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

passive reading vs active reading



Level 5: Critical Analysis
How does it engage the reader?

Level 4: Analysis
How are form and content related?

Level 3: Description
What are its formal features?

Level 2: Interpretation
What is it about?

Level 1: Evaluation
What is my gut reaction to it?

readerly texts vs writerly texts

readerly text
(texte lisible)

- a text to which a reader's response is more or less passive
- presents an easily recognizable world with easily recognizable characters

writerly text
(texte scriptable)

- a text that makes demands on readers to interpret actively, to provide their own meaning
- a text that focuses attention on how it is written (*metafiction*)

In his book *S/Z* (1970), French critic Roland Barthes distinguishes between these two basic kinds of text. For Barthes, the writerly text is of [greater] value because it changes the reader from [a passive] consumer to [an active] producer of meaning (Cuddon 588-89)

HOCs and LOCs

higher-order concerns (HOCs)

- the overall "structure" or "shape" of the work
- the larger "architecture" or "blueprint" of the work (Gutkind 104)

lower-order concerns (LOCs)

- the individual "phrases and sentences" in the work
- the "sentence structure, diction," and other "specificities of prose" in the work (Gutkind 104)

"Read what you've written from your readers' perspective. Decide if it works for them—not you. Have you written something readers won't understand or will find objectionable … ? Is the story hard to follow? Can readers visualize the characters and can they empathize with them? What's the take-home message … for the reader?" (Gutkind 101-02)

🕮 Author Biographies

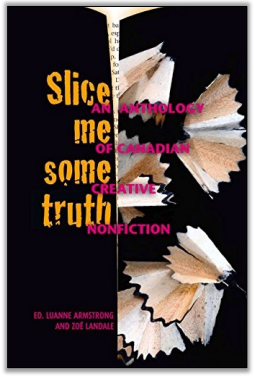
Madeline Sonik

- has written fiction, poetry, and creative non-fiction to international acclaim
- books include *Afflictions and Departures* (2011), a collection of personal essays
- co-editor of anthologies devoted to Gothic fiction, the Canadian landscape, and children's fiction
- teaches in the Department of Writing at the University of Victoria in B.C.

Timothy J. Anderson

- has written in fiction, non-fiction, and dramatic genres
- was an editor with the Books Collective for ten years
- is also a classical baritone and stage actor who has performed internationally
- holds degrees in fine arts, music, and journalism from UBC, the University of Ottawa, and Carleton University

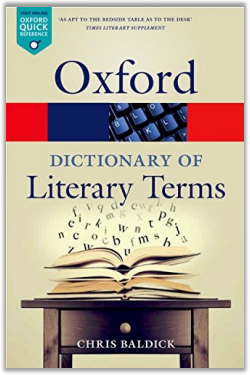
🕮 Madeline Sonik, "Cucarachas"



cultural allusions

- **Woodsy Owl (71):** U.S. Forest service mascot (1971-80s)
- **"Radar Love" (72):** song by Dutch band Golden Earring (1973-74)
- **Ted Bundy (72):** notorious U.S. serial killer (active 1974-78)
- **Deborah Harry (72):** U.S. singer, formed band Blondie (1974-80s)
- **Le Dain Commission (72):** Canadian drugs inquiry (1969-72)
- **Pierre Trudeau (76):** 15th PM of Canada (1968-79, 1980-84)

allusion



- an indirect or passing reference in a work to some event, person, place, other work, etc.
- the relevance is not usually explained, but relies on the reader's familiarity with what is referenced
- an economical means of calling upon the history of literary tradition the author and reader are assumed to share (Baldick 9-10)

🕮 Timothy J. Anderson, "Singapore 1995"

"The essay ultimately asserts that all of society is responsible in some way for the scourge of sex tourism."

"This juxtaposition calls attention to the problem of sex tourism in developing countries."

"The author juxtaposes his feelings of sexual attraction for Amran with his guilt for exploiting him."

"The essay recounts a sexual encounter the author has while travelling in Singapore"

"The essay narrates a titillating sexual encounter."

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