

国際教養学部 P.A.C. O'CONNOR	JOURNALISTIC WRITING
Week 11	THE OBITUARY
READING 1: WRITING AN OBITUARY	
Link to The Independent Obituaries: http://news.independent.co.uk/people/obituaries/ Link to The Times Obituaries: http://www.timesonline.co.uk/section/0,,60,00.html	
<p>In this class, we shall try writing “feature” obituaries -- i.e., obituaries that go beyond the basic facts of the individual’s life, usually because the subject was prominent in his or her field or in the local circulation area of the newspaper involved. We write obituaries about living people, just as some larger newspapers do, and incorporate material from person-to-person interviews. (Large newspapers regularly update obituary files on living people which they keep in a file called ‘The Morgue’ so as to be prepared to run a story in the event of the person’s death).</p> <p>Feature obituaries include more quotations (from the subject and from others) and more extensive biographies than “ordinary” obituaries. Nevertheless, the organization of an obituary should be pretty consistent:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report that so-and-so (full name) has died. If possible, give some statement of who this person was: “Former Vice President Spiro Agnew died late last night of an obstructed bile duct.” Note the cause of death. This is often not specific, but may be given in such phrases as “died of natural causes,” “died after a brief illness” etc. 2. Give a paragraph (or more if the subject’s importance warrants it) to briefly summarize the important points of the individual’s career. 3. Begin a chronological account. “He was born at Selby on August 13, 1933, at the height of the Depression, to John Norman and Gladys Helen (Wilson), and grew up on the family farm south of town.” 4. Remember to include facts of birth (date, place, parents); statistical record (marriage, divorce, children, grandchildren); survivors (including parents, spouse, children, brothers and sisters); educational experience and major employers. The basic statistical facts may go into a separate paragraph by themselves (except for survivors, who always come last) or they may be worked into a larger narrative of the life. 	

READING 2: THE WORLD FIGURE

OBITUARY

MR YUKIO MISHIMA

A prolific and successful author

Mr. Yukio Mishima who died as reported elsewhere was acknowledged to be one of the world's most prolific and successful writers. He was 45.

His first published work, *The Flowering Grove*, appeared in 1944—the year he entered the Tokyo Imperial University School of Jurisprudence from the Peers school, where he received a citation from Emperor Hirohito as the highest honours student. Since then his output has been tremendous and he has published well over 100 books of short stories, plays, verse and fiction. Several of his novels have been filmed.

Mishima, who was born on January 14, 1925, became a civil servant in the Japanese Department of Finance when he left university in 1948. He resigned a little over a year later to become a full-time writer. The early promise of *The Flowering Grove* was abundantly confirmed by *Confessions of a Mask*, published in 1949, which describes a boy's discovery, as he grows into early manhood during and just after the Second World War, that he is a homosexual.

The frankness and sensitivity in his *Confessions of a Mask* won critical acclaim; but it also gained Mishima a wide audience among the younger generation, who saw in it a reflection of the confusion and spiritual emptiness they themselves felt in postwar Japan.

His work has been translated into many European languages. In 1967 he was runner up for the Prix Formentor. Earlier he had been unsuccessfully nominated for the Nobel literature prize. Mishima's writings showed him to be fascinated with violence—spiritual as much as physical—and Kendo, traditional Japanese sword play, was one of his main leisure interests. His preoccupation with violence and homosexual themes was mirrored in his favourite Western authors—De Sade, Andre Gide, and Jean Genet.

Mishima's works include *The Sound of Waves*, *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*, *After the Banquet*, *Forbidden Colours*, and a play *Madame De Sade*.

About 10 of Mishima's novels or stories have been filmed—one twice—and he himself wrote, directed and took the leading role in a film made from one of his short stories, *Patriotism*. He also acted the title part in a gangster film. His passion for exercise—including the traditional Japanese martial arts—and body building was reflected in a recently published book of photographs of well developed men, including himself, called *The Young Samurai*. (The Samurai were the warrior class of feudal Japan.)

He married in 1958 and had a son and a daughter.

READING 3: HARDLY A CELEBRITY

Obituary: John Scott. *The Independent*, London, UK, June 2 1997 p.16

JOHN SCOTT had the true lexicographer's passion for accuracy and plain English. A fierce debate with his collaborator on the ground- breaking 1981 Dictionary of Waste and Water Treatment over the use of odour versus smell was carried on over the telephone lines to Edinburgh, in daily discussions which lasted for some months, with Scott refusing to budge from the use of smell. His writing also brought him into the company of that legion of lexicographers, translators, specialist librarians and working builders and engineers for whom his technical dictionaries had an almost biblical value. This admiration was not unfounded: the RIBA Journal described the Dictionary of Civil Engineering (1965) as "probably the best dictionary of modern structural terminology available in English today".

Scott's standards of accurate definition had much to do with his generation's distrust of the abstractions and universals which led the world so far astray in the devil's decade of the 1930s. Much as he hated his lessons at Wellington College, he was an accomplished Latinist, and this too contributed to his wish to clarify and his distrust of emotive expression. His references were discrete, but never to the point of locking the reader into his sense of the term. His authority came from experience, from having been in the mine or on the site, from having seen with his own eyes the consequences of lowering standards (he was one of the Flixborough inspectors), and from his own laboured use, year in, year out, in his own cellar and on his own roof, of the tools he so clearly defined and described.

Scott was born in 1915 in Jullundur, Punjab, the second of three sons. His father was then a captain in the 37th Baluchistan Horse. The family combined a tradition of service to church and state with gifted and colourful forebears on his mother's side, including the 18th- century Yorkshireman of sport, Colonel Thornton of Thornville Royal, for whom the sky perpetually rained meat, the watercolourist Robert Philip Atkinson, Canon J.C. Atkinson, nonegarian author of the classic *Forty Years in a Moorland Parish* (1891), and Robert Leicester Atkinson RN, doctor to Captain R.F. Scott's final expedition to the South Pole.

Scott was sent from India to be educated at Wellington College in Berkshire, a place he remembered with little affection, although he appears to have fitted in well. From Wellington, he went to Imperial College, London University, where he took a BSc in Engineering. His retreat from his class and background appears to have begun around this time, as he adopted the style he favoured on and off for the rest of his life: sandals, an open-necked shirt, dungarees held up with a string or wire belt, a shirt pocket bristling with sharpened pencils, travel by bicycle.

He was set for a career in structural engineering when a yen for travel took him to the oilfields of Romania for British Petroleum. When the Second World War broke out in 1939, he escaped from Romania by hanging from the couplings of the last train out when it was boarded by militia, then strolling round the border posts to rejoin his compartment on the Hungarian side.

Scott hoped to be registered as a conscientious objector but was denied that status, even when he "lost" his rifle bolt in training. A compromise was eventually reached by which he was sent to design gun emplacements at Scapa Flow, and later to the collieries at Aberfan. War brought him marriage to Paulette Charrier, a secretary in de Gaulle's London office, the death of his brother David at the Caen landings in June 1945, and in July of that year the birth of his first child,

Amandine.

Scott spent the early post-war years working in Paris but returned to London when his marriage failed. In the mid-1950s he moved in with and eventually married Maria, already the mother of two children by the writer Philip O'Connor. He then began a long series of technical office jobs, starting with the Ove Arup partnership and ending with the National Coal Board in 1980. In between came jobs in Saudi Arabia, where he became "Mr Smith" the newscaster on the side and was briefly held in manacles for injuring a boy with his car, and in Vienna with Unido.

His writing life began in the mid-1950s, when he started work on his Dictionary of Building, published by Penguin in 1958. From then until the very week of his death, his days were extraordinarily full. Not only did he write and keep in print four comprehensive technical dictionaries, but he also found the time to add to fluent French and Romanian an excellent command of Russian, German and Spanish.

He was also continually repairing the family home in London in order to trade up. He moved from Soho to Regent's Park to Kew and Chiswick and finally to Hornsey. Into these surroundings of upturned floorboards, fresh-mixed concrete and half-sealed plumbing arrived three more children, who grew up with an image of their father as a man in a hurry - barking instructions from two floors up at the other end of a tangle of copper piping, cutting and pasting yet another dictionary, rushing with shiny briefcase and ill-fitting suit to catch the bus to the detested day job. To some extent, these activities merged, as Scott tested his dictionary knowledge on the houses, sometimes with unusual results.

Apart from his allotment and some challenging improvised copper and fibreglass cutlery which he made, Scott had no leisure activities. Even within his family circle, he tended to confine small talk to his latest technical interest. Persuaded to take a holiday in 1987, only two sights excited much enthusiasm during a long round-trip between the Languedoc and Barcelona: one a factory chimney, the other a timber-truss suspension bridge. However, towards the end of his life, he became a keen participant in the Sunday outings of the Jewish Ramblers, among whose circle his gentle way of speech, his absolute honesty and humility, and his encyclopaedic knowledge of concrete things made him good friends.

When Scott died he was working on Padlock's Broken, a series of portraits of people he admired, with scarcely an engineer among them. His last complete book, co-authored with Clinton van Zyl, Introduction to EMC, on electro-magnetic compatibility and the dangers of electro-magnetic radiation, is due from Butterworth's this summer.

John Scott led a difficult but an interesting and productive life. He was too awkward in society to gather much celebrity, but his work, like the man himself, had a laconic, diffident charm which grew upon his readers and those who knew him. He wasted very little time. *Peter O'Connor*

John Somerville Scott, lexicographer, builder, and chartered mining and structural engineer: born Jullundur, Punjab 22 February 1915; author of *The Penguin Dictionary of Building* 1958, *The Penguin Dictionary of Civil Engineering* 1965, *Dictionary of Waste and Water Treatment* 1981, *First Dictionary of Microcomputing* 1987, (jointly with Clinton van Zyl) *Introduction to EMC* 1997; married 1944 Paulette Charrier (one daughter deceased; marriage dissolved), 1960 Maria O'Connor (nee Steiner; two sons, one daughter; marriage dissolved); died London 12 May 1997.

READING 4: A MAN WITH A MISSION

The Times September 21, 2005

Simon Wiesenthal DECEMBER 31, 1908 - SEPTEMBER 20, 2005

Nazi-hunter who relentlessly pursued war criminals - occasionally falling out with fellow workers in the field

SIMON WIESENTHAL devoted his life to the documentation of the murder of European Jews by the Nazis and to the pursuit of their murderers. In doing so, he became the most famous of “Nazi-hunters”, helping to apprehend Franz Stangl, the commandant of the extermination camp at Treblinka, and Hermine Braunsteiner, of that at Majdanek, along with many others of lesser infamy.

Altogether, through the network of Simon Wiesenthal centres in the US, Europe and Israel, and the Jewish Documentation Centre he established in Vienna, he was credited with bringing more than 1,000 Nazi criminals to justice. He is notably supposed to have supplied the information that was to lead to the apprehension of Adolf Eichmann by Israeli secret services, leading to his trial and execution in Israel in 1962 — though this contention has not gone unchallenged.

His unrelenting pursuit of Nazi fugitives from justice became, over the years, the stuff of thriller novels and films. Frederick Forsyth put Wiesenthal into his novel *The Odessa File* and Ira Levin into his *The Boys from Brazil* — both of which translated into huge box-office earners on the screen. A number of other films were also apparently inspired by him.

Wiesenthal did not, however, win the Nobel Peace Prize for which his work might have seemed to make him a natural candidate. And the very dedication with which he pursued his goals exposed him from time to time in his career to painful and bitter controversy.

Not surprisingly, Wiesenthal became a figure of hate for neo-Nazis. Large sums were offered to kill him. Klaus Barbie (and possibly the PLO) considered assassinating him, and in 1982 a bomb destroyed part of his house and shattered his wife’s health. Hatred from such quarters was to be expected. What distressed Wiesenthal more were quarrels with other Jews and Nazi-hunting groups and individuals who were sceptical of his record. Among these were the Mossad chief Isser Harel and the Romanian and German-born Nazi-hunters Serge and Beate Klarsfeld.

Simon Wiesenthal was born in 1908 at Buczacz, near Lemberg, in the province of Galicia in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. His upbringing was comparatively comfortable. In the early years of the last century, a rising tide of nationalism and anti-Semitism did not as yet pose a physical threat to the Jews of Austria-Hungary. Lemberg (subsequently and successively Lwow in Poland and Lvov in the Soviet Union, now Lviv in Ukraine) was a city where a Jewish family like the one into which Simon Wiesenthal was born could prosper.

That was decidedly less true of Poland, which gained its independence after the First World War, as he grew up. Wiesenthal was educated at a local gymnasium or grammar school, where he met his future wife, Cyla. He then studied architectural engineering at the Technical University of Prague, returning to Lwow to set up in practice despite the increasingly hostile climate.

In his childhood, his family had already known all about invasion. They had fled when Galicia



was conquered by the Russian armies in the opening battles of the First World War, returning with the Austrians in 1917. Then came the Ukrainians, threatening a massacre of Jews, then the Poles, then the Bolsheviks, then the Poles again.

“To survive under such circumstances is a school,” Wiesenthal once said, adding bleakly that: “Nobody could teach us anything new until a couple of liberations later, we got Hitler.”

The arrival of the Germans brought an end to the world Wiesenthal had known, and brought death to millions of Jews, among them more than 80 of his kinsmen. Any Jew who survived the horror needed rare luck. If he later became prominent, there was scope for malicious rumour spread by enemies; and Wiesenthal had many of those.

After he had been rounded up Wiesenthal was sent to a labour camp near Lwow, whose function was to service the railway. Harsh enough by the standards of any other time and place, the camp was, as he recalled, “an island of sanity in a sea of madness”. The two Germans in charge of it were almost humane, and Wiesenthal’s skills as a draughtsman helped to save him.

As the pace of the mass murder of Jews accelerated, Wiesenthal managed to get his wife out of the camp with help from the Polish resistance. He then escaped himself but was recaptured in June 1944. He ascribed his continuing survival to the belief among the SS unit which held him that guarding live prisoners would prevent its members from being sent to the horrors of the Eastern front.

Wiesenthal was then sent on a grim march westwards. By the end of the war he was in the notorious Austrian concentration camp Mauthausen, where he was liberated by the US Army on May 5, 1945, weighing barely seven stone. He was soon recovered enough to help to organise relief work for displaced persons, and as a happy result made contact with his wife, who had ended the war as a forced labourer in Germany.

The Americans also employed him in collecting evidence for war crimes prosecutions, the beginning of his life’s work. But by 1947 American interest in this task was slackening, and Wiesenthal started his own Jewish Historical Documentation Centre in Linz. He closed the Linz centre in 1954, a year after he had become an Austrian citizen, and moved its files to the Yad Vashem archives in Jerusalem.

But he later reopened the centre in Vienna which, as the Jewish Documentation Centre, was to remain his base for the rest of his life. Working out of cramped quarters, with a staff of only three, Wiesenthal painstakingly assembled his dossiers on Nazi war criminals, on the crimes they had committed and on their known or suspected movements since the end of the war.

Gradually he came to be helped by a vast network of contacts who were drawn into his work out of curiosity, a burning desire for justice or motives of revenge. In the case of Stangl he was tipped off by former Nazis with private scores to settle. One of the successes which gave him most pleasure was tracking down the SS officer Joseph Silberbauer, who had arrested the Frank family in Amsterdam in 1944.

Wiesenthal, of course, could only collect the evidence. It was for governments to act on it, and, to his frustration, they often proved dilatory in the extreme.

As Wiesenthal’s fame grew, his name was attached to another large Simon Wiesenthal Centre in Los Angeles. But his relations with this were not close or, later on, even particularly amicable.

Perhaps the most famous of all the cases in which Wiesenthal was concerned was that of Adolf Eichmann, who had been in charge of executing the infamous “final solution”. He was

discovered by agents of Mossad, the Israeli intelligence service, in Buenos Aires, abducted to Israel where he was put on trial and hanged in 1962. It had always been Wiesenthal's position that information that he had unearthed and supplied to the Israelis had played a decisive part in this capture.

But in 1991 the former Mossad chief Isser Harel astonished the world by telling the *Jerusalem Post* that Wiesenthal had "had no role whatsoever" in the capture of Eichmann: "All the information supplied by Wiesenthal, and in anticipation of the operation, was utterly worthless, and sometimes even misleading or of negative value."

Harel implied, too, that Wiesenthal had intervened in a bungling way in the case of Josef Mengele, the infamous Auschwitz doctor, when Mossad were close to capturing him. Certainly it appeared that much of Wiesenthal's information about Mengele was inaccurate, and in 1981 he was still insisting that Mengele was in Paraguay, though "his state of health is not good". Mengele had in fact died of a stroke while swimming in Brazil two years earlier, though this did not become generally known until 1985.

As the years went by, a crescendo of criticism mounted against Wiesenthal, much of it from other Jewish activists and Nazi hunters. Besides Harel and the Klarsfelds these included the World Jewish Congress.

However, many of his critics were compelled to recant some of the more intemperate things they said about him. Among these, in the mid-1970s, was Bruno Kreisky, the Austria Chancellor, himself of Jewish origin but notably detached from Jewish life and interests. When he suggested that Wiesenthal "had another connection to the Gestapo", clearly implying that he had been a collaborator, Wiesenthal sued. Kreisky was compelled publicly to back down, withdrawing his charges in parliament. A similar accusation was made by Wim van Leer in a letter to the *Jerusalem Post* in 1986; he too was forced to apologise.

Wiesenthal's sharpest clash with the World Jewish Congress was over the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kurt Waldheim, as he sought election as Austrian President in 1986. The WJC had been investigating Waldheim's claims about his war service, and shortly before the presidential elections the Austrian weekly magazine *Profil* published an article claiming that he had served in the SA-Reitercorps, a paramilitary unit of the Nazi Party before the war.

Waldheim had also claimed that during the war itself he had been wounded and spent the latter part of it in Austria. Evidence suggested that he had instead served in Greece, where the record of the German military occupation for atrocities against the civilian population, though not implicating him in any crime, cast some shadow over his presidency. Though, as a result, Waldheim was declared virtually persona non grata by many nations during his presidential term, Wiesenthal defended him, claiming that the attacks on Waldheim contributed to the re-emergence of anti-Semitic sentiment in Austria. Wiesenthal castigated the WJC for what he described as its methods: "First accuse, then look for documents."

Almost to the end Wiesenthal remained indefatigable and inexhaustible. In his energetic eighties, he renewed his attack on neo-fascism as it surfaced in many parts of Europe. He denounced mass murder in Bosnia, and claimed one last success when a Balkan war crimes tribunal on the Nuremberg model, something he had called for, was created in The Hague. Only in 2003 did he finally concede that his work of Nazi-hunting was finally complete. "I found the mass murderers

I was looking for, and I have outlived them all. If there are a few I didn't look for, they are now too old and fragile to stand trial. My work is done," he told the Austrian magazine *Format* in April that year.

In February 2004 he was appointed honorary KBE for his work in bringing the perpetrators of the Holocaust to justice. Wiesenthal's wife died in 2003.