

✍ Writing Creative Non-Fiction

Unit 1 Defining CNF	Unit 1a What Is Creative Non-Fiction?	Unit 1b Truthfulness	Unit 1c Ten Writing Recommendations
Unit 2 Striking Balances	Unit 2a Public vs Private Writing	Unit 2b Research and Immersion	Unit 2c Narrative and Narrators
Unit 3 Building Blocks	Unit 3a Reading and Readers	Unit 3b Scenes	Unit 3c Information
Unit 4 Finishing Touches	Unit 4a Recreation and Reconstruction	Unit 4b Hook, Frame, and Focus	Unit 4c Revising Creative Non-Fiction

Creative Non-Fiction: The Final Issue (2024)

[But] despite the resistance and criticism, the idea of writing non-fiction that was personal, intimate, and cinematic, with writers opening up and exploring all possibilities, employing the tools of storytelling—first gradually and then rapidly—caught on.... It took a while, but the academy [has now] embraced creative non-fiction and its virtues.... Nearly every week, creative non-fiction books appear on the bestseller lists of *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*.... Many newspapers today ... regularly solicit and publish personal essays [in their] opinion and feature pages.... Today, creative non-fiction is ... a legitimate and accepted genre worldwide. (13-16)

[Creative non-fiction was] rarely permitted in newspapers, magazines, and literary journals [when *Creative Non-Fiction* launched in 1994].... Creative writing programs in English departments paid little attention to non-fiction at the time, whether or not it was deemed “creative.” ... Throughout the next decade ... many people in the academy and the journalistic community made light of [it].... Some of the pushback was quite mean-spirited. Michael Anderson, an editor for the *New York Times Book Review*, characterized the idea of creative non-fiction as “bullshit.... If it is creative, then it’s not non-fiction, and if it’s non-fiction, it is not creative.” (11-12)

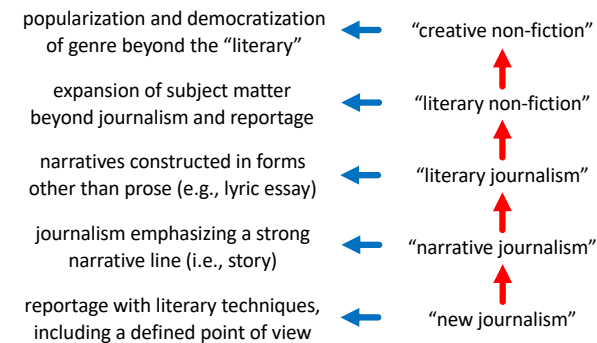
Lee Gutkind. “The Best of Thirty Years of Creative Non-Fiction.” *Creative Non-Fiction: The Final Issue*, edited by Lee Gutkind and Lee Rubinkowski, Belt, 2024, pp. 11-17.

genre

Classical genres	contemporary genres
lyric	poetry
epic	fiction
drama	drama
-	creative non-fiction

- French for a “type,” “species,” or “class” of composition
- a recognizable and established category of written work employing specific literary conventions
 - **convention**: an established practice adopted in literary works by implicit agreement or precedent
- many genres can be further subdivided into subgenres and sub-subgenres (Baldick 75, 150)

✍ Defining Creative Non-Fiction



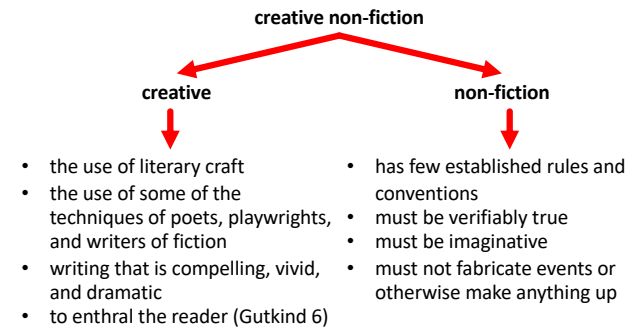
New Journalism

[New Journalism] is a form that is not merely like a *novel*. It consumes devices that happen to have originated with the novel and mixes them with every other device known to prose. And all the while, quite beyond matters of technique, it enjoys an advantage so obvious, so built-in, one almost forgets what power it has: the simple fact that the reader knows *all this actually happened*. The disclaimers have been erased. The screen is gone. The writer is one step closer to the absolute involvement of the reader that Henry James and James Joyce dreamed of but never achieved. (272)

Tom Wolfe. "Why They Aren't Writing the Great American Novel Anymore." *Esquire*, Dec. 1972, pp. 152-59, 272-80.

- name given to a development of modern American journalism in the 1960s and 1970s
- blended fictional presentation with journalistic reportage
- an early example was Capote's novel *In Cold Blood* (1966), now considered a "true crime" classic
- principles were set down in Tom Wolfe's *The New Journalism* (1973), which called objectivity of traditional journalism illusory (Baldick 247-48)

Creative Non-Fiction as a Hybrid Genre



Author Biographies

Marjorie Doyle

- non-fiction books include *Reels, Rock, and Rosaries: Confessions of a Newfoundland Musician*
- former *Globe and Mail* columnist and CBC broadcaster
- holds an MA from Memorial University, where she has taught creative non-fiction
- "Bridging Troubled Waters" first appeared in *Descant* 134 (2006) (389, 401)

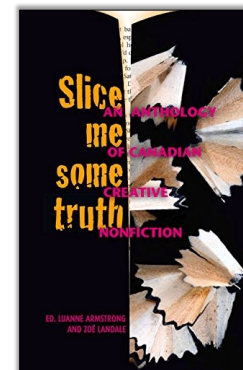
www.marjoriedoyle.ca

Susan Glickman

- has worked in publishing, bookselling, teaching, and editing
- teaches creative writing at the University of Toronto and Ryerson University
- has written poetry, novels, literary criticism, children's books, and creative non-fiction
- "Found Money" first appeared in *Maisonnette* 14 (2004) (390-91, 401)

www.susanglickman.com

Marjorie Doyle, "Bridging Troubled Waters"



... what is coveted, needed, is US cash. I strolled into a dollar store where the only accepted currency is American dollars. The Cuban peseta no existe inside these four walls.... I stood in front of a stocky white fridge and thought of the American one dollar bills I had handed out as tips. How long would it take for the waiter in my resort—who's really an unemployed vet—to bring home this basic appliance? How long to buy a bicycle, much needed for the long hot journeys to and from work? A mountain of one dollar bills looms in my mind. (292)

Marjorie Doyle. "Bridging Troubled Waters." *Slice Me Some Truth*, Wolsak and Wynn, 2011, pp. 287-96.

 Susan Glickman, “Found Money”

In 1973 I was living in Athens, nominally studying archaeology but more importantly falling in love. Falling in love with Greece, with travel, with freedom and with my own youth—until then, a rather weedy thing, solitary, ink-stained and derivative, lurking in libraries plotting the perfect term paper, but now striding along in dusty sandals declaiming poetry, plucking fresh figs and pomegranates from roadside trees, bargaining with fishermen for octopus pink and transparent as silk, and generally feeling immortal. (297)

Susan Glickman. “Found Money.” *Slice Me Some Truth*, Wolsak and Wynn, 2011, pp. 297-99.

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