

# JOU4008 Journalism Studies



## Fall 2019 Syllabus

### Journalism Studies

Monday (Periods 7-9, 1:55 PM - 4:55 PM) ~ [Matherly 0015](#)

“The Essence of Journalism Is a Discipline of Verification.” ~ [Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel](#)

“As a journalist, then a lawyer, and then a lobbyist for the past 38 years, I am a practitioner of narrative. I am intrigued by the way in which the stories we tell — and the credit we give them — shapes our understanding of who we are and what is true.” ~ [Tom Lee](#)

#### Instructor / Contact

Instructor: Dr. Ronald R. Rodgers: [About Moi](#)

Email: [rrodgers@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:rrodgers@jou.ufl.edu) (However, use Canvas mail. I will respond within 24 hours Monday-Friday.)

Office: 3058 Weimer Hall, 392-8847

Office Hours: On my [schedule](#) or make appointment

[Policy on Reference Letters from Dr. Rodgers](#)

#### Course Description & Objectives

*“The difference between literature and journalism is that journalism is unreadable, and literature is not read.” ~ [Oscar Wilde](#)*

This course will converge at the intersection of literature and journalism. We will:

1. Explore the mission of journalism by looking under the hood of that form described as literary journalism.
2. Recognize that the field of journalism has pliable borders and how this genre stretches those borders into other fields. As one former student of this class concluded after much discussion over many weeks about the subjectivity inherent in journalism as literature: *“Literary journalism is journalism – but in another place.”*
3. Reach some semblance of an understanding about the notions of objectivity and subjectivity and their relevance to the journalistic act because – and this is a mantra for this class:

**All Pain Is Anecdotal**

And therefore, the question is: “Can journalism employ the contested notion of “objectivity” to measure that pain – that is the straits, the troubles and the tribulations of complex and often marginalized lives lived at the periphery of our vision?”

4. Reveal – in relation to the notion that “all pain is anecdotal” – the [intersubjective](#) possibilities of this form of journalism and reach some conclusions about the significance to our world views and to democracy in general of empathetically revealing – through anecdote / narrative / metaphor / internal dialogue, and the other [elements of literary journalism](#) – “[The Other](#).” For instance, one recent work of literary journalism is the much-lauded [The Unwinding: An Inner History of the New America](#) – an example of [synoptic](#) writing to achieve some semblance of reality/truth. Another is [Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity](#).

### **So, Dr. Rodgers: Why is This Important?**

The inverted pyramid as the basis of the informational report – called news – is certainly a powerful tool in our society when done right. But it is a tool that often fails to fulfill the true mission of journalism. I – and I am not alone here – argue that the method we call literary journalism – or narrative nonfiction, etc. – there is much dispute about the proper name – believe that journalism that narrates a story using all the affective tools of the novelist or short story writer can connect the citizens of a society – whether locally or across the globe. Not to get too academic or preachy – but this is the premise from which I proceed: The primary mission of journalism – and especially the sadly diminishing local news media – is creating and maintaining a *community of discourse*, revealing ALL of the community to its readers. The scholar of rhetoric James Herrick holds that a *community of discourse* permits “people to think and act with unity to address a wide range of serious social problems.”

Or in the words of *To Kill a Mockingbird*'s Atticus Finch to his daughter Scout:

"First of all," he said, "if you can learn a simple trick, Scout, you'll get along a lot better with all kinds of folks. You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view—"

"Sir?"

"Until you climb into his skin and walk around in it."

### **Course Structure**

- This class involves an [Active Reading](#) of the readings. Follow this concentrated, focused, and annotative method in all your reading this semester.
- This course is a reading seminar built around informed discussion.
  - You are expected to participate in this class by submitting your written work, offering your ideas about the subject in class, allowing other people to express their views, respecting others' opinions, and exchanging ideas that will make us better readers and writers.
  - Seminar discussions require a fine balance. On the one hand, you do not want to take over the conversation. On the other, you do not want to let others do all the talking.
  - Weekly in-class discussions.

### **Textbooks / Readings & Resources**

- Your only required textbook for this class is a Twitter hashtag – [#JOU4008](#). I view it as a constantly updating text about the current issues of journalism happening around us every day.
  - Follow me on Twitter at [@ronrogers](#) and then regularly check out [#JOU4008](#). Material from this will become a large part of a weekly quiz in each class. Feel free to post anything about journalism, the media, or communications in general using the class hashtag.
  - I have no sympathy for any journalism major who does not like Twitter. Learn to use it. It has become a vital tool for communication professionals of every stripe.
- Any other readings or screenings will be linked in the Assignment section or in a folder on Canvas.

### Other Dicta

- Work turned in late will not be accepted without a legitimate and documented excuse.
- Bring a laptop or tablet to class, but **keep it closed** until we need it for class activity.
- Except where noted, all assignments or any other written work will be filed through [Canvas](#)

### Management Issues

- **Syllabus Changes:** I reserve the right to alter, with notice, the syllabus as the need arises.
- **Accommodation for disabilities:** Let me know immediately – informally and then with a formal letter from the proper authorities – if you have a **life issue** that would hinder your work in this course. I will do my best to help you. For accommodation register with [Disability Resource Center](#)
- **Common courtesy:** Please turn off your cell phone and close your laptops! Please also observe other rules of common courtesy, such as not speaking to your classmates (or yourself) when others are making a presentation or talking, not falling asleep in class, not scrolling the Web, not playing the high-school slacker or oppressed student slouching in your seat in the back.
- **Be Good:** You need to conduct yourself in a courteous manner when it comes to dealing with fellow students or your instructor. That means any rude, obstructive or aggressive behavior will not be tolerated, and manifestations of same will mean your ouster from the class. The [UF Counseling and Wellness Center](#) is located at 3190 Radio Road and the phone number for Appointments & After-Hour Assistance is 352-392-1575.
- **U Matter, We Care:** If you or a friend is in distress, please contact the [U Matter, We Care Team](#) so that it can reach out to the student in distress. A crisis counselor is available by at 352-392-1575.
- **CAVEAT:** A class such as this will deal with controversial topics, so words that may be considered offensive or ideological may be spoken in the context of subjects we discuss. As a teacher I have no political or social agenda – so do not try to answer in a way you believe might comport with what I want to hear or read. Feel free to advocate any position as long as you remain respectful of others' opinions, and always be able to defend your point of view with evidence.
- Read [On Plagiarism and Academic Honesty](#)

### Class Activities

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Percent &amp; Points</b>
1. Participation/ Attendance	5% (50 points)
2. Weekly Quizzes	20% (200 points)
3. Weekly Problem Paper	20% (200 points)
4. Discussion Leader	10% (100 points)
5. Query Letter for Final Article	5% (50 points)
6. Rough Draft of Final Article	10% (100 points)
7. Final Article	20% (200 points)
8. Final Article Presentation	5% (50 points)
9. Midterm Self-Assessment	2.5% (25 points)
10. Closing Self-Assessment	2.5% (25 points)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100% (1000 points)</b>

## CLASS PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE

**Participation:** You are expected to participate meaningfully in discussions. Windy verbosity with no point and hushed passivity will not go unnoticed.

**Here is how I assess your participation in class:**

1. **Good:** You add significant content to discussion but do not dominate the conversation.
2. **OK:** You speak from time to time, but look for more opportunities to add to our discussions.
3. **Inadequate:** Your perspective is important. I need to hear much more from you!

**Attendance:** You are expected to attend every class. **You will receive a failing grade for missing 3 or more classes without a legitimate excuse.** Excused absences include documented medical excuses and religious observances (with advance notice). University-approved absences must be documented (in advance, if for an approved university activity).

### Weekly Quizzes

(20 points)

Quiz could come from the readings/screenings for the week, but mostly from tweets using the hash tag [#JOU4008](#). Bring in your laptops. These are in Canvas – and you must be in class to take the quiz.

### Weekly Problem Paper

(20 points)

[Grading Rubric](#)

Respond to the problem posed to you each week in a two-page, 1.15-spaced paper. The problem will be informed by the topic of the week and the readings/screenings – both examples of literary journalism and articles about the act and issues of journalism.

**Format:** 12 pt. Times-Roman, 1.15-spaced, one-inch margins, Word document. **Due at 8 a.m. Mondays**

### DISCUSSION LEADER

(100 points)

**The key here is discussion – not presentation:** Each week two members of the class will lead a discussion of the readings/screenings. You can draw on the readings and your own readings, research, or knowledge. Each Discussion Leader will prepare their own 1-page outline summarizing their discussion – enough for all in class. Post this to canvas. **Format:** 12 pt. Times-Roman, **single-spaced**, one-inch margins. **Note:** This is not a presentation. It is a discussion between the two Discussion Leaders that draws participation from the rest of the class. Find ways to get people involved. And I will keep track of those involved and not. Review [Discussion Leader Instructions](#) for what I am looking for.

**Grading:** Based on how well you engage and prompt discussion. Google how to promote discussion.

### Query Letter for Article

(50 points)

**Due 8 a.m. Jan. 27**

You will compose a 1-page query letter to an editor – me, your esteemed professor. Follow the format described [here](#). At its basic, it involves:

**Paragraph 1** — The Hook: A one-sentence tagline for your story. Get me to read on.

**Paragraph 2** — Mini-synopsis: Distill the entire story into one paragraph.

**Paragraph 3** — Writer's bio: Who are you and why should I think you are capable of pulling this off?

**Note:** This idea also must include:

1. Just one well worked-out idea, not a list of potential stories.
2. It must be clear in thought.
3. Include the kind of source material you plan to consult.
4. Possible graphic, visual, video, hyperlinks, or any other digital elements.

### **Rough Draft of Final Article**

**(100 points)**

**Due 8 a.m. April 13**

This should be at least two-thirds completed by due date. Article confabs to be scheduled. Post to Canvas a Word document version of your rough draft. You will bring enough copies of your rough draft in so everyone in the confab has a copy. We will go over these together. I am going to set up some time to go over these outside of class.

**Format:** 12 pt. Times-Roman, **double**-spaced, one-inch margins, Word document.

### **Final Article**

**(200 points)**

**Due 8 a.m. April 20**

**Send me by email a well-articulated idea for vetting before you go too far.**

This should be about more than an isolated fact, person, or event. It must be connected to the issues of the day. Think about why anyone would want to read this? It could be about such things as a single literary journalist of some repute in the present or past OR about more than one comparing the similarities or differences OR about some issue(s)/ controversy/ problematics raised by the doing of literary journalism OR a comparative between literary journalism and the traditional form of journalism OR about the history and/or transition over time of literary journalism OR the subject could be one of the topics for the week. This is an article written for publication in the popular press online. That is, it should include at least one photo or graphic element and multiple links to other relevant articles or information sources just as I have done in this syllabus and on the assignment schedule.

**Format:** 12 pt. Times-Roman, **double**-spaced, one-inch margins, Word document – **at least 3,000 words.**

### **Final Article Presentation**

**(50 points)**

**In Class April 20**

You may present your article to the class in any way you like as long as you clearly articulate (1) its key elements, (2) why you wrote about this topic – that is what interested you, (3) what challenges you faced in the research and writing of the article. Organization and Presentation weigh heavily in your grade. In other words: Were handouts and outlines used? Were they helpful? Were you articulate and professional? Were audio-visual aids used appropriately? Were you well-versed in the topic? Does the presentation have a clear, well-focused introduction, a solid middle, and a convincing conclusion? Is it audience centered, e.g. good eye contact, clear diction? Did you generate discussion and answer questions?

## JOU4008 Journalism Studies Assignments (Subject to Change)

**“A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies, said Jojen. The man who never reads lives only one.”**

– George R.R. Martin, *A Dance with Dragons*

### **Class 1 – Jan. 6 Journalism Is Narrative Abstracted**

“A way of seeing is also a way of not seeing.” – [Kenneth Burke](#)

Please read before class [All Pain Is Anecdotal](#). This is essentially an outline of the class for the next few weeks covering the topics that will arise in considering the problems of journalism through the lens of literary journalism.

#### **In Class**

##### **Class Introduction**

- [The Revolution Begins Now](#)
- Mugs-Introductions / Syllabus / Class Assignments / Class Introduction
- Symbolic Annihilation

##### **On Journalism**

- Review the [Elements of Journalism](#) – Handout
- Some [Elements of Literary Journalism](#) (Narrative Arc or Thread)
- View this [Objective–Subjective Continuum](#) as a way of thinking about works of literary journalism.

##### **Thought Probe: Journalism Is Narrative Abstracted**

- An abstract is a summary of the contents of a book, article, or formal speech.
- “Journalists are the professional map-makers of our society.” – [Gregg Hoffmann](#)
- [Gainesville Abstracted](#) vs. [Gainesville Narrative](#)
- [Tornado Stories – AP vs. Rick Bragg – Handout](#)

##### **Imposition of New Forms of Journalism**

- Weimer – Press & Lino-Type
- [Farewell - ETAOIN SHRDLU - 1978 on Vimeo](#)
- What Happened to Newspapers? IRS to Hedge Funds

##### **Writing Tip**

- [Writing with Authority](#)

## Class 2 – Jan. 20

### Topic: Symbolic Annihilation & The Synoptic Method Literary Journalism – The Precursors & The Imposition of New Forms

- [Problem Paper 1](#) due 8 a.m. Jan. 20
- Stragglers
- Form Squads If Need
- Discussion Sked
- Quiz 1
- Lecture / Discussion
- Thought Probe - Rashomon

### Read for Class 2:

- **Example of the [Synoptic Method](#):** Chapter 117 of You Don't Have to Say You Love Me titled "[All My Relations](#)" (1 page) [Sherman Alexie Says He's Been 'Indian Du Jour' For A 'Very Long Day' – Interview on NPR's Fresh Air](#)

I want to begin this class by (1) emphasizing the notion that All Pain Is Anecdotal and (2) ensuring you are aware that journalism is contingent – that it is not one fixed idea that has remained the same. Journalism evolves to meet the demands of society. See, for example: "[On The Periodical Essayists.](#)" These readings below may well help you in writing your Problem Paper for this week.

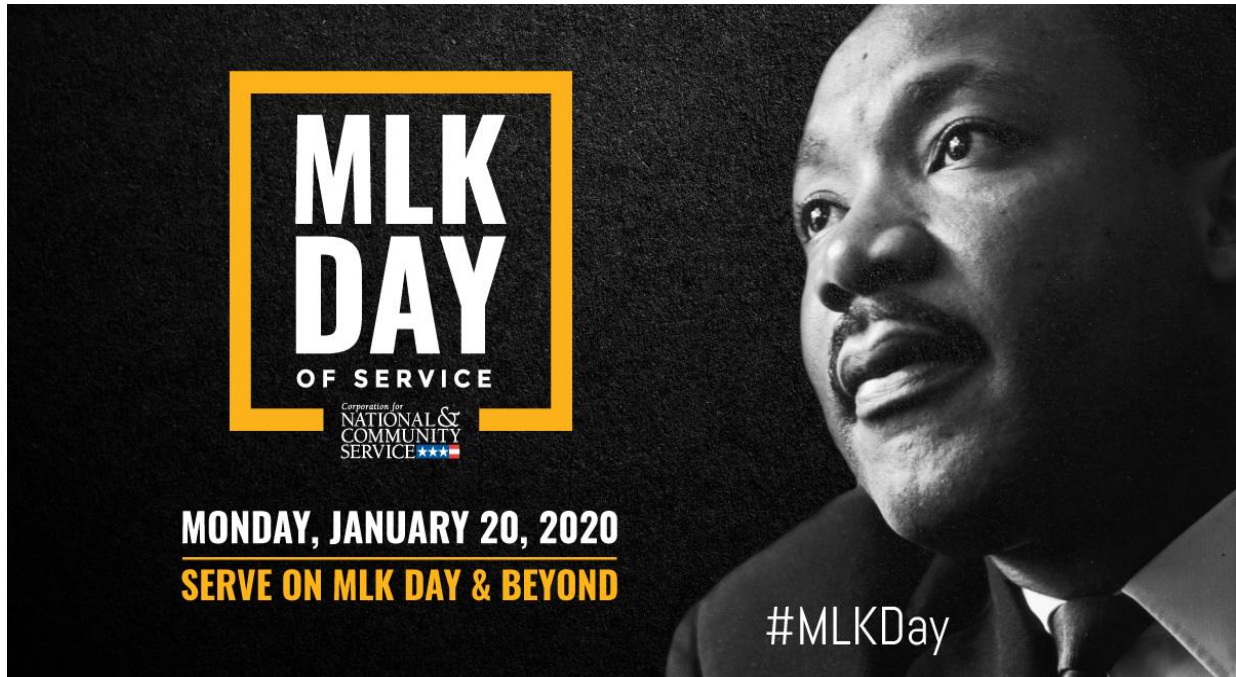
- If you have not read it yet, read it now: [All Pain Is Anecdotal](#)
- Pain is much more than physical: "[The Pain Scale,](#)" by Eula Biss
- **The Imposition of a New Form:** "[A New Form of Literature,](#)" by Hutchins Hapgood, (1905) "A story is said to be expressive when it outlives the moment when it is news. This means expressive of the familiar facts of human nature." – From [News and the Human Interest Story](#) by Helen MacGill
- "[Beyond the churn:](#) Junk news is like junk food – a quick bite that fails to nourish. Are slow-burning stories what we really want, and need?" by Sarah Smarsh – **Excerpts:**<sup>i</sup>
- [What are the boundaries of today's journalism, and how is the rise of digital changing who defines them?](#) by Matt Carlson & Seth C. Lewis -- This discusses the boundaries of journalism. Keep in mind that something as simple as the interview stretched the boundaries of the then acceptable. Literary journalism – and especially the [New Journalism](#) of the 1960s onward – also encroached on boundaries of the acceptable. **Note:** "The concept of boundaries has become a central theme in the study of journalism. In recent years, the decline of legacy news organizations and the rise of new interactive media tools have thrust such questions as 'what is journalism' and 'who is a journalist' into the limelight. Struggles over journalism are often struggles over boundaries." From [Boundaries of Journalism: Professionalism, Practices and Participation.](#)
- [Wall Street Is Killing Local Newspapers:](#) "Unfortunately, all over the country, private equity and hedge funds have been scooping up these cash-strapped papers—and looting them into irrelevance or bankruptcy," by Olivia Snow Smith.
- Examples: The Imposition of New Forms: The Financial Times is experimenting with the merger of [digital innovation and "emotional storytelling."](#) A new team at Reuters, under the guidance of the company's first "[storytelling editor,](#)" is bringing narrative sensibilities to complex policy issues.
- Optional in footnote but might aid your Problem Paper<sup>ii</sup>

### Writing Tips:

- [Transition Words](#)
- [Using Transitions Effectively](#)



Jan. 20 No Class



**In celebration of MLK day take a look at the following:**

[Letter from Birmingham Jail by Martin Luther King, Jr.](#)

[Learning to Read and Write by Frederick Douglass](#)

[Learning to Read by Malcolm X](#)

[A Letter to My Nephew by James Baldwin](#)

[How It Feels to Be Colored Me by Zora Neale Hurston](#)

[The Heroines of America's Black Press by Maya Millett](#)

[10-Year-Old Shot Three Times, but She's Fine by Patricia Smith](#)



**Class 3 – Jan. 27**  
**Query Letter for Article Due at 8 a.m. Today**  
**Topic: Journalism & Social Change**  
**Social-Justice Reporting**  
**Forms of Journalism**

- [Problem Paper 2](#) due 8 a.m.
- Quiz 2
- Discussion 1
- Lecture / Discussion
- [Sourcing Review](#)
- Thought Probe – Ship of Theseus

### Read for Class 3

There are three major chords in the works of literary journalism and those about journalism in this class and next – but indeed through the entire semester.

- (1) A thread that runs through much of what we read this semester and especially this week deals with Identity – and the defining of it – in its many forms.
- (2) Another is the notion of [“the other”](#) and the literary journalist’s attempt with narrative in its many forms to overcome the mainstream media’s – intentional or unintentional – [“symbolic annihilation”](#) of entire swathes of the population of the world by Giving Voice to the Voiceless.
- (3) Finally, there is the mantra for this class – All Pain Is Anecdotal. Recall John Howard Griffin, author of *Black Like Me* who had his skin chemically darkened and posed as an itinerant black man in the 1950s South. In comparing the journalistic usefulness of two types of data – quantitative and qualitative – he noted that:

I had spent weeks at work, studying, correlating statistics, going through reports, none of which actually help to reveal the truth of what it is like to be discriminated against. They cancel truth almost more than they reveal it. I decided to throw them away and simply publish what happened to me.<sup>iii</sup>

Keep these ideas on your frontal lobe while reading these offerings and formulate your thoughts about whether my argument about pain is valid.

### Works of Literary Journalism

- [“I Was Part of the Bronx Slave Market”](#) by Marvel Cooke
- [“Poor Teeth” by Sarah Smarsh](#): If you have a mouthful of teeth shaped by a childhood in poverty, don’t go knocking on the door of American privilege. About [Sarah Smarsh](#)
- Read Introduction and Chapter 1 “Serving in Florida” of Barbara Ehrenreich’s [Nickel and Dimed: On Not Getting By in America](#) **Note:** [Summary of Barbara Ehrenreich’s Nickel and Dimed: On Not Getting By in America](#)
- [White Debt by Eula Biss](#) You might note a few readings this semester by Eula Biss, a writer I discovered in the past year. I find her work intriguing – especially in relation to the topic of this class. That is: She combines **(1)** the research of journalism, **(2)** the stylistic flair of literary stylists, **(3)** a sharp intellect informed by an ability at [associational thinking](#) manifested in the linkages she makes to the wider world from a foundation of both life experiences and her wide swath of reading, and **(4)** the valid subjectivity of self that speaks beyond the self to express the problems and issues in the wider world and the pain of others through anecdote. **Note:** Some other similar writers would be [Meghan Daum](#) – here is a [selection](#) of her work – and [Rebecca Solnit](#) – author of the now famous essay [“Men Explain Things to Me.”](#) See also [“Rebecca Solnit on #MeToo, Mass Movements and the](#)

[10th Anniversary of 'Men Explain Things to Me.'](#) See also a roundup of writers in ["Finding empathy in the essay"](#) and [The 10 Best Essay Collections of the Decade](#).

**Associational Thinking:** The conscious – or sometimes unconscious – ability to connect seemingly unrelated things, or associational thinking, is a fundamental process that underlies creative thinking." As John Muir, the naturalist and pioneering environmental philosopher, once said: "When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe."

#### **Works about Journalism issues, problems, opportunities etc.**

- **Recall Hapgood and the "expressive personality":** ["Rebecca Skloot on narrating history: "looking for that one family, that one person, that one moment that will help hold everything together""](#) **Note:** Rebecca Skloot, is the author of ["The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks."](#) **Quote:** "I'm always looking for narrative with every story that I write. All great stories tell a sweeping story through one small story. Among other things, my book is the history of tissue culture and the evolution of bioethics told through the story of a family. With ["Seabiscuit,"](#) it's the story of a horse, but you learn the history of racing. All great nonfiction does that. In ["The Orchid Thief,"](#) you learn everything about the world of orchids through this one guy. It's looking for that one family, that one person, that one moment that will help hold everything together."
- ["Black News,"](#) by Eula Biss (This is one of those kinds of stories that rocked my boat on first reading and I am going to call it a modern classic. It has a resonance in a class called Journalism Studies because it is about the act of journalism and journalism's complicity in the construction of cultures and reality – and one woman's dawning realization of that fact.) **More on journalism's role in the designation of race:** ["How Italians Became 'White',"](#) by [Brent Staples](#)
- [The Black Journalist and the Racial Mountain: It's not what the wider world says about black writers that should concern them, so much as what they say about themselves](#) by [Ta-Nehisi Coates](#)

#### **Some Optional But edifying Further Reading**

- The title of Coates' essay is a literary allusion to [The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain](#) by Langston Hughes. **Note:** Here is a link to [All Atlantic stories by Ta-Nehisi Coates](#)
- Poetry as Social Change: [Patricia Smith](#) has been called "a testament to the power of words to change lives."

#### **Writing Tip:**

- [Thirty Tools for Writers – Poynter by Roy Peter Clark](#)

## Class 4 – Feb. 3

### Topic: Journalism and the Nether World

**Until the Story of the hunt is told by the Lion,  
the tale of the hunt will always glorify the hunter.**

– African Proverb

- [Problem Paper 3](#) due 8 a.m.
- Quiz 3
- Discussion 2
- Thought Probe – Bias on the Bench
- Lecture / Discussion
  1. History
  2. The Nether World
- [Witness Recounts Her Cousin's Shooting](#)

### Read for Class 4

#### Works of Literary Journalism

“It is better to see once than to listen many times” – Quote from a Mexican farmer to Ted Conover

- Excerpt from [Coyotes: A Journey Across Borders with America's Mexican Migrants](#) by Ted Conover.  
**Note:** Here are some [Conover Notes](#) if you want to know more
- [“Watercress Girl,”](#) by Henry Mayhew. Admittedly, “Watercress Girl” is not the most scintillating piece of journalism you will ever read. But what interests us here is the very early example of kind of journalism involving [“reporting from the ground – or bottom – up.”](#) CJR notes this in [“Among the Mongers: Henry Mayhew and the pursuit of history, from the bottom up”](#) See also this clip: [The Nation Student Journalism Conference: Reporting from the Ground Up](#)
- [“Experiment in Misery,”](#) by Stephen Crane
- [“Marrakech,”](#) by George Orwell

#### Works about Journalism issues, problems, opportunities etc.

- Ted Conover on [Immersion](#)
- [Black Like Me as the Nth of Intersubjectivity & Reporting from the Ground Up](#)
- [“Hate and racism in the South gave rise to 'social justice journalism',”](#) by Roy Peter Clark
- **Giving Voice to the Voiceless:** [Journalist Dena Takruri on being millennial, Arab American and a woman on camera](#)
- **Giving Voice to the Voiceless:** [Ted Genoways and His Year-Long Embed On a Family Farm](#)
- [Deception for Journalism's Sake: A Database](#)

#### Writing Tip

- [Politics and the English Language](#), by George Orwell

#### Some Optional Further Reading

- [Newspapers And The Rise Of Modern Journalism](#)
- [“For Their Own Good,”](#) by Ben Montgomery and Waveney Ann Moore published in the *St. Petersburg Times* (now the *Tampa Bay Times*) in 2009.
- Excerpt from [Newjack: Guarding Sing Sing](#), by Ted Conover
- [Why I Write](#), by George Orwell

## Class 5 – Feb. 10

### Topic: Revelations and the Literature of Exposure

- [Problem Paper 4](#) due 8 a.m.
- Quiz 4 – Social Justice Thought Probe
- Discussion 3
- Lecture / Discussion
- [Death of Racehorses](#)
- Thought Probe
- Lecture Functions & By What Right? Handout & Exercise

### Read for Class 5

#### Works of Literary Journalism

- [“Great Tasmania's Cargo,”](#) by Charles Dickens
- [“When Man Falls, a Crowd Gathers,”](#) by Stephen Crane
- [“The Wasteland,”](#) by Marilynne Robinson. **Source Material:** “Everything factual that I will relate in this article I learned from reading the British press or watching British television. But it would not be accurate to say that I know, more or less, what a reasonably informed Briton knows about these things, because there is a passivity and a credulousness in informed British opinion that neutralizes the power of facts to astonish.” **Note:** Google Map: [Nuclear Power Plant near Seascale](#)

#### Sports Is About More Than Sports

- [“Shadow of a Nation,”](#) by Gary Smith
- [“Going Deep: How Gary Smith became America’s best sportswriter”](#) In “Going Deep” — an essay about Gary Smith — Ben Yagoda tells us that, “Journalism that goes inside people’s heads is a tricky proposition that requires prodigious reportorial stamina, capacious insight and damned good literary chops.” Smith doesn’t just tell you things – he drives the point home. Instead of just telling you that the football team was good, he says this: “Bill May and his teammates didn’t just dominate Arkansas football in the ’50s – their second string could’ve done that.” Then you know. They were *that* good.
- **Imposition of a New Form:** [“Seven Days of Heroin: This is what an epidemic looks like,”](#) – Cincinnati.com: The Enquirer sent more than 60 reporters, photographers and videographers into their communities to chronicle an ordinary week in this extraordinary time. **Note:** No need to read this word for word. Just scan through it and be ready to discuss how stories on a digital platform can be a powerful form of narrative journalism revealing pain through forms of anecdote.

#### Works about Journalism issues, problems, opportunities etc.

- [“The Identity Of A Famous Person Is News,”](#) by Hamilton Nolan
- [On the Right to Know Everything](#) by [Ta-Nehisi Coates](#)
- [Addressing The Daily’s coverage of Sessions protests](#)
- [The Daily Northwestern Apologizes to Student Protesters for Reporting:](#) Editors at the campus newspaper spurred a backlash from professional journalists after they apologized for how they covered protests at a speech by Jeff Sessions.

#### Some Optional Further Reading

- From [“I Can't Breathe,”](#) by Matt Taibbi
- Re Dickens and Robinson: [How to deal with obstructive public information officers? Challenge them](#)
- More on this kind of professional obstruction: [Public information officers: Who they are, why they're a problem for journalists and the public, and what we're doing about it](#)

#### Writing Tip:

[Shitty First Drafts](#) by Anne Lamott from [Bird by Bird](#)

## Class 6 – Feb. 17

### Topic: Social Justice (and Injustice) Reporting Media's Role in Symbolic Annihilation & Strong Objectivity

- [Problem Paper 5](#) due 8 a.m.
- [Midterm Assessment](#) due 8 a.m.
- Quiz 5
- Thought Probe – Who Is Hedy Lamarr?
- Discussion 4
- [Death of Rodriguez, by Richard Harding Davis](#)
- [Death of Rodriguez Notes](#)
- Lecture / Discussion

### Read for Class 6

#### Works of Literary Journalism

#### Compare two [procedurals](#) – [Drift](#) and [The Lonely Death of George Bell](#).

- [“Drift,”](#) by Morris Markey. **Note:** In Greek mythology, [Charon](#) is the ferryman of Hades who carries souls of the newly deceased across the rivers Styx and Acheron that divided the world of the living from the world of the dead. Morris Markey’s literary journalism piece, “Drift,” belongs to a genre referred to as “the procedural.” Note how he uses [diction](#) and [syntax](#) to achieve an effect. Would this sort of writing work today – or does the ethos of our times ask that the writer be a bit more subtle? For instance see a more contemporary story below. **Optional:** Some history of Hart Island: [“Unearthing The Secrets Of New York’s Mass Graves,”](#) by [Nina Bernstein](#)
- [“The Lonely Death of George Bell,”](#) by [N. R. Kleinfield](#). Each year around 50,000 people die in New York, some alone and unseen. Yet death even in such forlorn form can cause a surprising amount of activity. Sometimes, along the way, a life’s secrets are revealed. A powerful procedural and look how the photos flow with story. **Note:** Learn more about the author who made a career of writing about the marginalized: [40 Years of Chronicling the Unnoticed](#)
- [“Time and Distance Overcome,”](#) from *No Man’s Land* by Eula Biss. **Journalism as Quasi Qualitative Social Science (Content Analysis & Interpretation) – Source Material:** “I began my research for this essay by searching for every instance of the phrase “telephone pole” in the *New York Times* from 1880 to 1920, which resulted in 370 articles. I was planning to write an essay about telephone poles and telephones, not lynchings, but after reading an article headlined [“Colored Scoundrel Lynched,”](#) and then another headlined “Mississippi Negro Lynched,” and then another headlined “Texas Negro Lynched,” I searched for every instance of the word “lynched” in the *New York Times* from 1880 to 1920, which resulted in 2,354 articles.” This is not dissimilar to how Marilynne Robinson reported [“The Wasteland,”](#) **Optional:** [Video excerpt from Time and Distance Overcome](#) (Warning – graphic images).
- Excerpt from [The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration](#) by Isabel Wilkerson (Read both the introduction about Wilkerson and her research and then the excerpt at end.) **Journalism as Quasi Qualitative Social Science (Depth Interviews & Interpretation) – Source Material:** During her research for the book, Wilkerson interviewed more than 1,000 people who made the migration from the South to Northern and Western cities. Interestingly, many of the people who Wilkerson encountered – who moved during the time period of 1915 to 1970 -- had no idea that they were even part of the Great Migration. **Want to know more?** [The Long-Lasting Legacy of the Great Migration](#)

Works about Journalism issues, problems, opportunities etc.

- [Symbolic Annihilation](#)
- Read: [#Symbolic Annihilation](#)
- [Katherine Boo's 15 Rules For Narrative Nonfiction](#) At the Mayborn Conference for storytellers, the Pulitzer winner warns against falling in love with the craft too much, and says that “getting it right matters way more than whether you can make people care” About [Katherine Boo](#)
- [“Why On-Screen Representation Actually Matters: We know the stories we watch on screen tend to marginalize people of color and women. But we might not realize how it affects us,”](#) By Sara Boboltz and Kimberly Yam
- **Journalism as Quasi Qualitative Social Science (Content Analysis & Interpretation)**  
[Who is ‘looting’ and who is ‘finding food’? How image gatekeepers shape the news](#)

### Some Optional Further Reading

- [Personal Yet Dazzlingly Eclectic 'Notes' On Race](#) – Review of *Notes From No Man's Land: American Essays* by Eula Biss

### Writing Tip

- Here is an explainer on **Narrative Arc (Thread)**: Roy Peter Clark on the search for the “embedded narrative”: [How to find a compelling storyline in arts coverage — or any beat topic](#)

## Class 7 – Feb. 24

### Topic: Objectivity

- [Problem Paper 6](#) due 8 a.m.
- Quiz 6
- Discussion 5
- Lecture / Discussion
- Thought Probe – Fact v. Opinion
- Objectivity
- Hiroshima

### Read for Class 7

#### Works of Literary Journalism

- Read Part 1 of [“Hiroshima,”](#) by John Hersey **Note:** (1) [“How John Hersey's Hiroshima revealed the horror of the bomb”](#) and (2) [How John Hersey Revealed the Horrors of the Atomic Bomb to the US](#)

#### Works about Journalism issues, problems, opportunities etc.

- [Journalism and Objectivity Over Time](#) – Ngram Viewer, a tool that searches for words and phrases across history in Google’s more than 20 million digitized books and produces a graph showing how the words or phrases have occurred.
- [Nora Ephron on Women, Politics, and the Myth of Objectivity in Journalism](#) **Quote:** “I’ve never believed in objective journalism — and no one who is a journalist in his or her right mind does — because all writing is about selecting what you want to use. And as soon as you choose what to select, you’re not being objective.”
- [“The most respected Supreme Court reporter of her generation slams media ‘objectivity,’”](#) by Eric Allen Been
- [“Objectivity and the decades-long shift from ‘just the facts’ to ‘what does it mean?’”](#) by Jonathan Stray
- [“Where Does Journalism End and Activism Begin?”](#) by Michael Blanding
- [A Battle in Falluja, Revisited:](#) Official documents can never tell us the whole story of war. **Note:** Here is an argument for the power of fully fleshed narrative vs. just the facts.

#### Writing Tip:

- [Using Commas](#)

**February 29 - March 7  
Spring Break**

Other Students



UF Students



**Class 8 – March 9**

**Topic: Two Examples of The New Journalism**

- No Paper – Discussion on readings in class
- No Quiz – items from readings will be on quiz next class
- No Discussion
- In Cold Blood - Handout
- [Discussion Post on Capote and Journalist Portrayals in Movies](#) (under participation)

**Read for Class 8**

**Works of Literary Journalism**

***In Cold Blood:***

- [In Cold Blood](#), by Truman Capote, “The Last to See Them Alive” – Part one of Truman Capote's story about a murdered family in Holcomb, Kansas.
- [Capote the PowerPoint](#)
- View [A visit with Capote](#)
- [“In Cold Blood: The Story Behind a Nonfiction Novel”](#) This is a Capote interview with [George Plimpton](#), a literary journalist in his own right. [Here](#) – an example of immersion journalism – Plimpton narrates his exploits as a one-time Detroit Lions quarterback which he documented in the classic non-fiction novel [Paper Lion: Confessions of a Last-String Quarterback](#).

***The Right Stuff:***

- The Forward and an excerpt from [The Right Stuff](#), by Tom Wolfe
- [The Right Stuff](#) – Video: The history of the time and Wolfe’s research and writing of [The Right Stuff](#)

**Works about Journalism issues, problems, opportunities etc.**

- **On The New Journalism:** [Excerpt: 'The Gang That Wouldn't Write Straight'](#) : NPR

**Some Optional Further Reading**

- [Longreads Best of 2019: Crime Reporting](#)

**Writing Tips**

- [How to use Twitter Lists](#)
- [Google Alert A Great Tool to Help Student Researchers](#)



**Class 9 – March 16**  
**Topic: More on The New Journalism**  
**Inadequacy of Words**

Reading Tom Wolfe was a revelation. Along with “In Cold Blood” & “Hiroshima,” his work showed me that journalism doesn't have to be a dry recitation of facts. We can tell true stories that weave spells, transport readers, spur emotion & bring our subjects into vivid color. ~ [Mónica Rhor](#)

- [Problem Paper 7](#) due 8 a.m.
- Quiz 7
- Discussion 6
- Lecture / Discussion
- Thought Probe – It’s Toasted - Sorites Paradox
- Inadequacy of Words

### Read for Class 9

#### Works of Literary Journalism

- Chapter 1: [“Las Vegas \(What?\) Las Vegas \(Can't hear you! Too noisy\) Las Vegas!!!!”](#) from [The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby](#) from Part 1: The New Culture-Makers.
- [Introduction to book followed by “The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby.”](#) Note in introduction Wolfe’s discussion about where his off-the-wall style came from?
- [“The Shit-Kickers of Madison Avenue,”](#) by Lillian Ross. I reminded of Crane’s sketch from decades before [“When Man Falls, a Crowd Gathers.”](#) **Note:** Ross was turning out stories in the mode of New Journalism long before the manifesto by Tom Wolfe, who largely ignored her accomplishments.

#### Works about Journalism issues, problems, opportunities etc.

- **On The New Journalism:** [“Some Sort of Artistic Excitement”](#) by Ronald Weber. This is the introduction to an early edited collection of essays discussing the New Journalism titled [The Reporter as Artist: A Look at the New Journalism Controversy](#). It is a brief but excellent explication of the concept of New Journalism and makes a solid argument for what it is (not just one thing) and how the genre – as with all literary and journalistic genres – addresses a need. Note, too, the use of the word “controversy” in the title. Recall “The Imposition of a New Form.”
- **On Truth:** [“The Legend on the License,”](#) by John Hersey, Yale Review, October 1980, 1-25

#### Some Optional Further Reading: More great examples of New Journalism

- [“Silent Season of a Hero,”](#) by Gay Talese
- An annotated version of [“Frank Sinatra Has a Cold,”](#) by Gay Talese. This ran in April 1966 and became one of the most celebrated magazine stories ever published, a pioneering example of what came to be called New Journalism — a work of rigorously faithful fact enlivened with the kind of vivid storytelling that had previously been reserved for fiction.
- [The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test: Chapter 6 The Bus](#), by Tom Wolfe
- [“What Do You Think of Ted Williams Now?”](#) By Richard Ben Cramer:
- [“The Last American Hero Is Junior Johnson. Yes!”](#) by Tom Wolfe
- [The New Yorker’s Profiles](#) (If not full text you can look on Lexis-Nexis for these through library.)

#### Writing Tip

- [“Remembering Tom Wolfe, The Master of The Long Sentence,”](#) by Roy Peter Clark

**Class 10 – March 23**  
**Topic: Inadequacy of Sources & False Equivalency**  
**Fake News is a Fake Term**

“You are entitled to your own opinion, but you are not entitled to your own facts.”

— Daniel Patrick Moynihan

- [Problem Paper 8](#) due 8 a.m.
- Thought Probe – Moderating Comments
- Quiz 8
- Discussion 7
- Lecture / Discussion

### Read for Class 10

#### Works of Literary Journalism

- [“Jimmy’s World,”](#) by Janet Cooke. This story, written in a narrative style, won a Pulitzer prize.
- [“Tiananmen Square,”](#) by John Simpson. **Note:** Note the end of this story in relation disinformation. Also, three optional reads about the massacre below.
- **Journalism as Quasi Qualitative Social Science – Immersion & Ethnography**  
[The Marriage Cure: Is Wedlock Really a Way Out of Poverty?](#) by Katherine Boo (Journalism that counters a myth and dogma and misinformation – sets the record straight – seeks the truth as best we can discern it)
- [“Why’s this so good?” No. 88: Katherine Boo and the marriage cure](#)

#### Works about Journalism issues, problems, opportunities etc.

- **On Truth:** [Journalism as a discipline of verification](#)
- **On Truth:** [The First Peril: Fabrication](#)
- **Trigger Warning** – this does not show anyone getting killed, but still I make it optional viewing:  
[Anatomy of a Killing](#) – BBC News
- **On Fake News:** [#JOU4008 Fake News](#)
- Scan through this [Alligator Archive](#) – do you spot a pattern of Fake News – or is it something else?

#### Optional reads

- [Read CJR’s Disinformation Issue](#)

#### Optional Reads to Learn More About Tiananmen Square

- [“When China Massacred Its Own People,”](#) by Nicholas Kristof
- [“Photos of the Tiananmen Square Protests Through the Lens of a Student Witness,”](#) by Tiffany May.
- [“I watched the 1989 Tiananmen uprising. China has never been the same,”](#) by David Holley

#### Writing Tip

- Journalism is Forensics: Do your ABCs – **A**ssume nothing. **B**elieve nobody. **C**heck everything.  
– [Mantra of British crime scene manager John Cockram](#)

## Class 11 – March 30

Topic: Gonzo

&

Journalism

vs.

P.R., Impression Management, Pseudo Events & Cognitive Manipulation

- [Problem Paper 9](#) due 8 a.m.
- Quiz 9
- Discussion 8
- Lecture / Discussion
- Thought Probe – Experimental Study of Apparent Behavior
- Media As Storytellers
- Gonzo & HST

### Read for Class 11

#### Works of Literary Journalism

- Excerpt from [Hell's Angels: A Strange and Terrible Saga](#), by Hunter S. Thompson. If you like, here is [a link](#) to entire book on Internet Archive. **Read:** [Excerpts from Bill McKeen's Interview with Sonny Barger about Hunter S. Thompson / February 14, 2006](#)
- ["The Kentucky Derby is Decadent and Depraved: Written under duress by Hunter S. Thompson; Sketched with eyebrow pencil and lipstick by Ralph Steadman"](#)
- [Last Secrets of Skull and Bones](#), by Ron Rosenbaum – **Some Context:** (1) [The 13 most powerful members of 'Skull and Bones'](#) (2) Rosenbaum's work has been described as "Intellectual Gonzo" and (3) the fact that Rosenbaum is Jewish. Do you see how this might be relevant?
- Read just the first few paragraphs of ["The Great American Bubble Machine"](#) by Matt Taibbi – **Note:** Taibbi has been called by some a contemporary Gonzo writer – an appellation he rejects.

#### Works about Journalism issues, problems, opportunities etc.

- [Gonzo](#) (A brief explication)
- [Hunter S. Thompson on Objectivity](#)
- [Hunter S. Thompson's 1958 cover letter for a newspaper job](#)
- Ralph Steadman: [With gonzo, you don't cover the story; you become the story](#)

#### Some Optional Further Reading

- [Why's This So Good? Hunter S. Thompson and "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas"](#) – Nieman Storyboard
- [Hunter S. Thompson, James Salter, and a Drunken Trip to Kentucky](#)
- ["Life Magazine Rides With Hells Angels 1965"](#) – a gallery of photos
- [Hell's Angels: The FBI Files](#)
- [Read 11 Free Articles by Hunter S. Thompson That Span His Gonzo Journalist Career \(1965-2005\)](#)
- [Read 18 Lost Stories from Hunter S. Thompson's Forgotten Stint as a Foreign Correspondent](#)
- [Hunter S. Thompson – Buy the Ticket, Take the Ride](#) (Documentary)

#### Writing Tip

- [Common Errors in English Usage](#)

## Class 12 – April 6

### Topic: Joan Didion & Cleansed of Received Wisdom

- [Problem Paper 10](#) due 8 a.m.
- Quiz 10
- No Discussion
- Discussion Post on [ATPM](#) (under participation)

### Read for Class 12

#### About Joan Didion (Read these first):

- [Joan Didion PowerPoint](#)
- [“The Picture in Her Mind,”](#) by Paul Gleason
- [“Why I Write,”](#) by Joan Didion
- [“Joan Didion on Keeping a Notebook,”](#) by Maria Popova

#### These three are from a collection of essays titled [Slouching Towards Bethlehem](#)

- [“John Wayne: A Love Song”](#)
- [“Some Dreamers of the Golden Dream”](#) **Note:** [“Why’s this so good?”](#) No. 57: Joan Didion on dreamers gone astray
- [Los Angeles Notebook](#) **Note:** [The Santa Ana winds and the literature of Los Angeles](#)

#### Some Optional Further Reading:

- [“In Grief, Joan Didion’s Move From Fiction to Memoir,”](#) by David L. Ulin
- [“Out of Bethlehem: The radicalization of Joan Didion,”](#) by [Louis Menand](#)
- [12 Essays by Joan Didion for Free Online, Spanning Her Career From 1965 to 2013](#)
- [Joan Didion's Essay, "On Keeping a Notebook"](#)

## Class 13 – April 13

### Rough Draft of Final Article Due at 8 a.m. Today

- [Closing Self-Assessment](#) due 8 a.m.
- No Problem Paper
- Discussion Post on Class 12 Movie
- No Quiz
- Meetings
- Meeting Schedule – Sign Up

### Read for Class 13

#### Works of Literary Journalism

- Jimmy Breslin on JFK’s Assassination: Read the second story here, [“It’s An Honor”](#)
- [“So ... We Meet at Last, Mr. Bond,”](#) by Bob Greene, (columnist)
- Annotated version of [“Portrait of Hemingway”](#) by Lillian Ross. **FYI:** [About Lillian Ross & a List of Her Stories for The New Yorker](#)
- [“Lillian Ross: Pioneer of Literary Journalism,”](#) by James W. Tankard, Jr.
- [For Writer Lillian Ross, the Story’s in the Details](#) (short radio interview)

#### Writing Tips

- [A Writer’s Essay: Seeking the Extraordinary in the Ordinary](#)
- [“The Politics of The Plain,”](#) by Hugh Kenner

## Class 14 – April 20

### Final Article Due by 8 a.m. today – Article Presentations in class

## Endnotes

<sup>i</sup> Information without context strikes the mind but peters out before the heart.

But let's be clear: no matter what my journalism professors said, most news stories aren't stories.

My peers and I would soon get to choose: stay on the reporting-intensive track or shift to the new one tailored to 'media convergence' – diversifying know-how across disparate realms of print, TV and radio suddenly united by the web. Excited about the internet but sensing something more abiding in story than in the container that transmits it, I'd stay on the 'old curriculum'.

In a media landscape of zip-fast reports as stripped of context as a potato might be stripped of fibre, most news stories fail to satiate. We don't consume news all day because we're hungry for information – we consume it because we're hungry for connection.

When we sever that bridge between objective fact and subjective meaning in the interest of speed or protocol, TV anchors awkwardly interview six-year-old witnesses to shooting rampages, and reporters convey military suicides as tallies in a descending order of deemed significance known as the 'inverted pyramid'.

People like a deep, slow-burning narrative, even in the realm of news. Such narratives are familiar to us as magazine stories, documentaries, the occasional newspaper series. But in our lifetimes they've been secondary, a Sunday supplement to daily news. What if they were primary? What if, by examining our news sources with the same scrutiny we afford food labels, we chose stories that were, in fact, stories?

<sup>ii</sup> [The Live-Streamers Who Are Challenging Traditional Journalism](#): Webcasters promise transparency and objectivity, but not all views deserve equal time. By Andrew Marantz

"The agitation of mainstream journalistic practice undertaken by each of the writers above was spurred by a questioning of a foundational journalistic practice: objectivity. The New Journalists challenged the authority of fact and its capacity to represent the human condition. This challenge to objectivity drove an experimentation with journalistic form that produced a deeply innovative body of work; however, these innovations are not merely formal. They also call into question the epistemological assumptions that tether journalism to a phenomenal world assumed to be fully representable." – Juliana Adele Rausch, ["The New Journalism as Avant-Garde Art."](#) PhD diss., Temple University, 2017.

iii John Howard Griffin, *Black Like Me* (New York: Signet, 1996), 149.