



To Tell What They Can't Say

Award-winning journalists facilitate writing and photojournalism workshop for New Hampshire veterans

March 12, 13, 14, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Facilitators: Pulitzer-Prize winning war correspondent [David Wood](#) and international photo journalist [Andrea Bruce](#)

Nackey S. Loeb School of Communications, 749 E Industrial Park Dr, Manchester, NH 03109
[DIRECTIONS](#)

SYLLABUS

Plan for a three-day workshop on storytelling through writing and photography. We are meeting with 20 to 30 veterans who have stories they want to tell about their experiences but need inspiration and guidance on how to tell their stories. We anticipate leading six 2- to 3-hour sessions over three days that will enable participants to create one or more stories or exhibit of photographs that will be presented at an event later in the spring.

The plan is for David Wood to lead the sessions on writing, Andrea Bruce to lead the sessions on photography. But since these storytelling forms overlap, we each plan to attend the other's sessions. David will lead in the morning, Andrea in the afternoon.

We will provide each participant with a short reading list to complete before the workshop. And we will ask each participate to bring two or three story ideas -- not finished stories but ideas -- to discuss in the workshop.

Day 1: Monday, March 12, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Suggested reading: *Politics and the English Language*, George Orwell, 1946

Writing workshop: We will each introduce ourselves and talk briefly about what continues to inspire us as journalists and storytellers. We will touch on the idea of truth: how do we tell stories to convey a truth? Why clear writing is critical to our democracy. David will talk about getting started: What IS a story? How to draw out a story from the welter of experiences we all have. He will introduce the idea of the nutgraph, the short, concise statement of what the story about. The nutgraph is a way for the writer to organize his or her thoughts and to guide the construction of a story. How to choose between 1st and 3rd person viewpoints. David will assign each participant to write a nutgraph for one of the story ideas he or she has brought to the workshop.

Photography workshop:

Suggested reading: *Slightly Out of Focus* by Robert Capa

What makes a good photo? Through examples, we will explore the elements of a photo, namely composition, light, color, emotion and moment. Assignment: Develop a “shot list” for your story.

Day 2: Tuesday, March 13, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Suggested reading: *SeaBiscuit*, by Laura Hillenbrand, excerpt.

Writing workshop: David will review and discuss the participants’ nutgraphs. He will then discuss how to organize a story. What makes a good sentence (simple, simple, simple)? What makes a powerful written image? What is the lead, and how to write a good one. Why are paragraphs important, and how to organize successive paragraphs to draw the reader through a story. Avoiding adjectives and cliches. The zoom-in, zoom-out technique. How to deal with the boring-but-important background or contextual stuff. David will assign participants to write at least one good lead for his/her story idea that reflects the nutgraph from Day 1.

Photography workshop: What is a photo essay? We will visit their story ideas and discuss how to illustrate them through photography. Also, expand and explain the “shot list,” thinking beyond the obvious. Assignment: Photograph an emotion.

Day 3: Wednesday, March 14, 9:00 – 4:00 pm

Suggested reading: *The Art of Omission* by John McPhee, *New Yorker*, September 14, 2015

Writing workshop: David will talk about long stories. Construction of a lead that sets up a conflict and draws the reader toward a resolution. How to build toward a climax. Finding characters and dialog to help tell the story. Using the zoom-in, zoom-out technique, switching from general observations or conclusions to detailed anecdotes or examples and back again. What to do with the inevitable writer’s block. David will discuss and guide, if necessary, the participants’ plans for stories to be presented at the later event. We will establish ways to stay in touch until the final event.

Photography Workshop: Where do we go from here? We will ask them where they get their inspiration and suggest ways to encourage them to think visually, with purpose, about the world. Also, we will discuss the responsibility of journalism; and photography as both journalism and art.

Questions? Contact Dr. Kathy Mathis, Project Director, New Hampshire Humanities, at 603-224-4071 or kmathis@nhhumanities.org.