

‘Just as I Am’? Marshall Frady’s Making of *Billy Graham*

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A moral conundrum at the heart of literary journalism is the writer’s relationship with his or her main character. The writer of this higher order of nonfiction needs to get inside the head of the individual or individuals being written about. This relationship-to-source is different from that of the newsroom correspondent. That more common journalistic relationship has its own set of ethical and legal complexities, balancing protection of a source against a public interest in disclosure.¹ But for the literary journalist, the main source of information is usually the story’s subject as well as its source, unless the work’s central figure is never interviewed. (In that case, the work can be an attack, like Tom Wolfe’s 1965 profile of *New Yorker* editor William Shawn, or a tour de force, like Gay Talese’s legendary “Frank Sinatra Has a Cold” in 1966, assignments in which the subjects refused to cooperate.²) Furthermore, the literary journalist usually lacks the authority of an overriding public good. Whether the protagonist is a celebrity, a political superstar or a nobody, this is “intimate journalism,” requiring what Walt Harrington calls “a kind of invasive interviewing” and the subject’s “enthusiastic involvement.”³ The writer may also need to ask probing, personal, or seemingly trivial questions of the subject’s kinfolk and associates. The closeness requires a variety of methods to win the trust, if not enthusiastic involvement, of the subject and other sources. The writer must be something of a salesman, a gentleman caller, or a hustler. He will try to radiate trustworthiness, backed by past writings and third-party testimonials, or play on a subject’s vanity. The writer might try to achieve a level of familiarity that makes him or her seem to vanish into the background. Janet Malcolm describes these devices and “disingenuousnesses” as being played out in a fever of anxiety on the part of both the writer and the subject.⁴ The purpose of all this is not true friendship or intimacy, of course, but the amassing of facts and impressions. And a lot of facts and impressions must be gathered, for the literary journalist’s art is to select only those that deliver the goods to the reader. The writer might well remain on friendly terms with the source after publication; the writer’s double-ness does not necessarily become a double-cross. Still, Malcolm’s cruel curse is hard to shake off in the case of literary journalism, that the process is “morally indefensible.”⁵

Marshall Frady provides a beguiling case study of this dilemma, specifically around the reporting, writing and publication of his biography of Billy Graham by Little, Brown in 1979. Frady died of cancer in 2004, leaving a massive archive of personal papers that document the mixed successes and gyrations of his extraordinarily productive career.⁶ Frady's talent for writing in a lavish style all his own – a high rhetoric of the American South using on-the-ground reporting from civil-rights-era dramas and personalities – was recognized in the magazine world as early as 1964, when he began reporting for *Newsweek* at age 24.

His idea of writing a novelistic biography of the world-renown evangelist Billy Graham had many foreshadowings. Frady was the only son of a Southern Baptist preacher, J. Yates Frady, who pastored a sequence of churches around the piedmont scrublands of South Carolina and Georgia in the 1940s and '50s. From his father, he absorbed a way of using language to sway moods, evoke biblical dimensions in everyday life and give spiritual matters an incarnation in metaphor. He was smote as a teen by literary ambition rather than the Holy Spirit. But he also retained an enduring sense of sin in a life that would be full of mischief and infidelities, an exhilaration more than a shame that he described as lurking “like the distant steaming of a robust and unabashed calliope.”⁷ The essay containing that fanciful image, from a first-person account that ran in *Mademoiselle* in 1970, “Growing up a Baptist,” offended his parents. His father, in particular, felt that the piece mocked Southern Baptists and dismissed his gospel-preaching as a grand delusion. The son tried to repair the damage in a letter home, insisting the piece was not about the Southern Baptist Church or Southern Baptists in general, but about his own experience. “I just don't understand your dismay,” he wrote. “The editor wrote me, before the piece appeared, that she envied me my upbringing, that she wished she had grown up in [so] full and rich and intense – and integrity-conscious – an atmosphere, and she absolutely was not being condescending or patronizing.” In this four-page typed letter (typical of some 40 years of letter-writing in his archived papers), Frady spells out a sort of personal theology for his own literary journalism.

Now, there may be some for whom “the mixture of a lie ever giveth pleasure,” but I can tell you that it never giveth pleasure to any serious writer – in fact, there is nothing more lethal and deadening to what every serious writer is trying to do than even the faintest traces of a lie in his work; nothing more alien than a lie, because his business – what impels him to be a writer in the first place – is, so far as he is able, no less than telling the truth as God Himself would be telling it (which may also be the real writer's supreme conceit, but there it is anyway). . . “If you would just stick to the facts,” you say. But I don't think reality consists of facts. And anyway, where do you suppose all that imagination – all these adjectives – came from in the first place? For what may have been the extravagant and high emotionalism of that piece, you have to thank the high emotionalism of where I came from – which is what I was talking about in the piece.⁸

One of the first sallies he took out of the Atlanta bureau of *Newsweek* was for the profile of a 16-year-old male evangelist in Campbell's Creek, West Virginia, in 1964. The dispatch he sent to the New York office was so bewitching, it took on a life of its own, according to several letters from Michael Janeway, then a staff writer at *Newsweek* assigned to re-write the profile.⁹ Under *Newsweek's* system at the time, bureau reporters telexed long, detailed files that were then re-written, shortened, and sometimes blended with other files to run without by-lines. Janeway, who told Frady he wept to cut back on his prose, said that the original file had so impressed senior editor Jack Kroll that he passed it around to other editors until "I hear your name echoing through the corridors occasionally." Jim Cannon, the head of correspondents, sent copies to all the bureaus saying he wanted reporting of that caliber in the future. Janeway also discreetly sent Frady's file to *Esquire* and got a "very encouraging" letter back, which he relayed to Frady. "If you follow *Esquire* you have probably noticed that they seem open to any new talent, which they then stir with N. Mailer's or some other philosopher's turgid works," Janeway wrote. "Anyway, I hope you keep in touch with them."¹⁰ Soon after, Janeway moved on to become an associate editor at *The Atlantic Monthly* in Boston, and trumpeted Frady there. "Everybody addicted to the Baptist piece," he wrote Frady in 1966. "[Atlantic executive editor] Bob Manning says go ahead, shoot for a top of 4,500 words." Frady had apparently proposed a story for *The Atlantic* that would examine together his two obsessions: Southern Baptists and the civil rights movement.¹¹ (One of Frady's first assignments with *Newsweek*, besides the West Virginia file, was covering Martin Luther King Jr.'s disastrous campaign in St. Augustine, Fla.) The theme of Frady's *Atlantic* article, which ran the following January, was that the twain never met. "The South, the most thoroughly churched corner of our country, is a humid gospel region largely under the cultivation of the Southern Baptist Convention," the article maintained. "Here in the South, the moral challenge of the post-1954 civil rights movement was mounted – and here it was for the most part ignored, sidestepped, and in some cases opposed by the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention." The piece makes passing reference to Dr. Billy Graham, citing a somewhat misleading quote that suggested "the South's folk preacher" felt the primacy of soul-salvation should foreclose the church's interest in "questions the people aren't asking."¹² In a letter Janeway sent Frady a few months later, he says reports of progress "on your biography of Billy Graham" is good news and he hopes Frady's literary agent will let *The Atlantic* see it. The reference to a Graham book twelve years before it would actually come about could be a mistake or a joke.¹³ Frady, at the time, was a guest writer-in-residence at Sea Pines Plantation, Hilton Head, South Carolina, writing his first book, a biography of George C. Wallace consciously modelled on Robert Penn Warren's 1946 novel *All the King's Men*.¹⁴

Wallace was a critical success, establishing Frady as a dazzling new Southern contender in the New Journalism happening.¹⁵ He had an ear for Wallace's dialect, an eye for detail (in Wallace's 1967 New Hampshire primary campaign for the Presidency, "his breast pocket was bulging with plastic-tip White Owl cigars and scraps of paper on which were scribbled random notes. . .like a traveling novelty salesman."), and an intuitive intellectual flair. Wallace was "a

consummate political and cultural articulation of the South, where life is simply more glandular than it is in the rest of the nation,” Frady writes in his blend of Faulkner, Agee and political journalism. “Southerners tend to belong and believe through blood and weather and common earth and common enemy and common travail, rather than belonging, believing, cerebrally.”¹⁶ He had left Newsweek after four months for a fellowship at the University of Iowa, where he gravitated to the prestigious Iowa Writers Workshop. He returned to Newsweek for about a year more of covering the civil rights drama, including the trial of the killer of civil rights activist Jonathan Daniels in Lowndes County, Alabama.¹⁷ Soon after moving to Newsweek’s Los Angeles bureau in 1966, Frady quit the magazine with a contract for the Wallace book, and made Atlanta his transitory base camp for the next ten years. During that time, he juggled literary agents, contracts, and freelance assignments with many of the brand magazines of the day – *Saturday Evening Post*, *Mademoiselle*, *Esquire*, *Holiday*, *Atlantic* and, in his most rambunctious run of work in 1969-71, *Harper’s* under editor Willie Morris with David Halberstam, Larry L. King and John Corry as fellow staff writers. Later, *Life*, *New Times*, *The New York Review of Books* and *Playboy* would be regular venues for Frady’s work.

By the fall of 1973, Frady was feeling played out. In Raleigh, North Carolina, having lunch in a hotel dining room with Claude Sitton, executive editor of the Raleigh newspapers, it seemed the civil rights excitement had sputtered and died. Sitton had singlehandedly covered the South in its most violent years of the early Sixties for the *New York Times*, while Frady had come late and doe-eyed to this epic upheaval. So the two reminisced, as Frady wrote to his former Newsweek bureau chief, “about the old smokes and glories, indulging in melancholy benedictions and accounts of the fine sun-bright soar and slow dim decline since of many princes and knights of those days.” Frady goes on to apologize for being so “inert and sludgy of wit and fellowship” during a recent house party in the North Georgia mountains hosted by that former boss. “I was not, needless to say, in finest fettle,” he writes. “It’s just that, for about the past year now, I’ve felt like one of those black holes in space. . . Whatever this thing is – simply too much isolation and insularity, probably – it’s been a fearsome bear, a real gulch, and of course there’s nothing for it but to haul myself back out into the quick heat and surge and glisten of things by my own hands’ labor: but I seem to dwell in a strange abiding second-distance removed even among the liveliest of company, like a stopped clock under a glass bell.” Frady was in Raleigh on assignment for Clay Felker’s *New York* magazine, immersing himself in “the ferocious Nuremberg wholesomeness of a Billy Graham football-stadium Crusade for Christ.”¹⁸ The idea of the story was to see how Graham, as America’s preacher to Presidents, was coping with the undoing of his favorite White House host ever, Richard Nixon. That particular story never ran.

A month later, however, Frady was on another assignment for *New York*, covering the Yom Kippur War. Frady seemed to be getting back into the surge and glisten of things, back to the biblical region where *Harper’s* had sent him in 1970 for a series that became Frady’s second book, *Across a Darkling Plain*.¹⁹ There in the warring Middle East in October 1973, he met a

younger American correspondent, Marc Cooper, whose earlier experience as a translator for Chilean President Salvador Allende gave Frady the idea that the two could make a pitch to *Playboy* for a profile of Fidel Castro. Castro had been a fascination for Frady since his misadventures at age 17 trying to get to the Sierra Maestra Mountains of Cuba to join the Revolution. *Playboy* accepted the story proposal, sending Frady and Cooper to Mexico City for what turned out to be nearly eight weeks of surreal haggling and waiting in vain on the Cuban embassy for passage. Cooper would later publish a eulogy in *The Nation* that included a gonzo tale of Frady renting two IBM Selectric typewriters (one for each to write a book proposal), buying a drug-store package of amphetamines and a fifth of Scotch, and locking himself in his room at the Hotel Geneve to stay up all night consuming the intoxicants, typing and discarding crumpled drafts and finally producing the perfect book proposal on Billy Graham, on a single sheet of paper.²⁰

The Frady archives suggest that, in fact, his Graham biography had already been accepted a few months earlier. He had been separated from his second wife, Gloria, and staying with a friend in Atlanta, *Look* magazine writer William Hedgepeth. Hedgepeth recalled one afternoon when he found Frady in a state of exuberance. He had just gotten a phone call from his agent Sterling Lord that his Graham biography had landed a \$100,000 contract. Frady threw an arm around Hedgepeth, held up his finger and said in his courtly manner, “If it’s not too much to ask, could you, on my behalf, contact an available and attractive member of the fairer sex?” Hedgepeth presently introduced him to a former next-door neighbor, German artist Gudrun Schunk, who would become his third of four wives.²¹ What Frady typed up a few weeks later in Mexico was a proposal for a fictionalized version based on Graham. An editor at Bantam had seen Frady’s original proposal for a biography and asked for a novel instead. So, as Frady tells his version in a 1975 letter, “I quickly clacked out a scenario over a day and night on a rented typewriter in a dim-bulbed Mexico City hotel room while I was down there awaiting clearance from the Cuban embassy on a *Playboy* assignment on Fidel. Accordingly, it came out a bit muzzy and sloshy and ill-proportioned, which may be why [Bantam] finally demurred on it, but by then the biography had already been signed by Little, Brown anyway.”²²

All his writing life, Frady was working on two or three novels on the side, with at least one usually included in multi-book contracts with various New York publishers. The editors and agents who saw his fiction in drafts or proposals responded with serious comments and compliments. Yet he never had a novel published.²³ The frustration of this for Frady was not so much in his failure as a novelist, but in his success in literary journalism. He began to wonder if this mongrel genre, this “dubious and uneasy medium” combining factual reporting and art, would survive the amnesia and decays of Time. His driving passion from early adolescence was to achieve something of lasting merit, the semblance of immortality. As David Halberstam recounted in his admiring 2006 introduction to a posthumously re-issued *Billy Graham: A Parable of American Righteousness*, Frady had always seen himself as a writer. “The epiphany

— that he was a writer, or at least wanted to be,” Halberstam writes, “had come to him while still in high school because he had been reading Shakespeare and had loved not merely the prose, but the fact that Shakespeare, on the Richter scale of durability, had lasted a long time, over four hundred years.”²⁴ Yet Frady was troubled by some of the ethical damage a literary journalist suffers in the process of seeking the highest form of writing using real people caught in the circumstances of their lives and of history. “I don’t know,” he mused to his agent Sterling Lord as he faced the Everest of his Graham project, “maybe this is just my own peculiar midnight dybbuk to wrestle with. But it’s prompted suspicions of my own that what this whole long experiment of literary journalism will finally come to is one of those dark futile misbegotten arts like alchemy.”²⁵

Frady from the start was prepared to write the Graham book “exclusively from the outside” without Graham’s cooperation.²⁶ His initial request in April 1974 for two or three hours of Graham’s time at his home in Montreat, North Carolina, was rejected because the evangelist was fully booked for the rest of the year.²⁷ It seemed probable to Frady that he would be unable to breach the protective machinery of the Billy Graham Evangelical Association.²⁸ He began his research with a stretch of time in Charlotte, then installed himself back in Atlanta.²⁹ There were many distractions. During these years in the mid-1970s, his legal, financial and personal problems seemed to tumble over each other. He spent 24 hours locked in a Fulton County jail cell for owing \$4,000 in alimony to his first wife. His second wife, who was suffering mental problems that would land her in a clinic in South Carolina, entangled Frady in a drawn-out divorce. The IRS was after him for back taxes. His letters throughout his career, but especially during this time, plead in elegant gestures of misery with lawyers, literary agents, magazine editors and collection agencies for loans, advances, deadline extensions, quick magazine assignments or simple mercy. By the end of 1975, without having turned in a single page of the Graham book, he told his editor at Little, Brown that his personal travails had landed him “at an absolutely hopeless and implacable cul-de-sac.”³⁰ Little, Brown bailed him out with enough funding to work on Graham for another nine months.³¹ Frady continued mining Graham’s documented history in morgues of newspaper clippings and in the long shelf of books on Graham – critical or hagiographic – that had accumulated since the Fifties.³²

Courting the Source

In March 1976, Frady again contacted Graham’s aide T.W. Wilson about spending time with Graham, unobtrusively and intermittently, to “lend a final crucial dimension to the whole portrait.” Frady acknowledged to Wilson that Graham seemed, in previous biographies, uncomfortable with too much attention on himself. “I don’t know how I can reassure you on that score,” Frady wrote, “except to say that this is a profile conceived to be, obviously and necessarily, both about the man and his ministry.”³³ Wilson, a long-time Graham associate, phoned Frady ten days later asking for more specifics, given the avalanche of requests they get

for Graham's time. Without yet hinting at his technique of radiographic portraiture, Frady wrote back that he wanted to shadow Graham on his busy schedule "at whatever appropriate remove," and at some point, sit down with the man to chat. "I'm somewhat abashed to be requesting the help of you all to this extent . . .but it would be immeasurably helpful to the final registers of what is going to be, it seems certain, an important book – owing not at all to my hand, I hasten to say, but simply to the man and his work, and the way this whole undertaking has come to take shape."

Frady got his initial interview with Graham a short time later.³⁴ He describes the meeting this way in the biography:

[Graham emerges] suddenly out of a glimmer of leaves with a curiously lurching and off-tilt lope, a precipitous and galumphing eagerness. He greets his visitor, a stranger who has flown up that morning, with a huge glad grin flaring lavishly under his dark sunglasses, yet there seems in his manner some vague momentary falter of abashment, distraction – his commodious handshake loose and tentative, in the cordial blare of his voice some vapor gap of light uncertainty – a furtive shyness that is faintly startling after all the awesome theatre of those stadiums over the years. . .

The two men settled down on the porch of Graham's log-and-shingle house for a light lunch, which Graham blesses with a short prayer that mentions his visitor, asking the Lord to bless him and his family and be present for their talk. "It has the peculiar effect of producing in the stranger, as he hears this with bowed head, an unexpected little interior bloom of gratitude," Frady writes. Amiably, Graham ("By all means, call me Billy, please") asks the stranger about his own spiritual standing. Frady responds, "Well, I don't know that I have accepted Jesus exactly in the sense you would mean, but I believe in him, I love him, he's a living reality to me. I'm a Christian, yes, though a terribly imperfect and faltering one." While being driven back down the mountain in a station wagon, Frady savors a feeling of lingering benediction from Graham.

It's as if his simple presence has the effect of a kind of blessing – leaves a mellowness afterward of a spontaneous, guileless, eager, fond absorption and regard. But more than that, one is left with a surprising sense in him of an ineffable utter innocence, as clear and blameless as the crystalline mountain morning. It prompts the stranger to turn and declare to the aide behind the wheel, "I have to tell you, I've never gotten off of anyone I've ever met such a feeling of natural goodness. What a wickedness it would be to ever visit mischief on a soul like that." And then one realizes – he's Billy Budd. Melville's welkin-eyed Billy.³⁵

With that, Frady sounds his literary theme, and he would share this “Billy Budd” idea with both Graham and his wife in the next few months. In that initial two-hour interview, he told Graham what his theme would *not* be: He would not paint him as insincere or a profiteer, the suspicions of the cynical who imagine an Elmer Gantry behind every popular evangelist.³⁶ Graham, for his part, went into his study after Frady’s visit and prayed that the writer would be drawn closer to the Lord during his research and writing and, as Graham wrote in the first of many courteous letters he would mail to Frady, “that it will culminate in a complete surrender of your life to Jesus Christ, not only as Saviour but as Lord!”³⁷

Frady sensed an opening. Thus began the courtship that every literary journalist learns to conduct. Frady conducted his with word-magic and charm. “I am, needless to say, thrummingly eager to move on into whatever talks and times with Billy can be worked out,” he wrote to Wilson in a follow-up. Frady asked for meetings with Graham’s wife, brother, mother, sons and daughters and requested Graham’s week-by-week schedule over the next few months for Frady’s planning, especially so he might attend one more Crusade. In a letter to “Billy,” Frady described how the book “is turning out to be a rare and difficult grappling indeed, more consuming and deeply-dimensioned than I had ever anticipated, and of course you have divined not a little that’s involved in that grappling,” a hint at the divine assistance Graham was praying for.³⁸ Graham invited Frady to join his team at the next Crusade in San Diego Aug. 15-24, 1976, and Frady accepted. The bonding Frady achieved on that nine-day trip would open up much closer relationships to milk for the book’s central narrative of Billy’s life. Frady called it “a windfall of material resulting from an access and intimacy that developed with Graham beyond what any of us really expected.”³⁹ Witnessing the San Diego Crusade from the inside also provided scenic detail, such as the book’s final glimpse of Graham the insomniac, back in his motel room, “a lamplit carpeted muffled hush abruptly far from all the heavings of great hosts, the anthems and grandeurs of the stadium. . .in the darkness as he waits for sleep – waiting to resume his navigation through that gape before him again of the night.”⁴⁰

For Frady, the process of charming was also a kind of self-seduction. He often described it as Stanislavsky journalism. “Wholly without premeditation, in an almost automatic suspension of your own persuasions and sensibilities, you enter into an identification with your principals, perhaps not unlike that an actor reaches with a character, so complete that you almost *become* them, become who and what you’ll later be writing about.”⁴¹ Such a transformation happened to him in San Diego, he told Graham. “I kept feeling as if I were becoming assimilated into it [all] somehow – a highly unprofessional lapse of detachment. But then, I’ve had to realize that the truths of this story can’t really be come by from a perspective and position of detachment: they don’t lie there. In that sense and others, it seems I’m light-years beyond where I began with this book.”⁴² He also explained this book’s “particular literary run” to Graham’s wife, Ruth, who grew so close to Frady during these months that she sent him her poems for his reaction. “I’m trying something with this book that is terribly difficult to effect,” he wrote to Ruth, “though it’s

also what makes the difficulty worth it: to write it, not so much as conventional journalism or as an illustrated kind of critique, but, while answering to all the journalistic integrities, to write it also with the fuller realization and larger vision and language and dramatic movement that a novelist would bring to bear.” His ambition was indeed Shakespearean. “Going into why one really writes would be a book in itself, and would still be a mystery in the end, but I know that a part of it, especially with this book, is that I want it to move people not just today and five years from now, but a hundred, three-hundred years from now. . .”⁴³ Graham asked Frady for permission to share those two letters – the one to him and the one to his wife – with a *Charlotte Observer* reporter working on a series about Graham for that newspaper.⁴⁴

Frady’s absorption into the Graham family and ministry brought him two marathon sessions with Graham at his Montreat home in October. In the second one of these, Frady mentioned an offer he had made to T.W. Wilson in San Diego, in the warmth of that budding trust: to let Graham scan the final manuscript to check for factual errors. Graham seemed to be aware of the offer, but wasn’t going to press for it unless Frady wanted to carry through with the offer. But others in the Graham camp, it turned out, insisted on a legalistic interpretation of Frady’s offer.⁴⁵

Legal Gotterdammerung

Frady enjoyed many more interviews and fulsome cooperation from the Graham camp. Indeed, the helpfulness and trust extended by Billy Graham and his aides to Frady seemed boundless. So it didn’t strike Frady as a problem when T.W. Wilson mentioned in a letter of August 18, 1977, that he remembered Frady offering to let Graham look over the manuscript when it was finished. Wilson and a couple of colleagues “commented to each other afterwards that we thought this was a wonderful and courteous gesture on your part.” Frady thought so too, and he repeated it. Yes, he told Wilson in a letter, it’s crucial that Graham go over the material when it’s ready, but this could wait for Graham’s return from Eastern Europe.⁴⁶ In fact, Wilson didn’t hear from Frady for the next seven months, making him wonder if the book had been abandoned. Not at all, Frady told Wilson in April 1978, but the writing had been “the most stunningly difficult, complicated, wearing thing I’ve ever done in my life.” Two more months passed before the editing began. That’s when Little, Brown learned of Frady’s offer to show Graham the manuscript. Frady’s editor blew up, explaining to him that it was a fundamental principle that manuscripts are not submitted to principals prior to publication. Frady had to tell Graham. “I’ve been deeply distressed ever since over how I was going to tell you this,” Frady wrote, “and feel embarrassment, chagrin, miserableness in having to do so.”⁴⁷

Whether Billy Graham was willing to let the matter drop, his lawyers and associates were not. They presented to Little, Brown the notion that Frady’s unprecedented access to Graham and his circle was predicated on the assumption that they would be able to review the manuscript to

check for factual errors. They suggested that it was an implied contract, a *quid pro quo*. Frady, sending the lawyers on both sides copies of his letters to Graham and his people, told his editor this was absurd. Their cooperation began well before the San Diego crusade, and Graham and his wife especially seemed to open up to Frady in San Diego apart from the offer on manuscript review. He made the offer in the spirit of good-will he felt toward his subjects at that time. More generally, it was a consequence of the risky way he came to enter into the essence of all his subjects, he said. “[F]or the sort of biography I wanted to do – the only kind I know how to do – you just naturally, without premeditation, enter into an eager personal rapport and empathy and identification with your principal[;] so far as possible you *become* for a while who and what you’re writing about.” But that changes when you sit down to write, Frady said. Under the circumstances and at this point, Frady said he would be quite disinclined for Graham’s people to see the manuscript.⁴⁸

But it wasn’t his decision any longer. Lawyers and officials of Little, Brown and the Billy Graham Evangelical Association apparently came to an agreement that, while there was no legal obligation, there may be an ethical one. The two sides negotiated a settlement whereby Graham and a team of researchers would get five copies of the manuscript for fact-checking, but that the book’s interpretations would be the publisher’s privilege and the fact that Graham’s organization reviewed it beforehand would not be disclosed.⁴⁹ Frady wrote Graham a cover letter to go with the manuscript, seeking to put it in the best light, or at least explain its scenic and verbal intensities. “As you go through this,” he wrote, “I want you to know that it turned out to be, beyond any comparison, the most immensely difficult work in which I’ve ever engaged. For one thing, how I wanted to tell this was with the fullest focusing on what might be called ultra-biography, total biography – while carefully observing all the journalistic integrities of accuracy and fairness, to write about the entire man, the entire matter, with the widest-scanning registers and fullest realizations, and so hopefully, with the truth, to move into those deepest reaches of recognition that the best literature sounds in us.”⁵⁰ When Little, Brown later acquiesced to a request from Ruth Graham for one more copy so that she might review it as well, Frady was furious. “[N]ow not only Billy but a brace of his researchers, plus his literary attorney, and now God help us plus Ruth, are going to be plunging and tracking and rifling back and forth through the thing,” he wrote his editor. He fumed that, at a certain point, the lawyer and others at Little, Brown would have to trust him and trust that he has been responsible in what he had written.⁵¹

Graham’s legalistic arguments to Little, Brown had put the publisher into a tort-law defensive crouch, even before the secret sharing of the manuscript was agreed on. Roger Donald, the senior editor handling the Graham book, wrote Frady a five-page letter educating him on recent case law around public- and private-figure standards for libel, privacy, consent and adequately hiding the identity of a source who wished to remain unidentified. Donald went on to ask for clarification on thirty-eight “worrisome” passages in the manuscript. “There might be some I’ve missed,” Donald wrote. “My point is not to scare you, but to point out that this is your

responsibility.” Frady attempted to address these questions before the manuscript was sent to Graham and his team two and half weeks later.⁵² Whatever worrisome matters Frady might have fixed, Graham wrote back after a couple of days of quickly reading only a quarter of the book to say he found many things “absolutely inaccurate” or so out-of-context as to make them false. His tone is classic Billy Graham, measured and courteous, and reflects some of the deep friendship that had developed. But one can sense lawyer-talk in the background: “Everybody is entitled to his opinions but no one has a right to distort the facts,” he writes. Graham said he was returning the manuscript immediately so he could get on with his ministry in Kansas City, Scandinavia, and Poland, but would be willing to make time to help give the book accuracy. “Of course, I reserve all my rights,” he concludes.⁵³ Frady wrote back that he was startled by the letter, “but I’m glad we can proceed with this.”⁵⁴ Meanwhile, Graham’s legal team reviewed the manuscript and found “serious problems” and overall “a false depiction of Dr. Graham’s life and work.”⁵⁵

The page-by-page legal review was a painful, disheartening process that took another six months of Frady’s time and discomfort. He added explanations of his interviewing and research methods to the four-page “Author’s Note” and to his twenty-nine pages of endnotes. At one point, Frady wrote to the lawyer-novelist George V. Higgins in Boston seeking to know his legal rights in resisting some of the demands for changes in the manuscript.⁵⁶ He had to go over quotes and facts far beyond the normal process of a book’s copyediting, under a cloud of suspicion raised by Graham’s people that he did not take notes or do any research. He was dismayed at the charge. “This just isn’t going to do,” he responded in a long statement he wrote for Graham’s people, by way of a Little, Brown representative who carefully refereed the exchanges. His extensive notes are available for proof, Frady told the Graham camp. “[A]ll it would take, even for yourselves, would just be a glance through them for it to be obvious, completely obvious, they were taken from the interviewing.”⁵⁷ Indeed, the Frady archives contain dozens of reporter’s notebooks from interviews about Graham, several legal pads filled with notes, and 117 pages of a 5 ½ by 8 ½-inch loose-leaf notebook in which he typed on one side, leaving the other blank for note-taking, with some two hundred questions. He used this notebook in those leisurely interviews at Montreat, writing responses of a few words or whole paragraphs in the margins and the blank page opposite the question.

Frady tried to patch things up with Graham in letters back and forth. After Graham wished him and his family a happy Thanksgiving (“I hope you’ll be able to take some time out of what must have been a hectic year for you, to spend time with them.”), Frady wrote that he was relieved by the tone of the note after so much legal phraseology had crept into their exchanges. “Those [lawyerly locutions] are never real – they are always artificial and distant to the truth of a situation,” Frady said. Again, he tried to help Graham appreciate the literary approach of the book. “I remain absolutely convinced that you are going to find its public effect far more sympathetic than you at first, perhaps understandably, supposed. In any event, please know Billy, that I only tried to write the truth of it all, out of an admiration and affection obvious to everyone

else who has read it, as fully and fairly and meaningfully as I could, in every sense possible.”⁵⁸ When the editing and legal review was finally complete, in February 1979, Frady told Graham there were times he wondered if any biography had ever been subjected to such exhaustive pre-publication scrutiny. “My feeling, though, is that it could hardly be sounder, and it’s been eminently worth it.”⁵⁹

Another victim of the lethal gas scattered by the Graham camp was an excerpt of the book that *The Atlantic* had planned to run. Editor Bob Manning was spooked by the wrangling. Frady, who was counting on the *Atlantic* as an old friend and needed the money, fought back. “It’s obviously been the hope of Graham and his attendants, because it’s the only possible recourse really available to them, to exert through Harriet [F. Pilpel, their lawyer], simply with much flash and roar and smoke, a chilling and depressing effect on intentions to publish this book at all – a gambit that seems now to have indeed come close to half-working in the case of *The Atlantic*. It’s like an effort at prior restraint, however farcical and contrived their actual complaints, simply through ferocious gesturings and ground-stompings. . .”⁶⁰ Frady was unable to assure Manning. But *Esquire* ran an excerpt from the book’s first chapter, a cover story that editor Clay Felker said in his editor’s note had originated with an assignment six years earlier from “this magazine,” apparently confusing *Esquire* with the magazine he edited at the time, *New York*.⁶¹

Attacked by Graham Surrogates

He had wanted the book to be titled *Billy: A Parable of the American Righteousness*, in reference to Melville’s last work, and to carry some artful cover like David Levine’s cross-hatched caricature of Wallace on the dust jacket of his first book. But the tensions with Graham’s camp required diplomatic trade-offs, so the title was *Billy Graham*, the word “the” dropped from the subtitle, and the cover was an ordinary-looking photograph supplied by the Graham ministry of Graham giving a Crusade sermon, an open Bible in one hand, the other firmly pointing heavenward. But Frady’s skirmishing kept the text almost exactly as he wanted it. The 546-page *Billy Graham: A Parable of American Righteousness* was released in May 1979 to thoughtful and wide attention in the press. Some reviewers felt that Frady had been seduced by Graham. Such reviewers, perhaps, did not quite grasp Frady’s symbolic point that Graham’s “innocence” distilled, and maybe permitted, a dangerous immaturity that post-war America had loosed on the world and on the Christian faith. Another criticism was of Frady’s extravagant style. But overwhelmingly, the reviews recognized something startlingly original about the book and appreciated seeing an actual human being behind the myth and image of Billy Graham. Jonathan Yardley, spanning this range of reaction in the *Washington Star*, called it an “inordinately ambitious and strikingly successful biography.” But, he adds, Frady at times embellishes “even upon rococo, and his prose often calls too much attention to itself.”⁶²

Meanwhile, the quibble between Graham's inner circle and Frady continued to smolder. While no libel suit was filed, and specific facts were not so much the issue, the charge that Frady took no notes got covered by *Newsweek*, *The Christian Century*, several newspapers and ABC-TV's "20/20."⁶³ The camera crew for "20/20" was in Frady's living room for some five hours, giving him a chance to display his pile of interview notes and to discover a certain enjoyment he felt speaking on camera.⁶⁴ (Frady would be working as chief correspondent for ABC-TV's "Close-Up" within seven months of this.) Note-taking and use of a tape recorder, of course, can be a lively discussion among practitioners of literary journalism techniques. Writers from Tom Wolfe to Ted Conover who want to be unobtrusive or spend a lot of time with a source under natural circumstances will hold off on note-taking until it can be done in solitude from memory, in a car or back at the motel.⁶⁵ Frady owns he did this when he was given free-flowing time with Graham's people. This may be why Graham, once he had seen the manuscript and recoiled, told Frady he and the others noticed how few notes he took while talking to them. "I would suggest the possibility that you make some record of what is said to you in your future interviews."⁶⁶

In November 1979, *Christianity Today*, the voice of evangelicalism in America since the 1950s, dedicated six pages of its magazine to denouncing Frady for his biography of Graham. The critique was unusual in several respects. It was part book review and part editorial, yet much longer than either form for that magazine, and with an illustration of four blindfolded sculptors working on a gigantic bust of Graham with devil's horns. The main text bore no byline, but was said to be written by unnamed members of the editorial staff. In an introduction, the editor explained why *Christianity Today* would take this much trouble for a book it didn't like. The response was necessary, wrote editor Kenneth S. Kantzer, because among the scores of biographies and profiles written about Graham over the years, Frady's had "stirred so much interest . . . and [is] being given maximum exposure in the secular press." He noted Frady's "American Gothic prose," or as the essay acknowledged, that Frady "is capable of using words artistically." The problem, Kantzer wrote, was that Frady seemed to be using Graham as a scapegoat for the moral malaise of the times, "a badly twisted picture of why things are so bad in America today." A major portion of the attack accused Frady of playing loose with facts and – as it claimed several interviewees told *Christianity Today* – taking no notes.⁶⁷ This was the same line of attack that Graham's associates and Graham himself had been airing, at least since reviewing the manuscript.

Frady responded to *Christianity Today*'s charges with a letter of about the same length – 15 typed pages. Conceding that he knew it was a bootless exercise to quarrel with reviewers, he nevertheless shot back that in all his years of reporting on subjects who were not always happy with the result, he had never had any of them "venture this absurdity." Over the five years he worked on the book, he said, of course he took notes, and had dozens of notebooks to prove it. *Christianity Today* edited down Frady's rebuttal to about 220 words and ran it as a letter under the headline "Much Smoke and Roar."⁶⁸ The managing editor said he appreciated Frady's offer

to edit his letter for them, but that they decided to do it themselves, to conform to their space limitations.⁶⁹

Resolution

Writing factually about Graham has been one of the great challenges for journalists who have covered religion in the post-World War II era. There is little doubt that he is “perhaps the most famous Christian in the history of the faith,” as one North Carolina-based journalist put it.⁷⁰ In the age of mass media, which his crusades skillfully mastered, Graham was directly beheld by more people in more places around the globe than anyone in history. Furthermore, his close relationship with every U.S. President since Truman enmeshed his religious message and influence with politics at the highest level.⁷¹ While books about Graham were numerous – Frady cites more than 30 volumes on Graham alone by the 1970s – they tended to be marked by special interests, “whether diligently admiring or indicting,” Frady wrote, “all principally arguments with their homiletic points to make.”⁷² Since then, it can be argued that among dozens of additional Graham biographies a few stand out as admirably free of bias, pro or anti, particularly Rice University professor William Martin’s *A Prophet with Honor* and the study of his relationship with the White House by *Time* magazine editors Nancy Gibbs and Michael Duffy. These more balanced biographies since the 1980s seem to have benefited from Graham’s willingness to cooperate with writers from the “secular media” without conditions.⁷³ “It’s your book,” Graham told Martin. “I don’t even have to read it. I want you to be critical.”⁷⁴

A factual literary rendering of such an influential, successful and personally likeable figure carries the challenge at the heart of literary journalism, the challenge that Janet Malcolm called morally indefensible. Frady sought to understand and present Graham in a way that no other biographer dared to try – in the highly subjective and controversial methods of the narrative form. “How I wanted to tell this story . . . was through frequencies of feeling, mood, characterization – of realization – fuller to the reality than simple blank reportage or essay-like critiquing. . . to write about the entire man and the entire matter with the deepest possible registers and sensings.”⁷⁵

The twists and troubles Frady encountered in the process are what makes this a good case study of the problem, as this paper asserted at the start. Studies of literary journalism have explored the “fellow human being” difficulties of the form, but these usually relate to another type of story, where the writer is spending months with private and sometimes marginal people.⁷⁶ Graham was as public and media-savvy a figure as anyone. Likewise, critical writing on professional deception has little to say about a case like this.⁷⁷ Frady never disguised his identity,

or purpose, or even his own spiritual standing as “a terribly imperfect and faltering” Christian. Indeed, some of the richness of this study is in the many letters between him and the Graham camp describing his creative purpose as it evolved.

The problem was not deception or violation of privacy. It was precisely that pivot that the nonfiction writer must make from being an immersion reporter and researcher to being a word-crafter at the keyboard. This right-angle turn from facts to creation, from hunter-gatherer to artist, was wearing him down. In *Southerners*, a collection of his magazine profiles published a year after the Graham biography came out, Frady mentions times when the people he was writing about felt betrayed by what he wrote with such icy detachment. “An uneasiness would overhaul me upon moving into a new story,” he wrote. “I imagined I could spy, in approaching a new character, the accumulated shades of all those past aggrieved ones glaring over his shoulder like so many Banquo’s ghosts.” The vicarious probing of those many strangers’ lives also took its toll on Frady’s existential need for a solid self. “After laboring for so long as a kind of broker or magpie collector of other people’s passions and struggles, you begin to feel you are receding further and further out of any real life yourself. You seldom experience its charges directly and personally any longer, becoming instead someone made up of assorted secondhand mementoes of other people’s realities.”⁷⁸

Word-weary and still insolvent, Frady moved to New York to work for seven years with ABC-TV’s news magazine “Close-Up,” then for Ted Koppel’s “Nightline.” Although he helped ABC win an Emmy, he soon became disenchanted with the medium. One reason, as Halberstam noted, was that television requires verbal minimalists and Frady was not that, nor much given to understatement.⁷⁹ Frady later recalled that getting his first script for “Close-Up” into an hour felt like trying to inhale a half-century of history then re-utter it in one breath. “But the fundamental fact about television,” he realized, “is that it is finally a realm of air, whose ceaseless bright winds blow away all memory, isolating one in an endless repetition of disparate, turbulent, pastless moments – a petty storm of forgetting.”⁸⁰ He moved to California and found more success in screenwriting. Then, in 1987, he began work on a profile of Jesse Jackson that would eventually produce five articles for *The New Yorker* and a 552-page book, *Jesse: The Life and Pilgrimage of Jesse Jackson*.⁸¹ His biography of Jackson is stamped with Frady’s distinctive voice and the same literary ambition that drove his earlier biographies, to render the full person in all his emotional dimensions. But Frady had a different kind of connection with Jackson, an empathy that required less method acting. Both men were raised in the same area of South Carolina and had special gifts for language. Frady lets Jackson speak at length, from transcripts of long recorded interviews. This time Frady used a tape recorder, and his interviews of Jackson’s childhood teachers, friends and mentors left thick single-spaced typed transcripts in the Frady archives. *The New Yorker*, where he was on staff for some six years, and Random House gave Frady more resources and more rigorous editing than he had expressed before. “Congratulations on a great and magnificent achievement,” Random House editor David

Rosenthal wrote Frady when *Jesse* came out after nine years of work on it. “You defied all odds and triumphed mightily. I am proud of the book and grateful for your courage.”⁸² Finally, with *Jesse* and a “Penguin Life” biography of Martin Luther King Jr. published in 2002,⁸³ Frady was writing biographies of subjects he bore a natural and idealistic affection for, without the Stanislavsky exertion. Jackson appreciated the biography, and spoke movingly at Frady’s funeral.

In all of Frady’s writings, there churns an undercurrent of his own psychic dramas – religious, moral or romantic. All four of the biographies he wrote, and many of the magazine profiles, are about Southern men who are outsiders, and who disrupt the social order – or in Graham’s case, are exploited by it. If the Graham biography is a work of art, it achieves this through Frady’s own Promethean struggle to understand himself through Graham’s life. While Graham was praying that Frady would know Jesus, as millions of others experienced this merely hearing Graham for an hour or so from a vast stadium distance, Frady was determined to know Graham. In a typed page addressed to “Billy” and full of ellipses and stricken words, suggesting Frady was writing to himself after reading through the book’s galleys, he seems to have experienced a revelation. “. . . [W]hat you’ve been preaching all these years is in one sense true. . . . It takes that blind giving up to Jesus. . . . After that, nobody is ever the same. . . . It comes to me sometimes that what I’ve been doing is arguing, talking, traving with you in all this. . . . I only say all this because I feel you are truly Christ-natured – Christian-natured. . . .” Whatever this ramble means, Graham may have been onto something when he told Frady, in accusing him of factual errors, that he wondered if much of the book was not Frady’s own spiritual rebellion against his religious background.⁸⁴ That rebellion was not against Christianity, but against the particular evangelical shape that Christianity took with Graham and with Frady’s father. In the biography, Frady gives eighteen pages to a profile of a figure he poses as a counter-evangelist, an alternative. This was a renegade Baptist preacher and writer named Will D. Campbell, who had pastored foot soldiers in the civil rights movement but then turned to being a country guitar-playing farmer whose Christian mission was to prisoners, Klan members, Eastern intellectuals, songwriters, drug-addicts, and writers, including Frady. Frady regularly sought Campbell’s spiritual guidance since doing a profile of him for *Life* magazine in 1972.⁸⁵ “It was as if he was always in search of himself,” Campbell told Halberstam after Frady died, “that this was all part of a lifelong journey of discovery.”⁸⁶

One way to make a moral judgment over how a literary journalist like Frady “uses” his subjects and sources is to consider the writer’s own aspiration. If he aspires to the timelessness of literary art, as Frady did, then it may be appropriate to adopt Frady’s own frame of value. The negative reaction of evangelicals did not matter much to Frady. What was important to him was how he met the literary challenge – as if “sending dispatches from those far brawlings of life to Dickens, Twain, Gogol, Balzac, Cervantes.”⁸⁷ Of course, a share of fame and funding would have been nice. But he was aiming to write something that would be read in a hundred years with

as much interest as today. If the Graham biography was selling at merely “a stately deliberation,” he blamed the lack of interest in Graham as a subject. “Agee, Mailer, Melville himself could have written about Graham, but still a lot of the book-buying folks would be finally uninterested in him, as a garish triviality no matter how mightily elaborated on,” he wrote to friends.⁸⁸ One gets a sense that, after all his exertions to get inside the man, he found a yawning emptiness there, and filled it as an echo-chamber with his own voice. After all the flurry over his note-taking and factual precision, the biography seems to aspire to be the novel *The Evangelist* that Frady proposed but never wrote based on Graham. Attempting to enlist facts into the techniques of fiction remains one of the inherent moral tensions of literary journalism. A tentative resolution of that tension, assuming an honest and athletic effort at factual accuracy, lies in the durability of the work as art, now and in the sweep of time.

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Notes

¹ Media-ethics literature on a journalist’s use of sources mostly focuses on matters of privacy versus the public interest of news reporting. For example, see *Journalism and the Debate Over Privacy*, Craig L. LaMay, ed. (Mahway, N.J.: Erlbaum Publishers, 2003). Some critics of investigative reporting question the use of unnamed sources, and how much weight the text gives these sources. Joan Didion, for example, sees a problem she describes as investigative reporter Bob Woodward’s allowing his often-unnamed sources, rather than his own interpretation, to define the story. “The Deferential Spirit,” *New York Review of Books*, Sept. 19, 1996 (43, 16), 14-19.

² Tom Wolfe, “Tiny Mummies! The True Story of the Ruler of 43rd Street’s Land of the Walking Dead,” April 11, 1965, and “Lost in the Whicky Thickets,” April 18, 1965, *New York*, and Gay Talese, “Frank Sinatra Has a Cold,” *Esquire*, April 1966.

³ Walt Harrington, *Intimate Journalism: the Art and Craft of Reporting Everyday Life* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE, 1997), xxxiv-xxxv.

⁴ Janet Malcolm, *The Journalist and the Murderer* (New York: Knopf, 1990), 19. Malcolm, herself a literary rather than traditional journalist, experienced her own bitter entanglements with a profile-subject who had been a cooperating source, Jeffrey Masson, administrator of the Freud Archives. Malcolm’s two-part profile of Masson in the *New Yorker* in December 1983 and her book version published by Alfred A. Knopf, *In the Freud Archives*, became the subject of a libel suit that smoldered for a dozen years and reached the U.S. Supreme Court as *Masson v. New Yorker*. An excellent analysis of the case’s implications for the ethics, legal standing and epistemology of literary journalism is Kathy Roberts Forde’s *Literary Journalism on Trial: Masson v. New Yorker and the First Amendment* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2008).

⁵ Malcolm, *Ibid.*, 3.

⁶ Doug Cumming, “‘So Splendid It Hurts’,” *Journalism History* (40:1), Spring 2014, 1-5. See also Cumming, “The Outtakes of a Literary Life,” *Furman* magazine (54:4), Winter 2012, 3-7. Both articles describe the 58 boxes of unprocessed Frady Papers, how they were acquired by Emory University and the outlines of Frady’s career.

⁷ Marshall Frady, "A Personal Preliminary," in *Southerners: A Journalist's Odyssey* (New York: New American Library: 1980), xxiii, adopted from "Growing Up a Baptist," *Mademoiselle* (70) March 1970, 156.

⁸ Frady to his parents, March 17, 1970. "Correspondence," Box 52, Marshall Frady Papers, MS Collection No. 1099, MARBL, Emory University (below, cited as MFP). Like most of the letters, this one appears to be a draft that was re-typed. The "mixture of a lie" quote is from Francis Bacon.

⁹ "Vision in the Valley," *Newsweek* (63), June 29, 1964, 82-83.

¹⁰ Janeway to Frady, July 16, 1964; Frady to Robert Lescher (Frady's agent), Feb. 18, 1969; John Berendt, assistant editor at *Esquire*, to Frady, July 15, 1964, Box 52, "Correspondence," MFP.

¹¹ Janeway to Frady, May 4, 1966, "Correspondence," Box 52, MFP.

¹² Frady, "God and Man in the South," *The Atlantic* (219, 1), January 1967, 37-42.

¹³ Janeway to Frady, Aug. 27, 1967, "Correspondence," Box 52, MFP.

¹⁴ Marshall Frady, *Wallace* (New York: New American Library, 1968).

¹⁵ Ben A. Franklin, *New York Times Book Review*, Oct. 6, 1968, BR3. Franklin said the book – "one of the finest pieces of political reporting in years" – manages to make Wallace both a villain and "in the literary and dramatic sense," a hero.

¹⁶ Frady, *Wallace*, 1-2, 10-11. This opening section is also excerpted in *Voices in Our Blood: America's Best on the Civil Rights Movement*, Jon Meacham, ed. (New York: Random House, 2001), 235-66.

¹⁷ "Haynesville Justice," *Newsweek*, Oct. 11, 1965. Chief of Correspondents James Cannon wrote Frady, April 5, 1965, "I was immensely pleased that you have decided to rejoin Newsweek. We look forward to getting more of those great files you were sending to us last summer." "Correspondence," Box 52, MFP.

¹⁸ Frady to Joseph B. Cumming Jr., Sept. 29, 1973, Box 52, "Correspondence," MFP.

¹⁹ Frady, *Across A Darkling Plain: An American's Passage through the Middle East* (New York: Harper's Magazine Press, 1971).

²⁰ Marc Cooper, "Remembering Marshall Frady," *The Nation*, March 11, 2004.

²¹ William Hedgepeth, "Transcribed Remarks. . . at the Memorial Service for Marshall Frady at Rowland Funeral Home, N. Augusta, S.C., March 12, 2004, in possession of Doug Cumming.

²² Frady to "Ken," a book editor in New York to whom Frady was sending a revised version of his proposed Graham-inspired novel, "The Evangelist," Jan. 21, 1975. Originally, around the beginning of 1974, Simon & Schuster had paid Frady a \$15,000 advance to produce the Graham biography. But the contract was switched to Little, Brown sometime later that year. By 1980, Simon & Schuster had taken legal action to collect \$3,500 that Frady still owed on the original advance. Frady to Sue (Susanne Barker), his first wife, March 20, 1980, Graham "Correspondence," Box 18, MFP.

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- ²³ Frady to Franklin Ashley, sent from Deja, Majorca, Spain, July 27, 1975, Box 52, Correspondence, MFP. Frady says he is starting work on a novel for Harper's Magazine Press, and will return in two weeks to begin work on his Graham book. In other letters, he refers to a novel, *Moab*, on contract with Houghton, Mifflin.
- ²⁴ Halberstam, "Marshal Frady: Son of the South," *Billy Graham: A Parable of American Righteousness* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2006), xv.
- ²⁵ Frady to Sterling Lord, Jan. 3, 1976, Box 52, Correspondence, MFP.
- ²⁶ Frady to Roger Donald, July 19, 1978, Box 18, Graham, "Correspondence," MFP.
- ²⁷ T.W. Wilson to Frady, April 19, 1974, Box 18, Graham, "Correspondence," MFP.
- ²⁸ Frady to T.W. Wilson, March 27, 1976, and Frady to Roger Donald, July 19, 1978, Box 18, Graham "Correspondence," MFP.
- ²⁹ Frady to Will Campbell, Feb. 24, 1975. Box 52, "Correspondence," MFP.
- ³⁰ Frady to Roger Donald, Jan. 1, 1976, Box 18, Graham, "Correspondence," MFP.
- ³¹ Frady to Roger Donald, senior editor at Little, Brown, Nov. 8, 1975; Frady to Jeff, a friend in New York, Feb. 16, 1976, Box 18, Graham "Correspondence," MFP.
- ³² Frady to T.W. Wilson, July 18, 1976, Frady to Henderson Belk of Charlotte, from whom Frady had borrowed an extensive collection of books on Graham, Aug. 19, 1977, Box 18, Graham, "Correspondence," MFP.
- ³³ Frady to T. W. Wilson in Montreat, N.C., March 27, 1976, Box 18, Graham "Correspondence," MFP.
- ³⁴ Frady remembered it as being around April 17, 1976. Frady to Roger Donald, July 19, 1978, Box 18, Graham, "Correspondence," MFP.
- ³⁵ Frady, *Billy Graham: A Parable of American Righteousness* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), 8-11.
- ³⁶ Frady to Roger Donald, July 19, 1978, Box 52, Correspondence, MFP.
- ³⁷ Billy Graham to Frady, June 12, 1976, Box 52, Correspondence, MFP.
- ³⁸ Frady to Billy Graham, July 18, 1976. Frady suggests a similar need for divine blessing to Ruth Graham: "I realized some time ago that it was going to take a wisdom and skill beyond my own indeed to deliver this book." Frady to Ruth Graham, Dec. 28, 1976, Box 52, Correspondence, MFP.
- ³⁹ Frady to Sterling Lord, Aug. 27, 1978, Box 52, Correspondence, MFP.
- ⁴⁰ *Billy Graham*, 511-12.
- ⁴¹ Frady, "A Personal Preliminary," op. cit., xxv.
- ⁴² Frady to Billy Graham, Sept. 4, 1976, Box 18, Graham, "Correspondence," MFP.
- ⁴³ Frady to Ruth Graham, Sept. 5, 1976, Box 18, Graham, "Correspondence," MFP.
- ⁴⁴ Graham to Frady, Sept. 10, 1976, Box 18, Graham, "Correspondence," MFP.

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- ⁴⁵ Frady to Roger Donald, July 19, 1978, Box 52, Correspondence, MFP.
- ⁴⁶ Wilson to Frady, Aug. 18, 1977; Frady to Wilson, Aug. 19, 1977, Box 52, Correspondence, MFP.
- ⁴⁷ Frady to Graham, June 19, 1978, Box 18, Graham, "Correspondence," MFP.
- ⁴⁸ Frady to Roger Donald, July 19, 1978, Box 18, Graham, "Correspondence," MFP.
- ⁴⁹ The stipulation that no one, in either camp, will publicize the fact that the manuscript was read or approved by Graham's people is cited by Frady in a letter to Graham, Sept. 2, 1978, Box 52, Correspondence, MFP.
- ⁵⁰ Frady to Graham, Aug. 23, 1978, Box 18, Graham, "Correspondence," MFP.
- ⁵¹ Frady to Roger Donald, Sept. 10, 1978, Box 18, Graham, "Correspondence," MFP.
- ⁵² Donald to Frady, Aug. 7, 1978, Box 18, Correspondence, MFP. Frady scribbled names and phone numbers around several of the items in the archived copy of Donald's letter, indicating the start of a follow-up.
- ⁵³ Graham to Frady, Aug. 29, 1978, Box 18, Graham, "Correspondence," MFP.
- ⁵⁴ Frady to Graham, Sept. 2, 1978, Box 18, Graham, "Correspondence," MFP.
- ⁵⁵ John N. Akers and Sherwood Eliot Wirt to Marshall Frady, Sept. 15, 1978, Box 52, Graham-Correspondence, MFP.
- ⁵⁶ Frady to Higgins, Oct. 2, 1978, Box 18, Graham, "Correspondence," MFP.
- ⁵⁷ Frady to "Ike," legal counsel for Little, Brown, Sept. 21, 1978, Box 18, Correspondence, MFP.
- ⁵⁸ Frady to Graham, Nov. 13, 1978, Box 18, Graham, "Correspondence," MFP.
- ⁵⁹ Frady to Graham, Feb. 15, 1979, Box 18, Graham, "Correspondence," MFP.
- ⁶⁰ Frady to Bob Manning, Oct. 25, 1978, Box 18, Graham, "Correspondence," MFP.
- ⁶¹ Frady, "The Use and Abuse of Billy Graham: How 'Christ's American son' lost himself in the halls of power," *Esquire*, April 10, 1979, 23-44.
- ⁶² Jonathan Yardley, *Washington Star*, May 27, 1979, B-1.
- ⁶³ Frady to Roger Donald, Jan. 2, 1980, Box 18, Graham, "Correspondence," MFP.
- ⁶⁴ Frady to "Jonathan," n.d., Box 52, Correspondence, MFP.
- ⁶⁵ Robert S. Boyton, *The New New Journalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 2005). In this collection of interviews with literary journalists, each writer is asked about his or her approach to note-taking and interviewing.
- ⁶⁶ Graham to Frady, Aug. 29, 1978, Box 18, Graham, "Correspondence," MFP.
- ⁶⁷ "The Graham Image: A Parable of America's Blindness?," *Christianity Today*, Nov. 16, 1979, 26-30.

⁶⁸ The headline might seem to imply that Frady's self-defense was so much "smoke and roar," but the words are actually from Frady's description in the letter of *Christianity Today's* grandiose nitpicking. Frady used the same words earlier to describe the legal threats from Graham's attorney.

⁶⁹ James W. Reapsome, managing editor, to Frady, with copy of letter as it would appear in *Christianity Today* attached, Feb. 1, 1980, Box 18, Correspondence, MFP.

⁷⁰ Frye Gaillard, *Race, Rock & Religion: Profiles from a Southern Journalist* (Charlotte, N.C.: East Wood s Press, 1980), 167.

⁷¹ Nancy Gibbs and Michael Duffy, *The Preacher and the Presidents: Billy Graham in the White House* (New York: Center Street, 2007), vii, x-xv.

⁷² Frady, *Billy Graham: A Parable of American Righteousness* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), vii-viii.

⁷³ Gibbs and Duffy, x-xi.

⁷⁴ William Martin, *A Prophet with Honor: The Billy Graham Story* (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1991). Graham also wrote his own account of his life, *Just As I Am: The Autobiography of Billy Graham* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997).

⁷⁵ Frady, "Author's Note," in *Billy Graham*, vii.

⁷⁶ Kristiane Larssen, Harald Hornmoen, "The Literary Journalist as Fellow Human Being," *Literary Journalism Studies* (5, 1) Spring 2013, 81-94.

⁷⁷ Deni Elliott, Charles Culver, "Defining and Analyzing Journalistic Deception," *Journal of Mass Media Ethics* (7, 2), Jan. 1, 1991, 69-84; Larry Alexander, Emily Shewin, "Deception in Morality and Law," *Law and Philosophy* (22, 5), Sept. 1, 2003, 393-450.

⁷⁸ Frady, *Southerners*, xxv-xxvi.

⁷⁹ Halberstam, "Frady: Son of the South," xx-xxi.

⁸⁰ Frady, from an unpublished essay for *Southpoint* magazine, November 1989, in Doug Cumming's possession.

⁸¹ Frady, "Report from Baghdad," Sept. 24, 1990; "Outsider," I. The Gift, Feb. 3, II. History is Upon Us, Feb. 10, III. Without Portfolio, Feb. 17, 1992; "An American Family," April 29, 1996, all in *The New Yorker*; and *Jesse: The Life and Pilgrimage of Jesse Jackson* (New York: Random House, 1996).

⁸² Rosenthal to Frady, May 9, 1996, Box 55, "Letters II," MFP.

⁸³ Frady, *Martin Luther King Jr.* (New York: Penguin Group, 2002).

⁸⁴ Graham to Frady, Aug. 29, 1978, Box 52, Correspondence, MFP.

⁸⁵ Frady, "Fighter for the Forgotten Men," *Life*, June 16, 1972.

⁸⁶ Halberstam, "Son of the South," xxi.

⁸⁷ Frady, *Southerners*, xxviii.

⁸⁸ Frady to “Good and Beloved Folks,” unnamed, Aug. 15, 1979, Box 52, Correspondence, MFP.