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.

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
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 just days ago in Oxford, England.
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 perenniel 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:*

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.

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 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 Darknesses: 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

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.
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

By Barbara Fisher

Julia Van Haaften described her role as “an accidental
In 2015, Julia Van Haaften wrote the introduction to a collection of Berenice Abbott's photos.

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
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

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.

Please respond promptly to your membership renewal notice. As a nonprofit
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.
Reiner Stach published the third volume of his Franz Kafka biography earlier this month.

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 Prize. A Letter from the Vice President

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 of a new bookcase. If you’re interested in learning more about the Levy Center, please visit their website at leonlevycenter.org. Thank you for your understanding.
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](mailto: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 familiar 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 about Africa or books about...
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](#).
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 of a diary written by a biographer.

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

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. Some would say that books —
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 Barbara Guest, and 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-
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.

**Prizes**

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 faces that seem especially...
Aaron Henry was a prominent civil rights activist in Mississippi.

**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 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
• *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*.

---

**BIO's Board of Directors**

Will Swift, President
Deirdre David, Vice President
Marc Leepson, Treasurer
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 Dickinson

**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
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

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 enewsletter 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

Sarah Jensen has known her subject for 30 years.

The Biographer's Craft

Editor
Michael Holroyd
Eric Lax
David Levering Lewis
John Matteson
William S. McFeely
Jon Meacham
Marion Meade
Nancy Milford
Andrew Morton
Martin J. Sherwin
T.J. Stiles
William Taubman
Terry Teachout

Consulting Editor
James McGrath Morris

Copy Editor
Michael Burgan
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,
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)
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)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rejected Princesses: Tales of History's Boldest Heroines, Hellions, and Heretics</td>
<td>Jason Porath</td>
<td>Dey Street Books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Quarter: The Three Lives of Jimmy Page</td>
<td>Martin Power</td>
<td>Overlook-Omnibus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phog: The Most Influential Man in Basketball</td>
<td>Scott Morrow Johnson</td>
<td>University of Nebraska Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freud: In His Time and Ours</td>
<td>Elisabeth Roudinesco, translated by Catherine Porter</td>
<td>Harvard University Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olympic Collision: The Story of Mary Decker and Zola Budd</td>
<td>Kyle Keiderling</td>
<td>University of Nebraska Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Davis: Nation Builder, and Not So Bland After All</td>
<td>Steve Paikin</td>
<td>University Press of Kentucky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elinor Ostrom: An Intellectual Biography</td>
<td>Vlad Tarko</td>
<td>Rowman &amp; Littlefield International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witkin &amp; Witkin: Joel-Peter Witkin, A Photographer; Jerome Witkin, A Painter</td>
<td>Trisha Ziff</td>
<td>Trilce Ediciones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharrell Williams: Blurring the Lines</td>
<td>Chris Roberts</td>
<td>Carlton Books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlie Chaplin's Little Tramp in America, 1947-77</td>
<td>Lisa Stein Haven</td>
<td>Palgrave Macmillan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleven Months to Freedom: A German POW's Unlikely Escape from Siberia in 1915</td>
<td>Dwight R. Messimer</td>
<td>Palgrave Macmillan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willis Duke Weatherford: Race, Religion, and Reform in the American South</td>
<td>Andrew McNeill Canady</td>
<td>University Press of Kentucky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ambivalent Legacy of Elia Kazan: The</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 Incorrigible
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)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Park Chung Hee and Modern Korea: The Roots of Militarism, 1866-1945</td>
<td>by Carter J. Eckert</td>
<td>Belknap Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casanova: The World of a Seductive Genius</td>
<td>by Laurence Bergreen</td>
<td>Simon &amp; Schuster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>José Mourinho: Up Close and Personal</td>
<td>by Robert Beasley</td>
<td>Michael O'Mara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic Civilization in Thirty Lives: The First 1,000 Years</td>
<td>by Chase F. Robinson</td>
<td>University of California Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing to Save a Life: The Louis Till File</td>
<td>by John Edgar Wideman</td>
<td>Scribner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Resistible Rise of Benjamin Netanyahu</td>
<td>by Neil Lochery</td>
<td>Bloomsbury USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ptolemy I: King and Pharaoh of Egypt</td>
<td>by Ian Worthington</td>
<td>The History Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encounters with John Bowlby: Tales of Attachment</td>
<td>by Arturo Ezquerro</td>
<td>Routledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfred Bester</td>
<td>by Jad Smith</td>
<td>University of Illinois Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Abolitionist Abroad: Sarah Parker Remond in Cosmopolitan Europe</td>
<td>by Sirpa Salenius</td>
<td>University of Massachusetts Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Boss of Bethnal Green, Joseph Merceron the Godfather of Regency London</td>
<td>by Julian Woodford</td>
<td>Spitalfields Life Books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Black Panther: The Trials and Abductions of Donald Neilson</td>
<td>by Gordon Lowe</td>
<td>The History Press</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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)

Maud Coleno’s Daughter: The Life of Dorothy Hartman, 1898-1957
by John Dann
(Matador)

John F. Kennedy and PT-109
by Richard Tregaskis
(Open Road Integrated Media)

A Radical Faith: The Assassination of Sister Maura
by Eileen Markey
(Nation Books/Perseus)

Edward Ardizzone: Artist and Illustrator
by Alan Powers
(Lund Humphries)
*Damning Words: The Life and Religious Times of H. L. Mencken*  
by D. G. Hart  
(Eerdmans)

*The Case of Rose Bird: Gender, Politics, and the California Courts*  
by Kathleen A. Cairns  
(Bison Books)

*Octavia E. Butler*  
by Gerry Canavan  
(University of Illinois Press)

*Max Baer and Barney Ross: Jewish Heroes of Boxing*  
by Jeffrey Sussman  
(Rowman & Littlefield)

*Serious Daring: The Fiction and Photography of Eudora Welty and Rosamond Purcell*  
by Susan Letzler Cole  
(University of Arkansas Press)

*The Hitler Conspirator: The Story of Kurt Baron von Plettenberg and Stauffenberg’s Valkyrie Plot to Kill the Fuhrer*  
by Eberhard Schmidt  
(Frontline Books)
Paperback

The Actors’ Crucible: Port Talbot and the Making of Burton, Hopkins, Sheen and All the Others
by Angela V. John
(Parthian Books)

Roosevelt and Stalin, Portrait of a Partnership
by Susan Butler
(Vintage)

The Legacy of Cornelius Cardew
Game Changers: The Unsung Heroines of Sports History
By Molly Schiot
(Simon & Schuster)

John le Carre: The Biography
by Adam Sisman
(Harper)

Kill 'Em and Leave: Searching for James Brown and the American Soul
by James McBride
(Spiegel & Grau)

Montana: The Biography of Football’s Joe Cool
by Keith Dunnavant
(St. Martin’s Griffin)

Blood Brothers: The Fatal Friendship Between Muhammad Ali and Malcolm X
by Randy Roberts and Johnny Smith
(Basic Books)

Church of Spies: The Pope’s Secret War Against Hitler
by Mark Riebling
(Basic Books)

The Road to Ruin: How Tony Abbott and Peta Credlin Destroyed Their Own

Karol Szymanowski: His Life and Work
by Alistair Wightman
(Routledge)

Nadia and Lili Boulanger
by Caroline Potter
(Routledge)

Young Orson: The Years of Luck and Genius on the Path to Citizen Kane
by Patrick McGilligan
(Harper Perennial)

Alexander Nimmo Master Engineer 1783-1832: Public Works and Civil Survey
by Noel P. Wilkins
(Irish Academic Press)

Edmund Campion: Memory and Transcription
by Gerard Kilroy
(Routledge)

The Year of Fear: Machine Gun Kelly and the Manhunt That Changed the Nation
by Joe Urschel
(Minotaur Books)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>by Niki Savva</td>
<td>(Scribe Publications)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Convict's Daughter: The Scandal that Shocked a Colony</td>
<td>by Kiera Lindsey</td>
<td>(Allen &amp; Unwin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Curious Friendship: The Story of a Bluestocking and a Bright Young Thing</td>
<td>by Anna Thomasson</td>
<td>(Pan Macmillan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lion of Sabray: The Afghan Warrior Who Defied the Taliban and Saved the Life of Navy SEAL Marcus Luttrell</td>
<td>by Patrick Robinson</td>
<td>(Touchstone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Devil's General: The Life of Hyazinth Graf von Strachwitz, “The Panzer Graf”</td>
<td>by Raymond Bagdonas</td>
<td>(Casemate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joan Chittister: Her Journey from Certainty to Faith</td>
<td>by Tom Roberts</td>
<td>(Orbis Books)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proust: The Search</td>
<td>by Benjamin Taylor</td>
<td>(Yale University Press)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trammell: Detroit's Iconic Shortstop</td>
<td>by Todd Masters</td>
<td>(McFarland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Daughter's Deadly Deception: The Jennifer Pan Story</td>
<td>by Jeremy Grimaldi</td>
<td>(Dundurn)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ambitions of Jane Franklin: Victorian Lady Adventurer</td>
<td>by Alison Alexander</td>
<td>(Allen &amp; Unwin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleanor Marx: A Life</td>
<td>by Rachel Holmes</td>
<td>(Bloomsbury)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Life and Music of Eric Coates</td>
<td>by Michael Payne</td>
<td>(Routledge)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Purple Diaries: Mary Astor and the Most Sensational Hollywood Scandal of the 1930s
by Joseph Egan
(Diversion Publishing)

Marvelous: The Marvin Hagler Story
by Brian Hughes and Damian Hughes
(Pitch Publishing)

Mary of Nazareth: History, Archaeology, Legends
by Michael Hesemann
(Ignatius Press)

Augustus: The Biography
by Jochen Bleicken, translated by Anthea Bell
(Penguin UK)

Muhammadu Buhari: The Challenges of Leadership in Nigeria
by John N. Paden
(Roaring Forties Press)

Money: The Life and Fast Times of Floyd Mayweather
by Tris Dixon
(Birlinn)

Chin: The Life and Crimes of Mafia Boss

Peggy Guggenheim: The Shock of the Modern
by Francine Prose
(Yale University Press)

Sons of the 43rd: The Story of Delmar Dotson, Gray Allison, and the Men of the 43rd Bombardment Group in the Southwest Pacific
by Michael R Spradlin
(Innovo Publishing)

The Life of Saul Bellow: To Fame and Fortune, 1915-1964
by Zachary Leader
(Vintage)

Frick: Baseball’s Third Commissioner
by John Carvalho
(McFarland)

Fighting for Life: The Story of Jake Lamotta
by Freedman Lew
(Blue River Press)

In Search of Song: The Life and Times of Lucy Broadwood
by Dorothy de Val
(Routledge)

North Carolina Governor Richard Caswell:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Vincent Gigante</em></td>
<td>by Larry McShane</td>
<td>(Pinnacle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Elizabeth: Renaissance Prince</em></td>
<td>by Lisa Hilton</td>
<td>(Mariner Books)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Red Ripper: Inside the Mind of Russia’s Most Brutal Serial Killer</em></td>
<td>by Peter Conradi</td>
<td>(Open Road Media)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Warburgs: The Twentieth-Century Odyssey of a Remarkable Jewish Family</em></td>
<td>by Ron Chernow</td>
<td>(Vintage)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The House That Jack Built: Jack Mundey, Green Bans Hero</em></td>
<td>by Jim Colman</td>
<td>(University of New South Wales Press)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Lost Airman: A True Story of Escape from Nazi-Occupied France</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Founding Father and Revolutionary Hero</em></td>
<td>by Joe A. Mobley</td>
<td>(The History Press)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Wanderer: The Story of Frank Soo</em></td>
<td>by Susan Gardiner</td>
<td>(Electric Blue Publishing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Saladin and the Fall of Jerusalem: Richard the Lionheart, the Crusades and the Battle for the Holy Land</em></td>
<td>by Stanley Lane-Poole and David Nicolle</td>
<td>(Frontline Books)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Jahangir Khan 555: The Untold Story Behind Squash’s Invincible Champion and Sport’s Greatest Unbeaten Run</em></td>
<td>by Rod Gilmour</td>
<td>(Pitch Publishing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Walter Benjamin: A Critical Life</em></td>
<td>by Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings</td>
<td>(Belknap Press)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Life and Times of Moses Jacob Ezekiel:</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
by Seth Meyerowitz and Peter Stevens
(NAL)

God and Churchill: How the Great
Leader’s Sense of Divine Destiny Changed
His Troubled World and Offers Hope for
Ours
by Jonathan Sandys and Wallace Henley
(SPCK Publishing)

Bill Cush
by David Benton
(Black Rose Writing)

The Making of a Modern Indian Artist-
Craftsman: Devi Prasad
by Naman Ahuja
(Routledge India)

Woodward and Bernstein: The People’s
Right to Know
by Julie A. Goldsmith
(Routledge)

Hybrid Judaism: Irving Greenberg,
Encounter, and the Changing Nature of
American Jewish Identity
by Darren Kleinberg
(Academic Studies Press)

José Fernández: Passion for Baseball,
American Sculptor, Arcadian Knight
by Peter Adam Nash
(Fairleigh Dickinson University Press)

George Galphin and the Transformation of
the Georgia–South Carolina Backcountry
by Michael P. Morris
(Lexington Books)

Pendergast!
by Lawrence H. Larsen and Nancy J.
Hulston
(University of Missouri Press)

Clarice Cliff
by Lynn Knight
(Bloomsbury)

Stanley Melbourne Bruce: Australian
Internationalist
by David Lee
(Bloomsbury Academic)

Wyatt Earp’s Last Deputy
by Casey Tefertiller
(Turner)

Okina Kyuin and the Politics of Early
Japanese Immigration to the United States,
1868-1924
by Ikuko Torimoto
Passion for Life
by Clark Spencer
(Herald Books)

Notorious Victoria: The Uncensored Life of Victoria Woodhull - Visionary, Suffragist, and First Woman to Run for President
by Mary Gabriel
(Algonquin Books)

One Day As A Tiger: Alex MacIntyre and the Birth of Light and Fast Alpinism
by John Porter
(Rocky Mountain Books)

Marie Curie - A Nobel Life
by Ann Atkins
(Flash History Press)

The Brothers Vonnegut: Science and Fiction in the House of Magic
by Ginger Strand
(Farrar, Straus & Giroux)

Lion of the Senate: When Ted Kennedy Rallied the Democrats in a GOP Congress
by Nick Littlefield and David Nexon
(Simon & Schuster)

A Life Worth Living: Albert Camus and

J. L. Wilkinson and the Kansas City Monarchs: Trailblazers in Black Baseball
by William A. Young
(McFarland)

Philo T Farnsworth
by Donald Godfrey
(University of Utah Press)

Capturing the Fire: The Sally Little Story
by Adli Jacobs
(CreateSpace Independent Publishing)

John McCrae: Beyond Flanders Fields
by Susan Raby-Dunne
(Heritae House)

Louis Alexandre De La Rochefoucauld: Aristocrat In The Service Of Science
by Daniel Vaugelade
(Commonwealth Books of Virginia)

Who’s There?: The Biography of William Hartnell
by Jessica Carney
(Fantom Films)

Henri Dutilleux: His Life and Works
by Caroline Potter
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Amanuensis</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amanuensis</strong>: A person whose employment is to write what another dictates, or to copy what another has written. Source: Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary (1913).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.”

Lucy S. R. Austen, “‘Is This How it Really Was?’ Exploring Lives Through Private and Public Writing”
This email was sent to . To ensure that you continue receiving our emails, please add us to your address book or safe list.

manage your preferences | opt out using TrueRemove®