



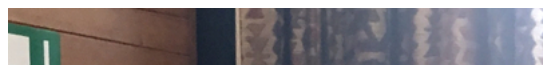
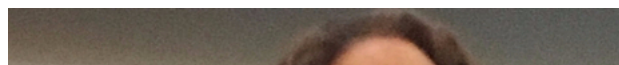
The BIOGRAPHER'S *craft*

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
FOR WRITERS & READERS OF BIOGRAPHY

November 2016 | Volume 11 | Number 9

Biography Beyond Borders Brings Together US and European Biographers

On November 4-5, BIO and the Oxford Centre for Life-Writing co-sponsored Biography Beyond Borders, a colloquium on American and European biography. The weekend in Oxford and London featured 29 distinguished biographers from across the United States and Europe examining their craft in lectures and panel discussions. *TBC* consulting editor James McGrath Morris sent us these photos of the weekend; look for a more detailed report in the December issue.



Save the Date for the 2017 BIO Conference!

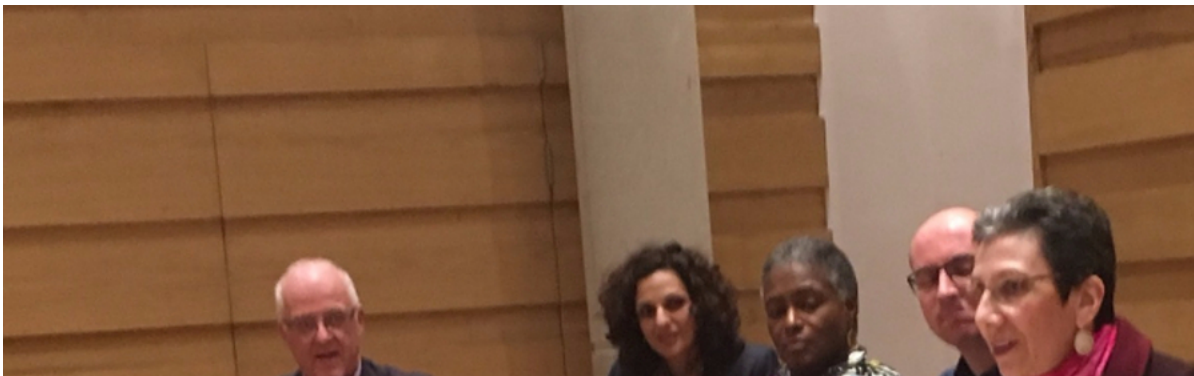
Join us in Boston on May 19–21, 2017, for the Eighth Annual BIO Conference at Emerson College, in the beautiful Back Bay neighborhood. We're returning to the city where we held our first conference, and we'll once again offer an informative array of panelists and speakers, along with the opportunity to meet and socialize with other biographers.



Carla Kaplan opened the weekend on November 4 with a talk on the life of Jessica Mitford, the famous American muckraking journalist who grew up in a British aristocratic family.



Hermione Lee spoke during lunch on November 5. Lee, who is president of Wolfson College, University of Oxford, where the Oxford Centre for Life-Writing is located, won BIO's Plutarch Award in 2015.



Watch for details in future issues of *TBC* and in your mailbox.

From the Editor

I have a confession that will not raise my esteem among BIO members: Before taking over as editor of *TBC*, I wasn't a regular reader of the *New York Times Book Review* (probably because I knew I would never see one of my books reviewed there or included on the best-seller lists). That's changed, of course, and I while I can't admit to reading every word ever week, I do make point of reading "By the Book," and so I saw the recent edition that featured H. W. Brands. The prolific historian said that Barbara Tuchman was his all-time favorite author but then added, "Also, James Parton, the greatest American biographer no one today has ever heard of."

Given the erudite makeup of our membership, I'm sure some of our readers knew of Parton, but I didn't. And I couldn't find much about him online, except for a



Left to right are British professor and biographer Iwan Morgan, French doctoral student Maryam Thirriard, American professor and biographer Sonja Williams, Dutch professor Dennis Kersten, and American biographer Gayle Feldman, who moderated the panel discussing history and biography. The panel was one of four looking at American and European biography during the day-long conference.

Talese Reflects on a Long, Passionate Publishing Career

“We learn by stories,” Nan A. Talese said, and when it comes to biography, “the story of the person’s life should be interesting and carry the reader along.” That



Wikipedia article that referenced the 1911 edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. That source said that Parton was born in England in 1822, came to the United States as a young boy, pursued a career as a teacher, and wrote a number of biographies, becoming “the most popular biographer of his day in America.” His subjects included Aaron Burr, Andrew Jackson, Benjamin Franklin, and Voltaire. He also wrote *Famous Americans of Recent Times* and *People’s Book of Biography*.

That last title intrigued me. The full text of many of Parton’s books are available online, including that one. The book, published in 1868, is, as I suspected, a collection of biographical sketches. The subjects ranged from the well known—George Washington, Shakespeare, Catherine the Great, John Adams, Robert Fulton—to some who are more obscure today. Do *you* know who Zerah Colburn was and why he would make the cut for this book? Or

the reader along. That was just one of the insights Talese imparted from a 50-year career in publishing, many of those years spent helping dozens of biographers bring their subjects' stories to life.



Nan A. Talese is flanked by A. E. Hotchner to her right and Anne C. Heller and BIO President Will Swift to her left.

Talese spoke just before accepting BIO's third annual Editorial Excellence Award, which recognizes the contributions of outstanding editors—as nominated by BIO members—to the publishing of biographies, .

The October 5 event at the New York Society Library began with an introduction by BIO member Anne C. Heller (who played the key role in organizing the evening and ensuring its success, in collaboration with members Kate Buford, Deirdre David, Gayle Feldman, and Will Swift). Talese worked with Heller on her biography *Ayn Rand and the World She Made*, and Heller noted that Talese's books "are known both for their literary excellence and for their physical beauty." She praised Talese for "the extraordinary judgment, taste, skill, dedication, and, in my case, patience, Nan has brought to her literary calling."

A. E. Hotchner followed Heller and recounted working with Talese on *Papa Hemingway*, Hotchner's account of the novelist's life and Talese's first major biography after coming to Random House from *Vogue* as a young editor. Hotchner described going into her tiny basement office—a broom closet that included a desk and two chairs—and her first words: "I think we should change the title." She also advised him to put more of himself in the book, as Hotchner and Hemingway had been friends. As Talese later explained, she suggested edits while also drawing

what was Theodore R. Timby's claim to fame?

Me neither.

Another confession: I did not read *People's Book of Biography*. But I did read Parton's preface, in which he called biography the most interesting kind of composition. "Fiction itself, and the drama not less, as well as the highest forms of epic poetry, derive their value from their biographic truth, and their interest from the insatiable desire which men have to know how it has fared with their fellows."

I don't know if everyone would agree with most of Parton's thesis, but that insatiable desire certainly remains, for biographers and readers alike.

As an Anglo-American, Parton's story provides a nice transition to one of the features on this month's issue. Consulting editor James McGrath Morris takes on the role of *TBC's* foreign correspondent to provide us highlights of BIO's Biography Beyond Borders colloquium, held

more out of Hotchner, and they ended up cutting 20 percent of the original manuscript and adding a new 20 percent. *Papa Hemingway* went on to become a perennial best seller.

Hotchner and Talese worked together on several other books, and Hotchner noted her eye for detail, sometimes questioning a single word choice, and her swift and careful attention to the manuscripts she receives. Most gratifying, he said, was hearing Talese describe a manuscript as “wonderful.” He said, “She says *wonderful* better than anybody else.”

Talese spoke next, offering her recollections of some of her experiences with Hotchner. At their first meeting, which included several other editors, she admitted, “He thought that I was going to bring them coffee or something; he certainly didn’t think that I was going to be his editor.”

Talese also discussed some of the other noteworthy books she has worked on, including Thomas Keneally’s *Schindler’s List* and the challenges she faced negotiating the finances of the book with Keneally’s lawyer. Talese wanted the book badly, and she said she became a “pest” as she worked to close the deal. Talese also recalled the difficulties she and Deirdre Bair had in securing rights to Saul Steinberg’s art for Bair’s biography of the cartoonist.

Talese and Bair worked together again on Bair’s new biography, *Al Capone: His Life, Legacy, and Legend*, published last month, and Bair joined Talese to address what Bair called the “nuts and bolts” of editing and publishing biographies. Asked what she looks for in a book she publishes, Talese said she focuses on three questions: Does the writer use language well, is the writer a storyteller, and does the writer tell the subject’s story with such passion that people will want to read it.

When Bair brought up the popularity of celebrity biographies and wondered if there is still a place for deeply researched books on serious subjects, Talese said people do still want those “big” biographies. At times, though, such books are

just days ago in Oxford, England. We hope to have a more complete review of the weekend’s events in the December issue. Also in this month’s issue is a closer look at the presentation of the BIO Editorial Excellence Award to Nan A. Talese, which took place last month in New York. We also have reports on several other events of interest to biographers, along with our usual features, with Judith Stein giving her own spin to the six questions in our Member Interview (look for some other changes to that feature in the new year). I hope you enjoy the issue, and [please drop me a line](#) if you have an idea for a story, want to share an item for News & Notes, or know the historical significance of Zerah Colburn.

Yours,

Michael Burgan

Sold to Publishers

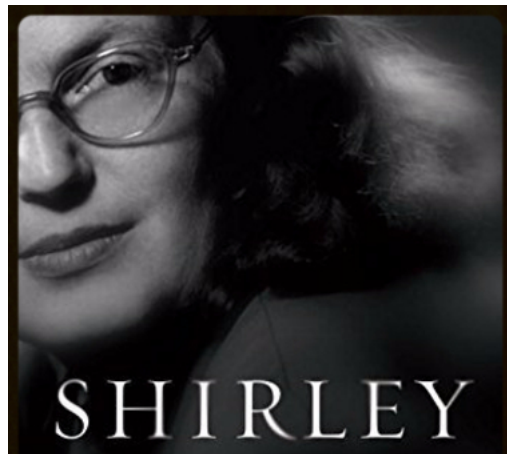
Joseph Berger
A Prophet for His Time:
The Life of Elie Wiesel

reviewed so well, “people think they’ve already read the book” after reading the reviews.

Reflecting on her career, Talese said she was not truly qualified to be an editor when she first came to Random House, and her first job was looking for typos. But she was grateful to be there, saying, “I couldn’t believe I was being paid to read....To this day I love it just as much.” With her job, “you live in another world, you learn of another world.”

Following the Q&A, BIO president Will Swift presented Talese with her award, noting the importance to biographers of skilled—and passionate—editors like herself, as they “help us become more than we dreamed we could be.”

Levy Center Fellows Take Differing Approaches to Their Subjects



By Jane Lincoln Taylor

On October 19, two recipients of the Leon Levy Biography Fellowships contrasted their approaches to the art of biography during a thought-provoking discussion at the Leon Levy Center for Biography at the City University of New York. Alexandra Chasin discussed her new book, *Assassin of Youth*:

sold to Yale University Press
by Jane Dystel of Dystel, Goderich &
Bourret

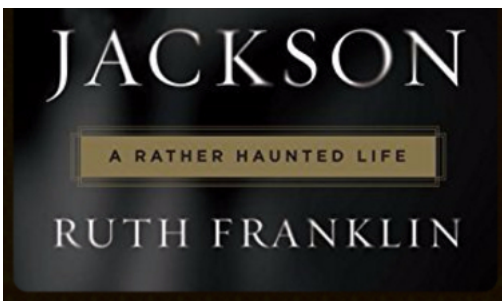
Simon Callow
Orson Welles, Vol. IV
sold to Viking
by Robin Straus at the Robin Straus
Agency in association with Margaret
Hanbury at The Hanbury Agency in
London

Marlene Wagman-Geller
*Still I Rise: The Persistence of
Phenomenal Women*
sold to Mango
by Roger Williams at
Roger Williams Agency

Daniel Fingeroth
Stan Lee: The Man and the Marvel
sold to Thomas Dunne Books
by Kevin Moran at Kevin Moran Books

Stephen Budiansky
Mr. Justice
(Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr.)
sold to W. W. Norton
by Katinka Matson at Brockman

Brady Prauser
The Piano Prince



Ruth Franklin's biography of Shirley Jackson was published in September.

complex than we knew.

The biographers' differing approaches to their subjects arose directly from the nature of the protagonists, and the contrasts in focus and style illuminate the choices every biographer confronts when deciding how to frame a biographical tale.

Franklin, a former editor of the *New Republic*, a Cullman Fellow at the New York Public Library, a Guggenheim Fellow in biography, and the author of *A Thousand Darknenses: Lies and Truth in Holocaust Fiction*, felt that her unconventional subject needed and deserved a definitive biography, one that would reclaim Shirley Jackson as a standard-bearer for a tradition that had often excluded her. In the editions published in Jackson's lifetime, her works tended to have lurid covers. Her image, one she herself cultivated, was of a woman obsessed with witchcraft and evil—according to Franklin, one reviewer called her “Virginia Werewolf” and another said she wrote “with a broomstick”—but she also wrote many humorous stories for women's magazines about her family life with the critic Stanley Edgar Hyman and their children in Vermont. She was haunted by her problematic mother, her difficult marriage, and critical disdain, but she was also

A Kaleidoscopic History of Harry J. Anslinger's War on Drugs (University of Chicago Press, 2016), about the first commissioner of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics; then Ruth Franklin presented *Shirley Jackson: A Rather Haunted Life* (Liveright, 2016), her fresh take on an author familiar in the public mind primarily for writing the powerful *New Yorker* short story “The Lottery,” but who was vastly more

(James Booker)

sold to St. Martin's Press
by William Callahan at
Inkwell Management

Casey Rae

The Priest, They Called Him

(William S. Burroughs)

sold to University of Texas Press
by William LoTurco at Kuhn Projects

Chris McNickle

Bloomberg: A Billionaire's Ambition

sold to Skyhorse,

by Erika Storella at

The Gernert Company

Ben Montgomery

Backward

(Plennie Lawrence Wingo)

sold to Little, Brown

by Jane Dystel at Dystel & Goderich
Literary Management

Kara Cooney

When Women Ruled the World

(six Egyptian queens)

sold to National Geographic

by Marc Gerald at UTA

Lowell Dingus

buoyed by her terrific sense of humor.

Franklin approaches this complicated woman as a writer to be taken seriously, in the same company as Mailer and Salinger, and explores why she was largely ignored. (One probable reason: most of her characters are female.) Franklin did vast research, interviewing Jackson's children, studying everything from her diet logs to her dream diaries, and searching for letters, although the letters Jackson wrote were not generally saved by their recipients, as letters from her male contemporaries likely would have been. Comparing original documents and the (mostly undated) stories, she has established a chronology for Jackson's life and rounded out our knowledge of an often contradictory figure by writing, in a sense, her own mystery story, puzzling out the truth to counter Jackson's fanciful stories about herself.

Chasin's work takes a more unconventional turn. Anslinger himself was not, apparently, a fascinating person in private; our interest in his story arises from the huge influence his drug policies had on American life, which resonate to this day. So Chasin, an associate professor of literary studies at the New School, the recipient of a fellowship in fiction from the New York Foundation for the Arts, and the author of *Kissed By* and *Selling Out: The Gay and Lesbian Movement Goes to Market*, has written an offbeat, idiosyncratic "quasi-biography" to bring Anslinger's story to life. Prompted by her dismay at the disproportionate incarceration rates for blacks and Latinos for drug offenses, she wondered how America had arrived at that state.

Anslinger, born in 1892, was a bureaucrat who took principles from his former job at the Pennsylvania Railroad and applied them to the burgeoning effort to address the drug trade. Prohibition, that great experiment in controlling the use of intoxicants, had been a colossal failure, but from 1930 to 1962, Anslinger used the same approach on narcotics, leading directly to today's dismal War on Drugs.

King of the Dinosaur Hunters

(John Bell Hatcher)

sold to Pegasus

by Sam Fleishman at Literary Artists
Representatives

Pamela Toler

Women Warriors

sold to Beacon Press

by Leila Campoli at Stonesong

Cathy Scott-Clark and Adrian Levy

*The Exile: The Explosive Inside Story of
Osama bin Laden*

and *Al Qaeda in Flight*

sold to Bloomsbury

Daniel Lee

The S. S. Officer's Armchair

sold to Hachette Books

by Melanie Jackson at the Melanie
Jackson Agency, on behalf of Peter
Straus at Rogers, Coleridge and White

Dimitri Bontinck

*The Jihadi Hunter: How One Father
Saved His Radicalized Son from the
Battlezone of Isis*

sold to St. Martin's Press

by Scott Waxman at Waxman Leavell
Literary Agency

Chasin's work is a cultural history and a literary diversion, not an old-fashioned biography. Anslinger's straitlaced nature and tame personality were not what caught Chasin's attention; she wanted to explore his role as propagandist for the notion that there was an inevitable connection between racial minorities and certain drugs, leading to discriminatory laws designed to enhance social control. Chasin counters Anslinger's "rectilinear," conventional, rule-bound personality with a "curvilinear" approach to the book. Each chapter begins with a historical document—land deeds, photos of rum-runners, Supreme Court cases—and Chasin provides cultural context and tells the stories of those who suffered from Anslinger's policies to reveal a larger truth.

Rectilinear and curvilinear approaches to biography were both explored at this engaging presentation, and the juxtaposition made each book stand out more clearly. The challenge of the biographer's art—not only to tell a subject's story accurately and clearly, but to frame the narrative in a way that serves the reader best—was vividly brought to life, and Anslinger and his legacy, and Shirley Jackson and hers, promise enticing reading.

Jane Lincoln Taylor is a freelance book editor and writer with a particular interest in biography.

"Accidental" Biographer Gives Helly Lecture

By Barbara Fisher

Julia Van Haaften described her role as "an accidental



Will Bardenwerper
The Prisoner in His Palace: Saddam Hussein and Twelve Soldiers Who Guarded Him
sold to Scribner
by Zoe Pagnamenta at
Zoe Pagnamenta Agency

Kory Stamper
True Color: One Man's Quixotic Quest To Define The Rainbow
(Isaac Godlove)
sold to Pantheon
by Heather Schroder at
Compass Talent Agency

H. W. Brands
Heirs to the Founders
(Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, and John Calhoun)
sold to Doubleday

Margaret MacMillan
Making the World Again: How Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin Built Peace out of War
sold to Random House
by Caroline Dawnay at United Agents

Maggie Doherty
The Equivalents

biographer” of the twentieth-century photographer Berenice Abbott at the fall 2016 Dorothy O. Helly Works-in-Progress Lecture, a biannual event sponsored by the Women Writing Women’s Lives Seminar. As the founding librarian for the special photography collections at the New York Public Library, Van Haaften curated a 1989 retrospective on Abbott’s work. Trained as a librarian, not as a writer, she said that she fell into writing Abbott’s life story “accidentally,” after curating the show and discovering that she and Abbott had a shared sensibility.

In her talk, Van Haaften traced Abbott’s life from her Ohio childhood to her escape to Greenwich Village, where, as a crazy, arty kid, Abbott pursued journalism and sculpture. She next ventured to Paris, where, working for Man Ray during the 1920s, she discovered photography, her chosen artistic medium. Returning to New York at the beginning of the Depression, she concentrated on urban photography. She also experimented with scientific subjects and scenes from her travels across the United States. After teaching at the New School in New York City with Diane Arbus, Abbott left the excitement of New York for the beauty of Maine, where she maintained a life-long partnership with Elizabeth McCausland, a woman who was both a protector of artists and a critic of their



In 2015, Julia Van Haaften wrote the introduction to a collection of Berenice Abbott's photos.

(Anne Sexton, Maxine Kumin, Tillie Olsen, Barbara Swan, and Mariana Pineda)
sold to Knopf
by Elias Altman at Zachary Shuster Harmsworth Literary Agency

Emilie Le Beau Lucchesi
Ugly Prey: An Innocent Woman and the Death Sentence That Scandalized Jazz Age Chicago
sold to Lisa Reardon at Chicago Review Press

Thomas Lowenstein
The Trials of Walter Ograd: The Shocking Murder, So-Called Confessions, and Notorious Snitch That Sent a Man to Death Row
sold to Lisa Reardon at Chicago Review Press

David Browne
Untitled biography of Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young
sold to Da Capo
by Erin Hosier at Dunow, Carlson & Lerner

Jon Sweeney
Never Close Your Heart
(St. Peter Faber)

work.

Van Haaften showed slides of Abbott's well-known cityscapes, but also surprised the audience with unfamiliar early portraits and elegant, abstract scientific images. She described her research into the many rich primary sources available to her, including archives kept by Abbott's partner McCausland, recollections from a darkroom assistant, reports from a smitten admirer, and files from the FBI. She considers herself especially fortunate to have had Abbott's own oral history and drafts of an autobiography to work with. Van Haaften's biography of Abbott will be published by Norton in 2017.

Barbara Fisher is a writer and book reviewer in New York. She is currently working on a biography of Lionel Trilling.

Friends Remember Aileen Ward, Biographer and Mentor



By Dona Munker

On October 21, about fifty friends, colleagues, family members, and former mentees gathered at New York's Century Club to pay affectionate tribute to Aileen Ward, who died May 31 at the age of 97.

Ward's 1964 biography, *John Keats: The Making of a Poet*, which she spent nine years

sold to Loyola Press

Jeremy Sabella
*An American Conscience:
The Reinhold Niebuhr Story*
sold to Eerdmans

Please Keep Your Info Current

Making a move or just changed your email? We ask BIO members to keep their contact information up to date, so we and other members know where to find you. Update your information in the [Member Area](#) of the BIO website.

Membership Up for Renewal?

Please respond promptly to your membership renewal



Along with writing a biography of John Keats, Aileen Ward edited a collection of the poet's work.

researching and writing, was the first full-fledged life of Keats since 1925. It won the National Book Award and is still praised not only as a highly readable biography but as a particularly insightful study of the inner life that led to what Ward called Keats's "audacious act of self-creation." Poet Gardner McFall, who served as the biographer's assistant at the Poetics Institute at New York University, said

that Ward made the decision to trace the poet's evolution after a stint at the Yaddo artists' retreat, where she first had the time and leisure to read him carefully.

"There's always a moment in an artist's life," she told McFall, "when he has to appoint himself an artist. If you don't appoint yourself a poet, no one else will."

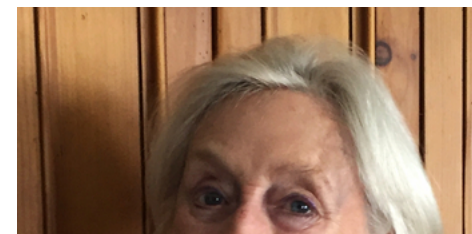
Ward was also a meticulous scholar, as well as one who understood the uses of the historical imagination. Mary Lawlor, another former assistant who is now a memoirist and writer with a strong interest in history, recalled that Ward, when planning a biography of William Blake, once gave her the job of mining *The Gentleman's Magazine* for information about November 28, 1757, Blake's birthday. Lawlor's assignment was to find all the picturesque details she could about what was going on in London on that date, from the day's weather to public hangings.

Several attendees also spoke of the generous and lasting ways Ward found to benefit other biographers. At NYU's Institute for the Humanities, she started a small, hands-on manuscript group for which the sole criterion for admission was a desire to write a serious book about someone else's life; the group eventually became the NYU Biography Seminar. Similarly, a conversation in 1990 with Deirdre Bair, another Ward protégé, led to the formation of the Women Writing

notice. As a nonprofit organization, BIO depends on members' dues to fund our annual conference, the publication of this newsletter, and the other work we do to support biographers around the world. When renewing, please make sure the contact information we have for you is up to date.

Are You a Student?

Or do you know one who is interested in biography? BIO now has a special student membership rate. Visit [the BIO website](#) to find out more.



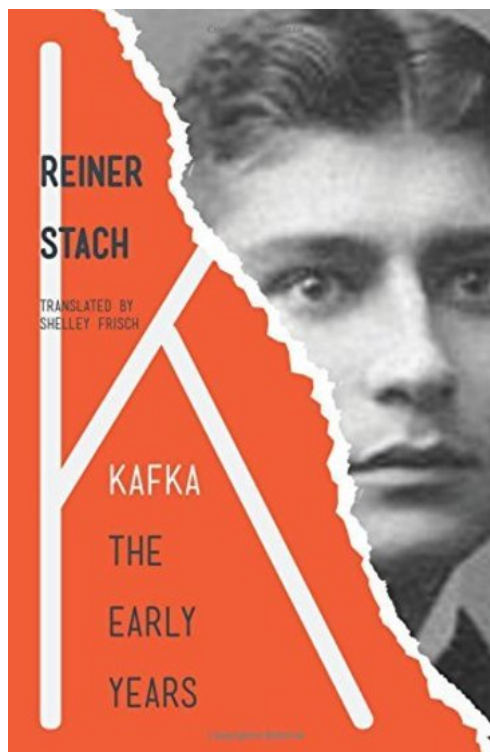
Women's Lives Seminar, an independent discussion group of feminist biographers and memoirists that now meets under the auspices of the City University of New York Graduate Center.

[Dona Munker](#), writer and co-author (with Sattareh Farman Farmaian) of *Daughter of Persia: A Woman's Journey from Her Father's Harem through the Islamic Revolution*, is working on a book about the affair of Sara Bard Field and C. E. S. Wood. Her blog, "[Stalking the Elephant](#)," is about biography and the writing life of the biographer.

Shorts

Levy Center Announces November Events

The Leon Levy Center for Biography presents German biographer Reiner Stach with his translator Shelley Frisch at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 9, to discuss *Kafka: The Early Years*, the final volume of Stach's trilogy on Kafka's life. Stach worked extensively on the definitive edition of Franz Kafka's collected works before embarking on his biography of the writer, first in *Kafka: The Decisive Years*, then in *Kafka: The Years of Insight*. Frisch's translations of those volumes were awarded the Modern Language Association's Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize and the Helen and Kurt Wolff Translator's



Reiner Stach published the third volume of his Franz Kafka biography earlier this month.



A Letter from the Vice President

Organizing

Lately, I've been preoccupied with the problem of insufficient bookshelves since the makeshift strategy of piling books horizontally on top of others standing upright has run its course. This is not something that can be remedied by a trip to the nearest Ikea since I don't have an inch of space where I could put a new bookcase. What's more, as a judge for the Plutarch Prize, I've assembled several toppling piles of biographies. Where to put them? I could, of course, adopt another familiar strategy—the acquisition

Prize. *Kafka: The Early Years* tells the story from Kafka's birth in Prague in 1883 to the beginning of his professional and literary career in 1910, offering a rich portrait of German Jewish culture before World War I and on the eve of the breakthrough that resulted in his first masterpieces, including *The Metamorphosis*. The event will be held in Elebash Recital Hall, The Graduate Center, CUNY, 365 Fifth Avenue (at 34th Street.) The talk is free and open to the public. Reservations are required and can be made [here](#).

The Levy Center is also co-sponsoring "Arthur Lubow on Diane Arbus: Portrait of a Photographer" on Thursday, November 10, at 6 p.m. Lubow will discuss his new biography of Arbus as part of the Millennium Lecture Series of the Princeton Library in New York. The event is at the Princeton Club of New York, 15 W. 43rd Street and is free and open to the public. Reservations are required by emailing library@princetonclub.com or calling 212-596-1250.

Scholar Claims Hitler Wrote His Own Biography

The biography *Adolf Hitler: His Life and his Speeches* appeared in 1923, two years before the Nazi leader published *Mein Kampf*. The author credited for the biography was Baron Adolf Victor von Koerber, a German aristocrat and war hero. Now, scholar Thomas Weber says he has found evidence that von Koerber was a front for the book's real author—Hitler himself. While examining von Koerber's papers in a South African archive, [Weber found several documents](#) that attest to Hitler's writing the book. Weber, who teaches history at Aberdeen University, said his discovery shows that Hitler was "a conniving political operator with a masterful understanding of political processes and narratives long before he drafted what is regarded as his first autobiography." The new material, Weber said, "challenges the accepted view that at this stage in his life he did not see himself as the man to lead the German revolution....The fact Hitler wrote the biography and collated the

original strategy—the acquisition of a new book means another gets given away—but another challenge remains. How should one (can one?) organize one's books?

In his most recent column for the Modern Language Association newsletter, K. Anthony Appiah writes about his unsuccessful stabs at organization (see my [blogpost on the topic](#) for the Oxford Centre for Life-Writing, the site of our November 5 Colloquium on American and European biography). A philosopher, he tried first to sort his philosophy books into metaphysics and epistemology on the one hand and political and moral philosophy on the other. The result was a philosophical jumble. Then he began to wonder whether books about French cooking should go with books about France and whether accounts of African Americans visiting Africa belong with books

speeches himself and put it together under a different name speaks to the fact that at a much earlier time he saw himself in...[a] ‘saviour’ role and that he started in a very manipulative way to plot his way to the top.”

Trump Biographer Shares Interview Tapes

According to emails from Wikileaks, Donald Trump biographer Michael D’Antonio offered to share with the Hillary Clinton campaign nine hours of recorded interviews he did with his subject as research for *Never Enough: Donald Trump and the Pursuit of Success*. The book came out in September 2015 and was renamed *The Truth About Trump* when it appeared in paperback this spring. The leaked emails say that someone representing D’Antonio reached out to the Clinton camp but they do not indicate if he actually shared any of the material. Last month, D’Antonio did share five hours of Trump interviews with the *New York Times*. The paper said that the biographer had not originally planned to release any of his research material but changed his mind when he “was deeply alarmed by the kind of campaign that Mr. Trump decided to wage.” Summing up the impression Trump leaves in the interviews, *Times* reporter Michael Barbaro wrote, “The recordings reveal a man who is fixated on his own celebrity, anxious about losing his status and contemptuous of those who fall from grace. They capture the visceral pleasure he derives from fighting, his willful lack of interest in history, his reluctance to reflect on his life, and his belief that most people do not deserve his respect.” You can read Barbaro’s first of two articles on the tapes [here](#).

Biographers Discuss Challenges of Their Craft

The 2016 Sydney Writers’ Festival, held in May, featured a panel discussion with Martin Flanagan, Catharine Lumby, and Kerry O’Brien talking with moderator Margot Saville on the pleasures and pitfalls of writing biographies, especially of living subjects. A recording of the talk is available [here](#).

about Africa or books about America.

So how to organize the pile of Plutarch biographies, assuming one has the bookshelf space to do so? Do all biographies focusing upon a single subject and adopting the conventional cradle-to-grave narrative belong on the same shelf? Should biographies of presidents be shelved separately from those about sports celebrities, film directors, or photographers? Where to place group biographies? Or slice-of-life biographies, books that zoom in on a particular moment and then fan out to explore the rest of the narrative territory? Where to place, say, Ruth Scurr’s innovative study of John Aubrey? Scurr contends that “biography is an art form open to constant experiment” and she constructs Aubrey’s diary based on his manuscripts, correspondence, and records of those who knew him. It’s an autobiography in the form

Member Interview

Six Questions with Judith Stein

What path led you to biography?

I didn't start out to be a biographer. Not many of us do. I'm a classically trained art historian who did university teaching, but I never wanted a career in academia. Before joining the curatorial staff at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts (PAFA) in the eighties, I wrote for *Art in America* and reviewed art for NPR's *Fresh Air*. It was at PAFA that I met Richard Bellamy, an art dealer legendary within the insular art world for launching the careers of most of the iconic artists of the sixties, but little known beyond it. Bellamy's Green Gallery (1960-65) propelled pop artists Oldenburg and Rosenquist, minimalists Judd and Flavin, and mavericks di Suvero and Yayoi Kusama to the fore.

I was intrigued by this self-effacing man who chose not to enrich himself when the art market mushroomed around him. But there was next to nothing written about Bellamy, a posterity-averse, Chinese American bohemian, arguably



In 2008, Judith Stein won a Warhol Foundation/Creative Capital Arts Writers Grant to work on her biography of Richard Bellamy.

of a diary written by a biographer.

In her *Biography: A Very Short Introduction* (2009), Hermione Lee offers a deceptively simple definition of biography as “the story of a person told by someone else,” and then proceeds to show that such a definition is unstable and liable to exceptions: think, she says, of biographies such as those of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's dog, of the Bayeux Tapestry, and of the River Thames. And Beryl Bainbridge, in a 2011 interview for the British Library, declared that when she was writing a novel she was writing about her own life: she was, in fact writing an autobiography, and if she wanted to make it seem like fiction she would “have a murder or a death at the end.” There's probably no bookcase large enough to shelve what we now term ‘Life-Writing’ since capacious definitions of biography have long generated multiple ways of writing a life.

the most influential set of eyes of his generation. He initially discouraged me when I decided to write his biography. I persevered and in the nineties, I began to interview his friends and family, eventually amassing an archive of several hundred tapes.

***Eye of the Sixties, Richard Bellamy and the Transformation of Modern Art* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux) appeared in July. You were a neophyte—how did you get to that point?**

“You can do this,” I sweet-talked myself. But it was a trial-and-error process. I talked too much in the early interviews, wanting to impress my subjects. Much of what I learned was fascinating and fresh, and I couldn’t wait to share it—my early drafts were like acorn-filled chipmunk cheeks. Susan Rabiner and Alfred Fortunato’s *Thinking Like Your Editor* and Hermione Lee’s *Biography, A Very Short Introduction* helped wisen me up, and Stephen King’s *On Writing* was full of apt apercus. Of incalculable aid were the several BIO conferences I attended, all ears.

What were your models?

Roger Shattuck’s brilliant *The Banquet Years* illuminated early modernism through the lives of four key figures. I recognized the power of biography as cultural history in *Herself Defined: the Poet H.D. and Her World* by Barbara Guest, and *Everybody Was So Young: Gerald and Sara Murphy: A Lost Generation Love Story* by Amanda Vaill.

Your most satisfying moments as a biographer?

Bellamy’s Chinese mother died when he was seventeen. Over the years, he drifted away from her family. With the help of his son Miles Bellamy (co-owner of Spoonbill & Sugartown Booksellers in Williamsburg, Brooklyn) I found his long-

Some would say that books are over anyway—time to read everything electronically—but most of us, I think, still like the feel, the look, the pleasure of a real book, even if we have nowhere to put it.

Deirdre

Deirdre David
BIO Vice President



Biographer's Diary

By Cathy Curtis

lost relations who were overjoyed to reconnect. Bellamy's long-estranged wife Nancy was largely senile when I found her in a Bronx nursing home, a ward of the state. An ace gumshoe, I discovered a niece in CA who became both my informant and her patient advocate in her remaining years.

Your most frustrating moment?

With few exceptions, people were happy to talk about Bellamy, a much-beloved figure. Sculptor Walter De Maria, notoriously inhospitable to writers, ignored my letters for more than a year. With nothing to lose, I changed tactics, and mailed him an envelope of vintage picture postcards, with messages keyed to the image. "I don't want to take a big bite of your time," was the message on the reverse of George Stubbs's "Lion Attacking a Horse." He phoned me three days later and we met soon thereafter.

How did you get your agent?

There are not many books about art dealers. After reading Lindsay Pollock's *The Girl with the Gallery*, I cold-contacted her to let her know about my project. When she asked if she could mention it to her agent, Kuhn Projects, I was delighted. They took me on with a handshake and worked with me for a year to shape a "bullet-proof" proposal.

One research/marketing/attitudinal tip to share?

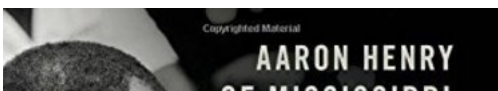
I took to heart Carol Fitzgerald's secret about blogs: Write them as if they were e-mails to yourself. That puts you in a different head set; when you focus on communicating to one person, everything becomes a lot less overwhelming.

Talking About a Biography

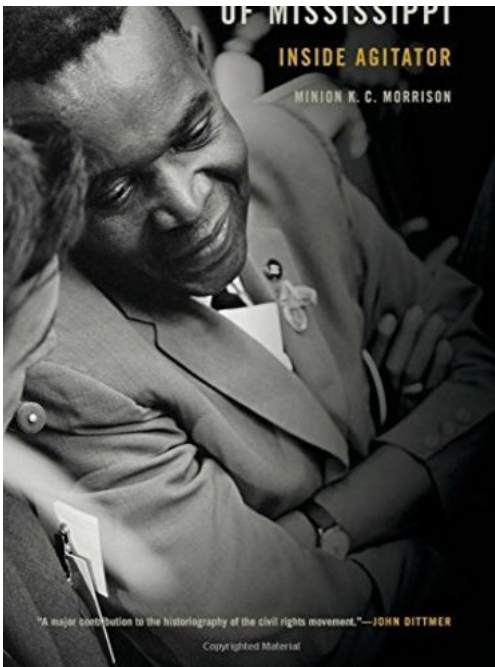
Public speaking was never high on my list of enjoyable things to do. But now that I had a real mission—talking about my first biography—I was happy to have an audience. I organized photos of my subject and her paintings on PowerPoint and polished an hour-long script that referred to each image as I covered the high points of my subject's work and eventful life.

I rehearsed until I could maintain eye contact with my audience most of the time. Gesturing (probably too much) and speaking animatedly, I tried for a brisk pace. Sometimes I threw in unscripted observations that I think will appeal to a particular audience. Afterwards, I always welcomed questions.

I've learned to ignore blank, bored, skeptical, or baffled expressions and to focus on the



Prizes



Aaron Henry was a prominent civil rights activist in Mississippi.

Conservative. The award goes each year to a book that advances conservative values. It's named for Henry and Anne Paolucci and is given by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, which was founded during the 1950s to promote conservatism at US colleges.

William Hill Sports Book of the Year Award

Biographies comprise more than half of the titles on the shortlist for the William Hill Sports Book of the Year Award. Here's the complete list:

- *Endurance: The Extraordinary Life and Times of Emil Zátopek* by Rick Broadbent

Lillian Smith Book Awards

Minion KC Morrison's *Aaron Henry of Mississippi: Inside Agitator* is one of two winners of this year's Lillian Smith Book Awards, which honor books that focus on race, social justice, civil and human rights. The prize is named for the white, Southern writer of the 1944 novel *Strange Fruit*, who was a fervent champion of civil rights. The Lillian Smith Book Awards are administered by the Southern Regional Council and the University of Georgia Libraries.

Paolucci Book Award

Bradley J. Birzer won the Paolucci Book Award for *Russell Kirk: American*

faces that seem especially receptive. It seems to me that all talks are attended by a certain proportion of people who are preoccupied or tired, who aren't interested in the subject but agreed to accompany a friend, or whose faces simply look annoyed when in repose.

I mention all this because I was startled recently when my bid to return to a venue to discuss my new book was rejected. I was told that my previous talk, in the summer of 2015, was not acceptable because it was too long and spanned the entire life of my subject. This was the first I'd heard of any problem.

I had forgotten to ask how long I was supposed to speak. Now, I belatedly learned that the time limit was 45 minutes, and—lulled by the intimate venue, with its audience of artists and their friends, and the relaxed feel of a summer Sunday afternoon—I had

- *Barbarian Days: A Surfing Life* by William Finnegan
- *Forever Young: The Story of Adrian Doherty, Football's Lost Genius* by Oliver Kay
- *Chasing Shadows: The Life & Death of Peter Roebuck* by Tim Lane and Elliot Cartledge
- *Mr. Darley's Arabian: High Life, Low Life, Sporting Life – A History of Racing in 25 Horses* by Christopher McGrath
- *Find a Way: One Untamed and Courageous Life* by Diana Nyad
- *Mister: The Men Who Taught the World How to Beat England at Their Own Game* by Rory Smith.

The winner receives a £28,000 (\$34,408) cash prize, a free £2,500 (\$3,072) bet with William Hill, a UK-based betting and gaming company, and a day at the races. The winner will be announced on November 24.

Whiting Creative Nonfiction Grant

Two biographers won Whiting Creative Nonfiction Grants of \$35,000 to help them finish their current projects. Deborah Baker, the author of several biographies, is working on *The Last Englishman: Love, War and the End of Empire*. The book focuses on two men and the woman they both loved in the years leading up to India's independence. John Jeremiah Sullivan's book is *The Prime Minister of Paradise: Christian Gottlieb Priber and the Search for a Lost American Enlightenment*. It's the first biography of Priber, a German immigrant who tried to build a multiracial community in colonial South Carolina. Rules for applying for the 2017 grants will be available on the Whiting Foundation's website in February.

Call for Applications

exceeded it by a half-hour. OK, a lesson learned. But I was dumbfounded at the notion that I wasn't supposed to present—in highly condensed form, of course—the dual trajectories of my subject's life and work.

An article in the Summer issue of the *Authors Guild Bulletin* quotes a bookstore owner who says that an author's presentation should be no longer than 30 minutes, with 15 minutes of questions afterward. I would argue that the length (and content) of a talk depends on the venue and the makeup of your audience. People at a specialized venue are likely to be more interested in the details of a career than people at a bookstore or library.

Here's another wrinkle: Articles on the Web—generally targeted to fiction writers—often suggest focusing on the author's own experiences in conceiving of and writing the book. My talk

Applications are being accepted through December 12 for the Columbia School of Journalism's J. Anthony Lukas Work-in-Progress Award. The annual award of \$25,000 helps a writer complete a significant work of nonfiction on a topic of American political or social concern. Applicants for the award must already have a contract with a US-based publisher to write a nonfiction book. For more information on the award and the application process, go [here](#).

Research Tip

National Press Club Talks Available Online

BIO member Robin Rausch shared an item on BIO's Facebook page originally published by CBS News. Drawing from a collection of almost 2,000 tapes, the Library of Congress now offers speeches from the National Press Club dating from 1954 to 1989, under the title, "Food for Thought: Presidents, Prime Ministers, and Other National Press Club Luncheon Speakers." The presidents include Richard Nixon, Jimmy Carter, and Ronald Reagan, and among the foreign leaders are Fidel Castro, Margaret Thatcher, and Anwar Sadat. Speakers from the worlds of sports and entertainment include Leonard Bernstein, Muhammad Ali, and Alfred Hitchcock. You can access the recordings [here](#).



The Writer's Life

Most UK Authors Make Less Than Minimum Wage

Most writers enter their career knowing they could face a

begins with my "discovery" of a gorgeous painting by my subject in a museum show. So far, so good. But I've sensed a slackening of interest among audiences at the mention of some of my "eureka" research moments, so I've learned to leave them out. (On the other hand, questions from a fellow guest at a B&B—a man in an entirely different line of work—were about how biographers weigh competing information.)

What have your experiences been on the book talk circuit? [Email me](#), and let's see if we can post an article about this subject in an upcoming issue of *TBC*.

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daunting financial lot, but a new study by the European Commission spelled out how bleak it can be for writers in the United Kingdom. The study found that the average annual income for writers is £12,500, well below the country's minimum wage for a full-time job of £18,000. [As the Guardian reported](#), "In an industry that is becoming increasingly unequal, those at the bottom of the income distribution continue to struggle. Only half of the 317 UK authors who responded to the survey said writing was their main source of income, with respondents who offered a figure reporting total earnings from their latest book averaging at £7,000." Writers in the UK and Ireland came in at the bottom among the writers surveyed in ten EU countries

Biography first convinces us of the fleeing of the Biographied.

—Emily Dickinso

Freelancers Can Choose from a Wide Assortment of Helpful Tools

The Writing Cooperative, an online community that aims to help members write better, recently provided a list of 31 apps and tools that it says can make life easier for freelance writers. The article by Kyle Kivett divides the tools into six categories:

- Keeping Track of Time
- Managing Your Workload
- Balancing Your Budget
- Staying in Contact
- Landing Freelance Writing Jobs
- Finding an Ideal Workspace

The featured apps include Toggl, which helps writers keep track of billable hours for different projects; Droptask, which helps freelancers set up their

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schedule and juggle multiple tasks; and Upwork, which can help writers get new jobs. You can see all 31 apps and tools [here](#).

As a writer, a failure is just information. ...What you do is you identify the procedure and what went wrong and then correct it.

—Toni Morrison



Sarah Jensen has known her subject for 30 years.

News and Notes

Several members have new books out this month. **Sarah Jensen**'s *A Perfect Union of Contrary Things* is the authorized biography of musician and vintner Maynard James Keenan, and it received a starred review from *Library Journal*. Underscoring once again how valuable the annual BIO conference can be, Sarah told us that she met her agent, Ann Collette of the Rees Literary Agency, in the Agent Speed Dating event at the 2014 BIO conference in Boston. Also out this month is *Ray & Joan: The Man Who Made the McDonald's Fortune and the Woman Who Gave It All Away* by **Lisa Napoli**. The book was featured in Shelf Awareness Pro, the newsletter for bookstore owners, and it

received a starred review from *Kirkus*. *Florence Nightingale: The Courageous Life of the Legendary Nurse* by **Catherine Reef** has garnered several starred reviews

Michael Holroyd

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Marion Meade

Nancy Milford

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William Taubman

Terry Teachout

The Biographer's Craft

Editor

Michael Burgan

Consulting Editor

James McGrath Morris

Copy Editor

before its release this month. **Daniel G. Payne**'s *Orion on the Dunes: A Biography of Henry Beston*, rounds out the new hardcover titles from members. Beston was the pen name of Henry Sheahan, who wrote children's stories and *The Outermost House*, considered a classic of American nature writing. Over the past few months, we missed some releases of members' books, so we're playing catch-up now. Last month, **Angela V. John**'s *The Actors' Crucible: Port Talbot and the Making of Burton, Hopkins, Sheen and All the Others* was released in paperback. Like her subjects, Angela hails from the South Wales steel town of Port Talbot. In March, **Susan Butler**'s *Roosevelt and Stalin, Portrait of a Partnership* came out in paperback, a year after its hardcover release. Susan previously published *My Dear Mr. Stalin: The Complete Correspondence of Franklin Roosevelt and Joseph Stalin*. In September, we noted the release of *The Biographical Turn: Lives in History*, which was co-edited by **Hans Renders**, but we didn't know that several members contributed essays: **Debby Applegate**, **Nigel Hamilton**, **Joanny Moulin**, **Carl Rollyson**, and Hans himself. Last month, Nigel attended the Geschiedenis Festival (History Festival) at the Philharmonie in Haarlem, the Netherlands. He discussed his latest book, *Commander in Chief: FDR's Battle with Churchill, 1943* in a conversation with Hans. Hans also recently spoke on "The Challenges of Life-Writing" at the Biography Seminar Aix-Marseille University. Carl wrote "Becoming My Subject's Subject: Susan Sontag's Carl Rollyson File" for the summer issue of *Popular Culture Review*. Carl was also interviewed for the *Journal of Modern Life Writing Studies*, published by the Center for Life Writing at Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China. The piece on Carl was called "Each New Project Is like Building the World Anew." **Kai Bird** and his collaborator Martin J. Sherwin were also interviewed for that issue, for an article called "Biographers Write Not Only the Life, but Also the Time." **Deirdre David** wrote a blog post for the Oxford Centre for Life-Writing website about, in part,

Kay Bird

Correspondents

United Kingdom

Andrew Lownie

Netherlands

Hans Renders

India

Ashok R. Chandran

Australia/New Zealand

Todd Nicholls

United States

Sandra Kimberley Hall
(Hawaii)

Pat McNees
(Washington, D.C.)

Dona Munker
(New York)

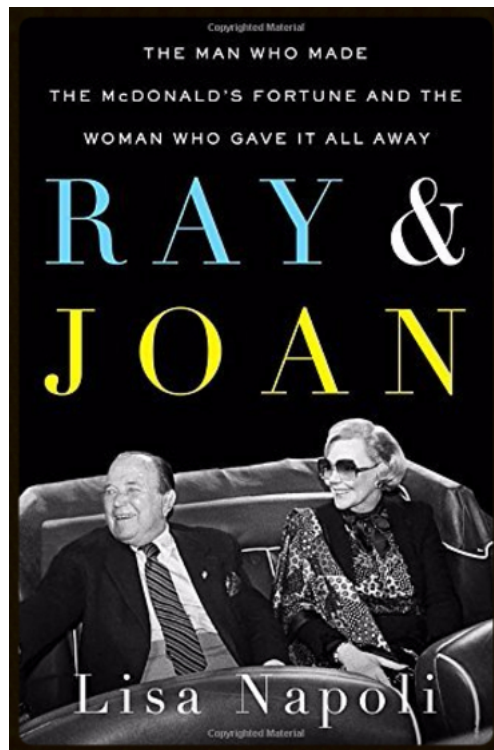
To contact any of our correspondents,
click [here](#).

BIO's Biography Beyond Borders colloquium, which was co-sponsored by the Oxford Centre. You can read the post [here](#). In September, **Heath Hardage Lee** appeared on the [Virginia Voice podcast](#). **Jack El-Hai** wrote "[The Shaming of the Cherry Sisters](#)" for Longreads, an online magazine that feature both fiction and nonfiction. **Stacy Schiff** spoke about her most recent book, *The Witches*, at the Vegas Valley Book Festival in Las Vegas. **David Maraniss**, who wrote a biography in 1996 about Bill Clinton, appeared on NPR after this year's second presidential debate. You can hear the interview or read the transcript [here](#). David also took part in a discussion of the 2016 election at New York University with several other presidential biographers, including **Jonathan Alter**. **Marlene Trestman** made a several appearances recently to discuss *Fair Labor Lawyer: The Remarkable Life of New Deal Attorney and Supreme Court Advocate Bessie Margolin*, in New Orleans, Natchez, Mississippi, and Houston, Texas. Still to come this month are stops in Atlanta and Baltimore. Margolin's alma mater, Tulane University, recently acquired her papers and credited Marlene for organizing the documents and preparing a finding aid to assist future researchers. You can read more about it [here](#). **Lois Banner** has been awarded the Fulbright Distinguished Chair in American Studies at Uppsala University in Sweden for the spring 2017. She will be doing research there on a biography of Greta Garbo entitled *Greta Garbo and the Creation of Ideal Beauty*. Lois is learning Swedish and German to write this biography. This month, Lois will be at Latrobe University in Melbourne, Australia, to deliver a keynote address on Marilyn Monroe. **T.J. Stiles** [reviewed](#) *American Ulysses: A Life of Ulysses S. Grant* by Ronald C. White for the *New York Times Book Review*. Congratulations once again to **Patricia Bell-Scott**, whose *The Firebrand and the First Lady: Portrait of a Friendship* made the shortlist in nonfiction for the American Library Association's Carnegie Medal. The winner will be announced in January. Congratulations also to **Stephen Grant**: his *Collecting*

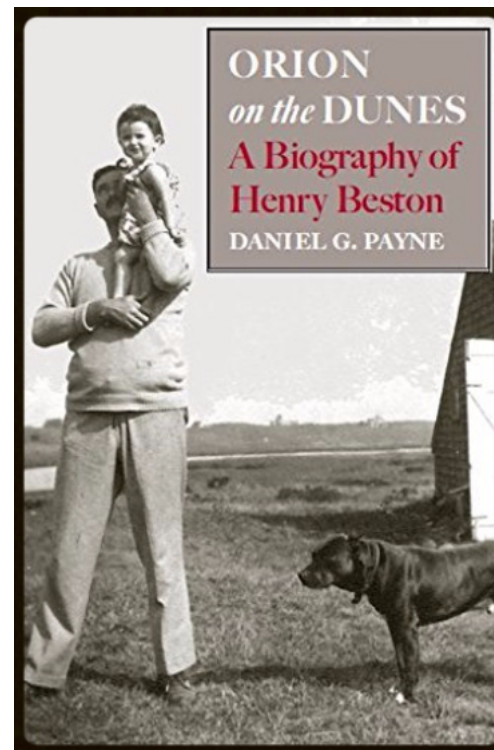
Shakespeare; the Story of Henry and Emily Folger has been nominated for the Mercantile Library Prize of the Bibliographical Society of America.

[Send us your news!](#)

In Stores



Ray & Joan: The Man Who Made the McDonald's Fortune and the Woman Who Gave It All Away



Orion on the Dunes: A Biography of Henry Beston
by Daniel G. Payne

by Lisa Napoli
(Dutton)

*Florence Nightingale: The Courageous Life
of the Legendary Nurse*

by Catherine Reef
(Clarion Books)

A Perfect Union of Contrary Things

By Sarah Jensen
(Backbeat)

*Eleanor Roosevelt Vol. 3: The War Years
and After, 1939–1962*

by Blanche Wiesen Cook
(Viking)

*Victoria: The Queen: An Intimate Biography
of the Woman Who Ruled an Empire*

by Julia Baird
(Random House)

*Young and Damned and Fair: The Life of
Catherine Howard, Fifth Wife of King
Henry VIII*

by Gareth Russell
(Simon & Schuster)

*Rasputin: Faith, Power, and the Twilight of
the Romanovs*

by Douglas Smith

(David R. Godine)

*Tlacaelel Remembered: Mastermind of the
Aztec Empire*

by Susan Schroeder
(University of Oklahoma Press)

*Fire and Ice: Li Cunxu and the Founding of
the Later Tang*

by Richard L. Davis
(Hong Kong University Press)

Abhishek Bachchan: Style & Substance

by Pradeep Chandra
(Niyogi Books)

*John McDonald and the Whiskey Ring:
From Thug to Grant's Inner Circle*

by Edward S. Cooper
(Fairleigh Dickinson University Press)

*Toni Morrison: Life, Liberty, and
Literature*

by Veronica Hendrick
(Routledge)

*Outlandish Knight: The Byzantine Life of
Steven Runciman*

by Minoo Dinshaw
(Allen Lane)

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux)

Last Girl Before Freeway: The Life, Loves, Losses, and Liberation of Joan Rivers

by Leslie Bennetts
(Little, Brown)

Moses: A Human Life

by Avivah Gottlieb Zornberg
(Yale University Press)

I Read the News Today, Oh Boy: The Short and Gilded life of Tara Browne, the Man

Who Inspired the Beatles' Greatest Song
by Paul Howard
(Picador)

Hitler's Religion: The Twisted Beliefs that Drove the Third Reich

by Richard Weikart
(Regnery History)

Bear: The Life and Times of Augustus Owsley Stanley III

by Robert Greenfield
(Thomas Dunne Books)

Kafka: The Early Years

by Reiner Stach, translated
by Shelley Frisch
(Princeton University Press)

Æthelred: The Unready

by Levi Roach
(Yale University Press)

The Life and Work of Sid Grossman

by Keith Davis
(Steidl/Howard Greenberg Library)

W. E. B. Du Bois: Revolutionary Across the Color Line

by Bill V. Mullen
(Pluto Press)

Indomitable: The Life of Barbara Grier

by Joanne Passet
(Bella Books)

Arrivals and Sailings: The Making of George Wyllie

by Jan Patience and Louise Wyllie
(Birlinn)

Wings of Valor: Honoring America's Fighter Aces

by Nick Del Calzo and Peter Collier
(Naval Institute Press)

The Man Who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo: Charles Deville Wells, Gambler and Fraudster Extraordinaire

by Robin Quinn

The Spy Who Couldn't Spell: A Dyslexic Traitor, an Unbreakable Code, and the FBI's Hunt for America's Stolen Secrets
by Yudhijit Bhattacharjee
(NAL)

One-Man Show: The Life and Art of Bernard Perlin
by Michael Schreiber
(Bruno Gmuender)

A Warrior of the People: How Susan La Flesche Overcame Racial and Gender Inequality to Become America's First Indian Doctor
by Joe Starita
(St. Martin's Press)

Somebody to Love: The Life, Death and Legacy of Freddie Mercury
by Mark Langthorne and Matt Richards
(BLINK Publishing)

Snake: The Legendary Life of Ken Stabler
by Mike Freeman
(Dey Street Books)

Prince: Purple Reign
by Mick Wall

(The History Press)

Hank: The Short Life and Long Country Road of Hank Williams
by Mark Ribowsky
(Liveright)

Toussaint Louverture: A Revolutionary Life
by Philippe Girard
(Basic Books)

Raphael Lemkin and the Concept of Genocide
by Douglas Irvin-Erickson
(University of Pennsylvania Press)

The Némirovsky Question: The Life, Death, and Legacy of a Jewish Writer in Twentieth-Century France
by Susan Rubin Suleiman
(Yale University Press)

Willy Brandt: Life of a Statesman
by Hélène Miard-Delacroix
(I. B. Tauris)

Lives of the Great Gardeners
by Stephen Anderton
(Thames & Hudson)

(Trapeze)

*Rejected Princesses: Tales of History's
Boldest Heroines, Hellions, and Heretics*

by Jason Porath
(Dey Street Books)

*No Quarter: The Three Lives
of Jimmy Page*

by Martin Power
(Overlook-Omnibus)

*Phog: The Most Influential Man in
Basketball*

by Scott Morrow Johnson
(University of Nebraska Press)

Freud: In His Time and Ours
by Élisabeth Roudinesco, translated by
Catherine Porter
(Harvard University Press)

*Olympic Collision: The Story of Mary
Decker and Zola Budd*

by Kyle Keiderling
(University of Nebraska Press)

*Bill Davis: Nation Builder, and Not So
Bland After All*

by Steve Paikin
(J. Patrick Boyer)

Elinor Ostrom: An Intellectual Biography
by Vlad Tarko

(Rowman & Littlefield International)

*Witkin & Witkin: Joel-Peter Witkin, A
Photographer; Jerome Witkin, A Painter*

by Trisha Ziff
(Trilce Ediciones)

Pharrell Williams: Blurring the Lines
by Chris Roberts
(Carlton Books)

*Charlie Chaplin's Little Tramp in America,
1947-77*

by Lisa Stein Haven
(Palgrave Macmillan)

*Eleven Months to Freedom: A German
POW's Unlikely Escape from Siberia in
1915*

by Dwight R. Messimer
(Naval Institute Press)

*Willis Duke Weatherford:
Race, Religion, and Reform
in the American South*

by Andrew McNeill Canady
(University Press of Kentucky)

The Ambivalent Legacy of Elia Kazan: The

Louise Nevelson: Light and Shadow
by Laurie Wilson
(Thames & Hudson)

*Being Abdullah Ahmad Badawi: The
Authorised Biography*
by Datuk Wong Sulong
Pelanduk Publications

*In Love and Struggle: The Revolutionary
Lives of James and Grace Lee Boggs*
by Stephen M. Ward
(University of North Carolina Press)

*Game of Queens: The Women Who Made
Sixteenth-Century Europe*
by Sarah Gristwood
(Basic Books)

Edward IV: The Summer King
by A. J. Pollard
(Penguin UK)

Peter O'Toole: The Definitive Biography
by Robert Sellers
(Thomas Dunne Books)

*JFK and the Masculine Mystique: Sex and
Power on the New Frontier*
by Steven Watts

Politics of the Post-HUAC Films
by Ron Briley
(Rowman & Littlefield)

Defender: The Life of Daniel H. Wells
by Quentin Thomas Wells
(Utah State University Press)

*Surge of Piety: Norman Vincent Peale and
the Remaking of
American Religious Life*
by Christopher Lane
(Yale University Press)

*Rodolphe Brèsdin: The Incurable
Bohemian*
by Trevor Dance
(Unicorn Press)

*Going to Extremes: The Adventurous Life
of Harry de Windt*
by Stephen Wade
(Pen and Sword)

Emma Hamilton: Seduction and Celebrity
by Quintin Colville and Kate Williams
(Thames & Hudson)

Steve Jobs: A Biography
by Michael B. Becraft
(Greenwood)

(Thomas Dunne Books)

*Park Chung Hee and Modern Korea: The
Roots of Militarism, 1866-1945*

by Carter J. Eckert
(Belknap Press)

*Casanova: The World of a Seductive
Genius*

by Laurence Bergreen
(Simon & Schuster)

José Mourinho: Up Close and Personal

by Robert Beasley
(Michael O'Mara)

*Islamic Civilization in Thirty Lives: The
First 1,000 Years*

by Chase F. Robinson
(University of California Press)

Writing to Save a Life: The Louis Till File

by John Edgar Wideman
(Scribner)

The Resistible Rise of Benjamin Netanyahu

by Neill Lochery
(Bloomsbury USA)

Ptolemy I: King and Pharaoh of Egypt

by Ian Worthington

*Encounters with John Bowlby: Tales of
Attachment*

by Arturo Ezquerro
(Routledge)

Alfred Bester

by Jad Smith
(University of Illinois Press)

*Bill Ratliff: A Profile of Courage and
Leadership in American Politics*

by Robert Edward Sterken Jr.
(Lexington Books)

*An Abolitionist Abroad: Sarah Parker
Remond in Cosmopolitan Europe*

by Sirpa Salenius
(University of Massachusetts Press)

*The Boss of Bethnal Green, Joseph
Merceron the Godfather of Regency
London*

by Julian Woodford
(Spitalfields Life Books)

*The Black Panther: The Trials and
Abductions of Donald Neilson*

by Gordon Lowe
(The History Press)

(Oxford University Press)

By Women Possessed: A Life of Eugene O'Neill

by Arthur Gelb and Barbara Gelb
(Marian Wood Books/Putnam)

Caravaggio and the Creation of Modernity

by Troy Thomas
(Reaktion Books)

Building the City of Spectacle: Mayor Richard M. Daley and the Remaking of Chicago

by Costas Spirou and Dennis R. Judd
(Cornell University Press)

Trammel's Trace: The First Road to Texas from the North

by Gary L. Pinkerton
(Texas A&M University Press)

Queen Victoria and the European Empires

by John Van der Kiste
(Fonthill Media)

New Politics in the Old South: Ernest F. Hollings in the Civil Rights

by David T. Ballantyne
(University of South Carolina Press)

Adele

by Sean Smith
(HarperCollins)

Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan: Humanitarian and Visionary

by Diana Miserez
(Book Guild Publishing)

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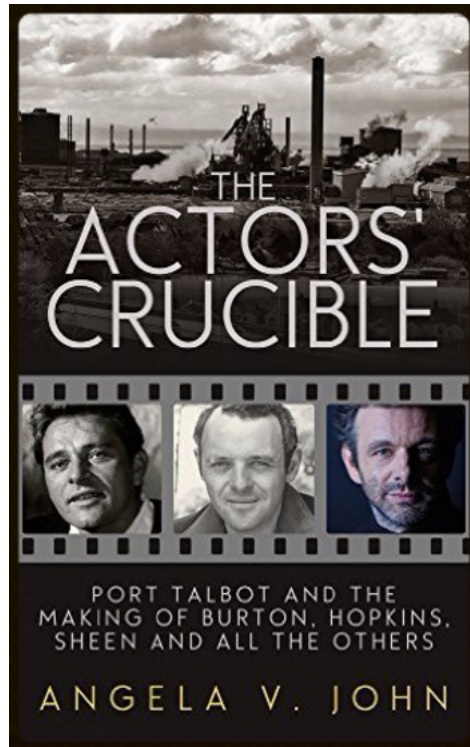
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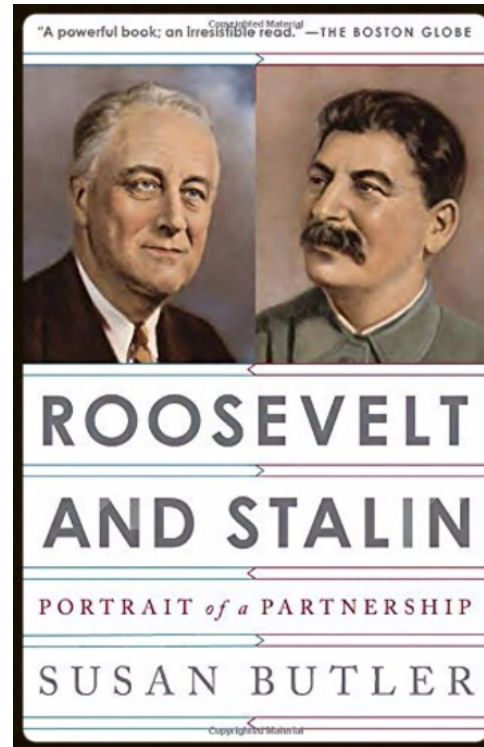
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(Routledge)

Amanuensis

Amanuensis: A person whose employment is to write what another dictates, or to copy what another has written. Source: *Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary* (1913).

A biographer herself, [Elisabeth] Elliot wrote about the friction between what the public wanted and the private realities of the self from the other side of the exchange. She deplored the tendency to include only the facts which fit a preconception. When she wrote her late husband's [Jim Elliott] biography—drawing heavily on excerpts from

his own letters and journals—she declined to leave out the “warts,” despite his public status as a modern-day martyr: “I have not ‘delicately censored’ anything at all which I felt would contribute to the faithful portrayal of the whole man as I knew him.” Since the journals included not only stirring spiritual meditations but fairly explicit accounts of struggle with sexual desire, this must have shocked the more traditionalist members of her audience. Of the research and writing process she wrote, “Again and again I found myself tempted to ask what my readers would want this man to be, or what I wanted him to be, or what he himself thought he was—and I had to ignore all such questions in favor of the one relevant consideration: Is this true? Is this how it really was? And of course this is the question that any writer, of any kind of literature, has to be asking all the time.” [\[more\]](#)

Lucy S. R. Austen, “‘Is This How it Really Was?’ Exploring Lives Through Private and Public Writing”



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