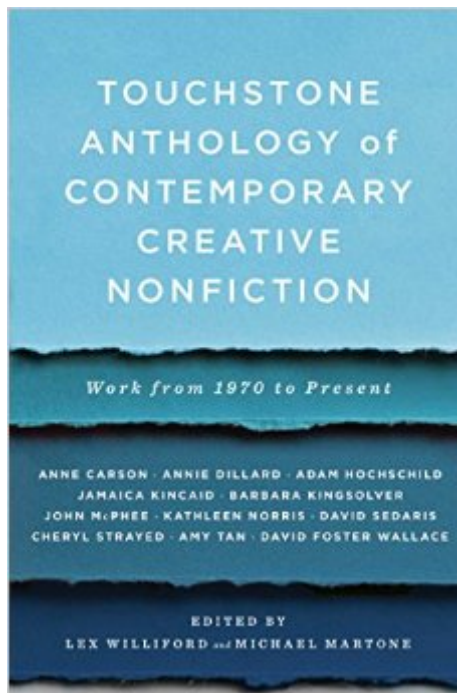


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# Touchstone Anthology Of Contemporary Creative Nonfiction: Work From 1970 To The Present



## Synopsis

From memoir to journalism, personal essays to cultural criticism, this indispensable anthology brings together works from all genres of creative nonfiction, with pieces by fifty contemporary writers including Cheryl Strayed, David Sedaris, Barbara Kingsolver, and more. Selected by five hundred writers, English professors, and creative writing teachers from across the country, this collection includes only the most highly regarded nonfiction work published since 1970. Contributors include: Jo Ann Beard, Wendell Berry, Eula Biss, Mary Clearman Blew, Charles Bowden, Janet Burroway, Kelly Grey Carlisle, Anne Carson, Bernard Cooper, Michael W. Cox, Annie Dillard, Mark Doty, Brian Doyle, Tony Earley, Anthony Farrington, Harrison Candelaria Fletcher, Diane Glancy, Lucy Grealy, William Harrison, Robin Hemley, Adam Hochschild, Jamaica Kincaid, Barbara Kingsolver, Ted Kooser, Sara Levine, E.J. Levy, Phillip Lopate, Barry Lopez, Thomas Lynch, Lee Martin, Rebecca McClanahan, Erin McGraw, John McPhee, Brenda Miller, Dinty W. Moore, Kathleen Norris, Naomi Shihab Nye, Lia Purpura, Richard Rhodes, Bill Roorbach, David Sedaris, Richard Selzer, Sue William Silverman, Floyd Skloot, Lauren Slater, Cheryl Strayed, Amy Tan, Ryan Van Meter, David Foster Wallace, and Joy Williams.

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## Customer Reviews

I am a writer myself (Halibut Rodeo), and I teach creative nonfiction at the university level. I've used most of the cnf anthologies out there. This is the best of the lot. There's not a bad essay in the book. It has its fair share of standards, like Beard's "The Fourth State of Matter," Lopate's "Portrait of My Body," Tan's "Mother Tongue," and McPhee's "The Search for Marvin Gardens," but also astonishing, soon to be classics like Bowden's "Torch Song" and Cox's "Visitor." It does, perhaps, put too much emphasis on the memoir (more examples of literary journalism would be welcomed), but for those who want to know what creative nonfiction is, it's a great place to start.

I did not finish this book. I read the first 200 pages and then decided to not read anymore. The essays are almost all very well written and are unique in their style. The Torch Song by Charles Bowden stood out for its powerful writing. However, overall the essays have a dark undertone to them. They speak of morbid subjects and a depraved humanity. I found them shocking, mildly entertaining, insightful on occasion but for the most part draining. I do not quite know why we as humanity equate good writing with depressive subjects, as if goodness, humor, spirituality are somehow too shallow to find a place in our make believe hall of honor. A good book for those who seek to be literary but for any who seek to be enlightened as a person or seek joy from reading, there are better ways to spend time.

This is IMO the best selection of contemporary creative non-fiction available. Almost any two of the included selections is worth the price of entry. My favorites: The Fourth State of Matter - Jo Ann Beard  
Embalming Mom - Janet Burroway  
Visitor - Michael Cox  
Leap - Brian Doyle  
Small Rooms in Time - Ted Koozer  
The Undertaking - Thomas Lynch  
The Love of my Life - Cheryl Strayed  
If I had to pick one of those..... Leap....Oh my Holy Sh\*t! What a piece of writing! Followed closely by Embalming Mom. But the rest of contents are no slouches. This is one to read from cover-to-cover and then go back and do it again. Incredible, wonderful work!

This is the first essay anthology that I read after Kingsolver's two books of essays (both of which I really loved) and I really fell in love with essays after reading it. There are many essays here that I know I will reread time and time again. This collection will really widen your view of the world. Highly recommend to anyone!

This is the text I assigned for my creative nonfiction class. Some great gems in here--opens with Fourth State of Matter, a great starting point for the genre, and it includes Love of my Life, by Cheryl Strayed. My students liked Kissing a lot, and I found Some How Form a Family by Early to be an understated classic. It also includes many essays I've never read, some great, some filler. The physical features of the book are mediocre. Flimsy cover, cheap paper, bleh design. But I love the feeling of all books, even Doverstore thrift, which this book is not but certainly has the feel of. makes a good introduction to the genre. and is a good anthology to have on the shelf overall.

I've been reading on this book, a dab at a time, all summer. It was the required reading for my personal essay writing class this summer. I went to look for it at B&N and it wasn't there. I was happy to find I could download it, immediately, on my Kindle. An excellent use of my Kindle, as I could carry it with me to Utah and read it while waiting for an oil change and even just before I went to sleep. I had no idea the book had 576 pages; on the Kindle, all books feel equally light. So what about the...what do I call them? I want to call them stories, but I suppose, for accuracy's sake, I will call them essays. Brilliant. Writing so good I could almost see the sheen of the words on my Kindle. But sad. All were sad. No happy stories. A school shooting. An unwanted child. An alcoholic dad. That left me thinking, Are there no happy stories? Is it only the traumatic events of one's life that people want to read? I'll leave that question, and just say one more time: These are excellent essays. Amazing. I want to read them again. And again.

The Touchstone Anthology is a required text for a course that I am taking at Stanford University. Whether you are required to read, like to text for a course, or just enjoy reading creative nonfiction - you will not be disappointed. It's absolutely a fantastic collection and inspiring.

This book was recommended by a dear friend so I bought the book. At first most of the stories were rather depressing/sad and I put it away. Having read everything on my kindle and bookshelf I picked it up again and I am so glad I did. This book is a great read and I am going to reread the first few stories again.

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