

# WRITING MATTERS

VOL. 5 NO. 3

Celebrating writing in all its forms at Northwestern University.

SPRING 2005

## DIRECTOR'S LETTER

*Journalist Rick Atkinson presents a lecture worth revisiting.*

By David Abrahamson

Director, NU Center for the Writing Arts  
and Helen G. Brown Research Professor of  
Journalism, Medill School of Journalism



It was almost midnight in "the middle of nowhere" when Rick Atkinson found out he'd won the 2003 Pulitzer Prize for history for *An Army at*

*Dawn*, his compelling history of the World War II campaigns in North Africa. "Nowhere" was 80 miles south of Baghdad. He was on assignment in Iraq, spending two months embedded with the 101st Airborne Division.

As he recalled later, "The next day I spent in Karbala with the ...[troops], watching an intense firefight and writing a long story about it for the [Washington] Post. That seemed appropriate, somehow. It's always best to just get on with your work." Not bad words to live by.

This past February, Northwestern hosted Rick Atkinson as part of the "Literature of Fact" lecture series, sponsored in part by the NU Center for the Writing Arts. In his presentation entitled "History, Journalism, and Writing About Wars Past and Present," Atkinson considered various ways that he and others have approached writing about military conflicts.

Atkinson began his career in journalism in Pittsburg, Kansas in 1976, moving to the *Kansas City Times* a year later.

He joined the *Washington Post* in 1983, where he has covered the Pentagon, presidential elections, and the Gulf and Iraqi wars. He also served as the Berlin bureau chief, and as the paper's deputy national editor and assistant managing editor.

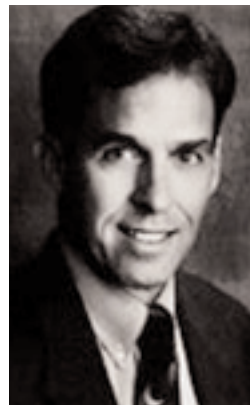
His books include *An Army at Dawn*, *The Long Gray Line*, *Crusade*, and *In the Company of Soldiers*. The latter, published in 2004, is a narrative of his time with the 101st Airborne Division and its charismatic commanding general, David Petraeus, in the Iraqi War. As follow-ups to *An Army at Dawn*, he is currently working on companion histories of the Italian and Western European campaigns during World War II. Atkinson is the recipient of three Pulitzers—the 1982 prize for national reporting, a shared 1999 prize for public service, and the 2003 award for *An Army at Dawn*. The following is a reprint of his lecture delivered in Fisk Hall on February 28, 2005.

### HISTORY, JOURNALISM AND COVERING WARS PAST AND PRESENT

Presented by  
Rick Atkinson

Thanks for inviting me to be with you today.

I'm always delighted to come back to the Chicago area—even in February—because I went to graduate school at the other end of the city, in Hyde Park at the U of C. Northwestern's journalism school was much admired then, and in the thirty years since has only become more so. In those days I thought I wanted to teach college English; if I'd had any sense I would have come here instead to learn something useful about my future profession rather than having to learn



RICK ATKINSON

## ARE YOU PLANNING WRITING EVENTS THIS QUARTER? LET US KNOW!

Just a reminder that the Center's biweekly digest, *NU Writing Event Digest*, highlights NU writing events and reaches students, faculty, and staff via the Center's growing listserv. If you know of an upcoming event related to writing, whether it be an author visit, departmental program, or even an off-campus event involving NU students or faculty, please let us know! We will do our best to publicize all writing-related programming. If you would like to receive the electronic *NU Writing Event Digest*, please send an email to [words@northwestern.edu](mailto:words@northwestern.edu). And don't forget to give us a call! #467-4099

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To view our writing events calendar, please visit our web site:  
[www.northwestern.edu/writing-arts/](http://www.northwestern.edu/writing-arts/)

## IN BRIEF: NORTHWESTERN WRITING NEWS

❖ In February, the 2005 Winter Quarter Writer in Residence, **Alex Kotlowitz**, presented a lecture in which he offered a sneak preview of the radio essays he produced for Chicago Public Radio's *Chicago Matters: Money Talks* series. The complete series began airing in February on WBEZ (91.5 FM) and will continue through May. Kotlowitz and co-producer Amy Dorn compiled and edited a collection of nine personal narratives entitled *Stories of Five Dollars and Other Amounts of Money*. To listen to the radio essays and for more information on the series, visit [www.wbez.org](http://www.wbez.org) ♦

❖ Debuting this April at Chicago's Goodman Theater is *Silk*, the latest stage adaptation from NU's **Mary Zimmerman**. Based on the novel by Alessandro Baricco, *Silk* recounts the sensual journey of a young man in Japan. In January, Zimmerman presented a reading of her work as part of the ongoing "Writers and Their Writing" series featuring NU faculty. More information on the new play is available at [www.goodman-theatre.org](http://www.goodman-theatre.org) ♦

### WRITING MATTERS

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Special thanks to Rick Atkinson.

## ENGLISH DEPARTMENT SPONSORS 2005 ANNUAL WRITING COMPETITION

*Entries are now being accepted for more than a dozen prizes in categories ranging from poetry to literary criticism.*

### ANNUAL WRITING AWARDS 2005

The English Department's Annual Writing Competition isn't only for English majors! Most of the nearly dozen prizes are open to all university undergraduates. A few awards, such as the *TriQuarterly* Prizes in Essay and Fiction, are open to graduate students as well. Cash awards from \$50 to \$500 are given for the prizes. From the Edwin L. Schuman Awards in Fiction for excellence in the short story to the Harriet Gilliam Memorial Prize for the "best essay dealing with the psychological or psychoanalytic interpretation of a literary text," the Annual Writing Competition offers students outside the

English department an opportunity to achieve recognition for their scholarly or creative work.

According to the department's web site, "any original work is eligible, whether or not it has been written for a class." This year's application deadline is **Friday, May 13th**. Manuscripts must be submitted to University Hall #215 by 4pm on the due date.

For details on the awards and for application guidelines, visit the English Department's web site: [www.english.northwestern.edu](http://www.english.northwestern.edu).

In addition, students interested in applying to the English Department's Writing Major must submit application materials to University Hall #215 by 3pm on Friday, May 6th. ♦

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## NU'S CENTER FOR THE WRITING ARTS INTRODUCES 2005 FALL QUARTER WRITER IN RESIDENCE, LANDON Y. JONES

*Author with long career in publishing, writing, and editing insists Northwestern students must find their own voices.*

Landon Y. Jones, author of *Great Expectations: America and the Baby Boom* (1981) and, most recently, *William Clark and the Shaping of the West* (2004), joins Northwestern University in the 2005 Fall Quarter to teach "The Art of Nonfiction: Find Your Own Voice." A 37-year veteran of Time Inc., Jones served as managing editor of *People* magazine and as writer and editor for other Time Inc. publications including *Life*, *Time*, and *Money*. He has taught nonfiction writing at Princeton University and currently serves on the advisory council of its Department of English. For information on applying to Landon Y. Jones' course, please visit the Center's web site: [www.northwestern.edu/writing-arts/](http://www.northwestern.edu/writing-arts/). Application deadline is Monday, April 18, 2005.

*The following is an excerpt from William Clark and the Shaping of the West.*

**AN ORIGINAL EXCERPT** Clark left Louisville and proceeded on to Virginia. On January 5, 1808, he presented himself before the Botetourt County Clerk in Fincastle, Virginia, and asked for a marriage certificate. With him were William Preston, who paid the \$150 marriage bond, and his future father-in-law, George Hancock, who signed his permission for the wedding of his underage daughter "Judith" (as she was named in the documents). Later that day William Clark—who already had sponsored two godchildren and had more than thirty nieces and nephews—finally became a husband. The ceremony would have been the biggest event in the picturesque county seat since Clark himself had been toasted by the citizen of Fincastle as a returning national hero almost a year earlier to the day.

The newlyweds spend two months waiting for the ice to clear on the Ohio and packing up Julia's things

for her new life. She later asked Jonathan's wife to send cooking essentials like sage to "this wild Country" in the West. She would be transporting all the finery of planter society, including a piano, the first ever seen in St. Louis. By mid-March, they were headed west, a caravan of carriages and wagons escorted by York and several Hancock slaves, including a woman named Molly and her family. They would have taken either the southern route through the Cumberland Gap or the Midland Trail turnpike, a new road across present-day West Virginia to the Ohio River at Huntington.

In either case, travel on frontier roads was a spine-jarring, tooth-loosening experience. Wagons and carriages rumbled over washboard roads built of "corduroy," split trees laid side by side with the fate sides down. Stumps were often left in the middle of the road, and low tree limbs could knock a careless driver off his perch. Coaches would ford countless streams, bogs, and sinkholes.

Accidents were frequent. One man claimed to have been overturned more than a dozen times in three



LANDON Y. JONES

years traveling between Cincinnati and Cleveland. George Washington's carriage once sank so hopelessly into a mud hole on the way to Mount Vernon that the President of the United States had to be extricated with ropes and planks. A stagecoach's horses would be changed every fourteen or sixteen miles while travelers refreshed themselves at a tavern.

On the new road—a better choice given their load of furnishings—William and Julia's party would have made their way to Old Sweet Springs, 30 miles northwest of Fincastle, and picked up the Midland Trail turnpike at Crow's Tavern. The next stop would be White Sulphur Springs, the largest spa in Virginia. Following the route of today's U.S. 60, they would pass Lewisburg, Rainelle, and Charleston on their way to Huntington. It was another 220 miles by flatboat downriver to the Falls of the Ohio.

By mid-April, the newlyweds were in Louisville. They caught up with friends and family and former expedition members. One was Reubin Field, who had recently married the daughter of his brother Joseph, who was also on the expedition but had been killed soon afterward. His niece had become his wife. At Louisville, William and Julia's party gained a new member—Clark's own niece Ann Clark Anderson, a daughter of his late sister, Eliza, and her husband,

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everything, absolutely everything, on the job, much to the dismay of a string of long suffering editors.

The truth is that I now consider myself a recovering journalist. It was a profession that I loved, a calling really, and I will always cherish the people the profession attracts and the role that journalism generally and newspapering in particular plays in our society and in our culture. But I have moved on to a different kind of writing, a different kind of reporting, and really a different kind of life.

My ambition today is to make this into a conversation, to hear your thoughts and questions. For a few minutes though I'm going to talk about three writing genres, each of which I've taken a crack at, and how they might fit into the study of and writing about history.

Those genres are: journalism, "instant" history, and "true" history. Those last two terms were coined by a professor at Ohio State. For classification purposes, they're as good as any. What is the relationship between these types of writing? What are the boundaries? Is there a relative scale of legitimacy? Can they inform one another, with a kind of synergism? Can you practice one without devaluing yourself as a practitioner of another?

I'm going to use three brief examples, and I hope you'll pardon me if I draw all three from my work. If we're going to eviscerate anyone this evening, it might as well be me.

The first example is from the *Washington Post* of April 7, 2003, and it's datelined Karbala, Iraq. It starts like this:

"They shamle through each

stinking alley with the gait of men old before their time, burdened by more than the weight of their kit. The Mesopotamian sun is molten today, again, and they sweat like horses. A room here, a balcony there: They sweep the town in small teams, eyes darting from corner to dim corner.

In a war dominated by armored juggernauts and precision munitions dropped from 20,000 feet, infantrymen are the proverbial boots-on-the-ground. If the dismounted infantry has played a secondary role since the war began on March 20, its stock has risen in recent days as troops have been needed to seize and subdue cities bypassed by

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EVERY SOLDIER'S DEATH  
IS A PUBLIC EVENT  
AND OUGHT TO PROVOKE  
THE HARD QUESTION:  
WHY DID HE DIE?

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tanks and armored personnel carriers bound for Baghdad.

In a pattern repeated in Najaf and Karbala, and which may be a template for the Iraqi capital, armored forces 'set the conditions for success by shooting the big pieces, and then the infantry moves in to clean out the die-hards and secure the town,' one Army general said.

Ernie Pyle, the legendary war corre-



spondent, called infantrymen the 'mud-rain-frost-and-wind boys.' He forgot dust. Troops here from the 101st Airborne Division have for weeks been living in a four-inch layer of brown talc that has become a fifth element, along with fire, earth, air, and water.

Pyle's description of World War II infantrymen in Tunisia in 1943 remains apt for thousands of Screaming Eagles: 'There are none of the little things that make life normal back home. There are no chairs, lights, floors, or tables. There isn't any place to set anything or any store to buy things. There are no newspapers, milk, beds, sheets, radiators, beer, ice cream, or hot water....A man just sort of exists.'

Okay. What characteristics do we see here? The entire piece is short, about 700 words in total. It was written quickly, on deadline, and in fact the writer had another longer piece in the same Monday newspaper that carried the hard news of Karbala's capitulation. It relies on direct observation and virtually no other source material besides another journalist, albeit a pretty good one.

The second example is from an "instant history," although I have to say the events it recounts seem, on some days, like ancient history. This is from the opening of the prologue of the book I wrote that recounts my time as an embedded journalist with the 101st Airborne Division. It's titled *In the Company of Soldiers*, and it's a first-person account of being inside the division headquarters from the deployment out of Fort Campbell in late February through the occupation of Baghdad in mid-April. Here's how the prologue starts:

"They found the sergeant's body at mid-morning on Saturday, April 12, 2003, just where an Iraqi boy said it would be: in a shallow grave in south Baghdad, near the Highway 8 clover-

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leaf known to the U.S. Army as Objective Curly. His interment was imperfect; an elbow and a knee protruded from the covering rubble. He had been stripped of boots and combat gear but not his uniform, and his rank stripes and name tape sewn over his right breast pocket made identification easy: Sergeant First Class John W. Marshall, who had been missing since Iraqi forces ambushed his convoy below Curly on April 8. A rocket-propelled grenade had ruined Sergeant Marshall's back and arm; four days in the ground had spoiled the rest of him. Soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division recorded the map grid of his makeshift burial plot, MB 4496275295, and a chaplain read from Psalms. By the time I arrived at the site, the remains had been lifted into a body bag, wrapped in an American flag, and carried—head first, as Army custom prescribed—to a Humvee. A Graves Registration team took the body for eventual burial in Arlington National Cemetery.

I learned more about Sergeant Marshall in the coming weeks. He was fifty years old, making him the senior American soldier killed in the war. He had served in the 3rd Battalion of the 15th Infantry Regiment, a legendary unit in the 3rd Infantry Division, and he died while firing a Mk-19 automatic grenade launcher at marauding Iraqi paramilitaries. The fatal RPG round had blown him from his Humvee turret, and in the chaos of combat his corpse had been left behind. Born in Los Angeles, Marshall had joined the Army at eighteen. His father, Joseph, was an Army quartermaster during World War II; his mother, Odessa, had been a medical technician in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, an

unusual distinction for a black woman in those days. Odessa Marshall would wear her uniform to her son's funeral.

Sergeant Marshall had left the Army for four years in the 1980s in a successful fight against Hodgkin's lymphoma. With the cancer in remission, he rejoined the service. The war in Iraq was his first combat tour, and he was nearing retirement. His survivors included a widow, Denise, and six children, ages nine to seventeen. They collected his posthumous Silver Star and Purple Heart.

In a political democracy, every soldier's death is a public event. Every

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HIS INTERMENT  
WAS IMPERFECT; AN ELBOW  
AND A KNEE  
PROTRUDED FROM THE  
COVERING RUBBLE.

---

soldier's death ought to provoke the hard question: why did he die? Even without having met Sergeant Marshall, I could surmise that he had his own answers. His rank indicated enough time in service to have sorted out such existential issues. Later, I would learn that in his last dispatch home he saw little merit in debating the mission in Iraq. 'It's really not an issue with me,' he wrote. 'I am not a politician or a policy maker, just an old soldier. Any doubts on my part could get someone killed.' But private rationales, however valid and honorable, rarely satisfy public inquiries. Why did Sergeant Marshall die?"

What about this genre? It reflects about 10 months of work. The book—which was published last spring and

comes out in paperback tomorrow—is 90,000 words, much longer than any newspaper article but about one-third the length of *An Army at Dawn*, my history of the North African campaign in World War II. It's first-person; never done that before. The underlying ambition is not to offer a comprehensive account of the invasion of Iraq, but rather a soda-straw view that observes the U.S. Army from within, and attempts to show how war is waged in an age when wars are small, sequential, expeditionary, and bottomless. Most of the material is based on what I saw, heard, smelled, felt and tasted, although I've drawn from some secondary sources—particularly about Mesopotamian and Islamic history—and I got hold of quite a few primary documents, including V Corps situation reports, after action reports, and personal notes.

I'm willing to classify this as "instant history," but I'd been thinking of it in another genre that I've come to appreciate while researching World War II, the "battle-memoir." Among examples I admire are: *The Battle is the Pay-Off* by Ralph Ingersoll, who had been managing editor of the *New Yorker* and *Fortune* before going to North Africa; *Road to Tunis* by David Rame; *Brave Men* by Ernie Pyle; *Slightly Out of Focus* by Robert Capa; *The Road Back to Paris* by A.J. Liebling; *Journey Into War* by John MacVane, an NBC correspondent in North Africa; *Our Share of Night* by Drew Middleton; *Purple Heart Valley* by Margaret Bourke-White, and *The End in Africa* by Alan Moorehead. A more recent example would be *Martyrs' Day* by Michael Kelly, who died outside Baghdad on April 3, 2003.

It's a book that takes to heart the observation by Samuel Hynes, the distinguished professor of literature

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at Princeton, that “war narratives make war vivid, they don’t make it familiar. Indeed, one motive for writing them seems to be to show how unfamiliar war is, how strange and desolate its ordinary scenes are.”

Okay, finally, true history: I’ll keep this brief. This passage comes from the epilogue of my North African history, which opens with the victory parade in Tunis, on Thursday, May 20, 1943, and describes the units marching down the boulevard. Then this sketch:

“Even after two and a half hours in the molten sun Eisenhower showed no sign of wilting. A reporter described him as ‘lean, bronzed, and loose-limbed. He was happy as a schoolboy...taking the salutes as the units passed. When the parade drew to an end he smoked, laughed, and joked with the various leaders.’

In truth, he had been peevisish and distracted, notwithstanding the gleeful announcement from his West Point classmates that they were renaming him *Ikus Africanus*. ‘All the shouting about the Tunisian campaign leaves me utterly cold,’ he confided to George Marshall. The concept of a victory parade appalled him, and he had tried without success to convert the event into a sober commemoration of the dead. He still slept badly. If he seemed jolly, jolliness was among the many masks the commander-in-chief had learned to wear.

No soldier in Africa had changed more—grown more—than Eisenhower. He continued to pose as a small-town Kansan, insisting that he was ‘too simple-minded to

be an intriguer or [to] attempt to be clever,’ and he retained the winning traits of authenticity, vigor, and integrity. He had displayed admirable grace and character under crushing strain. But he was hardly artless. Naïveté provided a convenient screen for a man who was complex, shrewd, and sometimes Machiavellian. The Darlan affair had taught him the need to obscure his own agency in certain events even as he shouldered responsibility for them. The failings of Fredendall and other deficient commanders had taught him to be tougher, even ruthless, with subordinates. And he had learned the hardest lesson of all: that for an army to win at war, young men must die.

‘One of the great fascinations of the war was to see how Americans developed their great men so quickly,’ a British general later observed. None more than Eisenhower. In the fall of 1942, the general continued, he had been ‘a well-trained and loyal subordinate’ to his more experienced British colleagues. Now he was a commander. His son, John, later wrote: ‘Before he left for Europe in 1942, I knew him as an aggressive, intelligent personality.’ North Africa transformed him ‘from a mere person to a personage...full of authority, and truly in command.’”

This is something else, isn’t it? It actually disputes the journalist’s first-hand account. There are eight citations listed in the notes for this passage, including letters, memoirs, and oral histories. It makes judgments about a subject that has been scrutinized, Lord knows, by many others over the past sixty years. It’s a sketch, and an assessment, that could not have been legitimately made at the time because the sup-

porting material was not transparent. It requires distance and time. Something had to ferment.

The methodological differences between these three examples are pretty obvious; so too is the varying length of the telescope through which they are viewed—basically from six hours to six months to sixty years. Less obvious I believe are the boundaries between these genres. What we have in the three excerpts, respectively, are the first-, second-, and third-drafts of history. None, I would argue, is a final draft. When people ask whether I think *An Army at Dawn* is the definitive history of Operation TORCH, which was the codeword for the invasion of North Africa, I cringe. Great events, like World War II, are bottomless; great men, like Dwight Eisenhower, are bottomless. There’s more to write. There will always be more to write.

There’s an intertwining going on here, isn’t there? I rely quite a lot in *An Army at Dawn* on journalists’ accounts, and I guess I believe they are often undervalued by many people writing history. Journalists are, after all, paid eyewitnesses—underpaid!—often with a literary flair, an eye for detail, and a penchant for irony and skepticism, those twin lenses of modern consciousness. And, in writing journalism, I look for historical resonances—the eternal verities of the infantry life for example.

Let me quote Professor Samuel Hynes again. “Historians,” he writes, “tell the big stories, of campaigns and battles, of the great victories and the disastrous defeats...assigning credit and blame, turning war’s chaos into order. The men who were there tell a different story, one that is often quite ahistorical, even anti-historical.” I guess what I’m trying to do in the books I write now is to reconcile the two, to square the circle, to integrate the turning of disorder into order,

that he sees as the province of historians, while also capturing that ahistorical sense of immediacy, of authenticity.

In my recent Iraq book, I obviously am relying heavily on journalistic trawling, yet I also try to benefit from works of history, and sociology, and primary sources. I make judgments that I would not have been comfortable making on the spot, and which would run counter to the prevailing professional ethic of daily newspapers; that hard question—"Why did he die?"—would not make it through the *Post* copy desk. Yet I freely acknowledge that I cannot assess Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, who was the commander of the 101st Airborne Division, as comfortably as I can assess Eisenhower. (For one thing, he's still alive; I swore after writing *Crusade*, my book on the 1991 Gulf War, that henceforth the only books I was going to write would be about dead people. So much for that vow.)

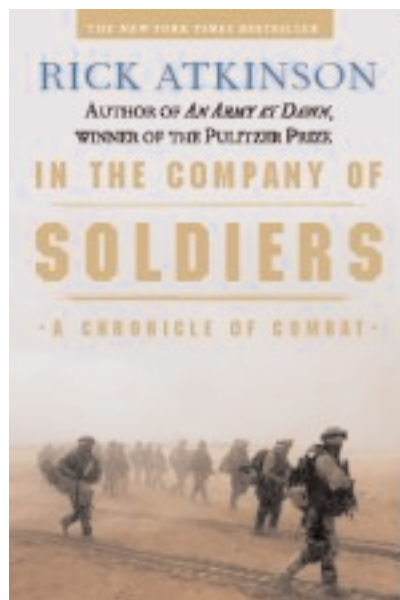
But I think there are other currents here that cut across the genres. Each have narrative elements. Frankly, for me, if it doesn't have a story, or can't be told as a story, I'm not terribly interested. Also, there's an emotional charge in each, an effort to make flinty-eyed assessments while also trying to convey an emotional truth; that's a truth, I suppose that isn't right or wrong in a rigidly empirical or historiographical sense, but one that is evaluated on the basis of how it resonates. Writers of military history have an inherent advantage in their subject matter because so much of military history carries a natural emotional charge, like a proton carrying an electrical charge: it's about life and death.

I'm much taken with Paul Fussell's concept of history "illuminated by emotion." Fussell, who for many years was a professor of English at

the University of Pennsylvania, has this to say in writing about the British historian Martin Gilbert: "It is as if to Gilbert 'objective' historiography is not merely impossible but inhuman, offensively heartless and insensitive. To him, the writing of history is not a science, but distinctly one of the humanities, and only those with deep feelings for the human predicament should try it."

And I guess that's where I ultimately come down on this question of genres: the one thing that links them together, when done capably, is an inherent interest in the human predicament, whether it concerns events that happened this morning, or last year, or a hundred years ago. I don't think I'd be quite so rigorous in declaring that those who lack deep feelings for that human predicament ought not practice journalism or writing instant history, but, as in those writing true history, it helps. ♦

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## CWA 2005 SPRING QUARTER CALENDAR

This quarter, please join NU's Center for the Writing Arts as we celebrate writing in all its forms by welcoming distinguished guests from both on and off campus. For a complete calendar and recent additions, visit [www.northwestern.edu/writing-arts/](http://www.northwestern.edu/writing-arts/).

### Tuesday, April 19th, 2005

5:30 PM  
Harris Hall 108

2005 Spring Quarter Writer in Residence **Peter Ho Davies** reads from *Equal Love* and other recent fiction.

### Wednesday, May 11th, 2005

4 PM  
Harris Hall 108

2005 Spring Quarter Writer in Residence **Peter Ho Davies** presents a lecture on a topic TBA.

### Tuesday, May 17th, 2005

12 PM  
University Hall 201

**T.H. Breen** reads from *The Marketplace of Revolution* as part of the "Writers and Their Writing" series.

### Wednesday, June 1st, 2005

12 PM  
University Hall 201

**Donald Norman** reads from *Emotional Design* as part of the "Writers and Their Writing" series. ♦

## LANDON Y. JONES' EXCERPT FROM *William Clark*

For information on his NU residency, visit our website: [www.northwestern.edu/writing-arts/](http://www.northwestern.edu/writing-arts/)

### "WILLIAM CLARK" CON'T

Richard Clough Anderson. At eighteen, Ann—often called “Nancy”—would be Julia’s traveling companion into the strange new land across the Mississippi. Her presence would be especially welcome in the coming months, since Julia was now pregnant.

Clark transferred their personal furnishings into the flatboats, along with a load of merchandise for the government trading-house and cantonment at Bellefontaine. He sent back to Jefferson “the skin of he sheep of the Rocky Mountains” and a grizzly hide to display in his Indian Hall at Monticello. He separately boxed up three additional crates of fossils left over from Big Bone Lick to ship to Jefferson by way of New Orleans.

On June 2, Clark left Louisville and descended the Ohio to the mouth of the Cumberland River. From there he sent his horses, carriage, and wagon overland to Kaskaskia with York and two other family slaves, James and Easter. They were accompanied by Joseph Charless, an Irish-born printer who, with financial backing from both Lewis and Clark, was planning to start the first newspaper west of the Mississippi. He founded the Missouri Gazette in July 1808.

Meriwether Lewis, who had finally arrived in St. Louis a full year after he had been appointed governor of the Territory of Louisiana, was busily preparing for his friend’s arrival. He had rented a French colonial house from John Campbell, the new subagent for Indians on the Upper Mississippi. Built in the characteristic French *poteaux en terre* style of logs planted upright in the ground and chinked with a filling of grass, clay, and stone, the house

offered two fireplaces, four downstairs rooms, an office, a stable, a nearby well, a fenced-in garden, and a wraparound porch.

In a warm letter to “My dear friend,” Lewis proposed sharing the quarters with the newlyweds and noted that if there was not sufficient room he could move out. He then added a teasing, if typically strained, Lewisian reference to William’s earlier description of “the goods” he would be bringing to St. Louis. “I must halt here,” Lewis wrote, “and ask you if the matrimonial dictionary affords no term more appropriate than that of goods, alias merchandise, for that dear and interesting part of the creation? It is very well Genl., I shall tell madam of your want of Gallantry; and the triumph too of detection will be more complete when it is recollected what a musty, fusty, rusty old bachelor I am.” ♦

