



Faculty of Arts
& Social Sciences

School of the Arts and Media

MDIA5009

Literary and Narrative Journalism

Session 2, 2014

Staff contact information

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School of the Arts and Media (SAM) Office

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Class time and location

Monday 4 - 6pm, Matthews Building Room 312

Attendance requirements

- A student is expected to attend all class contact hours.
- A student who attends less than 80% of class contact hours without justification may be awarded a final grade of UF (Unsatisfactory Fail).
- A student who arrives more than 15 minutes late may be penalised for non-attendance.
- If a student experiences illness, misadventure or other occurrence that makes absence from a class/activity unavoidable, they should seek permission from the Course Authority. The application should be accompanied by an original or certified copy of a medical certificate or other form of appropriate evidence.
- A Course Authority may excuse a student from classes for up to one month. A student seeking approval to be absent for more than one month must apply in writing to the Dean.
- A student who has submitted the appropriate documentation but attends less than 66% of the classes/activities will be asked by the Course Authority to apply to discontinue the course without failure.
- For more information about the FASS attendance protocols, see the SAM policies and guidelines webpage:
<https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/>

Essential Information For FASS/SAM Students

For essential student information relating to: *attendance requirements; requests for extension; review of marks; occupational health and safety; examination procedures; special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure; student equity and disability; and other essential matters, see the SAM Policies and Guidelines webpage:*
<https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/>

Summary of the course and aims

This subject will give students the opportunity to plan and execute a strong, publishable work of narrative journalism. This course centres on long-form narrative magazine writing with an emphasis on the writer doing in-depth research on a topic, including the possibility of immersing themselves in the situation she or he is writing about. The subject will also touch on how to develop a book project. Students will read and discuss ideas about creative, non-fiction writing, plus provocative pieces of literary journalism from the past few decades, while also researching and writing a 4,000-word article of their own. Students will study and practise the art of narrative journalism: the controlled delivery and interplay of character, scene, plot, perspective, dialogue and description; examining the craft's practicalities, including selecting topics and locations, staying on target, keeping notes and records, using photography, targeting publications or publishers, and writing magazine pitches and book proposals.

Students are expected to have already written a series of competent pieces of journalism or non-fiction writing. Entry to this course will be available subject to the discretion of the Academic Co-ordinator of the MA in Journalism and Communication based on the student's prior grades in the Master of Journalism and Communication or on demonstrated capacity, if this is not possible.

Student learning outcomes

On successful completion of this subject, students will be able to:

- Employ critical thinking when reading long-form narrative journalism
- Research and plan a work of long-form narrative journalism
- Write a strong pitch to editors and publishers with the aim of selling their work
- Demonstrate an understanding of technical and conceptual aspects of creative non-fiction writing
- Conduct interviews and understand the ethical issues involved in obtaining sources and using information
- Write a compelling piece of long-form literary or narrative journalism

Graduate attributes

In this course successful students will develop a range of graduate attributes. Successful students will be:

- Understanding of their discipline in its context
- Rigorous in their analysis, critique and reflection
- Able to apply their knowledge and skills to solving problems
- Capable of effective communication
- Capable of independent, self-directed practice

Teaching strategies

This course will be taught face to face using lectures, workshops, and problem solving exercises. All will have a strong emphasis on student participation and on reflection about issues posed by the lecturer and raised by student experiences in the field.

Assessment

In order to pass this subject you must make a serious attempt at all assessment tasks. Assessment items are required to be submitted electronically on Moodle.

1. A 1,000 word paper responding to the question below and based on the readings in Weeks 1- 4 (20 per cent). Due 5pm Wednesday 20 August (Week 4).

Question: What is narrative and literary journalism? Illustrate your paper with reference to at least four readings from weeks 1 to 4.

- 2.
3. A 1,200 word Research Plan* (see below) including interview material for your major article (20 per cent). Due: 5pm Wednesday 17 September (Week 8).
4. A 3,500 word article in the form of literary and narrative journalism (60 per cent). Due 5pm Wednesday 03 November (Week 13).

***Research Plan:**

- A. Write 400 words describing the topic of your major piece of narrative journalism and how you will research it.
- B. 400 words of quotes from one or more interviews which you have already completed.
- C. An outline sequence of events which might form a storytelling narrative at some part of your planned story (approx. 200 words).
- D. A list the sources of background information which you intend to use for your story. These could include a list of books related to your topic and a list of relevant news reports (with URL links)

Assessment criteria

For assignment 1

- addressing the questions posed;
- demonstrated engagement with the material;
- use of evidence to substantiate your findings;
- appropriate use of quotes (with references) from the reading material.

For assignments 2 and 3

- demonstrated depth of research (the variety and number of sources used);
- appropriate use of quotes from interviews;
- factual accuracy;
- skillful storytelling techniques;
- correct and clear English expression.

Electronic submission

Please be aware that when you submit a UNSW course assignment online, through a facility such as Turnitin etc., you are automatically acknowledging that you have understood and abided by the University requirements in respect of student academic misconduct outlined in the Student Code Policy and Student Misconduct Procedures, both of which are available at: (<https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/academiclife/assessment/StudentMisconduct.html>).

You are also declaring that the assessment item is your own work, except where acknowledged, and has not been submitted for academic credit previously in whole or in part. In addition, you are declaring that the assessor of this item may, for assessment purposes:

- provide a copy to another staff member of the University
- communicate a copy of this assessment item to a plagiarism checking service (such as Turnitin) which may then retain a copy of the assessment item on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking.

Late Submission

PLEASE NOTE THAT THESE RULES APPLY FOR ALL COURSES IN SAM.

If your assignment is submitted after the due date, a penalty of 3% per day (including Saturday, Sunday and public holidays) will be imposed for up to 2 weeks. For example, if you are given a mark of 72 out of 100 for an essay, and your essay were handed in two days late, it would attract a penalty of 6% and the mark would be reduced to 66%. If the same essay were handed in seven days late (i.e. a penalty of 21%) it would receive a mark of 51%. If your assignment is not submitted within 2 weeks of its due date, it will receive a mark of 0. For more information on submission of late work, consult the FASS assessment protocols at <https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/>

Extension Procedure

- A student seeking an extension should submit a SAM extension application form to the Course Authority before the due date. The form can be downloaded here: <https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/forms/>
- The Course Convenor should respond to the request within two working days.
- The Course Convenor can only approve an extension of up to five days. A student requesting an extension of more than five days should complete an application for Special Consideration.
- If a student is granted an extension, failure to comply will result in a penalty. The penalty will be invoked one minute past the approved extension time.
- A student who missed an assessed activity held within class contact hours should apply for Special Consideration via myUNSW.
- This procedure does not apply to assessment tasks that take place during regular class hours or any task specifically identified by the Course Authority as not subject to extension requests.

- For more information, see the FASS extension protocols on the SAM policies and guidelines webpage:
<https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/>

Special Consideration

In the case of more serious or ongoing illness or misadventure, you will need to apply for Special Consideration. For information on Special Consideration please go to this URL: <https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/SpecialConsideration.html>

Students who are prevented from attending a substantial amount of the course may be advised to apply to withdraw without penalty. This will only be approved in the most extreme and properly documented cases.

Academic honesty and plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

- **Copying:** using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.
- **Inappropriate paraphrasing:** changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit. It also applies to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without referencing and a student's own analysis to bring the material together.
- **Collusion:** working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.
- **Duplication:** submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Further details about what plagiarism is can be found on the Learning Centre's Website (<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism>) and in the myUNSW student A-Z: Guide: <https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/Plagiarism.html>.

The UNSW plagiarism policy and procedure are outlined in these documents:

<http://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/plagiarismpolicy.pdf>

<http://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/plagiarismprocedure.pdf>

The UNSW Student Misconduct policy and procedures can be found here:

<https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/academiclife/assessment/StudentMisconduct.html>.

The Learning Centre also provides substantial education written materials, workshops, and tutorials to aid students, for example:

- Correct referencing practices;
- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre.

Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW makes use of the similarity detection tool Turnitin. For this course you are required to submit an electronic version of your written assignments so they may be reviewed using this procedure.

Weekly class schedule

* Readings will be available on the course Moodle site, which you can access via: <https://moodle.telt.unsw.edu.au>.

Week 1 Introduction to literary and narrative journalism (28 Jul -1 Aug)

In-class reading & discussion: Introduction & The Island, in Chloe Hooper, 2008, *The Tall Man: Death and Life on Palm Island*. Hamish Hamilton, Camberwell.

Week 2 The 'new journalism' and the literature of fact (4 Aug - 8 Aug)

In-class discussion. Please read the following before class :

- Wolfe, T, 'Like a Novel', *The New Journalism*, Harper and Row, 1973.
- Eisenhuth, S, 2007, 'New Journalism and its legacy', Eisenhuth, S and McDonald, W, *The Writer's Reader: Understanding journalism and non-fiction*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne.
- Wynhausen, E, *Dirt Cheap: life at the wrong end of the job market*, Macmillan, Sydney.

Week 3 How creative? How factual? The Helen Garner case (11 Aug -15 Aug)

In-class discussion on the readings:

- Garner H. *The First Stone* (extract).
- Ricketson, M, 'True stories: the power and pitfalls of literary journalism', Tapsall, S and Varley, C, *Journalism: theory in practice*, Oxford U. P. South Melbourne.
- Garner, H, 1996, 'The fate of The First Stone', Garner, H, *True Stories*, Text Publishing, Melbourne.

Week 4 Writing about travel and place (18 Aug - 22 Aug)

In-class discussion:

Zinsser, W 1994, 'Writing about places' in *On Writing Well*, Harper Perennial
Davidson, R Chapter 7 from *Tracks*
Theroux, P. *Riding the Iron Rooster: By train through China*

Note: *First assignment due this week.

Week 5 Profiles and biographical studies (25 Aug - 29 Aug)

Wallace, C, 1998, *Greer, untamed shrew*, Picador, Sydney.
Ferguson, A 2012, *Gina Rinehart*, Macmillan, Sydney.
Ricketson, M 2004, 'Generating Fresh Story Ideas' in *Writing Feature Stories*.

Workshop: Developing your story idea.

Week 6 No class: Individual consultations (1 Sept – 5 Sept)

Your Research Plan is due in 3 weeks. These consultations are designed to assist you in preparing your research and story.

Week 7 Narrative and direct observation (8 Sept – 12 Sept)

Lisa Anthony, 'Getting it in the neck', *Juice*, Oct 1997.
Hersey, J, 1989, 'A Noiseless Flash', *Hiroshima*, Vintage Book, New York.

Story Planning workshop

Please bring to the class 3 printed copies of a description of your story idea(s).

Fontaine, A & Glavin, W, 'Organization', *The art of writing nonfiction*, Syracuse University Press.

Week 8 Researching and documentary sources (15 Sept – 19 Sept)

Using news databases, news archives and other documentary sources.

Week 9 Interviewing (22 Sept – 26 Sept)

Assignment Two due.

Metzler, K, 1997, *Creative Interviewing*, Allyn and Bacon.
Clayton, J 1994. *Interviewing for Journalists*, Piatkus.

Mid semester break (two weeks)

No classes on Monday September 29 or October 6th.

Week 11 Using reconstruction techniques (13 Oct – 17 Oct)

Jack Hart, 'Scene' in Hart, *Storycraft: The complete guide to writing narrative non-fiction*, University of Chicago Press, 2011.

Week 12 Structuring long articles (20 Oct – 24 Oct)

Ricketson, M, 'Finding the right structure', *Writing Feature Stories*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

Week 13 Editing and polishing workshop (27 Oct – 31 Oct)

Zinsser, W, 'Simplicity' and 'Clutter' *On Writing Well: an informal guide to writing nonfiction*, Harper Collins, New York.

Suggested readings

Boynton, Robert. *The New New Journalism: conversations with America's best nonfiction writers on their craft*. New York: Vintage Books, 2005.

Carroll, David *A Manual of Writer's Tricks*, Marlowe 1995.

Eisenhuth, S & McDonald, W, 2007, *The Writers Reader : understanding journalism and non-fiction*, Cambridge, Melbourne.

Glass, Ira (editor). *The New Kings of Nonfiction*. New York: Riverhead, 2007.

Gutkind, Lee 2008, *Keep it real: everything you need to know about researching and writing creative nonfiction*, Norton, New York.

Hart, Jack, 2011, *Storycraft: the complete guide to writing narrative non-fiction*, University of Chicago Press.

Sims Norman, *Literary Journalism in the Twentieth Century*, OUP, 1990.

Wolfe, Tom. *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*. New York: Bantam, 1969.