

# SALEM PRESS

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## **Salem Press Announces the New Addition to Critical Insights Series; *Critical Insights: American Creative Non-Fiction***

Edited by Jay Ellis, University of Colorado at Boulder, *Critical Insights: American Creative Non-Fiction* provides an overview of a genre of genres called “creative nonfiction,” but also takes a look at lyrical essays. Simply introducing a collection of essays about creative nonfiction occasions trouble because the term remains so troubling-and compelling. This title begins by figuring out why readers of American literature in particular created “nonfiction” writing and also examines some lyric essayist work whose cannot be trusted as a meaningful form of “nonfiction.”

In **Contextual Essays**, Kelly Clasen begins by providing helpful definitions on the background and history of creative nonfiction, impressively covering over a dozen of its subgenres. Ross Griffin follows the critical responses by extending our inquiry into writing that claims truth on unstable grounds. Griffin’s admirable examination of the truth-claims within various types of creative nonfiction includes notice of the controversies and sometimes scandals arising from those claims, especially when a writer plays deliberately loose with facts. Despite a comparative lack of serious scholarship on the genre of genres, Griffin provides an excellent guide to critical reception, while furthering the work on “creative nonfiction.” Editor, Jay Ellis provides an argument of “creative nonfiction” against “lyric essay”. Finishing **Critical Contexts**, David Bahr provides a comparative analysis of Tim O’Brien’s work across genres. The **Critical Contexts** essays avoid an untruthfully neat agreement on terms, precisely because there remain so many different perspectives contributing to a collective sense of truth.

The main section of the book consists of ten **Critical Readings** from a variety of authors. Peter Kratzke provides a view of Benjamin Franklin’s *Autobiography*, as the first nonfiction writer. Kelly Clasen follows by providing an example of relatively early nature writing from Susan Fenimore Cooper. Other essay topics include:

- “*A Canticle of My Reaction*”: *Socio-Cultural Criticism in Claude McKay’s A Long Way from Home* by Christopher Allen Varlack.
- Christopher Walsh focuses on *The Civil War* from Shelby Foote’s.
- G. Thomas Couser introduces an exemplary range of writing within the medical humanities.
- Katherine Lashley’s essay on Temple Grandin and Autism.
- A shared experience through a personal lens is the focus of Shira Segal’s chapter on cinematic self.
- Beth Walker provides a personal focus on a much creative nonfictional memoir on writing, art, and religion.
- Brandon Benevento examines David Foster Wallace’s writing and the ethical potential of creative nonfiction.
- The final chapter closes with David Bahr, on Art Spiegelman’s “Prisoner on The Hell Planet.”

Each essay in *Critical Insights: American Creative Non-Fiction* is 2,500 to 5,000 words in length, and all essays conclude with a list of "Works Cited," along with endnotes. Finally, the volume's appendixes offer a section of useful reference resources including additional works of American Creative Non-Fiction, an annotated bibliography for readers seeking to study more about this subject, about the editor, contributors, and a subject index.

The *Critical Insights* Series distills the best of both classic and current literary criticism of the world's most-studied literature. Edited and written by some of academia's most distinguished literary scholars, *Critical Insights: American Creative Non-Fiction* provides authoritative, in-depth scholarship that students and researchers will rely on for years. This volume is destined to become a valuable purchase for all.

### **Free Online with Print Purchase**

In addition, *Critical Insights: American Creative Non-Fiction* comes with complimentary online access via <http://online.salempress.com>. A single purchase of the printed version is all it takes to gain access to this important title on the web.

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*Critical Insights: American Creative Non-Fiction*

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