

News

Reporting and Writing

[影印]

新闻报道与写作

Ninth Edition (第九版)

Melvin Mencher



新闻与传播系列教材·英文原版系列

清华大学出版社

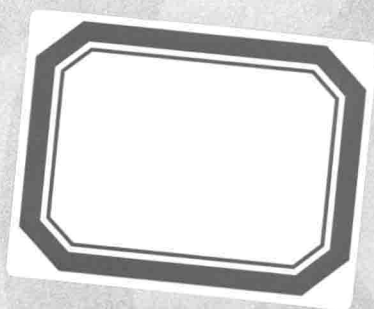
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News Reporting and Writing, Ninth Edition

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总 序

麦克卢汉所预言的地球村，当年人们还半信半疑，如今却几乎成了一个不争的现实。通信卫星、互联网、电子信号以及现代化的交通运输工具，已经将地球联结为一个巨大的网络，环环相扣、息息相关。中国走向世界或者世界走向中国已经不再是一种期待，中国已经立足于世界，世界已经包容着中国。正是在这样一种全球化的时代，中国的新闻传播教育也进入了一个新时期。在未来的世界中，信息就是力量，获得信息和传播信息都将成为衡量一个国家和民族在世界上的地位和影响的重要标志。中国和关于中国的信息传播，其质量和数量都是中国世界形象和世界作用的一个象征。因而，为了适应这种全球化发展趋势，中国未来的新一代新闻与传播人才，必然将越来越需要一种世界性的传播视野、国际性的传播能力和全球性的传播意识。

正是基于这样的认识，与清华大学建设“综合性、研究型、开放式”的世界一流大学的规划相适应，清华大学新闻与传播学院在建院初始就计划一方面陆续在校内开设部分新闻学、传播学英语课程和中英文双语课程，另一方面将陆续编辑出版与课程相适应的英文原版系列教材，以培养学生的国际传播和国际交流的素质和能力。

这套英文原版教材包括新闻学、传播学、媒介研究和应用等方面的内容，主要集中在新闻学、电子（广播电影电视）传播、新闻媒体传播以及媒介经营管理四个方面。这也是目前清华大学在广泛考察了国内外新闻与传播教育的状况、结合传媒发展实际后，所规划的四个重点研究方向和培养方向。在学院的教学规划中，多数新闻与传播的主干课程都将配备英文原版教材作为主要教材、辅助教材或者教学参考书。

这套经过认真挑选的英文教材，都是欧美国家正在使用的主流教材，多数已经多次再版，具有一定的权威性或代表性，而我们选择的则是这些教材的最新版本。近年来，国内出版了一些翻译的国外新闻学、传播学教材，但是质量参差不齐，有的教材的选择不够适宜，更重要的是翻译质量难以保证，而且由于经过了一次中英文的转换之后，原文的表达和意义往往都不同程度地受到一些损害甚至歪曲。所以，我们和清华大学出版社合作，决定直接将英文原版引进出版，一方面让具有英语阅读能力的学生、读者能够直接阅读和理解英文原文的内容；同时，也让学生将英语学习与专业学习相结合，起到一石二鸟的作用；当然，这样也可以避免目前一些外文教材由于中文翻译出现的错误和疏漏而引起的误导。实际上，直接阅读英文原版专业教材，也许本来就应该成为适应全球化趋势的新一代新闻与传播人才的基本学习能力之一。

中国的新闻传播教育与当前传媒发展的规模和速度相比，应该说还远远不能适应。新闻

学与传播学的知识、方法、观念、体系等都面临着重大的更新。在这种情况下，这套英文原版教材的引进对于中国新闻与传播教育的发展也许会起到一定的推动作用。这些教材由于与中国国情不同，也由于作者的立场、观点、方法和知识结构的不同，在某些方面可能会引起不同的评价和看法，所以，我们希望读者能够有一种清醒的反思性的阅读意识，像鲁迅先生所说的那样，有一种“拿来主义”的胸怀和立场，从这些教材中吸取那些能够给我们带来健康的滋养和启发的资源，去其糟粕。其实，任何书都不可尽信，经典也不例外。所以，这套英文原版教材仅仅是为新闻与传播教育提供了一种新的改革实验，绝不是移植来的洋教条。中国的新闻与传播教育的根基依然在中国本土这片独特的土地上。

本套教材将陆续出版，热诚地希望国内外的专家学者能够向我们推荐更多的英文原版教材。

感谢关心和支持本套教材编辑出版的清华大学出版社的有关人员及国内外同行。

新闻与传播系列教材·英文原版系列编委会

2002年4月

新闻的章法

——英文影印版《新闻写作与报道》第九版导读

董关鹏

撰写这篇导读是从北京机场的候机大厅开始的，恰好赶上某中央媒体对一位来华体育明星进行现场采访，场面很有感染力：专业的灯光、两位不同机位的摄像师、还有专业着装的出镜记者。中国的电视新闻，达到今天的专业化操作，我们曾经历了十分漫长的一个过程。很多我在英国工作时候的场景一下子又历历在目，今天作为一名中国新闻传播教育的学者，不禁有很多感慨。新闻学教育的核心争论已经有很长时间了，那就是学生从一个新闻学院毕业以后，我们希望他带走的是什么？在媒体工作的年轻同事曾经向我抱怨，从新闻学院毕业来到媒体以后，居然发现自己竟然连基本采访如何实地进行都不懂。也有学生对我讲，基本的采访还算做得来，可是为什么总是发现学习过的“知识”要经过那么长的时间才能够通过实践而变成自己的本领。传统的新闻学教育出了什么问题？什么时候能让学生从新闻学院一毕业就能够胸有成竹地投入新闻实践的工作？难道世界上所有的新闻学院的毕业生都有如此的困惑吗？

在候机大厅里，突然发现身边有很多人在同时使用无线上网的笔记本电脑，“信息海量”已经成为全球传播时代最显著特点，有什么理由让新闻故事获得最多眼球的关注？很多传统的传媒品牌在今天已经不能为你的读者、观众和受众提供足够关注自己的理由。我们今天所说的“新闻写作与报道”已经前所未有地拓宽了它的范围，它可能是报纸的、广播的、电视的、网络媒体的，更有可能是我们从来没有正视的手机短信、街头广告、图文电视或电子游戏。媒体的概念被拓展了，新闻的写作与采访的概念也被赋予了新的含义。如果我们今天讲的新闻写作与采访还是针对于新媒体挑战之下的传统媒体，那么至少我们的目标应该始终是提高一篇可以与新媒体所有优势相抗衡的“全能文章”。

我拿在手里的是看得有些卷边的梅尔文·孟彻经过九次修订的“后9·11时代”最新版本的《新闻写作与报道》，什么样的教材可以经过25年的考验而仍然畅销不衰？对本书的第八版我已经有过近乎字斟句酌的研究，曾经以学生、教师和业者的三种身份研读此书，角色的变换没有让我意识到任何的不合时宜，当然随着国家和新闻机构的角色转换，仍然还有很多层面需要因地制宜。被清华大学出版社邀请为本书的影印版作导读已经颇有些时日，当初欣然应允之际，又有很多压力，觉得为这样一本经典著作撰写导读是一种光荣，但是要以一种方式让读者更加容易领会原作者在新闻学技法与理念上的高明之处，并且不脱离中国的新闻业界实际，不是一件容易的工作。想把这本经典的新闻学教材推荐给大家，已经有过一

段时间了，清华大学出版社曾经想于去年影印出版此书1999年的第八版，后来美国出版社方面告知刚刚修订的第九版即将面世，为了让大家看到最新的版本，我们决定等到今天。

想起日内瓦湖：天山天池边的感叹

带着为本书撰写导读的任务，踏上了暑期的外出讲学之路。先是在青岛讲学，差不多天天抱着这本书在宾馆里研读，始终没有下笔，对第九版的增删内容十分关注，再次深深意识到一本经典新闻学教科书经历二十余年始终畅销的各种原由。后来到了乌鲁木齐，因为是第一次来到新疆，发现了很多的从前对新疆的误解。自治区党委副书记努尔·白克力介绍说，新疆的人均生产总值排名全国第十，可我相信一定有太多的人跟我一样，对西部，包括新疆常常有一个非常模糊的认识，比如西部就一定不发达，拥有黄土地与沙漠就一定缺水，新疆只有吐鲁番的葡萄和克拉玛依的石油……，我们是从中国的主流媒体获得这些信息的。可当我站在红山鸟瞰乌鲁木齐这座现代化的都市的时候，我被震撼了。记者与学者的经历让自己去过很多国家和都市，我很难找到这座城市比他们缺少任何都市元素，我开始也职业性地关注新疆的媒体，这里的记者有没有站在外边人的视角向外边的人讲述一个真实的新疆？这种关注后来始终贯穿于我的新疆之行。除了及时报道以外，新闻记者还有那么多责任让“无知”成为“有知”，因为媒体过度发达的全球传播时代，媒体没有报道的事件就等于没有发生。

第三天的行程是参观天山天池，并在昌吉州阜康市的哈萨克族毡房中亲历天山风情与哈萨克民族好客的饮食文化。对天池的匆匆参访，感触颇多。碧蓝的天池加上远处的雪山让我想起了自己曾经学习和生活过的瑞士日内瓦湖畔。同是碧湖雪山，一个是举世闻名，一个是默默无闻。全球传播的学者已经在强调现在是一个酒香也怕巷子深的时代，没有以国际语言沟通而传播出去的信息，就不可能获得外界对你的最真实了解，甚至在很多的他方的认知中它压根就不存在。最基层和最前线的新闻记者每天生产的都是这个传播过程的第一手原材料，一切的成败都不可避免地从这里开始了。

《新闻写作与报道》就应该从这里读起，新闻记者要对自己所见所闻的新闻元素保持高度的敏感性，该书的第二章就详细阐述了一个好新闻的最基本要素。漏掉任何的元素都是职业精神所不能够容忍的。当然我这里谈到的问题也涉及到中国新闻工作者的“术”的问题，没有漏掉任何因素，信息完全交给受众，也不见得就能成为一名好记者，关键还得为受众提供他们更加易于接受的新闻故事。这本书正是一本向中国业界朋友传授写作与报道之“术”的著作。

全球视野的报道与新媒体的时代

这已经是一个在全球范围内交换信息的时代，信息技术把世界的每一个角落都紧密地联结起来，中国和其他任何一个明星国家一样，她的任何一个角落都和美国这样号称世界中心

的国家紧密关联。我们的新闻记者也应当像美国同行一样，在新闻报道中总保持一个全球视野和对全球背景的阐释，不仅仅新闻社的记者应该如此，那些只为自己媒体写稿子的记者也是义不容辞，否则就会阻拦自己所在的媒体融入这个全球传播的过程。理论家说，这种传播是让话语权的持有双方共同获益的传播，不对称传播的最后结果只能是一个国家或地区的全面落后。

国内出版的新闻学著作中，大家熟悉的李希光教授的新著《新闻学核心》具有显要的位置。该书的上篇“新闻学核心”一再将美国的新闻报道手段与视角和中国相对比，比较之中的应有之意就是，我们该以更加开放的全球视野与胸怀，构建报道今天中国人和各个不同层面的新闻故事。李教授将西方的“框架”理论结合到中国的实际，深入浅出地论证了具有“议程设置”和“章法”的新闻思维。孟彻的《新闻写作与报道》与李教授的观点不谋而合，尤其是从微观上来讲的“导语问题”、新闻的“视觉化”和“故事化”问题都取得了共识。与国内大部分的相关主题著作相比，由于孟氏的著作已经过多年再版，在美国新闻学教育的成熟环境中，更具有系统性、可操作性和全面性。

全球传播时代的最显著特点就是新媒体技术的应用，政治传播学者归纳出了这样的几个特点：资讯富裕的社会、论证式的民主、互动式的信息传递过程、网络与中介政治的出现。新版的《新闻写作与报道》加入了为新媒体写作的章节，足见西方主流新闻学院对新媒体给传统媒体报道技术带来挑战与影响的关注。新闻工作者在这个时代，忽略了对新媒体技术在写作与报道中的应用，就在走向边缘了。这本书的第九版，尤其增加了新媒体报道的一章，其中的内容也不仅仅限于新媒体技术在一般写作与采访中的应用，更是兼顾了新媒体环境之下，受到挑战的传统报道方式将不得不做出某种应对的改良或改变。

突发事件中的媒体：坏消息就是好新闻？

有很多世界量级媒体都是从突发事件或危机的报道中迅速成长起来的，美国的有线新闻网（CNN）就是因为对海湾战争进行了史无前例的全程报道而获得包括美国总统和五角大楼高官在内的关注，甚至某些军方的情报也是从他们的前线记者那里得来，该新闻网马上声名大噪，成为世界闻名的“日不落新闻帝国”^①。中国香港的凤凰卫视也因为对2001年的中美撞机事件和“9·11”事件的第一时间全程报道而声名鹊起。同样方式树立的媒体品牌还有阿拉伯世界的半岛电视台（Al Jazeera）。中国的媒体也需要世界范围广泛承认的国际传媒品牌，否则我们就自动退出了世界舆论的大合唱。既然突发事件已经成为当今社会的一种常态，我们的媒体就不应该放弃任何可能使自己的媒体成为品牌的机会。

^① 美国有线新闻网现拥有美国亚特兰大、英国伦敦和中国香港三个最主要的广播电视中心，三个地方恰好各自相隔八个时区，前一个地方进入黄昏的时候，后一个地方又迎来黎明，因此二十四小时始终保证有最新的新闻来自该新闻网遍布全球的新闻资源网络，故号称“世界新闻的领袖”、“世界上第一个知道发生什么人”和“日不落的新闻帝国”。

曾经有很长的时间，我们对西方的新闻界有一个误解，比如“坏消息就是好新闻”，这显然是把西方媒体低估了。“好消息”同样可以成为西方新闻的头条和重点，关键在于新闻故事的“新闻点”。陆定一先生曾经给新闻下过最好的定义，只是一些实践者把这个给忘记了，不及时地报道怎么能够成为新闻呢？当然对突发事件的报道，不是看到一方风景就可以以偏概全，如果能在短时间内作出深度的报道，会赢得更多的尊敬。本书就提供了很多调查性报道的实例，从中我们可以学到很多西方新闻中弥足珍贵的东西。

完美主义的新闻学：形式大于内容？

是我们的包装做得太多了还是太少了？为什么地方党报不能再摊派订阅让那么多人变得那么紧张？宣传、宣传、再宣传，在党报记者和编辑的头脑中根深蒂固，可是“宣传”在西方已经被赋予贬义的色彩。网络媒体中近来十分流行民间归纳的某中央级媒体的公式化语言，并号称人人都可以成为这家媒体的大牌记者，因为在那里“大牌”的技巧居然就是这样的一系列公式！如果观众看了你的新闻，只听导语，就知道下文，这样的新闻还有什么意义？西方政治心理学家归纳出“看到—相信—被说服”这样一个认知链过程。要先让大家看到了，而且愿意看下去，然后就是要想办法让大家相信，要使用受众可以听懂的语言，不然就失去真正的意义了。

新闻不好看，人家干吗要看你的新闻？即使是全国重要的报纸或是国家电视台的黄金时间新闻节目，没人看的话其实际作用也会变得越来越不重要。新闻也要服从“眼球经济”的残酷原则，否则不但难以完成党的宣传任务，更谈不上完成维系自己生命线的经济任务。对新闻形式的苛求，并不必然影响到内容的可信性、真实性与客观性。新闻记者的天职就是把事实传递给受众，如果有人在就同一事件以更“可信”的方式造谣的时候，新闻记者也有义务和责任以高超的新闻的技巧和形式工具，把事实以更真实可信的方式传递给受众。

我曾经与英国的一名资深驻华记者有过交谈，他对很多记者归纳的中国新闻“党八股”论不以为然，他说这是中国新闻业者的一种朴实的新闻观。在他礼貌和尊重的观点之后，仍然不可以掩饰的是，“素面朝天”没有经过“包装”的新闻报道在我们现在所处的这个时代恐怕已经难以参与捕捉读者眼球的竞赛了。当然，希望不要误解这个“包装”的含义，事实就是事实，来不得半点虚假，然而在叙事的方式上，头脑里没有受众的“自娱自乐”者，不适合这个充满竞争的行业。孟氏这本书所讨论的“新闻的章法”包含有很多教大家从基础做起，不影响事实传递，让新闻故事以更加喜闻乐见的方式到达目标受众的方法。

关于直接引语

为什么在中国的平面媒体报道中常常很少看见被采访者的原话？似乎在中央级的很多其他媒体中也有类似的情况，精彩的发言常常被隐去或是换成了新闻播音员的同期配音，有魅

力的政治家、企业家和杰出的思想者变成了千人一面，失去了性格。其实并非演讲者的演讲有多么不精彩，而是我们的媒体从业人员还保持着当年的惯性，我们想说的是，惯性应该适应全球传播时代的特点而变化。现场感的提供已经成为新闻品牌中“可信性”和“客观性”的必备要素。

前新华社资深记者、香港树仁学院新闻学教授刘其中先生的新作《诤语良言》中专门留有一章探讨直接引语的使用。他在书中对比了国内外媒体对直接引语的使用情况，令人信服地指出，由于直接引语的缺失，中文媒体的可信度明显差于外国媒体。在全球传播时代，中文媒体也必须遵循一定的国际规则，只有这样，才能真正实现媒介与国际的接轨。

还有必要一提的是，突发事件频繁到来的时代，对新闻从业者在第一时间生产高品质新闻“产品”的要求也越来越高。长期以来，国内的业者习惯了在突发事件以后的“等、看、望”，常常是在第一时间以后才姗姗来迟地“袒露真言”，并且美其名曰“后发制人”。突发事件发生以后常常是“谣言满天飞”的时刻，主流渠道媒体记者的沉默，就毫无疑问的造成了小道消息的空前活跃。少量的主流新闻也大都是千篇一律的官样的新闻通稿，直接引语好像真的没有“市场”。

孟氏的著作反复强调“人”作为符号在新闻写作与报道中的突出作用，而“人”的全景塑造离不开直接引语——这个基本却十分好用的工具。

走近经典的美英新闻教育：新闻的章法要从“术”到“学”

中国的传统新闻教育工作者曾经长期认为西方没有本科阶段的新闻学教育，这是与事实不符的。我曾经在国家权威机构撰写的学科指导性文件中见到英美没有新闻学本科教育的文字，感到如坐针毡。是否由于这个误解，就阻碍了我们对以章法著称的西方基础新闻学教育中有益成分的借鉴？

新闻学是最为特殊的社会学科之一，没有大量的新闻从业的前提，新闻学理论很可能会远离实践。新闻学的教授不可以将学术意见停留在观众和读者的水平之上，新闻理论也不可能产生在故纸堆里。英国的新闻学教育界曾经流行这样一句话：脱离实践的新闻学理论可能会在几天时间里就成为谬论。

新闻是有章法的，而新闻学的方法不应该是空洞的理论。一个道理如果可以用一句话讲清楚，新闻学者为此而造出一套长篇大论的理论去讲明白这个道理，就是可怕的浪费。新闻学在西方的主流是社会科学（social sciences），而绝不是人文科学（humanities）。社会科学的境界是简约，大师们总是能够以最简单的语言道出最深刻理论背后的个中缘由，新闻写作和新闻理论自然都应该遵循这个原则。尽管二者都是经验主义的成果，其共通之处在于，研究成果也好，新闻报道的故事也好，都应该重视方法论的“可重溯”性与“可再检验”性，因为它们都是系统化的人类智慧。

怎样使用这本教材

这是一本久经考验的教材，因此它的系统性和综合性是一流的。但是由于作者是美国人，面对的也是以英语为母语的新闻学院学生，因此我们不得不承认本教材在美国中心主义影响之下的局限性。然而他人的视角永远都是我们建立更加客观、可行和有效方法论的有益的参考依据，对外传播业者与学者通过本书将会获得更多的知己知彼的机会。

这本教材让我联想起在英国某著名媒体第一天的工作经历，那天我获得了一本带有该媒体内部“宪法”加上“技术规范”的小册子，条目细致到对高层领导人接受贿赂丑闻和学童课间食品生产线卫生质量接受质询等新闻报道的具体操作准则，含有咨询责任人或授权人的程序、行文方式和报道议程设置等。有人说这可能在一定程度上限制了记者的创造性，而当时的同事告诉我，这是他们的“创造性起飞的地方”，因为这个内部的“准宪法”机制正好保障了记者在第一时间及时、快速反应的能力。这本教材，至少条目的设置，可以成为国内不少媒体在完成自己报道手册时候可以参考的一个样板。微观的层面上有一个章法的问题，媒体本身的宏观“章法”也是十分必要的。

因此我们希望这本教材能够成为每一位现在或者未来即将从事新闻工作的读者的工具书，在学习以后继续查询和使用。早在二十世纪八十年代早期，中国社会科学院研究生院首届新闻学研究生班上，相当一部分今天的资深新闻人就是在那个“黄埔一期”的学习中将这本教材作为核心必读课本的。比当年前辈们幸运的是，在新媒体时代的学习过程中，大家可以登陆该书提供的网站获得更多的有关本教材的学习资源，本书在美国本土出版时候的配套教师用书和学生练习册都有在线版本，相信读者通过整合这些资源可以有一个整体的学习体验。

这是我向各位隆重推荐的一本好书，一本注重“章法”的经典新闻学教科书，和它一起在实践中学习，相信我们会看到更多专业的、客观的、接近受众的，更加喜闻乐见的高水平新闻作品不断出现。

2003年8月20日夜于安徽合肥稻香楼宾馆



Preface

This ninth edition of *News Reporting and Writing* marks its 25th year in journalism classrooms. In that time, much has changed. Computers have replaced typewriters. Broadcast journalism has become a powerful messenger of information. Online news services have found a niche. But the fundamentals remain, as does the purpose of *NRW*:

1. To teach the skills necessary for a variety of media work.
2. To provide the background knowledge essential to accurate and informed reporting and writing.
3. To suggest the values that direct and underline the practice of journalism.

Learning to report accurately and to write precisely and vigorously is no simple task. Digging through the clusters of events and the torrent of verbiage to find useful, relevant information and then capturing these nuggets in purposeful language require mastery of a demanding discipline.

To guide us, we will spend a lot of time with truth seekers—another way to describe journalists—as they go about their work. We will accompany a young reporter as he conducts his first interview, and we will watch an experienced reporter dig through records to expose a state's shameful treatment of its mentally ill. We will listen to a reporter's thinking as she works out the lead to her story about a city council meeting. We will peer over the shoulders of reporters using databases for key information, and we will look in on some online news operations.

We will sit in the press box with reporters covering high school football and major league baseball games. We will join a police reporter as she races to cover a triple murder.

We will watch a reporter labor over his story until "little beads of blood form on his forehead," as Red Smith described the agony of the journalist's search for the words that accurately portray the event. And we will share in the reporter's joy when the story is finished and is given a byline and placed on the front page or makes the evening network newscast.

In other words, we will be concerned with the processes of reporting and writing—how reporters gather information from sources and from their observations, how they verify the material, and how they put it together in stories.

The journalists we will be watching work for small newspapers in Iowa, South Dakota and Oregon, and they are on the staffs of metropolitan dailies in Chicago and Los Angeles. They serve online news services and online newspapers. One reporter writes for a network television station in New York; another covers local events for a television station in San Francisco. We will see how general assignment reporters and the men and women assigned to cover politics, sports, business, the police, city hall, education and other beats do their jobs.

The Basics

Whether covering a college basketball game, writing an obituary or reporting the president's State of the Union address, the journalist follows the same basic process. The sports reporter, the entertainment writer, the general assignment reporter in a town of 25,000 and the Associated Press's White House correspondent all share a way of thinking and a similar set of techniques that have guided journalists through the years, whatever the changes in technology.

In their reporting, journalists seek out the new, the significant, the material they decide will inform their readers, viewers and listeners. And they find a suitable form for this information in a story that satisfies the public's need to know.

Reporting and writing basics are explored in detail in this textbook. But without guiding principles about the function of journalism in a democracy, the basics don't go very far in developing the journalist. The journalists we will be following not only show a mastery of the basics. We will see that they share an ethic that directs and gives meaning to their work.

The Morality of Journalism

The literary critic Northrop Frye could have been describing journalistic morality: "The persistence of keeping the mind in a state of disciplined sanity, the courage of facing results that may deny or contradict everything that one had hoped to achieve—these are obviously moral qualities, if the phrase means anything at all."

James O. Freedman, former president of Dartmouth, might have been speaking of the practice of journalism when he described his experience as a law clerk to Thurgood Marshall: "In that year, I learned from a great advocate that law must be practiced not only with craft and passion but also with a tenacious commitment to ideals."

Mary McGrory, the Washington columnist, described an aspect of how journalists approach their work in comments she made after interviewing 45 journalists who had applied for Nieman Fellowships at Harvard. She said she

Power of Knowing.

"Knowledge will govern ignorance, and a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power knowledge gives. A popular government without popular information or the means of acquiring it is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy or perhaps both."

—James Madison

found these journalists to have a “great deal of commitment and compassion.” Most had a trait in common, she said: “They knew a great deal about what they were doing. They did not think it enough.”

The journalists I know—my former colleagues and students, from whom I have shamelessly taken time and borrowed ideas—would shrink at being described as moralists. Yet they consider their work to have a large moral component. Most of them worry about the abuse of power.

Although adversary journalism is often criticized and sometimes ignored, it is as old as the Republic. Today’s journalists are descended from a press described by the historian Robert A. Ruthland as “obstreperous newspapers (that) signalled the rise of a new kind of journalism in America that would not truckle long to any officialdom.”

The journalist knows that democracy is healthiest when the public is informed about the activities of captains of industry and chieftains in public office. Only with adequate information can people check those in power. Jack Fuller of the *Chicago Tribune* put this simply: “To me, the central purpose of journalism is to tell the truth so that people will have the information to be sovereign.”

Ignorance and repression are the consequences of unchecked power and of a journalism that substitutes entertainment for information. Walt Whitman, journalist and poet, described the fragility of democracy and its source of strength this way: “There is no week nor day nor hour when tyranny may not enter upon this country, if the people lose their supreme confidence in themselves—and lose their roughness and spirit of defiance.”

Confident, rough and defiant. An apt description of the journalist at work—but also characteristics that have aroused anger and animosity. In its role as watchdog for the public, the press has been relentlessly scrutinized and sometimes attacked for its revelations. Journalists understand that the path of the truth teller is not always smooth, that people are sometimes disturbed by what the journalist tells them.

This ninth edition is offered to students with a commitment to and a belief in the traditional role of the press as a means of enabling people to improve their lot and to govern themselves intelligently. *News Reporting and Writing* takes seriously the observation in the Book of Proverbs: “The instruments of both life and death are contained within the power of the tongue.”

Public Service Journalism

The kind of journalism that animates this textbook can be described as public service journalism, a journalism that meets the needs of people by supplying them with the information essential to rational decision making. Public service journalism has a long and glorious history. It has attracted writers like Charles Dickens whose crusading newspaper *Household Words* carried stories that revealed his indignation at the indecencies visited on the young, the poor and the powerless—themes current today.

While many writers sat at their desks, Dickens visited orphanages, saw for himself the conditions under which homeless women lived. He saw the streets teeming with the uneducated young. He described what he saw.

Dickens said his ambition as an editor was that his newspaper “be admitted into many homes with confidence and affection,” and it was. His biographer says the result of Dickens’ revelations was a “huge and steadily growing audience ranging in both directions from the middle and upper middle classes.”

Today’s journalists are worthy inheritors of this tradition of public service journalism, and we will be looking at their work. We’ll watch a reporter show how children born in a poor part of town receive an education inferior to the children born into a middle class neighborhood. We will listen to a reporter describe the ill-fated attempt of a group of people to escape tyranny.

Journalism intends to entertain us as well as to inform us, and we will also follow reporters as they show us the zany side of life. We’ll drop in on a young woman as she tries to teach her students the tricks of the bartending trade, and we will eavesdrop on a truck-diner waitress as she trades quips and barbs with her burly customers.

Journalism’s Tradition

Journalism has always had its down periods, and there has been no shortage of nostrums offered for a quick cure. Its survival, however, has rested on the bedrock of its tradition. Albert Camus, the French journalist and author, was sustained by that sense of his calling during the Nazi occupation of France when he wrote from the underground. Accepting the Nobel Prize for literature in 1957, Camus said, “Whatever our personal frailties may be, the nobility of our calling will always be rooted in two commitments difficult to observe: refusal to lie about what we know and resistance to oppression.”

In much of what the journalist does, there is an awareness of the relevance of his or her work to human needs and purposes, for the reporter knows that news represents reality to most people. The reporter is interested in ideas but avoids the sin of making the concrete abstract.

Journalism “is something more than a craft, something other than an industry, something between an art and a ministry,” says Wickham Steed, an editor of *The Times* of London. “Journalists proper are unofficial public servants whose purpose is to serve the community.”

My model for this amalgam of artist, sentry, public servant and town crier is Ralph M. Blagden, who taught a generation of journalists their duty and introduced them to the power and splendor of their native language. Ralph’s classrooms were the newsrooms of newspapers from New Hampshire to California, where he worked as reporter and editor.

Ralph was my competitor as a state capitol correspondent, and never was there such a mismatch. As a beginning reporter, I reported what people said and did and stopped there. Ralph generously took the youngster in tow and

showed him that a good reporter never settles for the surface of the news, that the compelling commandment of the journalist is to dig out the truth. He refused to make reporting divisible: All good reporting is investigative reporting, he insisted.

Long before investigative reporting became the fashion, Ralph was digging out documents and records to disclose truths. His journalism was in the tradition of Joseph Pulitzer and that publisher's crusading editor, O. K. Bovard. Those of us who were fortunate to work with Ralph feel ourselves to be members of a journalistic family whose roots are embedded in a noble tradition.

Benjamin C. Bradlee of *The Washington Post* says of Blagden:

Ralph taught me to be dissatisfied with answers and to be exhaustive in questions. He taught me to stand up against powers that be. He taught me to spot bullies and resist them. He taught me about patience and round-the-clock work. He taught me about ideas and freedom and rights—all of this with his own mixture of wit and sarcasm and articulate grace. He could also throw a stone farther than I could, which annoys me to this day.

Bradlee, who directed the *Post's* coverage of the Watergate story that earned his newspaper a Pulitzer Prize for meritorious public service and led to the resignation of president, recalls his first story for Blagden when he was a young reporter.

"It had to do with the post-war housing mess, and he made me rewrite it 16 times. I've never done that to a reporter, but I suspect I should have. He had a great dollop of righteous indignation, which I learned to admire enormously."

"And of course he wrote with style and punch and clarity."

I recall the first story I covered with Ralph. He had heard that patients in a state hospital for the mentally ill were being mistreated. Some had mysteriously died. We interviewed doctors, nurses, attendants and former patients, and we walked through the wards and corridors of the institution. I learned that secondhand accounts are just a starting point, that direct observation and other techniques of verification are essential, and when we wrote the story I learned the power of the simple declarative sentence. I also learned that journalists can be useful members of society, for after the story appeared and both of us had moved on, the state built a modern hospital to replace that aging snake pit.

New to the Ninth

This Silver Anniversary edition is accompanied by a second CD. The first, "Brush Up: A Quick Guide to Writing and Math Skills," proved so popular that we decided to add "NRW Plus." In this new CD you will find entire stories, many of them accompanied by the comments of the reporters who wrote them.