



The 2010-2011 OneBook Theme: Remembrance

Remembrance plays a key role in authors' experiences writing autobiographical texts. As scholars Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson note, different objects, people, and events can serve as touchstones or inspiration for autobiographers. As you read, think about the ways Charles's journal—and Jordan himself—provide inspiration for *A Journal for Jordan*.

Memory also plays an important role in how readers understand autobiographical writing. Think about what you know about the Iraq war. What do you remember about the U.S.'s decision to go to war? What have you learned about the topics of war and peace in your reading for ENGL 1301? What is your current opinion about the war? Your knowledge and attitudes will shape your reception of the book.

Civilians in a War Zone

For some, what first comes to mind in relation to *A Journal for Jordan* and the theme of Remembrance is the memory of U.S. service men and women who have given their lives in Afghanistan and Iraq; however, there is another dimension to the story of our wars: the death of civilians.

Sometimes civilians are purposefully targeted by homicide bombers intent on sowing terror, confusion, and instability. Other times, civilians die as a result of military error in the so-called "fog of war." In Afghanistan, over 5,000 civilians are estimated to have died from 2007-2009.¹ In Iraq, estimates of civilian casualties for 2006-2009 range between 26,825 and 57,370.²

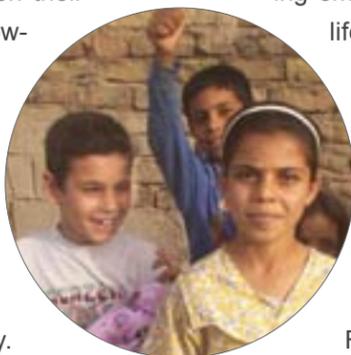
The effects of war on civilians is not limited to casualties. War and the lack of personal security are powerful deterrents to the effective main-

tenance of a properly functioning civil society and economy. In Iraq, for example, electricity is only available a few hours a day, disrupting small businesses and making daily life difficult for ordinary people. In Afghanistan, chronic underemployment and government corruption has encouraged many to join the insurgency and perpetuate violence.

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, a French writer who died in World War II, once wrote: "War is not an adventure." Indeed, while many of us may have divergent views on the justification for these and other wars, we can all agree that war should never be taken lightly, and that noncombatants experience extreme suffering in armed conflicts.

(1) Chesser, Susan G. "Afghanistan Casualties: Military Forces and Civilians." *Congressional Research Service*, March 8, 2010. 2.
(2) Fischer, Hannah. "Iraqi Civilian, Police, and Security Forces Casualty Statistics." *Congressional Research Service*, September 17, 2009. 5-6.

Photo by John Rohan



"I AM A GIRL, FIFTEEN YEARS OLD. I have two sisters. I have a great father; he is a doctor, and a great mother who is an engineer. We live in Mosul, a city in the north of Iraq." So begins the book *Iraqi Girl: Diary of a Teenage Girl in Iraq* (2009), a life narrative that originally came to the world's attention as a series of blog posts in 2004. In her book, *Iraqi Girl* traces the day-to-day worries of life in a war zone as well as the social and existential questions that plague all young people. She reports on the lack of drinking water in her house, the power outages, the terror of falling bombs, and her dreams of going to Mecca.

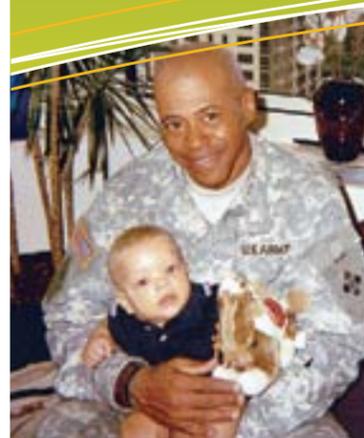
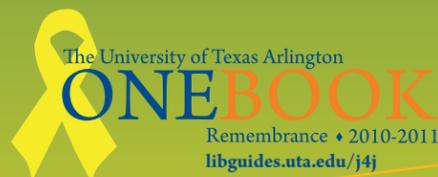
Counseling Resources

A Journal for Jordan is a deeply personal narrative about the power of words, the anxiety of having a loved one away at war, and the grief of loss. If you feel overwhelmed by emotions, **UT Arlington's Counseling Services** can help you cope. Services are free to currently enrolled students. Contact Counseling Services at 817-272-3671 or <http://www.uta.edu/counseling>.

If you're a veteran of our armed services, a counselor from the newly opened **Tarrant County**

Veterans Center in Pantego offers services on campus at the Community Service Center in the Social Work Complex Building B, 211 S. Cooper St. The free counseling for war-zone veterans and their families is available Wednesdays, 9 a.m. to noon. For more information, call Judi Fields at 817-274-0981.

For information about **Vet Center Readjustment Counseling Services** and its DFW locations, visit www.VetCenter.va.gov.



Author Biography

Dana Canedy is a senior editor at the *New York Times*, where she has been a journalist for twelve years. In 2001, she was part of a team that won a Pulitzer Prize for national reporting for "How Race Is Lived in America," a series on race relations in the United States. Raised near Fort Knox and a graduate of the University of Kentucky, she lives in New York City with her son, Jordan.

Author Dana Canedy to speak on Nov. 15, 2010, at 7:00 p.m. in the Bluebonnet Ballroom. Free.

A JOURNAL for JORDAN

Each year, first-year students at UT Arlington participate in the OneBook program, reading a common text and attending related university activities. This year's OneBook is *A Journal for Jordan*, a memoir written by Pulitzer Prize-winning *New York Times* journalist Dana Canedy.

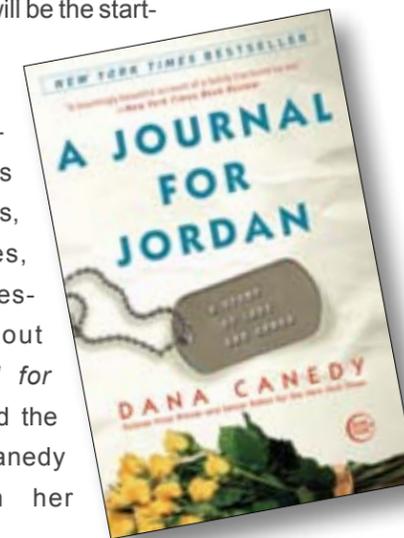
In *A Journal for Jordan*, Canedy tells the story of her relationship with her partner Charles King, a U.S. Army First Sergeant who was killed in Iraq when their son Jordan was only six months old. During his tour of duty, Charles kept a journal for his son, which serves as the inspiration for Canedy's memoir. Canedy skillfully weaves excerpts from Charles's journal throughout her text, creating a heart-wrenching book written from loving parents to their infant son.

The OneBook program also includes an accompanying theme that ties together campus activities related to the OneBook. This year's theme is "Remembrance," which is appropriate given that September 11, 2011, marks the tenth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. *A Journal for Jordan* pro-

vides the campus with an entry point into the international discussion about how the 9/11 tragedy and the subsequent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have impacted our families, our nation, and the world.

As you read, think about Canedy's audience and purpose for writing. Although Jordan is named as the intended reader, Canedy also writes to a larger audience. Who are her implied readers? Why does she choose to reveal her deeply personal story to those readers? What arguments does Canedy make in the text? Questions like these will be the start-

ing point for fulfilling conversations with friends, classmates, and professors about *A Journal for Jordan* and the issues Canedy raises in her memoir.



About This Guide

This guide was written by Dr. Chris Conway, Evelyn Barker, and Dr. Margaret Lowry. Special thanks to Jody Bailey, Joshua Been, Lynn Johnson, Margaret Knox-Kruschke, Dr. Peggy Kulesz, Dr. Dawn Remmers, Misty Underwood, and C.D. Walter.

A Day of Tragedy: Sept. 11, 2001

8:48 AM EST: American Airlines Flight 11 crashes into the North Tower of the World Trade Center in New York City.

9:03 AM: United Airlines Flight 175 crashes into the South Tower of the World Trade Center.

9:37 AM: American Airlines Flight 77 crashes into the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. There are 64 passengers and crew on board, including 5 hijackers. In the Pentagon, 125 people are killed.

9:45 AM: The White House and Capitol are evacuated.

9:59 AM: World Trade Center South collapses, killing many trapped in the building.

10:03 AM: Hijacked flight United Airlines 93 crashes in Pennsylvania when passengers try to regain control of the plane from hijackers. There were 44 crew and passengers on board, including 4 hijackers.

10:28 AM: World Trade Center North collapses. An estimated 2,973 people die in the collapse of both the North and South towers, including a combined 156 airline passengers and crew and 403 emergency personnel.

5:20 PM: A building next to the twin towers, Number 7, collapses.

The U.S. In Afghanistan

Sept. 20, 2001: In response to the terrorist attacks of 9/11, President George W. Bush demands that the Taliban surrender Al-Qaeda leaders hiding in Afghanistan.

Oct. 7, 2001: When the Taliban refuses to surrender Osama Bin Laden, U.S. and British aircraft begin bombing Afghanistan.

2002-2006: International coalition forces fight remnants of the Taliban. Afghans work to create a constitution and hold free democratic elections.

2004: Hamid Karzai becomes the first democratically elected president in Afghanistan's history.



Sgt. Joel Chaverri

Marine, Photographer, UTA Student

On Serving in Iraq, Transitioning to Student, and What He Thinks of *A Journal for Jordan*

Note: The following responses are excerpted from a longer interview available at <http://www.youtube.com/OneBookUTA>.

On Sept. 11, 2001, recent high school graduate Joel Chaverri watched the towers of the World Trade Center collapse. Nine months later, spurred by patriotism and faith, he joined the Marines and was eventually sent to Iraq as a journalist photographer. He served in 1st Battalion, 8th Marines, and is currently on Inactive Ready Reserve.

Today Sgt. Chaverri, a UTA graduate student in the School of Social Work, is an affable, focused, and slightly guarded man who retains his military bearing. Unlike some returning vets who dislike speaking of their wartime experiences, Chaverri welcomes the opportunity to share his in the hope that it will help others returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

OneBook: Tell me about your role in the Marines.

Chaverri: I ended up being picked to be a journalist photographer. I got nicknamed really quick "Kodak," partially because no one could pronounce my last name.

OneBook: You were involved in the second battle of Fallujah in November 2004. How did that battle unfold for you?

Chaverri: Well, you know, that was a tough day—tough few days. It was

hard to define my role as a Marine photographer. Am I rifleman or am I photographer?

We landed in the city in the middle of the night, couldn't see anything, just waiting for something to happen and as soon as the sun came up, it hit the fan. And I did what I was trained to do, I started taking pictures.

A unit had started to cross the street. One guy in the unit got shot. Sniper. So the guy I was standing right next to couldn't see



I wear a bracelet of the 13 guys in Bravo Company that died. A lot of these guys, [it] doesn't take very long to know them, for you to consider them family. And I wear their names on my wrist as a way to remember them and honor their memory and their sacrifice.

—Chaverri



that happen. Before anyone knew it, he was in the middle of the street trying to drag him out and he got shot. And in that moment when I was taking pictures, I knew I was taking something historic, but reality still hadn't hit. And when I looked down at the camera and I reviewed the images I'd just taken, I looked back up and saw it was actually right in front of my eyes, not just through a lens.

I put my camera down and picked up my rifle and at that moment I knew my role—it was a Marine. I was a rifleman. And basically after that moment for the next three weeks, I was a Marine rifleman, not a photographer.

OneBook: Talk about the challenges of transitioning from soldier to student.

Chaverri: One of the hardest parts of coming back was dealing with the professors. I expected a professor, a person in a leadership position, to take charge of the class and kind of order us around like an officer would. I actually desired more structure than was allotted to me. I often became frustrated with the professor who

would allow people to talk in the back of the class.

OneBook: Most first-year students will read *A Journal for Jordan*. Is there anything you want to tell them?

Chaverri: This book is a very emotional book. I can imagine a veteran picked this up and put it back down simply because

You're living 24/7 with someone wanting to kill you, it's kind of hard not to be stressed out.

—Chaverri

they're afraid of going there, going to that place where you're opening yourself up to feeling. But I would encourage a veteran who is worried. Really allowing yourself to go there—allowing yourself to experience those emotions—is only going to make you stronger.

If I were to guess, I think that the author might actually be anti-war. I don't know, but you can't tell because she was pro her family. You can connect with these people. You can see really where they're coming from and you can feel what she's feeling because no matter what you think about the war, we all feel loss. And we all feel love. And that's something that this book really connects to everyone who reads it.

Photos from Iraq

A selection of Sgt. Chaverri's photographs from Iraq will be displayed in Central Library's Sixth Floor Parlor from Jan. 31 to May 21, 2011. The exhibit is free and open to the public.

2009: President Obama raises troop levels in Afghanistan and says that U.S. forces will begin withdrawing in summer 2011. Amid widespread accusations of fraud and corruption, Hamid Karzai is elected to a second term as president.

2001-July 5, 2010: 1157 U.S. troops have died in Afghanistan.

The U.S. In Iraq

2002: The Bush administration, with Tony Blair's support in Great Britain, makes the case that Iraq has a dangerous weapons program that threatens the United States and the rest of the world.

March 19, 2003: The U.S. invasion of Iraq begins. A few weeks later, U.S. forces enter Baghdad.



Dec. 13, 2003: The U.S. captures Saddam Hussein.

2004: Controversial photographs of the abuse of Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib are released. Insurgent and terrorist attacks take a heavy toll on civilians and U.S. troops.

2005: The U.S. ends its search for weapons of mass destruction. Iraqis ratify a new constitution and participate in elections.

2006: Sectarian violence continues unabated. Saddam Hussein is executed. The Iraq Study Group Report recommends not keeping an "open-ended" commitment to staying in Iraq.

2007: Bush vetoes a congressional plan to withdraw U.S. troops from Iraq. His administration increases the number of troops deployed to Iraq ("The Surge").

2009: President Obama announces plans to withdraw some U.S. troops from Iraq in summer 2010.

2003-July 5, 2010: 4411 U.S. troops have died in Iraq.

Photo of man holding rose by Beverly & Pack. Other photos courtesy of the U.S. Army. U.S. troop casualty figures from iCasualties.org. Casualty figures for Sept. 11, 2001, from The 9/11 Commission Report.