

Short Creative Nonfiction (SCNF) Works

During the first half of the semester, we will be exploring different subgenres of creative nonfiction, one that begins with an inward focus and one that begins with an outward focus. However, your personal identity must be present in each of these texts, and they should be written for a public audience. Each needs to be focused on one main idea, using the tools of narrative to tell a story based in lived reality. Your finished SCNFs must create meaning for your readers from the story, place, and/or person about which you are writing.

SCNF 1: Personal Essay

Given the qualities of personal essay that we discuss in class, write a **2-3 page personal essay** that focuses on one event, object, or experience of your choice. This essay should fulfill Lejeune's autobiographical pact, i.e. the writer's name should match the protagonist and narrator. Basically, write a meaningful story in which you are either the central figure or an experience is shown through your eyes. You should also consider other elements of good narrative: setting, character, dialogue, action/pacing, and tone.

SCNF 2: Essay of Place OR Profile

For your second SCNF, you can choose to write either a **2-3 page essay of place** or a **2-3 page profile**. While the subject of each may be external, you need to be present in the piece, as a narrator/interviewer/observer. However, you do not need to be central to the piece. For each, you will provide documentation that reflects your research methods.

Essay of Place: For this option, you will focus on deep description of a place you know well and explore its impact on its community. You should focus on describing the sensory experience of a place, while also communicating one experience you had in this place. You will describe people, too, as part of describing the impact of the place, and you may include yourself as one of those persons. If possible, I recommend re-visiting the place to collect additional impressions of the place. Documentation required will be a personal photograph of the place, along with the name/location of the place and any notes you take if you are able to visit.

Profile: For this option, you will focus on describing a person and exploring their place in their community (however defined). You will need to formally interview this person, including quotes from them in your profile, as well as informally observe them in their community/environment. As such, you will also be describing a place where this person can be found. You may also interview those around the person, gathering insights about the individual from others' perspectives. Documentation required will be a consent form for anyone you interview (especially the main individual), as well as the interview questions and notes you took during the interview.

Consider these SCNFs trial runs for your longer CNF piece. While these essays should be complete in and of themselves, they do not need to be as polished as your final LCNF will be.

REQUIREMENTS

SCNFs should be between **2-3 pages long**, double-spaced and in 12 pt basic font (Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri, etc.). Please include an MLA-esque header with your name, date, and a purposeful title. (See Blackboard for a sample.) *Documentation does not count toward the 2-3 page requirement.*