

Title of the Presentation

Nellie Bly's *Ten Days in a Mad-House* and Other Stories: A Journalist's Life in a Graphic Novel

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Abstract

When addressing the history of XIXth century investigative journalism, one is quickly reminded of Elizabeth Cochrane Seaman, better known by her pen name Nellie Bly. Perhaps her most notorious work was her exposé for newspaper *New York World* later published in the book *Ten Days in a Mad-House* (1887), an undercover assignment where Nellie Bly feigned insanity to be committed to an insane asylum. In a time when social conventions limited women's ambitions and achievements, Nellie Bly became a noteworthy literary and investigative journalist “effectively launching the decade of «stunt» and «detective reporting», a clear precursor to investigative journalism and one of Joseph Pulitzer's innovations” (Brooke Kroeger, 2000, “Bly, Nellie”—*American National Biography*).

To consider Nellie Bly's literary journalism, this study will focus on the recent publication of the graphic novel *The Incredible Nellie Bly: Journalist, Investigator, Feminist, and Philanthropist* (2021). While there are many noteworthy examples of fictional journalists in comics, such as Superman, Tintin and Spider-Man, to name a few; this new graphic novel about Nellie Bly is an interesting opportunity to approach a real-life journalist and show the groundbreaking antics of a reporter ahead of her time. With *Ten Days in a Mad-House* as a case study, because of its innovative journalistic narrative and complex subject, this study hopes to analyze the graphic novel *The Incredible Nellie Bly* and how its author's told Nellie Bly's investigative journalism in comic book form.

Keywords: investigative journalism, exposé, graphic novel, comic book