

Figure Eight Writers' Workshop: Creative Nonfiction Foundations

Class Description:

What does it mean to write creative nonfiction? Essentially, it means writing true stories that resonate emotionally, intellectually and aesthetically using the same kind of literary techniques that fiction, play and poetry writers use: scene, dialogue, imagery, metaphor, point of view, etc. The most common forms of creative nonfiction are memoirs (think Cheryl Strayed's "Wild," Jeanette Walls' "The Glass Castle," Frank McCourt's "Angela's Ashes"), personal essays (think David Sedaris and Joan Didion), and lyric essays (these are less well-known, but some great examples include "Citizen" by Claudia Rankine and "Bluets" by Maggie Nelson). The "Modern Love" section of the *NYTimes*, the online magazine *Brevity* and the parenting magazine *Brain, Child* all fall under the umbrella of creative nonfiction. Basically, creative nonfiction is any kind of narrative that is both literary and true.

Each class will be designed to teach a fundamental principle of CNF writing. During the first hour of each class, we'll look at short published CNF pieces, discuss their impact on us as readers, and then look at how the authors use craft elements to create effects. Then, to loosen the writing gears and generate ideas, I'll provide a prompt.

The 2nd hour of the class will be devoted to students' original work. Every week I'll ask 2-3 participants (depending on how many people we have) to bring in 2-4 double-spaced pages (approx. 500-1000 words) of new or revised work. The topic and form of this work is entirely up to each student, but creative nonfiction (or something close to it) is encouraged. During the workshop portion, each writer will have roughly 20 minutes to read his/her work aloud and receive constructive feedback from the group.

So, the outside-of-class expectations are:

- a. Write 2-4 double-spaced pages (approx. 500-1000 words) of new or revised work every other week.
- b. Read the short, published creative and/or critical pieces that I send out prior to class.

When:

Fridays, 10:30am-12:30pm EST

9/29
10/13
10/27
11/10
11/17
12/1

Where:

We will meet on Zoom.

Class Size:

6 max.

Price:

\$380 for the block (block includes six 2-hour classes)

Payment is due one week before the start of class and can be made via Zelle (emilyw7@gmail.com), Venmo (@emilyw7) or PayPal (emilyw7@gmail.com). If you prefer to mail a check, contact me for the address.

To Sign Up:

Email me at emilyw7@gmail.com