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Story First—Publishing Narrative Long-Form Journalism in Digital Environments

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Abstract

Narrative long-form journalism is going through an international upswing. Existing media companies and journalistic start-ups have taken narratives into the digital environment, using multimedia elements to tell their stories in new ways and attempting to get their stories to become viral. This essay analyses *The Atavist* and *Long Play* as examples of long-form nonfiction publications, and offers results from a small international survey of long-form publishers. The findings suggest that digital online environment provides narrative journalism with new possibilities, such as multimedia elements and online presence, which have the potential to both strengthen the authenticity of a story and weaken its immersive effect due to too many sensory stimuli.

Keywords: digital environments, long-form journalism, multimedia, narratives, nonfiction

Introduction

When journalism first entered the online world, it was widely believed that the Internet required short writing. Today, we know that it also accommodates long stories. Several publishers offer narrative, long-form content online, and some publications are specifically tailored for tablet computers or other mobile platforms.¹ Online publications such as *The Atavist*, *Byliner*, and *Narratively* started as platforms specifically for narrative journalism, and some established media enterprises adopted this “journalistic equivalent of slow food”² as a whole new territory. In June 2013, for instance, the political news site *Politico* announced that Susan Glasser, then editor-in-chief of *Foreign Policy* magazine, joined its team to help it succeed in “the long form game.”³ *Politico* stated: “With Susan’s help, we intend now to tackle a fresh challenge: embracing what we see as a coming renaissance in long-form journalism, as readers search for distinctive work that cannot be easily cannibalized or commoditized.”⁴ In another example, *The New York Times* 2012 multimedia project *Snow Fall*, which told the story of a group of skiers lost in an avalanche, became an international success, and received a Pulitzer Prize for feature writing in 2013.⁵

However, in June 2014, as this was being written, the San Francisco digital publisher *Byliner* announced that its future was uncertain. *Byliner*, a platform for both fiction and nonfiction, had been “a darling of the press,”⁶ but was now the first high-profile long-form

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publication experiencing severe difficulties. This could be interpreted as the end of the honeymoon for digital long-form publishing. The coming years are likely to separate the wheat from the chaff.

This essay discusses narrative journalism in digital and, more specifically, in tablet environment. Narrative journalism gets its ideals from the more tightly defined genre of literary journalism.⁷ Probably the most famous definition comes from author and journalist Tom Wolfe: literary journalism is journalism that would read like a novel or a short story.⁸ Wolfe has identified several techniques typical of the genre: scene-by-scene construction, dialogue recorded in full, third-person point of view, and symbolic details.⁹ All these techniques are applicable to digital stories and can be found in the two digital publications considered here: *The Atavist*, an American publishing boutique started in 2011, and *Long Play*, a Finnish e-book publication launched in 2013. Moreover, when taken into the digital environment, narrative long-form journalism gets some added value from the use of multimedia techniques: pictures, audio, video, graphics, maps, etc. Additionally, a self-evident advantage stems from the very essence of being online: the opportunity to create discussion, to be shared, to become viral.

The essay begins by discussing tablets as a platform for journalism in general and long-form journalism in particular. This is followed by a discussion of *The Atavist* and *Long Play*, in light of which the essay explores the referentiality and authenticity of digital online journalism, on the one hand, and the immersive effect of multimedia storytelling on the other. Finally, the essay presents the results of a small survey of professionals, discussing the potential added value a story gets when published in a digital environment, compared with traditional print journalism.

The Dawn of Tablet Journalism

When newspapers began their online versions, the goal was to deliver information in the most efficient manner, including by exercising brevity. Often, this is still the case.¹⁰ However, since the early days of the World Wide Web, many long-form narratives have been published online as well. In one early example, Royal and Tankard Jr. found the use of literary journalism techniques on the website of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.¹¹ More recent examples of such research include Nora Berning's article about authenticity in online literary reportages¹² and Steen Steensen's study about online feature journalism,¹³ to name a few.

As the digital revolution has accelerated, print publications have been forced to make crucial decisions. Should they go digital? What strategy would be best? How can it be profitable? Shepherd and Waters offer three categories of such strategies: replication of existing genres, evolution of existing genres, and the spontaneous appearance of new genres.¹⁴ An example of the first category is the practice of uploading each newspaper issue online in a portable document format (PDF), which does not add any value to the print edition but can successfully replace it—for instance, when it is highly expensive to deliver a printed newspaper.¹⁵ Copying text and pictures from the paper to a HTML-formatted web version belongs in this category as well. Adding interactive elements to the existing story is an

example of evolution within a genre. By contrast, examples of whole new genres include, for instance, the *Oma Olivia*¹⁶ concept in Finland, in which an issue of a women's magazine, *Olivia*, is co-created online with the reader community, or *The Atavist*'s tablet-tailored application, which utilizes versatile multimedia functions.

Apple's iPad, introduced in 2010, marked a breakthrough for tablet computers, but media companies did not immediately embrace tablets in their struggle for sustainable profits. On the contrary, they were rather suspicious, for reasons similar to the factors behind the hesitation toward going online in general: a wait-and-see approach; limited resources to branch out; and uncertainty about readers' willingness to pay for digital journalism.¹⁷ According to a 2011 Pew report, the last reason was indeed legitimate; the willingness to pay for tablet journalism was low.¹⁸ The Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2014 indicates that the situation has not changed much.¹⁹ Given the maelstrom faced by media systems worldwide, lack of resources is also likely, and reluctance to take risks is understandable. Therefore, many publications' tablet version has merely been the day's paper uploaded as a PDF. Larry Kramer has criticized this practice, stating: "In the end, you want a different kind of storytelling process to occur on a tablet."²⁰ Indeed, a tablet offers an opportunity to combine text, audio, video, pictures, and interactivity, and its readability and portability make it a useful platform for long-form texts. Thereby, a tablet computer is an ideal environment for digital long-form journalism, both in text and multimedia forms.

In 2013, 35 percent of Americans age 16 and older owned a tablet computer, and 43 percent owned either a tablet or an e-book reader.²¹ In Finland, approximately 20 percent of citizens owned a tablet, below the European average of 31 percent.²² According to the Pew Project, in 2011 active tablet users already preferred their new devices over desktop computers, laptops, print publications, and television as a way to get both news headlines and to read long-form stories.²³ More than 40 percent of tablet users read in-depth news articles regularly, and another 40 percent read them sometimes. People also read past articles and save them for future reading.²⁴ The numbers seem encouraging enough for media companies to make decisions to invest in tablet apps, and also—as smart phones are getting larger—mobile developments.

However, a relatively large number of readers still read stories using the tablet's web browser instead of media publications' own applications.²⁵ As tablet computers and larger smart phones ("phablets") increase their market share at the cost of desktop PCs and laptops,²⁶ it could be expected that consumers will change their habits and learn to use the applications. Another possible scenario is that publishers will abandon native apps and turn to universally functional HTML5-based developments.

The Atavist and Long Play as Examples of Narrative Publications

The Atavist is a magazine and e-singles publishing house that releases its own original, long-form narrative journalism. It started in February 2011, and by December 2013 had published 32 original stories, which have included video, audio, pictures, and maps. It has developed its own platform and application. Multimedia versions of the stories are currently

available in *The Atavist*'s free app for the iPad, iPhone, and web browsers. Text versions can be read with other applications also. In 2013, each story cost up to \$3.99. Readers could also choose a monthly or a yearly subscription or an annual membership, the latter of which also offered free access to the story archive. In addition to publishing original stories, *The Atavist* offered its platform to the public under the name Creatavist. In 2013, anyone could publish one story for free, publish unlimited e-book files under the Creatavist app for \$10 per month, or create their own custom app for \$250 per month. *The Atavist*'s revenues came from selling stories and story sponsorships,²⁷ and from the Creatavist users. According to cofounder Evan Ratliff, the Creatavist side had more revenue potential: "Partly because we think the software has enormous usefulness and that the market for it is only going to grow, and partly because it's just really hard to grow a big business on things you sell for \$2–4 per month, as I think anyone would agree."²⁸ However, *The Atavist* does not release any data regarding sales figures.²⁹

Long Play is one of the most clear-cut examples of a new media start-up in Finland. A group of Finnish freelancers launched it in January 2013 with an initial capital of merely 500€.³⁰ According to the website, it published "investigative journalism, vast reportage, profiles, essays and other long-form stories in digital form," under the headline "*Long Play*—better journalism." *Long Play* e-book singles could be purchased at the price of 3.90€ per story. In the beginning *Long Play* was published by Hitaan journalismin yhdistys ry., the Association for Slow Journalism. In 2013, the association accepted supporting members whose annual membership fee was 54€. Supporting members received all the *Long Play* singles automatically, plus additional e-books and other potential benefits. In the beginning of 2014, *Long Play* became a business, and opened its own publishing platform, through which annual subscriptions also became possible. *Long Play*'s sales figures are not public, but its best-selling e-single from 2013 was *Himansen etiikka* (*The ethics of Himanen*, published in February), which sold nearly 5,000 copies, which is a lot in a country where the market is small and e-book sales have been extremely slow so far.³¹ The story revealed how the Finnish prime minister helped secure funding for a controversial research project without following the usual rules of competition, and led to a large-scale political scandal in Finland.

The ability to buy one story at a time, digitally, was and is a fresh concept in Finland, where literary journalism has always had a somewhat marginal space. It has been practiced in numerous publications, but not very systematically and generally in a short form.³² Book-length journalistic nonfiction has never broken through in Finland. Thus, the "longer than a magazine story but shorter than a book" concept of *Long Play* has been new to many of its readers. In 2013, *Long Play* published ten singles—nine journalistic pieces written by Finnish journalists, and one translation of an essay published by a Danish partner, *Zetland*. All the singles consisted of plain text, except for the cover illustration on each e-book single. The *Long Play* website offered a link to a series of pictures of a baby's skull surgery, related to the story *Pään avaaminen* (*The Head Opening*), which could also be bought as an audiobook. Other stories were available as text only.

Long Play has been actively broadening its scope of operation. In addition to publishing e-book singles, the journalists at *Long Play* offer writing courses for other journalists, and in the fall of 2013, they started to co-host public events, such as interviews. In November 2013, *Long Play* won a 250,000€ award in a media innovation challenge looking for sustainable business models for journalism. The team is using the money to develop a new publishing platform that allows SMS payments,³³ and also working internationally to create “a kind of Netflix for quality content,” where a customer can download not only journalistic texts, but also documentary films and literature, among other things.³⁴

Both *The Atavist* and *Long Play*, the latter in particular, interact with readers in the digital environment, especially through social media platforms, specifically Facebook and Twitter. This is a wise decision, considering that of all social media users in Finland, 95 percent used Facebook and 9 percent used Twitter in 2012.³⁵ The corresponding numbers in the US are 71 and 18 percent.³⁶ As of June 24, 2014, *The Atavist* had 3,257 likers on Facebook, whereas *Long Play* had 7,724 likers. On Twitter, *The Atavist* had 11,957 followers compared with *Long Play*’s 6,383 followers. On Twitter, *The Atavist* followed 978 users and *Long Play* 749 users. *The Atavist* joined Twitter in October 2010 and had published 3,653 tweets since. *Long Play* tweeted for the first time in December 2012, and had since published 1,964 tweets. Neither *The Atavist* nor *Long Play* use email to communicate with subscribers, except to send a notification when a new single appears in virtual print.

Multimedia Add Authenticity but Can Also Interrupt

The digital and online environments take journalistic storytelling to a new level, but the fundamental principles, such as obligation to the truth, remain essential. Narrative journalists borrow techniques from fiction, but like any other journalists, they ought never to cross “the reality boundary” to the epistemological side of fiction.³⁷ While keeping this in mind, one advantage of the online digital environment is that it gives journalists new tools for building authenticity, which Nora Berning identifies as key to online narrative journalism.³⁸ According to Margreth Lünenborg, authenticity is a characteristic encoded in the process of production, with the help of aesthetic devices, and has to be decoded by the reader in the process of interpretation.³⁹ Technology-based elements such as multimedia features, links to sources, and interactivity all have the potential to enhance an online digital story’s authentic impression.

Authenticity can be grasped in part through the concept of referentiality. Dorrit Cohn states that fiction is nonreferential by nature, whereas nonfiction is always referential.⁴⁰ Fiction “itself creates the world it refers to by referring to it.”⁴¹ It can also refer to the reality outside the text, but it does not have to, and if it does, claims about the reality do not have to be truthful.⁴² According to Cohn, fictional stories are always more complex because they have more discursive levels; by contrast, in nonfictional stories the author and the narrator are always the same and inseparable.⁴³ However, numerous scholars have acknowledged the complex structures of narrative nonfiction. According to Daniel W. Lehman, nonfictional journalism is not only referential, but multireferential by nature; for instance, journalists are

involved in their stories as they construct them, but also make connections to actual occurrences taking place in reality. Readers are also involved in the stories as they read them, but are also constantly making connections between the text and the outside world based on their pre-existing knowledge. Thus, there are several, complex levels of reference, a “multireferential plane,” as Lehman puts it.⁴⁴ The author-narrator tells about an existing world to readers who exist within the same world, and the more familiar the topic is to readers, the more foundation they have to estimate the credibility of the story by comparing it with their own experiences. This aspect has become ever more important as readers have obtained access to indefinite amounts of information via the Internet. Taking narrative liberties is always a risk for the journalist. James Phelan encourages readers to be critical and not to ignore mimetic lapses, such as situations in which narrators know more than they should. Even though such moments would not deny the story its nonfiction status, they nevertheless reveal a lot about the journalist’s work process and the ideology behind it.⁴⁵

In spite of the potential of multimedia elements to add referentiality and authenticity, some online long-form journalistic pieces have been cautious in using them. For example in 2013, *Long Play* did not offer any multimedia features. Quite the contrary, it did not even include pictures or varying layouts, such as a magazine. According to the editor-in-chief Johanna Vehkoo, there were several reasons to this. First, financial and technological restrictions: the initial capital of 500€ did not allow for complex multimedia developments. Furthermore, there were also ideological reasons, as Vehkoo describes the whole *Long Play* team as being “very text-oriented journalists.”⁴⁶

By contrast, *The Atavist* stories contained music, audio clips, photographs, video clips, maps, and so on. Let us review *The Stray Bullet* as an example of a story published in *The Atavist*. It tells about a friendship that the author has developed with a prisoner, a black man who, as a teenager, shot another black teenager. The story opens with a photograph of the main character, Tony, and an audio clip of a recorded phone call: “beep – beep – this recorded call is from an inmate at a California state correctional facility.” There are audio clips between the text chapters: interrogation recordings, a phone call from Tony to his home, and phone calls from Tony to the author. There are also photographs of Tony’s letters. All of these features are embedded within the story without any links. The story thus remains “closed,” even “nonreferential” in a sense, as it refuses to implement the quality that is in the very nature of online journalism: the indefinite connectedness to other texts in the World Wide Web. The immersive effect of the story ultimately depends on readers’ choices.

Berning suggests that hypertextuality, multimediality, and interactivity offer enhanced means of immersion.⁴⁷ However, these features can distract the reader and thus weaken the immersion; for instance, if the reader listens to the audiobook version of *The Stray Bullet*, the extras (timeline, maps, etc.) can interrupt one’s concentration every once in a while and probably force him/her to pause the audiobook. If the reader reads the text, shifting attention to different elements appears to be easier. As for *Long Play* stories, the immersive effect can be very strong when the text is the only thing that captures the reader’s

attention—but this requires that the writing is engaging and compelling. On the other hand, multimedia features that can enhance the authentic impression are lacking.

Shareability also potentially strengthens the authenticity and factuality of a story. *The Atavist* application on iPad has a button that allows the reader to instantly share the story via messages, e-mail, Facebook, and Twitter. The further a story spreads, the higher its impact and the more critical its readers will be. For instance, in Finland in the fall of 2013, a blogger noticed a potentially plagiarized story in a national newspaper and asked her readers to dig through the Internet in search of the original text. The original story was found, and the newspaper apologized to its readers.⁴⁸ This is an extreme example of intentional fraud, but on smaller scale, online news sites routinely post corrections to their stories, many of which are most likely pointed out by readers.⁴⁹ This importance of online sharing is difficult to judge for the two online platforms that are the topic of this essay because neither *The Atavist* nor *Long Play* release any data about the degree to which their stories have been shared on social media.

Practitioners Value Accessibility and Shareability above Multimedia

How many multimedia features can a story tolerate without falling apart? When do multimedia elements become a distraction instead of complementing the story? These and similar questions have puzzled scholars as well as developers in the industrial and business worlds. For instance, in the field of education, cognitive load theory has been applied to studying the abilities and the restrictions of human working memory in multimedia environments.⁵⁰ Information technologist Pierre Gander has especially questioned common beliefs about new storytelling media: that an audience's experience will be more immersive the more sensory information it is exposed to, and that the ability to participate and interact within the medium will add immersion.⁵¹

To seek answers from practitioners' point of view, a non-representative survey was conducted among professional journalists with experience in publishing digital long-form narrative journalism through small start-up companies. The survey consisted of four questions sent via e-mail to eight journalists in Finland, Denmark, Italy, the Great Britain, and the U.S.:

- (1) What do you think are the most useful features that become available when taking narrative journalism from print into digital environment? What do they add to the reading experience?
- (2) Could you give an example of a particularly good piece of narrative journalism published digitally? How do its multimedia elements support the story?
- (3) Pictures, audio, video and other multimedia elements increase the authenticity of a story. According to some studies, they also increase the immersive strength of the story. On the other hand, too many elements can

distract the reader and weaken the immersive effect. Where do you think the line is? How can it be defined? (You can share your experiences both as a writer/editor or a reader.)

(4) What is your view on different digital environments? Native apps vs. HTML5—what do you say? What do you expect from the future?

The respondents were chosen on the basis of the publication they represented or other merit in the field of digital long-form publishing. Existing connections were used in order to reach respondents. Six journalists completed the survey, which was conducted in May and June 2014. The respondents represented *Narratively* (the U.S.), *Longreads* (the U.S.), *Informant* (Italy), *Zetland* (Denmark), *Long Play* (Finland), and one independent journalist (the UK). Journalists from *Byliner* and *The Atavist* did not respond. The survey was conducted in English, which was not all of the respondents' first language, but all of them were fluent in it. The narrow corpus does not allow for any generalizations, but the answers can serve as a springboard to future research.

According to the respondents, the most useful features in online digital journalism compared with print journalism were not multimedia elements but interactivity: comments, recommending, sharing, and being present and easily accessible. For example:

The most useful feature (...) is – most important by far—the simple fact of just being there: Being present on media platforms which the readers (in particular younger readers) use and are familiar with as their most important platform for any media experience. (*Zetland*)

Accessibility may not be as sexy as new experiments in multimedia, but it is the most important piece. Give as many people as possible the ability to read on their own device, on their own terms. (*Longreads*)

Further, multimedia elements were described as “a double-edged sword,” which “can both raise and decrease a reader’s attention” (*Informant*).

Generally, the journalists who answered the questions were reserved in regard to using multimedia elements. For example, a journalist from *Narratively* stated: “As a reader, I don’t ever want my experience interrupted.” The independent long-form journalist from the UK agreed: “Certainly in the last two years we’ve seen publishers using lots of features at once because they could rather than because they should.”

The respondents also described their own practices aimed at minimizing distractions to the reader. For instance, each time they think of inserting a multimedia element in a story, they ask themselves whether the element is really necessary (*Informant*). They want the reader to be able to choose whether to pay attention to the multimedia (*Long Play*). They make sure that the multimedia has the same pace and rhythm as the story they are telling (*Informant*), and they make sure that the piece presents complete experience even if the reader for some reason does not consume all the different elements (*Longreads*).

These practices could be combined into a check list for editors. However, according to the respondents' answers, the line where the multimedia elements are too many and too distracting is different for every story. "But as a rule, less is always more," offered the independent journalist.

The six respondents seemed to look at their work "text first"—a bit surprisingly so, considering that they represent new media start-ups and innovative publishers. For example:

I still believe in the virtues of the long-form tradition that was born of the "paper-experience"—the disconnected experience, where you sit in solute and read a narrative that takes you from a to z. (...) I sound like an old hat. I AM an old hat. (*Zetland*)

Snow Fall, the Pulitzer-prize-winning multimedia story from *The New York Times*, was mentioned in respondents' answers both as "the gold standard...—the reader is just totally swept up in the story and it feels less like an article than an experience" (*Narratively*) and a critical example of multimedia gone wrong. "It was also interesting to note that the commentary focused solely on the style and not the substance. No-one was interested in the narrative of *Snow Fall*, just that it looked pretty," stated the independent journalist.⁵² The writer from *Long Play* added: "I am one of the people who confess to not reading the whole story—I was simply too distracted by the fancy multimedia." These reactions suggest that agreement of how to make the best use of multimedia elements cannot be found even within a group of expert practitioners.

The respondents were asked to name a particularly good piece of narrative journalism published digitally. *Snow Fall* received one mention. Other stories from *the New York Times* included *Invisible Child*⁵³ and *The Ballad of Geeshie and Elvie*,⁵⁴ which was mentioned by two people for the following reasons: "The audio elements are embedded within the text without being distracting. It works because it is a story about music and so audio has a reason to be there. We need more of this discipline" (independent journalist). "The story ... included embedded audio clips from their songs. This complemented the story I was reading, with real sounds of their voices, without taking me out of the reading experience" (*Longreads*). All *The Atavist*'s pieces in general, *South China Morning Post*'s longform about the Tiananmen massacres,⁵⁵ and *A Good Man in Rwanda* by BBC⁵⁶ were each mentioned once.

The respondents were also asked to discuss the difference between native apps and HTML5-based developments, and to try to anticipate the future. Two respondents stated that they were not qualified to answer the question. The four other answers varied. The web was praised for its universal nature; on the other hand, native apps were seen as important in mobile phones, the markets for which were anticipated to keep growing. "The web is still the most flexible when it comes to reaching the largest audience possible, and it seems like that is where most of the conversation begins," stated a journalist from *Longreads*.

Conclusion: Story First

The future of digital narrative long-form journalism does not seem all too hopeless. It appears that there are at least two possible ways it can prosper. First, traditional, big media companies can find ways to make a sustainable profit and direct some of the revenue into the expensive art of long-form narrative. Second, journalists can take an entrepreneurial approach to their work and start microbusinesses, such as *The Atavist* and *Long Play*. They ought not to expect to make profit by publishing a single e-book per month; rather, they need to find additional sources of income, such as sponsorships, software services, crowd funding, courses, and events.⁵⁷ First and foremost, though, they need to produce quality stories.

Being digital and online provides journalists with new features that potentially also create quality: the stories can be enhanced with versatile multimedia elements, and the accessibility and shareability of the stories bring about new possibilities for reaching readers and creating conversations. Journalistic principles such as “the reality boundary”⁵⁸ are as valid in the digital environment as they are in print. Multimedia and interactivity add new levels to the “multireferential plane”⁵⁹ of narrative journalism, which can strengthen the authenticity of a story. However, too many sensory elements can distract the reader’s attention, which weakens the immersive effect. The practitioners’ reactions, as outlined in this report, suggest they think along the same lines—seeing shareability and connectedness as the most important features in digital long-form journalism. The ability to take text-based stories into the realm of public discussion appears to be a more valuable feature to them than video, audio, and other sensory stimuli.

Notes

1. The first tablet computer in the consumer market was Apple’s iPad, the first model of which was released in April 2010 in the United States and in November 2010 in Finland. Apple still has the largest share in tablet markets, 29.6 percent in October 2013, but Samsung has been reaching Apple, currently holding 20.4 percent of the market. “Android Growth Drives Another Strong Quarter for the Worldwide Tablet Market, According to IDC,” October 30, 2013, accessed November 15, 2013, <http://www.idc.com/getdoc.jsp?containerId=prUS24420613>.
2. Susan Greenberg, “Slow Journalism in the Digital Fast Lane,” in *Global Literary Journalism: Exploring the Journalistic Imagination*, eds. Richard Lance Keeble and John Tulloch (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 381.
3. The term “long form game” has been used, for instance, in “Magazines get in the digital long-form game,” *StoryBoard*, September 19, 2011, accessed June 23, 2014, <http://www.thestoryboard.ca/magazines-get-in-the-digital-long-form-game/> and Rem Rieder, “Long-Form Journalism Makes Comeback,” *USA Today*, June 5, 2013, accessed June 20, 2014.

4. Dylan Byers, "POLITICO Hires FP's Susan Glasser to Head New Long-Form Journalism, Opinion Divisions," *Politico*, June 2, 2013, accessed November 25, 2013, <http://www.politico.com/blogs/media/2013/06/politico-hires-fps-susan-glasser-to-head-new-longform-165226.html>.
5. The 2013 Pulitzer Prize Winners, Feature writing, accessed July 1, 2014, <http://www.pulitzer.org/citation/2013-Feature-Writing>, and the original story John Branch, "Snow Fall, The Avalanche at Tunnel Creek," *The New York Times*, December 20, 2012, accessed June 24, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/projects/2012/snow-fall/>.
6. For background and discussion on the topic, see Laura Hazard Owen, "Why 2012 was the year of the e-single," *Gigaom*, December 24, 2012, accessed June 22, 2014, <https://gigaom.com/2012/12/24/why-2012-was-the-year-of-the-e-single/> and "This is the Real Reason why Byliner is Struggling," *LitRagger*, June 9, 2014, accessed June 23, 2014, <http://www.litrigger.com/literature-news/commentary/this-is-the-real-reason-why-byliner-is-struggling/>.
7. See, for example, John C. Hartsock, "Literary Reportage: The 'Other' Literary Journalism," *Genre* 1–2 (2009): 113–134.
8. Tom Wolfe, "The New Journalism," in *The New Journalism: An Anthology*, eds. Tom Wolfe and E. W. Johnson (London: Picador, 1973), 21–22, 24.
9. Wolfe, "The New Journalism," 46–47.
10. See, for instance, Tony Rogers, "Writing for the Web: Keep It Short, Break It Up, and Don't Forget to Highlight," *About.com*, accessed November 22, 2013, <http://journalism.about.com/od/writing/a/webwriting.htm>. See also Sims, "The Evolutionary Future of American and International Literary Journalism," 88.
11. Cindy Royal and James W. Tankard Jr., "Literary Journalism Techniques Create Compelling Blackhawk Down Web Site," *Newspaper Research Journal* 25, no. 4 (2004), 82–88.
12. Nora Berning, "Narrative Journalism in the Age of the Internet: New Ways to Create Authenticity in Online Literary Reportages," *Textpraxis. Digitales Journal für Philologie* 3, no. 2 (2011), accessed November 2, 2013, <http://www.uni-muenster.de/textpraxis/nora-berning-narrative-journalism-in-the-age-of-the-internet>.
13. Steen Steensen, "Online Feature Journalism: A Clash of Discourses," *Journalism Practice* 3, no. 1 (2009): 13–29.
14. Michael Shepherd and Carolyn Watters, "Identifying Web Genre: Hitting a Moving Target," paper presented at WWW2004 Conference Workshop on Measuring Web Search Effectiveness: The User Perspective, New York, May 18, 2004, quoted in Greenberg, "Slow Journalism," 382.

15. An elucidating example: in Finland there is a small Swedish-speaking minority. One in five issues of the largest Swedish-speaking newspaper in Finland is delivered to areas of dispersed settlement, and the delivery is slow and costs a lot. In 2011, the newspaper did a pilot experiment, in which it gave a test group of 25 readers a tablet computer on which they could read the newspaper early in the morning. They were given an individual tablet version of the paper, not a PDF or an equivalent. The readers were not satisfied with the tablet version, and preferred a PDF as a replacement for the printed newspaper. Olli Sulopuisto and Helene Juhola, "Tabletit 2012—kokeiluista liiketoiminnaksi," accessed November 15, 2013, http://www.sanomalehdet.fi/files/2346/tabletit_2012_kokeilusta_liiketoiminnaksi_julk.pdf.
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