

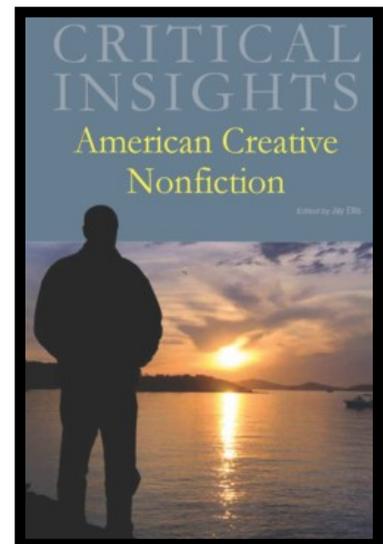
Critical Insights: American Creative Non-Fiction

Reviews

"This entry in the Critical Insights series **provides an extensive overview** of what editor Jay Ellis terms a "genre of genres" (p. vii)—American creative nonfiction. The volume opens with **a detailed general summary of the book's contents followed by the editor's chapter outlining the history and challenges of studying a wide-ranging genre** that encompasses several subgenres (memoir, captivity narratives, travel writing, nature writing, and illness narratives to name just a few). A "Critical Contexts" section presents **four original essays** reflecting on the background and critical reception of creative nonfiction as well as an **in-depth consideration of Tim O'Brien's work in the genre**. The "Critical Readings" section follows with 10 essays from scholars representing diverse educational interests. The essays build upon the material offered in the "Critical Contexts" section through their specific analyses of the creative nonfiction subgenres. Each essay in the volume concludes with endnotes and a "Works Cited" list. The volume concludes with a **useful "Resources" section** offering a general bibliography, a list of additional works of American creative nonfiction, entries on the professional credentials of the editor and contributors, and a subject index. **The essays approach the genre from multiple critical perspectives** (two notable examples include essays on African American autobiography as sociocultural criticism and the role of gender in nature writing) resulting in **a well-rounded resource appropriate for an academic audience**. Keeping in line with the aim of the Critical Insights series, **this volume provides comprehensive, authoritative scholarship suitable for both students and teachers**. This volume is **recommended** for academic collections and large public libraries."

-ARBA

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“This addition to Salem Press’ Critical Insights series is **an excellent academic study of the genre known as creative nonfiction** (or lyric essay). The four opening essays debate what type of nonfiction is included in the genre and what it should be named. **Ten critical readings analyze specific works**, from Benjamin Franklin’s Autobiography to Shelby Foote’s The Civil War to Art Spiegelman’s Maus. The book **includes a list of additional creative-nonfiction works, a bibliography of sources, information about the editor and contributors, and an index.**”

-Booklist

“American Creative Non-Fiction thoroughly scrutinizes “creative nonfiction” as a genre, considering its challenges and strengths and comparing it to lyric essays and autofiction. The book begins with a section written by the editor on creative nonfiction and then proceeds to a section on “Critical Contexts,” which continues the theme of **a thorough examination of the genre**. The bulk of the text then moves to a selection of essays on more **specific examples**, from the first piece of creative nonfiction, written by Benjamin Franklin, to an essay on Temple Grandin’s memoir, to Natalie Goldberg’s writing, ending on a piece about nonfiction comics. Finally, the book provides a list of additional works of interest, information about the contributors, and access to an online supplementary resource.”

- Booknews Inc