penguin Random House LLC. All rights reserved. Copyright (UK and Commonwealth except Canada) © Michael Herr 1968, 1969, 1970, 1977. Reproduced with permission of the Licensor through PLSear.

Alison MacAdam, NF '14

STILL REMEMBER where I was when I heard this story. It was night. I was driving alone—the best time to listen to the radio.

I was 23, in my first year in public media. I wrote local newscasts but harbored grand aspirations of audio storytelling, and this piece, "The Vietnam Tapes of Lance Corporal Michael A. Baronowski," had it all: The distorted voice of a young man, recording himself in the Vietnam jungle in 1966. The sounds of nighttime and rain. The boredom and jokes. A harmonica in a foxhole. The nearby explosions—"Jesus! That's too close." The longing in Michael Baronowski's voice for his family back home in Pennsylvania.

And, like me, this young man had radio aspirations. His friend, Corporal Tim Duffie who helps narrate the story, explains that Baronowski was trying to build a portfolio for when he came home to the U.S. Baronowski says of recording himself, "This is so much easier than writing. You get all the right voice inflections. And I can do it in the dark."

Audio journalism, at its best, puts voices in your ears that not only inform you, but move you. Those voices are raw, unpracticed. Sometimes in radio newsrooms, we say, "Can we get some 'real people' in this story?" We may sound cynical, but the impulse is what drew me to public radio and has kept me there. We have the power to elevate the most normal thoughts and conversations to poetry. Lance Corporal Michael Baronowski is so alive in this story, even though he lost



Audio journalism, at its best, puts voices in your ears that not only inform you, but move you

his life in Vietnam.

It takes hard work to make a story like this one. The producers likely listened to hours of tapes Baronowski sent home to Pennsylvania. They chose portions that told a story—tracing an arc from the banal waiting to the intensity of battle. This is where journalism meets art.

THE VIETNAM TAPES OF LANCE CORPORAL MICHAEL A. BARONOWSKI

Produced by CHRISTINA EGLOFF with JAY ALLISON for the series “Lost and Found Sound” broadcast on NPR. Aired on NPR’s “All Things Considered” April 21, 2000

EXCERPT

SOUNDBITE OF MORTAR
DISCHARGE AND FIRE

Lance Cpl. BARONOWSKI:
Sounds of the enchanted forest.

SOUNDBITE OF
MACHINE GUNFIRE

Lance Cpl. BARONOWSKI: Boosha.
Jesus. That’s too close.

Mr. DUFFIE: [platoon mate and best friend]: Air strike.

SOUNDBITE OF NAPALM

Mr. DUFFIE: White napalm all over that place. Look at that.

Lance Cpl. BARONOWSKI: (Singing)
You’re in the Pepsi generation.

Mr. DUFFIE: I don’t see any indication of fear in his voice. We didn’t know but what we were going to have to grab our rifles and M-14, or grenades, and have at it because if they’d have broken through that point, then we were going to be in an all-out hand-to-hand combat. And that very potential—there was no way I could have stood there and did what he did.

Lance Cpl. BARONOWSKI: Now, it’s dark, quiet. Everything’s been quiet for about 15 minutes now. I was just crouching down in the hole there talking to a hand grenade. I thought it was the microphone. I realized what I was doing. ■

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“Wisht I could stand up an’ git some sleep.”

Steve Northup, NF ’74

“UP FRONT” IS a collection of Bill Mauldin’s World War II cartoons featuring Willie and Joe, a pair of dogged infantrymen, who are tired and dirty all the time. Bill was a friend of mine, and when UPI assigned me to cover the Vietnam War in 1965, I called him for advice. “Get a couple of bottles of good wine and come over here.” I did, and we promptly drank the wine. “What the hell do I

do,” I pleaded with him. “Take care of your feet,” came the reply. “That’s it?” I slurred. “Yep, that’s it.” It was the best advice I ever had.

“Up Front” is a wonderful collection of drawings showing the truth of being an infantryman. It is done with love, caring, and great accuracy. Forget the generals, colonels, and brass. The infantryman is the basic unit of failed diplomacy and is tough, smart, and adaptive, and willing to give up his life to save his friends. Bill holds a brilliant mirror to these men. He showed us truth. Not only about World War II, but all wars and all infantrymen.



**[Bill Mauldin]
showed us truth.
Not only about World
War II, but about all
wars and infantrymen**

CARTOONS

UP FRONT

By BILL MAULDIN
Henry Holt & Company, Inc., 1945

TELLING
STORIES ABOUT
INDIVIDUALS,
REMARKABLE
AND ORDINARY

PEOPLE





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The 2016 Kentucky Derby at Churchill Downs. For Mary Meehan, NF '16, the Derby instilled a sense of pride in her home state and inspired her own journalism



Lorie Conway, NF '94

HAD NEVER heard of the musician Sixto Rodriguez before watching “Searching for Sugar Man,” the recipient of both the American Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature and the British Academy of Film and Television Arts Award for Best Documentary in 2013. The film tells the story of Rodriguez, a Mexican-American singer, songwriter, guitarist, and poet from Detroit whose music was successful for a brief time in the U.S. But, after being dropped from his record label, Rodriguez disappeared, causing some

to think he had committed suicide.

What the movie reveals is the mystery of what happened to this most thoughtful of singers whose music reflected the alienation of the inner city poor and the pain of being marginalized. Perhaps this is why Rodriguez’s music, unbeknownst to him, was resonating a continent away in South Africa, as the soundtrack of the apartheid resistance movement. Rodriguez was so popular during the mid-1970s in South Africa that his albums were said to be more popular than Elvis’s. Yet Rodriguez never benefited from

Rodriguez, the subject of the documentary “Searching for Sugar Man,” performs in Las Vegas in 2015

this success or even knew about it. Instead he was scraping by as a laborer demolishing buildings in Detroit.

The late Swedish director Malik Bendjelloul brilliantly lays out this story. Through beautiful filming, animation, and interviews, “Searching for Sugar Man” evokes a deep connection to Rodriguez both as a person and musician. By understanding Rodriguez, one can understand his relevance in South Africa. But there’s something else at work in this film and I think that’s what makes it so special. The filmmaker knew he was dealing with someone extraordinary and he gave Rodriguez the space to reveal himself. No set-ups, no manipulation, no phony walks on the beach. Just Rodriguez, in his own world, for all the world to see.

SEARCHING FOR SUGAR MAN

Directed by MALIK BENDJELLOUL
Released Jan. 19, 2012

EXCERPT

Stephen Segerman: To many of us South Africans, he was the soundtrack to our lives. In the mid-’70s, if you walked into a random white, liberal, middle-class household that had a turntable and a pile of pop records and if you flipped through the records you would always see “Abbey Road” by The Beatles. You would always see “Bridge Over Troubled Water” by Simon and Garfunkel. And you would always see “Cold Fact” by Rodriguez. To us, it was one of the most famous records of all time. The message it had was: “Be anti-establishment.” One song’s called “Anti-Establishment Blues.” We didn’t know what the word “anti-establishment” was until it cropped up on a Rodriguez song and then we found out, it’s okay to protest against your society, to be angry with your society. Because we lived in a society where every means was used to prevent apartheid from, you know, coming to an end, this album somehow had in it... lyrics that almost set us free as oppressed peoples. Any revolution needs an anthem and in South Africa, “Cold Fact” was the album that gave people permission to free their minds and to start thinking differently. ■

Mary Jordan, NF '90

“**M**RS. KELLY'S MONSTER” has never left me.

“The heartbeat goes pop, pop, pop, 70 beats a minute.”

In his December 12, 1978 article in *The Baltimore Evening Sun*, Jon Franklin put me in the operating room and spiked my heartbeat with his words.

He had an inspired idea: witness something remarkable yet common. Every hour of every day, a surgeon somewhere is trying to save a dying patient.

A life-and-death plot with three characters. Surgeon. Patient. The “monster” in her brain. Electrifying pace. Complex procedures rendered with stunning clarity.

“The aneurysm finally appears at the end of the tunnel, throbbing, visibly thin, a lumpy, overstretched bag, the color of rich cream, swelling out from the once-strong arterial wall, a tire about to blow out, a balloon ready to burst, a time-bomb the size of a pea.”

I read that story over and over in college. Later I had my journalism students at Georgetown University read it out loud to feel their own hearts go pop, pop, pop.

Great idea. Precision writing. No fancy words. Pure power. ■

NARRATIVE JOURNALISM

MRS. KELLY'S MONSTER

By JON FRANKLIN
The Baltimore Evening Sun,
Dec. 12, 1978



“Mrs. Kelly's Monster” has never left me. ...
Jon Franklin put me in the operating room and spiked my heartbeat with his words

Nicholas Whitiker, the subject of Isabel Wilkerson's New York Times profile, in Chicago in 1993



Lolly Bowean, NF '17

IN HER ILLUSTRIOUS, richly crafted book “The Warmth of Other Suns,” Isabel Wilkerson brilliantly shows the journey that many African-Americans embarked on during the Great Migration. But it's another Wilkerson work that I return to, over and over, as a guide to inform my own journalistic mission: her Pulitzer Prize-winning profile of Nicholas Whitiker, a fourth-grader from the South Side of Chicago.

Through vivid and robust details, Wilkerson compassionately shows us a Black family, the obstacles they face, and the sacrifices the oldest son makes to help his mother advance. She helps us see the toll too much adult responsibility takes on a young boy and helps us relate to a 10-year-old whose story could easily be overlooked.

Her portrait of Nicholas reminds us of his innocence, his humanity. He's a child, a young Black boy—a group too often portrayed as the image of gun violence and too rarely highlighted for ambition, sacrifice, and for being the backbone of a family. Wilkerson shows us a boy aggressively trying to tackle poverty, racism, and historic inequities in ways he can't even articulate.

The reporting and writing are perfection. Wilkerson isn't heavy-handed, she doesn't label the family or pass judgment. She simply tells the story through the eyes of Nicholas with authority. She reminds us of this family's integrity.

I re-read Wilkerson's profile repeatedly because not only is it a great blueprint, but it reminds me why I do this work: to amplify the voices of the unheard and to help communities better understand each other.

FIRST BORN, FAST GROWN: THE MANFUL LIFE OF NICHOLAS, 10

By Isabel Wilkerson
The New York Times, April 4, 1993

EXCERPT

A fourth-grade classroom on a forbidding stretch of the South Side was in the middle of multiplication tables when a voice over the intercom ordered Nicholas Whitiker to the principal's office. Cory and Darnesha and Roy and Delron and the rest of the class fell silent and stared at Nicholas, sitting sober-faced in the back.

“What did I do?” Nicholas thought as he gathered himself to leave.

He raced up the hall and down the steps to find his little sister, Ishtar, stranded in the office, nearly swallowed by her purple coat and hat, and principal's aides wanting to know why no one had picked her up from kindergarten.

It was yet another time that the adult world called on Nicholas, a gentle, brooding 10-year-old, to be a man, to answer for the complicated universe he calls family.

How could he begin to explain his reality—that his mother, a welfare recipient rearing five young children, was in college trying to become a nurse and so was not home during the day, that Ishtar's father was separated from his mother and in a drug-and-alcohol haze most of the time, that the grandmother he used to live with was at work, and that, besides, he could not possibly account for the man who was supposed to take his sister home—his mother's companion, the father of her youngest child? ■

Isabel Wilkerson © 1993 *The New York Times*.

Mary Meehan, NF '16

AT THE KENTUCKY Derby women wear ridiculously elaborate hats and heels they regret within the hour. The horses are sleek and strong and beautiful. And, bonus, there's always bourbon.

When Seattle Slew won the Derby in 1977 ("Seattle Slew 'em in the Stretch"), I was 13. I inhaled Derby coverage. It was a rare celebration of my community. On TV, there was the whoosh-roar of hot air pumping into colorful balloons that I could later see as rainbow dots from my backyard.

On the radio, play by play of a steamboat race pitting the Belle of Louisville, with her red paddle wheel, against some clearly inferior boat from Indiana. In print, two daily newspapers reflecting my hometown alive in a way that came only each May.

Then, as now, national coverage of Kentucky centered on hillbillies and Colonel Sanders. But on Derby Day the press focused on the beauty of the Bluegrass region and the graciousness of its people.

And then, as now, as the camera swept over the track with the crowd singing "My Old Kentucky Home," I choked up.

Grown me sees it was a mostly boozy, vice-ridden spectacle. It was a snapshot of the country's still persistent class divide with the in-field crowd doing headlong beer slides as elites sip cocktails in the air-conditioned and pricey grandstands.

Still, that press, those captured positive moments, mattered to me as a kid. They gave me a sense of pride of place and they inspired me to a career of capturing moments of my own.

SEATTLE SLEW 'EM IN THE STRETCH

By JIM BOLUS and BILLY REED
The Courier-Journal & Times, May 8, 1977

EXCERPT

An hour or so before the 103rd Kentucky Derby, while the madding crowd at creaky old Churchill Downs was working itself into a typical julep-inspired frenzy, Seattle Slew slept.

His trainer, Billy Turner, stood near the big colt's stall in Barn 42 and said that Slew always takes a siesta before a race, even one as historic and prestigious as the Derby.

"With all the fanfare, excitement and crowd, we try to keep him as relaxed as possible," said Turner. "This is just like a heavyweight fighter before a championship fight."

When he awoke, the beautiful dreamer delivered a solid knockout to his 14 opponents. Sent off as the 1-2 favorite by the crowd of 124,038 yesterday, the son of Bold Reasoning-My Charmer pulled away down the stretch and held on for a solid, if not overwhelming, 1¼-length victory over a game Run Dusty Run. ■

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Ana Lourdes Cárdenas, NF '01

SOME STORIES ENDURE, not simply because of the subject matter but for the depth of reporting and quality of writing. Sonia Nazario's masterpiece "Enrique's Journey" is without a question one of those stories.

Through her attention to detail, she made me feel the pain and fears of the tens of thousands of children like Enrique who leave their countries in Central America with dreams of reuniting with their mothers in the U.S. Nazario's anthropological approach—based on multiple extensive interviews, along with tracing Enrique's journey—produced one of the most

Jockey Jean Cruguet on Seattle Slew (saddle #3) at the 1977 Kentucky Derby





Hondurans Hernan Bonillo and Miguel Olivio react to U.S. Border Patrol agents telling them to move back across the Rio Grande toward Nuevo Laredo, Mexico. Enrique spent several weeks in that city before crossing the border into the U.S. in 2000

DON BARTLETT/LOS ANGELES TIMES

comprehensively reported stories on immigration ever written.

There is no question that she has had an influence on my own immigration reporting. Sixteen years have passed since Nazario wrote the six-part story, and migrants still face serious risks when trying to come to the U.S. It is as important as ever that reporters covering immigration produce powerful, objective, and accurate journalism.

ENRIQUE'S JOURNEY CHAPTER 1: THE BOY LEFT BEHIND

By SONIA NAZARIO
Los Angeles Times, a six-part series,
Sept. 29, 2002

EXCERPT

The boy does not understand.

His mother is not talking to

him. She will not even look at him. Enrique has no hint of what she is going to do.

Lourdes knows. She understands, as only a mother can, the terror she is about to inflict, the ache Enrique will feel and finally the emptiness. [...]

Slowly, she walks out onto the porch. Enrique clings to her pant leg. Beside her, he is tiny. Lourdes loves him so much she cannot bring herself to say a word. She cannot carry his picture. It would melt her resolve. She cannot hug him. He is 5 years old.

They live on the outskirts of Tegucigalpa, in Honduras. She can barely afford food for him and his sister, Belky, who is 7. Lourdes, 24, scrubs other people's laundry in a muddy river. She fills a wooden box with gum and crackers and cigarettes, and she finds a spot where she can

squat on a dusty sidewalk next to the downtown Pizza Hut and sell the items to passersby. The sidewalk is Enrique's playground.

They have a bleak future. He and Belky are not likely to finish grade school. Lourdes cannot afford uniforms or pencils. Her husband is gone. A good job is out of the question. So she has decided: She will leave. She will go to the United States and make money and send it home. [...]

His mother never returns, and that decides Enrique's fate. As a teenager—indeed, still a child—he will set out for the U.S. on his own to search for her. Virtually unnoticed, he will become one of an estimated 48,000 children who enter the United States from Central America and Mexico each year, illegally and without either of their parents. ■

Anita Harris, NF '82

A NEWLY MINTED college grad, in 1970, I happened to catch a re-run of “Harvest of Shame” on TV while I was working on a study of hospital decision-making in a strip-mining region of West Virginia. The documentary made me understand, for the first time, the power of the press to expose wrongdoing and inequity and to promote social change. That night, I resolved to become a journalist. A year later, with only high school journalism experience, I joined friends in starting an alternative newspaper in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. After our second issue, a local community center called to ask if we’d write about a migrant camp where, it turned out, workers in squalid conditions were forced by men with guns to pick tomatoes, and, when there were no tomatoes, weeds. In my reporting, I learned that the state had lauded the camp for excellence. Later that year, the Pennsylvania secretary of labor called to tell me that, as a result of my story, the state had closed



It made me understand the power of the press to expose wrongdoing



Photographs of Hae Min Lee and her friends. Lee’s murder in 1999 and the conviction of her ex-boyfriend Adnan Syed are the subject of the first season of “Serial”



Gabe Bullard, NF '15

SOMETIME AROUND THE point when “Saturday Night Live” did a parody of “Serial,” a joke passed among audio producers that “Serial” invented podcasts. It didn’t, of course, but in a lot of ways, it may as well have.

“Serial” is a medium-defining work. It took near-perfect advantage of the form’s aesthetic and technological advantages. The show probably wouldn’t have been such a hit without both the inherent intimacy of audio and the ability to send new pieces of audio to listeners’ phones automatically. Being an outgrowth of “This American Life,” a show that redefined radio storytelling, didn’t hurt either.

The story and the way it was told brought listeners to podcasts. This may have been inevitable given the format’s growth. But podcasters weren’t going on late-night shows before “Serial” host Sarah Koenig did. Its effect on podcasting was as if a story in The New York Times got people to subscribe to four other newspapers as well.

The show came out during my Nieman year. I had spent most of my career working with audio, but I felt stuck. I wanted to do something beyond the typical broadcast story, but the options didn’t seem clear. So many podcasts at the time were interview or roundtable shows and it wasn’t easy to get people to pay attention. Radio documentaries were a good option for in-depth reporting, but they were hard to get on the air. When “Serial” blew up, it was like a giant voice granting permission to do something different, and challenging all us audio journalists to make something great.

the camp, banished the crew leader from Pennsylvania, and set forth new regulations to prevent abuses like those I’d exposed. After several years in alternative journalism, I went to Columbia Journalism School, where Fred Friendly, a producer for “Harvest of Shame,” taught, and then on to a career as a national TV journalist, teacher, and author.

HARVEST OF SHAME

Produced by FRED W. FRIENDLY, EDWARD R. MURROW, and DAVID LOWE
Aired on CBS Nov. 25, 1960

EXCERPT

“Harvest of Shame” begins in an open lot, crowded with men and women looking for jobs. Murrow, the narrator, says: “This scene is not taking place in the Congo. It has nothing to do with Johannesburg or Cape Town. It is not Nyasaland or Nigeria. This is Florida. These are citizens of the United States, 1960. This is a shape-up for migrant workers. The hawkers are chanting the going piece rate at the various fields. This is the way the humans who harvest the food for the best-fed people in the world get hired. One farmer looked at this and said, ‘We used to own our slaves; now we just rent them.’” ■

Printed with permission of CBS News.

A scene from “Harvest of Shame” shows a bus full of migrant agricultural workers traveling to their next job

This shouldn't overshadow, though, that "Serial" is also a great work of journalism, a great story. It effectively reopened a little-known murder case and educated its audience on the justice system.

SERIAL SEASON 1, EPISODE 1: THE ALIBI

Co-created and co-produced by SARAH KOENIG and JULIE SNYDER Available for download Oct. 3, 2014

EXCERPT

Sarah Koenig: For the last year, I've spent every working day trying to figure out where a high school kid was for an hour after school one day in 1999—or if you want to get technical about it, and apparently I do, where a high school kid was for 21 minutes after school one day in 1999. This search sometimes feels undignified on my part. I've had to ask about teenagers' sex lives, where, how often, with whom, about notes they passed in class, about their drug habits, their relationships with their parents. And I'm not a detective or a private investigator. I'm not even a crime reporter. But, yes, every day this year, I've tried to figure out the alibi of a 17-year-old boy. Before I get into why I've been doing this, I just want to point out something I'd never really thought about before I started working on this story. And that is, it's really hard to account for your time, in a detailed way, I mean. How'd you get to work last Wednesday, for instance? Drive? Walk? Bike? Was it raining? Are you sure? Did you go to any stores that day? If so, what did you buy? Who did you talk to? The entire day, name every person you talked to. It's hard. Now imagine you have to account for a day that happened six weeks back. Because that's the situation in the story I'm working on in which a bunch of teenagers had to recall a day six weeks earlier. And it was 1999, so they had to do it without the benefit of texts or Facebook or Instagram. ■

SERIAL Season 1 Episode 1, "The Alibi," co-created and co-produced by Sarah Koenig and Julie Snyder. Produced by the creators of THIS AMERICAN LIFE, in collaboration with WBEZ Chicago. Hosted by Sarah Koenig. Available for download Oct. 3, 2014.

The Louisville Courier-Journal chose three ordinary individuals to drive home the powerful meaning of a birth, wedding, and death

Birth, marriage, death

'There's three times when folks' names get in the paper'

By BILLY REED

Small-town editor, speaking to a young reporter: "Son, remember, there's three times when we've got to get folks' names in the paper—when they're born, when they're married and when they die."

VANCEBURG, Ky.—An 18-year-old named Linda Moore rested peacefully in her bed in Room 206 of the Hayswood Hospital. On her pillow, next to her head, a transistor radio played soft music. A pair of tiny knitted blue booties was on her bedside table.

A couple of days earlier, Linda had given birth to a 6-pound, 11-ounce boy. He was named Alan Moore Jr., after his father, a young worker in a factory near Vanceburg. The birth was very painful, said Linda, but she forgot it all when she heard her first child's squall.

"I remember when he came into the world," she said, dreamily. "The doctor didn't have to spank him. He just sorta tickled him, and he started to scream and

of thing once, that's all I gotta say," said Jannie.

A delightful pair of a girl with large brown eyes, red ribbons in her pigtail, freckles and a champagne laugh, Jannie Hargett, 22, will be married to Rick Nalinger, also 22, of Lexington, on Saturday, Aug. 17.

Classmates and honor students at Transylvania College, Rick and Jannie will be married in the school's Morrison Chapel. And as Jannie describes the wedding, with the groom and his men wearing tails and the ladies in beautiful gowns, it sounds like a dream about to come true—a dream that little country girls have almost as soon as they discover little country boys.

"I'm conservative and old-fashioned," said Jannie. "We wanted a little wedding, but now the thing's grown so that I don't know how we're going to get everybody inside."

They were engaged last February under rather unromantic conditions, unless your definition of romantic happens to

of the legislation. The state allows inmates up to 10 days of good time per month served in prison. A staff report said that discrimination can result when time in jail is not considered in good time since persons might be penalized because they could not make bond.

Ordered a staff report on model arbitration statutes.

Named a subcommittee to consider revising state laws on credit sales. Moloney said recent court decisions and some pending cases "threaten to create a situation where we would have no more credit sales."

The subcommittee also will compare state and federal parole practices. Federal paroles usually are not granted unless at least one-third of the original sentence is served.

Her own life was not without pain. She lost two sons in World War II and a daughter at the age of 9 months. But Mrs. Hall never got down, never burdened others with her problems.

"Her philosophy of life was that when anything bad happened, well, it was over and done with, tomorrow was another day and you should just go on and live your own life," said Mrs. Anderson.

To her dying day, Mrs. Hall loved Maysville and Mason County. She kept a small home here at 214 Main Street, but what she really wanted was to move back out in the country, where she was born, and live on a farm.

"She did for anybody who needed anything done, no matter whether they were black or white," said her daughter, "and she refused publicity of any kind. The paper wanted to do a story on her 90th birthday party but she wouldn't let them."

"Her greatest joy in life, though, was taking care of young babies. She would go and stay with the mothers and babies as long as she was needed. Lots of those

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Nancy Webb, NF '84

GROWING UP, I craved a more significant existence than seemed available in rural Kentucky.

Climbing the ladder as a journalist, working far from home, I longed to cover "important" stories.

In the mail arrived an article from The Louisville (Ky.) Courier-Journal, courtesy of my mother, who captured the premise in her letter: "People say the only time you're guaranteed to get your name in the paper is when you're born, when you marry, and when you die." The Courier-Journal had chosen three individuals—nobody "special"—and had recounted, in depth, the powerful meaning of a birth, wedding, and death. "Birth, Marriage, Death" became the foundation for the remainder of my career. What gives news relevance is its effect on our perceptions of the world into which we bring children, commit to shared dreams, then pass our torch as we leave.

BIRTH, MARRIAGE, DEATH

By BILLY REED
The Courier-Journal, Aug. 9, 1974

EXCERPT

Vanceburg, Ky.—An 18-year-old named Linda Moore rested peacefully in her bed in Room 206 of the Hayswood Hospital. On her pillow, next to her head, a transistor radio played soft music. A pair of tiny knitted blue booties was on her bedside table.

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He was named Alan Moore Jr., after his father, a young worker in a factory near Vanceburg. The birth was very painful, said Linda, but she forgot it all when she heard her first child's squall.

Maysville, Ky.—At her family's three-story, white-brick antebellum mansion on Third Street, the one with the black wrought-iron railings all around, Jannie Hargett sat in the middle of the carpeted dining room floor, opening wedding gifts and adding names to her list for "Thank You" notes.

The dining room was filled with gifts, so that it looked almost like the miscellaneous section of a small department store. Over here was a table with nothing but silver trays and pitchers. Over there was a table with china and glassware. Other tables had electric appliances and other articles of her "loot," as Jannie laughingly called it.

At 11:15 p.m. on Wednesday, July 28, Mrs. Margaret Hall passed away quietly in her 94th year. She was just 11 days shy of her 95th birthday. Until she got sick earlier this year, Mrs. Hall never doubted she would live to be 100.

"She had no patience with old people who just gave up," said her daughter, Mrs. Lloyd Anderson, 73, one recent afternoon. "She never thought of herself as old. Why, when she was in her 90s I remember her talking about other people and calling them, 'this old person,' or 'that old person.'" ■

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Bruce Stannard, NF '83

THE AMERICA'S CUP in the summer of 1983 was not only the longest and most intensive assignment of my career—one that went on day and night for four months—but it entailed total immersion in a sporting, social, historical, and political pageant that was played out in real time on an international stage. I was fresh off my Nieman year, which had underscored for me the inestimable value of deep research and the overriding need for balance in shedding light on both sides of the bitter divide over the America's Cup. Furthermore, Sports Illustrated writer Carleton Mitchell's book, "Summer of the Twelves," his insider's account of the 1958 defense of the America's Cup, allowed me to see how I could tackle my own America's Cup coverage.

A worldwide audience was drawn into a great unfolding story that had everything, including the emotional roller-coaster ride of a cliff-hanger result, the toppling of a High Society icon, and the unlikely heroics of a scruffy, unlettered design genius. As both a live radio broadcaster and as

a journalist reporting for Australia's leading metropolitan newspaper, I found myself communicating with a global audience, many of whom on the far side of the world remained glued to their transistor radios taken to bed. It was the only time in my life that I received what might be called "fan mail"—postal sacks with thousands of letters telling me how much listeners and readers appreciated the front-row seat I'd given them. Even today, 35 years later, people still stop me in the street to say how much they valued those broadcasts and reports ("Newport Goes Mad for Bond"). It was a humbling experience and one that also allowed me to appreciate the weighty responsibility we bear as communicators.

NEWPORT GOES MAD FOR BOND

By BRUCE STANNARD
The Age, Sept. 28, 1983

EXCERPT

NEWPORT, 27 Sept. — Australia II came home to a hero's welcome in

Newport last night, the likes of which this historic seaport has never seen.

Tens of thousands of people crammed every available bit of dock spaces and clambered up on roofs and boats and cars and anything that would give them even a glimpse of the boat that had, after 132 years, ended the New York Yacht Club's domination of world yachting.

It was a bit like the crowd that must have gathered around David after he whacked Goliath with his slingshot.

People seemed genuinely in awe of the big Australian racing machine, and quite rightly so.

Yesterday they witnessed history. Australia II ended the longest winning streak on record in sport. She came from 3-1 down in the best-of-seven series, overcoming a seemingly insurmountable 57-second deficit in the final race. Yet boat and crew turned that deficit into a 41-second victory.

The prize, the America's Cup, is to be presented to Alan Bond in a formal ceremony here later today.

Mr. Bond, who has spent an estimated \$16 million on four challenges, said: "I guess everybody has their day in the sun. This was ours, and I'll never forget it." ■

Alan Bond and John Bertrand of Australia wave and give a thumbs-up after defeating the U.S. in the 1983 America's Cup



Clarence Jones, NF '64

AS A NEWSPAPER reporter, I looked down my nose at TV “talent” who called themselves journalists. My colleagues and I thought TV reporters were hired for their looks and their voices, and because they could read well what their producers wrote.

Then TV made me an offer I couldn't refuse. I had three kids to raise. The new job meant I'd have to learn a new skill. Writing the spoken word is not at all like writing for print.

Charles Kuralt's “On the Road” series for CBS impressed me. He did not fit the TV reporter mold. He *did* have a great voice. But he was overweight and balding, with a face that was easy to forget.

During the 1976 bicentennial, Kuralt reported from Independence Hall in Philadelphia. He stood in the spot where Thomas Jefferson had argued what should be in Declaration of Independence. Kuralt spoke Jefferson's exact words. Then the camera moved around the room and Kuralt told us what Patrick Henry and Benjamin Franklin had said.

In all his stories, Kuralt's prose was often poetry. He made it seem so easy. He was the guy next door, with a conversational style that explored people and places all across America. He educated and inspired his listeners. He was the master storyteller, teaching us more history than we learned in school. Little ironic gems like Robert E. Lee, as a U.S. Army colonel, leading the troops who captured and executed John Brown at Harpers Ferry. Brown was hanged for trying to start a rebellion against the federal government and its tolerance for slavery. Shortly after, Lee became the supreme commander of all Confederate troops, fighting the Civil War against that same government.



Kuralt's prose was often poetry. He made it seem so easy



Charles Kuralt in Bird City, Kansas reporting for “On the Road” in the late 1960s

ON THE ROAD: JOHN BROWN'S RAID AT HARPERS FERRY

Hosted by CHARLES KURALT
Aired on CBS News, June 25, 1976

EXCERPT

Charles Kuralt: John Brown was an uneducated man but he knew a few things.

He knew that we could never have justice until those who were not injured were as concerned about injury as those who were. He knew that reason has its limits in human affairs, and he knew that violence has its

uses. Maybe those truths perceived by John Brown are what make us so uneasy about him yet.

On the day of his execution, he handed a note to one of his guards. It read, “I, John Brown, am now quite certain the crimes of this guilty land will never be purged away but with blood.”

Six hundred thousand lives were lost in the war that he helped to start. One side had a marching song: “John Brown's body lies a'mouldering in the grave / His truth is marching on.” ■

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Jassim Ahmad, NF '17

HAVE SAMPLED a lot of virtual reality (VR) that has left me feeling confused and frustrated. Then I discovered “Notes on Blindness: Into Darkness.” It centers on the audio diaries of John Hull as he recounts his gradual loss of sight over several years. He became completely blind in 1983. A professor of religion at the University of Birmingham in England, Hull died in 2015 at the age of 80.

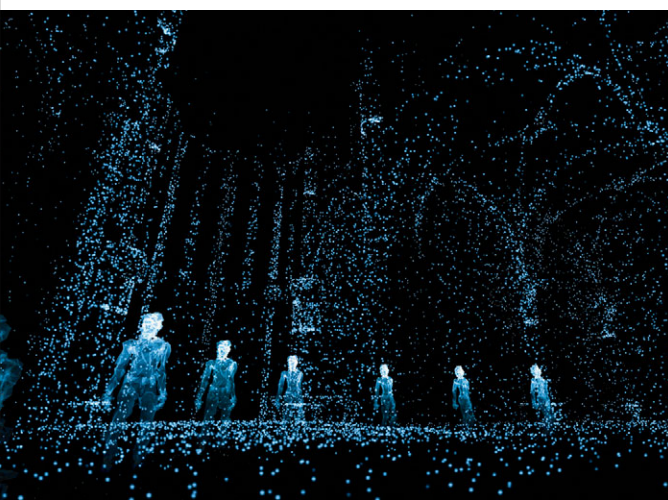
Hull’s world is represented through visual abstraction, showing me how futile it is to attempt to accurately simulate reality. Its emphasis on the spoken word reminded me what role our imagination plays in evocative storytelling. Where there is interactivity, it is in service of the narrative.

For the first time, I saw how a VR story could draw me closer. Though blindness has always been present in my family, this project somehow helped me understand it better. For me, that qualifies it as an inspiring act of journalism. ■

VIRTUAL REALITY

NOTES ON BLINDNESS: INTO DARKNESS

Produced by Ex Nihilo, ARTE France, and AudioGaming, in co-production with Archer’s Mark. Premiered January 2016



→ Joan Didion stands in Golden Gate Park in 1967

A still from “Notes on Blindness,” which depicts John Hull’s descent into blindness

Edward Wong, NF '18

SOMETIME IN MY 20s, when I was starting out as a reporter, I read two collections of Joan Didion’s early articles and essays. They changed the way I thought about journalism. Here were pieces in which the subjective eye and the voice were as important to the story as the facts in it. It’s impossible to think of these stories without hearing Didion in your head. Her voice was—and remains—ironic and detached, yet also engaged and vulnerable. The voice strengthened the reporting, and the reporting strengthened the voice. The accumulation of detail, telling conversations, and sense of place and time gave the stories their foundation. Everything built to a commentary on history, politics, and culture, as her entire body of work does.

“Slouching Towards Bethlehem” is her most famous piece and the title of her 1968 collection, but I could just as easily point to “Goodbye to All That,” in the same collection, as a story I love, or to the articles reprinted in “The White Album,” or to her book “The Year of Magical Thinking,” about the death of her husband, which gave me one of the most emotional reading experiences I’ve ever had. In a 2017 documentary about Didion, the filmmaker, Griffin Dunne, her nephew, asked her about her reaction when she encountered a 5-year-old girl in Haight-Ashbury in 1967 tripping on LSD given to the girl by her mother. The scene appears in “Slouching Towards Bethlehem,” and it’s a signature one in her oeuvre. “Let me tell you, it was gold,” Didion said. “You live for moments like that, if you’re doing a piece. Good or bad.”

Jo Thomas, NF '71

WAS LIVING in Ohio in 1968, working at the Cincinnati Post and Times-Star as the first new woman reporter in the city room since World War II. I had covered the aftermath of two urban uprisings in a city that was filled with racism,

poverty, and despair and had seen what appeared to be intractable injustice. I wasn’t sure that journalism was worth it. I hadn’t studied either journalism or writing, so I had no models. Then I picked up Joan Didion’s book, “Slouching Towards Bethlehem.” Her circumstances were different, but in her preface, she said, “I went to San Francisco because I had not been able to work in some months, had been paralyzed by the conviction that writing was an irrelevant act, that the world as I had understood it no longer existed. If I was to work again at all, it would be necessary for me to come to terms with disorder.” The beauty of her writing, her insight into characters, and the texture of their culture made me aware of so many possibilities. A door opened for me.

SLOUCHING TOWARDS BETHLEHEM

By JOAN DIDION
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1968

EXCERPT

It was not a country in open revolution. It was not a country under enemy siege. It was the United States of America in the year 1967, and the market was steady and the GNP high, and a great many articulate people seemed to have a sense of high social purpose, and it might have been a year of brave hopes and national promise, but it was not, and more and more people had the uneasy apprehension that it was not. All that seemed clear was that at some point we had aborted ourselves and butchered the job, and because nothing else seemed so relevant I decided to go to San Francisco. San Francisco was where the social hemorrhaging was showing up. San Francisco was where the missing children were gathering and calling themselves “hippies.” When I first went to San Francisco, I did not even know what I wanted to find out, and so I just stayed around awhile and made a few friends. ■

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Jeneé Osterheldt, NF '17

IT WAS ALL a dream. I used to read Word Up! Magazine. And The Source, Vibe, and XXL.

I hung pictures on my wall, tearing out images of my favorite rhymers and major players in hip-hop culture. But first, I drank in every adjective, noun, and verb used to describe them. My people lived in these pages.

And Dream Hampton didn't just hold space for them, she delivered their stories to us by kicking in the front door of our hearts with unapologetic truth dripped in soul.

She's among the journalists who kicked in the door for the rest of us culture writers. The journos who fight to cover hip-hop with nuance, to delve deeper than stereotypes, to love it all, and also be able to point out its problems because we know it's not just music. It's our culture.

My sophomore year in college at Norfolk State University, she wrote about one of my favorite lyricists, Jay-Z, for Vibe. This was before they were friends, before they'd collaborated on his book, "Decoded." It was 1998, at the tipping point of his career.

She didn't just interview him. She spent days with him over the course of some weeks, eating with him in New York, a flight to Virginia, a tour boat, and a football game at my college. This wasn't just his world, it was our world. The party and the closet full of frail skeletons. And she contextualized it in a way that made me want to do it, too.



JAY-Z: THE LIFE

By DREAM HAMPTON
Vibe, Dec. 1998

EXCERPT

Let me tell you something about money. And drugs. Myth and lore. Mandatory sentencing. Open caskets with bloated, bejeweled bodies.

About kamikaze capitalists who just happened to be teenagers. Young black boys who may have never understood their position—that of mere pawns—in the larger scheme of this but who quickly expanded their tightly wound worlds. Then set them afire. With the heaviest, most sophisticated weaponry countries like Israel had to import. How aunts and uncles became somnambulant street stalkers and parents police informants.

About the little girl who had always loved the little boys and quickly learned to love the things these boys now had to offer—all that glittered.

I'm not saying this was every black person's experience. Just those who were coming of age, poor, and living in a major city in the '80s. In New York, hustlers like Fat Cat from Queens and Calvin Klein from Brooklyn—they were becoming famous. Cities and small towns in Maryland, the Carolinas, Virginia, and even the nation's capital—especially the nation's capital—became bloody war zones for enterprising, murderous hustlers from New York City looking to "open" them up.

A lot of speculation/ On the monies I've made/ How is he for real/ Is that nigga really paid?/ Hustlers I've met or dealt with direct/ Is it true he stayed in beef and slept with a Tech?

"I was never a worker," say Shawn "Jay-Z" Carter. "And that's not even being arrogant. I was just never a worker." Jay, who made his fortune a decade before the release of his debut, 1996's Reasonable Doubt, isn't exactly forthcoming about his past. You half expect him to pat you down or check the hotel room smoke detector for cameras—and I've known him for a little while. ■

Jay-Z performs at Brooklyn's Barclays Center in 2017



Joshua Prager, NF '11

THE NEW YORK Times critic A.O. Scott once observed that great novels often "blend private destinies with public events." So too with great nonfiction; it was the private sufferings of six Japanese survivors that enabled John Hersey to communicate the public horror of Hiroshima in his landmark article. Find the right protagonist, and the writer can piggyback history and explain it too.

It was Walter Lord who first helped me understand this. Before reading his book "A Night to Remember: The Classic Account of the Final Hours of the Titanic," I knew that the Titanic



HULTON-DEUTSCH COLLECTION/CORBIS VIA GETTY IMAGES

had sunk. But after reading his book, that same fact left me cold, with Lord preserving in crystalline prose the icy Atlantic waters in which the ship—and some 1,500 people—went down in the spring of 1912.

Lord did not report so much as recreate. He was a tireless researcher (he interviewed, for example, 63 survivors of the doomed ship), and employed, as one reviewer put it, “a kind of literary pointillism, the arrangement of contrasting bits of fact and emotion in such a fashion that a vividly real impression of an event is conveyed to the reader.”

Still, Lord did not merely recreate history. He helped his reader to understand it. As he wrote of the Titanic, 42 years after ship struck iceberg: “Complacency vanished on that unforgettable April night and has never come back again.”

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER: THE CLASSIC ACCOUNT OF THE FINAL HOURS OF THE TITANIC

By WALTER LORD
Henry Holt and Company, 1955

EXCERPT

High in the crow’s nest of the New White Star Liner Titanic, lookout Frederick Fleet peered into a dazzling night. It was calm, clear and bitterly cold. There was no moon, but the cloudless sky blazed with stars. The Atlantic was like polished plate glass; people later said they had never seen it so smooth.

This was the fifth night of the Titanic’s maiden voyage to New York, and it was already clear that she was not only the largest but also the most glamorous ship in the world. Even the passengers’ dogs were glamorous.

A day after the disaster, a London newsboy sells papers bearing news of the Titanic sinking

John Jacob Astor had along his Airedale Kitty. Henry Sleeper Harper, of the publishing family, had his prize Pekingese Sun Yat-sen. Robert W. Daniel, the Philadelphia banker, was bringing back a champion French bulldog just purchased in Britain. Clarence Moore of Washington also had been dog shopping, but the 50 pairs of English foxhounds he bought for the Loudoun Hunt weren’t making the trip.

That was all another world to Frederick Fleet. He was one of six lookouts carried by the Titanic, and the lookouts didn’t worry about passenger problems. They were the “eyes of the ship,” and on this particular night Fleet had been warned to watch especially for icebergs. ■

Excerpt from Chapter 1 “Another Belfast Trip” from the book *A NIGHT TO REMEMBER* by Walter Lord. Copyright 1955 by Walter Lord. Reprinted by permission of Henry Holt and Company. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of Gilman School in Baltimore, MD. Walter Lord graduated from Gilman in 1935.

Michelle Boorstein, NF '17

READ “NEXT of Kin” in 2002 and it changed my sense of what is possible in journalism. After reading it, I became a fanatic follower and student of David Finkel’s writing, past and (then) present, one of the many who try to figure out how he does it.

In “Next of Kin,” Finkel does the journalistic equivalent of a rare quadruple Axel in figure skating. First, he chisels out one of the core moral issues in a busy, complex, contemporary debate (in this case, the question of what revenge is). Then he adds layers of perfectly-used reporting (in this case, items such as the brutal autopsy report, among many other examples). Third, Finkel crafts a kind of irresistible jazz or blues piece with his writing. The pacing, the word choices are so exquisite (“Her hair was brushed. Her hands were fists. She wore a dress.”). And finally, Finkel’s architecture—the scaffolding of his stories—are the best. As a writer you can never ever replicate them, and they are so unique it can be hard (though I’ve tried) to steal even the ethos of his structural ideas. However, the empathy and obsession he has with his subjects, and his commitment to writing that demands readers read, remain a beacon, an aspiration for me year after year.



After reading [“Next of Kin”], I became a fanatic follower and student of Finkel’s writing, past and (then) present, one of the many who try to figure out how he does it. In [the piece], Finkel does the journalistic equivalent of a rare quadruple Axel

NEXT OF KIN

By DAVID FINKEL
The Washington Post, Oct. 22, 2000

EXCERPT

The plan Taryn Potts came up with was simple: Just stand up in the courtroom and run. Up the aisle. Past the guards. Past the lawyers. Right at him. Right at his cold, mean, guilt-free, despicable face.

No. Even better:

Here’s what we’ll do, Taryn’s friend Helen suggested. I’ll come to court, too, and I’ll bring a friend in a wheelchair, and at some point I’ll tip the wheelchair over, and when the guards are distracted by the crash—that’s when you go at him.

No, better even than that, Taryn thought the next day as she sat in the courtroom in Chesterfield, Va., third row back, the moment at hand, watching him on the witness stand as he tried to save his life.

“Do you want some water?” his lawyer asked.

“No, I’m all right,” he said.

And Taryn thought: I’ll stand on the arms of the chair.

“Tell them your full name, please,” the lawyer continued.

“Everett Lee Mueller,” he said.

And Taryn thought: I’ll jump. [...] And land on him, screaming: You killed her. [...]

But instead, as the prosecutor took over the questioning, and Mueller angrily said, “You want to put me on death row, that’s no goddamned problem,” she stayed where she was.

Her hair was brushed.

Her hands were fists.

She wore a dress.

“Get this goddamned [expletive] over with so I can go smoke a cigarette,” Mueller said.

The crime involved rape, mutilation and murder. The victim was a 10-year-old girl.

And Taryn, the mother of the victim, remained seated, and sickened, and civilized, wondering whether to surrender to revenge. ■

David Finkel © 2000 The Washington Post.

→
A doctor examines a child’s fractured arm at an FSA camp clinic in Weslaco, Texas in 1942

Pamela Spaulding, NF '85

EARLY IN MY career I was deeply affected by the photographs of the Farm Security Administration (FSA). It is a visual record of American life between 1935 and 1944.

This was a U.S. government photography project headed for most of its existence by Roy E. Stryker. It is still the most famous documentary photography project ever undertaken. Some of the better-known photographers were Dorothea Lange, Marion Post Wolcott, Arthur Rothstein, Walker Evans, and Russell Lee.

The photographs touched me because they were about ordinary lives. And it was not lost on me that women were deeply involved in this work. Dozens of books have been published about the individual photographers and on the entire body of work.

In 1976 I searched for and found first-time parents in Louisville, Kentucky willing to let me photograph the first year of life with their new baby. I went on to spend 42 years (and continuing) documenting the McGarvey family. Always in the back of my mind I was remembering the work of the FSA photographers making a record of daily life. That famous project was the root of the personal project that has spanned most of my life.

There are important stories to tell about the major subjects of the day, but I am most interested in the ordinary stories that seem insignificant in the moment but are the cultural artifacts of our time.

The original parents of the family I am documenting have four grandchildren and another one on the way. ■

PHOTOGRAPHY

FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

PHOTOGRAPHY
COMMISSIONED
BY U.S. GOVERNMENT,
1935-1944





Subina Shrestha, NF '17

GROWING UP IN Nepal under the autocratic monarchy I did not know that journalists could tell stories about underdogs. The government only broadcast news about the royals and their official visits. Newspapers were

equally limited. Even after democracy was restored in 1990, national news focused mainly on the capital, Kathmandu. In 1996, I was a student in India when I happened upon Palagummi Sainath's "Everybody Loves a Good Drought," a collection

A laborer collects crop-destroying pests from a field in the Anantapur district of the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh in the late 1990s

of stories that Sainath wrote about rural poverty in India and the failure of the Indian government to protect the poorest citizens. It was an eye-opener for me. I had never seen a journalist with such passion for finding stories of the people who had been systematically silenced. I had never seen such stories reported from Nepal. I realized that I did not even know my country. It was Sainath who has inspired me to tell stories of people who are neglected by the mainstream media.

EVERYBODY LOVES A GOOD DROUGHT: STORIES FROM INDIA'S POOREST DISTRICTS

By P. SAINATH
Penguin India, 1996

EXCERPT

PUDUKKOTTAI (Tamil Nadu): It was a swift, silent raid, launched under cover of darkness as the train crept into Pudukkottai railway station at 2:30 a.m. The passengers remained asleep. I was pinned back in the corridor with my knapsack. A befuddled security guard who had been dozing, leaning against his rifle, looked on helplessly as the men swarmed on board. They were armed with pots, buckets and jerry cans.

And all they wanted was water.

This they obtained by emptying the toilet tanks with practised ease. A couple of minutes later. I was alone on the platform. They were gone. So was most of the train's water.

Scarcity has promoted a thriving water market in this district of 1.3 million people. This operates in terms of both irrigation and drinking water. Right here, in Pudukkottai town, you can witness all-night searches for water at many points. In the villages, no one gets more than ten litres of water daily. That's the average on the good days—and ten litres won't fill one standard sized bucket. Often, it falls to six litres and on some days to nil. Compare that with the daily average of 220 litres each resident of Delhi gets. That figure is 90 in Calcutta, 155 in Bombay and 70 in Madras. ■

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Rami Khouri, NF '02

FIRST READ JEFFREY Fleishman's 2007 article about poor roof dwellers in Cairo nearly 10 years after he wrote it, while I was teaching a course at the American University of Beirut on narrative reporting and the legacy of Anthony Shadid. Jeff was a classmate during our Nieman year in 2001-02, and in my travels from Beirut after that, I saw him a few times during his stint as the Los Angeles Times Middle East correspondent in Cairo.

His article, "Viewing Life From the Roof," captures for me the best that journalism and international reporting can do: it describes other, distant worlds with precision and detail, capturing at once the many emotions, memories, vulnerabilities, and strengths of ordinary people who live extraordinary lives. It relays important macro tales related to poverty and stalled development in Egypt, while conveying the indomitable human will to persevere regardless of the obstacles life throws at us. It touches on the variety of fairy tale and nightmarish conditions across the Arab region, but always returns to the central theme of the invincible human spirit in a fast-moving world that never stops.

Rarely in my decades of reporting and writing in the Middle East have I encountered such articles by foreign correspondents that accurately



[Fleishman's] article "Viewing Life From the Roof" captures for me the best that journalism and international reporting can do: it describes other, distant worlds with precision and detail



capture the multitude of interlocking dynamics that make the Arab region such a wonderful and exasperating place. These include hardy, colorful, or stressed individuals; vibrant neighborhoods in magnificent, often hard cities; and, countries of and for the ages, in a region both bound and plagued by the many complex relationships among its disparate people. To capture all this by using the life conditions and recollections of one old poor lady, the milieu of a single rooftop, and the instrument of just words, is as good as it gets in journalism, in my book.

VIEWING LIFE FROM THE ROOF

By JEFFREY FLEISHMAN
Los Angeles Times, Nov. 29, 2007

EXCERPT

She comes up the stairs slow and heavy, almost heaving; she steps on the roof past the surly dog and the man she married. He hasn't been right since the war, walking around slumped and lost, but what can she do up here on the roof, living in a hut made of scavenged wood, waving to the neighbor, the one perched on a

Alia Qotb and her husband Ahmed Gaballah live on a rooftop shack in Cairo. Qotb was born in the building's basement

higher rooftop who looks down with pity on the broken sinks and battered couch that long ago was brocaded and ornate, in the French style.

Funny how lives end up. Alia Qotb was born in the basement of this building and now she's living on its roof. In between she bore seven children, visited a fine Beirut hotel, kept house for a Saudi princess. Her first husband stole her heart. By day he painted walls, at night he took his easel to the bridges over the Nile and made portraits. He willed life into art, and a man who can do that is a man she'll remember. But he's gone. They came together long ago, after that day she sewed him a shirt and he asked her brother for her hand in marriage.

She was 12.

Every rooftop has a story. Mostly poor ones. If you're up on the roof, you've missed something—the decent job, the lucky break, the well-connected cousin. Cairo is a city of rooftop stories. Qotb can hear them, if she listens, amid blowing laundry, the scratch of a broom, the hum of a satellite dish. She knows what the neighbors are cooking, she can smell the garlic and coriander, hear the stirring of pots, a tin symphony beneath her. ■



Author and journalist Tom Wolfe at home in New York City in 2016

Alex S. Jones, NF '82

IT WAS THE mid-'60s and I was in college and a guy I had never heard of—an alumnus of my college [Washington and Lee University] as it happened—was coming to speak. He was a journalist from New York. I was mildly interested as I had some writing aspirations, and almost without thinking I showed up to hear what he had to say.

It was Tom Wolfe and he was there to talk about “The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby.” Wow! It was life-changing because his writing was so new, so different, so not like anything else journalistic! And so was he.

What he had done was not that hard to understand. He had simply taken the trouble to report very, very deeply and to pay sympathetic, embracing attention to what he was seeing, hearing, smelling, feeling, touching, and apprehending. And then writing it down as it looked, sounded, smelled, felt, and *meant*.

His book was a sumptuous assortment of wonderful pieces that were all, in their way, both extra-true and extra-revealing. For me, it was a revelation that there was something out there called New Journalism.

THE KANDY-KOLORED TANGERINE-FLAKE STREAMLINE BABY

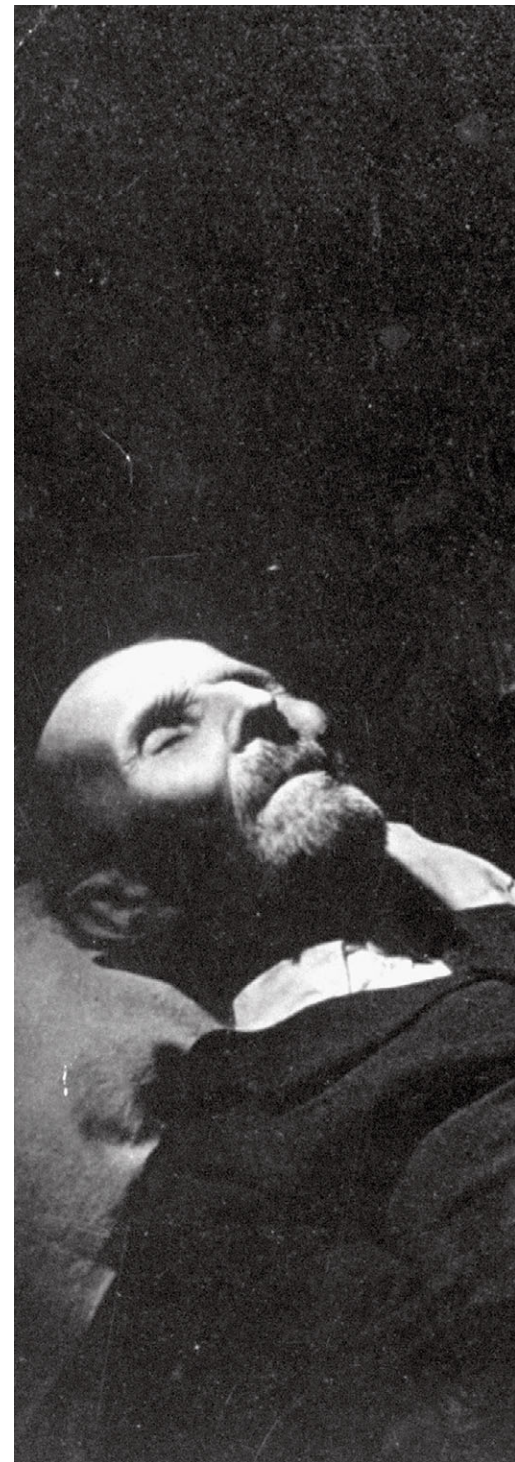
By TOM WOLFE
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1965

EXCERPT

The legend of Junior Johnson! In this legend, here is a country boy, Junior Johnson, who learns to drive by

running whiskey for his father, Johnson, Senior, one of the biggest copper still operators of all times, up in Ingle Hollow, near North Wilkesboro, in northwestern North Carolina, and grows up to be a famous stock-car racing driver, rich, grossing \$100,000 in 1963, for example, respected, solid, idolized in his hometown and throughout the rural South, for that matter. There is all this about how good old boys would wake up in the middle of the night in the apple shacks and hear an overcharged engine roaring over Brushy Mountain and say, “Listen at him — there he goes!”, although that part is doubtful, since some nights there were so many good old boys taking off down the road in supercharged automobiles out of Wilkes County, and running loads to Charlotte, Salisbury, Greensboro, Winston-Salem, High Point, or wherever, it would be pretty hard to pick out one. It was Junior Johnson specifically, however, who was famous for the “bootleg turn” or “about-face,” in which, if the Alcohol Tax agents had a roadblock up for you or were too close behind, you threw the car into second gear, cocked the wheel, stepped on the accelerator and made the car’s rear end skid around in a complete 180-degree arc, a complete about-face, and tore on back up the road exactly the way you came from. God! The Alcohol Tax agents used to burn over Junior Johnson. ■

Excerpt from THE KANDY-KOLORED TANGERINE-FLAKE STREAMLINE BABY by Tom Wolfe. Copyright © 1965, renewed 1993 by Tom Wolfe. CAUTION: Users are warned that this work is protected under copyright laws and downloading is strictly prohibited. The right to reproduce or transfer the work via any medium must be secured with Farrar, Straus and Giroux.



Eli Reed, NF '83

MY APPRECIATION FOR the long-form photographic essay began with work published in *Life* magazine. A number of photo essays captured my attention. Two by legendary *Life* photographer W. Eugene Smith pushed me beyond the obvious surface of life.

BEBETO MATTHEWS/
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



W. EUGENE SMITH/THE LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION/GETTY IMAGES

The first, “Visit to a Spanish Village,” was published in 1951 and republished elsewhere in the late 1960s. The powerfully iconic photograph of mourners in black surrounding a deceased man of the village is probably the image that most associate with the essay.

In 1975, I participated in a W. Eugene Smith Masters Workshop at the International Center for Pho-

tophography in New York City. I and the other students were never ever the same. Smith gave something invaluable to us. He introduced us to true passion, dedication, and the necessary attention to the fragility of life that we seek in photography. All of this came from the four workshop days spent with him and his carefully chosen words about his last great work, which is his Minamata photo

essay, published in 1972, about mercury poisoning in Minamata, Japan. We learned from Smith how to capture something that could touch the human heart. ■

W. EUGENE SMITH
Life magazine, April 9, 1951

PHOTOGRAPHY

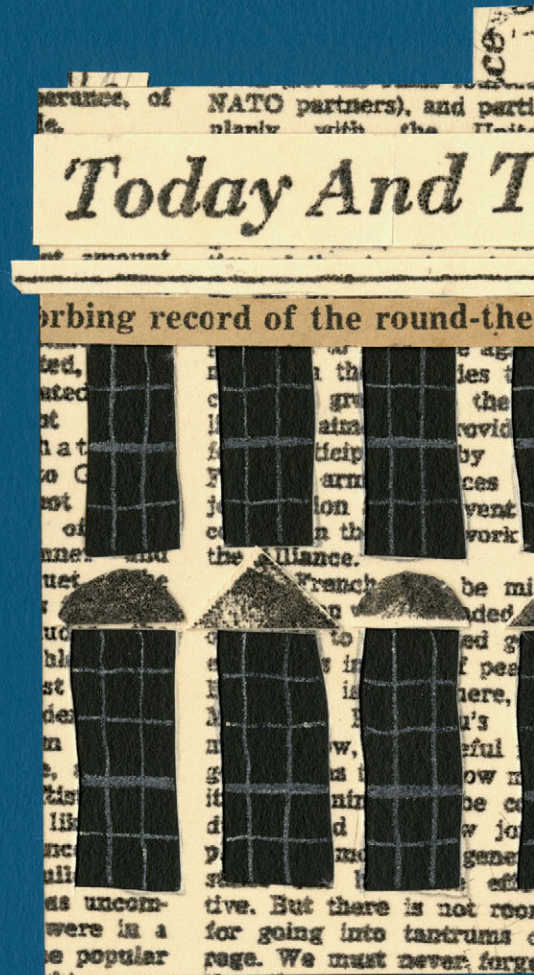
VISIT TO A SPANISH VILLAGE

By W. EUGENE SMITH
Life magazine, April 9, 1951

RE-EXAMINING LIPPMANN'S LEGACY

BY MICHAEL PETROU
ILLUSTRATION BY EDWARD KINSELLA III

Journalists are still
grappling with many of
the issues that defined
Walter Lippmann's
extraordinary career





WASHING

On The Coast

tomorrow

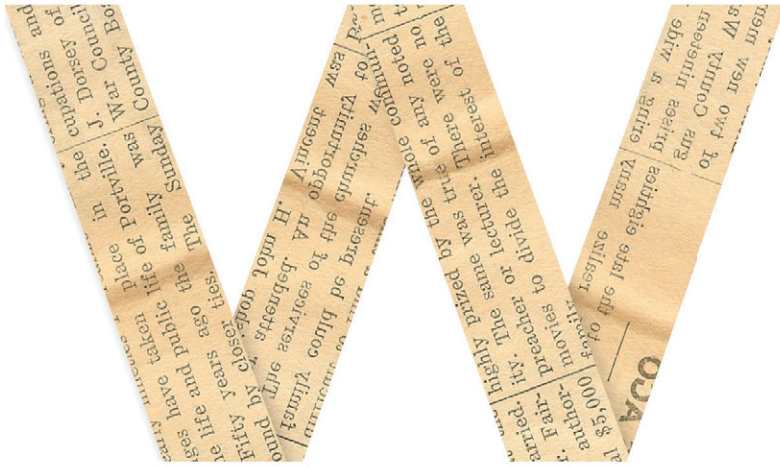
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WALTER LIPPMANN'S LONG and extraordinary career embodied what magazine magnate Henry Luce described as the "American Century." Lippmann chronicled it, tried to understand it, and ultimately shaped American politics, diplomacy, and journalism.

He began his intellectual life as a socialist, but he spent much of his career among the world's most powerful. Lippmann was drawn to them, and such was the impact and reach of his journalism that, even if they did not want to hear from him, they could rarely turn him away. "Men like that have always fascinated me," he said in a 1950 interview, speaking of Charles de Gaulle. "It's as if the country is inside of them, and not they as someone operating within the country."

One could say the same thing about Lippmann. He "may have been the most influential American of the twentieth century never to have held elected office," writes Christopher Daly, in his book "Covering America: A Narrative History of a Nation's Journalism."

Daly, a professor of journalism at Boston University, says Lippmann's impact was global and his annual international tours cast him in the role of "something like a secretary of state without portfolio." Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev once asked Lippmann to delay a visit to Russia because he was dealing with a crisis. When Lippmann said no, Khrushchev rearranged his plans to accommodate him.

Lippmann was unique, according to Daly, in the degree to which politicians consulted and listened to him. He built credibility, among readers and politicians, because of "the sheer amount of knowledge and hard work and dedication. These are sort of old-fashioned virtues, but that was Lippmann, and it's hard to separate them from his success. He did his homework.

He knew what he was talking about." In its front-page obituary of Lippmann, who died in 1974, *The New York Times* described him as "the dean of American political journalism in the 20th century ... What gave him readability and immense authority was his ability to take a tangled headline issue, analyze it coolly and relate it convincingly to the underlying problems of which it was a part. He always wrote from a background of solid information, and in this sense he was also a public schoolmaster who obliged his readers to think of the transient in terms of the everlasting."

David Greenberg, a professor of history and of journalism and media studies at Rutgers University-New Brunswick, says Lippmann earned respect and influence because few perceived him as a partisan cheerleader: "He obviously inhabited the world of Washington. He consorted with these people, he talked to them, he was interested in having influence on them. But he was not predictably in one camp or another. And I think that's why he was so influential and so widely read as a columnist for many years, because he wasn't knee-jerk, he wasn't a hack. He really followed his own life. He was a realist in foreign policy, and that led him at various times to support or oppose various presidents."

To mark the Nieman Foundation's 80th anniversary, *Nieman Reports* is re-examining Lippmann's legacy and impact. It's been more than 40 years since he died, but journalists are still grappling with many of the issues that defined Lippmann's life and career: the value of reporting versus commentary; the question of who warrants our attention as journalists—the wealthy and influential or the marginalized and ignored; a journalist's relationship with power—should journalists be outsiders or insiders, and what happens when they shift from one



A Harvard alum, Walter Lippmann (front row, far left) received an honorary Doctor of Letters degree from the school in 1944. Lippmann played an integral role in establishing Harvard's Nieman Foundation

BETTMANN/CONTRIBUTOR VIA GETTY IMAGES



to the other? For Lippmann, the latter question is intimately tied to his Jewish identity.

Lippmann began as a cub reporter at the *Boston Common* in 1910, and soon after took a job as a researcher for muckraking pioneer Lincoln Steffens, investigating financial corruption. He joined *The New Republic* as a founding editor in 1913 and was writing a regular column for *Vanity Fair* by 1920.

He started working for the *New York World* in 1922. When it closed, almost a decade later, Lippmann began his syndicated “Today and Tomorrow” column, which he would write for 35 years, usually for the *New*

York Herald Tribune. He would produce more than 4,000 of these columns. They were widely syndicated and brought him his greatest fame. Lippmann’s accolades included two Pulitzer prizes and three Overseas Press Club awards.

Along the way, Lippmann wrote more than 20 books, cementing a reputation as a public philosopher—a métier that fits with his journalism, which was more about commentary than reportage. The philosophy that underpinned much of that commentary was liberalism, albeit a liberalism that was at times colored by elitism.

Lippmann’s connection to the Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard came as a result of an unexpected bequest to Harvard from Agnes Wahl Nieman, widow of *Milwaukee Journal* editor Lucius Nieman. Agnes, a wealthy, well-traveled, and well-educated woman from a prominent German-American family in Chicago, altered her will only four days before her death in 1936 to leave the largest portion of her estate to Harvard. Her will stipulated that the money be used “to promote and elevate the standards of journalism in the United States and educate persons deemed specially qualified

for journalism.” Harvard President James B. Conant wondered, “How did one go about promoting and elevating the standards of journalism?”

It was Lippmann, a Harvard alum who sat on the university’s Board of Overseers, who steered Conant toward an answer. The money would not be used for a journalism school or an archive of newspapers on microfilm, but to provide working journalists with an opportunity to study at Harvard. Lippmann then helped secure support from Harvard’s governing board.

These ties persisted. Lippmann made a point of coming to Cambridge and speaking to each new batch of fellows during the fellowship’s early years. After Lippmann died, money from his estate went toward renovating the house where the Nieman Foundation is now based and that bears his name.

As a student at Harvard, Lippmann relished his work at the socialist Cambridge Social Union because, he said, it allowed him to reach “some small portion of the ‘masses’ so that in the position not of a teacher but of a friend, I may lay open real happiness to them.”

Four years after graduating, his political outlook shifted. “[T]he winter of 1914 is an important change for me. Perhaps I have grown conservative,” Lippmann wrote in his diary while crossing the Atlantic that July. “At any rate I find less and less sympathy with the revolutionists ... and an increasing interest in administrative problems and constructive solutions.”

This change was reflected in the bulk of Lippmann’s journalism. If journalism is history in a hurry, Lippmann’s was usually history from the top down. He traversed an archipelago of wealth and influence, dining with members of the ruling classes who inhabited these islands but not with those in the seas between.

This colored the work Lippmann produced. His commentary about the suffering of ordinary Americans during the Great Depression was bloodless; people should be thrifty and control their appetites, he said. When he wrote about Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, two Italian immigrant anarchists executed for murdering two men despite another man’s confession that he committed the crime, Lippmann focused on those who decided their fate, not on Sacco and Vanzetti or the milieu from which they came. For a man who knew Europe so well, he was notably unsympathetic to its huddled masses yearning to escape a continent that, in the 1930s, seemed to be barreling toward violence and ever more virulent hate.





Rather than a reporter, Lippmann considered himself more of a commentator or political philosopher

ALFRED EISENSTAEDT/THE LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION/GETTY IMAGES

Without specifically mentioning Jews, he suggested Europe's "surplus" population should colonize Africa.

Such was the gilded myopia for which Tom Wolfe would later savage Lippmann. "For 35 years Lippmann seemed to do nothing more than ingest the Times every morning, turn it over in his ponderous cud for a few days, and then methodically egest it in the form of a drop of mush on the foreheads of thousands of readers of other newspapers in the days thereafter," he wrote in a 1972 New York magazine article about the New Journalism. "The only form of reporting that I remember Lippmann going for was the occasional red-carpet visit to a head of state, during which he had the opportunity of sitting on braided chairs in wainscoted offices and swallowing the exalted one's official lies in person instead of reading them in the Times."

In an obituary, Lippmann's biographer Ronald Steel wrote that Lippmann's aversion to actual reporting was so severe that he "shied away from a scoop, even when handed to him on a platter, as though it were distasteful and slightly odoriferous."

This may have been because Lippmann never saw himself as a reporter, but as a commentator or a political philosopher, says Nicholas Lemann, dean emeritus and the Joseph Pulitzer II and Edith Pulitzer Moore Professor of Journalism at Columbia's School of Journalism: "I think he thought of his column as a way to be engaged and try to influence public affairs. I don't think there was ever a moment in his life that I was aware of when he thought, 'I hold myself separate from public officials' or 'I would never advise a president.' He really functioned throughout his life as part of that very elite little corner of the political system."

Lippmann's ascent into that elite little corner was rapid. President Woodrow Wilson invited Lippmann to a gala dinner reception in 1916, and Lippmann would come to know every president who succeeded him up to Richard Nixon, who resigned months before Lippmann's death more than 50 years later.

The close relationships Lippmann enjoyed with politicians can strike a modern journalist as too cozy. He relished being part of the establishment and, for much

LIPPMANN'S AVERSION TO ACTUAL REPORTING WAS SO SEVERE THAT HE "SHIED AWAY FROM A SCOOP, EVEN WHEN HANDED TO HIM ON A PLATTER," WRITES RONALD STEEL

of his career, seemed reluctant to write in a manner that would threaten that membership. Lippmann also didn't refrain from helping politicians, including by drafting papers and speeches for them, even while working as a journalist. This work included helping to edit John F. Kennedy's inauguration address—a speech he then praised in a column.

But Lippmann worked at a time when the wall between politicians and journalists was far more porous than it is today. High-level political journalists such as Lippmann simply didn't see themselves as outsiders in Washington, says Maurine Beasley, professor emerita of journalism at the University of Maryland, College Park. They "were part of the political establishment, and whether they should have been or not, ethically, is a question you can debate. But I think they were."

And Lippmann was hardly alone. "He might have been at the pinnacle as one of the leading journalists. As one of the most brilliant minds, he might have been called on the most, but there are lots of others," says Greenberg.

Lippmann eventually came to rethink the relationship between journalists and those in power. In 1964, he told a television interviewer: "There are certain rules of hygiene in the relationship between a newspaper correspondent and high officials—people in authority—which are very important and which one has to observe ... There always has to be a certain distance between high public officials and newspapermen. I wouldn't say a wall or a fence, but an air space, that's very necessary."

Lippmann was never obsequious, nor did he shrink from taking on presidents and the Washington establishment. He criticized Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal. He fiercely opposed Harry Truman's strategy of containing the Soviet Union following World War II. His opposition to the Truman administration's belligerence on Korea was even sharper. But the "air space" he said should exist between a politician and a journalist was, in his case, generally pretty small.

"Before the second half of the war in Vietnam there was kind of a bedrock assumption that the United States had an establishment, needed an establishment, and that the establishment should be made up of the best people—not in the British sense of the best born, but the most capable and the most dedicated," says Daly. "I think [Lippmann] thought we're all in this together, and other serious people like him who cared about the country had a common cause."

"We operate off a set of rules that we

think are normal and expected for journalists and that we think are pretty well established,” says Lemann. “Those rules basically didn’t exist until Walter Lippmann was maybe 60 years old, so we’re sort of retrofitting his life with a set of rules that he wasn’t even really aware of.”

And it may be that prevailing mores haven’t changed that much, after all. Some journalists still seek affirmation from their interview subjects and prize access over independence. Even policy consultations between journalists and politicians persist. They’re just framed differently, says Greenberg. President Barack Obama often invited journalists into the White House for off-the-record discussions, he says.

And if journalists today would not help politicians draft speeches or consciously act as an administration’s unofficial messenger, other forms of cooperation persist. It was only in 2012 that *The New York Times* announced it would sharply curtail the practice of “quote approval”—submitting quotes to a source before publication.

LIPPMANN’S WILLINGNESS TO cooperate with the powerful people he wrote about was also a product of his time. He cut his teeth under muckraker Lincoln Steffens. But even the muckrakers, in their turn-of-the-century heyday, were not true outsiders. They had a progressive political agenda and sought allies among politicians they thought could advance it.

Ray Stannard Baker, reporter for McClure’s magazine and among the most prominent in muckraker ranks, was tight with Theodore Roosevelt. Baker sent Roosevelt articles in advance of publication, and Roosevelt gave Baker access to restricted government files. David Woolner, a professor of history at Marist College and a senior fellow at the Roosevelt Institute, says the muckrakers’ access to Theodore Roosevelt didn’t blunt their criticism. But when there was inevitable discord, Baker tried to smooth it over.

Lippmann would also become smitten with Roosevelt. He leapt at a chance to write Roosevelt a position paper on labor. Roosevelt, who was contemplating another attempt to return to the White House in 1916, gripped the 24-year-old Lippmann’s hand and said the two were linked in a common cause, Steel writes in “Walter Lippmann and the American Century.” They would fall out, but Lippmann’s fondness never cooled.

Woolner says Roosevelt inspired excitement among progressive-minded people

who believed government should have a role in giving average people economic justice. “Journalists got caught up in this idea and wanted to move it forward,” he says. “And to the extent that they wanted to be a part of it, they may have been willing to do things, cooperate with these political figures, in ways that may seem in today’s world to be crossing that line. But in the political context of the day it made sense.”

When America entered the war in 1917, Lippmann was recruited as an assistant to Secretary of War Newton D. Baker. America did not handle wartime dissent well. Publications were suppressed, editors indicted and harassed. Hundreds who questioned the war were jailed. And in a foreshadowing of congressional cafeterias selling “freedom fries” instead of “French fries” to protest France’s opposition to the proposed invasion of Iraq in 2003, sauerkraut was renamed “liberty cabbage.” Lippmann protested, with arguments built on wartime tactical considerations rather than principles.

“So far as I’m concerned, I have no doctrinaire belief in free speech. In the interest of war it is necessary to sacrifice some of it,” he told Wilson advisor Edward “Colonel” House. “But the point is that the method now being pursued is breaking down the liberal support of the war and is tending to divide the country’s articulate opinion into fanatical jingoism and fanatical pacifism.”

Later in the war, Lippmann was commissioned as a captain in military intelligence, where he worked on propaganda, and then joined the American delegation negotiating peace in Paris following the armistice. Lippmann believed in the work he did on behalf of the war effort but wanted to return to journalism. He did so in 1919.

The sense that journalists and politicians share a common goal during times of national crisis persisted into World War II, says Larry Sabato, director of the University of Virginia’s Center for Politics. Even during the Cold War, journalists tended to support their government because of the perceived stakes in America’s ongoing confrontation with the Soviet Union, he says.

With John F. Kennedy’s administration came a sense of glamour that seduced many reporters covering him. “Kennedy entranced the press, and reporters gave him even more breaks than they gave his predecessors,” says Sabato. “They were well aware of some of the comings and goings of young beautiful women and actresses and so on. They were also taken into Kennedy’s inner circle in a sense ... and given inside information.

The administration did not suggest to them or require that these things be off the record. They simply knew they weren’t supposed to report it. Occasionally they’d check with the press secretary and ask.”

Sabato says reporters became more confrontational during the Lyndon B. Johnson presidency, and especially so when Richard Nixon was president. After the Watergate scandal, he says, it was “open season.”

The mostly male Washington press corps and those they covered operated in kind of unofficial fraternity. They drank together, often heavily, and could be fairly confident that knowledge of certain transgressions would be kept between them. This was a time in which the public at large was willing to afford politicians more privacy than it is today. Journalists reflected this. But those writing about politicians also feared losing access.

THE ROOTS OF Walter Lippmann’s insecurity about losing his insider status may have begun with his upbringing as an American Jew in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century New York. It seems that insecurity left him hesitant or slow to write about those who hadn’t reached a similar level of status and social acceptance, and on occasion to commit errors of judgment when he did so.

In his biography of Lippmann, Steel describes young Walter, who was born in 1889, growing up among wealthy and thoroughly assimilated German Jews who shut themselves off from more recently arrived migrants fleeing the pogroms of Eastern Europe. Those Jews, the Lippmann crowd believed, were too loud and obviously foreign. The rabbi of the Emanuel temple where the Lippmanns prayed praised his congregation because its members were “no longer Oriental,” meaning Polish or Russian.

Lippmann carried a desire to shed any foreign vestige with him to Harvard, where he learned this wasn’t as easy as he had hoped. Final clubs, unofficial social clubs that functioned as a sort of escalator into America’s ruling class, didn’t want Jews as members. He wasn’t invited to join *The Harvard Crimson* student newspaper either. His background and faith limited his options. Lippmann rebelled, briefly. But for most of his life he tried to hold on to his place within establishment bastions, rather than forcing their gates.

This was especially true concerning Judaism. In the 1920s, several universities began imposing limits on the number

LIPPMANN WORKED AT A TIME WHEN THE WALL BETWEEN POLITICIANS AND JOURNALISTS WAS FAR MORE POROUS THAN IT IS TODAY

of Jews they would admit. Harvard, after what Steel describes as a bitter faculty debate, chose not to. But Harvard University President A. Lawrence Lowell remained unhappy about the “excessive” number of Jews at Harvard and appointed a committee to reconsider.

One committee member asked Lippmann for his thoughts. In a draft letter, which Steel could not determine was delivered, Lippmann said he was prepared to accept the judgment of Harvard authorities who believed more than 15 percent Jews in the student body would lead to segregation and confrontation between Jews and gentiles. His sympathies lay with “the non-Jew,” he added: “His personal manners and physical habits are, I believe, distinctly superior to the prevailing manners and habits of the Jews.” Lippmann thought Jews should assimilate.

He supported “a more even dispersion of the Jews, and of any other minority that brings with it some striking cultural peculiarity.” As a way around quotas, he suggested Harvard select more students from parts of the country where fewer Jews lived. He was against any “test of admission based on race, creed, color, class or section,” he wrote in the letter.

Harvard imposed an informal quota on Jews all the same. Lippmann publicly condemned it. “Harvard, with the prejudices of a summer hotel; Harvard, with the standards of a country club, is not the Harvard of her greatest sons,” he wrote in an editorial.

Jews at this time in America had to walk a difficult line. Some, such as Lippmann, had achieved social prominence. But there was enough discrimination in society, and memories of far worse bigotry, that the position of even those who had reached such high status must have felt precarious.

In a February 1938 letter to Helen Byrne, who would soon become his second wife, Lippmann described his friend Carl Binger as having a somewhat “oppressed” spirit because “he has that rather common Jewish feeling of not belonging to the world he belongs to.” Lippmann understood these emotions but did not share them, he added: “I have never in my life been able to discover in myself any feeling of being disqualified for anything I cared about.”

But Lippmann was disqualified from things he wanted at Harvard. In the same

letter, Lippmann listed a number of injustices faced by Jews, from exclusion from some summer hotels to job discrimination, but concluded that one should learn not to care about such things. It’s hard not to see Lippmann’s desire to subsume his Jewish identity reflected in his journalism. He rarely wrote about Jewish issues, and when he did the results could be disastrous.

In a 1933 column, in which he also described a speech by Adolf Hitler as “statesmanlike” and “the authentic voice of a genuinely civilized people,” he urged readers not to condemn all German people because of the uncivilized things that are said and done in Germany.

He wrote, “Who that has studied history and cares for the truth would judge the French people by what went on during the Terror? Or the British people by what happened in Ireland? Or the American people by the hideous record of lynchings? Or the Catholic Church by the Spanish Inquisition? Or Protestantism by the Ku-Klux-Klan? Or the Jews by their parvenus? Who then shall judge finally the Germans by the frightfulness of war times and of the present revolution? If a people is to be judged solely by its crimes and its sins, all the people of this planet are utterly damned.”

Shortly after America entered World War II, Lippmann wrote a column about the “enemy alien problem ... or much more accurately the Fifth Column problem” on the Pacific Coast. America, he said after talking to military

officials, was in imminent danger of a combined attack from within and without.

President Roosevelt authorized military authorities to remove anyone it chose from military zones on the West Coast. Japanese Americans were given 48 hours to pack up or sell a lifetime of goods and were shipped to internment camps. More than 100,000 people, mostly American citizens, were detained in barracks behind barbed wire fences as if they were criminals or prisoners of war.

Lippmann’s defense of repressive measures reflected popular hysteria, and perhaps demonstrates how difficult it can be for journalists to clearly assess events as they unfold, without the benefit of time and distance. “Very often the conventional wisdom turns out to be wrong, or it’s overtaken by events, or it’s discredited in one way or another. So, if you epitomize the conventional wisdom, that’s going to happen to you,” says Daly, speaking of Lippmann.

Steel writes that Lippmann had no personal prejudice against African Americans. But he largely overlooked their struggles until they became an unavoidable part of the national conversation. In 1919, Lippmann advocated “race parallelism,” roughly meaning separate but equal, which qualified as a progressive opinion at the time. He wrote little about segregation in the ensuing decades.

Barry D. Riccio, in his book “Walter

People canvass London for a rally protesting Sacco and Vanzetti’s death sentence



Lippmann—Odyssey of a Liberal,” describes Lippmann’s relationship to civil rights and the civil rights movement as “especially illustrative of his rather conservative brand of liberalism.” Discussions about the issue were bound up with considerations of precedent, constitutionalism, and order. “Rarely did it seem to be a matter of race or morals.” Riccio says that when Lippmann did address civil rights in the mid-1950s, he did so through a Cold War lens. Jim Crow made America look bad internationally, diminishing its global appeal.

Lippmann’s framing of civil rights in America as, at least partly, a Cold War issue was not an uncommon position as America vied with the Soviet Union for influence in Africa and other parts of the developing world. His broader caution was also not unique. Yet Lippmann’s views could change, and on civil rights, they did.

He supported President Dwight Eisenhower’s dispatch of federal troops to Little Rock, Arkansas in 1957 to ensure school desegregation. By 1963, following the Freedom Rides, the use by police of attack dogs on peaceful demonstrators in Birmingham, Alabama, and the March on Washington organized by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., Lippmann realized “equal rights could not be achieved by persuasion alone,” writes Steel. Lippmann concluded desegregation must become a national movement led and directed by the federal government.

Lippmann was not indifferent to the discrimination women faced. At Harvard, he wrote of the suffragists: “They are unladylike, just as the Boston Tea Party was ungentlemanly, and our Civil War bad form. But unfortunately in this world great issues are not won by good manners.”

Lippmann’s “rather conservative brand of liberalism,” as Riccio describes it, meant he was rarely at the forefront of journalism related to the rights of the disenfranchised and overlooked. Journalists today can miss stories and misjudge the strength of movements for similar reasons.

IN THE TWILIGHT of his career, Lippmann adopted an iconoclasm he had until then largely avoided. The trigger was the war in Vietnam.

President Johnson seemed to want Lippmann’s help. Less than two weeks into his presidency, he asked to come over to Lippmann’s house for a chat, recounts Steel. The two were on good terms for a time, with Lippmann visiting Johnson’s Texas ranch a couple of months later. They blasted down ranch roads in a Lincoln Continental,

stopping to drink whiskey and soda while Johnson leaned on the car horn to warn cattle wandering nearby. Whatever genuine affection Johnson’s attention and flattery might have engendered, it didn’t blind Lippmann to the flaws in Johnson’s decision to escalate America’s military involvement in Vietnam.

The escalation came amidst frequent consultations between Lippmann, Johnson, and members of Johnson’s administration—which, for Lippmann, might have added to his later sense of betrayal and disappointment. Because the White House did not want to alienate Lippmann, Steel writes, Johnson and his national security advisor, McGeorge Bundy, kept telling him they would be willing to negotiate a settlement in Vietnam once the military situation there improved. Their real objective was winning the war.

Lippmann grew skeptical of what the White House was telling him. He also recognized that military success would require more blood and treasure than America was willing to expend, and that American interests in Vietnam were too minuscule to justify the sacrifice. Concluding privately in 1965 that he had been “pulling my punches,” Lippmann endeavored to more forcefully expose the folly of Johnson’s Vietnam strategy. “There are some wars which must be averted and avoided because they are ruinous,” he wrote the following year. Lippmann had avoided personal attacks on Johnson but now accused him of “messianic megalomania.”

Lippmann picked this fight even as most

American media, including his home paper, *The Washington Post*, backed the war. He suffered derision and hostility as a result. Johnson, who had once draped an arm around Lippmann and proclaimed, “This man here is the greatest journalist in the world, and he’s a friend of mine!” now told guests Lippmann was senile and mocked him in public.

But Lippmann made no attempt to write his way back into favor. When Lippmann decided to leave Washington for New York and stop writing his regular “Today and Tomorrow” column in 1967, he told colleagues at a farewell dinner that he was not leaving “because I no longer stand very near the throne of the prince nor very well at his court” but because “time passes on.” “Change and a new start,” he added, “is good for the aging.”

Looking back on Walter Lippmann’s life, Ronald Steel concluded there could never be another to match him: “The mold that Lippmann filled so impressively no longer exists.”

This is true on many levels. His productivity, range, and impact have not been equaled since. Few political philosophers ever reach the audiences Lippmann did, and even fewer have the capacity to simultaneously write multiple columns a week for decades on end.

He also lived during a different time in American journalism. Writing in 1998,

Japanese-American citizens en route to an internment camp in California, 1942



UNITED STATES NATIONAL ARCHIVES VIA POPPERFOTO/GETTY IMAGES

Steel recognized its landscape had already irrevocably changed: “The sources of news and opinion are too atomized and varied. No single person can encompass them all.” The scope of what is covered today has also changed. People and communities whose stories seldom appeared in newspapers 80 years ago are no longer as ignored.

What’s considered an acceptable relationship between a journalist and a politician has shifted, too. Here, Greenberg shares Lemann’s caution against judging historical figures by today’s ethical standards. “It’s very easy to cast a moralistic eye backward on someone like Lippmann. But I think the reality is high-level journalism and high-level Washington politics are intertwined, and it’s human nature to be seduced by power, so I’m not particularly judgmental of Lippmann,” he says.

Lippmann, says Greenberg, believed the personal influence he could have on politicians was part of his role as a journalist and thinker. “The ethics of the time didn’t really proscribe that,” he says.

Lippmann was at times horrendously wrong—about Hitler in 1933, about the herding of Japanese Americans into internment camps a decade later. But his warnings about the dangers of America overextending itself abroad, his insistence that the country should limit its interventions to places where vital interests are at stake (not Vietnam), would resonate today among American policy makers who feel they’ve had to learn those lessons all over again.

And if Lippmann was often elitist, he was in the end a democrat who believed that if a country is to be governed with the consent of its people, journalists must provide citizens

with the information they need to decide how they want to be governed. “This is our job,” he said in a speech to a National Press Club gathering in honor of his 70th birthday in 1959. “It is no mean calling. We have a right to be proud of it and to be glad it is our work.”

Lippmann’s career was characterized by re-evaluation and continuous learning. It is tempting to see a reflection of this in Lippmann’s support for the Nieman Foundation and the fellowships it provided so that journalists might study at Harvard and enhance their skills. Lippmann wrote for as long as had something to say and his health would permit, writing his final article in 1971 at the age of 81. Facing death a few years later, he was calm and impassive. “At no time did he ever speak of prayer or God or an after-life,” his lawyer, Louis Auchincloss, recalled. “Whatever was or would be, he accepted.” ■

“HARVARD HELPED FORM LIPPMANN’S MIND”

BY RONALD STEEL

IT WOULD BE NO surprise to be told that young Walter Lippmann conquered Harvard, conquered its challenges with his intelligence, ambition and wide-ranging curiosity. That one would expect. But he was also conquered by Harvard, both intellectually and emotionally, in a way that left a deep imprint on his life. Harvard helped form Lippmann’s mind. That, after all, was its self-appointed task. But it also affected his character, and closed some doors even as it opened others.

Walter Lippmann came to Cambridge in the fall of 1906, a few days shy of his seventeenth birthday. Infused with the optimism and idealism of the progressive era, he embraced the utopian tracts of H. G. Wells, the social criticism of Ibsen and Shaw, and the visions of Nietzsche.

Having discovered socialism—not the Marxist variety to be sure, which he with sublime self-assurance at the age of eighteen, declared to be outmoded, but the more genteel and pacific Fabian

variety—he began writing political tracts for the college magazines. He excoriated the rich and, to quote from one of his articles for the Harvard Monthly, those fashionable ladies who bought motorcars so that they might “take their teddy bears out for an airing in Newport.” He even, in typical Harvard fashion, attacked his professors—particularly the eminently respectable Barrett Wendell.

This impertinent assault upon Harvard’s pillar of gentility brought an unexpected visitor to Weld Hall one fall morning. Roused from his bed, the nineteen-year-old author found himself face to face with William James. The sexagenarian philosopher, bored in his retirement and always on the lookout for cheeky iconoclasts, had come to offer his congratulations. Lippmann charmed the philosopher, just as he charmed so many of the influential older men he soon came to meet, and became a regular tea-time visitor at James’ house on Irving Street.

From James, who urged his disciples to give up logic

and embrace experience, Lippmann learned the exuberant pragmatism that marked his early books. But James had a rival for Lippmann’s mind, and in the end one whose influence was far more pervasive. Quite casually in his sophomore year, Lippmann signed up for the introductory course in Greek philosophy with George Santayana. Santayana was the opposite of James. With devastating wit and elegant turn of phrase, he demolished the nineteenth century shibboleths of progress and moral uplift that Lippmann had grown up believing. In their place he offered a seductive neo-Platonism based on the striving for beauty and perfection.

Although Lippmann fought Santayana’s snare, in the end he was overwhelmed by the sardonic Spaniard. He signed up for every course Santayana taught, and though he finished his course requirements in three years, stayed on a fourth year to graduate with his class and serve as Santayana’s assistant. Santayana’s impact on Lippmann increased over the years and it

dominates his later books. As Lippmann himself once wrote to his friend Bernard Berenson, “I love James more than any great man I ever saw, but increasingly I find Santayana inescapable.”

Harvard left its imprint on Lippmann, more deeply and in different ways than he himself might freely have chosen. It was a training ground for the society he was about to enter, and it prepared him well for the shoals that lay ahead.

Walter Lippmann felt a real loyalty to Harvard ... and ultimately left most of his estate to the University.

Without any children of his own, he felt a special attachment to younger journalists, and to the University where he had received his initiation. Few things would have given him greater pleasure than to be associated with Harvard, through this very special refuge [the building that houses the Nieman Foundation]—for special journalists—that bears his name. ■

Excerpted from Ronald Steel’s remarks at the dedication of the Nieman Foundation’s Walter Lippmann House in 1979.

“THE PRESENT CRISIS OF WESTERN DEMOCRACY IS A CRISIS OF JOURNALISM”

BY EDUARDO SUÁREZ

What Walter Lippmann's early writings say about some of journalism's most urgent contemporary challenges

ALFRED EISENSTAEDT/THE LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION/GETTY IMAGES





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“INCONSEQUENTIAL DAYS IN London, including talks with people,” wrote Walter Lippmann in his diary entry for July 22-26, 1914. A graduate of Harvard, 24-year-old Lippmann had arrived in Britain a few days before for a European tour. Neither his readings nor his conversations with friends and intellectuals gave him any clue about what was about to happen.

Austria had just delivered an ultimatum to the Serbian government after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand. The world was on the verge of war.

The events didn’t keep Lippmann from traveling to Brussels, where he was astonished by the chaos he saw. “Run on banks. Collapse of credit. Bought ticket for Zurich and then found that the trains ran only to Luxembourg, so I turned back to England, travelling wretchedly all night,” he wrote on July 30. Still confused, a couple of days later, he wrote: “News this morning that Germany has declared war against Russia. I feel a sort of black stupidity with inability to realize the situation.”

Lippmann’s experience of the start of World War I was the beginning of a new focus on foreign affairs that would transform him into one of the world’s most influential columnists. It was also a prologue to a fertile period of his career. Lippmann’s books during these years—“Liberty and the News” (1920), “Public Opinion” (1922), and “The Phantom Public” (1925)—provide valuable insights into some of the challenges journalists still face today, from the impact of disinformation to the shrinking trust of the public to the challenge of covering authoritarian and demagogic political leaders.

DEALING WITH DISINFORMATION

“Liberty and the News,” which includes essays Lippmann wrote for The Atlantic

Walter Lippmann

T · H · E
PHANTOM
PUBLIC

With a new introduction by
Wilfred M. McClay

“The private citizen today has come to feel rather like a deaf spectator in the back row ... He lives in a world which he cannot see, does not understand and is unable to direct”

“THE PHANTOM PUBLIC”

Monthly, reads like a program to elevate the craft of journalism. Lippmann thought the main danger to journalism came not from the pressures of governments or advertisers, but from the opinionated attitude of many reporters and their lack of professionalism when reporting the news.

Much like our own era, the world in which Lippmann published “Liberty and the News” was riven by inequality and transformed by technologies that provoked fear and distrust. Politics was shaken by populists like Robert La Follette and William Jennings Bryan, who railed against trusts and plutocrats and praised the common man. Religious hatred and fear of bolshevism led Congress to approve the Immigration Act of 1924, aimed at restricting arrivals of Roman Catholics, Arabs, and Jews.

“The present crisis of Western democracy is a crisis of journalism,” wrote Lippmann in the first pages of “Liberty and the News.”

Neither journalism nor liberal democracy could survive if the other perished, Lippmann believed, and both were affected by psychological biases and shared the same crisis of trust. What Lippmann saw during the war would shape his ideas on the public sphere for the rest of his life—how governments manufacture the consent of their citizens by exploiting prejudices and dehumanizing perceived enemies.

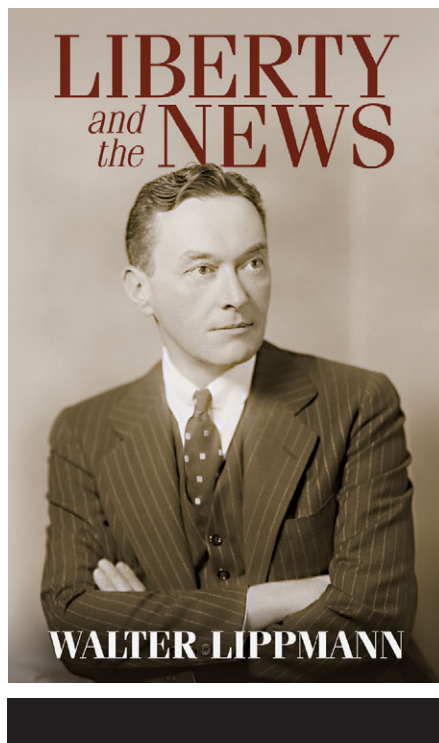
“We are told about the world before we see it,” Lippmann wrote in “Public Opinion.” “We imagine most things before we experience them. And those preconceptions, unless education has made us acutely aware, govern deeply the whole process of perception.”

The influence of “Public Opinion” can be found in Harvard Law professor Cass Sunstein’s description of the echo chambers that amplify prejudices in social media and in New York University professor Jonathan Haidt’s claim that “when it comes to moral judgments, we think we are scientists discovering truth, but actually we are lawyers arguing for positions we arrived at by other means.”

PROBLEMS OF ANONYMOUS SOURCING

After returning to New York, Lippmann decided to apply the lessons he learned during the war in Europe to study the coverage of another major event. In August 1920, The New Republic, which Lippmann co-founded, published “A Test of the News,” a 42-page article he co-wrote with Charles Merz. The piece examined how The New York Times had failed its readers while covering the Russian Revolution and the Russian Civil War. The newspaper had published falsehoods and mixed lazy reporting with its own editorial views. The authors wrote against the “boundless credulity” of reporters and their “untiring readiness to be gulped.”

From November 1917 to November 1919, the newspaper published 91 times that the Bolshevik regime was on the verge of collapse—without offering any solid evidence to support that claim. “The chief censor and the chief propagandist were hope and fear in the minds of reporters and editors,” wrote Lippmann and Merz. “The news about



Russia is a case of seeing not what was, but what men wished to see.”

The authors detected another element behind the reporters’ poor judgment: accounts from anonymous sources. “Behind those phrases may be anybody, a minor bureaucrat, a dinner table conversation, hotel lobby gossip, a chance acquaintance, a paid agent,” they wrote.

Journalists and media critics still debate the pros and cons of anonymous sources. The controversy is especially acute in the context of covering the Trump administration, when so many scoops depend on unnamed public officials or others privy to private conversations. Many of these stories could not be reported at all without anonymous sources, but over-reliance on anonymity can also undermine reader trust, especially when politics—and media consumption—are already so polarized.

REPORTING VERSUS OPINION

Another issue identified by Lippmann and Merz is still very much in play: mixing news with views. Lippmann described access to objective information as “the touchstone of our sanity” and explained why protecting that access was much more important than protecting free speech. For him, objectivity was not an aim but a method. “In going behind opinion to the information which it exploits,” Lippmann wrote in “Liberty and the News,” “we shall be fighting the battle where it is really being fought. We shall be protecting for the public interest that which all the special interests in the world are most anxious to corrupt.”

For Lippmann, reporting was an essential tool to navigate a reality that was too complex for any individual to process. “The private citizen today has come to feel rather like a deaf spectator in the back row... He lives in a world which he cannot see, does not understand and is unable to direct,” he wrote in “The Phantom Public.”

Lippmann pushed journalists to leave behind the sloppiness and partisanship of 19th-century newspapers. Fed up with seeing journalism as “the refuge of the vaguely talented,” he yearned for reporters fluent in the new language of quantitative research and consulting independent experts.

“I am convinced that we shall accomplish more by fighting for truth than by fighting for our theories. ... For the real enemy is ignorance, which all of us, conservative, liberal, and revolutionary, suffer”

“LIBERTY AND THE NEWS”

Lippmann’s emphasis on the scientific method reflected the early years of the 20th century. The federal government was creating agencies devoted to quantitative research. Robert S. Brookings founded the Brookings Institution in 1916 with the mission of becoming “the first private organization devoted to analyzing public policy issues at the national level.” In 1921, a group of diplomats and scholars founded the Council on Foreign Relations; Lippmann was a member until the end of his life.

Lippmann was obsessed with improving the quality of reporting, which he saw as essential to preserving a functioning democracy. Lippmann and others led the effort to improve the quality of the news by hiring more educated reporters and getting rid of those who had the usefulness “of an astrologer or an alchemist.” “No amount of money or effort spent in fitting the right men for this work could possibly be wasted, for the

health of society depends upon the quality of the information it receives,” he wrote in “Liberty and the News.” Those words anticipated the origin of many journalism schools around the country as well as the creation of the Nieman Foundation in 1938.

FACTS AND FREE SPEECH

The most prescient passages of Lippmann’s early books are perhaps the ones describing the rise of demagogues and that phenomenon’s relation to the corruption of the news ecosystem.

“Men who have lost their grip upon the relevant facts of their environment are the inevitable victims of agitation and propaganda,” he wrote in “Liberty and the News.” “The quack, the charlatan, the jingo, and the terrorist can flourish only where the audience is deprived of independent access to information. But where all the news comes at second-hand, where all the testimony is uncertain, men cease to respond to truths, and respond simply to opinions.”

In a world besieged by the rise of totalitarianism, Lippmann understood the risk of citizens not being able to tell the difference between facts and lies. “If I asserted that the Japanese secretly drank the blood of children ... I guarantee that most of the newspapers would print it eagerly,” wrote Lippmann in “Liberty and the News.” “The whole reference of thought comes to be what somebody asserts, not what actually is.”

This is, in fact, one of the lessons of the August 2017 study “Partisanship, Propaganda, and Disinformation: Online Media and the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election,” a joint effort of the Berkman Klein Center at Harvard University and the MIT Center for Civic Media. Its co-authors, including Harvard Law professor Yoichi Benkler, studied hyperlinking and social media sharing patterns as well as topic and language patterns in more than 2 million stories published by 70,000 sources over the course of the election.

Their analysis showed that Breitbart News’s aggressive coverage set the agenda not only for conservative media but also for mainstream publications like The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times. It also revealed that most of the mainstream coverage was negative for both candidates but largely

followed the Trump agenda. The coverage of Hillary Clinton’s campaign, for example, focused mostly on the investigation about her emails, while the coverage of Trump focused mostly on the narratives he pushed. “Coverage of Trump included some scandal, but the most prevalent topic of Trump-focused stories was his main substantive agenda item—immigration—and his arguments about jobs and trade also received more attention than his scandals,” wrote Benkler and colleagues in the *Columbia Journalism Review*.

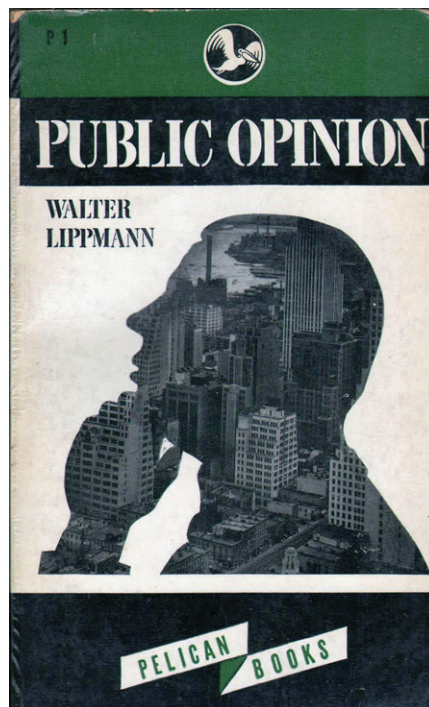
For Lippmann, protecting free speech was less fundamental than protecting news gathering and ensuring that people got access to credible reporting. “True opinions can prevail only if the facts to which they refer are known; if they are not known, false ideas are just as effective as true ones, if not a little more effective,” he wrote in “Liberty and the News.” “We cannot fight the untruth which envelops us by parading our opinions. We can do it only by reporting the facts, and we do not deserve to win if the facts are against us.”

This commitment to facts shouldn’t be confused with the “view from nowhere.” A guide published by the American Press Institute (API) explains the origins of the concept of objectivity and includes a few words from Lippmann on the topic: Journalism should aspire to “a common intellectual method and a common area of valid fact ... It does not matter that the news is not susceptible to mathematical statement. In fact, just because news is complex and slippery, good reporting requires the exercise of the highest scientific virtues.”

It is the journalistic method that is objective, not the journalist. Objectivity doesn’t come from the “view from nowhere” but from the discipline of the craft. “Journalists who select sources to express what is really their own point of view, and then use the neutral voice to make it seem objective, are engaged in a form of deception,” says the API’s guide.

Lippmann also pushed reporters to explain publicly how they did their jobs. “The philosophy of the work itself needs to be discussed; the news about the news needs to be told,” he wrote in “Liberty and the News.”

Media organizations are increasingly using just this kind of transparency in an attempt



“We are told about the world before we see it. We imagine most things before we experience them. And those preconceptions, unless education has made us acutely aware, govern deeply the whole process of perception”
“PUBLIC OPINION”

to regain trust, as David Fahrenthold did in his crowdsourced, Pulitzer-winning investigation of the Trump Foundation. When the conservative nonprofit Project Veritas set up an operation to trick Washington Post reporters into publishing a false story about U.S. Senate candidate Roy Moore, the Post published a story and a 10-minute video about how it uncovered the sting. The video included an interview with the woman who tried to mislead them, and the paper explained why it broke the agreement of confidentiality. The Post also explained in a video that is part of a new series called “How to Be a Journalist” how it broke the story about Moore’s legitimate accusers.

Transparency is crucial, Lippmann believed, because “in some form or other the next generation will attempt to bring the publishing business under greater social control. There is everywhere an increasingly angry disillusionment about the press, a

growing sense of being baffled and misled; and wise publishers will not pooh-pooh these omens.”

Governments are starting to respond to the threat of disinformation, sometimes with draconian legislation that could threaten real journalism, too. In April, the Malaysian Parliament passed a law that includes punishments of six years in prison and a \$127,000 fine for anyone who “maliciously” spreads false information about the country or its citizens. Spain, France, and the United Kingdom are considering milder measures against misinformation.

This approach was criticized in a report published in March by a group of experts convened by the European Commission. “There is a long tradition of opposition to government regulation of free press,” the report states. “We would have similar concerns about governments gaining excessive control over what news sources can and cannot be accessed online.” Lippmann also feared government regulation: “If publishers and authors themselves do not face the facts and attempt to deal with them, someday Congress, in a fit of temper, egged on by an outraged public opinion, will operate on the press with an ax.”

Lippmann’s career did not always reflect the ideas he articulated in his early writings. But what he wrote during the early 1920s should still be an inspiration for every journalist who tries to make the invisible visible.

Truth is rarely self-evident. Reality is always more nuanced than it looks at first sight. That is one of the lessons of the scoops on sexual harassment and sexual assault (published by Jodi Kantor, Megan Twohey, Ronan Farrow, and others), which this year won the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service. Reporting that kind of story is expensive and painstaking, but doing it right is a powerful way to effect change.

“I am convinced that we shall accomplish more by fighting for truth than by fighting for our theories,” Lippmann writes at the end of “Liberty and the News.” “It is a better loyalty. It is a humbler one, but it is also more irresistible. Above all it is educative. For the real enemy is ignorance, which all of us, conservative, liberal, and revolutionary, suffer.” ■

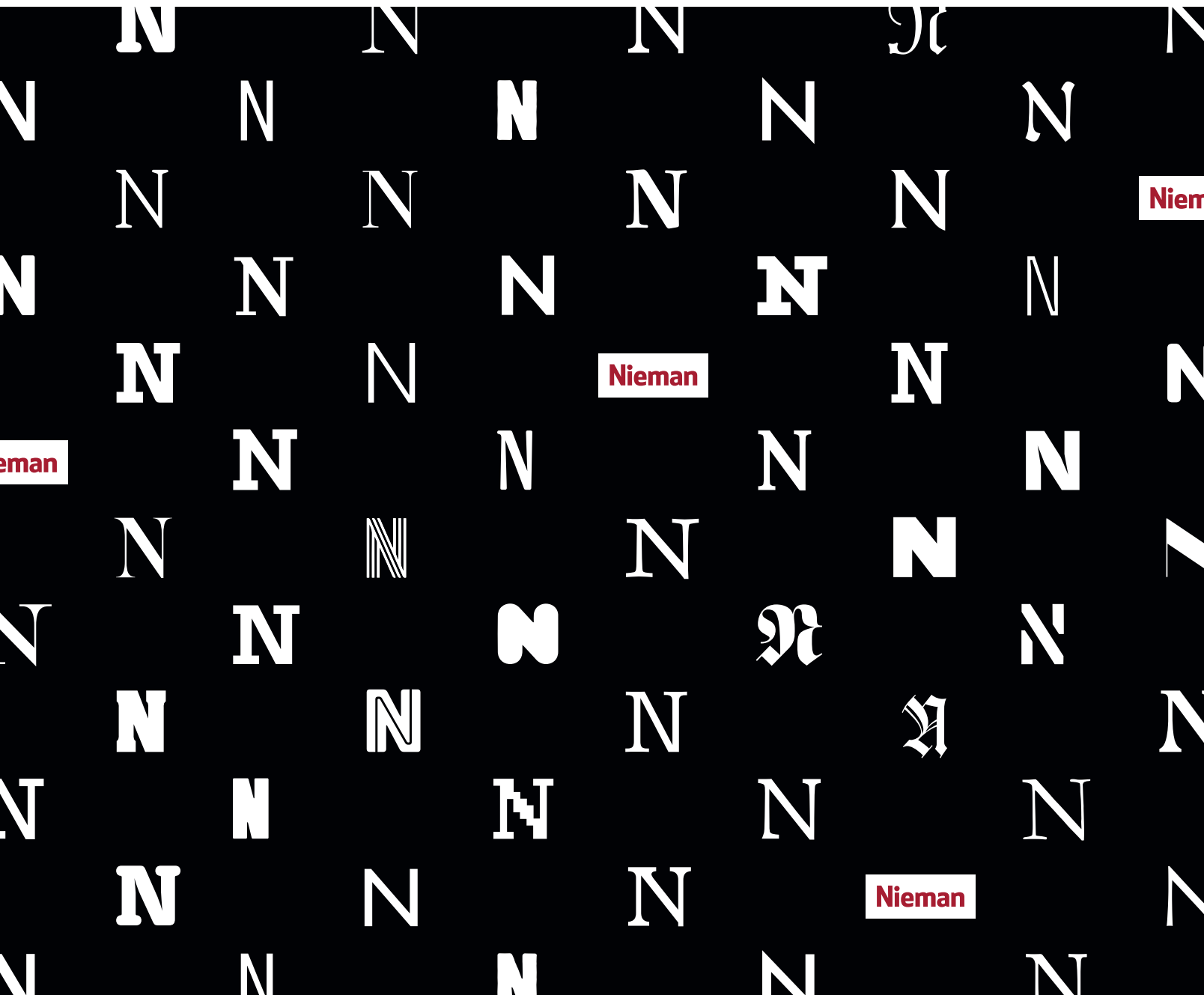
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THE NIEMAN FOUNDATION AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY