

Firing the Canon: The Historical Search for Literary Journalism's Missing Links

Nancy L. Roberts
University at Albany, SUNY, U.S.A.

Keynote address, International Association for Literary Journalism Studies, Toronto, Canada, May 2012

THE CASE FOR STUDYING MATERIAL CULTURE

What could an ancient timber, a shard of china, gravestones, musical instruments, cuts of meat, furniture, and even refuse dumps possibly have to tell us about unearthing overlooked mines of literary journalism in the United States? Much more than one at first might think. To begin with, in these artifacts of early American life, these “small things forgotten,” as the anthropologist and historical archaeologist James Deetz has told us in his fascinating book by the same name, lie clues to the culture of both colonial New England’s English settlers and the black African Americans who lived among them.¹ These common, everyday artifacts unearthed at Plymouth, Massachusetts and elsewhere in America give eloquent voice to people who did not have the economic and educational wherewithal to leave behind elite records in the way of great music, visual art, and writing. Instead, they produced common material objects—cultural remains, as Deetz calls them—that are of incalculable value when decoded by historical archaeologists.² These materials, when complemented by available data from probate, property, and tax records; land deeds, court records, birth and death records; church records, diaries, and other documents, reveal how these colonial Americans lived daily life, including their ideas about design and space and even, we would have to say, their world view.

One of Deetz's most compelling findings deals with the archaeological and architectural remains of Parting Ways, a humble, late eighteenth-century settlement near Plymouth established by a freed slave who had fought in the Revolution, Cato Howe. Parting Ways' material culture (i.e., post molds and ceramics from the Turner-Burr house) reveals a strikingly West African understanding of space and design, in marked contrast to that of the neighboring white settlements. The archaeology of such African American settlements has illuminated our picture of black history in ways that written records alone cannot. Deetz concludes: "The archaeology tells us that in spite of their lowly station in life," [these African American settlers with West African roots] were the bearers of a lifestyle, distinctively their own, neither recognized nor understood by their chroniclers.³

Similarly, the work of folklorist Henry Glassie and others have figured importantly in the establishment of a rich tradition of scholarship on material culture that reveals certain heretofore hidden and significant aspects of American cultural history.⁴

THE LINK TO LITERARY JOURNALISM STUDIES

Many instructive parallels can be drawn to literary journalism studies, if we will just ponder several leading questions. First, we need to be mindful of the elite sources of literary journalism that have already attracted full-bore scholarly analysis: books printed by recognized publishers and magazines and newspapers such as *The New Yorker*, *Texas Monthly*, and *The New York Times*. Yes, we've discovered and will continue to find major writers of literary journalism published in these pages, but we shouldn't overlook other, less elite sources—where we may find not the "usual suspects" (Truman Capote, Tom Wolfe, Joan Didion, et al.) but others with original visions of literary journalism and the requisite abilities to realize them. Who knows how our historical understanding of literary journalism might evolve, when we uncover such voices and study them?

So, the leading question is this: for literary journalism, what's the equivalent of material folk culture? Here I mean "equivalent" in the sense of being an overlooked, commonplace source that's considered "functional" or "utilitarian," rather than an "intentional" work of art (such as elite art, music, and writing). Some of these comparatively "functional" potential sources of literary journalism are: household magazines and newspapers; letters, memoirs, and diaries; epistolary journalism; religious tracts; travel writing; and social movement, muckraking, and African American periodicals. I'll discuss each of these in turn.

UNCOVERING THE WORK OF WOMEN LITERARY JOURNALISTS: MAGAZINES

Note that a number of these potential sources will lead us to discover the work of women writers. Do women write literary journalism? It's not surprising that this question is still asked, considering that Tom Wolfe included only two women (Joan Didion and Barbara Goldsmith) in his book *The New Journalism*. This classic 1973 work helped to define the genre of literary journalism as a mainly male province, as Jan Whitt points out.⁵ So the question of whether women write literary journalism is still posed, and the answer may depend on where we're looking. One neglected source is an entire realm of publications scholars have basically bypassed: women's magazines, as Amy Mattson Lauters has argued so convincingly in her book, *The Rediscovered Writings of Rose Wilder Lane: Literary Journalist*.⁶ Here she presents Lane (1886–1968) as a literary journalist, noting that Lane's literary journalism has been largely overlooked because she wrote it for "women's magazines that have historically been devalued as media forms" (including *Woman's Day*, *Good Housekeeping*, and *Ladies Home Journal*) as well as *Cosmopolitan*, *Sunset*, *The San Francisco Bulletin*, and the *Pittsburgh Courier*, an African American newspaper.

And recent research reveals that still other women's magazines, more specialized because they deal wholly with farm life, are also repositories of literary journalism by women that deserves more than a cursory reading. Lauters demonstrates this in her book-length study of such magazines as *The Farmer's Wife*, *Farm Wife News*, and *Country Woman*.⁷

Not to be forgotten are the "literary ladies," as Sherilyn Cox Bennion calls the women literary magazine editors of the nineteenth-century American West. Their efforts at periodicals such as the *Golden Era* (1852), *The Overland Monthly*, and *The Californian*, nurtured not just poetry and fiction, but literary nonfiction narrative that is well worth further exploration.⁸

WOMEN'S LETTERS, DIARIES, AND JOURNALS; EPISTOLARY JOURNALISM

Women "published very little" in the first half of the eighteenth century, according to Elaine Showalter, a literary historian. They were certainly writing—"letters, diaries, journals, and religious tracts,"—but these were mainly private communications. Owing to societal norms and prejudice, publication paths were less open to them. When they did publish, it was much more likely to be in newspapers rather than books.⁹ And often, this content took the form of letters, such as the many that the brilliant Margaret Fuller (1810–1850) contributed to Horace Greeley's *New York Tribune*. Greeley hired Fuller in 1844 and sent her to Europe in the summer of 1846 as probably the first woman foreign correspondent; "between then and January

1850 she wrote 37 dispatches for the New York Tribune from Great Britain, France, and Italy.”¹⁰ Probably her very best were the war correspondence dispatches she sent to the Tribune after the 1849 Italian Revolution.¹¹ Fuller’s writing as editor of *The Dial*, the Transcendentalists’ influential journal, is also fertile literary journalism ground.

Katrina J. Quinn has recently brought to our attention the genre of epistolary journalism, a largely unstudied form of literary journalistic narrative, in nineteenth-century American newspapers.¹² While not all epistolary journalism is necessarily literary journalism, she cautions, certainly some letters written by journalists and published in the newspaper qualify as literary journalism—among them, travel letters written to illuminate a specific destination, not unlike the “thick description” prescribed by Clifford Geertz more than a century later.¹³

Do unpublished letters “qualify” as “literary journalism”? Certainly letters have yielded untold volumes of literary work, and many of these works could be considered to be a form of journalism. Indeed, letters were the first journalistic forms in Europe. And they continued to be a means to communicate news until being displaced to a considerable degree, in our age, by email. For example, for a very long time, letters were the only sources of news between those living on the eastern side of the Blue Ridge Mountains and those living on the western side, as Hazel Dicken-Garcia writes in her book *To Western Woods*. Here is an excerpt from one such letter, written in 1792 by Mary Howard in Kentucky to John Breckinridge in Virginia before he moved his family to Kentucky: “It gives me most sincere pleasure every time I visit Cousin Betsy to see your Noble seat which is vastly preferable to any I ever saw on James river. I ride to an eminence on which I expect you’ll build. I there alight and has [*sic*] many a pleasing interview with you and my dear Polly[:]. Indeed, I cannot leave the solitary spot without shedding a tear and wishing it real.”¹⁴ Similar claims about the important role of letters as a form of journalistic communication could be made about other regions of the United States.

Other examples are the letters Louisa May Alcott (1832-1888) wrote about her nursing experiences during the Civil War, first published in *The Boston Commonwealth* (starting in May 1863). Through the voice of her comic character, *Tribulation Periwinkle*, Alcott details the challenges of caring for wounded soldiers, the reality of which contrasts starkly with popular, heroic images of the war.¹⁵ For instance, she writes: “One funereal lady came to try her powers as a nurse; but, a brief conversation eliciting the facts that she fainted at the sight of blood, was afraid to watch alone, couldn’t possibly take care of delirious persons, was nervous about infections, and unable to

bear much fatigue, she was mildly dismissed. I hope she found her sphere, but fancy a comfortable bandbox on a high shelf would best meet the requirements of her case.”¹⁶ Nurse Periwinkle (Alcott) attends many deaths, but none is more memorable than that of John, a beloved young soldier dying far from home and mother. “I sat down by him,” writes Alcott, “wiped the drops from his forehead, stirred the air about him with a slow wave of a fan, and waited to help him die. He stood in sore need of help—and I could do so little; for, as the doctor had foretold, the strong body rebelled against death, and fought every inch of the way, forcing him to draw each breath with a spasm, and clench his hands with an imploring look, as if he asked, ‘How long must I endure this, and be still!’”¹⁷

Women’s letters present a particularly rich lode of material with literary journalism potential. While historically, both men and women wrote letters, epistolary journalism was a more common (and often the sole literary) outlet for women. Many anthologies of letters have been recently published and of course the possibilities for original, archival research are practically limitless.¹⁸ Increasingly, historical institutions are digitizing their collections of letters to make them available online. For instance, the University of Minnesota’s Immigration History Research Center has digitized letters “that were written between 1850 and 1970 both *by* immigrants and *to* immigrants in languages other than English.” See <http://ihrc.umn.edu/research/dil/index.html>.

Others require online subscription, such as Manuscript Women’s Letters and Diaries from the American Antiquarian Society, which spans the years 1750 to 1950 and includes one hundred thousand pages of “the personal writings of women of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries.” Some are famous, such as Annie Sullivan (describing how she taught Helen Keller) and Ellen Tucker Emerson (Ralph Waldo Emerson’s daughter), writing about Concord, Massachusetts life during the Civil War, while many more of the letter writers are obscure. See <http://alexanderstreet.com/products/manuscript-womens-letters-and-diaries-american-antiquarian-society>.

What potential cache of literary journalism lies in letter writing is suggested by an excerpt that Quinn quotes from a letter by Samuel Bowles, the editor of the Springfield (Massachusetts) Republican (one of thirty-two that he published in his paper during a cross-country trip in 1865). Bowles wrote about crossing over the great Continental Divide: “It was no more than a ‘thank-ye-marm’ in a New England’s winter sleigh ride, yet it separates the various and vast waters of a Continent, and marks the fountains of the two great oceans of the globe. But it was difficult to be long enthusiastic over this infinitesimal point of mud; the night was very cold, and I was sore in unpo-

etical parts from unaccustomed saddles, and I got down from all my high horses, and into my corner of the stage, at the next station.”¹⁹

Another intriguing example is the correspondence of Mercy Otis Warren (1728–1814), a dramatist who wrote in 1779 to her best friend Abigail Adams about the new American nation: “America is a theatre just erected—the drama is here but begun, but while the actors of the old world have run through every species of pride, luxury, venality, and vice—their characters will become less interesting and the western wilds which for ages have been little known, may exhibit those striking traits of wisdom and grandeur, and magnificence, which the Divine oeconomist [sic] may have reserved to crown the closing scene.”²⁰ This sort of communication, in which women exchanged ideas about American political life, is actually quite common during the eighteenth century. Showalter tells us that women copied their letters and read them aloud to their friends; epistolary writing was no small endeavor, but a serious pursuit even when it was only shared among friends.²¹

Just as letters can be a province of literary journalism narrative, so too can be autobiographical writing such as memoir and diaries. In early America, Indian captivity narratives such as Mary Rowlandson’s 1682 book about her abduction, *A True History of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*, were immensely popular. Rowlandson’s book, which shows a specificity of detail and observation that we would readily describe today as “journalistic,” along with a literary sensibility and style, quickly became a bestseller both here and abroad. It “transcends the historical and cultural circumstances that produced it and by combining stark details, honesty, and exquisite style, brings the experience of war and suffering to a personal and accessible level.”²²

Or consider Mary Boykin Chestnut (1823–1886), whose diary brought to life the Civil War in a decidedly literary way.²³ Many “literary” women like her kept diaries in the nineteenth century, even as they were writing literary works for publication. And many women who wrote nothing else produced diaries. Lillian Schlissel’s *Women’s Diaries of the Westward Journey* is a classic source, gathering diaries of women who were among the quarter of a million Americans who crossed the continental United States between 1840 and 1870. Here is an excerpt from the diary of Catherine Haun: “This was the land of the buffalo. One day a herd came in our direction like a great black cloud, a threatening moving mountain, advancing towards us very swiftly and with wild snorts, noses almost to the ground, and tails flying in midair. . . . they seemed to be innumerable and made a deafening terrible noise.”²⁴

Tantalizing research prospects lie in the increasing number of online archives. For instance, the Harvard University Open Collections Program:

Women Working, 1800–1930, features digitized diaries, memoirs, autobiographies, and journals. These contain “stories and recollections of women astronomers and doctors, preachers and missionaries, reformers and suffragists, school girls and school teachers, a philanthropist and a “country woman,” and, in the publications trade, several authors, an editor, and a book agent.” See: <http://ocp.hul.harvard.edu/ww/vcsearch.php?cat=diaries>.

RELIGIOUS TRACTS AND PERIODICALS

In the early nineteenth century, religious tracts abounded. David Nord has ably demonstrated that it was not the penny press publishers of the 1830s but the earlier evangelical Christian publicists of the American Bible Society and the American Tract Society who created the first actual mass media.²⁵ To my knowledge, no one has ever investigated what literary journalism might lurk in these millions of pages (many of which were written by women)—or in the innumerable religious newspapers that blanketed the United States throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century, such as the Methodist *Christian Advocate* and the *American Messenger*,²⁶ as well as the *Christian Advocate* (a weekly paper published in New York by the Methodist Episcopal Church, starting in 1826) and the *Christian Recorder* (published by the African Methodist Episcopal Church, since 1852).

Why are these potentially rich sources for literary journalism overlooked? The answer may lie in the longstanding blind eye that many journalists—and by extension, historians of journalism—cast toward religious institutions in general. Too often, scholarship about religion is mistakenly equated with proselytizing. Yet religion is a longstanding, central force with considerable impact on society and has surely inspired works of literary journalism.

SOCIAL MOVEMENT PERIODICALS

Social movement periodicals present yet another exciting prospect for literary journalism sleuthing. The old truism that journalism thrives in times of crisis also applies to literary journalism. In their anthology of Thirties American women writers, Charlotte Nekola, and Paula Rabinowitz identify a number of women who wrote reportage, theory, and analysis on behalf of the Depression era’s efforts to remake society, among them: Josephine Herbst, Agnes Smedley, Anna Louise Strong, Ella Winter, Tillie Olsen, Meridel LeSueur, and Mary Heaton Vorse, and Dorothy Day.²⁷

My own work on U.S. peace advocacy periodicals uncovered a trove of women writers, heretofore largely unrecognized, who wrote passionately and sometimes in a decidedly literary way about their ideas to achieve world peace. One of them is Dorothy Day, whose writing in the *Catholic Worker* newspaper from 1933 to 1980 I have discussed as an example of literary jour-

nalism.²⁸ These women published their writing in scores of periodicals such as the *American Advocate of Peace*, *Four Lights*, *Friends Journal*, the *Circular* and *Oneida Circular*, *New Harmony Gazette*, *Pax Christi USA*, *Peace and Freedom*, *Shaker Manifesto*, and *The Voice of Peace*. They also wrote many books and mainstream magazine and newspaper articles.

Sometimes, sifting through archival collections is the only way to recover such lost history. At the Swarthmore College Peace Collection, I found records about a number of women who wrote extensively about peace issues—including several books each as well as extensive magazine and newspaper articles—yet these women were nowhere to be found in any of the standard biographical dictionaries, either in their time or ours.²⁹

Historically, other social movement periodicals such as the abolitionist press have attracted gifted women writers such as Lydia Maria Child (1802–1880). This multifaceted novelist, journalist, editor, and scholar wrote forty-seven books and tracts including four novels and three collections of short stories. She also wrote innumerable letters and substantial additional fiction and journalism, and the bibliography of her works is still growing as more works, some anonymous, are discovered, according to her biographer Carolyn L. Karcher.³⁰ Child founded and edited *The Juvenile Miscellany* (1826–1834), a popular children’s magazine and also the *National Anti-Slavery Standard* (1841–1843), the American Anti-Slavery Society’s weekly New York newspaper. (Her book-length collections of her columns from the *Standard*, published in 1843 and 1845, were very popular and offer intriguing literary journalism prospects.³¹)

Another accomplished abolitionist journalist was Sara Jane Clarke Lippincott (1823–1904), who wrote under the name of Grace Greenwood for the antislavery newspaper, the *National Era*, and the *Saturday Evening Post* of Philadelphia.³² Her journalism merits a closer look.

One can’t leave the realm of social movement publications without noting the vigorous nineteenth-century woman’s rights press that includes the *Revolution* of Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the *Lily* of Amelia Bloomer, *Woman’s Journal* (Lucy Stone) and the *Una* (Paulina Wright Davis).³³ What literary journalism may lie in these pages?

TRAVEL WRITING

Travel writing and foreign correspondence are yet other genres to which some nineteenth-century women contributed, yet they are not usually on our literary journalism radar, at least not before the twentieth century. While Mark Twain’s literary journalism travel writing is well known,³⁴ Francis Preston Blair’s wife, Eliza Violet Gist (1794–1877), may have been the very

first American woman travel writer for a newspaper (the *Washington Globe*). According to her husband's biographer, she was truly a co-editor of the *Washington Globe* with Blair, and "assumed responsibility for foreign news, human interest news, and special features, which included short stories, poetry, book reviews, letters from diplomats and foreign travelers, brief anecdotes, riddles, and other similar items."³⁵ Her travel pieces may offer literary journalism discoveries.

Sara Jane Clarke Lippincott was also a European correspondent for both the abolitionist *National Era* and the *Saturday Evening Post* (1852–1853), and her accounts of foreign cultures may show a distinctive feminine perspective³⁶ that is worth examining in relation to its literary journalistic qualities (such as trenchant observation and sensory scene-setting).

Katherine Bonner Sherwood (1849–1883) wrote for the *Memphis Avalanche* using the pen name "Sherwood Bonner" in the 1870s. Her travel letters satirized the Boston and Concord intelligentsia, including Louisa May Alcott. She proved herself an astute observer of the American scene during the post-bellum period of rapid cultural and social change and deserves further study as a potential literary journalist.

The most famous travel writer of this period, of course, was a man—Bayard Taylor (1825–1878)—who also may qualify as a literary journalist by virtue of his insightful, participant-observation accounts of far-flung cultures as a correspondent for Horace Greeley's *Tribune* in the 1840s and 1850s.³⁷

MUCKRAKING PERIODICALS

As we move into the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, we encounter the Progressive Era muckrakers, those crusading journalists who tried to expose wrongdoing from the marketing of quack patent medicines to Standard Oil's unethical monopolistic practices. Surely they should be read again with an eye toward recognizing literary journalism. The passion of writers such as Ray Stannard Baker, Ida Tarbell, Lincoln Steffens, and others, in the pages of publications such as *McClure's Magazine*, *Munsey's*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *The American Magazine*, to investigate corruption in politics and society deeply, led to writing that we may indeed wish to consider for addition to the corpus of literary journalism.³⁸

Historically, scholars of journalism have viewed muckraking and investigative reporting as belonging to a tradition separate from that of literary journalism, as James Aucoin has observed: "They situate bare-knuckled journalistic exposure of corruption, injustice, and maltreatment within historical models of progressive reform. The literature of fact, then, remains a parallel, alternative tradition grounded in journalism-as-story-telling." Muckraking

and literary journalism are seen “as separate, parallel responses to shortcomings in the mainstream media.”³⁹ Yet exciting new work by Cecilia Tichi argues convincingly that muckraking—both the “classic” early twentieth-century Progressive variety, and more contemporary work by writers such as Eric Schlosser (*Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal*, 2001; Laurie Garrett (*Betrayal of Trust: The Collapse of Global Public Health*, 2000, and *The Coming Plague: Newly Emerging Diseases in a World out of Balance*, 1994), and Joseph Hallinan (*Going Up the River: Travels in a Prison Nation*, 2001)—can qualify as nonfiction narrative art.⁴⁰ Both muckraking and investigative reporting—and literary journalism—share an emphasis on saturation or immersion reporting, verifiable fact, and the use such familiar literary devices as characterization, voice, and symbolic language.

AFRICAN AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS

Finally, a significant genre of African American literary expression, the newspaper, began before the Civil War as a vehicle for abolitionist opinion. *Freedom's Journal*, begun in 1827 by Samuel Cornish and John B. Russwurm, set a standard of hewing to African American racial pride while serving news and information targeted to that community. It was followed by Frederick Douglass's *North Star*, and by the end of the Civil War more than forty African American papers had been founded.⁴¹ Eventually, as African Americans settled in cities, they published newspapers for their communities such as the *Chicago Defender*, *Detroit Tribune*, the *Pittsburgh Courier*, and the *Amsterdam News* (New York). In their entirety, the millions of pages published in African American newspapers since the early nineteenth century beg to be scrutinized for the gems of literary journalism hidden there.

CONCLUSION

This is but a survey of some of the literary journalism equivalents of material folk culture, and what is said here of American culture might also be said of others. Rather than intentional works of art, these equivalents may be more functional and utilitarian in their purpose—but some may still reach that elusive pinnacle of literary journalism, even if seemingly by accident. Just like historical archaeologists, our challenge is to unearth in these “small things forgotten”—these less elite sources from household and farming women's magazines, letters, and religious tracts to travel writing and social movement, muckraking, and African American periodicals—the treasure that lies therein. Our excavations could reveal the ammunition to explode our formulaic approaches, resulting in a different history of literary journalism, one much more nuanced than we know now.

Nancy Roberts is a professor in the Communication Department and directs the Journalism Program at the University at Albany, SUNY. She has taught literary journalism courses for thirty years, at Albany and earlier at the University of Minnesota. Her books include *The Press and America: An Interpretive History of the Mass Media* (with M. and E. Emery), *Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker*, and 'As Ever, Gene': *The Letters of Eugene O'Neill to George Jean Nathan* (with A. W. Roberts). She is the book review editor of *Literary Journalism Studies*.



NOTES

1. James Deetz, *In Small Things Forgotten: The Archaeology of Early American Life* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1977).

2. As Deetz puts it, "Historical archaeology studies the cultural remains of literate societies that were capable of recording their own history." He further defined historical archaeology as "the archaeology of the spread of European culture throughout the world since the fifteenth century and its impact on indigenous peoples" [*In Small Things Forgotten*, p. 5].

3. Deetz, 153–54.

4. Henry Glassie, *Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968) and *Folk Housing in Middle Virginia: A Structural Analysis of Historic Artifacts* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1975); Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach, *Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1986); Thomas J. Schlereth, ed., *Material Culture: A Research Guide* (Lawrence, Kans.: University Press of Kansas, 1985).

5. Tom Wolfe, *The New Journalism* (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1973); Jan Whitt, *Settling the Borderland: Other Voices in Literary Journalism* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 2008), 119.

6. Amy Mattson Lauters, *The Rediscovered Writings of Rose Wilder Lane: Literary Journalist* (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 2007).

7. Lauters, *More Than a Farmer's Wife: Voices of American Farm Women, 1910–1960* (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 2009).

8. Sherilynn Bennion, *Equal to the Occasion: Women Editors of the Nineteenth-Century West* (Reno and Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press, 1990), 119–31.

9. Elaine Showalter, *A Jury of Her Peers: American Women Writers from Anne*

Bradstreet to Annie Proulx (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2009), 15.

10. Giovanna Dell'Orto, *Giving Meanings to the World: The First U.S. Foreign Correspondents, 1838–1859* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2002), 105.

11. Margaret Fuller Ossoli, *At Home and Abroad*, ed. Arthur B. Fuller (New York: The Tribune Association, 1869), 420.

12. “Exploring an Early Version of Literary Journalism: Nineteenth-century Epistolary Journalism,” vol. 3, no. 1 (Spring 2011), 32–51.

13. Clifford Geertz, “Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture,” in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books, 1973, 3–30.

14. Hazel Dicken-Garcia, *To Western Woods: The Breckinridge Family Moves to Kentucky in 1793* (Rutherford, Madison, Teaneck, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1991), 175 [22 July 1792].

15. Showalter, 139.

16. Louisa May Alcott, *Hospital Sketches* (Carlisle, MA: Applewood Books, 1991), 91 [originally published: Boston: James Redpath Publishers, 1863], <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/alcott/sketches/sketches.html#86>.

17. Alcott, 56.

18. Lisa Grunwald and Stephen J. Adler, eds., *Women's Letters: America from the Revolutionary War to the Present* (New York: Dial Press, 2005).

19. Quinn, 48, quoting Samuel Bowles, *Across the Continent: A Summer's Journey to the Rocky Mountains, the Mormons, and the Pacific States, with Speaker Colfax* (Springfield, Mass.: Bowles, 1865), 75.

20. Quoted in Showalter, 17.

21. Showalter, 18.

22. Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola, “Introduction” to *Women's Indian Captivity Narratives* (New York: Penguin, 1998), 5.

23. *Mary Chestnut's Civil War*, ed. C. Vann Woodward (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1981).

24. Schlissel, 176.

25. David Paul Nord, “The Evangelical Origins of Mass Media in America, 1815–1835,” *Journalism Monographs*, No. 88 (1984) (Columbia, S.C.: Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication).

26. David Paul Nord, *Faith in Reading: Religious Publishing and the Birth of Mass Media in America, 1790–1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

27. Charlotte Nekola and Paula Rabinowitz, eds., *Writing Red: An Anthology of American Women Writers, 1930–1940* (New York: Feminist Press, 1987); Dee Garrison, *Mary Heaton Vorse: The Life of an American Insurgent* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989). Also see: Norman Sims, *True Stories: A Century of Literary Journalism* (Evanston, Ill: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 134; James Boylan, “Publicity for the Great Depression: Newspaper Default and Literary Reportage,” in *Mass Media between the Wars: Perceptions of Cultural Tension, 1918–1941*, ed. Catherine L. Covert and John D. Stevens (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1984); and William Dow, *Narrating Class in American Fiction* (New York: Palgrave

Macmillan, 2009), on Meridel LeSueur (133–62) and Agnes Smedley (179–85).

28. Nancy L. Roberts, “Dorothy Day” (evaluative essay), in *A Sourcebook of American Literary Journalism: Representative Writers in an Emerging Genre*, ed. Thomas B. Connery (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1992), 179–85.

29. For instance: Fannie Fern Phillips Andrews, Florence Brewer Boeckel, Frances Alice Kellor, Dorothy Hewitt Hutchinson.

30. Karcher writes: “New articles of hers keep turning up, not only in hitherto unexamined journals but in those already searched by other scholars. Child also published a large number of articles anonymously or pseudonymously, both in her husband’s newspaper, the *Massachusetts Journal* (ca. 1828 until 1832), and during the Civil War, in mainstream political newspapers. Many of these articles remain to be located.” Carolyn L. Karcher, *The First Woman in the Republic: A Cultural Biography of Lydia Maria Child* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1994), 757.

31. Lydia Maria Child, *Letters from New York [First Series]*. (New York: C.S. Francis/Boston: James Munroe, 1843; London, Bentley, 1843); Lydia Maria Child, *Letters from New York. Second Serie*. (New York: C.S. Francis/Boston: J.H. Francis, 1845).

32. Dell’Orto, 105–06.

33. Catherine C. Mitchell, “Historiography on the Woman’s Rights Press,” in *Outsiders in 19th-Century Press History: Multicultural Perspectives*, ed. Frankie Hutton and Barbara Straus Reid (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1995), 159–68.

34. Thomas B. Connery, *Journalism and Realism: Rendering American Life* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 2011), 88–99.

35. Elbert B. Smith, *Francis Preston Blair* (New York: The Free Press, 1980), 50.

36. Shirley Foster, *Across New Worlds: Nineteenth-Century Women Travellers and their Writings* (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990), 24.

37. Dell’Orto, , 29; James L. Gray, “Bayard Taylor,” in *Dictionary of Literary Biography, vol. 189: American Travel Writers, 1850–1915* (Detroit: Gale Research, 1998), 321–35.

38. John M. Harrison and Harry H. Stein, eds., *Muckraking: Past, Present and Future* (University Park, Penn.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1973).

39. James Aucoin, review of *Exposes and Excess: Muckraking in America, 1900–2000* by Cecelia Tichi (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), published on Jhistory (October 2006); <http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=12412>

40. Cecelia Tichi, *Exposes and Excess; Muckraking in America, 1900/2000* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

41. Bernell Tripp, *Origins of the Black Press: New York, 1827–1847* (Northport, Ala.: Vision Press, 1992), 9; also see Patrick S. Washburn, *The African American Newspaper: Voice of Freedom* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 2006).

