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1994

### MBL Science Writing Fellowship Report

Bryon H. Waksman

Boyce Rensberger

Robert D. Goldman

Pamela L. Clapp

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MARINE BIOLOGICAL LABORATORY

WOODS HOLE • MASSACHUSETTS • 02543 • (508) 548-3705

SCIENCE WRITING FELLOWSHIPS PROGRAM

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*New York Times* and Freelance

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THOMAS POLLARD  
Johns Hopkins University

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Associated Press

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Medical Center

PROGRAM STAFF

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Co-Director  
Northwestern University

BOYCE RENSBERGER, M.S.  
Co-Director  
*The Washington Post*

PAMELA CLAPP  
Administrative Director  
Marine Biological Laboratory

September 27, 1994

Dear Friends,

Enclosed is the 1994 Report of the Marine Biological Laboratory's Science Writing Fellowships Program. We hope you will find it interesting. Please feel free to contact me or any of our program directors or advisors if you'd like to know more about our program.

Sincerely yours,

Pamela Clapp  
Administrative Director

enc.

## SCIENCE WRITING FELLOWSHIPS PROGRAM

### 1994 Report

Byron H. Waksman, M.D.

Robert D. Goldman, Ph.D.

Boyce Rensberger, M.S.

Pamela L. Clapp, B.S.

#### *Introduction*

The Science Writing Fellowships Program (SWFP) at the Marine Biological Laboratory continued in its ninth year the programmatic elements that have been successful in previous years, with minor but significant changes. (Our reports for earlier years are available upon request.)

#### *Program*

- The program is described in the attached Program Announcement 1994. The focus of the program remained the intensive five-day "hands-on" laboratory, designed for the fellows and taught by Dr. Robert Goldman and his colleagues from Northwestern University (see attached list). This laboratory emphasizes cell and molecular biology techniques and concepts basic to contemporary biomedical research. A single fellow with a strong background in science was permitted to skip the hands-on laboratory itself but attended all other exercises with the group and developed an individual program of laboratory and other visits during the first week.
- The hands-on laboratory (HOL) week was preceded by an informational day, in which the fellows toured MBL laboratory and library facilities, heard lectures by a number of MBL scientists, and had the opportunity to meet each other and the teaching staff. In mid-week there was a two-day break with time devoted to a lecture/discussion of contemporary immunologic research and its application to study of autoimmune diseases by Byron Waksman; an extended visit to the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution; discussions and demonstrations of environmental research by scientists of the MBL's Ecosystems Center; and a collecting trip.

- The hands-on laboratory was also accompanied by a series of evening discussions, under the guidance of Boyce Rensberger, dealing with such topics as how scientists make decisions about what experiments to undertake and funding problems facing today's scientists in the U. S. One evening featured a role-playing game between the journalists as "animal rights activists" and the scientists as putative faculty of Generic State University (a very instructive exercise). The half-day immunology presentation included an extensive discussion of the use of animals in disease-oriented research.
- For seven of the fellows, the HOL week represented their entire exposure to science in Woods Hole. Of the remainder, several were assigned for up to three additional weeks in the MBL courses in Physiology, Parasitism, Microbial Diversity, and Neural Science and Behavior. One fellow traveled to Alaska to participate, for two weeks, in the long-term research program of the MBL's Ecosystems Center at Toolik Lake. Two others, over the course of three weeks, visited and participated in environmental research carried on by Ecosystems Center scientists at the Harvard Forest and Plum Island and other estuarine sites.

### *Announcements and Applications*

The program was announced in a variety of journals, magazines, and newsletters (see attached list) commonly read by science journalists both in the U. S. and abroad. A particular effort was mounted to reach environmental journalists and potential applicants from various minority groups. This publicity effort led to 148 requests for applications; 29 journalists actually applied for the program. A survey of those who inquired elicited a variety of reasons for failure to apply, most commonly scheduling conflicts or the feeling that the program was too intense or too long.

### *Fellows*

Fourteen fellows—nine men and five women—were selected in 1994 from the group of 29 applicants, including one Canadian, one Indian, and one Japanese (see attached list). The group included a single American minority (Hispanic) journalist from Oregon. Three Advisory Committee members (Peggy Girshman, Howard Hiatt, Gerald Weissmann) aided Program staff in the selection process. The fellows included four newspaper reporters, three science writers for magazines, one magazine editor, one

science reporter for radio and one for TV, one producer of science films for use in schools, one publisher/writer of a science newsletter, and two freelance writers.

Thirteen fellows took the HOL course. The fourteenth was newsletter publisher, David Zimmerman, as noted above, who did not participate. All of the seven fellows who continued after the HOL received course or field assignments that corresponded to their preferences, as expressed in their applications.

One of our 1994 Fellows, Richard Saltus of *The Boston Globe*, is a former fellow of the Knight Science Journalism Program at MIT.

### *Funding*

Once again funding was derived from multiple sources (see two attached lists) and was sufficient to cover the expenses associated with 12 of the 14 fellows accepted in the 1994 program. The fellows from India and Japan paid for their own travel to Woods Hole.

### *Advisory Committee*

The Advisory Committee, made up of prominent journalists and scientists, met June 27, 1994 at the MBL. The committee's 1994 membership is shown in the attached list. Bill Kovach, who served four years as Committee Chair, was replaced by Eugene Roberts, regarded by many as the United States' most distinguished newspaper journalist. Mr. Roberts was named Managing Editor of *The New York Times* earlier this year. He intends to continue his participation as Chairman of the Committee and, with Boyce Rensberger, has mounted an active fund-raising effort on behalf of the program. Tom Pollard will be replaced by Herbert Borman, Yale University, or another highly qualified environmental scientist. Next year's Admissions Committee will consist of Blakeslee, Raeburn, Selby, and Weissmann. The committee made policy recommendations that will be incorporated in plans for 1994 (as detailed below).

### *Plans for 1995*

- The major modifications made in 1994 in the existing program (an introductory day of tours and lectures, splitting the HOL week by two days devoted to immunology, ecological/environmental science, additional laboratory visits, and a field trip) will be continued in future years.
- An increased effort will be made to recruit foreign journalists, who appeared to enrich the program by their presence, and to assist them in finding funding for their travel. The program will now be announced on the Internet. Also, the policy of permitting a few participants with a strong background in science to skip the HOL will be continued.
- The development of a second HOL emphasizing techniques of ecological/environmental research, as described in our 1993 report, was endorsed by the Committee and fund-raising efforts to make this possible are underway. If funding is obtained, it will be possible to accept 3-5 additional journalists/fellows (environmentally oriented) in future years, and to send some of them to local sites of environmental research (on soil and water pollution) and others to remote sites (global environmental change).
- Committee member Lew Frederick is approaching academic institutions in the Northwest in the hope of raising funds to support a regional fellow annually in the HOL. The Committee felt that regional restriction of funds does not pose a problem, as long as the criteria for selection of fellows are not relaxed.
- Funding of the SWFP by professional societies (currently approximately ten) has also frequently been accompanied by conditions (e. g. the request that a fellow be designated to attend the particular society's annual meeting). With Committee backing, the program administrators pass on such requests/conditions as "invitations" to the group of fellows and leave it to their individual discretion whether to involve themselves.

*Attachments*

Program Announcement

Hands-On Laboratory Instructors

Advertising Summary

1994 Science Writing Fellows

1994 Funding Sources

Funding 1986 to 1993

1994 Advisory Committee Members



## The Marine Biological Laboratory Science Writing Fellowships Program

### Science Writing Fellowships Program

Marine Biological Laboratory  
Woods Hole, Massachusetts 02543  
(508) 548-3705 ext. 423  
FAX: (508) 457-1924  
E-mail: pclapp@hoh.mbl.edu

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*The MBL Science Writing Fellowships offer summer residencies of up to eight weeks in a program designed to increase public understanding of biology and biomedicine.*

#### Purposes:

The Science Writing Fellowships Program provides Fellows with an opportunity to observe and participate in the process of science by working closely with investigators carrying out research and with graduate students learning the latest research methods. The interaction between science writers and scientists is a two-way street: the writers gain a deeper familiarity both with details of the science and the way scientists think and do the experiments, and the scientists come to understand the influences and constraints that shape the way science is reported to the public.

#### Activities and Opportunities:

1. **THE HANDS-ON LABORATORY** is an intensive six-day course to introduce fellows to some of the research techniques of cell and molecular biology used throughout basic biomedical science. Topics covered include culturing cells, light and electron microscopy, gel electrophoresis, immunoblotting, immunofluorescence staining, and cloning and sequencing genes. Ideally, all Fellows will begin their fellowship with this course—which is offered only once, from Saturday, June 4 to Sunday, June 12—and then may move on to one of the options below.

*This laboratory course is open to applicants who are not free to carry out a full fellowship program. Those accepted for the lab course are reimbursed for their travel to and from Woods Hole, and will be housed in the MBL Conference Center. Journalists interested in this component of the program must also complete the attached application.*

2. **MBL COURSES AND LABS:** Fellows are encouraged to spend three to seven additional weeks in Woods Hole in one of three formats. Some may choose to devote full time to one of the courses the MBL offers for graduate students and more advanced scientists in parasitology, embryology, marine ecology, neurobiology, or physiology. (Shorter courses covering a variety of topics are also offered by the MBL during the summer. Please consult the enclosed *Guide to Research and Education* for descriptions of all courses.) Some may prefer to be assigned to the laboratory of a scientist working on a current research project. And some may prefer to divide their time between a course and a working laboratory. Opportunities are also available for journalists in the MBL's

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Ecosystems Center (see descriptions in the *Guide to Research and Education* and the *Ecosystems Center Annual Report*). Journalists interested in working with Ecosystems scientists, either in Woods Hole or Alaska, should so indicate in section "11 C" of the attached application.

MBL courses are intended for advanced graduate students and postdocs who are prepared to put in long days. Typical schedules begin at 8:30 a.m. and end late in the evening, six days a week. There are some lectures, but most time is spent in the laboratory.

3. FELLOWS PANEL: Fellows who will be in residence at the MBL for at least four weeks will participate in a panel presentation scheduled for the Tuesday before July 4th. Each Fellow will speak on a topic of his/her own choice, relevant to science journalism (either print or broadcast).

**Eligibility:**

A limited number of fellowships are available for the summer of 1994. Applicants must be professional science writers with at least two years experience. Preference will be given to print or broadcast journalists with staff positions, although freelancers will be considered. A basic knowledge of biological principles and methods will be advantageous, but is not essential. Participation in the Hands-On Laboratory will be waived for applicants with advanced degrees in biology or extensive laboratory training or Fellows who have previously completed this course. Staff seniority is also not a criterion. Applications from minority group members and women are strongly encouraged.

**Program Staff:**

Program Director: Dr. Byron Waksman, visiting scientist, Harvard University and New York University; Associate Directors: Dr. Robert Goldman, chairman, Departments of Cell, Molecular, and Structural Biology, Northwestern University ("Hands-On" Laboratory Course director), and Mr. Boyce Rensberger, science editor, *The Washington Post*; Administrative Director: Ms. Pamela Clapp, managing editor, *The Biological Bulletin*, Marine Biological Laboratory.

**Support:**

Financial support for all Fellows (one, four, or eight weeks) includes the cost of the laboratory course, tuition, housing (for both unaccompanied Fellows and those accompanied by their families), transportation to and from Woods Hole (for the Fellow only), and library fees. It is expected that Fellows from other countries will pay their own travel to the U.S.

**Selection Schedule:**

**Eight copies of application and supplemental material are to be submitted and postmarked no later than February 1, 1994.** The applications will be reviewed by the MBL Science Writing Fellowships Program Selection Committee, which is composed of MBL staff and senior members of the scientific and science writing communities. Notification of selection will be made in early April.

*We gratefully acknowledge the support of the following companies, foundations, and societies:*

American Academy of Neurology	Association of Anatomy Cell Biology
American Association of Anatomists	Neurobiology Chairpersons
American Association of Immunologists	Biophysical Society
American Federation of Clinical Research	Charles A. Dana Foundation
American Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology	Foundation for Microbiology
American Society for Cell Biology	The Friendship Fund
American Society of Investigative Pathology	New York Times Foundation
American Society of Neurochemistry	Sandoz
	Alfred P. Sloan Foundation
	The Washington Post Company

I am applying for the one-week laboratory course ONLY.           I am applying for a      4-wk;      8-wk fellowship.

# APPLICATION

## Science Writing Fellowships Program

Marine Biological Laboratory  
Woods Hole, MA 02543  
(508) 548-3705 ext. 423  
FAX: (508) 457-1924

*Applications must be postmarked no later than February 1, 1994. Please type your application.*

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_

2. Marital Status \_\_\_\_\_ No. of Children/Ages \_\_\_\_\_  
*(to be completed by applicants who would be accompanied by their families)*

3. Present Position \_\_\_\_\_

4. Business Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
FAX # \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

5. Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
FAX # \_\_\_\_\_

6. Education (name, location, major, year)

Secondary \_\_\_\_\_

Undergraduate \_\_\_\_\_

Graduate \_\_\_\_\_

7. Employment (beginning with present position)

Organization	Dates	Position	Immediate Supervisor

8. Major Publications, Fellowships, or Awards

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. I plan to be in residence at the MBL for \_\_\_\_\_ weeks (note: Long-term fellowships are awarded for no more than eight weeks or less than four weeks. Writers who take only the laboratory course will be in residence for no longer than eight days.)

10. I am a member of the following minority group:  Black  Hispanic  Native American  Asian

11. Supplemental Material (*eight copies of each, collated by section A-D.*)

A. Statement (not to exceed 1500 words) describing your journalistic experience and professional goals, and explaining how this fellowship or laboratory course will benefit your career. (*To be completed by all applicants.*)

B. A list of science courses taken after high school and a brief description of any science laboratory experience you have had. (*To be completed by all applicants.*)

C. Your choice of at least two major course areas in which you would be most interested (*e.g., Embryology, Marine Ecology, Biology of Parasitism, Neurobiology, or Physiology*), and the reason for your choice — see *Guide to Research and Education* for complete list of summer courses and course descriptions. If you are interested in an Ecosystems Center Fellowship, please list two choices of research areas in which you would like to work (see enclosed *Annual Report*) and the reason for your choices. (*To be completed by applicants for 4- or 8-week fellowships only.*)

D. Four samples of your science writing. At least half of the samples should have been published within the last two years. Do not send anything irreplaceable. Do not send works-in-progress or other unpublished works or elaborate presentations such as complete books, newspapers, magazines, or scrapbooks. Broadcast work should be on 3/4 or 1/2 inch videocassette (2 copies required) or audio cassette, with total running time of 30 minutes or less. Editors or broadcast news directors should send samples with brief descriptions of their involvement in each story. Cassettes will be returned after the Fellows are announced. (*To be completed by all applicants.*)

E. Three confidential letters of recommendation, mailed by the evaluators directly to the MBL Science Writing Fellowships Program, no later than February 1. Where possible, one letter should be from a current or recent supervisor of your professional work. Please indicate below the names, affiliations, and telephone numbers of those who will be submitting letters on your behalf. (*To be provided for all applicants.*)

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I submit this information in connection with my application for an MBL Science Writing Fellowship, with the understanding that the number and selection of Fellows and their final acceptance to the program lie entirely within the discretion of the MBL Science Writing Fellowships Program Selection Committee and the Marine Biological Laboratory.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*The Marine Biological Laboratory does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, sexual or affectional preference, or handicap, in admission to, access to, employment in, or treatment in, any of its programs or activities.*

I heard about the Science Writing Fellowships Program from: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Colleague  
\_\_\_\_\_ Program flyer  
\_\_\_\_\_ Advertisement (specify source) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

***Hands-On Laboratory Instructors—1994***

**Director:**

Robert D. Goldman, Chairman and Stephen Walter Ranson Professor, CMS  
Biology, Northwestern University

**Associate Director:**

Rex L. Chisholm, Vice Chairman and Associate Professor, CMS Biology,  
Northwestern University

**Instructors:**

Satya Khuon, Northwestern University

Robert Moir, Northwestern University

Puneet Opal, Northwestern University

Leda Trivinos, Northwestern University

**Evening Discussion Leader:**

Boyce Rensberger, Science Writer, *The Washington Post*

*Advertising Summary: 1994 Program*

**Paid Advertising:**

NASW Newsletter (Fall)

American Journalism Review (AJR's Awards, Grants & Scholarships special section)

National Association of Black Journalists

**Complimentary Advertising or Newsletter Announcement**

Dow Jones Journalism Career and Scholarship Guide

Society of Environmental Journalists

**Promotional Flyers to:**

NASW Mailing List (approx. 800)

MBL Mailing List (approx. 200)

Asian American Journalists Association (480)

Native American Journalists Association

**Foreign Journalists:**

*Information sent to:*

Jose Barquin at Institute of International Education

Federation Internationale des Editeurs de Journaux

Japan Newspaper Publishers and Editors Association

Inter American Press Association

UN Correspondents Association

Center for Foreign Journalists (Mishlawi—Newsletter)

EUSJA—European Union of Science Journalists' Associations (Mr. Arthur Bourne)

ISWA—International Science Writers Association (Mr. Howard Lewis)

**Science Writing Fellowships Program**

**1994**

*Hands-On Laboratory Fellows*

• **Cara Birrittieri**  
New England Cable News  
160 Wells Ave.  
Newton, MA 02159

• **Giovanna Breu**  
*People* magazine  
303 East Ohio Street  
Chicago, IL 60614

• **S. Paul Gasek, Jr.**  
1002 Stony Brook Rd.  
Brewster, MA 02631

• **Scott LaFee**  
*San Diego Union-Tribune*  
PO Box 191  
San Diego, CA 92112

• **Ed Regis**  
Western Maryland College  
2 College Hill  
Westminster, MD 21157

*Alaska Fellow*

• **Richard Stone**  
*Science* magazine  
1333 H Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20005

*Four-Week Fellows*

• **Mr. Pallava Bagla**  
Publications & Information Directorate  
New Delhi-110 012, India

Course: Parasitism

• **Yvonne Baskin**  
1106 Second St., Ste. 123  
Encinitas, CA 92024

Lab: Ecosystems Ctr.

• **Alberto Enriques**  
Mail Tribune  
PO Box 1108  
Medford, OR 97501

Course: Microbial Diversity

• **Richard Saltus**  
*The Boston Globe*  
PO Box 2378  
Boston, MA 02107

Course: Physiology

• **Ms. Mutsumi Yoshida**  
*Newton* magazine  
Hourai Building, 20  
Nishishinjuku-1  
Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160, JAPAN

Course: Neural Systems &  
Behavior

• **David Zimmerman**  
*PROBE* magazine  
139 W 13th St., #6  
New York, NY 10011-7856

Lab: Ecosystems

## ***1994 Funding Sources***

Charles A. Dana Foundation  
New York Times Foundation  
American Society for Cell Biology  
Association for Research in Vision and  
Ophthalmology  
Burroughs Wellcome Fund  
The American Academy of Neurology  
Education & Research Foundation  
American Association of Immunologists  
Biophysical Society

American Society for Neurochemistry  
Washington Post Company  
Foundation for Microbiology  
American Society for Microbiology  
Association of Anatomy, Cell Biology,  
Neurobiology Chairpersons  
American Society for Investigative Pathology  
Merck and Co.  
American Society for Biochemistry and  
Molecular Biology



*Funding Sources of the  
Science Writing Fellowships Program  
1986 to 1993*

*— Foundations —*

Alfred P. Sloan Foundation  
Edna McConnell Clark Foundation  
The Friendship Fund

Carnegie Corporation of New York  
Foundation for Microbiology  
Charles A. Dana Foundation

*— Professional Societies —*

American Academy of Neurology  
American Society of Investigative Pathology  
American Society for Neurochemistry  
Long-Term Ecological Research (LTER)  
Association of Anatomy Cell Biology Neurobiology  
Chairpersons  
American Academy of Neurology  
American Federation of Clinical Research

American Association of Immunologists  
American Society for Cell Biology  
Biophysical Society  
Society of General Physiologists  
American Association of Anatomists  
American Society of Biochemistry and  
Molecular Biology

*— Journalism Foundations/Companies —*

New York Times Foundation

Washington Post Company

*— Corporate Foundations —*

Merck & Co.

Sandoz

***1994 Science Writing Fellowships Program***

***Advisory Committee***

**Chair:**

Eugene Roberts, Managing Editor, *The New York Times*, New York, NY

**Journalists:**

Sandra Blakeslee, *The New York Times*, Santa Fe, NM

Lew Frederick, Portland Public Schools, Portland, OR

Peggy Girshman, National Public Radio, Washington, DC

Max Gomez, WCBS-TV, New York, NY

Victor McElheny, Knight Journalism Fellowships, Cambridge, MA

Paul Raeburn, Associated Press, New York, NY

**Scientists:**

Howard Hiatt, Brigham & Women's Hospital, Boston, MA

Millie Hughes-Fulford, University of California, San Francisco, CA

Cecily Selby, New York University, NY

Gerald Weissmann, New York University Medical Center, New York, NY

**Staff:**

Pamela Clapp, Administrative Director, MBL

Robert Goldman, Co-director, Northwestern University

Boyce Rensberger, Co-director, *The Washington Post*

Byron Waksman, Director, New York and Harvard Universities