

The Convergence of Literary Journalism and the World Wide Web:

The Case of *Blackhawk Down*

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The World Wide Web is an evolving medium. It has the potential to offer an intermedia environment that connects text, images, audio, and video to create previously unexplored interfaces and blur traditional media boundaries.¹ While great opportunity exists for creative storytelling on the Web, these channels are not as seamlessly integrated as they undoubtedly will be in the future. We are witnesses to the ongoing process of media convergence.

This paper examines The *Blackhawk Down* site as a point of convergence of the World Wide Web and literary journalism. The combination of this new medium with a particular genre of writing offers the possibility of a new medium that combines the powerful features of the Web with the storytelling techniques of literary journalism. Just as literary journalism was born of a coming together of journalism and literature, literary journalism and the World Wide Web may come together to create a new hybrid. The exact form of this new genre is not clear, but the *Blackhawk Down* site provides an early tentative model.

The Web is not yet the strong medium for storytelling that it probably will become.² Nevertheless, there are examples of the Web being used for a compelling kind of journalistic storytelling. The *Philadelphia Inquirer's Blackhawk Down* site is one such example.

Reporter Mark Bowden began writing *Blackhawk Down* as a series in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* in late 1997. The series also appeared on the newspaper's Web site, with a "Reply to the Author" section. *Blackhawk Down* is a detailed narrative account of a single episode in the United States' participation in the military action in Somalia in October, 1993, through the eyes of the young soldiers involved. The materials were later repackaged in a CD-ROM sold by the newspaper. Bowden has reworked the material into book format and a motion picture drama based on Bowden's version of the events was released in early 2002.

A major contribution of *Blackhawk Down* is the conveying of the experience of being in combat. War reporting has been a common area of literary journalism, including John Steinbeck writing about World War II, Richard Harding Davis describing the execution by firing squad of Rodriguez in Cuba, Martha Gellhorn reporting on the Spanish Civil War, Svetlana Alexiyevich telling of the zinc coffins returning to the Soviet Union from Afghanistan, and Michael Herr conveying the hallucinatory experience of the Vietnam War. But Bowden's reporting goes further than that of most other writers in taking the reader into the experience of combat. His report is basically a moment-by-moment recounting of a 15-hour firefight between U.S. Rangers and Delta Force troops and hundreds of armed Somalians. Bowden has said his goal was "to report and write it in such a way that it would read like good fiction, but would be rigorously and demonstrably true"³ — a statement of purpose that resembles many definitions of literary journalism.

The detailed reporting of the street fighting and heroic rescue of downed helicopter pilots may have taken on new importance in the light of the events of

September 11, 2001, and the continuing war in Afghanistan, as readers are looking for information on U.S. foreign policy and the skirmishes in which its military forces participate abroad. The Web site (<http://www.inquirer.com/packages/somalia/>) is an excellent example of how a rich, multimedia environment can provide an immersive, interactive experience for users, beyond that which print media can provide.

This paper explores the convergence of literary journalism and the World Wide Web on the *Blackhawk Down* site. What will be the place of literary journalism on the Web? The *Blackhawk Down* site provides one model.

Defining Literary Journalism

The concept of Literary Journalism is one that has sparked much debate. In contrast to standard reportage, which is characterized by objectivity, direct language, and the inverted pyramid style, literary journalism seeks to communicate facts through narrative storytelling and literary techniques. The concept itself has been described with a variety of terms, including new journalism, creative nonfiction, intimate journalism or literary nonfiction. The phrase "New Journalism" was popularized in a book of that title by Tom Wolfe.⁴ He cited the works of talented feature writers of the day — Gay Talese, Jimmy Breslin, Truman Capote, Hunter S. Thompson, Joan Didion, Norman Mailer — as well as examples of his own writing. He also pointed out writers throughout history that had written in a style that would be commensurate with that of literary journalism, including Stephen Crane, George Orwell, Charles Dickens, and John Hersey. Wolfe's own description of this style is that "it just might be possible to write journalism that would...read like a novel."⁵ But, he adds, its

power over fiction writing is "the simple fact that the reader knows all this actually happened."⁶ What the literary journalist tries to do is to convey a deeper truth than the mere presentation of facts can accomplish. Fiction writers can enjoy the license to create, to make things fit, to apply just the appropriate symbol to convey meaning. Literary journalists must work within the boundaries of dialogue and scenarios that they have either witnessed or had conveyed to them by witnesses or documentation of such events.□

The term "new journalism" was not originated by Wolfe. It has roots in history back to 1887 when it was coined by Matthew Arnold to describe the style of W.T. Stead's writing in the *Pall Mall Gazette*.⁷ His writing was brash and reform-minded and much journalism of that time had a tone of advocacy. So, even though attention was called to the form of literary journalism in the 1970s, this was due more to its greater promotion and greater usage of pre-existing techniques rather than the advent of new techniques.

The concept is rarely referred to as "new journalism" anymore. In the remainder of this paper, we will use the term "literary journalism" unless the phrase is used otherwise in a citation. While there is still debate on the exact definition of this type of reporting, we are less concerned with the specific term than with describing its characteristics as broadly and succinctly as possible. Many scholars and writers have offered phrases to characterize its intent: nonfiction with a literary purpose,⁸ journalism that is thoughtfully, artfully, and valuably innovative,⁹ the truth artfully told,¹⁰ creative reportage¹¹, or *journalit*, journalism that is artistic and literary.¹² James E. Murphy identified three specific characteristics of literary journalism: the usage of dramatic literary techniques, subjectivity, and immersion.¹³ Wolfe provided further insight into the first

characteristic by defining four literary techniques that comprise his vision of the new journalism: scene by scene construction, use of extended dialogue, third person point of view, and the use of details symbolic of status.¹⁴ Additional characteristics sometimes mentioned include the ability of literary journalists to focus on the human element and to write interesting, insightful pieces about ordinary people leading ordinary lives. □

Norman Sims has provided another approach to defining literary journalism with the following list of characteristics: immersion reporting, accuracy, voice, structure, responsibility and symbolic representation.¹⁵ Kramer adds that structure counts, mixing primary narrative with tales and digressions to amplify and reframe events.¹⁶ He also notes that literary journalists write in an "intimate voice" that is informal, frank, human, and ironic. □

Regardless of the arguments about whether literary journalism exists as a distinct genre or form, there is evidence of a growing interest in the form of writing as a backlash to the sound bite journalism of the 1980s. In a 1993 study by the American Society of Newspaper Editors, it was found that "when stacked up against other types of newspaper stories, including the traditional inverted pyramid, the narrative was generally better read and better at communicating information."¹⁷ Others attribute the increased demand for literary journalism, whether in newspapers, magazines, or novel format, to the rise in the liberally-educated middle class in America, a large number of people who have a basic training in literature, who also want to be aware of things that are important or should be important to them.¹⁸ Chris Harvey points out that newspaper executives are feeling a competitive push from other media. "Television. Hollywood movies. Even the computer game is interactive story telling. It has a

protagonist and challengers and story structure and rising action and... a denouement."¹⁹ □□□

One additional technique that literary journalism writers use is that of the meaningful digression. Throughout history, writers have employed techniques in print that were non-linear, as in Bronte's use of flashback, Dickens' crosscuts between stories, and Tolstoy's battlefield panoramas. In the area of literary journalism, John McPhee often ventures into long digressions during a piece. In *The Deltoid Pumpkin Seed*, a book about the development of a new type of aircraft, McPhee digresses on the history of airships (dirigibles), and goes into detail about one engineer's childhood interest in building model airplanes.²⁰

Multiperspectival News

An author may choose, for artistic purposes, to write a story from several different points of view. This is easy to do on the Web, with links to the alternative points of view. This feature of the Web allows the production of multiperspectival news that can provide greater depth to reporting and address issues that affect ordinary people in their everyday lives, coincidentally a theme of literary journalism. In *Deciding What's News* in 1979, Herbert Gans introduced the theme of multiperspectival journalism and proposed a two-tier model to achieve that end: a first centralized tier of expanded national news media and a second decentralized tier of niche or specific interest media.²¹ Janet Murray describes a concept similar to multiperspectival news with her idea of a "violence hub,"²² or the use of multiple points of view to show the same event from different angles. Multiperspectival news and a "violence hub" are both more feasible now that the Web offers greater bandwidth for the coverage of issues

and the expansion of the newshole in both a centralized and decentralized fashion. While multiperspectival news is not commonly thought of as a characteristic of literary journalism at present, it may become a characteristic of literary journalism on the Web.

Where is literary journalism found?

Several print publications, including *The New Yorker*, *Esquire*, *New York Magazine*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, and *Harper's* have garnered reputations for narrative or literary journalism. And out of the mainstream, there have always been alternative or niche publications such as *The Utne Reader*, *Rolling Stone* and *The Village Voice* that are willing to allow for more creative expression. The characteristics of these alternative papers have provided a welcome home for the expression of literary journalists: they are dominated by young writers; utilize creative language, layout and publication techniques; and view themselves more as communities with a sense of social responsibility rather than institutions with a profit motive.

It is not surprising that the Internet, then, has provided new forums for literary journalism. *Salon* (www.salon.com) and *Slate* (www.slate.com) are two that spring to mind instantly, but there are many alternative Web sites, and the potential exists for more to explode on the scene to cater to a variety of needs and niches in our society. Two sites that regularly publish nonfiction are *Creative Nonfiction* (creativenonfiction.org), and the *Atlantic Monthly*-hosted *Atlantic Unbound* (www.theatlantic.com).

On many other Web news sites, journalism typically consists of the same content as the print version (termed "shovelware") or pure text with little usage

of hyperlinking and interactivity. There exist great opportunities to expand and enhance the consumption of nonfiction online. Following this phenomenon are mainstream magazines and newspapers, who are rushing to provide content on the Web that is both interesting and engaging within the confines of cyberspace. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* is one of a few newspapers that have experimented with the usage of the Web for more in-depth storytelling. In addition to *Blackhawk Down*, the Inquirer has produced another Web site complement to a five-week series on the drug trafficker Pablo Escobar, entitled *Killing Pablo*.

The *Blackhawk Down* Site

Blackhawk Down is unusual in being such a long piece of writing on the Web. In general, people do not like to read long passages of text on the World Wide Web. The screen resolution still is not very good on most monitors. The experience is more difficult and tiring than reading a book. And yet people will sometimes read very long text works on the Web. This seems to be the case with *Blackhawk Down*. One of the reasons may be the compelling, literary journalism style in which Bowden wrote the piece.

The site is high in user friendliness. Video, audio and other resources are presented through hyperlinks in the text and through a menu in a column to the left of the narrative text.

The site includes the following features: narrative in text form, video clips, audio clips, photos, maps, graphics, a glossary, a Who's Who of people appearing in the series, an index, and an "Ask the Author" bulletin board. Most of these features can be accessed from a menu on the left side of the Web page. There are also hyperlinks embedded in the text that link to various features.

Bowden himself has written, "The Web site version is so dense that Jennifer L. Musser, Philadelphia Online editor, says she took special care to ensure that users could navigate easily through the pages, studded with numerous links to text, audio, Pentagon videos, Inquirer photos, U.S. Army Radio broadcasts, map segments and other information."²³

Research Questions

This study focuses on two questions:

Does the text of the Web site version of *Blackhawk Down* make use of traditional literary journalism techniques? Do the writing and reporting of *Blackhawk Down* (the online version) embody the characteristics of literary journalism?

How do Web elements — the special features of the Web (audio, video, graphics, maps, hyperlinks, "Ask the Author" bulletin board) — help facilitate the goals of literary journalism?

Research Method

The project followed the method of the case study. The first research question was answered by carefully examining the Blackhawk Down site for the use of common techniques of literary journalism, including dramatic story form, third person point of view, dialogue in full, cliffhanger endings, and symbolism.

The second research question was answered by looking for instances in which web techniques were used to help accomplish or enhance traditional goals of literary journalism. As a checklist, we used Wolfe's list of the four devices of the New Journalism and Sims' list of the defining attributes of literary

journalism. We also looked for indications of multiperspectival news, as defined by Gans.

Results

Results dealing with techniques of traditional literary journalism used on the *Blackhawk Down* site — dramatic story form, third person point of view, dialogue in full, cliffhanger endings, and symbolism — are described below.

Dramatic story form. The Web version starts with a narrative lead and continues with dramatic action — storytelling techniques that are basic to literary journalism.

The lead of the first chapter stated: "Staff Sgt. Matt Eversmann's lanky frame was fully extended on the rope for what seemed too long on the way down. Hanging from a hovering Black Hawk helicopter, Eversmann was a full 70 feet above the streets of Mogadishu. His goggles had broken, so his eyes chafed in the thick cloud of dust stirred up by the bird's rotors."

Another example of dramatic story form occurred a little further on: "A round tore into Pilla's forehead and the exit wound blew blood and brain out the back of his skull. His body flopped over into the lap of Spec. Brad Thomas, who cried out in horror.

``Pilla's hit!" he screamed.

The story is told in chronological order, a basic tool for giving strength to narrative.

Third person point of view. This device — basically getting into a subject's head and reporting thoughts and feelings — was described by Wolfe as one of the basic techniques of the New Journalism. Third person point of view

appears at several places in *Blackhawk Down*. Early in the piece (the third paragraph), we are told Eversmann's thoughts and feelings: "He felt a stab of despair." There is also interior monologue, a form of third person point of view in which the reader is presented with the words a character says to himself in his mind: "Somebody's been shot already!"

The narrative even presents third person point of view for a Somalian, militia leader Yousef Dahir Mo'Alim: "The pilot was at their mercy. It occurred to Mo'Alim that this American was more valuable alive than dead."

Dialogue in full. Another one of the four techniques of the New Journalism identified by Wolfe is dialogue in full, which appears frequently throughout *Blackhawk Down*. For instance, this exchange occurs at the time of one of the first deaths of American soldiers:

"Calm down! What's wrong with him?" Struecker couldn't see all the way to the back hatch.

"He's dead!" Moynihan shouted.

"How do you know he's dead? Are you a medic?"

Another example of dialogue appears in a later chapter:

"Shoot him, shoot him," urged Nelson's assistant gunner.

"No, watch," Nelson said. "He'll come right to us."

Cliffhanger endings. Many chapters in *Blackhawk Down* end with cliffhanger endings, a common technique of dramatic fiction. For instance, Chapter 6 ends this way: "The man fired. The grenade hit the Black Hawk's rear rotor. Big chunks of it flew off in the explosion. And then, for a few surprising moments, nothing happened."

Chapter 8 ends this way:

“Terror washed over Durant like nothing he had ever felt. He could hear sounds of an angry mob. The crash had left the clearing littered with debris, and he heard a great shuffling sound as the Somalis pushed it away. There was no more shooting. The others must be dead. Durant knew what had happened to soldiers who had fallen into the hands of angry Somalis. . . . His second weapon was out of rounds. He still had a pistol strapped to his side, but he never even thought to reach for it.

“It was over. He was done.”

Symbolism. The major symbol used in *Blackhawk Down* is the Blackhawk helicopter itself. The helicopter starts out as a symbol of American power and invulnerability, but once two helicopters get shot down, the meaning has changed. The helicopters have become a symbol of America’s vulnerability. The phrase selected for the title of the work, “*Blackhawk Down*,” comes from the jargon of the rangers and expresses the theme of the book in two words, just as Tom Wolfe’s “the right stuff” came from the speech of fighter pilots and expressed in a condensed form the theme of that book.

Overall, the use of numerous literary journalism techniques helped to make the text on the Web site highly readable. It is reasonable to conclude that these techniques helped overcome the resistance of many users to reading lengthy documents on the Web.

Web techniques used to enhance literary journalism

Blackhawk Down utilizes many devices of the World Wide Web to provide a unique and intense multimedia experience for the reader. Audio and video clips are available within the text of the chapters, as well as made easily

accessible via the menu on the left side of the page. Some clips are audio tapes of interviews with soldiers, enabling the reader to hear in the participants' own words the events of that day. This technique can add credibility to the piece as well as provide a more engaging experience for the reader. Videos are available of Pentagon footage or of additional interviews with soldiers. Usage of multimedia can be an excellent complement, particularly when the media are provided by government and external sources, and not simply produced by the author of the piece. In addition, chat rooms or bulletin boards permit two-way communication between author and reader and between readers.

We turn now to the second research question: How do the special Web techniques help enhance the attributes of Literary Journalism?

Scene by scene construction. At least one video clip, apparently taped by a Somali, shows the scene of a battle taking place. We see people in Somali dress milling about on the streets, some with weapons, as a Blackhawk helicopter flies by overhead. One man sticks his gun around a corner and shoots.

Dialogue in full. Audio and video can be used to present actual recorded dialogue. For example, the following radio conversation between Rangers on the ground (Juliet 64) and a helicopter crew (Romeo 64) is available as an audio clip linked to Chapter 24:

R64 THIS IS J64 WE'RE TAKING HEAVY SMALL ARMS FIRE WE NEED
RELIEF NOW AND START EXTRACTING
THIS IS R64 UNDERSTAND YOU NEED TO BE EXTRACTED I'VE
DONE EVERYTHING I CAN TO GET THOSE VEHICLES TO YOU OVER
(J64) ROGER UNDERSTAND BE ADVISED COMMAND ELEMENT
WAS JUST HIT HAVE MORE CASUALTIES OVER

(R64) ROGER

Third person point of view. Audio and video interviews of participants can corroborate people's thoughts. For example, when Bowden writes that "Ranger Mike Goodale was feeling invincible," (Chapter 1) critics of literary journalism might ask how Bowden would know how Goodale was feeling. The accompanying video not only verifies the actual words spoken by the subject, but displays the demeanor and tone with which the comments were made.

In another example, a video clip shows Goodale recalling his thoughts during the battle: "Wait a minute, they're shooting at us. Oh, my God!"

Use of status details. Members of the Armed forces are, of course, highly attuned to differences in status through military rank. Rank is indicated by means of uniforms, insignia, titles of address and the use of words like "Sir." On the *Blackhawk Down* site, the Who's Who section helps remind the reader who belongs to which military unit (Delta Force or Rangers) and the military ranks of various participants.

Immersion reporting. The term *immersion* is one that is shared by literary journalism and the World Wide Web. Murphy describes "immersion" reporting as one of the basic aspect of the New Journalism.²⁴ The word is also used by Murray in describing the features of the Web.²⁵ A Web site permits and encourages inclusion of many kinds of materials, including video, audio, photos, maps, and graphics. The opportunity to include this material allows saturation or immersion reporting. A great deal of information in various media forms may be gathered while conducting the reporting for a literary journalism piece. The archiving function of the Web allows large amounts of text, photos, audio clips and video clips to be stored and to be made accessible to site visitors.

A reporter practicing literary journalism often immerses himself/herself in the environment of the subject for long periods of time, much longer than a typical reporter. This occurs frequently in the sub-genre of investigative literary reporting, in which the reporter sometimes goes undercover, living amongst the subjects. In these cases, the author makes a strong commitment to the subject by giving up large segments of his time, his comforts, and his freedoms, in the best interest of revealing a greater truth.

In turn, the presentation of the work should be equally immersive for the reader. The Web provides many features that will support an immersive environment. Sherry Turkle documents in her research on online communities that computer interactions can provide uninhibited access to emotions, thoughts, and behaviors that mirror real life.²⁶ Many of these immersive features have already been addressed: hyperlinking to audio and video files to increase the sensory experience, and providing an opportunity for the reader to participate in the creation of the story or encouraging the reader to present his/her opinion through either chat room, discussion group, or email. Additionally, graphic files, including maps, timelines, or diagrams, can provide supporting documentation to orient the reader to the subject. When a story is of critical public nature, as is the case with *Blackhawk Down*, the utilization of media to make the experience more immersive takes on a new light. These methods of storytelling might be able to provide a clearer understanding of the nature of U.S. participation in foreign military actions and help create a more educated populace.

Accuracy. Video and audio interviews can provide corroboration of many quotes and details. Video clips linked to Chapter 4 show Sgt. Mike Goodale describing what it was like to shoot a Somali and Ranger Dale Sizemore defining

the rules of engagement. The videos support the text that talks about how they are not supposed to shoot anyone unless they have a gun and how the Somali's took advantage of this knowledge by hiding guns under flowing robes and using women as shields. Goodale's video also shows his ethical dilemma about shooting someone that was not shooting back at him. It includes his comment about asking the medic if they should attend to the person they shot, which is the same as in the text.

Video clips can also add authority to statements from an anonymous source. A number of insightful video clips feature Delta Steve, an eight-year veteran of the Delta Force who did not want to be identified or photographed. He is shown in silhouette, sitting in a dark room with closed venetian blinds behind him. The fact that we can see and hear him gives his statements much more credibility than if they were just quoted in the text and attributed to an anonymous Delta Force member.

The Web also provides an alternative means of providing attributions of sources — the use of links.²⁷ Whenever individuals are mentioned in the text, there is a link to their short biographical sketch in the Who's Who section.

Voice. The Web version of *Blackhawk Down* is written in a conversational, you-are-there, style. The Web allows sources and documentation to be presented discretely through hyperlinks. The glossary defines military terms such as a *chalk*, which is a squad of soldiers, or the JOC, which was the Joint Operations Center. This means these terms can be used in the text in the same way that the Rangers and other soldiers used them, without definitions or explanation. In other words, the glossary frees the writer to write the way the soldiers talked and to use their language without distracting clarification of terms.

Structure. The *Blackhawk Down* site combines features of both linear and non-linear storytelling. There are 29 chapters, which can easily be read one after another in a linear fashion. The literary journalism approach to writing provides a strong narrative drive that motivates the reader to read sequentially. But hyperlinks presented in the menu to the left and in the text itself provide many opportunities to take a side path from the linear story and look at a video clip, listen to an audio clip, or study a relevant map.

Responsibility. Hyperlinks provide useful opportunities to provide verifying information. This encourages accuracy and responsibility in presenting information. Within the chapters, there are many hyperlinks that are available to provide further information to the reader. This story is particularly technical in nature and teeming with military jargon unfamiliar to the civilian population. Hyperlinking to a glossary description of the Black Hawk helicopter ("A Sikorsky-made UH-60 helicopter used primarily as a troop transport. It has a pilot and co-pilot and two crew chiefs who each man miniguns, extremely rapid-fire machine guns that fire up to 4,000 rounds per minute") also provides a drawing of the craft. Links to names of individuals appearing in the story are accompanied by short biographies and photos. Additionally, there are numerous audio and video clips available as links to enhance the story and add to the mood and tone of the scenes.

Digressions. The Web, with its hyperlinking capability, is well suited to handle the digressions characteristic of some literary journalism. The writer may take license to mention a digression but then have a link to the more detailed discussion. *Blackhawk Down* provides many avenues for digression in the usage

of its glossary terms, the multimedia components, and the added comments provided by readers through the "Ask the Author" bulletin board.

Multiperspectival news. Within the text, *Blackhawk Down* incorporates the views of many different Rangers and Delta Force members. A part of the Web site called "Soldier's Eye View" contains photographs taken during the mission in 1993 by some of the soldiers themselves. A Video Clip shows some of the Somali point of view on the raid. We hear further from the Somalis when Clan Elder Abdullah Firimbi explains the anger many Somalis had against the American soldiers: "Their houses had been destroyed."

Two-way communication. The Web allows the author to expand the number of voices contributing to the story. On the *Blackhawk Down* Web site, several chats were organized for the author to communicate with readers. These chats were primarily to gain feedback on the story. In many cases, however, the submissions provided an extension of the story, additional details, or contact with other participants. Often errors in detail were pointed out or clarifications made. For example, during Round 15 of the discussion, a participant only known as Diver identified himself as a Ranger and added this narrative:

Mark, I was one of the Rangers at the 1st crash site. In several of the past questions, people have asked who was in charge at the crash site? There was a Cpt. "C", who was in command of the CSAR bird, who was in charge of the crash site. Cpt Steele attempted to pull his men away from the crash site, but Cpt. "C" wouldn't let that happen. He took control of the site, set up a perimeter with the rangers and CSAR personnel, and coordinated with Cpt. Miller, who was across the street He also scrounged 2 sets of NODs and additional ammo out of the downed helo so we could defend ourselves that night. Another comment, the only animosity between the Rangers and Delta was at the

senior leadership level (Steele & McKnight) and not with the soldiers themselves. Thanks for your time.

This technique offers readers a chance to participate and contribute to the story itself. While this is being practiced on sites for fiction on the Web, its practice in literary journalism, with its focus on facts, is just beginning to be explored. In the context of *Blackhawk Down*, the story was able to take on new life as readers submitted their own experiences in narrative form.

Conclusions □

This case study found that many devices of literary journalism were used in the writing of the text for the Blackhawk Down site. Reporter Mark Bowden has said he wanted his report to read “like good fiction,” and it is obvious that he has used many of the techniques of literary journalism to accomplish that goal.

The study also found instances in which web features were used to enhance the literary journalism aspects of the series. Credit for this enriched treatment goes primarily to two editors.²⁸ The idea of treating the story with multimedia came from then Executive Editor Max King. Jennifer Musser, the editor of Philly Online, designed the web site.

In the future, some of these jobs may converge. The journalist who is gathering the information for the written text may also be looking for opportunities for audio interviews, for video clips, for maps and charts, and for other kinds of multimedia material.

In *Hamlet on the Holodeck*, Janet Murray describes the computer as a “spellbinding storyteller.” She envisions a new kind of teller of tales, “one that is half hacker, half bard.”²⁹ She notes that each identity represents its own version

of creativity and meaning. The case of *Blackhawk Down* clearly identifies the opportunity for media convergence from newspaper to Web to novel format to film. This multiple distribution can only increase the audience for and the appreciation of the practice of literary journalism.

The Web is now in a stage of infancy, or what Murray calls "incunabula," referencing the name given to materials produced during the first 50 years after Gutenberg's invention of the printing press. New concepts and designs are in various stages of experimentation. Creative structures are already being developed on the Web to support lengthy pieces. *Blackhawk Down* was produced at a time early in the Internet's design phase, with less attention paid to layout and scrolling. It is, however, one example of some of the most extensive and relevant uses of the features of hyperlinking, interactivity, and multimedia. And it is a vivid demonstration of how a multimedia web presentation can greatly enhance the telling of a journalism story.

Literary journalism seems highly compatible with the Web. In the future, we will probably see more convergence of this genre and this medium. Web pages can be enhanced and made more readable by the use of narrative and other techniques of literary journalism. And it is likely that literary journalism can and will be taken in new directions by the techniques and devices of the Web.

¹ Dick Higgins, "Intermedia." Available at:

<http://muse.jhu.edu/demo/len/34.1higgins.html>

² Janet H. Murray, *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace* (New York: The Free Press, 1997).

³ Mark Bowden, "Narrative Journalism Goes Multimedia," *Nieman Reports*, Vol. 54, No. 3, Fall 2000. Available at: <http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/00-3Nrfall/Goes-Multimedia.html>

⁴ Tom Wolfe, *The New Journalism: With an Anthology*, eds. Tom Wolfe and E. W. Johnson (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), 3-36.

⁵ *Ibid*, p. 9.

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 34.

⁷ Kevin Kerrane, "Making Facts Dance," *The Art of Fact* (New York: Touchstone, 1997), 17.

⁸ Ronald Weber, *The Literature of Fact* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1980).

⁹ Ben Yagoda, "Preface," *The Art of Fact* (New York: Touchstone, 1997).

¹⁰ Kerrane, "Making Facts Dance."

¹¹ Chris Harvey, "Tom Wolfe's Revenge: The Renewed Interest in Literary Journalism," *American Journalism Review*, October, 1994, p. 41.

¹² Seymour Krim, "The Newspaper as Literature/Literature as Leadership," in Ronald Weber, ed., *The Reporter as Artist: A Look at the New Journalism Controversy* (New York: Hastings House, 1974).

¹³ James E. Murphy, "The New Journalism: A Critical Perspective," paper presented to the Association for Education in Journalism, San Diego, 1974, p. 16.

¹⁴ Wolfe, *The New Journalism*, pp. 31-32.

¹⁵ Norman Sims, "The Art of Literary Journalism," in Norman Sims and Mark Kramer, eds., *Literary Journalism: A New Collection of the Best American Nonfiction* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1995), p. 9.

¹⁶ Mark Kramer, "Breakable Rules for Literary Journalists," in Norman Sims and Mark Kramer, eds., *Literary Journalism: A New Collection of the Best American Nonfiction* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1995).

¹⁷ Harvey, "Tom Wolfe's Revenge," p. 41.

¹⁸ Ronald Weber, "the Reporter as Artist," in Ronald Weber, ed., *The Reporter as Artist: A Look at the New Journalism Controversy* (New York: Hastings House, 1974).

¹⁹ Harvey, "Tom Wolfe's Revenge," p. 46.

²⁰ John McPhee, *The Deltoid Pumpkin Seed* (New York: Noonday Press, 1973).

²¹ Herbert Gans, *Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek, and Time* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1979), pp. 317-318.

²² Murray, *Hamlet on the Holodeck*.

²³ Bowden, "Narrative Journalism Goes Multimedia."

²⁴ Murphy, "The New Journalism."

²⁵ Murray, *Hamlet on the Holodeck*.

²⁶ Sherry Turkle, *The Second Self: Computers and the Human Spirit* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995).

²⁷ Roy Peter Clark, "Squeezing the Narrative; Exploring the Tension Between Storytelling and Attribution." Oct. 17, 2001. Available at:

<http://63.208.24.134/Terrorism/Aroy21.htm>

²⁸ Bowden, "Narrative Journalism Goes Multimedia."

²⁹ Murray, *Hamlet on the Holodeck*.