This collection of Creative Nonfiction is like a folding table in the living room corner covered in puzzle pieces. That's been my life: the keeper of the pieces à little facts about our family that have collected over the years in storage bins, drawers and computer files. "Oh, Julie, here's another one: Did you know Granddaddy Alex's nickname was Poulykee? That means 'stone crab' in Greek." Every once in awhile, I wander over to the table and attach another piece. Each discovery adds to the tapestry and the picture is starting to take shape. Like an artist's landscape, small details hint at the place and time and offer clues about the people in the scenery. Like religious iconographic art à each gesture, fact or facial expression brings meaning to the whole. This thesis became an excuse to spend more time at that folding table à and to look for missing pieces that would help bring the picture into better focus. In the research and writing, I was guided by two questions from one of my Thesis committee members: "Why are you doing this? Why do you care?" I had to do some soul searching for the answer. Then discovered a quote that I think best explains my drive: "Life is often lived forward, but understood backwards." - Os Hillman Understanding yes.
yes. I want to better understand the people and places of my ancestry and at the same time plug some of the holes in history. And perhaps separate fact from folklore. Most important, though, this collection was an excuse to explore the relatively new genre of Creative Nonfiction. I happened upon this intriguing newcomer in 1995, a dozen years into a full-time writing career. My discovery breathed new life into what had become a formula-driven journalistic career. Finally, nonfiction writers were given permission to play with their craft, just like our fiction counterparts. I've been working on our relationship ever since â seeking workshops that offered a glimpse of this magnificent attraction, sharing what I learned with interns I employed and bringing stories about the object of my affection to a writing seminar for senior citizens. In seeking a deeper connection to the genre, I still feel like a face in a crowd of fans behind the rope at a celebrity event. I get a glimpse of the heady world of Creative Nonfiction, but feel forever an outsider. Journey filled with intrigue Like an actor hides behind her characters, CNF has hidden behind many aliases over the years â narrative or literary nonfiction, personal essay, memoir, literary and "new" journalism. I haven't noted references to it recently, but there was dramatic nonfiction for a time as well. Making the character study even more challenging, the genre's subcategories include essays, articles, memoirs, documentary drama and narrative history, among others. Creative Nonfiction's identity crisis has left many of us no choice but to come up with our own definition. -"(Creative Nonfiction) combines the personal with reading, research, study and factoid. You can use quotes or other devices, always in an attempt to create meaning for the reader." (Susan Neville, author, English professor) - "It's nonfiction with extra imagination." (Stuart McIver, author) - "(Creative Nonfiction) is fact-based writing that uses techniques of literary writing. It uses techniques of journalism and mixes with fiction writing techniques." (John Calderazzo) - "Nonfiction is information â what you communicate to your readers. The creative part is how you communicate it." (Lee Gutkind, author of "The Art of Creative Nonfiction: Writing and Selling the Literature of Reality") Gutkind, who has been called the "godfather" of this new breed of writing, says further, "Creative nonfiction is a matter of writing nonfiction using literary techniques such as scene, dialogue, description, and allowing the personal point of view and voice, rather than maintaining the sham of objectivity. It's taking the time to integrate dramatic, suspenseful, compelling story structures within the articles you write." In order to reach my goal of exploring Creative Nonfiction techniques, I had to break my big puzzle into several sections. I chose three topics from my ancestral ties â Greek roots in downtown, French ones at San Luis and a place old Tallahasseeans call simply, "The Coast." While all are mentioned in the history of the Capital City of Florida, none have been explored in depth. So while my original focus was to stay true to the genre, I now realized that it was time to explore this genre in depth.
focus was to stay true to the genre, at one point, I felt
driven to assure a thorough account of the topic. And
that required breaking my three essays into five parts.
As I researched, certain questions plagued me. For
example: "How did St. Teresa Beach and St. James
Island get named?" And, "What was happening in
Alabama or Bainbridge, Georgia for that matter in
the early 1900s that attracted teenage Greek
immigrants?" For the San Luis vineyard era, "Why
would Emile Dubois leave the vineyard he worked so
hard to build and one that paid him handsomely?" and
midway through research, "Could a black man get a fair
trial in Tallahassee in the late 1800s?" Much of my time
was spent conforming the pieces to what I look for in
good Creative Nonfiction: personal voice, a definite
story, scene (vignettes, episodes, slices of reality) and
universal appeal. Each story seeks to reach out and
embrace the reader to move them along through
action and involve the writer as both actor and observer.
As a journalist, I couldn't resist the urge to include the
teaching element or some sort of information transfer,
weaving facts into the story, but trying to avoid a stilted
analysis. My hope is that the genre didn't get lost in
answering these questions and relating historical facts.
Let the reader decide.

Identifier:
FSU_migr_etd-1395 (IID)

Submitted Note:
A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts.

Degree Awarded:
Spring Semester, 2009.

Date of Defense:
March 31, 2009.

Keywords:
Greek Restaurant, St. James Island, Florida, Grapes,
Emile Dubois, St. Teresa Beach, San Luis, Wine,
Greeks, French, Creative Nonfiction

Bibliography Note:
Includes bibliographical references.

Advisory committee:
Ned Stuckey-French, Professor Directing Thesis; Diane
Roberts, Committee Member; John Fenstermaker,
Committee Member.

Subject(s):
Creative writing
History

Persistent Link to This
Record:
http://purl.flvc.org/fsu/fd/FSU_migr_etd-1395

Owner Institution:
FSU

http://purl.flvc.org/fsu/fd/FSU_migr_etd-1395
Storybook House Downloadable Cardmodels: Fairy Tale, Disneysque, Hansel and Gretel- these are all common synonyms for the Storybook Style we've chosen for a worthy collection. Its a rambunctious portrayal of medieval Europe, and surely the most delightful home style of the twentieth century. It appeared briefly on the American scene in the early 1920s, reached its flowering shortly before the Great Depression, and was all but forgotten by the late 1930s. Ten fun facts about Tallahassee. Fact 1 The name Tallahassee stems from a Muskogean Indian word. The literal translation of the word means “old fields”. The Creek Indians migrated through this area during the 18th and 19th centuries and gave the city its name, which stuck till today. Fact 2 It is believed that the first Christmas celebrated in the United States was celebrated at the site of the DeSoto encampment in what is now Tallahassee. A Storybook addon to show additional information for your stories. It is possible to add info by default to all or a subsection of stories by using a global or story decorator. It is important to declare this decorator as the first decorator, otherwise it won't work well. addDecorator(withInfo); // Globally in your .storybook/config.js. or. storiesOf('Component', module).