



Around the World in Seventy-Two Days And Other Writings

Nellie Bly, Jean Lutes (Editor), Maureen Corrigan (Foreword)

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Born Elizabeth Jane Cochran, Nellie Bly was renowned as America's first 'girl stunt reporter'. She was a pioneer of investigative journalism, including an exposé of patient treatment at a mental asylum and a travelogue from her record-breaking race around the world in emulation of Phileas Fogg. This volume, the only printed and edited collection of Bly's writings, includes her best-known works as well as many lesser-known pieces that capture the breadth of her career from her fierce opinion pieces to her remarkable World War I reporting.

Around the World in Seventy-Two Days And Other Writings Details

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From Reader Review Around the World in Seventy-Two Days And Other Writings for online ebook

Keri says

I loved reading about Nellie Bly in her own words! What a window into the time she was writing. I adored her no-nonsense attitude about it all, in the midst of a world that seriously did not take her seriously at first.

Danine says

Nellie Bly's stunt style of journalism is nothing new to us. But in 1885 and NO internet her reporting was ground-breaking for her time. For me, the shocking thing about reading this was how even after a hundred years women, minorities, and immigrants continue to struggle for equal pay and equal rights. There have been major strides in women's rights, but women are still paid less than men and reading about it over a century ago makes it even more sad.

When Nellie brought up the idea of herself travelling solo around the world to her editor said:

"It is impossible for you to do it. In the first place you are a woman and would need a protector, and even if it were possible for you to travel alone you would need to carry so much baggage that it would detain you in making rapid changes. Besides you speak nothing but English, so there is no use talking about it; no one but a man can do this."

Nellie's response: "Very well. Start the man, and I'll start the same day for some other newspaper and beat him."

I was impressed with Bly's interview with Susan B. Anthony. I love what Anthony has to say about bicycling:

"Let me tell you what I think about bicycling. I think it has done more to emancipate women than anything else in the world. I stand and rejoice every time I see a woman ride by on a wheel. It gives woman a feeling of freedom and self-reliance. It makes her feel as if she were independent. The moment she takes her seat she knows she can't get into harm unless she gets off her bicycle, and away she goes, the picture of free, untrammelled womanhood."

When asked what the new women will be she replied" "She will be free. Then she'll be whatever her best judgement wants to be. We can no more imagine what the true woman will be than we can what the true man will be."

Nellie Bly remains fascinating and inspiring for young girls and women of all ages. Love her!

Valerie says

Nellie Bly is a fucking hero and everyone should know her name and her story. What a badass. I've wanted to be like her for at least 14 years. Her example has allowed me to do everything I was scared of doing. I only wish her complete articles were available, and not just a selection. I'll be reading her biography soon and I'm really looking forward to it.

Historic Heroines says

The Inside Scoop on Nellie Bly

On September 22, 1887, Nellie Bly accepted a dangerous undercover journalistic assignment for *The New York World*. She was to commit herself to one of the lunatic asylums and write “a plain and unvarnished narrative of the treatment of the patients therein.” Less than a month later, *The New York World* published Bly’s account of her ten days spent in the mad-house. Her shocking exposé revealed atrocious conditions and appalling treatment of the women being kept at Blackwell Island’s Lunatic Asylum. Readers were outraged at the relative ease of Bly’s admission and questioned the process for determining mental instability. Nellie Bly’s scandalous story led to mental health reform.

At only twenty-three years of age, Bly had already ditched her given name – Elizabeth Jane Cochran – for the catchier byline, Nellie Bly, and she was desperate for a job. Four months earlier, she had moved to New York City from Philadelphia hoping to find employment as a serious news reporter, but after many rounds of rejections, her impatience ran out.

She asked her landlady for cab fare, rode down to *The New York World* offices and lied to the guard on duty about a made up meeting with the managing editor, Mr. Joseph Pulitzer. Amazingly, her plucky approach worked and Pulitzer granted her an interview. When she pitched him a story idea about sending her to Europe so she could board a ship back to Ellis Island and write about the abuses of the steerage class patrons, Pulitzer declined. He had another, more brazen idea.

Bly accepted his offer without hesitation and began plotting her impersonation of an insane person. She wondered, “Could I assume the characteristics of insanity to such a degree that I could pass the doctors, live for a week among the insane without the authorities there finding out that I was only a *chiel amang ‘em takin’ notes?*” Bly trusted her acting abilities and set to work.

Dressed raggedly and assuming a *dreamy* expression, Nellie Bly rented a room under a false name at a women’s boarding house. On her first night, she upset the other guests and house matron to such a degree with her crying about a lost trunk that the matron called for the police, and she was removed from the house. A judge decided that her condition was due to drugs, because the pupils of her eyes were enlarged, and she was sent to Bellevue Hospital for further evaluation.

At Bellevue Hospital, an undercover Bly met Miss Neville, also being held for psychiatric evaluation. Bly writes, “Miss Neville was a sane as I myself.” Nevertheless, both women were declared *positively demented* and shipped by wagon and boat to the notorious Blackwell Island Lunatic Asylum.

This asylum was the first mental hospital in the city of New York. One year after it opened in 1840, it housed just under 300 people. In 1868, although the asylum could only accommodate 640 patients, over a 1000 were crammed into the building. The majority of patients locked up were poor immigrants who were not able to speak English.

Bly’s impersonation took this into account. With the cover name Nellie Brown, Bly spoke with a Spanish accent and told the admission staff she hailed from Cuba. Bly writes, “From the moment I entered the insane ward on the Island, I made no attempt to keep up the assumed role of insanity. I talked and acted just as I do

in ordinary life. Yet strange to say, the more sanely I talked and acted, the crazier I was thought to be by all...."

Once trapped, Bly writes about rancid food, extreme boredom, freezing baths, drafty rooms and cramped quarters. Also, she shares many deeply disturbing stories about the treatment of some of the women incarcerated.

A Frenchwoman explains to Bly that she was admitted because when she was ill, she spoke deliriously in her native tongue, and she was sent to the Island because no one could understand her. She tells Bly that she no longer cries or tries to plead her case with the nurses and doctors because no one listens. Once to stop her from crying, one of the attendants choked her and her throat has been sore ever since.

Bly also tells about another woman who was treated just as deplorably. Urena Little-Page, a woman approaching middle age, believed she was eighteen. The nurses teased and mocked her until the woman became hysterical. Then the nurses dragged in into a closet and when she came out later, the woman's neck was red and bruised.

Perhaps the most harrowing details are Bly's descriptions of the *Rope Gang*: "a long rope onto which fifty-two women are strung together via wide leather belts locked around their waists; all are sobbing, crying, or screaming, each inhabiting her private delusion in public."

Several of Bly's stories focus on Miss Tillie Mayard who arrived on the Island with Bly. She tells Bly that she is sane and Bly believes her, but as the days wear on, Bly watches with consternation as her condition worsens. "She was continually cold and unable to eat of the food provided. Day after day, she sang in order to try to maintain her memory, but at last the nurse made her stop it. I talked with her daily and I grieved to find her grow worse so rapidly. At last she got a delusion."

Ten-days after being falsely admitted into Blackwell Island, Joseph Pulitzer was able to secure the release of his journalist. In the closing paragraphs of her account, Bly writes, "The Insane Asylum on Blackwell's Island is a human rat trap. It is easy to get in, but once there it is impossible to get out."

With *Ten Days in the Mad-House*, Nellie Bly definitely made a name for herself as one of the first undercover journalists. She followed up with another covert assignment where she impersonated a maid looking for a job to reveal shady employment practices and then as an unwed mother looking to sell her baby to expose a black market for newborns. She then went undercover as a factory worker to highlight the wretched working conditions for female garment workers.

Bly also wrote a number of articles showing her strong support for women's rights. She interviewed Belva Lockwood who ran for President of the United States in 1884 and 1888. Bly's article strongly advocated for this female presidential candidate. She also interviewed and published an article about Susan B. Anthony and another that argued for women to propose marriage instead of waiting around for a man to do so.

By 1890, Bly was a household name, and that is the year of her most memorable journalistic stunt. Inspired by Jules Verne's *Around the World in Eighty Days*, she undertook to accomplish Verne's fictional feat. She began her journey by steamer on November 14, 1889, and traveled by steamers and trains for the next seventy-two consecutive days becoming (for a short time) the world record holder for circumnavigating the globe.

Nellie Bly's successful undercover assignment at Blackwell Island Lunatic Asylum, however, is what put her

on the front page and into the hearts of her readers. Her detailed and emotional observations poignantly shined a light on the injustices of the vulnerable and marginalized. She writes, “It is only after one is in trouble that one realizes how little sympathy and kindness there are in the world.” After publishing her story, the public clamored for mental health reform. With Bly’s help, an investigation was launched, and a grand jury ordered a \$100,000 increase to the budget for the New York City Department of Public Charities and Correction. They also called for significant changes to the admission evaluation process. Bly’s undercover investigation and the grand jury’s findings ultimately led to the closing of this asylum. Her impassioned story, *Ten Days in the Madhouse*, showed that compassion can thrive even in the harshest of circumstances.

The Inside Scoop on Nellie Bly

Chari says

3.5 ?? Encantada de haber conocido a esta intrépida y valiente periodista pionera que fue Nellie Bly, admirable por su arrojo, confianza en si misma y sobre todo por negarse a aceptar que el papel de una mujer tuviera que limitarse al ámbito doméstico y familiar, que denunció las condiciones de trabajadoras de fábricas dando voz a las mujeres en lucha por una igualdad lo que la convierte en un referente feminista.

Mi parte preferida y destacable del libro es sin duda, la entrevista que le realizó a la interesante Belva Lockwood, candidata a la elecciones presidenciales estadounidenses, que además de política, era abogada, activista por la paz y educadora feminista, y de su vuelta al mundo en la que no profundiza más allá de ir narrando la ruta que sigue y qué hace durante el transcurso de su estancia en cada país, más como una especie de diario de navegación, me gustó cuando se encuentra en Japón. Una cosa que me pilló muy por sorpresa de esta parte del libro dedicada al viaje es la falta más absoluta de empatía que se le detecta hacia otras culturas.

Deseando leer Ochenta días de Matthew Goodman para conocer con más detalle su carrera contra reloj en la que batió el récord ficticio de Phileas Fogg.

Nellie seguiría, a día de hoy, en su salsa y feliz cubriendo directos en tv como reportera, e infiltrada destapando injusticias sociales, vistiendo una Belstaff y con un móvil al lado de ese su frasco de crema facial dentro de, una mochila esta vez, o así me la imagino yo :D

Ashley says

Whoa Nellie. (Sorry I had to say that.) THE coolest lady journalist and a century before her time. This book was gripping (mostly). Really interesting to see her view of the world. As a woman and journalist, so cool to read a bit about how she got along. Torn between four and five stars (Goodreads, get half stars already!) But I know this is one I'll think on for a long while, in spite of the couple of lulls. DEFINITELY worth a read.

Naomi says

An enchanting, true account, of a brave and daring woman who endeavored to challenge the protagonist of

Jules Vern's novel and travel around the world in less than 80 days. It was a pure delight to read! The writing style lovely and descriptive and her account chalk full of wonderful history! I especially loved her chapter that described her voyage on the Oceanic and captained by none other than Captain E.J. Smith!! All in all a delightful and much recommended read!

Daniel says

Impossible de donner plus de 3 étoiles. Le livre est trop problématique, malgré sa grande valeur historique. Aucun doute sur le fait que Nellie Bly est un personnage incontournable de l'histoire de l'émancipation des femmes, c'est pour ça que les jeunes américain(e)s en entende beaucoup parler. Mais, comme bien d'autres sujets historiques, son discours a très mal vieilli. On parle donc d'elle dans les écoles, de sa personnalité de "daredevil", mais on ne la fait pas lire. Comment pourrait-il en être autrement, alors qu'il faudrait toujours remettre en contexte de nombreux passages comme: "The Chinese are not pleasing appearing people"? Le reportage qui l'a rendue célèbre, Around the World in Seventy-Two Days, est un cas d'espèce de ce paradoxe: à la fois un document fascinant sur la liberté féminine qui refuse de considérer les obstacles à une époque où le monde était totalement dirigé par des hommes, et le récit en direct des préjugés d'une jeune américaine et des affres de l'impérialisme (ici surtout britannique). En effet, quel projet magnifique et absurde simultanément que de faire le tour du monde le plus rapidement possible? Et Bly a réussi son défi: elle nous a montré à quel point les humains pouvaient maintenant (en 1889) courser contre le soleil lui-même tout en nous démontrant (dans ses angles morts) à quel point parler du monde quand on le traverse en trombes confine aux platiitudes, à la condescendance et au racisme.

JuanitoLibritos says

Este libro me ha parecido un documento histórico de primer orden con un interés grandioso. De la mano de Nellie vemos, en primera persona, cómo era el mundo a finales del siglo XIX. Y lo hacemos de una manera veraz y fidedigna. En serio, es un documento histórico de valor incalculable. Es fascinante ver cómo una mujer de la época se enfrenta al periodismo de una forma intrépida y valiente, poniéndose en la primera línea del fuego y experimentando en su carne las dificultades de los artículos que investiga. Mi relato favorito ha sido el que da nombre al libro: es una experiencia antropológica grandiosa leer la descripción de una periodista del estado de las distintas sociedades y ciudades en las que recalca el viaje de la aventurera.

Julie Davis says

Heard at Forgotten Classics podcast, read winningly for us by Mary Reagan from LibriVox.

Intrepid woman reporter Nellie Bly sets out to see if she can beat Phileas Fogg's record from Around the World in 80 Days. All with one satchel, one dress, and a sunny spirit of determination.

As we can see from this book's title, she pulls it off. It is an exciting adventure and one that takes us back to the late 1800s. Thoroughly enjoyable.

Leanne (Booksandbabble) says

3.5

Literary Ames {Against GR Censorship} says

[http://mentalfloss.com/article/71974/...](http://mentalfloss.com/article/71974/)

Bookish says

Finally, completed this after months of dragging through the pages.

Her remarkable stints at the madhouse (what an eye-opener!) and reporting directly from the firing line was clouded by her tone of disdain on her travels to lesser developed regions.

Her meeting with Jules Verne was a high point and her recount of her extraordinary travels definitely pales in comparison with the esteemed writer.

I find her strides in feminism impactful with her gung-ho and get-it-done attitude.

Rebecca says

I first became interested in Nellie Bly when I was in 4th grade and read her biography. She was an amazing woman who was far ahead of her times. This book includes a good selection of both her famous and less famous articles, along with a short introduction to each that provides historical context. From the hell of Blackwell Island and WWI to the amazing personalities of Susan B. Anthony and Belva Ann Lockwood (ran for president before women could vote), the selections are not only interesting but historically significant.

Victoria Blacke says

The book was very well organized and annotated. While I enjoyed many of the articles, the primary work, "Around the World in Seventy-Two Days" was...well...boring. Setting aside the widely inappropriate racist comments as a product of the time period, the whole piece was self-serving and flat. I would have expected a young woman seeing the color, smells and sights of the wide-world to be a bit more curious and enthusiastic but that was not the case.

Nellie Bly was more interested in describing the condition of the roads at each port stop than she was the food, culture or people!
