

CREATIVE NONFICTION COMPOSITION



THE SEARCH FOR MEANING IN COMMON LIFE

“The true state of every nation is the state-of-common life.”

—Samuel Johnson, *A Journey in the Western Islands* (1775)

Andrew Rusnak

CREATIVE NONFICTION

Storytellers

Creative non-fiction can be classified into several, overlapping, oftentimes hard-to-distinguish sub-genres:

- Literary journalism;
- Personal memoir; and
- Essay.



CREATIVE NONFICTION

Storytellers

There are, however, many other narrative prose forms that preclude categorizing the genre in any comprehensive, definitive way:

- Travel writing;
- Science writing;
- Belletristic essay'
- Critical essay;
- Lyrical essay;
- Political commentary;
- Non-fiction novel;
- Profile & biography;
- Documentary;
- Case study; and
- Nature writing



CREATIVE NONFICTION

Storytellers

Good writers and storytellers are always mulling over certain questions:

- Who is my intended audience?
- What am I trying to convey thematically? Dramatically?
- Why should anyone care? Where's the relevance? Does my work beat the "so what" factor? Does it matter?



CREATIVE NONFICTION

Storytellers

Good writers and storytellers are always mulling over certain questions:

- How can work achieve meaning? What techniques are used to achieve meaning?
- Are there other meanings that can be leveraged to support and reinforce the main theme or meaning? What are the sub-themes?



CREATIVE NONFICTION

Storytellers

You will learn to:

- Analyze the various components and elements of creative non-fiction and theory by reading, writing, viewing, and interpreting/analyzing written works and films imaginatively and critically;
- Recognize the varieties of writing style, narrative voice, and how these suit whatever sub-genre is being explored;



CREATIVE NONFICTION

Storytellers

You will learn to:

- Recognize the differences in how creative non-fiction is structured, from traditional linear narratives to fabula and sujet;
- Recognize the “mechanical” elements that drive creative non-fiction like characterization, dramatic tension, descriptive passages, recollection, theme, relevant digression, irony, and dialogue, and determine a suitable balance for each;



CREATIVE NONFICTION

Storytellers

You will learn to:

➤ Distinguish various sub-genres like profiles, nature writing, travel writing, science writing, personal essay/memoir; lyrical essays, critical essays, belletristic essays, political essays, even case studies. (This is by no means an exhaustive list, but is designed to demonstrate the wide variety of writing that is loosely placed in this category of “narrative non-fiction”).



CREATIVE NONFICTION

I like narrative storytelling as being part of a tradition, a folk tradition.

[Bruce Springsteen](#)

It's all storytelling, you know. That's what journalism is all about.

[Tom Brokaw](#)

Storytelling is an ancient and honorable act. An essential role to play in the community or tribe. It's one that I embrace wholeheartedly and have been fortunate enough to be rewarded for.

[Russell Banks](#)

Rap is rhythm and poetry. Hip-hop is storytelling and poetry as well.

[Ajay Naidu](#)

The Deadly Choices at Memorial: In Sheri Fink's piece, *The Deadly Choices at Memorial*, write a 1,500-word essay on whether or not you believe that the medical staff (especially Dr. Anna Pou, who was indicted by the state's attorney) is or is not guilty of practicing euthanasia in the aftermath of Katrina. Make sure you construct a strong, working thesis statement and that this thesis is supported by at least three direct quotations from the text and three outside sources (works cited page). Include in your answer whether you believe, as Pou does, that the dynamics of managing healthcare during a natural disaster changes the ways critical care patients are evaluated, and that healthcare workers should be exempt from civil and/or criminal liabilities.



Memorial Hospital After Katrina



<http://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=Magazine+Articles+Hurricane+Katrina&view=detail&mid=E55559C83C0A59DC12E2E55559C83C0A59DC12E2&first=0> Killings after Katrina – 2min

BUSINESS WIRE COMMERCIAL PHOTO



Memorial Hospital After Katrina



(AP PHOTO)



Quotes from Deadly Choices

p.12: Sandra, an E.M.T., knew that her mother-in-law couldn't swallow, so she was surprised when she saw that Vera and other patients who needed IVs to keep hydrated were no longer getting them. When her husband asked a Memorial administrator why, the administrator told him that the hospital was in survival mode, not treating mode. Furious, Mark LeBlanc asked, "Do you just flip a switch and you're not a hospital anymore?"

That morning, doctors and nurses decided that the more than 100 remaining Memorial and LifeCare patients should be brought downstairs and divided into three groups to help speed the evacuation. Those who were in fairly good health and could sit up or walk would be categorized "1's" and prioritized first for evacuation. Those who were sicker and would need more assistance were "2's." A final group of patients were assigned "3's" and were slated to be evacuated last. That group included those whom doctors judged to be very ill and also, as doctors agreed the day before, those with D.N.R. orders.

Though there was no single doctor officially in charge of categorizing the patients, Pou was energetic and jumped into the center of the action, according to two nurses who worked with her. Throughout the morning, makeshift teams of medical staff and family members carried many of the remaining patients to the second-floor lobby where Pou, the sleeves of her scrubs rolled up, stood ready to receive them.

The question of what to do with the hospital's sickest patients was also being raised by others. By the afternoon, with few helicopters landing, these patients were languishing. Susan Mulderick, the "incident commander" who had worked with Cook for decades, shared her own concerns with him. According to Cook, Mulderick told him, "We gotta do something about this." Mulderick, who declined to be formally interviewed about the days after Katrina, did tell me: "We were well prepared. We managed that situation well."

Quotes from Deadly Choices

Cook sat on the emergency-room ramp smoking cigars with another doctor. Help was coming too slowly. There were too many people who needed to leave and weren't going to make it, Cook said, describing for me his thinking at the time. It was a desperate situation and he saw only two choices: quicken their deaths or abandon them. "It was actually to the point where you were considering that you couldn't just leave them; the humane thing would be to put 'em out."

On the second floor, Cook says, he and Pou, both weary, discussed the Category 3 patients, including nine who had never been brought down from the seventh floor. According to Cook, Pou was worried that they wouldn't be able to get them out. Cook hadn't been on the seventh floor since Katrina struck, but he told me that he thought LifeCare patients were "chronically deathbound" at the best of times and would have been horribly affected by the heat. Cook couldn't imagine how the exhausted Memorial staff would carry nine patients down five flights of stairs before the end of the day. Nobody from outside had arrived to help with that task. If there were other ways to evacuate these patients, he didn't see them.

Cook said he told Pou how to administer a combination of morphine and a benzodiazepine sedative. The effect, he told me, was that patients would "go to sleep and die." He explained that it "cuts down your respiration so you gradually stop breathing and go out." He said he believed that Pou understood that he was telling her how to achieve this. He said that he viewed it as a way to ease the patients out of a terrible situation.

Before delivering the keynote address, Pou participated in a panel on the "moral and ethical issues" that could arise if standards of care were altered in disasters. At one point, one of the panelists, Father John F. Tuohey, regional director of the Providence Center for Health Care Ethics in Portland, Ore., said that there are dangers whenever rules are set that would deny or remove certain groups of patients from access to lifesaving resources. The implication was that if people outside the medical community don't know what the rules are or feel excluded from the process of making them or don't understand why some people receive essential care and some don't, their confidence in the people who care for them risks being eroded. "As bad as disasters are," he said, "even worse is survivors who don't trust each other."



A Memorial Medical Center nurse fans a patient, who has the number 3 and D.N.R. written on his gown for triage category 3 and Do Not Resuscitate, waiting in the hospital's parking garage for helicopter transport from New Orleans on Sept. 1, 2005. (Brad Loper/Dallas Morning News/Corbis)



Dr. Anna Pou poses for a photograph at her home in New Orleans on July 22, 2006. (Alex Brandon/AP Photo)



Dr. Ewing Cook at his home near Lafayette, La. He says he did the right thing for a very ill woman when he 'hastened her demise.' (Paolo Pellegrin/Magnum Photos)



Mark and Sandra LeBlanc at home in New Orleans. They led a flotilla of boats to the hospital to save his mother, among others. (Paolo Pellegrin/Magnum Photos)



Workers move patients up the stairs from the parking garage to the helipad to be evacuated from Memorial Medical Center in New Orleans on Sept. 1, 2005. (Brad Loper/Dallas Morning News/Corbis)



The family of Emmett Everett in LaPlace, La. Carrie Everett, second from left, asked, "Who gave them the right to play God?" (Paolo Pellegrin/Magnum Photos)



Dr. Bryant King at his home in Indianapolis. He was angered by the way patients and other citizens were treated by the hospital. (Paolo Pellegrin/Magnum Photos)



Bodies were placed in Memorial's chapel on the second floor of the hospital. (Tony Carnes/Christianity Today)



Staff members prepare the last patient to be evacuated from Memorial Medical Center in New Orleans on Sept. 1, 2005. (Brad Loper/Dallas Morning News/Corbis)

Rodney Scott in Pearl River, La. He was almost taken for dead and was the last patient to leave the hospital in the evacuation. (Paolo Pellegrin/Magnum Photos)



Dr. Frank Minyard in his office in New Orleans. He struggled with mixed feelings while leading an investigation into the deaths at Memorial. (Paolo Pellegrin/Magnum Photos)

<http://www.propublica.org/special/on-the-frontlines-at-memorial-medical-center-826> photos of all players in story

One of the Five Most Deadly Hurricanes in History, August 23 – August 30, 2005

Science 17 June 2005:
Vol. 308 no. 5729 pp. 1753-1754
DOI: 10.1126/science.1112551

CLIMATE

Uncertainty in Hurricanes and Global Warming

[Kevin Trenberth](#), *The author is at the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR), Boulder, CO 80307, USA. E-mail: trenbert@ucar.edu*

During the 2004 hurricane season in the North Atlantic, an unprecedented four hurricanes hit Florida; during the same season in the Pacific, 10 tropical cyclones or typhoons hit Japan (the previous record was six) (1). Some scientists say that this increase is related to global warming; others say that it is not. Can a trend in hurricane activity in the North Atlantic be detected? Can any such trend be attributed to human activity? Are we even asking the right questions?

In statistics, a null hypothesis—such as “there is no trend in hurricane activity”—may be formed, and it is common to reject the null hypothesis based on a 5% significance level. But accepting the null hypothesis does not mean that there is no trend, only that it cannot be proven from the particular sample and that more data may be required. This is frequently the case when the signal being sought is

<http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=2040496n> CBS, Anna Pou

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DmLY6K7qAUk> Sheri Fink, Part 1 – 10 min

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i1iG_dsElhs Fink, Part 2, 10 min



masked by large variability. If one instead formulates the inverse null hypothesis—“there is a trend in hurricane activity”—then the 5% significance level may bias results in favor of this hypothesis being accepted, given the variability. Acceptance of a false hypothesis (a “type II” error) is a common mistake. Rather than accept the hypothesis, one may be better off reserving judgment. Because of the weakness associated with statistical tests, it is vital to also gain a physical understanding of the changes in hurricane activity and their origins.

FATALITIES: 1,833

HIGHEST WIND: 174 mph

Still Life: The title, *Still Life* has two meanings. What are they? When the McClamrock family was told after John's football accident that 95% of families don't make it if they try to care for paraplegics at home, Ann, John's mother, said we are taking our child home? What would you have done? Did God abandon Ann McClamrock, as the writer, Skip Hollandsworth, suggested some of her neighbors may have thought? Given the attention today on concussions in pro football, and the stories that surface from time to time about accidents like John's still happening in high school football, would you let your son play? Organize answers to these questions in 1,500 words using narrative form, a strong thesis, three outside sources, MLA or APA format, works cited page.



John McClamrock, pre-accident

From *Still Live*

p.51: One of the staffers took a breath. “We’ve found that ninety-five percent of the families that try to take care of someone in this condition cannot handle it,” she said. “The families break up.” She handed them a sheet of paper. “These are the names of institutions and nursing homes that will take good care of him.”

Ann nodded, stood up, and said, “We will be taking Johnny home, thank you.” A relative arrived with a station wagon, John was loaded into the back, and the McClamrocks returned to Northport Drive, where a newspaper photographer and some friends were waiting. Mac, Henry, and a couple of others carried John, who was wearing his Hillcrest football jersey, into the house. They twisted him into a sort of L shape as they turned down the hall and turned again into the guest bedroom, where they laid him on a hospital bed with a laminate headboard.

Every morning before sunrise, she got out of bed, did her makeup and hair, put on a nice dress or pantsuit, dabbed perfume on her neck, and walked into John’s room. She shaved him, clipped his nails, brushed his teeth, gave him a sponge bath, shampooed his hair, and scratched his nose when it itched. She fed him all his meals, serving him one bite of food after another, and she taped a straw to the side of his glass so that he could drink on his own. She changed his catheter and emptied the drainage bag when it filled up with urine, and she dutifully cleaned his bottom as if he were a newborn whenever he had a bowel movement. To prevent bedsores, she turned him constantly throughout the day, rolling him onto one side and holding him in place with pillows, then rolling him onto his back, then rolling him to his other side—over and over and over.

From Monday through Saturday, she almost never left the house. On Sunday mornings, she went to Mass at Christ the King Catholic Church, lit a candle for John, and put a \$10 check in the collection box. Afterward, she drove to Tom Thumb, the same one where John used to work, to buy groceries. Once a month she’d treat herself to a permanent at the hair salon at JCPenney. But that was it: Every other minute was devoted to John.

From *Still Live*

On March 18, Henry drove Ann to JCPenney to get her hair done before he took her to the rehabilitation facility. Because she was so feeble, Henry put her in a wheelchair. He pushed her into John's room, where she immediately began to check his catheter and inspect the bandages on his bedsores. "Mom, it's okay," John said.

She smoothed John's hair along the temples. She touched his forehead, and she slowly ran her hand down one side of his face, past his cheekbones and the curls of his hair. She said, as if she knew what was about to happen, "Johnny, we'll be back together soon."

"I know we will," John said.

Then he told his mother something he had never said before. "I know how hard it's been for you."

"Hard?" Ann asked. "Johnny, it's been an honor."

Henry took her home, helped her into her bed and made sure she had her prayer of thanksgiving card. After she fell asleep, he drove back to the rehabilitation facility to check on John one last time. A nurse greeted him at the door. John had died about thirty minutes earlier, she said. He had closed his eyes and quietly drifted away, not making a single sound.

66: Eight weeks after John's death, Ann died in her bed, her prayer of thanksgiving card on the bedside table. Henry was sitting beside her, holding her hand. He had her cremated and her ashes put in an urn, which he decided to bury in the ground directly over John's casket, at a cemetery near Love Field. At her service, the same priest who had presided over John's funeral said, "We send off Ann today to be with the son she loved. We send her to the mansions of the saints." The priest was about to say something else about Ann, but he saw Henry holding his hands to his face. "And may God bless Henry, who gave his life to his family," the priest said. "God bless Henry."

Percentage & Statistics for Football Players & Serious Injury, June 2011, Victoria Weinblatt

Football at the collegiate level produces the greatest amount of catastrophic injuries compared with any other sport, according to the Annual Survey of Catastrophic Football Injuries. The majority of catastrophic football injuries are associated with defensive players blocking and tackling. To help prevent football injury, the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons recommends wearing proper protective gear, stretching before and after playing -- especially when the weather is cold -- and frequent water breaks to prevent dehydration.

Youth Emergency Room Visits

Between 2001 and 2005, U.S. males of all ages made an estimated 1,060,823 emergency room visits with football-related injuries, according to an analysis of data from the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System-All Injury Program performed by the Injury Prevention Center at Rhode Island Hospital. The results, reported in the March 2009 issue of the journal "Academic Emergency Medicine," showed that for boys 7 to 11, 29 percent presented with fractures or dislocations and 27 percent with sprains or strains. In the 12-to-17-year-old age group, 31 percent presented with sprains or strains and 29 percent with fractures or dislocations.

Cervical Cord Injuries

Seven cervical cord injuries with incomplete neurological recovery occurred to football players at the high school level and one occurred at the college level, according to the 2009 Annual Survey of Catastrophic Football Injuries. This makes the rate of this serious injury 0.46 and 1.33 per 100,000 players, respectively. The majority of cervical cord injuries occur during games. Between 1977 and 2009 -- including the nine players previously mentioned: 253 high school players, 34 college players, six recreational players and 14 professionals suffered an incomplete recovery from a cervical cord injury.

Cont.

Play Type

Between 1977 and 2009, 41 percent of catastrophic injuries to 126 players below the professional level happened while tackling and 20 percent of those -- 62 players -- while tackling with the head down. Catastrophic injuries have the potential of leaving the player physically or mentally impaired for life, but some players have complete recovery. Tackled players represent 8.8 percent -- 27 players -- of serious injuries. Players making a tackle on the kickoff accounts for 5.5 percent, or 17 players, who had a serious injury.

NFL Concussions Increase in Severity

A 12-year study suggests that players were sidelined for a significantly longer period after concussions between 2002 and 2007 than from 1996 to 2001. The data analysis, conducted by former members of the NFL's Mild Traumatic Brain Injury Committee and summarized in an Oct. 2010 "HealthDay News" article, concluded that this trend was due to increased concussion severity, increased willingness on the part of players to report concussions and NFL medical staffers adopting a new conservative approach for concussion management.



John McClamrock and his mom Ann

<http://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=high+school+football+paralysis&view=detail&mid=4B15788846DF51B52B934B15788846DF51B52B93&first=0> Rob Kamosa paralyzed after high school football accident – 3min.

http://espn.go.com/nfl/story/_/id/8872778/junior-seau-family-files-wrongful-death-suit-vs-nfl Seau video 4 min.

Marc Drier's Crime of Destiny: In Bryan Burrough's piece, "Marc Drier's Crime of Destiny," Drier is swept away by a distorted view of success that began with high expectations when he was very young. In 500 words, using three examples from the text, describe Dreier's idea of success before he gets caught. First answer the question of whether you have sympathy for Drier? Why or why not? In the next 1,000 words describe your own view of success. Be sure to weigh what you consider to be a good balance between material possessions and spiritual fulfillment. Include five elements or qualities required to achieve to your version of success. Use three outside sources.



Marc Drier

“The Last Abortion Doctor,” by John Richardson. In 500 words, describe three reasons by which doctors would think it is in the best interest of the mother to have a later term abortion. After each description, write whether you agree or disagree and why or why not? In the next 1,000 words, consider this quote from the story: “They say, Well, this was just some wing nut guy who just decided to go blow up somebody. Wrong. This was a cold-blooded political assassination that is the logical consequence of 35 years of hate speech and incitement to violence by people at the highest levels of American society, including George W. Bush, Ronald



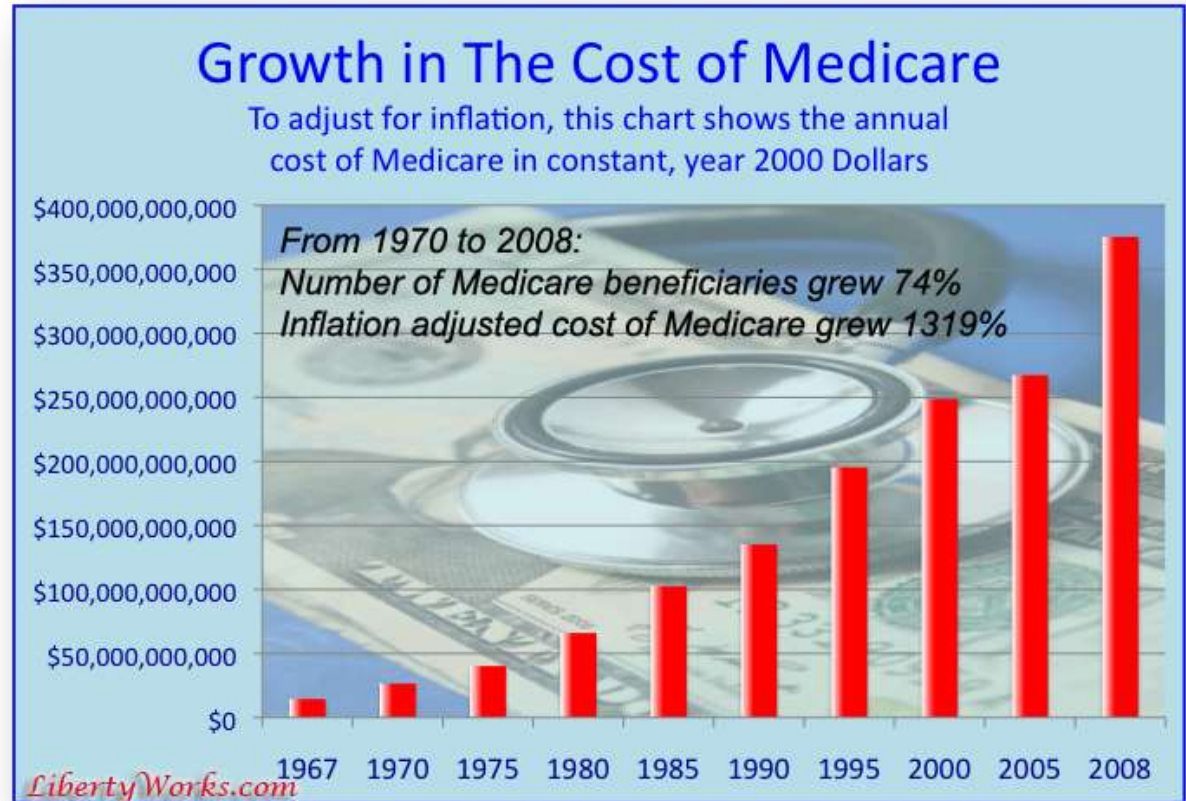
Dr. Hern

Reagan, Jesse Helms, Bill O’Rielly, Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson.” Decide whether you agree or disagree with the doctors assessment above? Why or why not? Remember the statistics that were cited: 8 murders, 17 attempted murders, 406 death threats, 179 assaults, 4 kidnappings, untold property damage from bullets and bricks. Use three outside sources, set up a works cited page.

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/clinic/view/> Frontline, The Last Abortion Clinic, 1st chapter, 14 min.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yrv1bKJjWWo> Rachel Maddox, Dr. Tiller’s Assassination, 7 min.

In “**The Cost Conundrum**,” the author Atul Gawande quotes White House budget director Peter Orszag who claims, “Nearly 30 percent of Medicare’s costs could be saved without negatively affecting health outcomes if spending in high- and medium-cost could be reduced to the level of low-cost areas.” It’s been shown that cost in healthcare, whether Medicare or private insurance, does not equate to quality in health care. In 500 words describe the differences in health care in McAllen, Texas, and healthcare at the Mayo Clinic, two examples that were contrasted in the story. In the remaining 1,000 words, describe where you would like to be treated and why. Use three outside sources.



http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bfHAXmlW72I&playnext=1&list=PL677FAEDA855CF782&feature=results_main ABC News Medicare Fraud – 10 min

<http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=6685946n> Medicare Fraud Arrests CBS News 2 min.

Overbilling by Doctors and Hospitals Costs Medicare a Billion Dollars a Year

Tuesday, September 18, 2012

Medicare lost a billion dollars a year over the last decade due to overbilling by doctors and other medical professionals, according to an investigation by [The Center for Public Integrity](#).

Medical groups used higher rates that added at least \$11 billion for treating elderly Medicare patients over the 10-year period under examination. The biggest culprit in the problem, accounting for \$6.6 billion, is a practice known as “upcoding.” Doctors and hospitals bill Medicare by applying a billing code to an office visit or a procedure. For example, a 99211 is a problem that requires five minutes or less of a doctor’s time and can be billed at about \$20. A 99215, on the other hand, which is billed at about \$140, refers to a problem that demands a complex decision and takes 40 minutes or more of doctor’s time. In upcoding, the doctors and hospitals bill for a visit or procedure that is higher than the one they performed, a violation that is difficult to monitor considering that Medicare deals with an average of one million billings a day.

In their defense, doctors said the fee hikes were justified because of the complexity of caring for seniors. They also told the Center for Public Integrity that some increases may have been a result of corrections to years of under-billing for these patients.

Some counties have particularly bad records. Santa Rosa County in western Florida led the country with 60% of its billings being for the two most expensive Medicare codes. In second place, at 57%, was neighboring Escambia County, which includes the city of Pensacola.

-David Wallechinsky, Noel Brinkerhoff

A Death in Texas: In 1,500 words using three examples from the text and three outside sources, describe what author Tim Berry's beliefs are in a "A Death in Texas" when it comes to building immigrant prisons and incarcerating illegals. Describe how you think the issue of illegal immigration should be resolved.



Posted: 09/27/2012 11:01 am Updated: 09/27/2012 1:40 pm

Private Prisons: Immigration Convictions In Record Numbers Fueling Corporate Profits



[Chris Kirkham](#)
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This spring, a group of inmates at a privately operated federal prison in Mississippi -- most of them undocumented immigrants from Mexico -- [rose up against their guards](#), setting fires, taking hostages and ultimately killing one correctional officer.



In this Thursday, Feb. 5, 2009 file photo, plumes of smoke rise from the yard and recreation building of Reeves County Detention Center 1 unit in Pecos, Texas. The fires came five days after inmates set fires to other parts of the RCDC I and II units during a riot blamed on complaints about inadequate health care and food. (AP Photo/Pecos Enterprise, Smokey Briggs)

The riot, the latest in a string of uprisings at low-security private prisons housing undocumented immigrants, came after [complaints from prisoners](#) about "substandard food, medical conditions and disrespectful staff members," according to a [federal court affidavit](#) filed by the FBI.

The inmates incarcerated in the Mississippi prison and more than a dozen private facilities across the country are not awaiting deportation in the immigrant detention system. Instead, many are serving prison time for the crime of crossing the border, a federal offense that prosecutors are [filing in record numbers](#) as part of a government crackdown on illegal immigration.

For three years in a row, more people have been convicted of immigration offenses than of any other type of federal crime, according to the [United States Sentencing Commission](#). Illegal re-entry into the United States was the [most commonly filed federal charge](#) last year, marking a dramatic shift in the makeup of the U.S. criminal justice system, which has been dominated by drug crimes in recent decades.

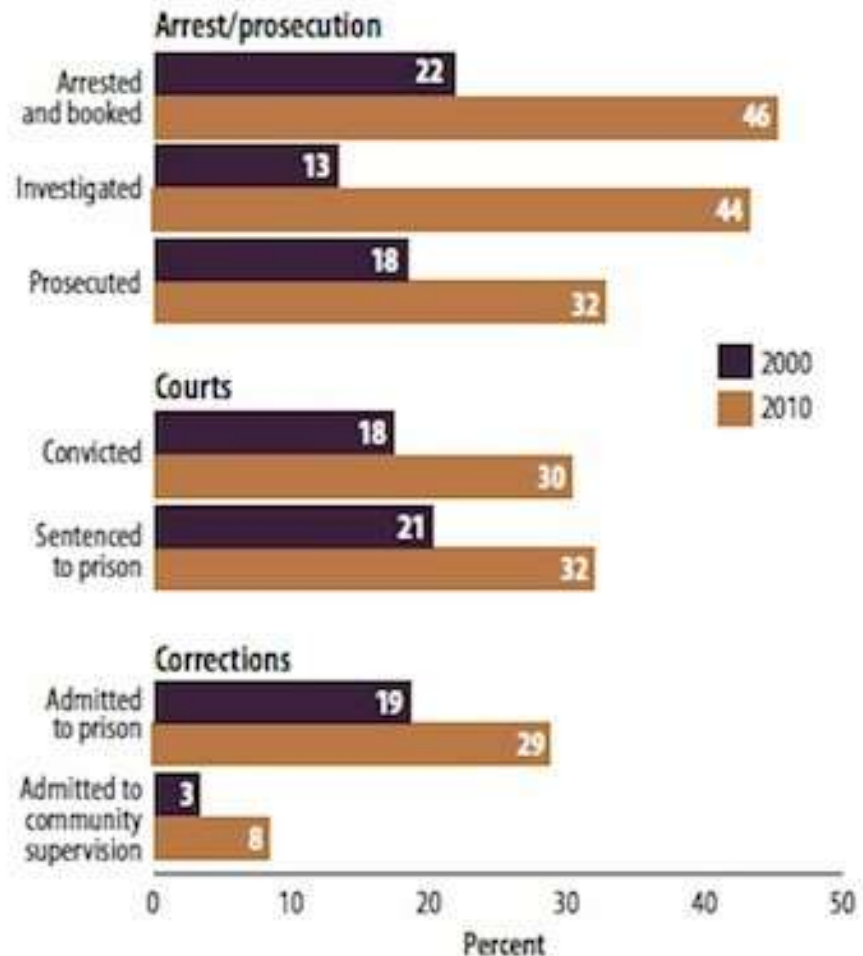
(Cont.)

As a surge of new immigration offenders flow into the federal prison system, they are being held primarily in private prisons operated by multibillion-dollar corporations that contract with the government. Federal prison officials argue that privatization saves money and frees up space for more violent criminals in government-run prisons.

But critics contend that the expanding web of privatized prisons for undocumented immigrants is substandard, where prisoner uprisings have become common due to poor conditions and inadequate medical care.

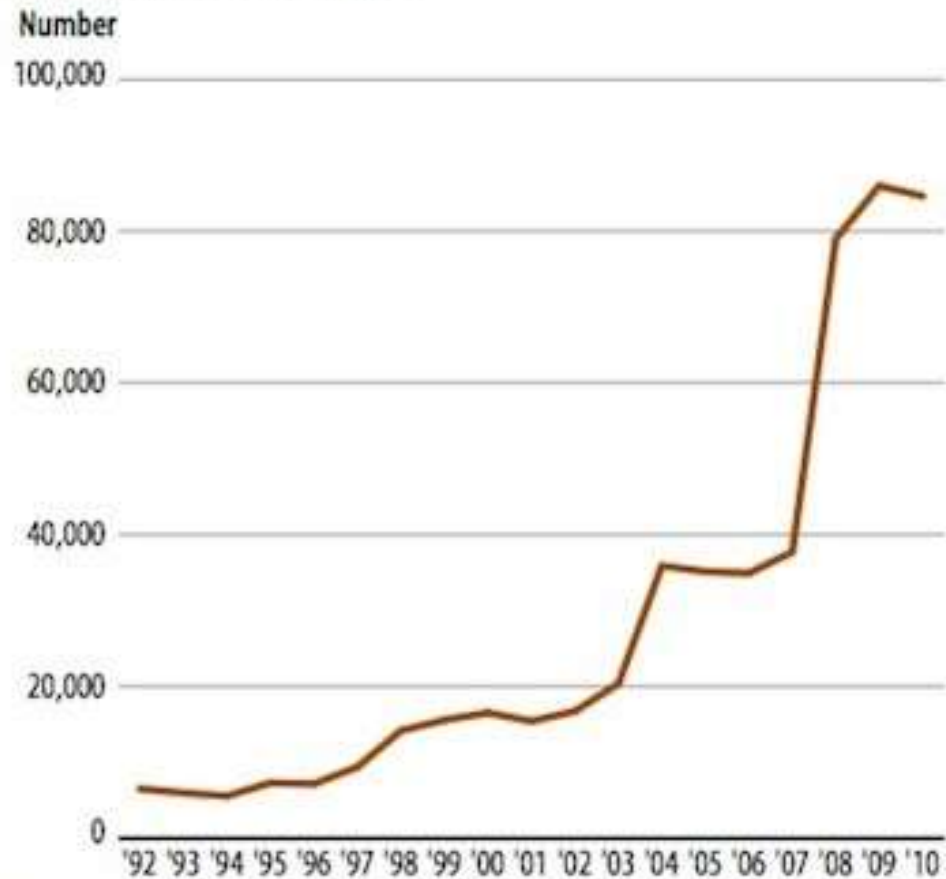
The number of immigration convictions has now surpassed drug convictions.

FIGURE 4
Immigration offenders as a percent of total federal criminal caseload, by stage, 2000 and 2010



Source: U.S. Marshals Service, Prisoner Tracking System (PTS); Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys, National LIONS data base; Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, criminal master file; Federal Bureau of Prisons, SENTRY data base; and Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, FPSIS data base, fiscal years 2000 and 2010.

FIGURE 11
Federal immigration suspects referred to U.S. attorneys, 1992–2010



Note: Includes matter with an immigration offense as the lead charge.

Source: Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys, National LIONS data base, fiscal year.



Vanished, Evan Ratliff: This piece is written in a very creative way. Ratliff vacillates between writing about himself in 1st and 3rd person. In 500 words, describe how this technique effects the reader. Ratliff writes, “I’d discovered how quickly the vision of total reinvention can dissolve into its lonely mundane reality.” In 1,000 words, write whether you agree or disagree as you apply this statement to your own “vision of total reinvention.” Work in three outside sources.

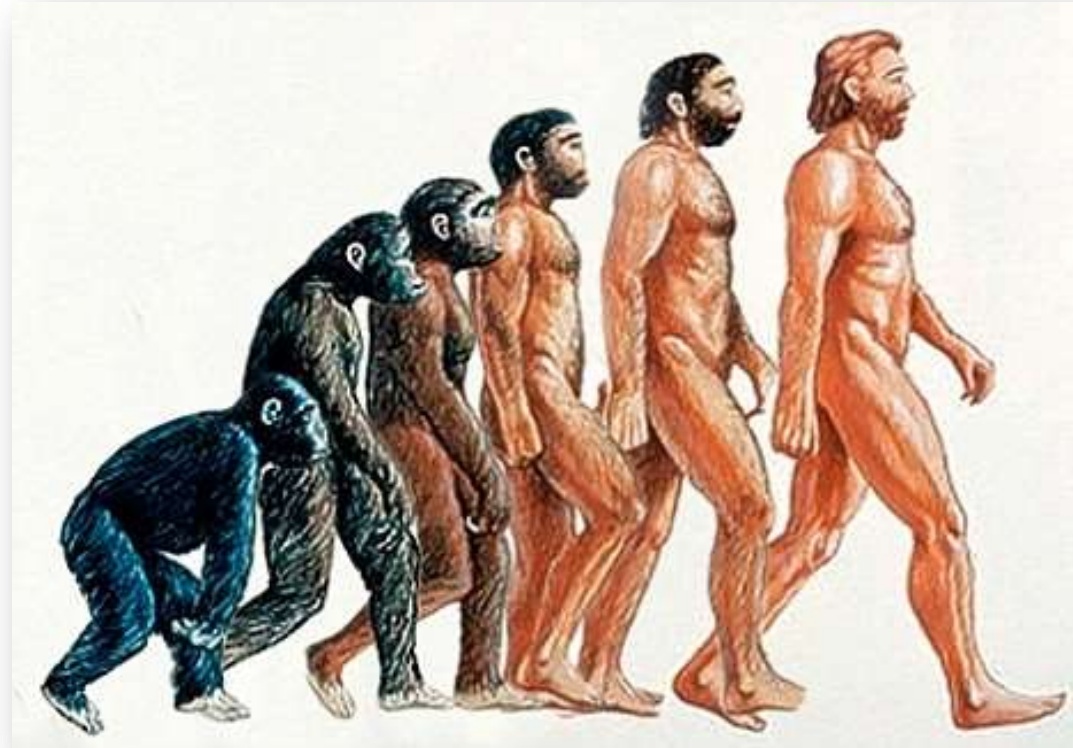


Out West, Joe Wilkins: In the literary memoir “Out West” Wilkins ties the loss of manhood to a changing economic and spiritual landscape, where the traditional role of men in rural parts of America, if not everywhere else, is undergoing a rather drastic and permanent change. Men are reacting violently to their changing status of stewards of the land, of their lack of access to what for thousands of years had been the attempt to negotiate if not beat the forces of nature, to squeeze a life out of the land. In 1,500 words write an essay on how manhood has changed and what it will be like in the future. Do not forget to work in three outside sources and include 2-3 quotes from the text.



Feminization of work?

What does it mean to be a man today? Compared to previous generations?



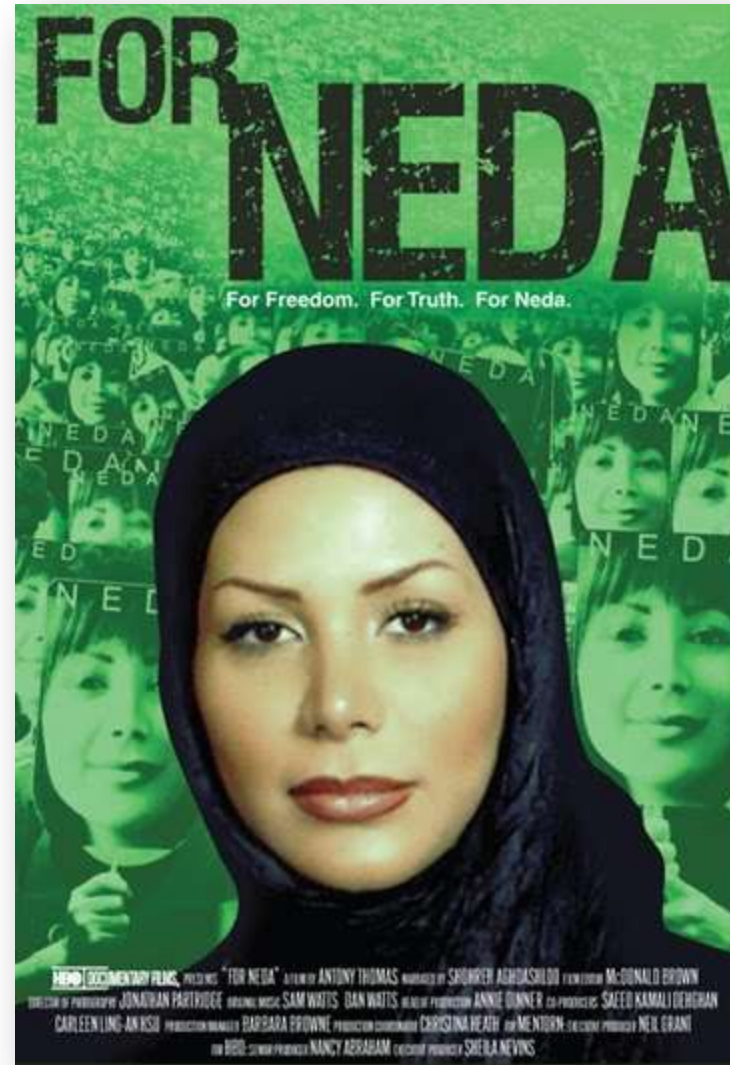
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ueOqYebVhtc> Colin Stokes: How movies teach manhood 13 min

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ww4e6HOXxJU> The Plague of Modern Masculinity, Part I – 8 min.

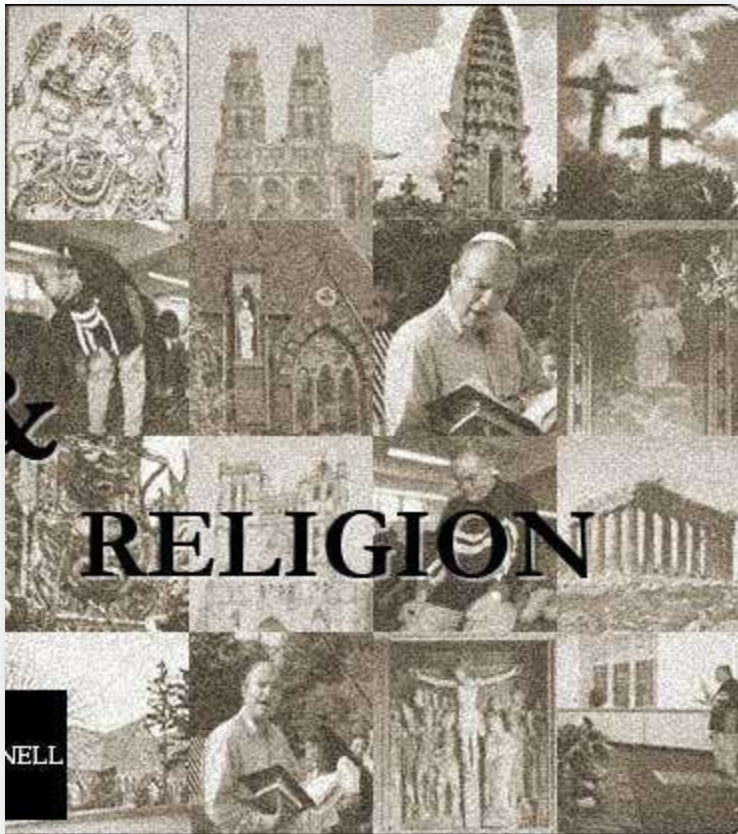
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUqp5jAFfpA&feature=watch_response Plague Part 2 – 8 min.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aVxoNOvMj00&feature=watch_response Plague Part 3 – 8 min.

Theocracy and its Discontents, Fareed Zakaria. (Read in conjunction with showing of film, *For Neda*.) In 100 words – Do you think it's possible that the U.S. Government could ever rig an election? Why or why not? In 500 words – List three reasons that you can think of that would prompt protests of the kind seen in the film *For Neda* in the U.S. today. In 1,000 words analyze the film and Zakaria's piece. Has there been a fall of theocracy in Iran? Zakaria believed that since the revolution in the 1980s, that the population believed that the government in Iran was divinely inspired. Can that be true? You must reference both the film and story in your essay. Use three outside sources.



Lead Us Not Into Debt, Megan McArdie. Using three examples from the text, in 1,500 words, describe how McArdie draws the parallel between religion and economics. Work in three outside sources.



**Bacon: The Other White Heat –
Theodore Gray.**



Excerpts For and Against Foreskin, Michael Idov, Christopher Bonanos, Hanna Rosin. Do some internet research on FGM, Female Genital Mutilation. In 500 words, describe what it is and what groups (religious/cultural) practice it. Add an explanation as to why it happens or is practiced. In another 1,000 words list three cultural reasons and three medical reasons why male circumcision is performed. Draw examples from the text. Include in this section a comparison of the two practices. Are they the same thing? How are they different? Work in three outside sources.



<http://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=circumcision&view=detail&mid=FB3A73A74A31201C7EDFFB3A73A74A31201C7EDF&first=0> circumcision debate – 5 min.

http://wn.com/Female_Genital_Mutilation_FGM#/videos FGM - 10 min.

Is there a difference between male circumcision and FGM?

There's a Sucker Born Every Minute, Tom Carson. Carson makes some claims, that our attraction to vampires is because they have become “domesticated” and “socialized,” that they once represented the “rich who learn that wealth and fame cannot buy happiness.” In 1,500 words, a strong thesis, and three outside sources, in what ways do you see this happening either by watching vampire shows or movies, or by reading Carson's piece.



War Games, Steve Erickson. Erickson raises some interesting points about the folly of war movies. When he lists the reasons why the war in Iraq hasn't reached the tragic proportions in film that other wars have, he says it's because the reasons were obvious it was a blunder of epic proportions. But he fails to list the reason many believe we went to war in Iraq—oil. In 1,500 words, if it was widely known that the real reason the United States went to war in Iraq was to secure a steady flow of oil out of the Middle East since China and India were coming online with their industrial revolutions and the regime in Iraq had other selling options, what would the public's reaction be? (Coordinate with the film, *Fuel*.) Work in three outside sources.



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ND97KKmKbSg> US Vet questions Iraq war, 3 min.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xry54zyUIQw> Inside Iraq, Motives for War Part 1 – 12 min.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8q85NPf73yY&feature=relmfu> – Iraq Motives Part 2 – 12 min.

Suburban Ghetto, Jonathan Dee. Dee's depiction of one of the most notable post WWII short story writers in America. John Cheever, and Dee's critique of Cheever's biography by Blake Bailey, one theme that emerges is a common one, that of the tortured artist. Some would say our greatest thinkers and artists are "victims" of alcohol and/or drug abuse. In 1,500 words, answer the following: Do writers, artists, musicians, have to suffer from some debilitating, clinical diagnosis of addiction to produce great work? Why or why not? Work in three outside sources.



The number of artists in all disciplines who abuse drugs or alcohol is endless. What is the relationship between creativity and substance abuse?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1IULFUsebA> David Kushner from Velvet Revolver on drugs, alcohol and creativity – 3 min

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ano2tNG3eS8> - Grammy-winner Susan McKeown talks about her album 'Singing in the Dark' (Hibernian Music, October 30, 2010), which explores Creativity & Madness through lyrics by poets who were writing through the lens of depression, mania and substance abuse. – 6 min

Obituary Columns: Danny LaRue, Benson, William Safire, Ann Wroe. In 1,500 words, project yourself into the future and write your own obit. Work in three outside srouces.

Great woman of science

WINIFRED Mary Curtis was educated in London and India and graduated from University College London with a BSc (Hons) degree in 1928.

She subsequently gained a MSc (1939), PhD (1950) and DSc (1968) from the same institution.

She migrated to Tasmania with her parents in 1939 and was employed part-time as demonstrator at the University of Tasmania's Biology Department and as a science mistress at Fahan School.

From 1942-1966 she worked at the University of Tasmania and was acting head of the botany department when she retired.

Winifred was a pioneer researcher in plant embryology and cytology, but her chief contributions were to plant taxonomy.

In 1943 she began work on *The Student's Flora of Tasmania*, the definitive handbook on Tasmania's flowering

OBITUARY

**Winifred Mary Curtis
PhD., DSc., A.M.
Born: June 15, 1905,
in London.
Died: October 14,
2005, in Hobart.**



PIONEER: Tireless worker Winifred Curtis.

plants and conifers. The first volume was published in 1956, the fifth and final volume in 1994.

Her *Student's Flora* remains the definitive text for students and lovers of Tasmanian plants.

Her six-volume *Endemic Flora of Tasmania* (1967-1978; jointly with artist Margaret Stones) is a masterpiece of botanical art and much-sought collector's item.

She worked tirelessly toward the security of Tasmania's botanical collections and the establishment of the Tasmanian Herbarium at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

In retirement, she gained many honours and much recognition for her contributions to Tasmania, including the Royal Society of Tasmania's Clive Lord Memorial Medal (1966), the Australian Natural History Medallion (1976), membership of the Order of Australia (1977), an honorary DSc from the University of Tasmania (1987), the Australian Plants Award (1988), the ANZAAS Mueller Medal (1994) and Hobart Citizen of the Year (1997).

— GINTARAS
KANTVILAS



Sergeant Joshua Michael Harapko, 23, died Tuesday, March 11, 2003, while doing what he was proudest of; serving his country in the Army 10th Mountain Division. Josh was one of the 11 soldiers who lost their lives when their Black Hawk helicopter crashed during a preparatory training mission in Ft. Drum, NY. Josh excelled at serving his country having been a decorated veteran of the Afghan war last year.

Josh was born in Erie, PA on April 28th, 1979, but spent the last 10 years in Phoenix qualifying him in most circles as an Arizona native. He attended Centennial High School in Peoria and received his GED from Project Challenge in 1997. We can proudly say that Josh made a lasting impression on everyone he met with his charm, which was only surpassed by the size of his heart. His energy, mischief, kindness and zest for life are what his friends and family will remember most.

Josh will forever be loved by those of us that he left behind. He is survived by his mother Patricia Moran and sister Heidi Harapko both of Peoria, his brother Sean Harapko of Scottsdale, his father John Harapko of Warren, PA, and his extended family. He will also be missed by the many friends he touched that we now consider family. We will all miss the joy and love that he brought into our lives, and we couldn't be more proud of him.

Memorial Service will be held at Phoenix First Assembly, 13613 N. Cave Creek Rd. on Tuesday, March 18 at 10:00 am. In lieu of flowers a contribution can be made to The Project Challenge Foundation in the name of Sergeant Joshua Harapko. Please send donations to: AZ PCPA (Project Challenge Parents Association), 34522 N. Scottsdale Rd. Suite D8 #601, Scottsdale, AZ 85262

Top Ten State Fair Joys,
Garrison Keillor. Keillor makes a compelling reason for visiting and experiencing state fairs. Pick out a favorite place/pastime/event and write an en essay in 1,500 words where you justify the top ten reasons for taking part. Work in three outside srouces.





The Man Who Never Was, Mike Sager. Sager makes the thematic point that the hero football star Todd Marinovich was taught to be a commercial success, a star and wasn't taught to be a man. In 1,500 words, what lessons of maturity did Marinovich miss out on because of his drug addiction that would essentially have helped him become both a better football player and man. Work in three outside sources.





Todd's art, once again a relationship between art and substance abuse.

<http://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=todd+marinovich&view=detail&mid=D162FE2E3F16401D044ED162FE2E3F16401D044E&first=0>
– Todd on Dr. Drew – 15 min

<http://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=Todd+Marinovich+Art&view=detail&mid=BD280BE74A8D91419299BD280BE74A8D91419299&first=0>
– Todd's art gallery – 3 min.

Trial by Fire, David Grann. (Coordinate with Senator Webb's article on prison reform.) Grann writes on one of America's most explosive topics, the death penalty. For this essay, in 1,500 words, a strong thesis and three outside sources, write on whether you believe Cameron Todd Willingham is guilty or innocent. Answer the question: Did the state of Texas execute an innocent man? Why? Why not?





With Wife Stacy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u-SBTRLoPuo> Eyewitness Testimony Part 1 60 min, 13 min

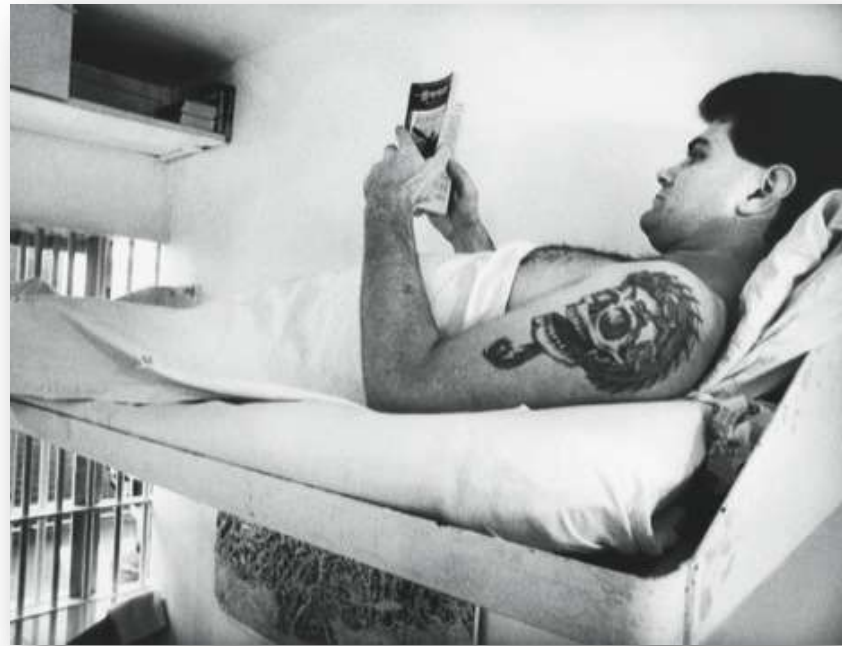
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l4V6aoYuDcg> Eyewitness Testimony Part 2 60 min, 13 min

<http://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=Cameron+Todd+Willingham+&view=detail&mid=F29746B3EE40A26DB0B0F29746B3EE40A26DB0B0&first=0> Nightline – The Wrongful Execution – 9:33

<http://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=Governor+Perry+on+Cameron+Todd+Willingham+&view=detail&mid=60B893821CED4036D12660B893821CED4036D126&first=0&FORM=NVPFVR> Gov. Rick Perry on Willingham – 2 min.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/11/01/cameron-todd-willingham-stacy-kuykendall-texas-pardon_n_2058042.html - Wife reverses - 2 min.

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/death-by-fire/> Frontline, 53 min



Life on Death Row



[Michael McLaughlin](#)

michael.mclaughlin@huffingtonpost.com

Cameron Todd Willingham's Ex-Wife Stacy Kuykendall Says Texas Shouldn't Pardon Him [EXCLUSIVE]

Standing in the way of a pardon for a Texas man that his family considers was wrongly convicted and executed is his ex-wife.

For years, Stacy Kuykendall advocated for Cameron Todd Willingham, stating repeatedly that she believed he didn't deliberately start the house fire that killed their three daughters in 1991. She reversed herself shortly before his 2004 execution, declaring that she now considered him guilty for murdering their 2-year-old daughter and her 1-year-old twin sisters.

As Willingham's relatives seek to [erase his conviction](#), with experts dismissing the original fire investigation as primitive and conducted using out-of-date techniques, Kuykendall renewed her insistence that her ex-husband started the blaze.

"Todd is guilty, the criminal justice system and the courts confirmed his guilt, and he should not be pardoned for his crimes," Kuykendall said in an exclusive statement to The Huffington Post. "My girls would have been 23 and 21 years old today. I miss them so much."



CNN

Stacy Kuykendall says her ex-husband Cameron Todd Willingham should not be pardoned for the murder of their three daughters.

Cont.

Her words could hinder the latest attempts by Willingham's stepmother Eugenia Willingham and cousin Patricia Willingham Cox to alter his record. Last week, the pair filed a petition with the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles to recommend a pardon for Willingham.

The Texas parole board checks with victims' families, the prosecutor and other people involved in the original murder case before deciding whether to recommend that the governor issue a pardon. That process could take months.

"I read that Todd's stepmom and cousin are asking the governor for a pardon. I don't blame Todd's stepmom for fighting for her son," Kuykendall said in her statement. "Mothers love their children and always will, no matter what happens in their lives.

"Eugenia loved Todd, and I understand why she does not want to face the facts of what he did to our girls," Kuykendall said.

Willingham maintained his innocence until the day he died, but his conviction was upheld on appeals in state and federal court. A [leading arson expert in 2004](#), however, concluded in a report that the testimony from fire investigators used against Willingham was no longer scientifically valid. Gov. Rick Perry turned down an eleventh-hour request to stop the execution.

The case was originally prosecuted by the Navarro County district attorney. The current DA, R. Lowell Thompson, told HuffPost he doesn't plan to challenge the pardon request.

Saying that Willingham is guilty is not new for Kuykendall, but it's a 180-degree change from the early years of the case.

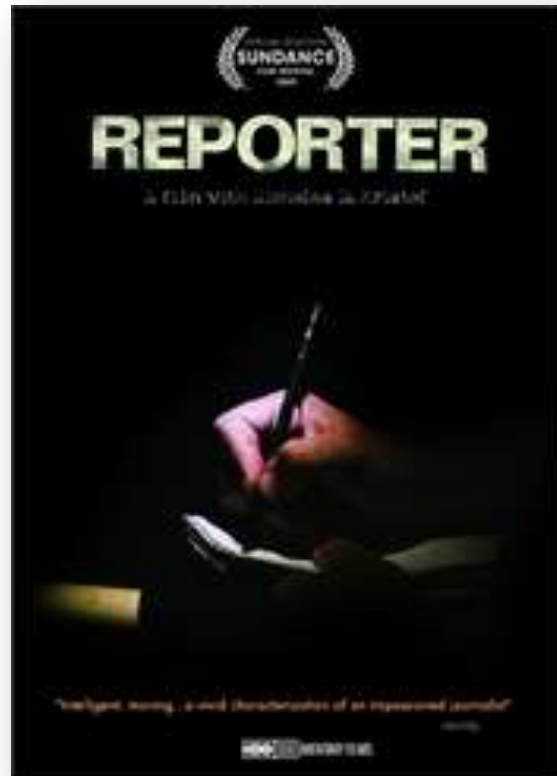
At the time of the fire, Kuykendall and Willingham were newlyweds. She told investigators that they hadn't been fighting and that her husband would never hurt their children.

Even after their divorce, she continued to [proclaim Willingham's innocence](#), as in a 1999 recorded interview with a teacher researching the case.

But by 2004, she had declared Willingham guilty. She told the Corsicana Daily Sun that a close [examination of the evidence persuaded her](#) that Willingham was not innocent.

In 2009, she unleashed a startling accusation that [Willingham confessed the crime](#) to her when she visited him on death row. Though she hadn't said this to investigators or during his trial, Kuykendall said she [threatened to divorce](#) Willingham the night before the fire.

New York Times' reporter
Nicholas Kristof travels the world
to find the single story that will
make the rest of us care.



Film Option I, *Reporter* – Select one question and prepare a 1,500 word response:

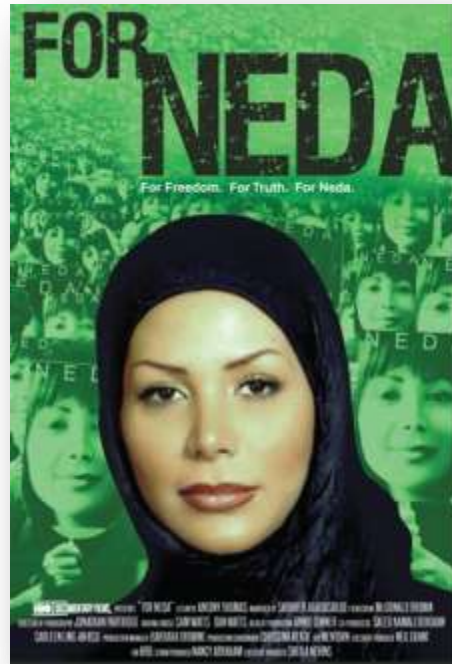
Documentary film director Eric Daniel Metzgar follows New York Times reporter Nicholas Kristof to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2007. Kristof takes with him a high school English teacher from Chicago and a medical student. The film asks important questions. Here are four options for your 1,500 word essay (work in three outside sources):

Do we have or not have a responsibility as world citizens to engage, understand, and seek action to prevent these atrocities of war?

Why do you think, in scientific studies of compassion, when it is revealed that our compassion level decreases when more victims are shown or more statistics revealed?

What is the role of newspapers and journalism in reporting these tragedies, these breakdowns in civilization? Are our modes of knowing threatened by the economic downfall, the challenge of newspapers to compete in the digital age?

Is what's happening in the Congo just part of what can be defined as a "normal course of events?" Have we really made much progress even since the Holocaust and the world's subsequent mantra of "never again" when genocide has occurred on large scales in a number of conflicts around the world since the end of WWII? Is it inevitable that these conflicts will happen and continue to happen, or is that just a defeatist attitude?



Tells the personal story of Neda Agha-Soltan and her tragic death in the Iranian protests following the recent rigged presidential elections.



Film Option II, *For Neda* - Select one question and prepare a 1,500 word response (with three outside sources):

Neda was gunned down in the streets of Tehran by a rogue, roof-top sniper who may have been working for the government. She was protesting the what appears to be fixed election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad who many perceive as a puppet of the cleric Ayatollah Ali Khamenei who hails as Iran's "Supreme Leader." Neda was, like many young American women, struggling to find her identity, become educated, find a career, dance to music, wear makeup even.

Do you feel as if you have a responsibility or feel emotionally compelled to empathize with Neda? Why or why not?

If I were Iranian living in Tehran during the last presidential election, would I have voted? Would I have protested the elections? Would I have taken any other course of action? What? How?

War may sometimes be a necessary evil. But no matter how necessary, it is always an evil, never a good. We will not learn how to live together in peace by killing each other's children. –Jimmy Carter (1924 -)

War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things. The decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks that nothing is worth war is much worse. The person who has nothing for which he is willing to fight, nothing which is more important than his own personal safety, is a miserable creature and has no chance of being free unless made and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself. –John Stuart Mill (1806 - 1873)

War is a cowardly escape from the problems of peace. –Thomas Mann (1875 - 1955)