
Creative Nonfiction, Excerpt and Methodology

Melinda Gormley*¹

¹University of Notre Dame (ND) – Reilly Center for Science, Technology, and Values, 450 Geddes Hall,
Notre Dame, Indiana 46556-4633, United States

Abstract

Some well-known books on scientific topics written in the style of creative nonfiction are Erik Larson's *The Devil in the White City*, Rebecca Skloot's *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, and Deborah Blum's *The Poisoner's Handbook*. Trained as an historian of science, I have been cultivating my ability to write creative nonfiction as a fellow with the National Science Foundation-funded program *To Think, To Write, To Publish* based at Arizona State University's Consortium for Science Policy and Outcomes. This program has partnered me with freelance science writer Melissa Fellet to produce an article on a science policy topic in the style of creative nonfiction that is slated for *Creative Nonfiction*. Together Melissa and I have used the peace activism of Linus Pauling to write about responsible advocacy in science. I am also writing on geneticist L.C. Dunn's activism in this manner as well. My paper will first present an original work of creative nonfiction covering an historical topic involving biology and advocacy that will be followed with a short discussion on the methodological challenges an historian faces when writing creative nonfiction.

*Speaker