

Book reviews . . .

Nancy L. Roberts, Book Review Editor

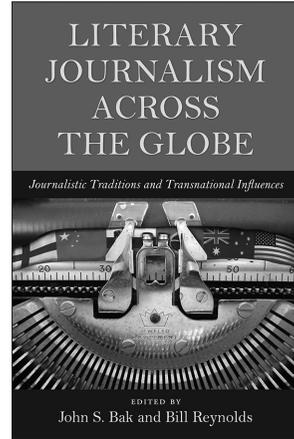
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A Road Map for the World

Literary Journalism Across the Globe: Journalistic Traditions and Transnational Influences
Edited by John S. Bak and Bill Reynolds. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011. Paperback, 306 pp., \$28.95

Reviewed by Kathy Roberts Forde, University of South Carolina, U.S.A.

Over the past several decades, scholars have built the intellectual base for the academic field of literary journalism. They have cleared a path through a vast wilderness of intelligence and print culture, setting up road signs and gathering the material necessary to build the scholarly houses of literary journalism. Although the great bulk of the resulting scholarship has focused on the American context, studies of other countries' traditions have been appearing with increasing frequency. *Literary Journalism across the Globe* joins this emergent literature as an important contribution that may well shape the discipline for years to come. This intelligently edited collection of sixteen essays provides not only the first scholarly survey of the field of international literary journalism but also a rudimentary map for future scholars to follow, enhance, and refine.



The authors contributing to this volume hail from Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, England, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, and the United States. Together they document the practices and fortunes of literary journalism and literary reportage in these countries and others, including Russia and countries of the United Kingdom. As John Bak explains in the introduction, the essays explore “how the form has been viewed, read, written, and studied throughout the world” (2), concentrating on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. What emerges from this collective effort is the understanding that literary journalism is a generative form of print culture that has been produced around the world across time in diverse cultural, social, and political conditions.

The essays in this book are arranged in three parts. The first, titled “Towards a Theory of International Literary Journalism,” is meant to “address several, and solve some, of the problems associated with defining a form that is more culturally bound than literature and more politically sensitive than journalism” (Bak, 7). The second and third parts address the topics suggested in the book’s subtitle: “Journalistic Traditions” and “Transnational Influences” respectively. Part II examines traditions of literary journalism in the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, China, Brazil, and Finland. As Bak observes, these essays suggest that “journalists most often turn literary when their nations are at war, be it with others or with themselves” (14). Categorization is often the Achilles’ heel of edited volumes as some contributions defy the chosen categories.

Each of the essays in Part III, “Transnational Influences,” examines closely “the notion of transnational influence,” or so we are told (14). Yet some of these essays focus very little on such influences and more on a particular writer working within or helping to build a national tradition. Readers wishing to chart transnational influences should depend on Bak’s thoughtful introduction and their own close readings of the collected essays.

Scholars have long suggested that literary journalism has historical roots in the United States and England. *Literary Journalism across the Globe* now complicates this narrative. As we would expect, a number of authors document the influence of the Anglo-American tradition on other national traditions. Isabel Soares explores the influence of the British *Pall Mall Gazette* on Portuguese journalists in the late nineteenth century and documents the emergence of a Portuguese literary journalism at the *fin de siècle*. Peiqin Chin describes the influence of American writers Edgar Snow and Upton Sinclair on Chinese literary reportage (*baogao wenxue*) in the 1930s and 1940s, a time of social and political turmoil. Chinese literary journalists gained energy from the American New Journalism movement when key works were first translated into Chinese in the late 1980s. Nikki Hessel suggests that the literary journalism of Upton Sinclair and George Orwell inspired the work of Robin Hyde in New Zealand in the 1930s. Maria Lassila-Merisalo discusses the influence of American Hunter S. Thompson’s gonzo journalism and the New Journalism movement on Finnish journalism in the 1980s. Sonia Parratt describes how the New Journalism energized literary journalism in Spain and Edvaldo Pereira Lima suggests it did the same in Brazil in the case of the magazine *Realidade*. Willa McDonald tells us that Helen Garner, a contemporary literary journalist in Australia, has been influenced by Janet Malcolm of the *New Yorker*.

While the Anglo-American influence has been important to many national experiences with literary reportage, transnational influences have crisscrossed the globe, sometimes without any reference to the Anglo-American tradition or the English-speaking world. In the lead essay, John C. Hartsock, author of the acclaimed book *A History of American Literary Journalism*, explores the role of the Prague-born Egon Erwin Kisch’s literary reportage in the international communist movement following World War I. Kisch’s work travelled in multiple directions, Hartsock writes, influencing not only Joseph North, the editor of the *New Masses*, in the United States, but also writers engaged in proletariat struggle in China. Sonja Merljak Zdovc suggests that Kisch also influenced journalists in communist Slovenia in the 1960s, who used narrative techniques to comment indirectly on the social and political problems of their country, thus “disguising their reportages as fiction” (238). Bill Reynolds describes the influence of Polish journalist Ryszard Kapuściński on a contemporary group of Canadian literary journalists in Vancouver. In an especially fine-grained critical analysis of Kapuściński’s reportage, Soenke Zehle discusses a transnational critique of the reporter’s work on Africa as a kind of literary-colonial exploitation and misrepresentation.

Several essays in *Literary Journalism across the Globe* make especially substantive contributions to new knowledge. The first is editor Bak’s finely written introduction,

which points out and analyzes points of historical and theoretical connection and rupture as he maps the territory covered in the volume. Bak usefully notes the primacy of war and various political ideologies and systems as transnational historical forces shaping the development of different traditions of literary journalism and reportage around the world. He also suggests several strategies scholars and practitioners should pursue to enrich the field of international literary journalism studies.

Hartsock's essay makes an especially important contribution to our knowledge of international literary journalism. It is a model of rigorous comparative analysis of European traditions of literary reportage. What's more, it generates not only substantive new knowledge about these traditions but also a template for theorizing about the various modalities and rhetorics of the form. Peiqin Chen offers what may be the first English-language historical analysis of the Chinese tradition of literary reportage from the 1850s through the late twentieth century. She shows how *baogao wenxue* has been used as a tool for social advocacy in periods of social and political dislocation and turbulence. Finally, Clazina Dingemanse and Rutger de Graaf document how the Dutch literary pamphleteering tradition, which began in the sixteenth century and flourished for centuries, influenced the development of a literary journalistic tradition in Dutch newspapers in the nineteenth century. Dingemanse and de Graaf's careful historical study demonstrates how particular genres and features of print culture were appropriated across time as new print genres emerged. This study provides a model that other historians of literary journalism may wish to pursue.

Literary Journalism across the Globe is an important book, a significant scholarly contribution to the field of literary journalism studies.

Mumbai's Under-citizens Partially Explained

Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity
by Katherine Boo. New York: Random House, 2012. Hardcover, 256 pp., \$27.

Reviewed by Miles Maguire, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, U.S.A.

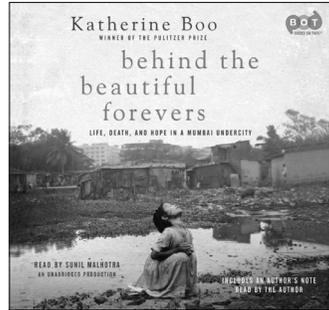
It is undoubtedly unfair to judge by its cover a book as thoroughly reported, as gorgeously written, and as modestly presented as Katherine Boo's *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*. But it's also hard not to forget the image that is there on the dust jacket, an apparently perfect representation of one of Boo's major points, that even crushing poverty and overwhelming squalor cannot extinguish hopes and possibilities.

The cover image is this: a beautiful young girl squatting beside a lake of sewage, her head tilted upward, her eyes shut and a faint smile emerging on her lips as she feels the first drops of a rainstorm. In the midst of this slum, then, the future beckons and a better life may yet emerge. The picture matches well with Boo's subtitle: *Life, Death and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity*.

The photo is, unfortunately, a bit of fakery, as the credits listed on the inside flap make clear: two different images from two different photographers, one of the slum in the background and the other of the girl up front. It is not a photograph so much as a photo illustration, true pictures used to tell a true story, perhaps—or used to create an illusion through juxtaposition and montage.

Like any work of literary journalism, Boo's book invites a suspicion that it has been similarly constructed out of art and artifice. In an author's note she counters such concerns by enumerating the extent of the fact gathering that went into the book: interviews with 168 people to reconstruct a single event; more than 3,000 public records; three and a half years spent in the slum district of Annawadi; and a full range of documentary devices, including "written notes, video recordings, audiotapes, and photographs" (249). She even enlisted slum residents in her reporting, allowing them to use her Flip camera to capture some of the stories retold in the book.

The product of this effort is a narrative both vivid and swift, depicting in painful, desperate detail the economic, political, and moral struggles of a group of people Boo calls "undercitizens" (1). Her focus is primarily on three families: the Waghekar, whose matriarch is intent upon becoming the slumlord of her neighborhood; the Husains, whose oldest son is an expert garbage sorter and the key to their brightening financial prospects; and the Shaikhs, whose hut shares a wall with the Husains'. A dispute about this wall becomes the central incident in Boo's book: the self-immolation of one-legged Fatima Shaikh, a distorted version of which leads to criminal charges, and the pre-trial imprisonment, of three members of the Husain family.



Boo masterfully advances this story, mixing unflinching descriptions of slum conditions and piercing observations about the pervasiveness of the varying forms of corruption that both help to maintain the status quo of suffering and offer the potential for a way out. Her subjects are often unappealing, spiritually impoverished as well as physically repulsive. For many their business is scavenging, picking through dumpsters, along roadsides, and behind fenced-off construction sites for the throwaway items of the global economy, an occupation that brings with it dirt and disease.

But Boo rejects the kind of journalism that contents itself with “poignant snapshots of Indian squalor: the ribby children with flies in their eyes and other emblems of abjectness” (247). She has bigger questions in mind, about what it takes for slum dwellers to escape their environment and about why they don’t revolt in the face of extreme inequality.

Boo wisely recognizes her limitations as an outsider and the limitations of writing about these conditions. She makes clear that Annawadi should not be seen as representative of India as a whole and discourages easy explanations. She has taken on a big enough challenge, the necessary first step in fighting poverty, which is to provide a credible account of the sights and smells, of the pains and joys, of the failures and successes in the lives of some of the poorest people on the planet.

Thus it is the Photoshopped cover of her book that causes deeper reflection on the details she has gathered and the way she has assembled them. Photoshop is a powerful tool for creating stronger images, by removing unwanted distractions and smoothing out the ragged edges of reality. A close reading of Boo’s text leaves one with the nagging doubts that she has indeed erased a major distraction, namely herself, while shifting attention away from the places where her story could use a fuller explanation of events.

Boo convincingly makes the case that the people living on the bottom rungs of Indian society are held back by, among other things, the ways in which the people in power—politicians, policeman, even aid workers—game the system by demanding bribes and withholding services until they have been compensated. But at two crucial points in her story, this pattern is broken: The system works, and justice prevails.

In one case Abdul Husain, who comes close to being the main “character” in the story, is facing detention as an adult for his alleged role in the death of Fatima Shaikh. A doctor examines the youth and warns that without a hefty payment he will be declared to be of age and sent to a notorious prison. But Abdul protests, no bribe is paid, and the doctor allows the boy to stay in a youth detention facility.

In the other example, the Husains’ case is sent through an accelerated court process that the central government has established to speed a balky trial system. Here again things work out for the Husains as the judge throws out the charges against them. At least in Boo’s reporting, there was no bribe, no illegal inducement for the judge to do the right thing.

A work of immersion journalism such as this promises a depth of understanding that would not be available through traditional means. But Boo offers no explanation for how the sea of corruption that she has elsewhere described so eloquently parts in these two cases for righteousness to emerge. Was this merely random happenstance?

Or was it a sign that India's society is shaking itself free of ancient ways?

A third possibility is that Boo, who says that she witnessed most of the events in the book, was present on these two occasions, and that the sight of a fair-skinned Western reporter helped to influence the outcome, or at least obviate the need for a payment under the table.

Behind the Beautiful Forevers is a memorable rendering of people living on the margins. It is particularly valuable in showing how their frame of reference is those most like themselves, so that the emotion that guides them is envy toward those with slightly more upward mobility rather than anger toward those whose riches allow them to live at far remove and in vast luxury.

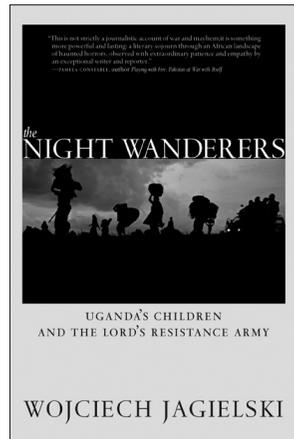
But Boo's story feels incomplete. The title of the book is drawn from a corporate slogan, "Beautiful Forever," that appeared again and again in advertisements along a wall that kept the Annawadi slum out of view. Boo has taken us behind that wall, but she leaves us wondering what else there might have been to see.

Wounds of Death and Loss in Post-colonial Uganda

The Night Wanderers: Uganda's Children and the Lord's Resistance Army
by Wojciech Jagielski, English translation by Antonia Lloyd-Jones. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2012. Originally published in Polish, 2009. Paper, 305 pp., \$14.21.

Reviewed by Isabel Soares, Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas, Universidade Técnica de Lisboa (Technical University, Lisbon), Portugal

“**H**Heart of darkness”: This expression, taken from the title of Joseph Conrad's memorable 1902 novella, could not any better characterize the core issue of *The Night Wanderers*. Just as in Conrad's work, coincidentally the first to overtly criticize imperialism's rapacity, readers are taken to a vilified Africa, a place of indescribable human agony where no catharsis can redeem or save those who hurt and those who are hurt. Whereas in Conrad's book, Marlowe, the main character and narrator, sets out for the impenetrable, dangerous jungles of Congo in search of Kurtz, a renegade white who has gone astray and brutalized natives, in *Night Wanderers*, Jagielski takes



us to darkest Uganda in search of Joseph Kony, the rebel leader of an army of child soldiers.

The greatest distinction, however, between *Heart of Darkness* and *Night Wanderers* is that the first lets us have the comfort of knowing its story belongs to the realm of fiction, whereas the latter stuns us with its real, unabashed violence. Jagielski can be likened to Marlowe in the sense that both characters are envoys from a Europe morbidly curious to know what horrid secrets lurk in Africa. Both are on a paid assignment and both tell a story: the narrative of their encounter with a strange continent of loss. The description of suffering renders them similar, but Jagielski is a journalist who does not go to Africa to destroy Kony or bring him to justice. Unlike Marlowe, Jagielski only knows his real purpose in Africa after having seen the night wanderers. The sense of the *unheimlich* (the eerily upsetting), shivers down his spine as he watches swarms of children invade every corner of the town of Gulu by nightfall. Suddenly, there are no adults on the streets, only ghostlike children who come to spend the night and claim the town. From then on, Jagielski has a story to tell.

Following its independence from the British Empire and the end of colonial rule in 1962, Uganda's history has been one of tribalism, poverty and the infection of old, unhealed wounds. With no political system that even remotely can be called democratic, Uganda has moved from one dictatorship to another over the last five decades. The tyrannical government of Idi Amin in the 1970s, with its mass killings, is proof of that. The current president and head of state, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, seized power in 1986 after leading the rebellious National Resistance Army and deposing General Tito Okello. Since then, parliament has passed laws to bypass the constitutional two-mandate limit in order to sanction Museveni's stay in power. In February 2011, elections were held and Museveni won with a staggering sixty-eight per cent majority. Civil war has also inflicted a heavy toll on the country, especially in the northern region, where Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) operates through terrorism and guerrilla warfare to terrorize civilian populations and the military alike.

It was against this intricate backdrop of ethnic conflict that Jagielski committed *Night Wanderers* to publication in 2009, the year of its first edition in Poland. In fact, Jagielski shares his Polish nationality with another reputed journalist in African affairs, Ryszard Kapuściński, curiously the same origin as Joseph Conrad's, and *Night Wanderers* was even shortlisted for the 2009 Kapuściński Award. What can be said about Jagielski's and Kapuściński's journalism is that it is literary. It becomes fluent through narrative and alive through scene depiction and character composition. When we read *Night Wanderers* or Kapuscinski's *The Shadow of the Sun* (1998) on his reporting from Africa, we feel as if we are reading a novel. And that is indeed literary journalism's quintessential definition.

In an introductory note, Jagielski sets matters straight by saying that everything in his book is true. From the town of Gulu to Joseph Kony, from the child soldiers to Acholi King Kenneth Banya, nothing and no one is fictionalized. Nevertheless, the leading characters "of Nora, Samuel, and Jackson have been created out of several real people." And here we have the first-person admission of character composites,

which anoints Jagielski's journalism with a characteristic borrowed from literature and which, consequently, leads it to a hybrid place located somewhere in the interstice between what is literary and what is journalistic. Furthermore, since those three characters occupy such prominent positions in the narrative, we, as readers, are forced to think about the extent to which Jagielski engaged in composition. Could he have talked to Nora and Samuel in the way he wrote about these conversations? Who were the child soldiers who shaped Samuel? Can we ever be sure that no imagination pervaded this journalistic report? These are, of course, questions left unanswered—questions that become irrelevant in the face of the narrative, which reads like a punch in the stomach.

The feeling that something is very wrong in Uganda starts hitting us in chapter one, although it is difficult to verbalize what exactly is upsetting us. In the manner of a novelist, Jagielski knows how to create suspense. First, it is a “gray river of children” who invaded Gulu and “loomed out of the darkness, from under the ground like apparitions” (5). Next, it is Jackson, Jagielski's Ugandan journalist friend, telling him that “children are different here” (8). And then there is the army colonel interviewed by Jagielski, who warns him against children:

If you see them coming out of the bush, please tell your driver to turn back immediately. And if they show up close to you and it's too late to turn around, tell him to keep going at full speed ahead. Under no circumstances should you stop. . . . Please don't forget—it's good advice. . . . With children there's no joking. (11)

Children. What can there possibly be about them to frighten us? They are characterized as ghosts. They are dangerous. They are, in the end, different and difference is unnerving. As a journalist Jagielski searches exhaustively to find out who these children are. But as a novelist he weaves a web of episodes, neither chronologically linear nor always related, to lead readers to realize there are two kinds of children in Uganda, both of which were deprived of childhood. On the one hand, there are those still free from the grip of the LRA, the night wanderers, the children who come into the towns at dusk to find sanctuary: “Their own parents, adults, had sent them on their way. Only like that, by driving the children out of their homes for the night, could they protect them from a deadly danger—from the guerrillas, who, like predatory animals set out at night to hunt down their victims (58).”

And, on the other, there are the children who have been abducted by the LRA and transformed into bloodthirsty, merciless murderers: “Ideal soldiers because after a time and the right training they regard war as an amusement, a game They don't feel fear of death—their own or anyone else's—because, by contrast to adults, they never think about it. They're not afraid because they've been through so little, they know so little, and have so little to lose” (55).

In *Night Wanderers*, Jagielski tells us all about these children and the quest for the Kurtz-like Kony. No novel and no conventional journalism could render his story any more real, true or troubling than literary journalism.

The Tiger in the Coal Mine

The Tiger: A True Story of Vengeance and Survival

by John Vaillant. Vintage Departures, 2011. Paperback, 329 pp., \$15.

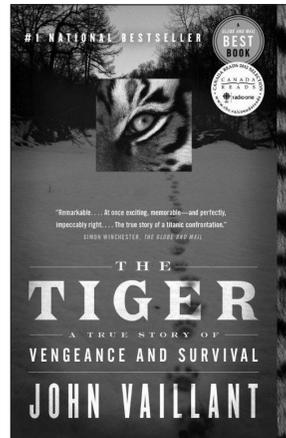
By Bill Reynolds, Ryerson University, Toronto, Canada

Writer John Vaillant met documentary filmmaker Sasha Snow at the Banff Mountain Festival, at Banff, Alberta, Canada, in October 2006. Snow was invited to show his latest film, *Conflict Tiger*, at the film festival there.¹ Never mind the actual documentary (which apparently wowed its audience), the topic itself was riveting: Siberian (or Amur) tigress in Far East forest has beef with certain humans and deliberately tracks, hunts, and kills them.

At that point in his career, Vaillant might have been forgiven for wondering whether he might ever stumble across another book idea as meaty and successful as the one he had about Grant Hadwin. A talented, fearless worker who surveyed roads through difficult terrain, Hadwin loved the forest so much that, after a kind of spiritual emergency, he turned against his own profession. As a protest, he chopped down the one and only “golden spruce,” known to the Haida tribe of the Pacific Northwest as the sacred tree K’iid K’yaas. Located on the Queen Charlotte Islands (Haida Gwaii) off the coast of British Columbia, south of Alaska, the centuries-old giant Sitka lacked 80 per cent of its chlorophyll, yet thrived and glowed radiantly whenever rare sunlight happened to fall upon it and highlight it among the remaining old-growth trees.

Vaillant first heard about the golden spruce while on travel assignment for *Outside* magazine in 2002,² kayaking around the southern archipelago of the Haida Gwaii. When he heard this strange story of the mythological golden tree that had been chain-sawed by Hadwin four years previous, he was captivated. The subsequent idea for a longer piece passed swiftly through Vaillant’s test filter for his nonfiction writing: “I am fascinated by the ongoing collision between human ambition and the natural world. How we manage our collective appetites and ambitions will determine the fate of our children, our species, and much of life on this planet. This, I feel, is the story of our time, and I try to address it in all my writing.”³

Inspired, the Vancouver-based writer (who grew up in Cambridge, Massachusetts but moved to Canada in 1999), read all the newspaper reports he could find about the “unhinged” Hadwin and his rants against “university trained professionals.” He decided there must be more to the story than what he could find. There were too many questions left unanswered. Why would a man who loved old-growth forest



kill the region's most spectacular specimen? Was the culprit still alive and, if so, where was he hiding? What were the implications of the tree's "murder" for the Haida, who were devastated by the loss?

For Vaillant, searching for the answers looked like a job for literary journalism. He turned a kayak expedition yarn into a 6,000-word Letter from British Columbia for the *New Yorker*, "The Golden Bough."⁴ Editors at W. W. Norton in the United States and Knopf in Canada agreed there must be more to it than that, and encouraged the writer to expand his story by about 74,000 words. The result, *The Golden Spruce* (2005),⁵ won numerous awards⁶ and catapulted Vaillant to the front rank of nonfiction storytellers.

At the Banff Mountain Festival, meeting Sasha Snow and watching *Conflict Tiger*, Vaillant's book-length story alarm went off again. Not only was Snow's film narrative another compelling example of humankind's most pressing and perhaps ultimate dilemma—how do we keep increasing our number and exploiting the natural world and not destroy everything around us—it was about a tiger. The last book was about a tree, for heaven's sake; this next one could be about the planet's largest cat, the most beautiful, dangerous creature imaginable.

After reading *The Golden Spruce*, Snow generously offered Vaillant whatever help he might need to get him started. Five years later, and a lot more help from a lot of different sources, including fixers and translators and climbing a mountain of reconstructed material to harness a (more or less) crime narrative, *The Tiger: A True Story of Vengeance and Survival*, proves that lightning can be bottled twice for this author. While *The Golden Spruce* was about the Pacific Northwest, about European expansionism and the clear-cutting of North America from east to west, and about literally not seeing the forest for the trees until it's almost entirely gone, *The Tiger* focuses on its Far East equivalent, in particular an area of rugged beauty called the Primorsky Krai (Maritime Territory), informally known as the Primorye, that easternmost part of Russia that thrusts like a tongue into China.

Vaillant's research covers different layers of the story. His preference seems to be for telling a story in John McPhee—process mode. That is, he initiates his book by advancing the narrative with a gripping reconstruction of the first man-eating episode, of beekeeper (and poacher) Vladimir Markov, before executing a breakaway into background and historical analysis. In order to understand the country's current relation to its remaining tiger population, Vaillant believes we need to know how tigers were thought of and dealt with in earlier centuries; how policy shifted once the Communists took over; how the Soviet Union's policy toward nature shifted (from the only good nature is nature eliminated, to the occasional white knight stepping up and saying, softly, so as to not arouse suspicion, let's try to create preserves for these creatures); to the chaos of the post-perestroika period (at least under communism people had work and a life; they didn't have to resort to poaching tigers for unscrupulous Chinese buyers flashing wads of cash); to Moscow's current indifference to the plight of the tiger. Here is a representative example of the kind of illumination Vaillant offers:

A century ago, many Russians lived this way [constantly scrounging for food in the bush] in the Far East, and most natives did, too. Then, there wasn't an alternative, but the expectations for what life can and should be have changed radically in the past twenty years. Under communism, there was room, albeit strictly controlled, for aspiration, and there was a State guarantee of basic security in terms of education, employment, housing, and food. But most of these assurances disintegrated after perestroika. Replacing them, along with crime, alcoholism, and despondency, were satellite dishes offering multiple channels that allowed you to see just how far behind you really were. Nowadays, in many parts of the world—not just Sobolonye—it is possible to starve while watching television.⁷

The hope is that when the reader is swung back into the story, the narrative has more of a backdrop and therefore is more powerful. And when Vaillant turns back to the story, he does not fool around. Lines such as “Waiting for a tiger to attack is like waiting for a bomb to go off”⁸ tend to jolt the reader into action mode. This toggling goes on for 306 pages, concluding with a showdown between tiger and tracker (Yuri Trush).

However, what Vaillant offers in addition is a little different from most process stories. He will not only veer into historical, or environmental, or biological, or botanical territory, he will also provide another aspect many other writers would not bother with (or dare): the mythological, the mystical, the not-real that is nevertheless believed by the locals. His exploration of Haida culture in *The Golden Spruce* was of this nature. His friend and fellow Vancouver literary journalist J. B. MacKinnon has said of him: “In John’s case he let those breakaways take him to some pretty wild places in cosmology and myth.”⁹ And he does so here in *The Tiger*, as he investigates not only the physical brawn of the tiger and its lethal capabilities, but also teases out the psychological hold the Amur has had on locals over the centuries. In the old days, a shaman might have helped a remote community to solve its issues with a certain predator.

The Tiger is great story, but one of the common problems with the process structure in general is that some people just want the narrative. These are the “don’t stop and bore us, get to the chorus” types. In other words, with its numerous breakaways the process structure almost by definition creates issues with pacing. When you must take your metaphorical backhoe and scoop large chunks of information into the text (about the country, about the people, thumbnail profiles of main characters, etc.), you run the risk of alienating the reader—and I think this does happen occasionally here (though, fortunately, not fatally). Then there are readers who might already be familiar with botany, say, and don’t need a science lesson on trees; or familiar with Russian history, say, and don’t need a refresher course. And even if, like me, it’s been a while since you’ve been inside the Russian mindset in literature and appreciate the effort Vaillant has put into his enterprise, some parts of some sections did become a bit of a slog.

Also, Vaillant is an excellent thinker and researcher, and a good writer, but perhaps his editor, whoever he or she was, could have had the good sense to eliminate some clunky phrasing for the final draft, stylistic tics that mar an otherwise fine book. For instance, couldn’t we have read “have had an impact on the collective psyche” rather than “have impacted the collective psyche”¹⁰?

Quibbles aside—and I do mean aside, as the concluding scene, the final confrontation with the tiger, is so terrific the reader is quite literally gobsmacked, and any and all petty carping is instantly forgotten—*The Tiger* is another of Vaillant’s excellent examples of modern literary journalism, or what Boynton in 2005 labeled “the new new journalism”: stories based on depth of research and near-total immersion.

One question that comes up with this type of story, at least for people who think about literary journalism and its taxonomy, is this: What separates *The Tiger* from various works of popular history by someone such as, say, Simon Winchester? That might take some mulling.

Also, having taught *The Golden Spruce* in literary journalism classes for several years now, upon reading Vaillant’s second book I wonder whether I should not switch it up and try *The Tiger*. As mentioned above, it is about, ahem, a tiger, not a tree. Tigers scare students; trees don’t. On the other hand, with *The Golden Spruce* I have a number of teaching tools at hand, including Vaillant’s *Outside* kayaking story, his query letter to the *New Yorker*, his *New Yorker* piece, and Holling Clancy Holling’s *Tree in the Trail*,¹¹ a children’s story about the evolution of the Santa Fe Trail over two centuries, as told through the life of a cottonwood tree, which served as a sort of model for Vaillant’s telling of K’iid K’yaas’s life story. That’s a lot of source material to help students appreciate Vaillant’s story structures and ideas and writing, so I’ll have to mull that one over, too.

As for Sasha Snow, his good turn in Vaillant’s favor back in 2006 has been reciprocated. Inspired by how Vaillant handled the book version of *Conflict Tiger*, Snow’s film, *Hadwin’s Judgement: The Making of an Environmental Terrorist*, based on Vaillant’s first book, is in production.

NOTES

1. Snow’s film won, among many other awards, the Grand Prize at that year’s Banff Film Festival.

2. <http://www.outsideonline.com/adventure-travel/north-america/canada/british-columbia/Paddling-in-a-Ghost-World.html> (Accessed August 25, 2012).

3. Vaillant’s MySpace description of the focus of his work.

4. “The Golden Bough,” *New Yorker*, November 4, 2002, 50-58.

5. The full title is *The Golden Spruce: A True Story of Myth, Madness and Greed* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2005). In Canada, *The Golden Spruce* was published under the same subtitle by Knopf Canada, 2005.

6. Vaillant’s book won the Governor General’s Award for nonfiction and the Writers’ Trust Non-Fiction Prize.

7. John Vaillant, *The Tiger*, 198.

8. *The Tiger*, 267.

9. Bill Reynolds, “The Edge of Canadian Literary Journalism,” in Reynolds and John S. Bak (eds.), *Literary Journalism across the Globe* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011), 73.

10. *The Tiger*, 29.

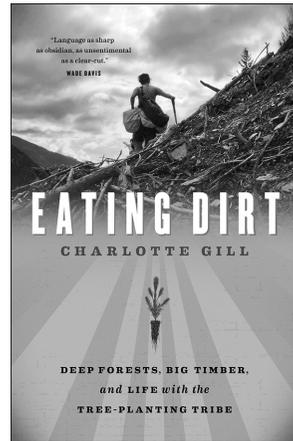
11. Holling C. Holling, *Tree in the Trail* (London: Sandpiper, Reprint Edition, 1990). Originally published 1942.

When Creative Nonfiction Falls Short of Literary Journalism

Eating Dirt: Deep Forests, Big Timber, and Life with the Tree-Planting Tribe
by Charlotte Gill. Vancouver: Greystone Books, 2011. Hardcover,
247 pp., \$29.95.

Reviewed by Linda Keefe, Madison, Wisconsin, U.S.A.

Charlotte Gill's new book, *Eating Dirt*, entices yet fails to meet expectations for one tree-loving literary journalism fan. But reading it brings to mind many International Association for Literary Journalism Studies conference discussions concerning genres—differences or similarities, between creative nonfiction and literary journalism. Gill's subtitle promises nuances of nature, industry, and life. And her twenty-year membership in "the tribe" planting conifers by hand eight months a year across coastal British Columbia qualifies her as a reporter immersed in her subject. Gill's previous success as a fiction writer bodes well for her literary style. The book is inviting and sports a short, active title floating across a strong monochromatic photo. The book also possesses accolades such as: British Columbia's National Award for Canadian Non-Fiction; Winner, 2012 Hubert Evans Non-Fiction Prize; and a blurb from the *Vancouver Sun* touting it as "a relief to read prose that's so steely-sharp." Chapter one, "The Last Place on Earth," begins in strong form:



We fall out of bed and into our rags, still crusted with the grime of yesterday. We're earth stained on our thighs and shoulders, and muddy bands circle our waists, like grunge rings on the sides of a bathtub. *Permadirt*, we call it. Disposable clothes, too dirty for the laundry.

The sun comes up with the strength of a dingy light bulb, dousing the landscape in shades of gray. The clouds are bruised and swollen. We stand in a gravel lot, a clearing hacked from the forest. Heavy logging machinery sits dormant all around, skidders and yarders like hulking metallic crabs. The weather sets in as it always does, as soon as we venture outdoors. Our raincoats are glossy with it. The air hisses. Already we feel the drips down the backs of our necks, the dribbles down the thighs of our pants. We're professional tree planters. It's February, and our wheels have barely begun to grind. (1)

Disappointingly, Gill then delivers the next two hundred pages, scene after scene, in similes and metaphors so abundant they too often become distractions. Multiple uses

of “like” or “as” or “similar to” on a single page are followed by additional uses on the next page. Her prose becomes a daunting read instead of a joy. Repeatedly, Gill is dropped off by her crew chief into vast spaces of stumps and tangles. She is continually exhausted and exhausting. Discovering another new wedge of mountain she is assigned to plant, Gill elaborates:

Here I can see the layers of the old forest floor in cross section. On the bottom there is bedrock, above that a horizon of gray-brown mineral dirt, and on top, like cake frosting, a layer of living earth, which comes in shades of cabernet, rust, and ocher, depending on what’s composting inside. Out of this topsoil hang dead roots, spilling like cords of a circuit box torn from a wall. I’ve got to climb up with my fresh load of trees. I find toeholds on outcroppings of broken rock. I grab fistfuls of roots to haul myself up, and I hope they hold, since the dirt is as loose and slippery as pastry flour. (72)

She introduces her tribesman (who are almost all men), but seldom reveals their personalities, intentions, or emotions. The scenes are filled with mossy, dirty, rainy discomfort. However, we never get to know or care about the characters slogging through them. Why do people come back to this bruising work year after year? What drives them to spend every February through September sweating, shoveling, stooping and setting the seedlings of planned, future forests? Gill offers the reader a possible but timid explanation:

Forests for the Future. Forests Forever, as the slogans and the T-shirts say. Not a salve or a fix for the planet, not exactly. We gave the trees some small purchase in the world, and they gave us the same in return. (230)

She interjects a bit of tribal humor in a quick piece of dialogue, a caustic matter-of-fact anthropological tease that may explain further:

Sean has more seniority than anyone, and he has an inexhaustible supply of jokes to prove it. How many tree planters does it take to screw in a light bulb? One. But you’ll find five bulbs in the socket. What do you call a tree planter without a girlfriend? Homeless. No one is offended. We’re unisex guys, the men of man-days. The work wears us down and lifts us up. Everyone together, equally. (4)

Convinced life is difficult on the slashed slopes, I want more. What do the planters feel or think about in this great vastness of mist-covered landscapes? Gill discloses scant information about her personal relationship with her boyfriend-planter, her other fellow planters or herself. And when she does, it is from a rhetorical distance despite her participatory role:

Some people prefer to plant trees with a partner—for the company, the shared snacks, and the subliminal comfort of knowing they won’t be caught alone with a bear or a sprained ankle. Some people say their minds have too much to gnaw on when they work in silence. I met a guy once who said he quit planting trees after two weeks for precisely this reason, the unbearable emptiness of the field. (83)

She continues with one, rare, self-revealing passage:

There was something alluring, addictive even, about the job. I liked the feel of loam between my fingers, loved the look of a freshly planted tree bristling up from tamped

soil. Planting trees was a whole, complete task. You could finish what you started in just a few seconds. You could sow a field in a day. It meant being outside, unprotected from the elements, but at least weather affected everyone equally. Best of all, in a cut block you could erase your old self. You could disappear almost completely. (61)

Failing to build empathy or explore character development, Gill does provide interesting historical, biological, and contextual information about the world's trees and forests. She chronicles wood's importance to the ancients and to us—the modern wood gluttons:

All over the world, every day of every week, trees are chipped and digested and emitted as paper and cardboard and every kind of tissue product. The pulping liquors are refined into concentrated tree juices for the making of scented oils and lacquers and acetones and turpentine and nail polish and nail polish remover. Tree extracts are poured into shampoo, shaving cream, toothpaste, and all kinds of cosmetics that lather when you rub them against your skin. Wood is spun out into gossamer layers of cellophane and rayon. It's converted to alcohols and plastics, acids and resins. Latex and rubber. Eucalyptus and palm. Tree extracts are squeezed into self-tanning cream and acne gel and anti-aging potions. They're stirred into snack foods like frozen pizzas and microwave popcorn and that most shelf-stable of snack foods, the Twinkie. Wood cellulose is even added as a cheap thickener to mashed potato flakes. Wood is ground down into powder and formed into bowling balls and sporting helmets. Not to mention explosives. With this wood flour and xylose—wood sugar—you could hypothetically bake a tree cake. The world eats up to 3.4 billion cubic meters of wood every year. If you converted this volume to utility poles, you could string telephone wire around the equator more than four thousand times. Half of this amount is used for firewood. (94-95)

Eating Dirt concludes at the completion of one year's planting cycle. The crew is back home; the story is over. Gill's new book may be acclaimed creative non-fiction. It also adds material to an ongoing debate about definitions of genre and a blurry line between creative nonfiction and literary journalism. It falls short of expectations for literary journalism because empathy with the characters or the author (or even the trees) is absent. Story arc, too, seems unimportant. Yet, in its defense, perhaps Gill's literary truth is present in the drudgery, repetition, and painful existence endured by the planters as they try to replenish the naked landscape wrought by an insatiable industrial hunger for timber. Describing the planters' homecoming in the final paragraph of the book, Gill does, indeed, capture my lethargy:

But after the initial burst of excitement, a wave of fatigue will creep over us. Later in the night we'll drop into beds like stones into water. When we wake up tomorrow we'll be different somehow, just a little bit. A change that yawns into the next day and the next. (244)

Inside a Lab-coat School's Labyrinth

White Coats: Three Journeys through an American Medical School

by Jacqueline Marino. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2012, cloth, 128 pp., \$28.95.

Reviewed by Lori Amber Roessner, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, U.S.A.

Stacked on top of junk mail, sundry bills, and a wedding invitation, *White Coats: Three Journeys through an American Medical School* was waiting on my dining room table, a space that hasn't seen a home-cooked meal in years, upon my return from an academic conference this summer. *Darn it*, I thought. *What have I signed up for this time?*

White Coats author Jacqueline Marino would likely refer to me as a gunner, as I have what some people refer to as the curse of conscientiousness. I call it go-getteritis. I stared at the book's cover, featuring three strategically posed medical students, and then I perused the description in the book jacket. "Is this the journalistic equivalent of *Grey's Anatomy*," I wondered aloud. "God, I hope not."

It's not that I didn't once love ABC's hit television drama, created by sitcom genius Shonda Rhimes. Quite the opposite. When it premiered, I was obsessed with the show—the dialogue, the sex, the scandal—but eventually the storylines grew tired and the show lacked any sense of realism.

The next morning, I decided to Google Marino before I plowed into the book. Under ordinary circumstances, I would wait to find out more about the author until after I've read a book that I'm reviewing. This time, however, I needed to know more about Marino before I could continue. I quickly stumbled upon her website. A few clicks later I breathed a sigh of relief. The last line of her "About" page said what I was hoping to hear: "I am a mom, an avid runner . . . a stockpiler of *New Yorker* magazines and a harsh critic of doctor dramas." Whew. I returned to the book with an open mind.

In April 2005, Marino, an associate editor at *Cleveland Magazine*, approached the higher-ups at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine about chronicling the daily lives and personal challenges of first-year students. Despite the risk that came with giving up all prior review, the dean of one of the nation's top medical schools granted Marino an all-access pass to follow a handful of incoming doctors-to-be during year one of a major curricular overhaul.

Marino's initial foray into narrative journalism became an intensive four-year immersion into medical education and literary reportage. The material she gathered from hundreds of hours of archival research, observations, and interviews appeared serially in the pages of *Cleveland Magazine* from August 2006 until August 2009.



Along the way, she won a number of awards, including a string of honors from the Cleveland Press Club and the Society of Professional Journalists.

The award-winning series, however, proved to be just the beginning of a bigger story. In *White Coats*, Marino offers readers gripping vignettes from the lives of three determined Case Western medical students. This difficult medical-school journey is seen through the lens of starkly dissimilar individuals: the penultimate Millennial, Millie Gentry; the insecure perfectionist, Michael Norton; and Marleny Franco, a second-generation Latina immigrant from an underprivileged background. All three characters share one thing in common, a healthy dose of self-doubt about their ability to conquer medical school. Along the path to becoming the healers they were born to be, they encounter the standard rites of passage: the white-coat ceremony; the cadaver dissections; the wards; the boards; the match ceremony; and, eventually, the culmination of medical school, the hooding at graduation.

(Spoiler alert ahead.) Along the way, all three students faced many obstacles, some of which were shared (constant apprehension, fatigue, time management issues, and health concerns), and some of which were their own (parenthood, ADHD, and depression). The two biggest challenges proved to be protecting their individuality and properly caring for themselves while navigating Case Western's challenging curriculum. All three were triumphant.

If the litmus test of literary reportage is its ability to provide a glimpse into another world, then Marino succeeds in this work of narrative journalism. For a period of four years, the *Cleveland Magazine* editor-turned-university professor immersed herself in the lives of three Case Western medical students. In addition to the countless hours spent with Case students and faculty for her original series, she added material gleaned from perusing piles of primary and secondary sources in Case archives. The end result is a gripping, yet hopelessly incomplete tale. Marino, of course, freely admits this fact in the author's note. "Only a full immersion," she contends, could provide a "complete history (ix)." To paraphrase the words of French Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser, a complete history is *always already* unrecoverable.

Marino and her full set of misgivings are on display from this point forward. Her openness, of course, is a welcome relief. She confesses to once being referred to as the "conscience" of the newsroom (1). She provides insight into her "fly-on-the-wall style of reporting (3)," her propensity to "observe the present (3)," and to avoid doing "anything that might change the future (3)." But, in the end, she acknowledges the type of circumstance—a student contemplating suicide—that would cause her to ignore these guidelines to alert the dean. In a refreshing manner, she also owns up to her own anxieties—a fear of failing to convey the nuance of her subjects, and missing part of the bigger picture because of her new duties as a professor.

By now you might be asking whether or not Marino's work qualifies as literary journalism. The answer is simple: yes, but of course. If one follows the cue of the British journal *Granta* and considers literary journalism to be "journalism marked by vivid description, a novelist's eye to form, and eyewitness reporting that reveals hidden truths about people and events that have shaped the world we know,"¹ then *White Coats* meets the criteria of literary journalism on all fronts. Marino provides

a vivid description of the grueling journey that medical students must encounter in the modern world of medicine. She does so through a series of vignettes culled from her eyewitness reporting about three aspiring physicians. *White Coats* also meets the criteria of literary journalism under the IALJS hallmark of “journalism as literature.” This standard, however, begs a determination of quality.

As Marino would likely tell you, the book falls short on several levels. She lacked the time, money, and resources to provide a more comprehensive account of the journey of a medical student à la Nova’s *The Making of a Doctor*. At times, too, some of her characters, most notably Norton, fall flat. It’s clear that she connected at a different level with Gentry and, to an extent, Franco. These flaws are only natural, and do not compromise Marino’s larger point—which also may be the great irony of medicine, and perhaps even life itself—that the people we depend on to take care of us often do not take care of themselves. They put our health above their own.

The ultimate test of any piece of literature or journalism is the negotiation of cultural truths. If that’s the test, then this book passes with flying colors and belongs on the bookshelf of every doctor, nurse, journalist, and scholar. It certainly made this gunner pause and reflect on the common set of struggles anyone in any human-service profession faces—the expectations, the pressures, the anxieties, and the struggle to balance personal needs with those you are trying to serve. In the end, Marino is right. We have to protect our unique selves in order to better take care of others.

NOTES

1. John C. Hartsock, “Literary Reportage: The ‘Other’ Literary Journalism,” in John S. Bak and Bill Reynolds, eds., *Literary Journalism across the Globe: Journalistic Traditions and Transnational Influence*, Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011, 24. See <www.amazon.co.uk/The-Granta-Book-Reportage-Classics/dp/1862078157> (Accessed October 24, 2012)

“This is My Story”: The Literary Journalism of Trauma

Rosemary Armao examines works of literary reportage or memoir by “insiders”—those who have experienced trauma firsthand, not primarily as reporters but as people whose lives have been caught up in terrifying events—including . . .

Chronicling Trauma: Journalists and Writers on Violence and Loss

by Doug Underwood, Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2011, cloth, 256 pp., \$50;

Trauma Journalism: On Deadline in Harm’s Way

by Mark H. Massé, New York: Continuum, 2011, paper, 248 pp., \$24.95;

“When They Come for Us”

by Sonali Samarasinghe Wickrematunge, *Nieman Reports*, Winter 2009 www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/article/101963/When-They-Come-for-Us.aspx (Accessed October 23, 2012);

“Reporting the Iraq War: Whose Truth Is Being Told?”

by Abdul Razzaq al-Saiedi, *Nieman Reports*, Winter 2009 <www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/article/101985/Reporting-the-Iraq-War-Whose-Truth-Is-Being-Told.aspx> (Accessed October 23, 2012);

Tell Them I Didn’t Cry: A Young Journalist’s Story of Joy, Loss, and Survival in Iraq

by Jackie Spinner, New York: Scribner, 2007, paper, 288 pp., \$18.99;

“One Violent Crime”

by Bruce Shapiro, *Nation*, April 3, 1995, 437, 445-452;

Zlata’s Diary: A Child’s Life in Sarajevo

by Zlata Filipović, translated with notes by Christina Pribichevich-Zorić, New York: Penguin Books, 1995, paper, 197 pp., \$12;

Sarajevo: A War Journal

by Zlatko Dizdarević, New York: Fromm International, 1993, cloth, 193 pp., \$19.95;

“Apocalypse in New Orleans”

by Brian Thevenot, *American Journalism Review*, October/November 2005, <www.ajr.org/Article.asp?id=3959> (Accessed October 23, 2012);

Curfewed Night: One Kashmiri Journalist’s Frontline Account of Life, Love, and War in His Homeland

by Basharat Peer, New York: Scribner, 2010, cloth, 240 pp., \$25;

The Bang Bang Club: Snapshots from a Hidden War

by Greg Marinovich and João Silva, New York: Basic Books, 2000, cloth, 320 pp., \$26;

A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier

by Ishmael Beah, New York: Sarah Crichton Books, 2007, cloth, 240 pp., \$22;

My War Gone By, I Miss It So

by Anthony Lloyd, Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1999, cloth, 336 pp., \$25;

Logavina Street: Life and Death in a Sarajevo Neighborhood

By Barbara Demick, New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2012, paper, 272 pp., \$16.

Reviewed by Rosemary Armao, University at Albany, State University of New York (USA)

Trauma changes those who witness it and inspires a distinctive journalism that reads more like literature than reporting. The writing is rife with pathos, descriptive scenes, and memorable, fully limned characters. A spate of scholarly articles, at least two book-length examinations in the past year alone, as well as new training programs being offered to reporters, have spotlighted the role of trauma in inspiring both literary journalism and fiction. Accordingly, this essay will examine works of literary reportage or memoir by “insiders”—those who have experienced trauma firsthand, not primarily as reporters but as people whose lives have been caught up in terrifying events.

In 2011, Doug Underwood in *Chronicling Trauma: Journalists and Writers on Violence and Loss*¹ and Mark H. Massé in *Trauma Journalism: On Deadline in Harm's Way*² both looked at the biographies and writing samples of current and historical writers to discover that journalists assigned to wars, crimes, and disasters are often deeply changed by these events. When, as frequently happens, they then move on from literary reporting to writing short stories and novels, “fiction built on a journalistic foundation,” as Underwood calls it, this new work reflects their altered attitudes and insights.

Such acuity can come at a heavy price. Much of the scholarship and the newsroom training on coping with trauma, prompted by the groundbreaking Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma based at Columbia University, emphasizes the need to identify, support, and treat journalists who, after assignments involving barbarity and terror, frequently exhibit signs of PTSD, depression, and substance abuse. Many reviewers of the two 2011 trauma journalism books noted—as did BBC correspondent David Loyn looking at Massé's book—that the basic human frailty of war-zone journalists has mostly been overlooked. In his Amazon Editorial Review he wrote: “Perhaps in the future, managing the risks to those who report violence will be routine in newsrooms. This book is a signpost towards that promised land.”³

Despite such recent heightened awareness and study, one subgenre of literary nonfiction about trauma seems to have been overlooked: the reportage, journals, and memoirs produced by real insiders to these traumatic events—those who are not just eyewitnesses, but actual participants who have been directly thrust into the midst of cataclysm. Researchers who have scoured the psychology and the output of those journalists who parachute into conflicts and then get caught up in what they see

and report on, have neglected those chroniclers who report on catastrophe close-up from within their own communities. These true participant observers—citizens, even children; soldiers; and local journalists—are among the writers whose work will be considered here. These writers are not just empathetic to suffering victims; they are themselves victims. Their own lives and families are being interrupted. They themselves have lost loved ones and property, seen their homelands ripped apart, and had to abandon hopeful plans for the future. They cannot “go home” to someplace safe for a break from the horrors they are covering.

Sri Lankan investigative reporter Sonali Samarasinghe Wickrematunge, whose journalist husband was killed in 2007 during the government’s fight to subdue Tamil Tiger separatists, wrote in *Nieman Reports* about what happens when you live a story, not just report on it:

When it strikes you personally, when you are afraid to sleep in your own bed, when thugs on motorcycles kill your husband then come back for you, when you are compelled to leave your home and family, your work, your country, and your life as you knew it, that’s when you realize you cannot give up. You have to do more, you have to speak louder, write bolder. And now, it’s personal.

I’m a little wounded but I’m not slain;

I will lay me down for to bleed awhile,

Then I’ll rise and fight with you again.

But to rise and fight again, we have to face the trauma of personal responsibility and the guilt that we live while our comrades lay dead. Guilt that we are free while 300,000 men, women and children of the war are interned still in Sri Lankan concentration camps surrounded by barbed wire, not knowing what tomorrow holds.

We have to face emotions we were taught to dismiss . . .⁴

In another piece in that same *Nieman Reports* issue, Iraqi Abdul Razzaq al-Saiedi talked about the four years he spent working for the *New York Times* during the Iraq war:

During my work the *Times* when we’d go out to a story, I used to tell the American correspondent, “You know what, you’re writing my story. I’m writing my story. When we cover a car bomb, it’s my neighborhood.” For an American correspondent, it’s a story. It’s a good story or bad story, it depends on how big the story. Some of the time we said, “We got a report. There’s a car bomb. Three were killed, 10 injured. This is not story. We will not cover it.” But we get another report, someone called and said, “There’s a huge car bomb. One hundred were killed and 300 injured.” That’s the story. That’s the good story. We will write about it. It will be front page.

But it’s my story because this bomb, this car went off in my neighborhood. My friends were killed in that accident . . . It’s really very difficult to write about yourself, your neighborhood, your family, and your friends in a story because at the end of the day it’s a story, it’s a business, it’s a commercial thing. As a journalist, this is our profession. We are selling stories. But at the end of the day also someone

should write a story about our story. And someone should contribute it to telling the truth.⁵

Several reasons most likely account for why work by these insiders to trauma has been overlooked. Foremost is that they mostly write in their own language and not English, the tongue of most literary journalism scholars. Translations frequently come years after publication, if at all. Second, until very recently the American and European press dismissed the work of foreign journalists as inferior and unreliable. Not until recent economic problems closed foreign bureaus and reshaped foreign correspondence did Western news outlets begin to rely on native reporters. Before then, native reporters were typically employed as freelancers or fixers who helped Western correspondents find their way around, deal with local customs, conduct interviews with non-English speakers, and provide background and context. Fixers were not given bylines, credit as contributors, or much attention at all until the Iraq War, when it became so deadly for American journalists to leave their bunkers and report that they leaned more heavily than ever on local journalists, who were less likely to be spotted and targeted as Westerners. In her 2006 book, *Tell Them I Didn't Cry*,⁶ *Washington Post* war correspondent Jackie Spinner revealed the reliance of top U.S. reporters on the unknown and unsung Iraqis working in their bureau. They conducted interviews, came up with questions, and wrote or edited stories, as she described the bureau's typical operation. Over the past decade of globalization, an unprecedented transfer of knowledge from Western journalists to colleagues in emerging democracies through government-funded media development programs has figured in raising the capacity of foreign journalists, and promulgated Western reporting models and story forms abroad. In other words, the work of foreign journalists is more likely now than ever to hold to Western standards, and thus to be trusted and given attention. Another reason the work of insiders has been overlooked is suspected bias; that is, the writing of people so close to the trouble was thought to be naturally unreliable.

The Dart Center has done much to change that kind of thinking, starting with the writings of founder Bruce Shapiro, an editor for the *Nation* magazine. In 1994, he and friends in a New Haven, Connecticut coffee bar were randomly assaulted by a distressed assailant with a hunting knife. The attacker seriously wounded seven people, including Shapiro, whose diaphragm, spleen, and hand were cut. In his new persona as victim, Shapiro wrote an account, "One Violent Crime," for the *Nation*.⁷ He described how his point of view about crime no longer matched anything he was hearing from politicians, other journalists, or even sympathetic friends. He began to see how the press hounded and hurt the wounded in pursuit of a hot story. He saw his friends starting to blame him by wondering what he should have done to stop the attack, as if his being victimized made them feel more exposed. And politicians saw the opportunity to pin on him a label—victim—an exploitable brand with which they could drum up support for crime-control laws he thought were ineffective and silly. He added:

What psychologists call post-traumatic stress disorder is, among other things, a profoundly political state in which the world has gone wrong, in which you feel isolated

from the broader community by the inarticulable extremity of experience. I have spent a lot of time in the past few months thinking about what the world must look like to those who have survived repeated violent attacks, whether children battered in their homes or prisoners beaten or tortured behind bars; as well as those, like rape victims, whose assaults are rarely granted public ratification.⁸

These victims or insiders are worth listening to. Shapiro, for example, saw in the coffee bar attack evidence of how powerful communication is. He and his friends helped each other escape. People on the street touched and soothed. And even his assailant pulled back, Shapiro notes, when he looked him in the eye and pleaded, "Please don't."⁹

That voice of the insider, so different from that of the mere observer, can come through in diaries and journals, classically illustrated by Anne Frank's *The Diary of a Young Girl*. In a more recent conflict, another young girl, eleven-year-old Zlata Filipović from Sarajevo, began writing a diary in 1992 during the Bosnian War. She nicknamed her diary "Mimmy" in open imitation of Frank's "Kitty," and began keeping track of a city under siege from her vantage point.

On May 2, 1992, Filipović wrote about a story that journalists also were following, the torching of the magnificent Austro-Hungarian post office in Sarajevo. Filipović wrote:

The shooting started around noon. Mommy and I moved into the hall. Daddy was in his office, under our apartment, at the time. We told him on the intercom to run quickly to the downstairs lobby where we'd meet him. We brought Ciko [her canary] with us. The gunfire was getting worse, and we couldn't get over the wall to the Bobars', so we ran down to our own cellar.

The cellar is ugly, dark, smelly. Mommy, who's terrified of mice, had two fears to cope with. The three of us were in the same corner as the other day. We listened to the pounding shells, the shooting, the thundering noise overhead. We even heard planes. At one moment I realized that this awful cellar was the only place that could save our lives. Suddenly it started to look almost warm and nice . . .¹⁰

Later that night, returning to their apartment, she reported:

Almost every window in our street was broken. Ours were all right, thank God. I saw the post office in flames. A terrible sight . . . Daddy took a few photos of the post office being devoured by the flames. He said they wouldn't come out because I had been fiddling with something on the camera. I was sorry. The whole apartment smelled of the burning fire. God, and I used to pass by there every day. It had just been done up. It was huge and beautiful, and now it was being swallowed up by the flames. This has been the worst, most awful day in my eleven-year-old life. I hope it will be the only one . . .¹¹

Filipović was touted by her teachers as the Anne Frank of the Bosnian war. She was discovered by the international journalists who swarmed Sarajevo, competing to tell the world about authentic experiences of Europeans coping with the longest siege in modern times. The child's later entries are inordinately consumed with attention to herself rather than to her city, which, while understandable, decreases the appeal of

the eventual book version, *Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo*. Nevertheless, the account offers a personal, eyewitness voice whose authenticity is undeniable.

Newspaper editor Zlatko Dizdarević didn't keep a diary, but in 1992 and 1993 he published a column in the newspaper *Oslobojenje* (Freedom) filled with his impressions of what was happening to his Sarajevo. Tellingly, the newspaper that carried the column defiantly put out an edition every day of the war, cutting down to a single page when more paper could not be secured. A Muslim married to a Serbian and a lifelong resident of a place known for multiculturalism, Dizdarević wrote of bombardment and division, and resistance and bravery under duress. During these years a global army of journalists reported the same topics. Some focused on individuals, some of neighborhoods, all attempting to bring home the bleakness, the boredom, and sheer claustrophobia of hiding in a city under intermittent bombardment. But Dizdarević's columns were clearly not about other people. Later re-published as *Sarajevo: A War Journal*, they included intimate anecdotes, jokes, and scenes few outsiders ever captured. He never dropped the journalistic façade of objectivity, but his pieces pulsed with feelings: pride, anguish, anger, hope, and despair.

A fluent English speaker, Dizdarević's writing, even in translation, is moving. For example, in a piece called "*The Long Goodbye*," he wrote:

That's what this war is, nothing, but a long goodbye. You say goodbye to your illusions and your past, your dreams, your habits, hopes and projects, all things great and small and all the places inseparable from days gone by. You even say goodbye to the simple things that make up a life. But above all, you take your leave from many, many people, who are divided into two entirely separate camps, connected only by the dread that will join them forever: the war.¹²

In a piece about altered lives, he wrote:

We no longer switch the light on in our apartment, no longer use our dinner dishes, the piles of plastic water buckets in the hallways and under our beds (if we still have a bed) no longer bother us. We've forgotten what it was like to be irritated by a television commercial. We don't get angry at the mailman for coming late, because there no longer is a mailman. We would give anything in the world just to get a bill, no matter how big or how small, because it would mean that someone believes we're still alive and capable of paying.¹³

Writing about the ineffectual United Nations troops in the city, the editor said:

In a few months, the Blue Helmets, once the darlings of Sarajevo, have become targets of resentment and scorn. They have also come to symbolize international hypocrisy and political dirty dealing. In the beginning, people would approach those boys in the street and shake their hands. They were welcomed with applause in the cafes, people treated them with sympathy, even love. Now those feelings have turned, in some cases, one hundred eighty degrees.¹⁴

Another writer attempting a literary journalism narrative about the Bosnian War is Aida Cherkez. Nearly twenty years after the end of the conflict, her friends still push her to write a book about the war—if only to spread the gripping stories only they have heard.¹⁵ Cherkez served in the army defending Sarajevo. Then, after learn-

ing English, she turned to war reporting for the Associated Press (she remains AP's Bosnian bureau chief). Her war stories are far removed from the objective, only-the-straight-facts reporting the wire service normally wants. She tells about how the Army didn't really know what to do with women soldiers at the start of the war—so she spends days mixing green chalk with Nivea lotion to make camouflage paint. She tells about how, after one particular telephone argument, she never fights with her mother. Cherkez had shipped her infant son and her mother to safety in Germany. "Remember," her mother tells her during the call, "I took your child out of the war zone. I left mine there." And then there is the story she calls "The Tripod Cow," about the hotel owner who manages to acquire a cow in the middle of the siege, when Sarajevo is without electricity or ice. He wants a surgeon to amputate one of the animal's legs so he can serve his guests dinner and save the rest of the meat.

Another example of this type of intimate news coverage comes from the Haiti News Project, which produced a blog that relayed just such stories from journalists who covered the 7.0 earthquake that shook apart their hometown of Port-au-Prince in 2010, killing tens of thousands. Several U.S. press associations set up the project as a way to help Haitian colleagues grappling with shock, grief, and loss of resources. It solicited equipment and funds to restore destroyed news offices and told stories of reporters such as Simon Wendy, a twenty-two-year-old cultural affairs reporter for *Le Nouvellist*. He stumbled from his shaking newsroom to find his city dissolved to rubble and dead bodies.¹⁶ After a frantic search, he located his girlfriend, who was pinned by the knees but otherwise unhurt in a collapsed building at her university. Convinced she would soon be freed, rescue workers could neither move enough debris nor cut her legs to release her. Wendy tried but could not find the heavy machinery to dig her out. Five days after the quake, he was still optimistic. But the woman with whom he had planned to spend his life succumbed. Wendy, with help from the Haiti News Project, went back to his newspaper to continue covering news, albeit with a new point of view—that of victim.

Similarly, Brian Thevenot, a New Orleans newspaperman who spent time embedded with Louisiana National Guardsmen on combat patrols in Iraq, found covering Hurricane Katrina an entirely different matter. For a week after the 2005 storm and flood, he wrote in "Apocalypse in New Orleans," published in *American Journalism Review* later that year, that colleagues had kept asking him to compare covering a war with the storm:

The similarities were striking: days that bled one into another, the constant whirr of helicopters, death, the heavy weight of history.

But a week in post-Katrina New Orleans felt like a month in Iraq. Iraq was Iraq. This was home, suddenly plunged into a scene out of *Hotel Rwanda*. We've all run out of adequate descriptors, words we couldn't believe appeared on our screens or notepads even as we wrote them: Armageddon, Bedlam, Chaos, Apocalypse, Hell.¹⁷

The ex-war correspondent makes a confession. While reporting a story about a Katrina refugee who leads a group of residents in singing gospel songs—they, like her, have just lost everything in the flood—Thevenot puts down his notebook and bursts

into tears. The singer opens her arms and he walks into them for a hug. No longer victim and observer, they are victims together.

In his haunting 2010 book, *Curfewed Night: One Kashmiri Journalist's Frontline Account of Life, Love, and War in his Homeland*, Basharat Peer details the descent of his homeland—caught between India and Pakistan—into violence and war. Peer has both a reporter's skill at noting detail and a poet's ability to compress emotion. Two paragraphs, one from the elegant opening where Peer recalls life before the trouble, the other from the epilogue, are enough to capture his insider's involvement and connection to the trauma he is depicting.

From his beginning chapter:

I would stand on the steps and watch the tourist buses passing by. The multicolored buses carried visitors from distant cities like Bombay, Calcutta and Delhi; and also many *angrez*—the word for the British and our only word for Westerners. The *angrez* were interesting; some had very long hair and some shaved their heads. They rode big motorbikes and times were half naked. We waved at them; they waved back. I had asked a neighbor who worked in a hotel, "Why do the *angrez* travel and we do not?"

"Because they are *angrez* and we are not," he had said. But I worked it out. They had to travel to see Kashmir.¹⁸

And from the epilogue:

Both Kashmir and I had changed. The heady rebellious Kashmir I had left as a teenager was now a land of brutalized, exhausted, and uncertain people. I was now in my late twenties, already old. The conflict might leave the streets, but it will not leave the soul.¹⁹

Four young, white South African photographers, who covered their nation's brutal struggle against Apartheid, collaborated on *The Bang Bang Club*. Photojournalists Greg Marinovich and João Silva shared the writing, blending their four stories into one. As the title, their nickname for themselves, indicates, it is partly an adventure book peopled with adrenalized, crazed photojournalists willing to do anything for a great shot. It is also, like other books and articles examined here, a chronicle of horror and an attempt to understand it by those who know it best. Dart Center research indicates that photographers are even more subject to psychological damage from exposure to trauma than reporters, who at least therapeutically write out their experiences daily. At one point, Marinovich asks his black house cleaner what she thinks about zombies, a frequent topic in the media of Africa where belief in shamans and spirits is widespread:

When I casually interrupted her, showed her the article and rather flippantly asked if she thought zombies actually existed, she finished a pair of trousers before stating matter-of-factly that her granddaughter Mimi was a zombie. I already knew that 13-year-old Mimi had been shot to death in her mother's backyard shack on 13 August 1991—more than a year previously—but I was taken aback to hear that Joyce believe she was a zombie, a thrall to a shebeen queen . . .

Over time, she told me the full details of the story, and I gradually came to understand the notion of zombies as a way in which people deal with trauma. Joyce had opened my eyes as no newspaper article ever had and I discovered an entire undercurrent to the violence, where ancient beliefs that I had thought were separate from the modern nature of the political struggle were in fact woven into almost every aspect of it.²⁰

The cleaning lady's belief holds even after the whites track down the hideous way the girl died and take Joyce to the morgue to identify and claim her granddaughter's body. Superstitions and dreams convince her that despite the body, Mimi could still come back as a zombie. The photographers are angered by the money and time she wastes on spells and sorcery to accomplish this until they realize that "everyone has their own way of dealing with trauma. Joyce's belief that Mimi was not really dead was not so different from [one's] own belief that God would spare [one's] mother from cancer."²¹

The ultimate insiders may be the soldiers or combatants, who write what they know of trauma. *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier* is the 2007 story of Ishmael Beah of Sierra Leone. His childhood ended at twelve, when he fled a rebel attack on his home. Over the next four years, as a recruit of the government army, he stayed high on drugs, killed, and witnessed horrible cruelty. By the time he was liberated, he hated the sound of adult voices telling him what to do. He tells his story without excuse and with convincing detail in plain language:

When we got to the back of the line, there were four men lying on the ground, their uniforms soaked with blood. One of them lay on his stomach, and his eyes were wide open and still; his insides were spilling onto the ground. I turned away, and my eyes caught the smashed head of another man. Something inside his brain was still pulsating and he was breathing. I felt nauseated. Everything began to spin around me. One of the soldiers was looking at me, chewing something and smiling. He took a drink from his water bottle and threw the remaining water at my face.

"You will get used to it, everybody does eventually," he said.²²

Anthony Lloyd is a British journalist now, but in 1993, when he moved to Bosnia, the setting for his 1999 book, *My War Gone By, I Miss It So*, he was an ex-British Army platoon commander. His book has been accurately described as powerful, graphic, painful, and elegantly written. It is, like Beah's, an unstinting look at what war really is:

The corpse seemed to loll up almost of its own accord, a black African with the side plate of his skull missing. The head tilted gently over the edge of shattered glass, there was a slow squelch and the man's brain fell intact onto the road like a shelled egg. As the crowd went quiet for an appalled few seconds a kitten ran out of nowhere and seized the slippery lump of grey. There was a kind of collective groan from everyone there, and the kitten was kicked away by the HVO.

"Man, the guy sure cam a long way to end up as Kit-e-Kat," Corrine remarked as we drove off, giggling horribly at the awfulness of what we had seen. Emotions are so contorted in war. There are labels which brand sentiments according to shade rather than detail, words like "afraid," "revolted," "shocked." Most of the time you do not

know how you feel in situations, there is no single word to describe the swirling kaleidoscope, so you come out of it and try to cast whatever feelings you had in the right bin—in this case the one marked “horrible”—where they stay clattering and jabbering like lunatics in secure units, imprisoned until the night’s darkness paroles them into your dreams.²³

Bosnia, Sri Lanka, South Africa. As the American Red Cross says in its current ads: “Disasters happen every day, all over the world.” Yet, regardless of how exotic the locale or obscure the root causes, the writing of insiders to trauma shares characteristics with literary journalism in general. These same characteristics distinguish these writers’ work from that of conventional journalists and other outsiders.

The first of these, evident in nearly every example above, is the expression of powerful emotion. Even those insiders who are journalists do not write about the woes of their homeland dispassionately. Their emotion may be sadness or anger but it is raw. These accounts have a clear point of view, and there is little attempt at playing fair to all sides. They root for the home team. These writers are connected to their subjects. As former *Washington Post* Spinner says, war correspondents are detached:

It’s personal but we’re detached from the larger picture. I mean, I can walk through the wreckage of a car bomb and see the body parts spread before me, and I’m touched by it because I’m human and because it’s dangerous and it makes me sad. But I’d think there would be a much bigger impact if it were happening to my country, my community, much in the way that people were affected by 9/11.²⁴

Second, insider accounts include an arc of time that contrasts the horrific present with a usually idyllic past. Beah and Peer, writing on different continents, both conjure up memories of their grandfathers, complete with dialogue, as they mourn the loss of peace and security. Cherkez tells stories about a very different Sarajevo, where Muslim and Serb children combine efforts to play hooky and pull pranks at the mosque. The time arc also swings further into the future for insiders. Their writing contemplates what will happen next, when the violence eventually ends, can anything like normal life be hoped for? The outsiders stick as exclusively as possible to the newsworthy present.

Related to this, the insiders generally provide better context to the story they tell. The impartial observer accounts bring in only as much background information as necessary to grasp what is going on now. But the insiders find much more about their subject fascinating. For this reason they write stories, not articles, long stories that frequently turn into book-length literary journalism or into Underwood’s journalistic fiction.

Insider accounts are full of such literary devices as dramatization, dialogue, scene-setting, and flashbacks (and other manipulations of time). In addition, they are imbued with a strong sense of place, evoked through sensory landmarks. Specific, vivid sensory description—strong smells, sounds, colors, textures, and tastes—are common. Insiders don’t just tell readers about their beloved but beleaguered home, they illuminate it.

Also, the insider accounts are filled with minute details that bring writing to life, details news reporting frequently has no room for. Examples of this range from Filipović’s mother’s fear of mice to the fact that the zombie conversation with the Bang Bang Club’s cleaning lady begins as she works over a pair of pants.

Insiders and foreign correspondents can be differentiated another way. Both may strive for the authenticity and story-telling power of what we call literary journalism, but insiders need resort to none of the devices their counterparts must. Barbara Demick of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, for example, laboriously befriended the residents of one street in Sarajevo in order to write insider-like accounts of the siege. This involved hours of sourcing, not to mention learning a new language. Her accounts, along with a 2011 update of the neighbors, have just been published as a book, *Logovina Street*.

Insiders are already immersed in the environment they are reporting about. They know—they may even be related to—the ordinary people the correspondent must hunt down, the sources who can evoke the realities of war or desperation. They are free to select from a wealth of small details that communicate evocatively, without rhetoric or wind, about weighty issues. It is limiting to use only interviews or visits—the usual tools of correspondents—to capture details such as these: What a filled water jug feels like by the time you’ve lugged it up eight flights in a building where elevators can no longer run; or the buzz of a house in the middle of the night, when the power suddenly comes on and all at once the television, the washing machine, and the vacuum cleaner are running. Early in his ordeal, Beah, the Sierre Leone boy, is being undressed by his captors and some rap tapes fall out of his pocket. Group and song titles, he writes, include Naughty by Nature and LL Cool J’s “I Need to Love.” The boy mimes the song for the war chief, and includes some of its lyrics in his account. It’s a small detail, but he has summed up the controversy and tragedy of boy soldiers in an unforgettable way.

Intimacy with the material is what makes the work of insider observers so moving and intense, sometimes to the point that it is difficult to read. The flip side, of course, is that this way of feeling the story is one reason why these writers are more likely to suffer and why they are most likely to need the kind of coping skills the Dart Center teaches. Susannah Nesmith of the *Miami Herald*, who has covered violence in Colombia and Venezuela and Iraq as well as hurricanes and earthquakes in Florida and Haiti, wrote:

The local journalists are often in much more danger,” says “They have families that might be targeted. And they often don’t have a safe ‘home’ to flee to if need be. I worked with a local journalist in Iraq who had to leave Fallujah, and that was very traumatic for him. I never had to flee a country because I was in personal danger, but just knowing that I could if I had to, and that there was a safe home for me to go to, I think made my experience easier than theirs.²⁵

Slovenian journalist Ervin Hladnik Milharčič (born 1954), interviewed by *World Literature Today* for its March-April 2012 edition, described his career this way:

I became an accidental war reporter. I didn’t go to war; the war came to me. It happened in places where I vacationed as a child and worked as a reporter covering boring events of ordinary life, in places like Kosovo or Sarajevo, long before they became objects of international interest. The country fell apart, and I became a foreign correspondent in a country that used to be my own. I don’t really know whether this has anything to do with New Journalism²⁶

It does.

NOTES

1. Linda Kay, "Mom and Dad, Suffering and Literary Journalism," review of *Chronicling Trauma: Journalists and Writers on Violence and Loss* by Doug Underwood, *Literary Journalism Studies*, Spring 2012, 137-139.

2. Journalists setting out for conflict or disaster zones may find Massé's book more interesting than may literary journalism scholars. His focus is overwhelmingly American, and he gives nuts-and-bolts information about trauma training and treatment, as well as reforming newsrooms to make them sensitive to the danger for reporters put under stress. He profiles many frontline reporters and disaster situations from Katrina to Columbine, but from the point of view of reporter motivation, techniques, and the effect of such work on reporters' physical and psychological health.

3. David Loyn, <www.amazon.com/Trauma-Journalism-Deadline-Harms-Way/dp/1441184635/ref=sr_1_3?ie=UTF8&qid=1350940391&sr=8-3&keywords=mark+masse> (Accessed October 22, 2012).

4. Sonali Samarasinghe Wickrematunge, "When They Come for Us," *Nieman Reports*, Winter 2009 <www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/article/101963/When-They-Come-for-Us.aspx> (Accessed October 15, 2012).

5. Abdul Razzaq al-Saiedi, panelist, "Reporting the Iraq War: Whose Truth Is Being Told?" *Nieman Reports*, Winter 2009 <nieman.harvard.edu/reports/article/101985/Reporting-the-Iraq-War-Whose-Truth-Is-Being-Told.aspx> (Accessed October 15, 2012).

6. Jackie Spinner, *Tell Them I Didn't Cry: A Young Journalist's Story of Joy, Loss, and Survival in Iraq*, New York: Scribner, 2007.

7. Bruce Shapiro, "One Violent Crime," *Nation*, April 3, 1995, 437, 445-452.

8. Shapiro, 451.

9. Personal interview by author, New York, May 2012.

10. Zlata Filipović, *Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo*, 41.

11. Filipović, 43.

12. Zlatko Dizdarević, *Sarajevo: A War Journal*, 61.

13. Dizdarević, 102.

14. Dizdarević, 48.

15. Personal interviews by author, Sarajevo, June/July, 2012; see: <www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/article/100408/Courage-Emerges-From-the-Work-Journalists-Do.aspx> and <http://blog.timesunion.com/armao/a-journalist-war-stories/723/>>

16. "Love and Loss among the Ruins in Haiti," Haiti News Project, July 26, 2010, <haitinewsproject.wordpress.com> (Accessed October 17, 2012).

17. Brian Thevenot, "Apocalypse in New Orleans," *American Journalism Review*, October/November 2005 <ajr.org/article.asp?id=3959> (Accessed October 15, 2012).

18. Basharat Peer, *Curfewed Night: One Kashmiri Journalist's Frontline Account of Life, Love, and War in His Homeland*, 5.

19. Peer, 217.

20. Greg Marinovich and João Silva, *The Bang Bang Club: Snapshots from a Hidden War*, 85.

21. Marinovich and Silva, 98.

22. Ishmael Beah, *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier*, 100.

23. Anthony Lloyd, *My War Gone By, I Miss It So*, 96-97.

24. Email interview by author, September 16, 2012.

25. Email interview by author, September 17, 2012.

26. Leonora Flis, "Impartiality Has Nothing to Do with Neutrality: A Conversation with Ervin Hladnick Hilharčić," *World Literature Today*, March/April 2012, 40.