**Literary Journalism Assignment**

Literary journalism uses the techniques of journalism (such as interviews and reviews) in order to look outside of the straight forward, objective world that journalism creates. It uses literary practices to capture the scene/setting of the assignment or the persona of the person being interviewed. It can often be narrative or heavily imagistic. Another important aspect of literary journalism is that it often stretches the idea of "objective facts" in order to better reflect real life and real people. In other words, while journalism is about being completely objective, literary journalism says that people can't be objective because they already have their own subjective views about the world. Therefore, by taking the "objectiveness" out of the journalistic process, the writer is being more truthful.

**Assignment:**

Write a piece of literary journalism ranging in 750-2000 words in which YOU are not the center of the story. You might be part of the story, or just the writer telling someone else’s story. In order to accurately capture the details of a story that is not solely your own, you will need to conduct research.

Your research must involve at least one interview. This could be with the subject of the story or someone close to them (if, for example, you are writing about someone who is dead). Focus on the who, what, where, where, why, and how. You’ll need to know before forming a set of questions what idea or incident you hope to write about in your piece. Be prepared to ask follow up questions and really dig for details. Asking your interview subject to elaborate with sensory details is often helpful. Take notes during your interview—I’d like you to turn them in with your completed essay.

Other research might involve online research about time period, place, etc. Looking at photographs or videos. Even trying to put yourself in the shoes of your subject to recreate the experience, if possible.

Even though you aren’t the subject of the story, don’t be afraid to include some scene. Dialogue may be tricky or impossible here, though you may quote from your interview. It’s more likely that you’ll use descriptions from what your subject has shared in order to place the reader in the situation. You can also use imagery and metaphor to capture emotion. Feel free to use cues to the reader when you are unsure of specifics (i.e. I wasn’t there, but… OR From what I have been told… OR Jane Doe isn’t sure she fully remembers…). Think ultimately about what is at the heart of the story, what will resonate with an outside reader, and use your creativity to bring that to the surface.

**Format**:

Title your essay

Double space

Include word count in your heading on page 1

Include last name, title, and page number on all pages