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DIARIES: THEIR USE BY AND INFLUENCE ON
AMERICAN NEWSPAPER JOURNALISTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“Ninety-five percent of what journalists see and hear ends up between their ears and not on the printed page. Every reporter has those little juicy things that never appeared in their stories.”¹

Barbara Osborn, host *Deadline L.A.* on KPFK

Writing in our own diaries,² as well as reading others’, helps us understand the vagaries of life and offers us a looking glass into our inner selves. “Like the best literature,” says diary scholar Robert Fothergill, “they [diaries] extend our realization of what being alive is like.”³ Journalists’ diaries are especially significant in that they are the private repositories of the public documentors of society. Journalists can transcend the mediated messages and communicate what radio commentator Paul Harvey calls *the rest of the story* in their diaries, as diaries are one of the few places journalists are unyoked from the news media’s objective injunctions.

Journalists’ front-row appearance in the media arena makes their behind-the-scenes communiqués of significant import to historians looking to reconstruct the past. In Dan Berkowitz’s *Social Meanings of News*, James Reston enjoins journalists to write personal accounts of the news events they cover, especially those that have global ramifications, “No journalistic

¹ Barbara Osborn as quoted in Deanna Kizis, “No Guts, No Story,” *Buzz*, November 1997, 32.

² Journals are subsumed under the term diary. For further explanation, see section “Definition of Terms” on page 11.

³ Robert A. Fothergill, *Private Chronicles: A Study of English Diaries* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), 10.

memoir would be complete without an attempt to explain, however painful, the role of the press during McCarthy's anti-Communist crusade."⁴ When major events occur, diarists from all over the world write about the transpiring circumstances in their diaries; however, it is often journalists' diaries that prove most revealing. For example, journalist Harrison E. Salisbury's published diary—*Tiananmen Diary: Thirteen Days In June*—is considered to be an important adjunct to the record of the 1989 massacre in Tiananmen Square, China. About his unique position, Salisbury says, "I thought to myself, Here I am again in a place where a reporter discovers what is happening by using his eyes, his ears, and his nose."⁵

Journalists' diaries are not only important historical supplements, they are also invaluable resource documents for biographers and autobiographers. Foreign correspondent and biographer Vincent Sheean not only used material from journalist Dorothy Thompson's diaries to write his biography on Thompson and Sinclair Lewis, *Dorothy & Red*, but also excerpted extensively from them. In writing *Life of Johnson*, James Boswell—called "the most renowned biographer in our language"⁶—culled from his own diaries *obiter dicta* and reflections he had recorded while in Samuel Johnson's company. Boswell is ardent about biographers including their subject's private reflections, "Indeed I cannot conceive a more perfect mode of writing any man's life, than not only relating the most important events of it in their order, but interweaving what he privately wrote, and said, and thought. . . ."⁷

Jessica Savitch, who tragically drowned at the age of 36 in a bizarre automobile accident in 1983, says in the preface to her autobiography *Anchorwoman*—published a year prior to her

⁴ James Reston, *Deadline* (New York: Random House, 1991), 222; quoted in Dan Berkowitz, *Social Meanings of News* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1997), 413.

⁵ Harrison E. Salisbury, *Tiananmen Diary: Thirteen Days in June* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1989), 20.

⁶ James L. Clifford, *From Puzzles to Portraits: Problems of a Literary Biographer* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1970), 196.

⁷ *Ibid*, 53.

death—that she had planned to use her journals for her autobiography at a much later date, but her unique status as the first Southern anchorwoman changed her mind:

From the beginning of my career, I kept journals and scrapbooks chronicling what was to be a hilarious, exhilarating, and often infuriating journey across uncharted territory. My intention was to wait until I had achieved a comfortable retirement sometime in the distant future and then write a book for those young women who would and ought to follow. A number of factors accelerated my time schedule, but one of the most important was my discovery that, because I was an unwitting pioneer in my field, I had become a role model.⁸

PURPOSE OF STUDY

This study was commenced to explore the diary in relation to the journalist, including examining why journalists do or do not keep diaries, the difference demographically between journalists who do and do not keep diaries, how journalists use their diaries, and how journalists are influenced by their and others' diaries. Prior research revealed that journalists' diaries are of monumental value to historians, biographers and autobiographers.

Research involved a study of published diaries, books about diaries, and theories of autobiography. In addition, an e-mail questionnaire was sent out to a select group of geographically diverse American newspaper journalists. The questionnaire was designed so that journalists would disclose not only the benefits they derive from keeping diaries, but the kinds of information they record in their diaries. Journalists were also asked for their diaristic advice—because unlike writing an autobiography—which is somewhat formulaic, writing in a diary is much less prescribed.

THE DIARY'S PROPOSED VALUE TO THE JOURNALIST

Research reveals that finding ways to encourage journalists to maintain a diary is important for reasons as diverse as historical legacy, personal well-being, writing development, and resource bank. The ways in which the diary is of value to the journalist are elaborated in the following paragraphs.

⁸ Jessica Savitch, *Anchorwoman* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1982), 11.

The nature of a newspaper journalist's job is such that he or she is always under the deadline gun. And according to a survey done by Starley A. Smith in her thesis, "Stresses on Reporters: A Two-Edged Sword,"⁹ deadline pressure is just one of the many stress-inducers with which reporters have to contend. Others include supervisor's demands, self-imposed aims at perfection, and working conditions/schedules. Because therapists often recommend diary keeping to patients in need of emotional release,¹⁰ it can be concluded that journalists can reduce the stress associated with journalistic work by keeping a diary.

Print journalists by nature of their vocation are writers, and one of the keys to being a good writer is to write frequently and regularly. As Roland Wolseley writes in *Critical Writing for the Journalist*, "The one certain thing is that you must write, write, write every day . . . if you are to become a master workman in your profession."¹¹ Journalist Bob Greene, who published his 1964 high school diary in 1987, says that a teacher recommended his journal as "the best way to make oneself a good reporter."¹² Since a diary "imposes a regular regimen of grappling with words,"¹³ it can be concluded that journalists can improve their writing skills by keeping a diary.

Journalists generally do not restrict their writing to journalism, but are cleaved to journalism for the steady income it offers. In fact, research of published journalists' diaries has shown that many journalists would rather be writing fiction, but are unable to make a living from it. One way a journalist might improve his or her fiction writing is by keeping a diary, since by doing so, the journalist captures the ordinariness of everyday living. Sinclair Lewis explains why:

Journalism teaches haste and fosters the habit of writing under orders. Worse yet, it exposes one to certain highlights of existence. . . . far less important to a genuinely creative writer than the steady, unmelodramatic daily life which may be uninteresting as immediate news but which forms the basis of all veritable poetry, fiction, or criticism.¹⁴

⁹ Starley A. Smith, "Stresses on Reporters: A Two-Edged Sword" (Master's thesis, California State University, Northridge, 1994), 21.

¹⁰ Gayle Brown, "The Healing Power of the Journal," *Arthritis Today*, Jan-Feb 1993, 19.

¹¹ Roland E. Wolseley, *Critical Writing for the Journalist* (New York: Chilton Co., 1959), 91.

¹² Bob Greene, *Be True To Your School: A Diary of 1964* (New York: Deadline Enterprises, Inc., 1987), vii.

¹³ Randall M. Miller, and Linda Patterson Miller, *The Book of American Diaries* (New York: Avon Books, 1995), xiii.

¹⁴ Howard Good, *Acquainted with the Night* (Metuchen: The Scarecrow Press, 1986), 9.

Another reason journalists may benefit from keeping a diary is its resource value. This is especially relevant to journalists searching for public-interest material to use in their stories, whether the information is anecdotal, historical, or epigrammatic. A diary can serve as the journalist's personal encyclopedia filled with his or her own stock of pertinent data. According to Cable Neuhaus, *Berlin Diary* author William Shirer relied heavily on his "yellowed diaries" kept since he was fifteen years old.¹⁵

It is not only the journalist's own diary that is of value to the journalist, but others' diaries, especially other journalists' diaries. Startt and Sloan express the inherent interest journalists have in each other's lives:

Journalists and other participants in the mass media have a special interest in their professional predecessors. . . . there is much for one to learn from the career and lives of key figures in journalism history . . . it is important to know what made them journalists? What qualities made them excel?¹⁶

DIARISTIC CONCERNS

Is the diarist truthful in his or her writings, and does it matter? Like a doctor's patient etherized upon the table, the diary is under the total control of the diarist. It is the diarist's histrionic stage—whether it is a tragic or comic portrayal, a subtle Stanislavskyian execution or an over-dramatic silent film performance, truthful or deceitful. Diarists, as contrasted with autobiographers, write specifically for, and to, themselves. Therefore, any apocrypha is only a form of hara-kiri welded against the diarist's own sense of self-understanding and growth. As diarist Henri-Frederick Amiel declares, "Truth is their [diaries] only muse, their only pretext, their only duty."¹⁷

¹⁵ Cable Neuhaus, "Long After His Nightmare Years in Berlin, Author William Shirer Relives His Professional Triumph," *People Weekly*, 3 September 1984, 85.

¹⁶ James D. Startt and William David Sloan, *Historical Methods in Mass Communication* (Hillsdale: L. Erlbaum Assoc., 1989), 17.

¹⁷ Henri-Frederic Amiel, *The Journal Intime of Henri-Frederic Amiel*, trans. by Mrs. Humphrey Ward (A.L. Burt Company, n.d.), 24.

The fear of someone else, especially a loved one, reading one's diary is certainly cause for one to be less than forthright. Diarists not only have to worry about someone else reading their diaries, but someone else using their diaries as a *corpus delicti* against them, as diaries "are much more at home in divorce courts than in the drawers of end tables near the marriage bed,"¹⁸ states Thomas Mallon. One of the more well-known divorce-court diary cases is that of actress Mary Astor, whose trial became known as "The Hollywood trial of the 1930's."¹⁹ Astor's husband threatened to use her diary in court if she did not agree to an uncontested divorce and his legal custody of their daughter. Fortunately for Astor, the diary—because it was not submitted in its entirety—was inadmissible in court, but not before Astor's reputation was irrevocably debased from the circulation of a counterfeit diary that falsified her relationship with George S. Kaufman and other Hollywood notables. Journalists have yet another concern: libel litigation. According to Don Pember in *Mass Media Law*, "Defamation, or libel, is undoubtedly the most common legal problem faced by persons who work in the mass media."²⁰ If a journalist were to be involved in a libel suit—and it were known that the journalist kept a diary—the diary could be subpoenaed in court.

Knowing that a diary could potentially be used against one is cause enough not to write the whole truth . . . and nothing but. But how far will one go to alter the truth? And for what reason? The researcher knows of a girl who rewrote her entire diary one year in order to delete any references to an ex-boyfriend. After rewriting her diary, she threw the old (authentic) diary into a bonfire to perform an effigyric ritual en solo. Is this much different from those who digitally excise their ex-spouse out of a group photograph? In both instances, history in the making becomes history in the remaking.

A diary is an ongoing endeavor, one that might not compel the diarist to plan for the diary's future. Renowned diarist Samuel Pepys most likely did not intend his diaries to be published, but

¹⁸ Thomas Mallon, *A Book of One's Own: People and Their Diaries* (New York: Ticknor & Fields, 1984), 223.

¹⁹ Sarah S. Hughes, *Women in World History* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1995), 572.

²⁰ Don R. Pember, *Mass Media Law* (Madison: Brown & Benchmark, 1997), 117.

he also did not destroy them, which he could very well have done since he stopped writing in them 34 years before he died (due to failing eyesight). What rights do diarists have in regards to the posthumous publication of their diaries? Unless diarists destroy their diaries, they virtually do not have any rights, as the case of H. L. Mencken's diaries attests. Mencken specifically requested in a memorandum that not only were his diaries to be sealed by the executors at Pratt Library for 25 years after his death (Mencken died in 1956), but that they "be open only to students engaged in critical or historical investigation, approved after proper inquiry by the Chief Librarian."²¹ Despite Mencken's edict, his executors sought the legal opinion of the attorney general of the state of Maryland, Stephen H. Sachs, who, on October 4, 1985, ruled, "the library has a legal right to publish the diaries."²² Sach's reasoning was that the memorandum concerning the diaries was not a legal document on its own and since it wasn't referred to in Mencken's will, the executors were not bound by its contents.

RATIONALE/SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Historians consider the diary to be an essential form of primary research, yet scholars have given relatively little import to the diary's other benefits. The challenge is to encourage serious research into diaries, especially journalists' diaries, in order to advance the diary's multitudinous value.

It is important to understand the diary's role in a journalist's life because it provides insight into one of the most formidable influences on society today: the media. And who better than a journalist to clothe the bare facts of history with the silken robes of perspicacity? Journalists can provide private eyewitness accounts in their diaries, thereby contributing to society's social reality

²¹ Henry Louis Mencken, *The Diary of H.L. Mencken*, ed. by Charles A. Fecher (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), xxi.

²² *Ibid.*, xxii-xxiii.

of world events. “To construct the historical record without including a place for the media would grossly distort the record,”²³ write James D. Startt and William David Sloan.

The diary’s ostensible audience is its author, but by extension of publication, it becomes an important channel of mass communication and embellishes the American collective memory that journalism is known to generate. Carolyn Kitch describes how the media affect our collective memories, “Because of the dialectical nature of mass-media storytelling (that is, although the stories are told by journalists, the story types come from, and return to, the audience), over time journalism itself becomes part of the American collective memory.”²⁴

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study of the diary employs the theory of autobiography as its theoretical framework because a theory of the diary does not exist per se, as theorists of autobiography usually exclude the diary from their theoretical discussions. Susanna Egan says she does not include diaries in her autobiographical deliberations because a diary writer writes from a different viewpoint than an autobiographer. The autobiographer has “a perspective on the past during which a possibly unconscious subscription to these patterns has had time to affect the autobiographer’s perceptions,”²⁵ says Egan. “It has therefore seemed sensible not to include letters and diaries, autobiographical as these most certainly are.”

Because the autobiography and the diary have conceptual elements in common—for example, they are both written about the self, by the self—the researcher was able to utilize much of the theorizing on autobiography to comprehend the diary’s theoretical trends. In fact, the researcher’s autobiographical exploration was redeemed with an affluence of diaristic theory, as theorists of

²³ James D. Startt and David W. Sloan, *Historical Methods in Mass Communications* (New Jersey: Erlbaum, 1989), 16.

²⁴ Carolyn Kitch, “Twentieth-Century Tales: Newsmagazines and American Memory.” *Journalism & Mass Communication Monographs* 1 (Summer 1999): 123.

²⁵ Susanna Egan, *Patterns of Experience in Autobiography* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 12.

autobiography—when explaining why they excluded the diary—were, in effect, defining it. A sound theoretical base was important to the researcher as it helped her not only formulate her own theories of the diary, but offered a broader understanding of the genre in general. Just as “theory can help us read autobiography with more critical awareness,”²⁶ so, too, can it help us read diaries more astutely.

Furthermore, in order for the researcher to fully comprehend the diary form, she examined thousands of diary entries—for according to John Sturrock in *The Language of Autobiography* says, a theoretician’s task “is to relate one autobiographical performance to others and to reclassify particular examples. . . .”²⁷ In other words, as Sturrock illustrates later, the theorist must study a multitude of individual works to make theoretical inferences.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem presented here is the lack of information about journalists and their diaries—an alliance that history has shown to be significant not only to the journalist but to society, too. Research reveals that no books specifically address the journalist and his or her diary, however, a recent article by Roscoe Barnes in *Editor and Publisher* illustrates the value of journalists’ diaries.²⁸ Using his own diary keeping as a basis, Barnes cites the following seven reasons reporters should keep diaries: 1) Sounding board; 2) Vent for frustrations; 3) Educational enhancement; 4) Historical record; 5) Blueprint for the future; 6) Playbook on your competition; 7) A way to comprehend your surroundings.

In addition, various studies have shown the value of the diary to the journalism student. For example, a study by Mark Massé, titled “Evaluating Students’ Progress by Reading their Journals,”

²⁶ Jill Ker Conway, *When Memory Speaks: Reflections on Autobiography* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), 4.

²⁷ John Sturrock, *The Language of Autobiography: Studies in the First Person Singular* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 9.

²⁸ Roscoe Barnes, “Seven Reasons Why Reporters Ought To Keep Private Journals,” *Editor & Publisher*, 13 March 1999, 54.

found that the use of student journals may provide journalism educators with a means of establishing more cooperative, collaborative relationships. . . . by giving the students an outlet to express their attitudes toward writing, and by offering instructors a tool for better understanding the psychology of learning to write.²⁹

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

With a focus on understanding the diary's use by and influence on journalists, the following six questions were examined:

1. What is the percentage difference between journalists who keep diaries or journals and journalists who do not keep diaries or journals?
2. How does a journalist who keeps a diary or journal differ demographically from a journalist who does not?
3. What compels journalists to keep diaries or journals, and conversely, what prevents journalists from keeping diaries or journals?
4. What kinds of information do journalists record in their diaries or journals, and how is the information used?
5. What is the significance of diaries or journals to journalists, i.e., what benefits do journalists derive from writing in their diaries or journals, who are journalists writing to, how important is privacy, etc.?
6. How are journalists influenced by others' diaries or journals?

²⁹ Mark H Massé "Evaluating Students' Progress by Reading Their Journals," *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator* 54 (Autumn 1999): 43-56.

LIMITATIONS/DELIMITATIONS

This thesis presupposes two delimitations, namely: 1) the e-mail questionnaire will only be sent to newspaper journalists; and 2) journalists' published diaries and journals are not a true cross-section of journalists' diaries as they are usually those of the more renowned. In addition, two limitations might affect the study's results: 1) research will rely on the journalists' responses being forthright and without oblique underpinnings; and 2) edited, published diaries might not be quite as telling as unedited, unpublished ones.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Several terms need to be defined as they operate in this study. Using the interpretation employed by the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), journalist will be defined as "every person whose main, regular and remunerated activity consists in contributing, by word or picture, to one or several written or audio-visual mass media and who derives most of his or her income from it."³⁰

According to *Webster's New World Dictionary*, a diary is "a daily written record, especially of the writer's own experiences, thoughts, etc."³¹ For the purposes of this thesis, the term diary is further understood to be interchangeable with the term journal. This seems especially appropriate since the words diary and journal derive from the same Latin root, *dies* (day). The word diary was chosen over the word journal for two reasons. First, this researcher calls her own such writings, diaries, and second, using the term journal would create a confusion of terms between the journalist as a profession and the journalist as a keeper of a journal.

The diary in relation to the autobiography is considered at length in the Literature Review (Chapter 2). The difference between the diary and the letter will be briefly considered here. Neither

³⁰ Georges Bohere, *Profession: Journalist* (Geneva: International Labor Organization, 1984), 8.

³¹ *Webster's New World Dictionary of American English*, 3rd College ed. (New York: Prentice Hall, 1988), 381.

the letter nor the diary is written ostensibly for publication. Where the two specifically diverge is in the intended recipient, as the letter is written to a concrete “Other,” the diary to an abstract “Other.” This difference is what makes the diary more of an introspective, personal form of writing than the letter. As diarist scholar Arthur Ponsonby asserts, “The consciousness in the [letter] writer of an immediate recipient exercises a restraint on the author and produces a certain sort of self-consciousness which may be entirely absent from the pages of a diary.”³² Both the letter and the diary serve as composing- and sounding-boards, but the letter writer—unlike the diary writer—converses mutually. The letter can therefore be considered a two-way channel of communication, the diary (unpublished), a one-way channel.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

It should be noted that this thesis writer has kept a diary for more than 30 years. Therefore, this study of the diary cannot help but be 1) broadened by the researcher’s impassioned intellectual interest, and 2) the researcher’s own diary writing infinitely improved.

³² Arthur Ponsonby, *English Diaries: A Review of English Diaries from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century* (London: Methuen & Co., 1923), 2

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

“My journal is that of me which would else spill over and run to waste.”³³

Henry David Thoreau

INTRODUCTION

This literature review was undertaken to identify the materials relevant to understanding the diary in relation to the journalist. Therefore, a thorough digestion of books about diaries, published diaries and the theories of autobiography was essential. These books were found by searching the holdings of the Oviatt Library at California State University, Northridge (CSUN). CSUN on-line databases like Infotrac and Lexis-Nexis; Internet sources like amazon.com and abebooks.com; scouring new and used bookstores; and by word of mouth. In addition, each book’s bibliography and index spawned a wealth of new material.

To assure there were no prior theses or dissertations on the subject of diaries and journalists, *Journalism and Mass Communications Abstracts* from 1963 to 1998 were researched using the terms diary and journal. The word diary was not found in any of the indexes and the word journal was always listed with the notification: “See Magazines.”

³³ Henry David Thoreau, *The Journal of Henry David Thoreau*, Volume I: 1837-1846, ed. by Torrey Bradford and Francis H. Allen (Salt Lake City: Gibbs M. Smith, 1984), 206.

In order to present the Literature Review's findings in an organized manner, they are divided into the following five sections:

- History of the Diary
- The Diary's Historical and Biographical Import
- Diarists on Diaries
- Editors on Diaries
- Theories of Autobiography

HISTORY OF THE DIARY

Major Books about Diaries

The most comprehensive account of an aggregate of diaries from all over the world is Thomas Mallon's *A Book of One's Own: People and Their Diaries*, published in 1985. Mallon delineates his book into seven types of diarists (although a caveat needs to be raised here that no diarist categorically fits into any one of Mallon's sections):

- *Chroniclers*—These diarists devote themselves to chronicling their lives and their interactions with the world around them. Diarists include Samuel Pepys, Samuel Sewall, the Goncourt Brothers, George Templeton Strong, Virginia Woolf, and Evelyn Waugh.
- *Travelers*—These diarists keep diaries of their travels. Mallon says that the camera has virtually replaced the travel diary today. Examples of diarists he includes here are James Boswell, Queen Victoria, André Maurois, Clara Milburn, and Simone de Beauvoir.
- *Pilgrims*—These diarists are predominantly in search of understanding themselves. Examples include Henry David Thoreau, May Sarton, Anaïs Nin, Josh Greenfield, C. S. Lewis, Alan H. Olmstead, Florida Scott-Maxwell, Søren Kierkegaard, and Annie Dillard.
- *Creators*—Diarists with a creative vein—predominantly painters, poets and novelists—or diarists who write about those with a creative vein. Diarists include Dorothy Wordsworth, Mary Shelley, Gerald Manley Hopkins, Allen Ginsberg, Sylvia Plath, Victor Hugo, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Graham Greene, Katherine Mansfield, Dostoevski, Edgar Degas, Edward Weston, and le Corbusier.
- *Apologists*—These diarists use their diaries to justify their behavior, as “posthumous press releases.”³⁴ Diarists include Richard Crossman, Charles Lindbergh, Joseph Goebbels, Leon Trotsky, and George Sand.

³⁴ Thomas Mallon, *A Book of One's Own: People and Their Diaries* (New York: Ticknor & Fields, 1984), 172.

- *Confessors*—These diarists use their diaries to unburden and expiate their sins, as at a confessional. Examples include Jim Carroll, Gretchen Lainer, Stendhal, and Christopher Isherwood.
- *Prisoners*—These diarists are both literal prisoners and prisoners of their own circumstances. Diarists include Anne Frank, Albert Speer, William Soutar, William Allingham, and Arthur Christopher Benson.

Mallon’s book should be required reading for anyone wishing to study the diary, as he provides an exhaustive account of the most well-known diarists over the last few centuries. In addition, Mallon offers the reader a broad sense of how the diary has been used, how the diary developed, and those most allied with the diary form.

A book that proved helpful in tracing the psychological development of the diary is Harry J. Berman’s *Interpreting the Aging Self: Personal Journals of Later Life*. Berman, who states that the seventeenth century marked the diary’s proliferation,³⁵ says there are four types of pre-diary texts written between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries that have influenced the present-day diary’s formation. Namely, the travel journal, the public journal, the journal of conscience, and the journal of personal memoranda.³⁶ In addition, Berman suggests two trends in twentieth-century diary writing: 1) The preparation of a diary with the intention to have it published immediately, and 2) The tendency of diarists to use psychological concepts.³⁷

Judging by the number of books on English diaries, the English appear to have a greater appreciation of, and fascination with, the diary genre. It is unfortunate that these books focus exclusively on English diaries, but this does not detract from their illuminating insights into the genre’s depths. Two of the most rewarding books on English diaries are Ponsonby’s *English Diaries* and Fothergill’s *Private Chronicles*. Because Ponsonby’s book predates Fothergill’s by 51 years, this study will begin with Ponsonby. As Ponsonby himself explains, “I did not set out to

³⁵ Harry J. Berman, *Interpreting the Aging Self: Personal Journals of Later Life* (New York: Springer Publishing Group, 1994), 25.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 25-6.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 27-8.

select the best diaries or even only good diaries.”³⁸ Instead, Ponsonby includes a panoply of English diaries he considers to “give a full representation of all shades of diary writing, long and short, historical, public and private, good, bad and indifferent.” Not only does Ponsonby offer astute annotations and insights about each of a hundred-plus diaries, but he begins his study with a brief analysis of the diary genre, including the history of diary writing, types of diaries, diarists’ motives, etc. Ponsonby is a must for any diary researcher.

Fothergill also focuses on English diaries, but instead of analyzing each diary individually, he studies them according to their placement into the following six categories: *Historical Perspective*; *The Diary as Literature*; *Motive and Manner*; *Style, Tone, and Self-Projection*; *Ego and Ideal*; *Forms of Serial Autobiography*. Like Ponsonby, Fothergill is an invaluable resource for anyone interested in understanding the diary’s *raison d’être*. In addition, since Fothergill’s book was written more than 50 years after Ponsonby’s, it is comprised of more contemporary diarists and more up-to-date deliberations about diaries.

There are many books that compile diary entries from a multitude of sources. Two that are organized in the format of a diary are worth noting here: *The Book of American Diaries* and *Faber Book of Diaries*. Other compilations that co-join excerpts according to historical era or subject matter are also worth mentioning: *A Treasury of the World’s Great Diaries*, *Diary of America*, *A Day at a Time*, and Steven Kagles’ two books, *Early Nineteenth Century American Diary Literature* and *Late Nineteen Century American Diary Literature*.

There are two seminal how-to books on diary and journal keeping in the last half of the twentieth century. One is Ira Progoff’s guide to keeping what he calls an “Intensive Journal;” the other is Tristine Rainer’s guide to keeping what she dubs “The New Diary.”

³⁸ Arthur Ponsonby, *English Diaries: A Review of English Diaries from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century* (London: Methuen & Co., 1923), vii.

Progoff proposes that a regular and disciplined use of the Intensive Journal will put one in contact with one's inner self. Progoff's program consists of participants writing about the following nine subjects, what he calls *steppingstone periods*: 1) Dialogue with Persons; 2) Dialogue with Works; 3) Dialogue with the Body; 4) Dialogue with Society; 5) Dialogue with Events; 6) Dream Log; 7) Twilight Imagery Log; 8) Inner Wisdom Dialogue; and 9) Intersections: Roads Taken & Not Taken.³⁹

Rainer's concept of The New Diary commingles the more quotidian diary with the more introspective journal and offers a "collective psychology of the diary and a testament to the creative process."⁴⁰ "We have only started to grasp the potential," says Rainer, "for the parts of the mind the diary helps to develop—memory, imagination, feelings, dream imagery, intuition, and other creative facilities."⁴¹ Rainer, like Progoff, offers specific mechanisms to guide the aspiring diarist.

Diarists of Note

Samuel Pepys is considered to be the first consummate diarist according to most accounts, as his diaries are a "chronicle of everything,"⁴² says Thomas Mallon. Written in a popular shorthand of the day, Pepys' nine-year diary—began in 1660 when he was 27 years old—was not deciphered until the early nineteenth century.

Probably the most well-known diarist today is Anne Frank, who wrote while in hiding during World War II in Amsterdam. Along with her sister, mother, father, and four others, Frank spent over two years in the upper rooms of a spice warehouse, referred to as the Secret Annexe. Frank wrote in her diary (a present from her parents on her 13th birthday) from the time she was 13 years old until her capture by the Germans shortly after her 15th birthday.

³⁹ Ira Progoff, *At a Journal Workshop: The Basic Text and Guide for Using the Intensive Journal* (New York: Dialogue House Library, 1975), 127-8.

⁴⁰ Tristine Rainer, *The New Diary: How To Use a Journal For Self-guidance and Expanded Creativity* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1978), 12.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, 12.

⁴² Thomas Mallon, *A Book of One's Own: People and Their Diaries* (New York: Ticknor & Fields, 1984), 1-2.

Another young diarist, Russian painter Marie Bashkirtseff, is not so well known today, but her journal was immensely popular in Europe in the late 1800's and early 1900's. "The appearance of Marie Bashkirtseff's journal," says Arthur Ponsonby, "encouraged many people to make a similar attempt."⁴³ Bashkirtseff's 10-year journal ended with her death of tuberculosis at the age of 23.

One of the most famous journals of the 1800's is that of the Goncourt Brothers, Edmond and Jules. The *Goncourt Journal* was transcribed by Jules, but composed by both brothers until Jules' death in 1870.⁴⁴ It is a paradoxical form of the diary because it is a solitary endeavor undertaken by two. The Prix Goncourt, established by Edmund in 1903, is still one of the most important literary prizes awarded in France today.⁴⁵

W. N. P. Barbellion's *Journal of a Disappointed Man* is another diary worth noting here, as it became a best seller immediately upon its publication in 1919. Ponsonby explains Barbellion's appeal, "So intimately sincere and so intensely human that you lay down the book feeling you have been in the closest contact with a human being that is conceivably possible through the medium of the printed page."⁴⁶ Barbellion's fans felt betrayed, however, when it became known that not only was Barbellion a pseudonym (Bruce Frederick Cummings was his real name), but that the author—postscripted as deceased—was very much alive.

Possibly the most well-known published diary by a journalist is William Shirer's worldwide best seller, *Berlin Diary*. Shirer, who was a CBS correspondent in Berlin in the opening months of World War II, used his smuggled diaries as the basis for *Berlin Diary*.⁴⁷

⁴³ Arthur Ponsonby, *English Diaries: A Review of English Diaries From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century* (London: Methuen & Co., 1923), 43.

⁴⁴ Edmond and Jules De Goncourt, *Pages From the Goncourt Journal*, ed. & trans. by Robert Baldick (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), x.

⁴⁵ *Merriam Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature* (Springfield: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 1995), 907.

⁴⁶ Arthur Ponsonby, *English Diaries: A Review of English Diaries from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century* (London: Methuen & Co., 1923), 435.

⁴⁷ *Time*, 10 Jan 1994, 15.

Enumerating the thousands of published diaries and journals is not this thesis' telos, however, throughout this paper, more than 100 diaries and journals will be taken into account. Two female diarists of the 1900's—Anaïs Nin and Virginia Woolf—should receive special mention here, as their influence today on the diary form and other diarists is substantial. Both diarists discuss diary writing throughout their diaries, providing the reader a virtual downpour of diary-keeping insight. Nin also dedicates two chapters of her inspirational manual for writers—*The Novel of the Future*—to the diary form.⁴⁸

Format of the Diary

Diaries have been written by the diarist in longhand, typed, and even dictated to an amanuenses. To record their musings, diarists have used notebooks, loose leaf paper—or as in the case of Albert Speer—scraps of paper foraged in prison. The advent of the personal computer in the 1980's added yet another format, the electronic. But it wasn't until the 1990's, when Internet use exploded, that diaries took on another form altogether: on-line interactive diaries. One of the largest and most organized interactive sites is writer Catherine deCuir's website: journals.miningco.com. DeCuir's site includes information about diaries as well as an opportunity to post one's own diary entries. The intent of the on-line diarist—writing to others, not just to oneself—is contrary to the true diary form, nonetheless, like all the other ways the Internet is changing the face of communications, the on-line diary is another avenue for communicating with others.

Diary as Hoax

When 62 volumes of Hitler's alleged secret diaries—covering 3 years, from 1932 to 1945—were discovered in 1983, the world was bustling with both astonishment and skepticism of the news.⁴⁹ But the diaries were soon decried as obvious forgeries by the Federal Archives in West

⁴⁸ Anaïs Nin, *The Novel of the Future* (Athens: Swallow Press, 1986), 142-164.

⁴⁹ *Time*, 16 May 1983, 36-43.

Germany, particularly as a chemical analysis proved that the binding and glue contained postwar chemicals. Other experts were quick to cry fraud as well, citing the pristine and congruous condition of the diaries, the plagerization of much of the content from Max Domarus' book *Hitler's Speeches and Proclamation 1932-45*, as well as handwriting discrepancies.⁵⁰

The publishing world was hit with a surprise revelation in 1979 when it was disclosed that *Go Ask Alice* editor Beatrice Sparks had augmented the diary of an anonymous drug-crazed teenager—in which the diarist is intimated to have died from a drug overdose—with “incidents and ideas” she had gleaned from her days as a youth counselor.⁵¹ It was the diary's supposed truth that had elevated the book to its bestseller status in the early 70's, as book reviewers espoused the book as a warning to teenagers about the perils of drug use.

Diary as Witness

Authorities hope that *San Antonio Express-News* reporter Philip True's last diary entry in December 1998—recalling his encounter with the Huichol Indians in Mexico—will help implicate his alleged killers.⁵² True writes of his encounter with one of the two suspects named Juan, who tells True that he cannot enter Huichol land without permission, “It looks bad for a bit.”⁵³ Nonetheless, True follows Juan to his ranch—and allegedly to his death.

Besides bearing witness to a criminal act or scandal, a diary can serve as a deposition of one's last days. This was the case for a 68-year-old woman and her 75-year-old husband who were trapped in California's Sierra Nevada mountains for more than two weeks in a snow storm after taking a wrong turn while driving home to Santa Clarita from Fresno. The couple's diary, written

⁵⁰ Ibid, 36-43.

⁵¹ Lauren Adams, “Go Ask Alice,” *The Horn Book Magazine*, Sept-Oct 1998, 6.

⁵² Mark Fitzgerald, “Slain Reporter's Lost Diary Implicates Suspect,” *Editor & Publisher* 20 March 1999, 17.

⁵³ Ibid, 17.

on scraps of paper, contained “poems, reflections, funeral instructions and an account of the passing days. . . .”⁵⁴

Diary as Journalism

It could be contended that newspaper columnists write a sort of “public” diary, since their columns are written in first person and focus on their opinions about public and private events. Interestingly enough, Franklin D. Roosevelt said of Eleanor Roosevelt’s column, “My Day”—which spanned 30 years and revealed her life in the White House and her own essays on social issues—“My wife simply writes in a daily diary.”⁵⁵

A widely-read column in *The Evening Standard*, called “The Londoner’s Diary,” has been providing social, political and literary gossip in England since its inception in 1916.⁵⁶ Ironically, two of the column’s past editors, Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart and Harold Nicolson, are both published diarists. A popular American diary column published in various New York papers, “Our Own Samuel Pepys,” by Franklin Pierce Adams, was not to survive such a long tenure, as it only lasted 11 years—from 1911 to 1922—but was known to have reinvigorated the public diary form in America at the time.⁵⁷

THE DIARY’S HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL IMPORT

Historical

The diary has long been heralded as one of the major wellsprings of primary material for historians wishing to comprehend the past. “Diaries can give greater accuracy for dates, people,

⁵⁴ John Johnston, “Stranded Husband and Wife Leave Behind Diary of Death,” *The Richmond News Leader* (Virginia), 10 May 1991, 4.

⁵⁵ Maria Braden, *She Said What?: Interviews with Women Newspaper Columnists* (Kentucky: The University of Kentucky, 1993), 5.

⁵⁶ John Cruesemann, “Londoner’s Diary,” *Evening Standard*, 13 May 1988 (Londoner’s Diary story sent to the researcher by Diary Assistant Emma P. Bowles).

⁵⁷ Randall M. Miller and Linda Patterson Miller, eds., *The Book of American Diaries* (New York: Avon Books, 1995), 479.

places and events than interview accounts or oral history material, because the diarist is usually recalling events that are fresh,”⁵⁸ says Paul C. Rosenblatt in *Bitter, Bitter Tears: Nineteenth-Century Diarists and Twentieth-Century Grief Theories*. In *The Critical Historian*, Kitson Clark discusses why the diary is an important historical document:

All journalism is an attempt to write history . . . On many 19th century topics, there is a very large network of private letters supplementing the great bulk of published documents and reports, and these with the aid of the odd diary can bring the researcher very close to the actions and the minds of the people about whom he is writing. . . . A report often gets modified either through transmission from one person to another before it is written down or through a lapse of memory on the part of a principal witness.⁵⁹

Primary documents like diaries are considered to be credible documents because they are not clouded or distorted by second-hand retelling. “A story told by a person in his/her own words of his/her own experience does not have to plead its legitimacy in any higher court of narrative appeal, because no narrative has any greater legitimacy than the person’s own,”⁶⁰ says Gerald Young in *Adult Development, Therapy and Culture*.

Historians look to the diary for the human element missing in objective portrayals of past events. “However careless and superficially chatty even the best of them may be at times,” says James Johnson, “it is nevertheless through the memoir and its related forms that the world of the past is often more vividly re-peopled than through the most carefully written histories.”⁶¹

Biographical

The diary is an invaluable source document for both the biographer and the autobiographer. Catherine Drinker Bowen considers the diary to be the biographer’s principal stock in trade, “That biographer is fortunate whose hero kept a diary in his youth or whose mother or sweetheart hoarded

⁵⁸ Paul C. Rosenblatt, *Bitter, Bitter Tears: Nineteenth-Century Diarist and Twentieth-Century Grief Theories* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1983), 5.

⁵⁹ Kitson Clark, *The Critical Historian* (New York: Basic Books, 1967), 17.

⁶⁰ Gerald Young, *Adult Development, Therapy, and Culture* (New York: Plenum Press, 1997), 39.

⁶¹ James C. Johnston, *Biography: The Literature of Personality* (New York: The Century Co., 1927), 160.

his letters. To come upon such a treasure trove is a valid reason to choose a biographical subject.”⁶² Ted Hughes believes his wife’s diary presents a better biographical portrait than even a biography could, “This journal [Sylvia Plath’s] offers something that no biography could—in its best passages the voice that speaks through these pages is as true and unique as the Plath of the poems.”⁶³

Diaries offer invaluable source material for an autobiography, not only because they provide autobiographers a perspective on events unaffected by the vicissitudes of time, but because they help autobiographers recall events and conversations long since forgotten. As useful as the diary is to the autobiography, however, the diarist still keeps a lock on many of the diary’s ruminations, according to Carolyn Heilbrun. Heilbrun, after reading hundreds of women’s diaries and autobiographies written the last couple of centuries, is surprised at the marked difference between a woman’s autobiography and her diary. Heilbrun finds that women’s diaries reflect their “ambitions and struggles in the public sphere,” while their published autobiographies portray them as “intuitive, nurturing, passive, but never—in spite of the contrary evidence of their accomplishments—managerial.”⁶⁴

DIARISTS ON DIARIES

Diary as Disciplinarian

Bless me diary, for I have sinned, it has been a week since my last confession. Like Catholicism’s confessional litany, diarists chastise themselves for their lack of regularity. Sylvia Plath was forever reproaching herself in her journal for her inconstancy: “A whole week, and I haven’t written here,”⁶⁵ “Hello, hello. It is about time I sat down and described some things,”⁶⁶

⁶² Catherine Drinker Bowen, *Biography: The Craft and the Calling* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1969), 75.

⁶³ Sylvia Plath, *The Journals of Sylvia Plath*, ed. by Ted Hughes and Frances McCullough (New York: Ballantine Books, 1991), xi.

⁶⁴ Carolyn G. Heilbrun, *Writing a Woman’s Life* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1988), 24.

⁶⁵ Sylvia Plath, *The Journals of Sylvia Plath*, ed. by Ted Hughes and Frances McCullough (New York: Ballantine Books, 1991), 209.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 151.

“No skipping after today; a page diary to warm up.”⁶⁷ André Gide also viewed his journal writing as a form of discipline, “As a matter of routine, I should force myself to write a few lines here every day.”⁶⁸ Instead of berating herself for her neglect, Fanny Burney seeks forgiveness and understanding, “Don’t be angry that I have been absent so long without writing, for I have been so entirely without a moment to myself, except for dressing, that I really have not had it in my power.”⁶⁹

Most diarists, it appears, have bouts of discontent with their diaries, as if they were coerced into keeping them up. Katherine Mansfield grumbled, “What a vile little diary!”⁷⁰ Charles Greville bewailed the chore of writing in his journal, but at the same time felt he had put too much of himself into it to apply the brakes: “Every day my disinclination to continue this work increases, but I have at the same time a reluctance to discontinue entirely an occupation which has engaged me for forty years.”⁷¹

Diary as Emancipator

Diametrically opposed to the diary as disciplinarian is the diary as liberator. Writing for one’s eyes only makes it more of a pleasurable task than a burdensome one. The freedom to write when, what, and where one pleases allows diarists the laxity to be themselves without the strictures demanded by commercial writing endeavors. Novelist Agnes Turnbull expresses the untold joy she felt upon the realization of what keeping a diary entailed:

Suddenly today the most amazing idea struck me! This morning I was thinking that for exactly twenty years I’ve been writing steadily, at short stories and novels. In those thousands and thousands of words, I’ve been speaking for somebody else. Just for once I

⁶⁷ Ibid, 163.

⁶⁸ André Gide, *The Journals of André Gide*, vol. 1, trans. by Justin O’Brien (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), 12.

⁶⁹ Frances Burney, *The Diary and Letters of Frances Burney, Madame D’Arblay*, vol. 1, ed. by Sarah Chauncey Woolsey (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1890), 92.

⁷⁰ Katherine Mansfield, *The Journal of Katherine Mansfield*, ed. by John Middleton Murry (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1941), 18.

⁷¹ Charles Cavendish Fulke Greville, *The Greville Diary*, vol. 1, ed. by Philip Whitwell Wilson (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1927), 5.

want to be me. I want to stop agonizing over imaginary women's emotions and reactions and think about my own. In short, I'm going to keep a Diary. Without benefit of style as such, without fear of publisher, editor, or critic, I shall write exactly as I please. If I care to split an infinitive I shall split it even if the crack can be heard a mile away.⁷²

David E. Lilienthal says of the diary's cathartic pleasure, "To be fully satisfying this should be a place where one says something . . . about how the inner man feels, thinks, dreams, believes, at the time, without worrying one bit whether it will sound silly to me if read a year or ten or twenty years later."⁷³ Stendhal says his diary keeping offers him a different sort of freedom, a respite from ennui: "The energy which makes me think what I write and then write it has to some extent rescued me from boredom."⁷⁴

Diary as Consoler

Diarists not only extol the diary's emancipating benefits, but also its ability to pacify. Marie Bashkirtseff writes of her diary's soothing effect, "What a consolation it is to write this! I am already calmer. Not only do the annoyances I suffer injure my health, but they injure my disposition and my appearance."⁷⁵ Samuel Pepys describes his recordings as a tonic, "Up, after sleeping very well; and so to my office, setting down the journall of this last three days. And so settled to business again—I hope with greater chearefullnesse and successe by this refreshment."⁷⁶

Virginia Woolf says writing in her diary helps elevate her mood, "Melancholy diminishes as I write."⁷⁷ Franz Kafka uses his diary as a soporific, "Open the diary only in order to lull myself to sleep."⁷⁸ Henry David Thoreau realizes that his journal is as stimulating as he chooses to make it:

⁷² Agnes Sligh Turnbull, *Dear Me: Leaves from the Diary of Agnes Sligh Turnbull* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941), 1-2.

⁷³ David E. Lilienthal, *The Journals of David E. Lilienthal*, vol. v (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 44.

⁷⁴ Marie-Henri Beyle, *The Private Diaries of Stendhal (Marie-Henri Beyle)*, ed. and trans. by Robert Sage (London: Victor Gollancz, 1955), 219.

⁷⁵ Marie Bashkirtseff, *The Journal of a Young Artist 1860-1884*, trans. by Mary J. Serrano (New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1919), 10.

⁷⁶ Samuel Pepys, *The Illustrated Pepys: Extracts from the Diary*, ed. by Robert Latham (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978), 56.

⁷⁷ Virginia Woolf, *A Writer's Diary*, ed. by Leonard Woolf (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanich, 1981), 28.

⁷⁸ Franz Kafka, *The Diaries of Franz Kafka, 1914-1923*, ed. by Max Brod (New York: Schocken Books, 1965), 144.

“I wish to set down such choice experiences that my own writings may inspire me. . . . I am greedy of occasions to express myself.”⁷⁹

Diary as Enlightener

Zen Buddhists spend untold hours every day pondering life, hoping to attain the peak moment of spiritual enlightenment called satori. Diarists enact the same sort of self-exploration by writing in their diaries. By writing daily about one’s experiences, one cannot help but open an inner valve of consciousness. Thomas Mann explains, “I love this process by which each passing day is captured, not only its impressions, but also, at least by suggestion, its intellectual direction and content as well, less for the purpose of rereading and remembering than for taking stock, reviewing, maintaining awareness, achieving perspective.”⁸⁰

David Lilienthal says that out of his diary “come some of the most satisfying experiences of life, for me: finding expression, somehow, for the things that are inside me that I believe and want others to believe.”⁸¹ André Gide says his diary is most valuable when it “records the awakening of ideas.”⁸²

Diary as Therapist

Become a diarist and you will never need a psychiatrist. Not all diarists might ascribe to this philosophy, but many diarists use their diaries to work out problems. Virginia Woolf employs her diary as an anodyne for her recurring bouts of madness: “I must hurriedly note more symptoms of the disease, so that I can turn back here and medicine myself next time.”⁸³ Sylvia Plath describes

⁷⁹ Henry David Thoreau, *The Journal of Henry David Thoreau*, vol. 1: 1837-1846, ed. by Torrey Bradford and Francis H. Allen (Salt Lake City: Gibbs M. Smith, 1984), lxiii.

⁸⁰ Thomas Mann, *Thomas Mann Diaries, 1918-1939*, trans. by Richard and Clara Winston (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1982), 194.

⁸¹ David E. Lilienthal, *The Journals of David E. Lilienthal*, vol. v (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 21.

⁸² André Gide, *The Journals of André Gide*, vol. 1, trans. by Justin O’Brien (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), 15.

⁸³ Virginia Woolf, *A Writer’s Diary*, ed. by Leonard Woolf (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanich, 1981), 32.

her journal as a life force: “All joy for me; love, fame, life work, and, I assume children, depends on the central need of my nature: to be articulate, to hammer out the great surges of experience jammed, dammed, crammed in me. . . .”⁸⁴ Diarist Agnes Turnbull provides a metaphysical metaphor for the diary’s therapeutic effects:

A diary is a sort of second self, a kind of ‘astral envelope’ into which one may slip for refuge. I think it would be a wholesome thing for every woman to keep a journal. They say the Confessional has actual therapeutic value. So, I’ve discovered, has a Diary.⁸⁵

Journalists, as to be expected, record their work-related enthusiasms and frustrations in their diaries. Sydney Moseley is proud of his journalistic affiliation, “Over a fortnight has passed since I joined the Daily Express. Now I am a journalist—in reality; and we Fleet Street men (!) have little time for private dreaming in diaries! What we write we give to the world!”⁸⁶ The heady glow of Fleet Street has obviously worn off for Robert Bruce Lockhart, “Fleet Street is no place for me. With very few exceptions I loathe and despise everyone connected with it, and the exceptions are the failures. Most of the successful ones have trampled over their mother’s or their best pal’s dead body to lift themselves up.”⁸⁷

Virginia Woolf, book critic and author, is less than complimentary of her fellow book reviewers, “So all critics split off, and the wretched author who tries to keep control of them is torn asunder.”⁸⁸ Albert Camus also writes of his frustration with the critic’s role, “Three years to make a book, five lines to ridicule it, and the quotations wrong.”⁸⁹ The Goncourt brothers are even more captious about the art of criticism, “Criticism is the enemy and the negation of the genius of an age.

⁸⁴ Sylvia Plath, *The Journals of Sylvia Plath*, ed. by Ted Hughes and Frances McCullough (New York: Ballantine Books, 1991), 163.

⁸⁵ Agnes Sligh Turnbull, *Dear Me: Leaves from the Diary of Agnes Sligh Turnbull* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941), 91.

⁸⁶ Simon Brett, ed. *The Faber Book of Diaries* (Boston: Faber and Faber, 1987), 101.

⁸⁷ Robert Bruce Lockhart, *The Diaries of Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart*, vol. one: 1915-1938, ed. by Kenneth Young (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1973), 271.

⁸⁸ Virginia Woolf, *A Writer’s Diary*, ed. by Leonard Woolf (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanich, 1981), 20.

⁸⁹ Albert Camus, *Notebooks, 1942-1951*, trans. by Justin O’Brien (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966), 20.

. . . That ephemeral sheet of paper, the newspaper, is the natural enemy of the book, as the whore is of the decent woman.”⁹⁰

Almost all published diarists who are journalists write of their desire to write when and what they want, but are constrained by the need for a regular income. Harold Nicolson writes of Noel Coward’s exhortations regarding his journalistic endeavors: “Noel abuses me for being a journalist; he feels that this constant emptying of my accumulators upon futile energies may end by sapping the source of energy itself, and that when I eventually leave and try to settle down to serious books the force will have gone out of me.”⁹¹ Nicolson, feeling helpless, adds, “But what am I to do? I can’t sacrifice Vita and the boys merely for my own convenience. . . . It is only that I am losing my literary reputation and shall never be taken seriously again. And all this for money!”⁹²

Diarists may not be writing encomiums about journalism in their diaries, but they do offer journalistic advice. Journalist Edward Robb Ellis writes, “Every good reporter asks questions that are brief and to the point.”⁹³ Newspaper journalist H. L. Mencken, referencing radio’s growing market in the 1940’s, says, “Nothing is going to be accomplished by trying to out-demagogue the radio crooners. The function of a newspaper in a democracy is to stand as a sort of chronic opposition to the reigning quacks. The minute it begins to try to out-whoop them it forfeits its character and becomes ridiculous.”⁹⁴

Diary as Composer

The expression, practice makes perfect, applies as much to journalistic writing as to any other endeavor. By the sheer process of writing in a diary, diarists improve not only their writing

⁹⁰ Edmond and Jules De Goncourt, *Pages from the Goncourt Journal*, ed. & trans. by Robert Baldick (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 37.

⁹¹ Harold Nicolson, *Diaries and Letters, 1930-1939*, ed. by Nigel Nicolson (New York: Atheneum, 1966), 58.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 58.

⁹³ Edward Robb Ellis, *A Diary of the Century: Tales from America’s Greatest Diarist* (New York: Kodansha International, 1995), 277.

⁹⁴ Henry Louis Mencken, *The Diary of H.L. Mencken*, ed. by Charles A. Fecher (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), 144.

proficiency, but also their rhetorical skills. Playwright Thornton Wilder appreciates how his journal helps him think on his feet, as his diary enables him “to reflect without writing and build up the power of ‘unflurried’ thinking in the thousand occasions in the daily life.”⁹⁵ Virginia Woolf says, “. . . the diary writing has greatly helped my style; loosened the ligatures.”⁹⁶ Arthur Inman, whose massive diaries focus on the writing of a diary, maintains his diary is “of incalculable value in learning self-expression.”⁹⁷

Anaïs Nin believes it is the privacy afforded by the diary that helps writers—especially young writers—compose, as a diary allows one to “bypass all the inhibiting factors.”⁹⁸ Nin adds, “I have seen young writers destroyed at the beginning of their careers by a scathing criticism of their work by a teacher, a friend, a parent. The young are very vulnerable.”

Diary as Confidante

Anne Frank’s first entry on June 12, 1942, written shortly before she and her family are forced into hiding, expresses her hopes for her diary: “I hope I will be able to confide everything to you, as I have never been able to confide in anyone, and I hope you will be a great source of comfort and support.”⁹⁹ Less than ten days later, Frank concludes, “Paper has more patience than people.”¹⁰⁰ Anaïs Nin envisions her diary as an alternate to the fine-weather friend:

I regret nothing. I only regret that everybody wants to deprive me of the journal, which is the only steadfast friend I have, the only one which makes my life bearable; because my happiness with human beings is so precarious, my confiding moods so rare, and the least sign of non-interest is enough to silence me.¹⁰¹

⁹⁵ Thornton Wilder, *The Journals of Thornton Wilder, 1939-1961*, ed. by Donald Gallup (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), xviii.

⁹⁶ Virginia Woolf, *A Writer’s Diary*, ed. by Leonard Woolf (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanich, 1981), 67.

⁹⁷ Arthur Inman, *The Inman Diary: A Public and Private Confession*, vol. I, ed. by Daniel Aaron (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), 167-89.

⁹⁸ Anaïs Nin, *The Novel of the Future* (Athens: Swallow Press, 1986), 144.

⁹⁹ Anne Frank, *The Diary of a Young Girl*, The Definitive Edition, ed. by Otto H. Frank and Mirjam Pressler (New York: Anchor Books, 1995), 1.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁰¹ Anaïs Nin, *The Diary of Anaïs Nin, 1931-1934*, ed. by Gunther Stuhlmann (New York: The Swallow Press and Harcourt, Brace & World, 1966), 224.

Conversely, Nin wonders if perhaps she pours too much of herself into the vortex of the diary: “I created you because I needed a friend. And talking to this friend, I have, perhaps, wasted my life.”¹⁰²

Mary Shelley, after the death of her husband Percy Bythe Shelley, writes of her need for a surrogate companion, “I have now no friend. . . . Now I am alone! Oh, how alone. . . . White paper—wilt thou be my confidante? I will trust thee fully, for none shall see what I write.”¹⁰³ Sophie Tolstoy—whose husband is very much alive, but very much absent—also looks to her diary to stave off her loneliness, “I am so often alone with my thoughts that the desire to write my diary is quite natural. I sometimes feel depressed, but now it seems wonderful to be able to think everything over for myself, without having to say anything about it to other people.”¹⁰⁴

Diary as Recorder

Diarists have an insatiable appetite to record. This is because they have “the desire,” says Alex Aronson, “to save experience from final oblivion.”¹⁰⁵ Julian Green explains, “Now, I obey the incomprehensible desire to bring the past to a standstill that makes one keep a diary.”¹⁰⁶ Sophie Tolstoy is intent on accurately representing her husband Leo Tolstoy’s likeness in her diaries, “I might render a service to posterity by recording, not so much Lyova’s [Leo’s] everyday life, as his mental activities, so far as I was able to watch them.”¹⁰⁷

Journalist Bella Fromm discusses the historical import of her recordings, “It is possible that, from an account of the daily events in the life of one journalist, the reader may become aware of

¹⁰² Ibid, 260.

¹⁰³ Mary Shelley, *The Journals of Mary Shelley, 1814-1844*, ed. by Paula R. Feldman and Diana Scott-Kilvert (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1087), xviii.

¹⁰⁴ Sophie Andreyevna Tolstoy, *The Diary of Tolstoy’s Wife*, trans. by Alexander Werth (London: Victor Gollancz, 1928), 130.

¹⁰⁵ Alex Aronson, *Studies in Twentieth-Century Diaries: The Concealed Self* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1991), xvii.

¹⁰⁶ Julian Green, *Diary: 1928-1957*, trans. by Anne Greene (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1964), 3.

¹⁰⁷ Sophie Andreyevna Tolstoy, *The Diary of Tolstoy’s Wife*, trans. by Alexander Werth (London: Victor Gollancz, 1928), 53.

the shadow that crept over and finally blotted out the light of civilization and culture in Germany and now hangs horribly over the rest of the world.”¹⁰⁸ Stendhal says he writes in his diary with the express purpose of writing “the history of my life day by day.”¹⁰⁹ Five years later, Stendhal is happy with his progress, “I reread this notebook January 10, 1806 at Marseille; it seems to have filled its purpose well enough. At times, there are some moments of profundity in the portrayal of my character.”¹¹⁰

Leo Tolstoy discusses why it is important for writers to record their thoughts at the moment of conception. “Whenever you find it difficult to place a particular thought,” advises Tolstoy, “jot it down in the Diary without allowing the desire to introduce it in the work delay you. The thought will find itself a place.”¹¹¹ Tolstoy explains how he uses his diary specifically as a storehouse of material for his literary works, “Set down in my Diary only thoughts, information, or notes relating to work I am undertaking. On beginning each fresh piece of work look through this Diary and copy out in a separate notebook all that relates to the work.”¹¹²

Diary as Communicator

Most diarists do not address each diary entry to a particular person, nor do they write the clichéd salutation, “Dear Diary.” Some diarists personalize their diaries by attaching a name to them. “To enhance the image of this long-awaited friend in my imagination,” writes Anne Frank, “I’m going to call this friend *Kitty*.”¹¹³ Fanny Burney is famous for her satirical entry upon commencement of her diary at the age of 16, “To Nobody, then will I write my Journal! Since to Nobody can I be

¹⁰⁸ Bella Fromm, *Blood and Banquets: A Berlin Social Diary* (New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1990), 7.

¹⁰⁹ Marie-Henri Beyle, *The Private Diaries of Stendhal (Marie-Henri Beyle)*, ed. and trans. by Robert Sage (London: Victor Gollancz, 1955), 68.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, 68.

¹¹¹ Leo Tolstoy, *The Private Diary of Leo Tolstoy*, ed. by Aylmer Maude and trans. by Louise and Aylmer Maude (London: William Heinemann, 1927), 64.

¹¹² *Ibid*, 61.

¹¹³ Anne Frank, *The Diary of a Young Girl*, The Definitive Edition, ed. by Otto H. Frank and Mirjam Pressler (New York: Anchor Books, 1995), 7.

wholly unreserved.”¹¹⁴ Richard Clough Anderson, Jr., who says he wrote much of his diary as advice to his son, addresses his son directly at times, “My son, never permit yourself to be in debt,”¹¹⁵ “I tell you again my son, never get your friends to do what can be done by yourself.”¹¹⁶

Anaïs Nin, who begins her diary “to record everything for my father,”¹¹⁷ continues her diaries years after her father’s death. Like Nin, Dorothy Wordsworth begins her diary as a record for someone else—her brother William: “I resolved to write a journal of the time till W. and J. return, and I set about keeping my resolve because I will not quarrel with myself, and because I shall give Wm pleasure by it when he comes home again.”¹¹⁸ Wordsworth continues her diaries long after her brother William’s return.

While diarists on the whole deny they write for anyone but themselves, they still express the hope that others will derive pleasure from their diaries. Henri-Frederick Amiel writes, “These pages are not written to be read; they are written for my own consolation and warning.”¹¹⁹ Yet Amiel’s attendant sentence is refutative, “If some passages from it may be useful to others . . . who, after me, may take some interest in the itinerary of an obscurely conditioned soul, far from the world’s noise and fame.”

“I think,” says Stephen Spender, “that the journal writer, like the poet, is haunted by the ghost of a reader; but a ghost is very different from some palpable flesh-and-blood reader whom the writer imagines lolling over his shoulder with his expectations, standards and demands.”¹²⁰ Spender adds, “I had, indeed, no intention of publishing these journals though hoping, doubtless,

¹¹⁴ Robert A. Fothergill, *Private Chronicles: A Study of English Diaries* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), 88.

¹¹⁵ Richard Clough Anderson, Jr., *The Diary and Journal of Richard Clough Anderson, Jr.*, ed. by Alfred Tischendorf (Durham: Duke University Press, 1964), 134.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 220.

¹¹⁷ Anaïs Nin, *The Diary of Anaïs Nin, 1931-1934*, ed. by Gunther Stuhlmann (New York: The Swallow Press and Harcourt, Brace & World, 1966), 202.

¹¹⁸ Dorothy Wordsworth, *Journals of Dorothy Wordsworth: The Alfoxden Journal 1798; The Grasmere Journals 1800-1803*, ed. by Mary Moorman (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 15-16.

¹¹⁹ Henri-Frederic Amiel, *The Journal Intime of Henri-Frederic Amiel*, trans. by Mrs. Humphrey Ward (A. L. Burt Company, n.d.), xii.

¹²⁰ Stephen Spender, *Journals, 1939-1983*, ed. by John Goldsmith. (New York: Random House, 1986) 14.

that some day after my death, someone would read them and find them interesting.”¹²¹ Marie Bashkirtseff expresses her fears of effacement if her diaries are destroyed:

What if I should happen to die suddenly! My family would find my journal, and destroy it after having read it, and soon nothing would be left of me—nothing—nothing—nothing! To live, to have so much ambition, to suffer, to weep, to struggle, and in the end to be forgotten;—as if I had never existed.¹²²

Paradoxically, Marie writes in her journal the uselessness of expecting others to understand her: “One can never give words the least idea of real life. . . . One may invent, one may create, but one cannot copy. . . . And then, why write all this? Others will never understand it, since it is not they, but I, who have felt it.”¹²³ Like Bashkirtseff, Virginia Woolf is anxious about the future of her diaries, “What is to become of all these diaries, I asked myself yesterday. If I died, what would Leo make of them? He would be disinclined to burn them; he could not publish them. Well, he should make up a book from them, I think; and then burn the body.”¹²⁴ As Virginia had hoped, Leonard makes up a book from her diaries, *The Writer’s Diary*, which he says includes “everything which referred to her own writing.”¹²⁵

Anne Frank apparently expected others to one day read her diary, as she would speak directly to the reader: “This morning I was wondering whether you ever felt like a cow, having to chew my stale news over and over again until you’re so fed up with the monotonous fare that you yawn and secretly wish Anne would dig up something new.”¹²⁶

¹²¹ Ibid, 14.

¹²² Marie Bashkirtseff, *The Journal of a Young Artist*, 1860-1884, trans. by Mary J. Serrano (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1919), xiv.

¹²³ Ibid, 29.

¹²⁴ Virginia Woolf, *A Writer’s Diary*, ed. by Leonard Woolf (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanich, 1981), 87.

¹²⁵ Ibid, viii.

¹²⁶ Anne Frank, *The Diary of a Young Girl*, The Definitive Edition, ed. by Otto H. Frank and Mirjam Pressler (New York: Anchor Books, 1995), 177.

Diary as Literature

Diarists, as to be expected, enjoy reading others' diaries, as most diarists seem to be voracious readers in general. And reading diaries by like minds "fans one's enthusiasms,"¹²⁷ to borrow a phrase from André Gide. Albert Camus' aphoristic journal is filled with quotes extracted from others' diaries. Camus appears to have especially appreciated diarists with a sense of humor for his quotes are often of a comical cast. For example, Camus records the following riposte from André Gide to a writer who asks if he should go on writing: "What? You can keep yourself from writing and you hesitate to do so?"¹²⁸

Writer Gail Godwin says she hopes that others will benefit from her diaries as she has from others: "I have found so many sides of myself in the diaries of others. I would like it if I someday reflect future readers to themselves, provide them with examples, warnings, courage, and amusement."¹²⁹

EDITORS ON DIARIES

The Editors

Diary editors not only write about the diarist(s) featured in their book's pages, but also about diary keeping in general. As recent as 1970, diary scholar Fothergill stated that the territory of criticism in the field of diaries is almost entirely uninhabited, and notes that "much more stimulating material can be found in the editors' introductions. . . . In these essays, one meets with minds which have thought about diaries and diary writing, instead of merely smiling over them."¹³⁰

¹²⁷ André Gide, *The Journals of André Gide*, vol. 1, trans. by Justin O'Brien (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), 11.

¹²⁸ Albert Camus, *Notebooks: 1942-1951*, trans. by Justin O'Brien (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966), 201.

¹²⁹ Gail Godwin, "A Diarist on Diarists," in *Our Private Lives: Journals, Notebooks, and Diaries* by Daniel Halpern, ed. (Hopewell: The Ecco Press, 1988), 15.

¹³⁰ Robert A. Fothergill, *Private Chronicles: A Study of English Diaries* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), 6.

One of the interesting discoveries that developed in reading the editor's introductions to diaries is the number of editors who are related to the diarist, for example, Ted Hughes, Sylvia Plath's ex-husband; Otto Frank, Anne Frank's father; Nigel Nicholson, Harold Nicholson's son; Ann Olivier Bell and Leonard Woolf, Virginia Woolf's nephew's wife and husband, respectively; Isabel Wilder, Thornton Wilder's sister; etc. It can be presumed that not only did it take a personal interest on the part of these editors to edit these diaries, but that this association enriches the reader's personal knowledge of the diarist.

Diarists are also known to edit their own diaries, but this is known to compromise the diary's integrity. William Wordsworth wrote *The Prelude* to Coleridge in 1805, but continued to revise it for the next 35 years. Ernest De Selincourt, who edited the 1805 version, comments: "No doubt that the 1850 version is a better composition than the A text. Weak phrases are strengthened, and its whole texture is more closely knit."¹³¹ "However," Selincourt surmises, "the essential point for us to realize is that their intrusion has falsified our estimate of the authentic Wordsworth, the poet of the years 1798-1805."¹³²

Anne Frank rewrote her diaries when she was 15 years old while in hiding after hearing an announcement on the radio from a member of the Dutch government in exile asking for documents that could be published that would offer eyewitness accounts of the suffering of the Dutch people under German occupation.¹³³ Anne's Father, Otto, the only survivor of the Annexe, culled from Anne's unedited diary (version A) and her edited diary (version B), to create version C, commonly known as *The Diary of a Young Girl*.

One diarist well known for her diary desecration is Madame D'Arblay. D'Arblay in her older age "slashed up and revised portions of the famous diary she kept as Fanny Burney,"¹³⁴ says James

¹³¹ William Wordsworth, *The Prelude or Growth of a Poet's Mind*, text of 1805, ed. by Ernest De Selincourt, revised impression (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), xix.

¹³² Ibid, xix.

¹³³ Anne Frank, *The Diary of a Young Girl*, The Definitive Edition, ed. by Otto H. Frank and Mirjam Pressler (New York: Anchor Books, 1995), iv.

L. Clifford. “Fortunately,” adds Clifford, “it is usually called the D’Arblay diary, for it represents what the older woman wished to have preserved, not wholly what she had set down earlier.”

The Editing Process

Editors of diaries, whether they are the diarist or not, discuss how they edited the diary, i.e., what was omitted, punctuation, layout, etc. And most include indexes in diaries as a matter of course. A less common, yet beneficial editorial tool, is to annotate the diary throughout with footnotes, providing background information on the diarist’s comments and on his or her associates. Every diary could benefit from such a task, but to do so is a formidable endeavor. Another formatting mechanism is to summarize the diary entries by either listing the main topics at the beginning of each chapter, or by labeling the top of each page. For example, in Thoreau’s journal, page headings include, “The Advice of a Friend,” “Flow in Writing,” “Importance of Classics,” and “Carlyle and Wordsworth.”¹³⁵

Because diaries are most often written out by hand—without regard to another’s discernment—they are not always easy to read or transcribe. Michael Davie is concerned that Evelyn Waugh’s poor handwriting will inadvertently distort his account of Waugh’s diaries, “The accurate transcription of proper names has presented special difficulty, for Waugh’s handwriting is often hard to decipher. . . .”¹³⁶ It is Katherine Mansfield’s cacography that has editor John Middleton Murry—upon his ill health—working hurriedly to gather together her remaining works. “It seemed unlikely that anyone but myself would be able to decipher them,”¹³⁷ explains Murry.

¹³⁴ James L. Clifford, *From Puzzles to Portraits: Problems of a Literary Biographer* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1970), 6.

¹³⁵ Henry David Thoreau, *The Journal of Henry David Thoreau*, vol. 1: 1837-1846, ed. by Torrey Bradford and Francis H. Allen (Salt Lake City: Gibbs M. Smith, 1984), 125, 353, 371, 431.

¹³⁶ Evelyn Waugh, *The Diaries of Evelyn Waugh*, ed. by Michael Davie (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1976), iv.

¹³⁷ Katherine Mansfield, *The Scrapbook of Katherine Mansfield*, ed. by John Middleton Murry (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1940), v.

Editors are also inclined to include photographs or portraits of the diarist and the diarist's family and friends in order to give a picture beyond words of the diarist. Helen Darbishire laments the fact that there are no portraits of Dorothy Wordsworth, "except for a sad one taken in her old age."¹³⁸ Sometimes editors will include a photograph of a handwritten page from a diarist's diary, as do Alfred Tischendorf in *The Diary and Journal of Richard Clough Anderson* and Vincent Sheean in *Dorothy and Red*. Besides the intrinsic interest in seeing the diarist's written entries, these photographs offer insight into the mind of the diarist, as the study of handwriting, graphology, is considered an important means of interpreting one's character.

Diarists can say whatever they want—in their diaries. But when it comes time for publication, it is the editor's responsibility to rein the diarist in—not only to protect the sensibilities of those whom the diarist disparages, but to guard against libelous suits. Evelyn Waugh editor Michael Davie says he omitted passages that were potentially libelous or offensive, "Publication of the verbatim text will not be possible for some years, because of the English laws of libel. In this edition, twenty-three libelous references have been altogether excised."¹³⁹ "Another twenty phrases have been omitted," adds Davie, "because I have concluded that their publication would be intolerably offensive or distressing to living persons or to the surviving relations of persons recently dead."¹⁴⁰ Sylvia Plath editor Frances McCullough expresses concern for the living, who she says "must live out their lives as characters in this drama."¹⁴¹

When editors excise passages they will often insert an asterisk or ellipses where the expurgated text was. Some editors, however, instead of removing entire pernicious passages, will substitute

¹³⁸ Dorothy Wordsworth, *Journals of Dorothy Wordsworth: The Alfoxden Journal 1778; The Grasmere Journals 1800-1803*, ed. by Mary Moorman (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), xii.

¹³⁹ Evelyn Waugh, *The Diaries of Evelyn Waugh*, ed. by Michael Davie (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1976), ii.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, ii.

¹⁴¹ Sylvia Plath, *The Journals of Sylvia Plath*, ed. by Ted Hughes and Frances McCullough (New York: Ballantine Books, 1991), xii.

dashes or initials in the place of the proper names, for example, Kenneth Young, who edited Robert Bruce Lockhart's diaries, says he substituted dashes for people's names.¹⁴²

Not all editors believe in sugarcoating the diaries they edit. Ann Olivier Bell, the wife of Virginia Woolf's son—who edited five volumes of Virginia Woolf's diaries—felt it was important not to delete passages in order to preserve the integrity of Virginia's diaries, “The decision having, rightly or wrongly, been taken that Virginia Woolf's diary merits publication in extenso. I do not think it is my function to attempt to beautify her self-portrait by cutting away ugly bits here and there.”¹⁴³ Stendhal says he will not correct anything in his diaries, “They would lose in resemblance to my sensation whatever they might gain in clarity and charm.”¹⁴⁴ Richard Clough Anderson's editor Alfred Tischendorf expresses his desire to be true to Anderson's voice, “Portions of the diary did not seem particularly illuminating . . . but it was presumptuous to delete any material that might be of interest to professional or amateur historians.”¹⁴⁵

The Diarist's Writing Regimen

Editors concern themselves not only with the frequency with which a diarist writes, but also the quantity of material. Susan Chitty says of her mother Antonia White's diary: “Sometimes she did not make an entry for many months or even a year. Sometimes, when she was in love or wrestling with a personal or theological problem, she would fill twenty pages at a sitting.”¹⁴⁶ “On an average day,” says Nigel Nicolson of his father's diary entries, “he would type half a page, on occasion extending it to two or three pages or reducing it to a few lines.”¹⁴⁷ Katherine Bucknell,

¹⁴² Robert Bruce Lockhart, *The Diaries of Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart*, vol. one: 1915-1938, ed. by Kenneth Young (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973), 9.

¹⁴³ Virginia Woolf, *The Diary of Virginia Woolf*, vol. two: 1920-1924, ed. by Anne Olivier Bell (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980), ix.

¹⁴⁴ Marie-Henri Beyle, *The Private Diaries of Stendhal (Marie-Henri Beyle)*, ed. and trans. by Robert Sage (London: Victor Gollancz, 1955), 398.

¹⁴⁵ Richard Clough Anderson, Jr., *The Diary and Journal of Richard Clough Anderson, Jr.*, ed. by Alfred Tischendorf (Durham: Duke University Press, 1964), vii.

¹⁴⁶ Antonia White, *Diaries, 1958-1979*, ed. by Susan Chitty (London: Virago Press, 1992), 9.

¹⁴⁷ Harold Nicolson, *Diaries and Letters, 1930-1939*, ed. by Nigel Nicolson (New York: Atheneum, 1966), 13.

in the introduction to Christopher Isherwood's diary, says Isherwood wrote in his diary "several times a week almost continuously for about sixty years, from the early 1920's until July 1983, a month before his seventy-ninth birthday."¹⁴⁸

Leonard Woolf says of his wife Virginia Woolf's writing style, "She did not write it regularly every day. There are sometimes entries for several days; more usually there is an entry every few days and then there will perhaps be a gap of a week or two."¹⁴⁹ Anne Olivier Bell offers yet more insight into Woolf's writing regimen, "Virginia's habitual position was seated in an easy chair with a board on her lap . . . she had a preference for a dipping pen and ink." Mary Moorman in her preface to Dorothy Wordsworth's journal says, "She did not write up her journal every day, but usually every third or fourth—sometimes with longer gaps."¹⁵⁰

Biographical Data

Almost all editors include a brief biography of the diarist to give the reader a sense of who the diarist is and to augment the partial picture presented by the diarist. Mrs. Humphrey Ward, editor of Henri-Frederic Amiel's journal, says, "It is a natural consequence of the success of the book . . . the greater desire there is to know something more about the personal history of the man who writes it—about his education, his habits, and his friends."¹⁵¹

Tolstoy's editor explains why he felt it important to include a biographical sketch in the preface to Tolstoy's diary, "The following outline of what happened to Tolstoy during the five years dealt with in this volume may make it easier to understand the entries in the Diary."¹⁵² Stendhal's editor

¹⁴⁸ Christopher Isherwood, *Diaries*, vol. one: 1939-1960, ed. by Katherine Bucknell (Great Britain: HarperFlamingo, 1996), vii.

¹⁴⁹ Virginia Woolf, *A Writer's Diary*, ed. by Leonard Woolf (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanich, 1981), vii.

¹⁵⁰ Dorothy Wordsworth, *Journals of Dorothy Wordsworth: The Alfoxden Journal 1798; The Grasmere Journals 1800-1803*, ed. by Mary Moorman (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), viii.

¹⁵¹ Henri-Frederic Amiel, *The Journal Intime of Henri-Frederic Amiel*, trans. by Mrs. Humphrey Ward (A.L. Burt Company, n.d.), xii.

¹⁵² Leo Tolstoy, *The Private Diary of Leo Tolstoy*, ed. by Aylmer Maude and trans. by Louise and Aylmer Maude (London: William Heinemann, 1927), vii.

says he interspersed the biographical material in Stendhal's diary "in order that the reader may be familiar with the circumstances of the author's life without being repeatedly interrupted by footnotes . . . for a full appreciation of the text."¹⁵³

Historical Value

Editors exhibit a fervent interest in the diary's historical legacy. Walter Harding regards Thoreau's journal as a lode of historical wealth, "Historians and sociologists are discovering that his journal is a goldmine of observations on life in a small American town of the nineteenth century. . . . We learn of their customs, folklore, superstitions, beliefs, ceremonies, food, dress, housing, education, recreation, gossip, religion, and politics."¹⁵⁴ Editor Kenneth Young says it is Robert Bruce Lockhart's frankness that makes his diaries an invaluable historical document:

Like Pepys he commented on the political and social scene and was equally candid about himself, at least as he saw himself. His disclosures about those in powerful positions in the Second World War will be the stuff of history when the tight-lipped memoirs of some of the leaders are stuffing dustbins.¹⁵⁵

Sarah Gillespie Huftalen's editor Suzanne L. Bunkers likens Sarah's diary to a Victorian period piece, "Sarah's diary opens a fascinating window on late nineteenth century Midwestern American life. . . . Sarah's diary adds significantly to our understanding of mother/daughter relationships, domestic and religious ideologies, and abusive families."¹⁵⁶ According to Odette Bornand, it is

¹⁵³ Marie-Henri Beyle, *The Private Diaries of Stendhal (Marie-Henri Beyle)*, ed. and trans. by Robert Sage (London: Victor Gollancz, 1955), xiii.

¹⁵⁴ Henry David Thoreau, *The Journal of Henry David Thoreau*, vol. I: 1837-1846, ed. by Torrey Bradford and Francis H. Allen (Salt Lake City: Gibbs M. Smith, 1984), xxvii.

¹⁵⁵ Robert Bruce Lockhart, *The Diaries of Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart*, vol. one 1915-1938, ed. by Kenneth Young (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973), 8.

¹⁵⁶ Sarah Gillespie Huftalen, *All Will Yet Be Well: The Diary of Sarah Gillespie Huftalen, 1873-1952*, ed. by Suzanne L. Bunkers (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1993), 14-15.

W.M. Rossetti's wide circle of acquaintances that make his diary "an invaluable source for the history of English literature and art between 1870 and 1873."¹⁵⁷

Destruction of Diaries

Literary cognoscente are familiar with the disappearance of one of Ernest Hemingway's novels—lost in a suitcase. Not as well known are lost diaries of possibly equal import—Jean-Paul Sartre's nine missing notebooks (diaries). "Quite apart from the brute fact of the loss of nine of the fourteen complete notebooks," says Quintin Hoare, "surely one of the great intellectual losses of the kind in our century—the circumstances in which they went astray and the reasons why the particular ones translated here happened to survive are entirely mysterious."¹⁵⁸

There are diaries that are thought to have disappeared that are known to surface years later. For example, for more than a century it was believed by scholars that all of Samuel Boswell's papers had been destroyed shortly after his death. It wasn't until Boswell's great-great-grandson offered a large collection for sale that their existence became known."¹⁵⁹ Sometimes diarists will purposely destroy their diaries, whether on a whim or from embarrassment. Michael Davie says of Evelyn Waugh's torn-out entries, "These letters suggest that he destroyed the diary for the period because it reflected the undergraduate homosexual experiences referred to by his authorized biographer, Christopher Sykes."¹⁶⁰ Thomas Mann, who destroyed all his diaries up to 1918 and from 1921 to 1933, explains why with a wry sense of humor in a letter to Otto Grautoff, "By the way, I am keeping especially warm these days. You see, I am burning all my diaries!"¹⁶¹ Mann explains,

¹⁵⁷ William Michael Rossetti, *The Diary of W.M. Rossetti: 1870-1873*, ed. by Odette Bormand (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), viii.

¹⁵⁸ Jean-Paul Sartre, *The War Diaries of Jean-Paul Sartre*, trans. by Quintin Hoare (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), xv.

¹⁵⁹ James Boswell, *Boswell's Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, LL.D.*, (New York: The Literary Guild, 1936), v.

¹⁶⁰ Evelyn Waugh, *The Diaries of Evelyn Waugh*, ed. by Michael Davie (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1976), i.

¹⁶¹ Thomas Mann, *Thomas Mann Diaries, 1918-1939*, trans. by Richard and Clara Winston (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1982) vi.

“They were a burden to me; in terms of space and in other ways as well. . . . It became awkward and uncomfortable for me to have such a mass of secret—very secret—writings lying around.”

John Middleton Murray says Katherine Mansfield “ruthlessly destroyed all record of the time between her return from New Zealand to England in 1909 to 1914. . . . She was ruthless with her own past, and I have little doubt that what has survived is almost wholly that which, for some reason or other, she wished to survive.”¹⁶² Walter Harding in the introduction to Thoreau’s journal mourns the loss of material in Thoreau’s early journals due to Thoreau’s habit of literally excising portions of his journal to use for his other writings.¹⁶³

Sometimes it is not the diarist but the editor who destroys a diarist’s diaries, as Ted Hughes did with one of his wife Sylvia Plath’s journals. “Two more notebooks survived for a while and continued the record from late ’59 to within three days of her death,”¹⁶⁴ says Hughes. “The last of these contained entries for several months, and I destroyed it because I did not want her children to have to read it (in those days I regarded forgetfulness as an essential part of survival). The other disappeared.”

It was Opal Whiteley’s foster sister who destroyed her diary written between the ages of five and six. Opal “painfully, over nine months, pieced together the torn fragments,”¹⁶⁵ says editor Jane Boulton. Boulton says she corrected Opal’s spelling errors except for those that were “charmingly misspelled.” Undoubtedly, Boulton was referring to entries like “I’m screw tin eyesing you,¹⁶⁶ and “You will be an egg sam pull.”¹⁶⁷

¹⁶² Katherine Mansfield, *Journal of Katherine Mansfield*, ed. by John Middleton Murry (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1941), xii-1.

¹⁶³ Henry David Thoreau, *The Journal of Henry David Thoreau*, vol. 1: 1837-1846, ed. by Torrey Bradford and Francis H. Allen (Salt Lake City: Gibbs M. Smith, 1984), vii.

¹⁶⁴ Sylvia Plath, *The Journals of Sylvia Plath*, ed. by Ted Hughes and Frances McCullough (New York: Ballantine Books, 1991), xv.

¹⁶⁵ Opal Whiteley, *Opal: The Journal of an Understanding Heart*, adapted by Jane Boulton (New York: Crown Trade Paperbacks, 1984), iv.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 26.

THE THEORIES OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY

History of Autobiography

Theorists are not in accord as to the first use of the word, autobiography, although the majority, including Saul K. Padover,¹⁶⁸ William L. Andrews,¹⁶⁹ Elizabeth Bruss,¹⁷⁰ and Marlene Kadar,¹⁷¹ proclaim British poet Robert Southey as the originator when he used the term, auto-biography, in a review in the *Quarterly Review* in 1809. Theoretical studies of autobiographies were not to occur until almost 150 years later. Estelle C. Jelinek explains, “It has only been since World War II, when the formal analysis of all branches of literature flourished, that autobiography began receiving consideration as a literary genre worthy of serious critical study.”¹⁷² “Before then,” states Jelinek, “autobiographies were considered of interest almost exclusively for the information they provided about the lives of their authors; there was virtually no interest in the style or form of the life studies.”¹⁷³ Theorist James Olney associates Georges Gusdorf’s 1956 article, “Conditions and Limits of Autobiography,” as the genitor of serious theoretical and critical autobiographical thought.¹⁷⁴

Defining the theory of autobiography is the theorists’ major divergence. “The more the genre gets written about, the less agreement there seems to be on what it properly includes,”¹⁷⁵ says theorist William C. Spengemann. Avrom Fleishman says this is because “There are no agreed

¹⁶⁸ Saul K. Padover, ed., *Confessions and Self-Portraits: 4600 Years of Autobiography* (New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1969), xiii.

¹⁶⁹ William L. Andrews, *Classic American Autobiographies* (New York: Penguin Books, 1992), 8.

¹⁷⁰ Elizabeth W. Bruss, *Autobiographical Acts: The Changing Situation of a Literary Genre* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 7.

¹⁷¹ Marlene Kadar, ed., *Reading Life Writing* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1993), xi.

¹⁷² Estelle C. Jelinek, ed., *Women’s Autobiography: Essays in Criticism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 1.

¹⁷³ *Ibid*, 1.

¹⁷⁴ James Olney, ed., *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 7.

¹⁷⁵ William C. Spengemann, *The Forms of Autobiography* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), xi.

norms for a genre of autobiography.”¹⁷⁶ Fleishman, however, developed what he considers to be the six approaches to autobiography, emphasizing that “The canons of a standard of truth, of a quest for meaning, of a set of conventional markers or consistent rhetorical gestures . . . all are broadly enlightening but are useful only operationally in exhibiting the behavior of one or another self-writing.”¹⁷⁷ Following is a summary of Fleishman’s six approaches to the study of autobiography:

1. *Truth*—an autobiography imparts varying degrees of truth.
2. *Meaning*—an autobiography discloses a meaning like any other work of art.
3. *Convention*—an autobiography conveys the historical and rhetorical culture of the autobiographer.
4. *Expression*—an autobiography reveals the author’s uniqueness.
5. *Myth*—an autobiography transforms or recreates the autobiographer.
6. *Structure*—an autobiography awakens the autobiographer to unexpected mental excitement and anguish.¹⁷⁸

Even though there are no absolute rules as to what constitutes an autobiography, Elizabeth W. Bruss’ distinguishing characteristics are considered by her peers to present fair parameters from which to begin categorization.¹⁷⁹ Bruss proposes three basic tenets that an autobiography must satisfy: 1) autobiographers are the source of both the subject matter and the structure of the text; 2) autobiographers purport to be telling the truth and readers accept this truth knowing they are free to verify it; and 3) autobiographers purport to believe what they assert.¹⁸⁰ “In principle,” says Robert Elbaz, “the ideal of [Bruss’] ‘constitutive rules’ is reasonable since they constitute the tools by which a group consciousness apprehends the various mediations of the material world.”¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁶ Avrom Fleishman, *Figures of Autobiography: The Language of Self-Writing in Victorian and Modern England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 35.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 35-6.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 7-35.

¹⁷⁹ Lynn Z. Bloom and Orlee Holder, *Anais Nin’s Diary in Context*, in Estelle C. Jelinek, ed., *Women’s Autobiography: Essay in Criticism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 206.

¹⁸⁰ Elizabeth W. Bruss, *Autobiographical Acts: The Changing Situation of a Literary Genre* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 10-11.

¹⁸¹ Robert Elbaz, *The Changing Nature of the Self: A Critical Study of the Autobiographic Discourse* (London: Croom Helm, 1988), 5.

Estelle Jelinek summarizes the elements critics consider constitute a “good” autobiography: “It must center exclusively or mostly on its author, not on others. . . . It should be representative of its times. . . . The autobiographer should be self-aware, a seeker after self-knowledge. He must aim to explore, not to exhort. His autobiography should be an effort to give meaning to some personal mythos.”¹⁸²

One area in which all theorists are in agreement is the first Western autobiography: Augustine’s *Confessions* written in A.D. 397-398. Theorist John Sturrock says, “True narrative autobiography begins indeed with the *Confessions* of Augustine, an unprecedented work of introspection written the end of the fourth century.”¹⁸³ William Spengemann explains why he believes *Confessions* is the quintessential autobiography, “*Confessions* employs all three forms—historical, philosophical and poetic—that autobiography would assume in the course of its development over the next fifteen hundred years.”¹⁸⁴

Time and Truth in Autobiography

Truth is one of philosophy’s primary pursuits, with perceptions of truth changing with each high tide of philosophical thought. Truth in an autobiography is one of theorists’ most challenged concepts, too. In an autobiography, truth is most often commensurate with time, as an autobiography entails the writing of the past in the present. Theorists debate whether the autobiography is more or less truthful because of the passage of time. Theorist Georges Gusdorf explains why he believes autobiographers frame a more focused, or truer, picture. “Autobiography

¹⁸² Estelle C. Jelinek, ed., *Women’s Autobiography: Essay in Criticism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 4.

¹⁸³ John Sturrock, *The Language of Autobiography: Studies in the First Person Singular* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 20.

¹⁸⁴ William C. Spengemann, *The Forms of Autobiography* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), xiv.

is a second reading of experience,” says Gusdorf, “and it is truer than the first because it adds to experience itself consciousness of it.”¹⁸⁵

Most theorists, however, question an autobiography’s truthfulness due to the autobiographer’s loss of memory and gain of experience resulting from lapsed time. James Olney explains how memory distorts both the present and the past, “Memories are shaped by the present moment and by the specific psychic impress of the remembering individual, just as the present moment is shaped by memories.”¹⁸⁶ The concept that man changes with the passing of time is not a new concept. This notion goes back at least as far as the 500’s B.C., when Greek philosopher Heraclitus expressed it metaphorically in the now-famous line, “You cannot step twice into the same river.”¹⁸⁷ Today’s theorists simply use different words to express the same abstraction. For example, postmodernist Roland Barthes says, “When a narrator recounts what has happened to him, the I who recounts is no longer the one that is recounted.”¹⁸⁸ Robert Elbaz writes not only of the autobiographer’s changed self, but the multiplicity of selves inherent in the autobiographical act, “Since I am not myself, I am not the same person I was yesterday or ten years ago; given my relational nature, I cannot be writing my autobiography but a story of a variety of old ‘personae’ seen from a distance.”¹⁸⁹

Autobiography as Literary Genre

The autobiography has gained stature over the last fifty years as a literary genre, with theorists of autobiography propounding it to be as creative an endeavor as any other form of writing. This

¹⁸⁵ Georges Gusdorf, “Conditions and Limits of Autobiography,” trans. by James Olney, in *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*, ed. James Olney (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 38.

¹⁸⁶ James Olney, ed., *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 244.

¹⁸⁷ Samuel Enoch Stumpf, *Socrates to Sartre: A History of Philosophy*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1975), 13.

¹⁸⁸ Roland Barthes, “To Write: An Intransitive Verb,” in James Olney, ed., *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 276.

¹⁸⁹ Robert Elbaz, *The Changing Nature of the Self: A Critical Study of the Autobiographic Discourse* (London: Croom Helm, 1988), 12.

is because autobiography is not just a haphazard listing of the events of one's life, but must be told in a compelling, narrative way or it is not going to interest the reader. "Autobiography," Robert Elbaz says, "is not just reconstruction of the past, but interpretation."¹⁹⁰ This hermeneutic approach is what makes the autobiography act a literary one, as the autobiographer must interpret in lucid and vivid prose a past that has since receded from the autobiographer's present reality.

"In autobiography, the problem of selection has been a major difficulty: What to leave in from a whole life, often an existence richly full of incident, adventure, people—precisely that complex superfluity of episodic experience which is thought to justify writing the autobiography in the first place."¹⁹¹ The act of capturing one's life in retrospect and organizing it into a story utilizes many of the conventions of storytelling. Diane Bjorklund reasons, "Putting together an autobiography is not simply a matter of recalling and recording facts of one's personal history. As an act of communication, it entails problems of composition and rhetoric. . . ."¹⁹² James Goodwin explains how the autobiographer's imagination comes into play, "In rendering places and people from the past, even when it is possible to revisit them, the autobiographer often applies imaginative and metaphoric coloration in order to bring them to life."¹⁹³

Autobiography versus Biography

The distinction between autobiography and biography is quite marked: biography is written by someone other than the subject; autobiography is written by the subject. James Olney says that is it this differentiation between autobiography and biography that helped activate autobiography's theoretical trajectory, "This shift of attention from bios to autos—from the life to the self—was I

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, 10-12.

¹⁹¹ Bernard Sharratt, *The Literary Labyrinth: Contemporary Critical Discourses* (New Jersey: Harvester Press, 1984), 141.

¹⁹² Diane Bjorklund, *Interpreting the Self: Two Hundred Years of American Autobiography* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 17.

¹⁹³ James Goodwin, *Autobiography: The Self Made Text* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1993), 13.

believe, largely responsible for opening things up and turning them in a philosophical, psychological, and literary direction.”¹⁹⁴

James C. Johnson distinguishes the two by their subjectivity and objectivity, “Such writings as have the author’s own experiences and observations as a basis are spoken of as subjective, or autobiographic; while those which deal exclusively with the material furnished by the lives of others than the writers are objective, or biographic.”¹⁹⁵ It is the autobiographer’s subjectivity that accounts for the autobiographer’s special epistemological sense of self, according to Janet Varner Gunn, “Not only does the self know itself better than anyone else could; that knowledge necessarily remains a secret which can never be known by another.”¹⁹⁶

Autobiography versus Diary

Most theorists of autobiography unequivocally exclude diaries (and letters) in their theoretical ruminations. James Goodwin in *Autobiography: The Self Made Text* says, “. . . the diary, the journal, and letters do not share with autobiography the necessary temporal perspective, a deliberate distancing of the self from the original experiences.”¹⁹⁷ As Suzanne Juhasz explains it, “The perspective of the diarist is immersion, not distance.”¹⁹⁸

Georges Gusdorf illustrates why the temporal differences of the diary and the autobiography widen the gulf between the two: “The author of a private journal, noting his impressions and mental states from day to day, fixes the portrait of his daily reality without any concern for continuity. The autobiography requires a man to take a distance with regard to himself in order to reconstitute

¹⁹⁴ James Olney, *Metaphors of Self: The Meaning of Autobiography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), 19.

¹⁹⁵ James C. Johnston, *Biography: The Literature of Personality* (New York: The Century Co., 1927), 140.

¹⁹⁶ Janet Varner Gunn, *Autobiography: Towards a Poetics of Experience* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), 6.

¹⁹⁷ James Goodwin, *Autobiography: The Self Made Text* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1993), 10.

¹⁹⁸ Suzanne Juhasz, “Towards a Theory of Form in Feminist Autobiography,” in *Women’s Autobiography*, ed. Estelle C. Jelinek (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 224.

himself in the focus of his special unity and identity across time.”¹⁹⁹ David Lilienthal explains why he thinks the diarist’s daily recordings present a more accurate picture than the autobiography:

A man’s focus, his interests, his mood and outlook on life, change over the years. He is not one person but many. These changes in his life are telling clues to the kind of man he is, to the vitality of his work, to the mark he leaves on others. A journal such as this may be the best way to capture this series of changes, this moving picture aspect of a man’s life. A retrospective autobiography or memoir can rarely do this since it is written at one age and one particular time.²⁰⁰

A diary brings the reader much closer to the emotional highs and lows of daily life, as the diarist’s entries are “still-warm recollections.”²⁰¹ The autobiography, on the other hand, is composed of recollections that have had time to simmer and stew. The diarist, unlike the autobiographer, writes without foreknowledge of an event’s denouement. “The novelist, poet, oral storyteller, or writer of an autobiographical memoir knows what happens next and directs the reader’s response at every point. Most diaries, on the other hand, are a series of surprises for the writer and reader alike,”²⁰² explains Margo Culley. The reader is immersed in the present of the diarist’s past, as both the diarist’s and the reader’s pasts and futures are opaqued—what Hannah Arendt calls the “‘no-more’ of the past and the ‘not-yet’ of the future, into the fullness of the present.”²⁰³ For example, when Virginia Woolf in a January 1915 diary entry says, “An aeroplane passed overhead,”²⁰⁴ the reader is struck by the fact that seeing an airplane is such a novelty that someone would record it. In an autobiography, Woolf might include her recollection of how rare it was to see an airplane, but the reader would not be affected by the actual moment of wonder and discovery as recorded in the diary.

¹⁹⁹ Georges Gusdorf, “Conditions and Limits of Autobiography,” trans. by James Olney, in *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*, ed. James Olney (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 35.

²⁰⁰ David E. Lilienthal, *The Journals of David E. Lilienthal*, vol. v (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), xiii.

²⁰¹ Edmond and Jules De Goncourt, *Pages From the Goncourt Journal*, ed. by Robert Baldick (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), xxi.

²⁰² Margo Culley, ed., *A Day at a Time: The Diary Literature of American Women from 1764 to the Present* (New York: The Feminist Press, 1985), 21.

²⁰³ Hannah Arendt, “The Life of the Mind: Thinking,” 211; quoted in Janet Varner Gunn, *Autobiography: Toward a Poetics of Experience* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), 43.

²⁰⁴ Virginia Woolf, *The Diary of Virginia Woolf*, vol. one: 1915-1919, ed. by Anne Olivier Bell (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), 7.

Another distinct difference between the diary and the autobiography is the autobiography is always intended for an audience; the diary most often is not—although theorists contend that diarists are also affected by a future possible audience. The problem with the autobiographical conscience, according to Jill Ker Conway is “one of censorship for public self-presentation.”²⁰⁵ This is because the autobiographer knows that he is being judged by every word, every sentence he writes. Perhaps Benjamin Franklin explains it best when he says, “. . . One does not dress for private company as for a publick ball.”²⁰⁶

Feminism in Autobiography

This study would be incomplete without including feminism, as feminists are a major life-writing force today. According to Marlene Kadar, “Feminists use woman’s autobiographies, diaries, memoirs, etc., to reposition the female voice. Feminist criticism is part of a general interest in researching subjects that have been mainly considered from a male point of view.”²⁰⁷ This is because women’s autobiographies have been excluded from most theoretical analyses, according to Estelle Jelinek. Jelinek asks: “What would happen if critics as a matter of course included representative women’s autobiographies in their studies? Would they modify their definitions, their theories, their ideas about the major characteristics of the genre?”²⁰⁸ The answer, of course, is yes. Jelinek explains, “The final criterion of orderliness, wholeness, or a harmonious shaping with which critics characterize autobiography is often not applicable to women’s autobiographies.”²⁰⁹

²⁰⁵ Jill Ker Conway, *When Memory Speaks: Reflections of Autobiography* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), 16.

²⁰⁶ Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* (New York: Random House, 1950), 15.

²⁰⁷ Marlene Kadar, ed., *Reading Life Writing* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1993).

²⁰⁸ Estelle C. Jelinek, ed., *Women’s Autobiography: Essays in Criticism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 8.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 19.

Carolyn Heilbrun in *Writing a Woman's Life* implores women to recognize the value of their feminine voice, "Women's talk will indeed be harmless as long as women consider it trivial compared to talk with men. Women must share the stories of their lives and their hopes and their unacceptable fantasies."²¹⁰

Sociological Aspects of Autobiography

In *Interpreting the Self*, Diane Bjorklund takes an interesting sociological approach to the study of autobiography. With a focus on discovering the changing ideas of self in autobiographies, Bjorklund analyzes 110 American autobiographies published since the beginning of the 1800's. As data, she uses comments that autobiographers make on everything from selfhood, parents, and sexuality, to memory, fate and religion. "Like all of us, their ideas about themselves have been significantly shaped by their culture and era,"²¹¹ says Bjorklund. As part of our socialization, we learn "vocabularies of self" to think about and assess our experiences and behavior. Bjorklund discusses the difference in the written communication process as compared to the verbal, in which the other party has a chance to respond. The speaker has the advantage of input from the listener, as well as the non-verbal gestures that say so much, like facial expressions, body language, inflection, etc. Bjorklund concludes, "Although some autobiographers may believe they write for themselves and that deferring to the readers would detract from their own integrity, they cannot disregard the audience for, at a minimum, they must make their writing understandable."²¹²

Summarized below is Bjorklund's view of the sociological changes that have taken place in autobiography:

In the early 19th century, autobiographers were torn between the belief in a Divine Providence and their own ability to exhibit self control of the passions that inherently drive human beings—a battle between good and evil, between God and Satan. The belief in

²¹⁰ Carolyn G. Heilbrun, *Writing a Woman's Life* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1988), 44

²¹¹ Diane Bjorklund, *Interpreting the Self: Two Hundred Years of American Autobiography* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), x.

²¹² *Ibid*, 20.

Divine Providence absolved their sins, as they were not responsible. In contrast, the late nineteenth century autobiographers believed that man's willpower could overcome anything. They prided themselves on their ability to overcome, they were responsible to themselves, largely in part due to a disbelief in God, probably brought on from Darwin's teachings. Coupled with this belief was the idea that too much restraint wasn't good either. With the teachings of Freud, entered a new reality in which the subconscious masked one's true intents. Since the early twentieth century, autobiographers have not only blamed their subconscious, but they have put major emphasis on society. The blame has gone from God to the individual to society.²¹³

Why We Write Autobiographies

People write autobiographies for many reasons, including to exonerate or glorify themselves, to instruct or enlighten others, or solely for recompense. But the main reason people write autobiographies, notes theorist John Sturrock, is the need to distinguish themselves from others. Sturrock offers as an example Jean-Jacques Rousseau's statement, "I may be no better but at least I am different."²¹⁴

Just as fingerprints and genetics certify a person's physical uniqueness; an autobiography demonstrates his or her mental singularity. James Olney recounts the now-famous quote by G.M. Hopkins, "That taste of myself, of I and me above and in all things, which is more distinctive than the taste of ale or alum, more distinctive than the smell of walnut leaf or camphor."²¹⁵

Why We Read Autobiographies

We read autobiographies because they tell a story about the life of a fellow human being and because they provide a different perspective of a common world. "We want to know how the world looks from inside another person's experience, and when that craving is met by a convincing

²¹³ Ibid, 158-166.

²¹⁴ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Confessions of Jean-Jacque Rousseau*, trans. by J.M. Cohen (Harmondsworth, 1953), 17; quoted in John Sturrock, *The Language of Autobiography: Studies in the First Person Singular* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 13.

²¹⁵ James Olney, *Metaphors of Self: The Meaning of Autobiography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), 23.

narrative, we find it deeply satisfying,”²¹⁶ says Jill Conway. Theorist James Goodwin explains, “Autobiography can wholly immerse the reader in the experience and thought of another person. It can activate the reader to self-reflection and create a deep recognition of shared humanity. . . .”²¹⁷

James Olney in *Metaphors of Self*, says that autobiography helps answer the most important question man can ask, “How shall man live? If autobiography can advance our understanding of that question, and I think it can, then it is a very valuable literature indeed.”²¹⁸ Maybe André Gide comes closest to why we read autobiographies when he says in his journal, “Man is more interesting than men.”²¹⁹

²¹⁶ Jill Ker Conway, *When Memory Speaks: Reflections on Autobiography* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), 7.

²¹⁷ James Goodwin, *Autobiography: The Self Made Text* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1993), 21.

²¹⁸ James Olney, *Metaphors of Self: The Meaning of Autobiography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), xi.

²¹⁹ André Gide, *The Journals of André Gide*, vol. 1, trans. by Justin O’Brien (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), 76.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

“Diary writing is a practice that should be encouraged. . . . Notwithstanding all the immense store of facts we are compiling by means of newspapers, books, registers and official records with regard to the history of our times, the privately written comments of an individual spontaneously scribbled and so reproducing the mood, the atmosphere, and, so to speak, the particular aroma of the moment, are priceless and can be regarded as the spice of history.”²²⁰

Arthur Ponsonby

In order to study the diary’s use by and influence on American newspaper journalists, an e-mail questionnaire about the diary was administered to a geographically diverse selection of American newspaper journalists. A questionnaire was chosen as the survey methodology for several reasons. First, because the subject matter, diaries, is a personal one, journalists are more likely to respond truthfully to the remoteness of the written word than other survey types like personal interviews or phone surveys.²²¹ Second, questionnaires (particularly e-mail questionnaires) reach a large population for a smaller investment in time and money than other survey methodologies. Third, questionnaires can be answered at the convenience of the respondent, an important consideration in the busy lives of journalists.

²²⁰ Arthur Ponsonby, *English Diaries: A Review of English Diaries from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century* (London: Methuen & Co., 1923), 43.

²²¹ Daniel C. Lockhart, ed., *Making Effective Use of Mailed Questionnaires* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1984), 42-3.

E-MAIL QUESTIONNAIRE CONSTRUCTION

An e-mail questionnaire was developed (see Appendix B) after reading portions of hundreds of diaries. The questionnaire was designed to yield the information needed to answer the six research questions integral to this thesis. Most of the survey questions are structured rather than unstructured (open-ended) for ease of response and to aid analysis. However, in order not to pigeonhole or prejudice the respondents in their answers, several open-ended questions were necessary.

E-mail is a computer technology-driven form of communication that is quickly replacing the phone and restoring the letter. This is because e-mail costs the same whether one contacts their next-door neighbor or their out-of-country relative. In addition, e-mail is transmitted instantaneously—unlike the U.S. mail (dubbed “snail mail”)—and eliminates the bother and cost of paper, envelopes and stamps. However, because e-mail has only been in general use since the mid- to late-nineties, research into the use of e-mail questionnaires is quite nascent. A search through Infotrac provided only one article about e-mail questionnaires. The article, “Startup Casts Survey Service: CustomerCast Uses E-mail Questionnaires to Assess Clients’ Customers,”²²² is about a marketing tool sold to businesses to monitor customer satisfaction. Unfortunately, this survey service is of no use to the researcher in search of e-mail questionnaire data. Therefore, the researcher was obliged to employ U.S. mail questionnaire research as a benchmark in establishing her own e-mail questionnaire methodology.

²²² John Madden, “Startup Casts Survey Service: CustomerCast Uses E-mail Questionnaires to Assess Clients’ Customers,” 30 August 1999, 47.

QUERY LETTER CONSTRUCTION

The decision to precede the e-mail questionnaire with a query “permission” letter (see Appendix A) was based on the following perceived advantages: 1) the questionnaire would be a welcome, or at least expected, sight, 2) respondents would be more inclined to complete and return the questionnaire since they asked it to be sent, 3) response from the query letter would inform the researcher whether a larger sample would be required, 4) the query letter would be a “polite” introduction that would replace at least one “nagging” follow-up, and 5) those not interested in receiving the questionnaire would not be bothered by future importunings by the researcher.

The questionnaire was included in the body of the e-mail, not as an e-mail attachment, for two reasons. First, many e-mail systems still have difficulty translating attachments from other systems, and second, the general public is hesitant to open e-mail attachments because of the destructive computer viruses often associated with them. Therefore, including the questionnaire in the body of the e-mail instead of as an attachment was another mechanism employed to secure a positive reception.

E-MAIL VERSUS U.S. MAIL QUESTIONNAIRES

Following are this researcher’s ascertained advantages and disadvantages of employing e-mail rather than U.S. mail surveys.

Advantages to Respondents:

- Respondents have the convenience of answering the questions using the computer keyboard instead of writing in longhand.
- The computer allows respondents to use as much, or as little, space as needed per question.
- E-mail questionnaires can be screen-read or printed out, according to the respondent’s preference.
- Respondents can easily volley the e-mail back with one quick click of the mouse on the reply button.

- E-mail is a relatively novel route to send and receive questionnaires, so it can be assumed that recipients have not been inundated with similar requests and will therefore be more receptive.

Advantages to Researcher:

- E-mail questionnaires are much more cost-effective than mail questionnaires, as postage and stationery costs are virtually non-existent.
- E-mail questionnaires are much more time-efficient, as they do not need to be printed out, inserted in envelopes and affixed with labels and stamps.
- E-mail questionnaire response rates are not affected by costly aesthetic considerations like the quality of paper and personalization of envelopes. Other aesthetic factors like layout, font size and type, and length of questionnaire can as easily be accomplished with e-mail questionnaires as with U.S. mailed ones.
- One click of the mouse will disseminate correspondence to each of the recipients concomitantly, unlike U.S. mail where the receipt time varies geographically.
- E-mail's instant transmission cuts days off the sending and receiving time, allowing more time for analysis.
- The researcher knows immediately if the e-mail address is wrong or invalid because he or she will receive an undeliverable message.
- The e-mail response monitoring is automatic, for example, date of response, respondent's affiliation, etc.
- The researcher doesn't have to spend valuable time deciphering the respondent's handwriting.

Disadvantages to Researcher:

- The return of response has not been effectively studied to know how many e-mail questionnaires should be sent to generate the response needed.
- Locating the e-mail addresses for one's sample is not as easy as finding U.S. mail addresses, as e-mail addresses are not ubiquitously available.
- Not everyone has an e-mail address.

SAMPLING

This study required a large population sample because the subject matter—diaries—is only germane to a select group of journalists: the diary-keeping journalists. And the best predictor of response rate is salience, according to Heberlein and Baumgartner’s 1978 analysis of 98 studies that used mailed questionnaires.²²³ Another reason a large sample size is important is the survey axiom: the larger the sample, the lower the sampling error.²²⁴ The maximum practical size for a sample, however, according to Alreck and Settle, is about 1,000.²²⁵ Furthermore, state Alreck and Settle, “the maximum practical size of a sample has absolutely nothing to do with the size of the population, provided that it is many times greater than the sample.”²²⁶

A study of one hundred “educated” people chosen at random by diary scholar Arthur Ponsonby in 1923 determined that, on average, 25 percent of educated people keep diaries, with females slightly higher than males.²²⁷ Ponsonby emphasizes that his sample is of “educated” people, although he doesn’t say what constitutes “educated” people; that is, college students, professionals, etc. According to Lockhart in *Making Effective Use of Mailed Questionnaires*, the education of the survey group is an important factor, as “the less educated find mail surveys difficult.”²²⁸

Results from a questionnaire pilot study undertaken by the researcher in 1998 of seven female and six male graduate journalism classmates, determined that 50 percent keep a diary or journal (five of the six female respondents said they keep a diary or journal, and none of the four male respondents said they keep a diary or journal). This high percentage rate from graduate journalism

²²³ Daniel C. Lockhart, ed., *Making Effective Use of Mailed Questionnaires* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1984), 5.

²²⁴ Pamela L. Alreck and Robert B. Settle, *The Survey Research Handbook* (Homewood: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1985), 67.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 89.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, 89.

²²⁷ Arthur Ponsonby, *English Diaries: A Review of English Diaries From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century* (London: Methuen & Co., 1923), 41.

²²⁸ Daniel C. Lockhart, ed., *Making Effective Use of Mailed Questionnaires* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1984), 35.

students may indicate that journalists as a group are more likely to be diarists than the general “educated” public. But, the fact that the pilot study focused on “student” journalists, not necessarily “working” journalists, also needs to be factored in.

A mean of Ponsonby’s study (25 percent) and the pilot study (50 percent), or 33.0 percent, was calculated as the projected percentage of journalists who keep diaries. The researcher would like to note a few caveats about this percentage, as there are factors in addition to the ones outlined above that might influence the response rate of diary-keeping journalists. Namely, the technological changes that have affected lifestyles since Ponsonby’s 1923 study; the fact that journalists may be hesitant to admit keeping a journal because of possible libel ramifications; and the knowledge that the pilot study was not only quite a small sample, but one of journalism students, not staffed newspaper journalists.

The return of response rate for U.S. mail surveys published between 1965 and 1981 was 47.3 percent according to Yu and Cooper.²²⁹ However, Alreck and Settle contend: “Mail surveys with response rates over 30 percent are rare. Response rates are often only about 5 or 10 percent.”²³⁰ Since the disparity between these response rates is quite marked, and the e-mail questionnaire methodology response rate is ahistorical, a conservative 13 percent was determined to be the expected rate of response. Thirteen percent is half the mean of Yu and Cooper’s high percentage rate (47.3 percent) and Alreck and Settle’s lowest percentage rate (5 percent). If a 13 percent rate of response is expected, and approximately 1,000 newspaper journalists are sampled, then 130 journalists should respond. If 33 percent keep diaries, then this should garner 43 questionnaires from diary-keeping journalists and 87 questionnaires from non-diary-keeping journalists.

²²⁹ Ibid, 85.

²³⁰ Pamela L. Alreck and Robert B Settle, *The Survey Research Handbook* (Homewood: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1985), 44.

SELECTION OF POPULATION

Since this study focuses on newspaper journalists and their diaries, the population for the questionnaire—newspaper journalists—was a given. Choosing the population sample, however, was contingent on the availability of finding journalists' e-mail addresses. The ideal place to begin, it seemed, were the websites of metropolitan newspapers. These sites turned out to be the researcher's Holy Grail, for many of the newspapers' websites publish a list of staff e-mails, in alphabetical order, with the staffers' titles. The availability of staffers' e-mail addresses was an important consideration in choosing the particular newspapers for this study. In addition, the researcher chose newspapers from diverse regional areas in order to render a fair geographical cross-section. The larger papers employ 100-200 writers and editors, so it was decided that only six major newspapers needed to be included in this study's population sample, as these six papers would yield the requisite number of 1,000 e-mail addresses. The two East Coast papers chosen were the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. The mid-coast paper selected was the *Chicago Tribune*, and the West Coast papers chosen were the *Los Angeles Times*, the *San Francisco Examiner*, and the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

DATA FOLDER CONSTRUCTION

In compiling the newspaper journalists' e-mail addresses, only the e-mail addresses of writers and editors were culled. It is important to note that the newspapers do not always use their domain address as their staff's website address. For instance, the *Washington Post's* domain address is washingtonpost.com, yet the staff addresses employ the nomenclature, name@washpost.com, not name@washingtonpost.com. The e-mail addresses were most often listed under headings like "Information," "Feedback" or "Contact Us." Because newspaper websites are continually under reconstruction as the medium increases in use and progresses in technology, the structure of each newspaper's website undergoes continual pathing changes. Therefore, the researcher will not go

into detail about how to locate each newspaper’s staff addresses. However, following are the newspapers’ domain addresses and the number of e-mail addresses included from each:

<u>Name of Newspaper</u>	<u>Domain Address</u>	<u>Number in Sample</u>
<i>Washington Post</i>	washingtonpost.com	183
<i>New York Times</i>	nytimes.com	143
<i>Chicago Tribune</i>	chicagotribune.com	248
<i>San Francisco Chronicle</i>	sfgate.com	129
<i>San Francisco Examiner</i>	examiner.com	62
<i>Los Angeles Times</i>	latimes.com	238

All 1003 of the newspaper journalists’ e-mail addresses were entered into their own eponymous-named e-mail personal distribution list using Microsoft® Outlook 97, an e-mail computer software program.

SENDING AND RECEIVING METHODOLOGY

A query letter e-mail was sent out to all 1003 stored e-mail addresses. This was easily accomplished by creating a mail message in Microsoft Outlook for each newspaper and inserting the corresponding newspaper’s personal distribution list in the “To” grid. The query letter was “cut and pasted” into the body of each newspaper’s e-mail message file and disseminated to each of the newspaper journalists by clicking the send key.

As each query letter response e-mail arrived, it was “dragged” into its associated newspaper’s query letter in-box folder created by the researcher. The researcher created “yes” and “no” subfolders under each newspaper’s main folder in order to quickly assess the number of diarists and non-diarists. Approximately two weeks after sending out the query letter, when most recipients were expected to have responded, according to Lockhart,²³¹ the researcher sent out the query letter

²³¹ Ibid, 93-4.

again, excluding undeliverables and those who favorably, and unfavorably, responded. After the stream of response from the query letter turned into a trickle, the researcher assessed the responses received to determine if she had enough responses from both diary-keeping and non diary-keeping journalists to make a valid study. As only 10 percent of the respondents said they keep a diary or journal—which was much less than the expected 33 percent—the researcher added two additional metropolitan newspapers to her population sample. Additionally, in order to gauge the efficacy of a query letter and to personalize the questionnaire (one respondent complained about the “spamming” effect), the researcher did not include a query letter beforehand and did not send out the questionnaire en masse to these two additional newspapers. Midwestern newspapers were chosen because the researcher felt she had a sufficient number of East and West Coast newspapers in her population sample. The two Midwestern newspapers were chosen by assessing various newspaper websites to find those that hyper-linked the staffs’ e-mail addresses and provided titles. The first two newspapers that fit these qualifications were the *Kansas City Star* and the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. Following are the domain addresses and number of e-mail addresses sampled from these two newspapers.

<u>Name of Newspaper</u>	<u>Domain Address</u>	<u>Number in Sample</u>
<i>Kansas City Star</i>	kcstar.com	170
<i>Milwaukee Journal Sentinel</i>	onwis.com	201

QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

As each questionnaire arrived, it was dragged into its associated newspaper’s questionnaire in-box folder. The questionnaires were then printed out and sorted by newspaper and placed into file folders. Within each newspaper’s file folder, the questionnaires were divided into two section: diary-keeping journalists and non diary-keeping journalists.

Each of the questionnaire’s responses was entered into a Microsoft® Excel spreadsheet (see Appendix C). The headings used were: “y/n,” “date returned,” “time returned,” “NP,” “query letter

sent/not sent,” “questionnaire sent/not sent,” as well as each of the 21 questionnaire questions. The subheadings used were the precodes included in the questionnaires and the postcodes developed as the researcher entered the open-ended questions from each questionnaire. The most interesting open-ended answers were not only coded, but were cited in their entirety in the Results Chapter (Chapter 4). Then, in order to assure anonymity, the electronic files were deleted, and the e-mail addresses were excised from the hard copies.

The questionnaires were analyzed to answer the researcher’s six research questions. Following are the researcher’s six questions and each of the corresponding questionnaire questions.

<u>Research Questions</u>	<u>Corresponding Questionnaire Questions</u>
1. What is the percentage difference between journalists who keep diaries or journals and journalists who do not keep diaries or journals?	1. Do you keep a diary or journal? 2. If you do not keep a regular diary or journal, do you keep one for specific occasions, i.e., while vacationing, on-assignment, etc.?
2. How does a journalist who keeps a diary or journal differ demographically from a journalist who does not?	15. What is your current marital status? 16. What is your gender? 17. What is your ethnicity? 18. What is your age? 19. What is your level of education? 20. How many years have you been a journalist? 21. What is your current job description?
3. What compels journalists to keep diaries or journals, and conversely, what prevents journalists from keeping diaries or journals?	3. If you do not keep any form of a diary or journal, why not? 4. Why did you start a diary or journal? 13. Is there any advice you would like to offer a journalist about keeping a diary or journal?
4. What kinds of information do journalists record in their diaries or journals, and how is the information used?	9. What kinds of information do you record in your diary or journal? (Any examples of entries would be greatly appreciated.) 12. What do you use your diary or journal material for? (For example, to aid in storytelling, to recall events, etc.)
5. What is the significance of diaries or journals to journalists, i.e., what benefits	5. How many years have you written in a diary or journal?

- do journalists derive from writing in their diaries or journals, who are journalists writing to, how important is privacy, etc.?
6. How often do you write in your diary or journal?
 7. Who do you write to in your diaries or journals? In other words, who is your intended audience?
 8. What benefits do you derive from keeping a diary or journal?
 10. How important is the privacy of your diaries or journals, and what precautions, if any, do you take to keep them private?
 11. Have you ever destroyed any of your diaries or journals? If so, why?
6. How are journalists influenced by others' diaries or journals?
 14. Have you been influenced/inspired by others' diaries or journals? If so, whose diaries and journals and how have they influenced or inspired you?

The demographic questions were analyzed by statistically compared the diary-keeping journalists with the non diary-keeping journalists. These statistics will be used to determine what demographic differences, if any, exist between the diarist and the non-diarist. For example, are more diary-keeping journalists single than non-diary keeping journalists? Have diarists been in journalism longer than their non-diarist counterparts?

The open-ended answers were grouped with like answers in order to determine salience. For example, those questionnaire's answers relevant to the diary's influence on the journalist were grouped according to commonalties. The researcher will quote from those responses that are most meaningful to this thesis in order to add vitality, as well as validity, to the study.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

“I would argue that modern journalists should no longer categorize stories as hard news or feature or literary feature, but should recognize that given the complex nature of life, the modern journalist needs a variety of writing approaches to satisfactorily explain the world to readers.”²³²

Thomas Berner

QUERY LETTER RATE OF RESPONSE

The query letter was e-mailed twice, once on November 12, 1999, and again on December 10, 1999. Out of the 1003 letters sent out, 99 were undeliverable. Out of the 904 delivered, 152 journalists, or 17 percent, responded to the query letter; 11 percent to the first mailing and 6 percent to the second. A 17 percent response rate exceeded the expected 13 percent response rate, however, the percentage of diarists, 10 percent, fell below the expected 33 percent.

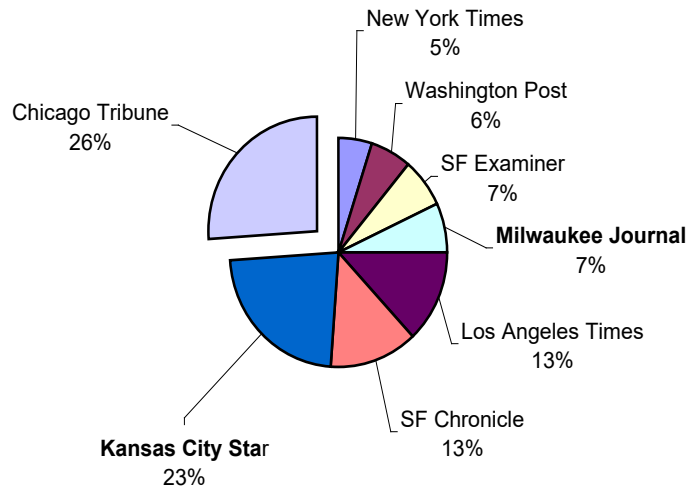
QUESTIONNAIRE RATE OF RESPONSE

A total of 1,275 questionnaires were sent out to eight newspapers. An even 100 questionnaires were returned, for an 8 percent rate of response. The original six newspapers' rate of response was 8 percent; the additional two newspapers' rate of response was 9 percent.

The researcher's analyses are based on the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet she used to code each questionnaire (see Appendix C). The chart below breaks out the percentage of journalists who responded from each of the eight newspapers.

²³² Thomas Berner, “Literary Newswriting: The Death of an Oxymoron,” *Journalism Monographs* 99 (October 1986): 1.

Dispersement of Newspapers' Response Rates



Breaking out the response by mailings, the first mailing of the questionnaire yielded 78 responses, or a 78 percent response rate; the second mailing yielded the remaining 22 responses, or a 22 percent response rate. Seventy of the responses, or 70 percent, were from the original six newspapers queried; 30 of the responses, or 30 percent, were from the two newspapers that were added and not queried. When looking at the percentage of response to each mailing according to those queried, 55 of the queried journalists, or 55 percent, responded to the first mailing, and 15, or 15 percent, responded to the second mailing. Twenty-two of the non-queried journalists, or 22 percent, responded to the first mailing, and 8, or 8 percent, responded to the second. Of the 78 journalists who responded to the first mailing of the questionnaire, 57 responded within the first two days; 18 of the 22 journalists who responded to the second mailing responded within the first two days. Fifty-four of the 152 queried journalists, or 36 percent, who said they would respond actually responded. Sixteen of the queried journalists, or 10.5 percent, responded to the questionnaire, but not to the query letter.

RESULTS OF THESIS QUESTIONS

Below are the questionnaire responses corresponding to each of the researcher's six questions as noted in the Methodology Chapter (Chapter 3). Tables were created to present a snapshot of the researcher's demographic findings, and the more interesting and/or relevant responses to the open-ended questions were excerpted to add a journalistic voice to the thesis. An analysis of the results will be conducted in the conclusions chapter (Chapter 5).

THESIS QUESTION #1

1. What is the percent difference between journalists who keep diaries or journals and journalists who do not keep diaries or journals?

Questionnaire Questions:

- 1. Do you keep a diary or journal?*
- 2. If you do not keep a regular diary or journal, do you keep one for specific occasions, i.e., while vacationing, on-assignment, etc.?*

Twenty-five percent of journalists keep some form of a diary. Broken out by questionnaire questions one and two, 18 percent keep a general diary (question number one), and 7 percent keep some form of a diary (question number two). It is important to note here that more than the noted seven respondents said they keep some form of a diary, but because they did not answer the questions specific to keeping a diary, they were excluded in the analysis of diarists and included in the analysis of non-diarists. The forms of a diary that journalists said they keep in question number two included vacation/on-assignment diaries, story idea diaries, and diaries for special occasions.

THESIS QUESTION #2

2. How does a journalist who keeps a diary or journal differ demographically from a journalist who does not?

Questionnaire Questions:

- 15. What is your current marital status?*
- 16. What is your gender?*

17. *What is your ethnicity?*
18. *What is your age?*
19. *What is your level of education? (Mark the highest level that applies.)*
20. *How many years have you been a journalist?*
21. *What is your current job description?*

The majority of diarists, 16, or 64 percent, are married, as are non-diarists, 51, or 68 percent (see Table 1 on page 72).

Fifteen of the diarists, or 60 percent, are female; 10 of the diarists, or 40 percent are male. Of the 75 non-diarists to respond, 52, or 69.3 percent, are male, and 16, or 21.3 percent, are female (see Table 2 on page 73).

The majority of respondents—diarists and non-diarists—are Caucasian/Non-Hispanic; 22 of the diarists, or 88 percent, and 62 of the non-diarists, or 82.7 percent (see Table 3 on page 74).

The preponderant age of diarists was equally distributed between two age brackets: 30 to 39 year olds, (nine, or 36 percent) and 40 to 49 year olds (nine, or 36 percent). The predominant age bracket for non-diarists was 40 to 49 year-olds; as 30 of the non-diarists, or 40 percent, checked this age bracket (see Table 4 on page 75).

The same percentage of diarists as non-diarists, 64 percent, have bachelor's degrees. Eleven of the 16 diarists with bachelor's degrees, or 44 percent, majored in journalism, and 28 of the 84 non-diarists, or 37.3 percent, majored in journalism. Nine of the diarists, or 36 percent, have master's degrees and 15 of the non-diarists, or 20 percent, have master's degrees. Seven of the nine diarists with master's degrees, or 28 percent, majored in journalism, whereas only six of the 15 non-diarists with master's degree, or 8 percent, majored in journalism. Only one respondent has a doctorate degree, and this respondent is a non-diarist (see Table 5 on page 76).

The highest percentage of non-diarists, 37 percent, have been journalists for 20 to 29 years, compared to diarists, whose highest percentage, 44 percent, have been journalists for 10 to 19 years (see Table 6 on page 77).

Reporters by far exceed all other job descriptions for both diarists and non-diarists. Fifteen of diarists, or 60 percent, are reporters, and 34 of non-diarists, or 45.3 percent, are reporters. Editors

and columnists also percentaged in quite high for diarists, as 20 percent of diarists are editors and 16 percent are columnists. A relatively high percentage of non-diarists, 24 percent, are editors, while only 6.7 percent of non-diarists are columnists (see Table 7 on page 78).

On the following seven pages are the seven tables that were created to display the demographic data from diarists and non-diarists.

TABLE 1

Frequency Distribution — Question 15
(What is your current marital status?)

	Diarists		Non-Diarists	
	Absolute Freq.	Relative Freq. %	Absolute Freq.	Relative Freq. %
Single	6	24.0%	9	12.0%
Married	16	64.0%	51	68.0%
Sep./Divorced	3	12.0%	4	5.3%
Widowed	---	---	1	1.3%
Other*	---	---	1	1.3%
No Answer	---	---	9	12.0%
Column Totals	n=25	100.0%	n=75	100.0%

* “Other” response: “living with partner.”

TABLE 2

Frequency Distribution — Question 16
(What is your gender?)

	Diarists		Non-Diarists	
	Absolute Freq.	Relative Freq. %	Absolute Freq.	Relative Freq. %
Male	10	40.0%	52	69.3%
Female	15	60.0%	16	21.3%
No Answer	---	---	7	9.3%
Column Totals	n=25	100.0%	n=75	100.0%

TABLE 3

Frequency Distribution — Question 17
(What is your ethnicity?)

	Diarists		Non-Diarists	
	Absolute Freq.	Relative Freq. %	Absolute Freq.	Relative Freq. %
African Amer.	---	---	2	2.7%
Asian	1	4.0%	1	1.3%
Cauc./Non-Hisp.	22	88.0%	62	82.7%
Hispanic	2	8.0%	1	1.3%
Native American	---	---	---	---
Other*	---	---	2	2.7%
No answer	---	---	7	9.3%
Column Totals	n=25	100.0%	n=75	100.0%

* The first “Other” response: Turkish/American/Jewish; the second “Other” respondent did not say what the “Other” was.

TABLE 4

Frequency Distribution — Question 18
(What is your age?)

	Diarists		Non-Diarists	
	Absolute Freq.	Relative Freq. %	Absolute Freq.	Relative Freq. %
Under 20	---	---	---	---
20-29	2	8.0%	2	2.7%
30-39	9	36.0%	17	22.7%
40-49	9	36.0%	30	40.0%
50-59	5	20.0%	19	25.3%
No Answer	0	0.0%	7	9.3%
Column Totals	n=25	100.0%	n=75	100.0%

TABLE 5

Frequency Distribution — Question 19
(What is your level of education? [Mark the highest that applies.])

	Diarists		Non-Diarists	
	Absolute Freq.	Relative Freq. %	Absolute Freq.	Relative Freq. %
High School	---	---	3	4%
Bachelor's*	<u>16</u>	<u>64.0%</u>	<u>84</u>	<u>64.0%</u>
Journalism	11	44.0%	28	37.3%
Other	5	20.0%	20	26.7%
Master's*	<u>9</u>	<u>36.0%</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>20.0%</u>
Journalism	7	28.0%	6	8.0%
Other	2	8.0%	9	12.0%
Doctorate	---	---	1	1.3%
No answer	---	---	8	10.7%
Column Totals	n=25	100.0%	n=75	100.0%

* Several of the journalists listed two or more degree majors. Only the first one was included in these calculations.

TABLE 6

Frequency Distribution—Question 20
(How many years have you been a journalist?)

	Diarists		Non-Diarists	
	Absolute Freq.	Relative Freq. %	Absolute Freq.	Relative Freq. %
Under 5	1	4.0%	---	---
5-9	5	20.0%	8	10.7%
10-19	11	44.0%	16	21.3%
20-29	6	24.0%	28	37.3%
30 or more	2	8.0%	15	20%
No answer	---	---	8	10.7%
Column Totals	n=25	100.0%	n=75	100.0%

TABLE 7

Frequency Distribution—Question 21
(What is your current job description?)

	Diarists		Non-Diarists	
	Absolute Freq.	Relative Freq. %	Absolute Freq.	Relative Freq. %
Reporter	15	60.0%	34	45.3%
Copy editor	---	---	5	6.7%
Editor	5	20.0%	18	24%
Reviewer	---	---	1	1.3%
Columnist	4	16.0%	5	6.7%
Other*	1	4.0%	5	6.7%
No answer	---	---	7	9.3%
Column Totals	n=25	100.0%	n=75	100.0%

*“Others” included bureau chief, editorial writer and on-line editor. Several of the non-diarists marked more than one of the job descriptions. Only the first listed was included above. Following are the additional titles. One journalist listed herself as both reporter and editor; two journalists as both reporter and columnist. One journalist listed himself as both copy editor and editor; one as both copy editor and copy desk. Two journalists listed themselves as both editors and columnists. The sole reviewer listed himself as both reviewer and columnist. One of the journalists listed himself as columnist and senior writer.

THESIS QUESTION #3

3. What compels journalists to keep diaries or journals, and conversely, what prevents journalists from keeping diaries or journals?

Questionnaire Question:

3. *If you do not keep any form of a diary or journal, why not?*

The main reasons stated for not keeping a diary were “not enough time” (35 times), “no interest/do not see the value” (24 times), “use other sources” (12 times), and “exhausted writing energy at work” (9 times). Following is a sampling of the responses given. (Note: Phrases of particular interest have been underlined throughout this chapter.)

“No time. I would like very much to do this and have tried from time to time to establish one. However, I’ve been attending graduate school for the last three years and found that I had plenty of opportunities through this experience to delve into issues of concern to me.”

•••

“Growing up, no one in my family did and I guess that’s usually where it stems from for children.”

•••

“Haven’t considered it.”

•••

“Never have given it a thought.”

•••

“One of my friends keeps a journal. . . . I find it to be a dangerous practice. Her trusting nature has put her in situations where other so-called friends have found some of her books and have taken it upon themselves to read her inner secrets . . . by putting her very personal experiences down into words, she makes herself vulnerable to exposure which may or may not come back to hurt her unnecessarily.”

•••

“Journals kept earlier in life only serve to embarrass me now upon rereading, which doesn’t exactly provide incentive to keep new ones.”

•••

“After writing all day long, I haven’t the mental energy to write with the depth and context I would want in a diary. Without context and depth to help record thoughts and impressions, I don’t see the value of one.”

•••

“No reason to. I’m not planning any books.”

•••

“I guess I don’t feel that anything I’m living through is important enough to write down.”

•••

“The reason I don’t keep a regular diary is that I don’t allow myself time for daily reflection.”

•••

“I generally consider my work—for the paper and fiction writing on the side—a fairly detailed accurate measure of my life and doings.”

•••

“When I do write, I like to have an audience (newspaper readers, friends, family).”

•••

“I find that good writing includes the idea of audience . . . like the idea of these on-line diaries—they include the idea of audience.”

• • •

“If it’s work related, I let my own notes/notebook—and the ensuing story—serve as the diary of experience.”

• • •

“I have never said to myself, ‘Gee, if I had had a diary, I could have looked that up.’ My career is just not that complicated. Files of stories and record books containing histories of events I have covered are enough. The Internet makes it even easier to look back on things.”

• • •

“I don’t see anything to gain from one.”

• • •

“Not enough time. I figure if I was going to sit down and write every day on my own time I would write a book or a screenplay.”

• • •

“Philosophically, I just don’t see the reason. One might argue retrospective self examination, but most people I know who have kept diaries hardly ever looked back at them, except perhaps for nostalgia.”

• • •

“Why journalists as opposed to surgeons or priests or teachers or over-the-road truck drivers? The daily lives and perceptions of most journalists are no more remarkable than the daily lives and perceptions of many others.”

• • •

“Why? That is the better question.”

• • •

“I don’t need a reason not to. I need a reason only to keep one.”

• • •

“Dumb question. The correct question is why would you keep one.”

• • •

“Why bother?”

• • •

“With a 70-hour-plus per week job, a wife, two kids, a house, a yard, there’s no time to think, much less write down a thought.”

• • •

“I guess I take so many notes in my professional life that I need a respite from it the rest of the time.”

• • •

“When I’m off I want to get away from work, which limits how much writing I’d want to do.”

• • •

“Too tired of writing at the end of each day to do more.”

• • •

“I would like to keep a journal regularly, but I never have the energy to sit down and do it. I feel as though my energy goes into the writing I do for the newspaper.”

• • •

“I’m too fatigued by words at the end of the day to generate my own!”

• • •

“I write all day, every day, at work. I’m sick of writing when not working!”

• • •

“Enjoy the moment and let the memories take care of themselves.”

• • •

“What I did or used to know will be remembered anyway if it was significant.”

•••

“I do not keep what I would consider a journal because it is reminders of what I am scheduled to do, not impressions of how the day went.”

•••

“I have never found the need for a journal. I always have files of papers if I need them.”

•••

“I’m not sure of the personal historical value of keeping a diary, since I do mental reflections and know that perspectives change over time.”

•••

“I’ve never been able to escape the self-consciousness that comes with writing a diary or a journal.”

•••

“I do write about personal experiences, but when I get an idea I make a note in my daily planner.”

•••

“To a certain extent, the use of e-mail can replace the journal because you are automatically left with a copy of what you sent.”

Questionnaire Question:

4. Why did you start a diary or journal?

The main reasons stated for starting a diary were “documentation” (12 times) and “therapy” (5 times). Following are sample responses to this question.

“To reflect on, think out on paper, momentous events in my life. To put tumultuous emotions on paper. To be able to look back to a previous time in my life to see what my thoughts and feelings were then.”

•••

“I have kept a diary on and off since I was a child because it’s therapeutic for me, and I get a kick out of looking back on my thoughts during a particular time in my life. I’m not sure if it helps build my voice as a writer, but I figure it can’t hurt.”

•••

“Probably because I was given a diary with a key when I was 10.”

•••

“As a child. Not sure why I started it. Just to keep track of my thoughts, things that happened, etc.”

•••

“My child was born. He was so fascinating that I wanted to keep track of his life, and thus began keeping track of my own.”

•••

“For future writing purposes.”

•••

“To deal with emotional issues, to get thoughts and feeling out of my head and onto paper.”

•••

“I’ve kept it up because of travel, because of stress management, and because it helps me learn about myself, and sometimes, the writing is pretty damn good.”

•••

“I seem to have a mania for recording the events of my life and those people around me.”

•••

“To help me grow as a writer and to create a personal, private record of thoughts and events as I journey through life.”

•••

“Because memory is fleeting.”

•••

“My marriage was breaking up and it helped me sort out some very difficult-to-handle emotions.”

•••

“To corral my personal thoughts.”

•••

“Because I liked to write. It was a way of expressing my feelings, thoughts on issues, also it was a good way to relieve stress.”

•••

“Mostly to record the wonder of experiencing a new thing, and to help myself remember the visual impact of new places, but without photos.”

•••

“So I can look back to previous years and know what happened, why I did certain things, etc. How my life, attitudes, perspective have changed.”

THESIS QUESTION #4

4. What kinds of information do journalists record in their diaries or journals, and how is the information used?

Questionnaire Question:

9. *What kinds of information do you record in your diary or journal? (Any examples of entries would be greatly appreciated.)*

Only one diarist included actual *dated* excerpts. Other responses included “recording activities” (seven times), “writing emotions and feelings” (six times), “writing to work out problems” (five times), and “writing down thoughts and reflections” (three times). Following are examples of the responses given.

“16 June Happy birthday to me. Another lousy day in paradise. Sun burned, so I really didn’t go to the beach. Shopping trip for dinner we were fixing . . . T-shirt in Calabash: I’d rather be in a boat with a drink on the rocks than be in the drink with a boat on the rocks.”

•••

“Events, emotions, insights, questions.”

•••

“Hi God, we had a good session this morning understanding people. I’m sitting here now, scared to write, sort of. So, I’m handing it over to you. I’ll write the quantity; would you take care of the quality? Thanks a bunch.”

•••

“What I did, how things looked, important personal conversations and feelings. . . .”

•••

“Work-related stuff, family stuff, stuff about friends.”

•••

“Conflicting thoughts and desires that give me pause. For example, when my father was dying of cancer, I recorded my struggle with his eventual demise, his courage in facing the disease, etc.”

• • •

“It varies, some days it’s what I did, other days it’s how I’m feeling or I’m trying to work out a problem. I write a lot about relationships.”

• • •

“Sometimes it’s poetry, silliness. Most times it’s a page or two describing an event, such as what it felt like giving birth or moving out of state. Sometimes it’s a reflection of something mundane, such as the interactions of people at a park one day.”

• • •

“Factual sequence of events and experiences. Occasional observations on current cultural, sports or political events.”

• • •

“I put the date, time of writing. Record whatever is on my mind at that time, or (now that I have a baby) funny things my son did, milestones in his development, etc. Also record info about fight with my husband or conflicts with friends.”

• • •

“Anything from lists to good days to bad days to stories, poems, ideas, goals, dreams . . . a lot of myself.”

• • •

“Environment, ambiance, humor, profiles.”

• • •

“Stream-of-consciousness stuff about whatever is on my mind at the moment.”

• • •

“Work angst. What is the purpose of life angst. Ideas for stories, both fiction and nonfiction.”

• • •

“Narrative descriptions of events and how I felt about them; lots of self-criticism, planning and goal-setting.”

• • •

“Emotional reactions or spicy events.”

Questionnaire Question:

11. What do you use your diary or journal material for? (For example, to aid in storytelling, to recall events, etc.)

As to be expected, the most frequent responses were to aid in storytelling (four times) and to recall events (five times), as these were given as examples. Many left the answer blank (seven times) or stated to see a previous answer (three times). Following are samples of the responses.

“Nothing yet.”

• • •

“To get over writer’s block.”

• • •

“Recall events. Clarify my life.”

• • •

“To help me know myself, to write, to dream, to set goals, to see how far I’ve come.”

• • •

“To recall details or things that people said that I may use later in a novel or essay.”

• • •

“To write about how I felt about how my week went, etc.”

• • •

“To refresh my memory.”

Questionnaire Question:

13. Is there any advice you would like to offer a journalist about keeping a diary or journal?

The majority of journalists did not offer any diaristic advice to journalists, as 11 of the journalists, or 44 percent, did not respond, and four, or 16 percent, said, no. The most common response was related to ignoring composition rules when writing in a diary (4 times). Following are examples of the responses.

“There should be no rules. Put whatever you like in there, for whatever reason.”

• • •

“Write at any time of day, write anything, don’t worry about language and grammar.”

• • •

“Do not edit while you write.”

• • •

“A journal or diary should be your thoughts or recollections on paper, not a final draft of a story or treatise. Write what you’re thinking, feeling, and don’t worry about organizing your thoughts.”

• • •

“I also try to record the humorous or inane events that occurred, so that when I read them later, it will be a pleasure to read instead of a mere recitation of fact, like some dull travelogue.”

• • •

“I do believe it helps in building voice. Also, the more you write, the better writer you become so it’s certainly a plus to keep one.”

• • •

“Keep one. It truly will aid your memory and provide reference to situations and events remembered only dimly.”

• • •

“It’s a valuable tool for learning about yourself. It’s not just valuable to journalists, but to anyone who is curious about the world.”

• • •

“Probably, don’t answer any surveys like this. (grin)”

• • •

“Try to have some sort of audience for it. Write it to (and send it to) an actual person.”

THESIS QUESTION #5

5. What is the significance of diaries or journals to journalists, i.e., what benefits do journalists derive from writing in their diaries or journals, who are journalists writing to, how important is privacy, etc.?

Questionnaire Question:

5. How many years have you written in a diary or journal?

The majority response to the number of years a journalist has kept a diary was 20 to 29 years (eight, or 32 percent). Seven, or 28 percent, said they have kept a diary for 10 to 19 years. Only one journalist said she has kept a diary for 30 or more years.

Questionnaire Question:

6. *How often do you write in your diary or journal?*

Only four of the diarists, or 16 percent, said they write in their diaries every day. The majority, nine, or 36 percent, said they write sporadically. Two, or 8 percent, said they write every few days, filling in the days in between. A higher number, however, five, or 20 percent, said they write every few days, *without* filling in the days in between.

Questionnaire Question:

7. *Who do you write to in your diaries or journals? In other words, who is your intended audience?*

Twenty-four of the diarists, or 96 percent, said they write to themselves. The twenty-fifth diarist marked “other” as the person he writes to, but did not indicate who the “other” was. Six of the diarists, or 24 percent, who said they write to themselves also said they write for posterity. Only two of the diarists said they also write to a relative. Four of the diarists, or 16 percent, said they write to themselves and “others.” The “others” included friends, children and god.

Questionnaire Question:

8. *What benefits do you derive from keeping a diary or journal?*

The majority of diarists (20 of 25) said they benefit from their diary’s use as a record-keeper, either to use as a reference document, to read back to chart changes, to aid memory, or just to record events. Other reasons included “therapeutic” (five times), writing aid (three times) and confidante (two times). Following are examples of responses.

“As a writer it’s a great exercise, allowing me to experiment with different styles with complete freedom. As a person, it’s a great self-discovery tool, helping me identify and articulate my feelings about situations.”

•••

“I vent.”

•••

“A record of events. My mother kept copies of all her letters and now I have a wonderful set of notes on my childhood that I will use to write a memoir or a novel.”

•••

“I can see my progress.”

• • •

“Notes for writing.”

• • •

“It helps clear my head, helps me clarify various issues and emotions with which I’m dealing. Sometimes it’s work-related, but generally not.”

• • •

“. . . helps me not drive friends crazy by giving me some place to whine besides them. Also helps me capture places and experiences that are positive.”

• • •

“Renewed enjoyment of writing, freelance prospects, later review.”

• • •

“Immeasurable. It’s a friend, it’s a confidante, it’s a way to keep myself in line, to set goals, to chart my progress, and to eventually let my future children know who I am. It’s just part of being a writer and being an artist.”

• • •

“I like to keep a record of things . . . so that I can look back to previous years and know what happened, why I did certain things, etc. How my life, attitudes, perspectives have changed.”

• • •

“Memory assistance.”

• • •

“Save hundreds of dollars in therapy.”

• • •

“I kept a diary for my two young sons because I think it will be a great gift to them when they’re older to see what they were like as children. They might also get a better glimpse into their mother and how much joy they brought her.”

• • •

“It helps me to keep grounded in reality.”

Questionnaire Question:

10. How important is the privacy of your diaries or journals, and what precautions, if any, do you take to keep them private?

Eight of the diarists, or 32 percent, said that their diaries’ safekeeping was very important. Six, or 24 percent, said somewhat important. And 11, or 44 percent, said the safekeeping was not important at all. Following are a few of the response comments from journalists regarding their attitude about the privacy of their diaries.

“I carry my book with me at all times. The others are in my apartment in a closet. I don’t worry that someone will read them.”

• • •

“Very important, but I trust those around me to respect that, so I take no particular precautions.”

• • •

“Keep locked away.”

• • •

“Tossed on top of my dresser.”

• • •

“Very, but I never write my name in it . . . which is good, because someone stole my journal when I was in Las Vegas . . . that was unsettling, as was the journal of my first two weeks of living abroad—I lost it, and can never recreate those moments.”

• • •

“I don’t mind the family reading it (it’s stored in a dresser by my bed). But I’d be embarrassed if anyone else read it.”

• • •

“I remove it from public view if people other than family members will be in my home.”

• • •

“Keep journal hidden from other family members (although my wife knows where it is if she wanted to peek, but she respects my privacy).”

Questionnaire Question:

11. Have you ever destroyed any of your diaries or journals? If so, why?

Interestingly, only two of the diarists, or 8 percent, said they destroyed their diaries. Of the remaining 23 diarists, one did not answer and 22, or 88 percent, said they had not destroyed their diaries. Following are the remarks made by the two journalists who said they destroyed their diaries.

“Yes, once went through a hard time at work, and threw away a few negative pages that really didn’t belong in a journal that focused more on the family.”

• • •

“At some point when I was a teenager, I destroyed (much to my regret) my original diary from when I was 10, simply because I thought it was dorky and embarrassing.”

The question evoked an emotional response from several of the diarists, who not only said they had never destroyed their diaries, but never would.

“Never!”

• • •

“Never. Never would.”

THESIS QUESTION #6

6. How are journalists influenced by others’ diaries or journals?

Questionnaire Question:

14. Have you been influenced/inspired by others’ diaries or journals? If so, whose diaries and journals and how have they influenced or inspired you?

Journalists said they were influenced by more than 20 diarists, including famous published diaries and unpublished relatives’ diaries. Only three diarists were mentioned more than once, Anne Frank (three times), Anaïs Nin (two times) and Virginia Woolf (two times). Nine, or 36

percent, did not respond. Other journalists cited include Henry David Thoreau, Sylvia Plath, Franz Kafka, Bob Greene, Harriett the Spy, Teddy White, Eric Sevareid, Henri Nouen, May Sarton, Lewis and Clark, Thomas Merton, Madeleine L'Engle, Gretel Erhlich and Edward Ellis. Some of the more telling responses are excerpted below.

“I am keenly interested in the journals of writers. In the past I have read journals by Franz Kafka and Thomas Merton, among others.”

•••

“My grandmother’s journals (which remind me that Christians are just forgiven sinners, not plaster saints).”

“Bob Greene’s book, based on his high school journal, inspired me in high school.”

•••

“The great diaries of Edward Ellis form a majestic chronicle of the 20th century and especially of New York City.”

•••

“The only diary I can say I’ve truly been influenced by is the *Diary of Anne Frank*, as a record of a terrible event and the way she dealt with it. From a historical perspective it’s invaluable, and brought to a clearer understanding—for millions of people years later—the type of effect the Nazi regime had on everyday people. I remembered feeling, she’s just like me, that could have happened to me. It was terrifying. And for that reason, very important. It binds humanity.”

•••

“Many journalists have relied on diaries in writing their memoirs, including two memorable ones for me: Teddy White’s *In Search of History* and Eric Sevareid’s *Not So Wild A Dream*.

•••

“I’ve written extensively about diarists. . . . I greatly admire that kind of persistence and devotion.”

•••

“I have used other journals or diaries in stories, especially historic journals.”

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

“The final lesson a writer learns is that everything can nourish the writer. The dictionary, a new word, a voyage, an encounter, a talk in the street, a book, a phrase heard. He [or she] is a computer set to receive and utilize all things. An exhibit of painting, a concert, a voice, a letter, a play, a landscape, a skyscape, a telephone conversation, a nap, a dream, a sleepless night, a storm, an animal’s greeting, an aquarium, a photograph, a newspaper story.”²³³

Anaïs Nin

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Responses from diary-keeping newspaper journalists confirm the diary is of value to them, for reasons as diverse as helping to work out problems, creating a record of events, improving writing skills, and storing source material, among others. Journalists who keep diaries are proud of them and have intense fidelity to their diary’s efficacy. As one journalist said, the benefits are “immeasurable.” Judging by the variety and number of answers—more than 30 benefits were cited—it can be concluded that diary keeping is not only a valuable endeavor, but that the value varies from journalist to journalist.

Research revealed that whether diarists actually mentioned their diary’s role as a friend—“it’s a friend, it’s a confidante”—diarists record the same kinds of information in their diaries that they verbalize to others, including the books they are reading, the movies they have seen, the places they have visited, their aspirations, their inspirations, even helpful hints and recipes. Unlike a friend, however, diarists’ communication with their diaries, is one-directional, as diarists rely on them as

²³³ Anaïs Nin, *The Novel of the Future* (Athens: Swallow Press, 1986), 164.

one-way sounding boards, confidential allies—pseudo-psychiatrists who do not require face-to-face contact. The journalists' questionnaire responses are strewn with comments relating to their diary's therapeutic merit, for example, "Save hundreds of dollars in therapy," "It's therapeutic for me," "I vent," "To deal with emotional issues, to get thoughts and feelings out of my head and onto paper."

As research progressed, the similarity between the recording techniques of the journalist and the diarist became more obvious, as both report on a regular basis what they see and experience—some better than others. Arthur Ponsonby asserts that it is a diarist's perception that makes one diarist a better recorder than another. "Perception, which is the faculty of detaching the significant from the things observed, is a rare talent. The diarist who possesses it will never fail to keep alert a reader of his record,"²³⁴ says Ponsonby. This ability to sift out the significant is a skill common to both diarists and journalists, as they are both gatekeepers of what they determine to be important. The diarist, however, is not confined by an editor's blue pencil or by a reader's censure.

According to research and the journalists' comments in the questionnaire, diary keeping improves one's communicative skills. Diarists, like all writers, must search for the *bons justes* that best describe an event, a personality, or a place. The writer's role, says Anaïs Nin, is "not to say what we can all say but what we are unable to say."²³⁵ Diarists, like journalists, are in a constant state of composing when writing in a diary. This conceptive process not only helps diarists to be better writers, but also better conversationalists—for in the course of laboring with their thoughts on paper, diarists are correspondingly packaging their stories for verbal delivery as well.

Keeping a diary not only improves expressive competency, but creates a repository of data from which to draw—information that might otherwise be forgotten. Just as most journalists do

²³⁴ Arthur Ponsonby, *English Diaries: A Review of English Diaries from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century* (London: Methuen & Co., 1923), 33.

²³⁵ Anaïs Nin, *The Diary of Anaïs Nin*, vol. 5: 1947-1955, ed. by Gunther Stuhlmann (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974), 171.

not depend on their memory in an interview to recall an interviewee's verbatim remarks, but rely on a tape recorder or notes, neither can diarists be expected to rely too much on their memories. By recording one's own and others' profundities, the diarist, like the speechwriter, has a repertoire of titillating information at his or her disposal. What is especially significant is that this information is winnowed out of all the trivia that is heard and read each day, thus creating a rich vein of unique material that can be incorporated into other writing projects. Several of the journalists specifically stated they use their diary material for stories. One journalist said he uses the material in his diaries to write "profiles." Another journalist said she uses her diary's matter to write "ideas for stories, both fiction and nonfiction."

The questionnaire results indicate that at least a fourth of diary-keeping journalists have been keeping diaries since they were young. Either the respondents specifically stated they have been keeping a diary since a child—"I was given a diary with a key when I was 10"—or the information was gleaned by matching the journalists' ages with the number of years they kept diaries. One journalist, in stating why he did not keep a diary said, "Growing up, no one in my family did and I guess that's usually where it stems from for children." Another journalist stated, "It's a habit I never developed." According to Arthur Ponsonby, ". . . habit and nothing else may account for the writing of a good many diaries."²³⁶

Robert Fothergill suggests another reason that might compel diarists to continue with such an assiduous endeavor: "As a diary grows to a certain length and substance, it impresses upon the mind of its writer a conception of the completed book . . . he would be leaving unwritten a book whose character and conventions had been established and whose final form is the shape of his life."²³⁷ Questionnaire responses offer three additional reasons diarists are driven to record:

²³⁶ Arthur Ponsonby, *English Diaries: A Review of English Diaries From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century* (London: Methuen & Co., 1923), 6.

²³⁷ Robert A. Fothergill, *Private Chronicles: A Study of English Diaries* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), 44.

- 1) An instinctive need to record—what Arthur Ponsonby calls “the itch to record.”²³⁸ One of the journalists said, “I seem to have a mania for recording the events of my life and those people around me.”
- 2) The pure enjoyment of recording—“a renewed enjoyment of writing,” as one journalist expressed it. Diary scholar Alex Aronson proposes that the ritual of making one’s regular entry in the diary is “a performance that gives added meaning to the experience described.”²³⁹
- 3) The ability to read, and cull from, prior recordings—which was asserted by several journalists. For example, one journalist said, “So I can look back to previous years and know what happened.” If, as Anaïs Nin says, writing allows one to “taste life twice,”²⁴⁰ then perhaps reading past diary entries allows the diarist the delicacy of tasting life *thrice*.

It is not surprising that journalists, who often work long hours, cite lack of time as the number-one reason for not keeping a diary. Interestingly, most of the journalists who cited lack of time were the most abbreviated in their response, for example, “Lack of time,” “Not enough time,” “No time,” “Who has time?” Journalists who expounded on why they lacked the time usually attributed it to both their work and home lives: “Not enough time, between work and home life, to write a journal,” “With a 70-hour-plus per week job, a wife, two kids, a house, a yard . . . there’s no time to think, much less write down a thought,” “Not enough time between family and work responsibilities.” The number of women leaving the home and entering the workforce since the 1960’s is more than likely one of the contributing factors, as both men and women now share in the responsibilities of their family and work lives. Interestingly, parenthood was also cited as a

²³⁸ Arthur Ponsonby, *English Diaries: A Review of English Diaries From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century* (London: Methuen & Co., 1923), 7.

²³⁹ Alex Aronson, *Studies in Twentieth-Century Diaries: The Concealed Self* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1991), 1.

²⁴⁰ Anaïs Nin, *The Diary of Anaïs Nin*, vol. 4: 1947-1955, ed. by Gunther Stuhlmann (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974), 149.

reason journalists *keep* diaries, for example, “I kept a diary for my two young sons because I think it will be a great gift to them when they’re older to see what they were like as children. They might also get a better glimpse into their mother and how much joy they brought her.” This clearly demonstrates that even though the demands of parenthood and work limit the free time a journalist has to write in a diary, some journalists will find the time.

Another justification journalists gave for not keeping a diary was writing burnout, for example, “Too tired of writing at the end of each day to do more,” “I feel as though my energy goes into the writing I do for the newspaper,” “I’m too fatigued by words at the end of the day to generate my own!” Here again, the diary-keeping journalists have a different opinion, as they see the writing aspect of diary keeping as a plus, not a negative, for example, “I do believe it helps in building voice,” “To get over writer’s block,” “To help me grow as a writer.” These clashing convictions highlight the difference in the diary’s and the newspaper’s writing styles, which is why one is not a substitution for the other. One is meant for an audience, with all the rules and accolades this entails; the other is meant for one’s own eyes only, with all the confidential freedom this signifies. Even the advice offered by journalists bespeaks this difference, as the majority of the journalists’ diary-keeping counsel directed diarists to liberate themselves of editorial concerns, for example, “Do not edit while you write,” “There should be no rules,” “. . . don’t worry about language and grammar.”

One of the more interesting reasons cited for not keeping a diary was lack of audience. This is an answer that is quite reasonable coming from newspaper journalists, whose daily prose has an immediate audience. Coincidentally, one of the journalists actually advised diarists to create an audience for their diaries: “Try to have some sort of audience for it. Write it to (and send it to) an actual person.” The sense of readership is important to writers not just because of the accolades that accompany publication, but because of the writer’s desire to share his or her work with others. Playwright Clifford Odets writes of this communicative need in his diary: “Always I am very

thankful that I am an artist, that I write about life, that I reach people with what I write. Any other existence would be intolerable for me.”²⁴¹

A published diary does not allow the diarist *daily* communication with the outside world as newspaper reporters’ stories do, but knowledge of its eventual publication can satisfy the diarist’s need for an audience. And by deferring publication, the diarist is—like the photographer’s subject who is more candid when unaware of the camera’s eye—less circumspect knowing he or she is not under the scrutiny of an immediate and palpable reader. Research has shown that most diarists, like soliloquists, ostensibly communicate only with themselves, but they do so with the knowledge of an ineffable—if not real—audience, whether it is god, a relative, or posterity. And even though 24 of the 25 diary-keeping journalists said they write first and foremost to themselves—which is not surprising since one of the distinguishing characteristics of the diary form from other kinds of self-life writing is that it is written by oneself, to oneself—six of the 25 diarists said they also write for posterity. In addition, despite the fact that 14 of the 25 diarists said their diary’s privacy is “very” or “somewhat” important, most do not take any special precautions to secrete their diaries, as comments included, “Tossed on top of my dresser,” “. . . it’s stored in a dresser by my bed,” “Very important, but I trust those around me to respect that, so I take no particular precautions.” The diarists’ lack of concern with the privacy of their diaries coupled with the fact that 23 of the 25 diarists have never destroyed their diaries—and “never would”—is enlightening as it offers hope that these journalists, if not planning on publishing their diaries, are at least preserving them.

Surprisingly, the demographic differences between the diary-keeping journalist and the non diary-keeping journalist are not exceptionally disparate. What is startling, however, is that a relatively high percentage, 40 percent, of the diary-keeping journalists are men—not only because of the diary’s little girl association, but because all five of the diarists in the researcher’s pilot study of seven female and six male graduate-level journalism classmates were female. It is important to

²⁴¹ Clifford, Odets, *The Time is Ripe: The 1940 Journal of Clifford Odets* (New York: Grove Press, 1988), 12.

note that this high percentage of male diarists cannot be attributed to a disproportionately smaller percentage of female newspaper employees, as the 1999 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics of national newspaper employment reveals that the number of female newspaper employees has risen from 26 percent in 1970 to 48 percent in 1998.

Another demographic surprise is that the majority of both diarists and non-diarists are married. One would expect married people to be less inclined to keep a diary knowing their spouses might read them or because they have less of a need for a confiding preserve. But as research revealed, diarists expect their spouses to respect their privacy. For example, one journalist wrote, “Keep journal hidden from other family members (although my wife knows where it is if she wanted to peek, but she respects my privacy).”

The fact that both diarists and non-diarists are predominately white is more an indicator of the complexion of journalists in general, as a 1998 industry-wide survey by the Newspaper Association of America on employment of minorities by U.S. daily newspapers found that 82 percent of newspaper employees are white.

Research reveals that an individual journalist’s perception of a diary is at the base of why journalists do or do not keep diaries. Diarists propose multiple reasons for keeping a diary, while non-diarists focus on only one aspect of diary keeping or denounce it entirely. Comments like the following are clearly indicative of these non-diarists’ perceptions of diary keeping: “Why keep a diary? “I’m not planning on writing a book,” “Why, that is the better question,” “Philosophically, I just don’t see the reason. One might argue retrospective self examination, but most people I know who have kept diaries hardly ever looked back at them, except perhaps for nostalgia.”

A prevailing misconception about diary keeping is that a diary must be written daily. This is contrary to the survey’s results, which indicate that 36 percent of diarists write sporadically, with eight percent filling in the days in between, and 20 percent not filling in the days in between. Forcing oneself to record daily would be no less a chore than any other quotidian duty—even the normal five-day workweek is offset by a two-day respite.

Another fallacy is the need for an exceptionally interesting life to keep a diary, or as one journalist expressed it, “I don’t feel that anything I’m living through is important enough to write down.” It is not necessarily one’s lifestyle that makes for an evocative diary, as a diary is not just a record of events, but a record of perceptions—and the knowledge that “every experience is a unique event in time and space, occurring for the first and last time.”²⁴² The researcher has therefore come to the conclusion that non-diarists might be persuaded to keep a diary if given the right reason—thereupon making the results of this study, and future diaristic research, an important conveyance to expose, and espouse, the diary’s multivariate role.

In regards to others’ diaries, both diarists and non-diarists cited more than 20 diarists who had influenced or inspired them. The responses were revealing in that the journalists referred to the same historical and biographical import asserted by the researcher in the introduction. Referring to Anne Frank’s diary, one journalist said, “From a historical perspective, it’s invaluable.” In respect to the diary’s biographical import, one journalist noted, “Many journalists have relied on diaries in writing their memoirs.” Research has shown that it is important that journalists publish their autobiographies because their behind-the-scenes comments are important adjuncts to the public historical records. And since journalists who keep diaries are able to cull from them to write their autobiographies, it can be postulated that diary-keeping journalists are more likely to pen their autobiographies than their non diary-keeping counterparts.

Journalists also said they used others’ diaries as source material for stories, for example, “I have used journals or diaries in stories, especially historic journals.” One journalist credited another journalist’s published diary as influencing her own diary keeping: “Bob Greene’s book, based on his high school journal, inspired me in high school.” The journalists’ remarks about others’ diaries lead the researcher to believe that journalists should be encouraged not only to keep diaries, but to

²⁴² Stephen Spender, “Confessions and Autobiography,” in *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*, ed. James Olney (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 116.

publish them, as the publication of journalists' diaries offer a wealth of information to the biographer, the historian, and the general reader.

Reading hundreds of diaries has illuminated the diary's sound-bite quality, inspiring the researcher to conclude that the published diary is the quintessential book for the new millennium—especially since “. . . in the postmodern theoretical context we begin to relinquish demands for theme, pattern, structure, and certain meaning.”²⁴³ The ability to read diaries in sips instead of gulps, to set them down and pick them back up without regard to a bookmark's placement, only helps to propagate the researcher's belief that the diary is the ideal reading cocktail. Because a diary is a non-linear form of literature—one void of plot—the reader is not hurried along to get on with the story, but instead is able to savor each refreshing sip. The reader can scan through a diary, somewhat like a book of quotes, discovering kinship gems throughout, as “customs and technologies change, but human emotions remain the same.”²⁴⁴

METHODOLOGICAL CONCLUSIONS

The eight percent rate of response was not as high as expected. However, since the use of the e-mail methodology is relatively unresearched, the rate of response was only able to be approximated using U.S. mail statistics. Whether this statistic is high or low will only be able to be determined in relation to the results of future e-mail research. The low rate of response from the first six newspapers prompted the researcher to add two additional newspapers to her database, which generated a slight increase in the overall response rate and helped the researcher obtain 30 additional e-mail questionnaires. Interestingly, the rate of response was one percent higher from the two newspapers that did not first receive the query letter (non-queried response was nine

²⁴³ Harry J. Berman, *Interpreting the Aging Self: Personal Journals of Later Life* (New York: Springer Publishing Group, 1994), 35.

²⁴⁴ Penelope Franklin, *Private Pages: Diaries of American Women; 1830's – 1970's* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1986), xxii.

percent, queried response was eight percent); however, this statistic is somewhat skewed because these newspapers were also e-mailed individually instead of as a group, a factor that might have influenced response.

The query letter might not be an important response generator, as less than half of the journalists who responded to the query letter actually responded to the questionnaire, however, the researcher believes the query letter was instrumental for two reasons. First, it provided an indication of the number of diarists and non-diarists the researcher could expect to respond. Second, respondents identified concerns the researcher had not anticipated, thus allowing her the advantage of refining her questionnaire accordingly. For instance, one journalist wrote, “I think you run the risk of having your results subpoenaed, and producing subpoenas for participating journalists.” This was a valid concern, one that the researcher and her committee took seriously. The questionnaire was revised to include a statement that assured the journalists that any connection between the journalist and his or her response would be impossible. Another query letter response, “My first tip is to write people you want favors from individually—no one wants to be part of a spam,” inspired the individual mailing of the questionnaire to the two additional newspapers.

Sending out the e-mail questionnaire a second time was well worth the effort, as 23 percent of the questionnaire response was as a result of the second mailing. These results dispose the researcher to suggest a third, or even fourth, e-mail be sent if the researcher is not sending out a query letter beforehand. An interesting phenomenon about the responses from both the e-mail questionnaire and query letter is that a majority of the responses were received within the first two days. Seventy-three percent of the journalists who responded to the first e-mail responded within the first two days, and 81.8 percent who responded to the second e-mail responded in the first two days. The researcher profits by obtaining a quick gauge of his or her survey’s efficacy and can make changes accordingly. This expeditious response leads the researcher to suggest that future researchers interested in the e-mail survey methodology should conduct an e-mail pilot study rather than sending an e-mail query letter, as not only would the pilot study be a better indicator of

response—as it would be a replica of the actual survey—it would, like the query letter, quickly identify problems.

The savings in time and money using the e-mail survey methodology were immense, as the researcher did not have to spend a penny on postage costs, nor expend time printing and copying query letters and questionnaires, stuffing and sealing envelopes, and affixing stamps. Because the e-mail methodology is at the dawning of its evolution, the researcher would like to include a few caveats for future researchers interested in this methodology:

- Not all formatting components used in wordprocessing programs transfer equivalently into e-mail programs, so it is recommended that the researcher check the questionnaire's format by printing it from the e-mail file before sending it out.
- In order to know which population database is responding without having to open each e-mail, include an identifying code in the subject grid of each e-mail sent out.
- Delete the return receipts, as these only serve to congest the e-mail in-box.
- Before cutting the e-mail address off the hard copies of the questionnaires (to maintain anonymity), arrange the questionnaires alphabetically by name within each database folder to assure there are not any duplicates.
- Assign each questionnaire a unique code in your questionnaire input data-processing file and on the hard copy, so that you can refer back to the questionnaire if necessary.

IN CLOSING

The researcher expected journalists as writers to be more inclined than the general public to keep a diary, and although there are no current statistics from which to compare the two, there is Arthur Ponsonby's 1923 study of the general "educated" public that challenges this hypothesis. Ponsonby's study resulted in a 25 percent response rate from diarists, which is the exact percentage rate produced by the researcher in her study.

The researcher hopes that the results of this study will not only present a clearer picture of an endeavor that has proven to yield the diarist a high return on his or her investment, but will also inspire other scholars to consider the diary a serious subject of study. Perhaps this research will help further the need for an American Diary Repository as suggested by journalist Edward Robb Ellis in an essay titled, “A National Drawer for Dusty, Yellowing Diaries,” published on the op-ed page of the *New York Times* on December 13, 1976. In sum, Ellis states:

I advocate the creation of an institution called the American Diary Repository. . . . As this nation enters its third century, we would do well to gather under one roof an untapped body of Americana—the life stories of all sorts of men and women as told in their journals. . . . Every good historian is eager to find and use diaries kept during the period about which he is writing. . . . The American Diary Repository could be funded by the federal government, foundations, philanthropists Donors would not be paid for their diaries, but perhaps they could get a tax break. . . . The repository could publish exceptional journals. . . . If anyone wanted to write a history of Seattle [for instance] he could apply to the repository, and computers might produce perhaps 67 cards identifying Seattle residents who kept diaries. By using them, the writer could produce a better history of Seattle than otherwise would be possible. . . .²⁴⁵

FUTURE RESEARCH

Potential areas for future research could include:

- Conducting a similar study of *broadcast* journalists and diary keeping.
- Conducting a content analysis of journalists’ published diaries.
- Studying the psychological differences between the diarist and the non-diarist in order to determine what personality characteristics distinguish the two.

²⁴⁵ Edward Robb Ellis, *A Diary of the Century: Tales from America’s Greatest Diarist* (New York: Kodansha International, 1995), 555-6.

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APPENDIX A

E-Mail Query Letter

Dear Journalist:

My name is Patty Martino Alspaugh. As part of my graduate work at California State University, Northridge, I am writing a thesis titled, "Diaries: Their Use By, and Influence On, American Newspaper Journalists in the Twentieth Century." To this purpose, I would like your permission to send you an e-mail questionnaire I have developed. Just return this e-mail to me by November 22, inserting an "x" in the box below that applies to you.

[] I keep a diary

[] I keep a journal

[] I keep neither a diary nor a journal

In the interests of anonymity and frankness, your name will be kept strictly confidential and will in no way be used in the analysis of the questionnaires. Additionally, a copy of the results of this survey is available upon request.

SPECIAL NOTE: Because of the problems often associated with attached documents, the questionnaire will not be an attachment, but will be included in the written text of the e-mail.

Sincerely,

*Patty Martino Alspaugh
patty.alspaugh@csun.edu*

*More contact information:
Patty Martino Alspaugh
6100 Primrose Lane, #9
Hollywood, CA 90068
(323) 957-0675*

APPENDIX B

E-Mail Questionnaire

Dear Journalist:

To those who responded to my query letter, thank you for your interest in helping further the research of the diary and its use by the journalist. Below is a very short questionnaire that should take about two minutes for non diary-keeping journalists and about five to ten minutes for diary-keeping journalists. The researcher's purpose is to examine how journalists' diaries benefit journalists and society, and to understand why some journalists keep diaries, while others do not.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please be assured that the connection between each journalist's name and the questionnaire's content will be kept completely confidential, as the researcher will destroy both the electronic e-mail file and the e-mail heading of each printed questionnaire before beginning her analysis.

After completing the questionnaire, simply click the reply button or send it to my e-mail address: patty.alspaugh@csun.edu. Please return it to me before January 15, 2000. You may feel free to print out the questionnaire and answer the questions in long hand. You can then mail it to me at: Patty Martino Alspaugh, 6100 Primrose Lane, #9, Hollywood Hills, CA 90068.

Please insert an "X" in the appropriate box(es) or type out your answers, whichever is applicable. The more candid your answers, the better the results of this research study.

1. *Do you keep a diary or journal?*

- (a) Yes, I keep a diary or journal
- (b) No, I keep neither a diary nor a journal

2. *If you do not keep a regular diary or journal, do you keep one for specific occasions, i.e., while vacationing, on-assignment, etc.?*

- (a) Yes (If yes, what kind(s) of diary or journal do you keep?):
- (b) No

3. *If you do not keep any form of a diary or journal, why not?*

IF YOU DO NOT KEEP ANY FORM OF A DIARY OR JOURNAL, YOU MAY SKIP QUESTIONS 4 THROUGH 13. ☺

4. *Why did you start a diary or journal?*

5. *How many years have you written in a diary or journal?*

- (a) Under 5 years
- (b) 5-9 years
- (c) 10-19 years
- (d) 20-29 years

- (e) 30 or more years
6. *How often do you write in your diary or journal?*
- (a) Every day
(b) Every few days, filling in days in between
(c) Every few days, without filling in days in between
(d) Sporadically, when on assignment, travelling, etc.
(e) Other:
7. *Who do you write to in your diaries or journals? In other words, who is your intended audience? (Mark all that apply.)*
- (a) Self
(b) Relative
(c) Posterity
(d) Other:
8. *What benefits do you derive from keeping a diary or journal?*
9. *What kinds of information do you record in your diary or journal? (Any examples of entries would be greatly appreciated.)*
10. *How important is the privacy of your diaries or journals, and what precautions, if any, do you take to keep them private?*
- (a) Very important (What precautions do you take?):
(b) Somewhat important (What precautions do you take?):
(c) Not important
11. *Have you ever destroyed any of your diaries or journals? If so, why?*
- (a) Yes (I destroyed diaries or journals for the following reason(s)):
(b) No
12. *What do you use your diary or journal material for? (For example, to aid in storytelling, to recall events, etc.)*
13. *Is there any advice you would like to offer a journalist about keeping a diary or journal?*

NON-DIARISTS/JOURNALISTS, PLEASE RESUME QUESTIONNAIRE HERE.

14. *Have you been influenced/inspired by others' diaries or journals? If so, whose diaries or journals and how did they influence or inspire you?*
15. *What is your current marital status?*

- (a) Single
- (b) Married
- (c) Separated or divorced
- (d) Widowed

16. *What is your gender?*

- (a) Male
- (b) Female

17. *What is your ethnicity?*

- (a) African American
- (b) Asian
- (c) Caucasian/Non-Hispanic
- (d) Hispanic
- (e) Native American
- (f) Other:

18. *What is your age?*

- (a) Under 20 years old
- (b) 20-29 years old
- (c) 30-39 years old
- (d) 40-49 years old
- (e) 50 years old or older

19. *What is your level of education? (Mark the highest level that applies.)*

- (a) High school graduate
- (b) Undergraduate degree in:
- (c) Master's degree in:
- (d) Doctorate degree in:

20. *How many years have you been a journalist?*

- (a) Under five years
- (b) 5-9 years
- (c) 10-19 years
- (d) 20-29 years
- (e) 30 years or more

21. *What is your current job description?*

- (a) Reporter
- (b) Copy Editor
- (c) Editor
- (d) Reviewer
- (e) Columnist
- (f) Other:

*If you have any additional comments, please feel free to share any thoughts/comments here.
(In addition, please feel free to e-mail me at patty.alspaugh@csun.edu, call me at 323-957-0675, or write me at 6100 Primrose Lane, #9, Hollywood, CA 90068)*

NOTE: If you would like to receive a copy of the results of this questionnaire, please send a separate e-mail to me requesting a copy.

THANK YOU!

APPENDIX C
Coded Questionnaire Input