Using Creative Nonfiction to Make Qualitative Evaluation Reports Less Boring

Darrel N Caulley – La Trobe University

How to Open a Piece of Creative Nonfiction

Open with text which is vivid and vital as Cheney's example (2001, pp. 16, 17) shows. It comes from Hunter S. Thompson about the Kentucky Derby titled "The Kentucky Derby Is Decadent and Depraved" published in *Scanlan's Monthly* (June 1970).

> I got off the plane around midnight and no one spoke as I crossed the dark runway to the terminal. The air was thick and hot, like wandering into a steam bath. Inside, people hugged each other and shook hands…big grins and a whoop here and there: "By God! You old bastard! Good to see you, boy! *Damn* good…and I *mean* it!"
> In the air-conditioned lounge I met a man from Houston who said his name was something or other – "But just call me Jimbo" – and he was here to get it on. "I'm ready for *anything*, by God! Anything at all. Yeah, what are you drinking?" I ordered a Margarita with ice, but he wouldn't hear of it: "Naw, naw…what the hell kind of drink is that for Kentucky Derby Time? What's *wrong* with you, boy?" He grinned and winked at the bartender. "Goddam, we gotta educate this boy. Get him some good *whiskey*…."
> I shrugged. "Okay, a double Old Fitz on ice." Jimbo nodded his approval.
> "Look." He tapped me on the arm to make sure I was listening. "I know this Derby crowd, I come here every year, and let me tell you one thing I've learned – this is no town to be giving people the impression you're some kind of faggot. Not in public, anyway. Shit, they'll roll you in a minute, knock you in the head and take every goddam cent you have."
> I thanked him and fitted a Marlboro into my cigarette holder….

The opening aims to involve the reader and to hook them to continue reading as the above example grabs the reader.. The use of conversation helps to do this. Fiction and nonfiction writers know the value of conversation throughout a report. Conversation has the power to hold the reader right from the beginning. A creative nonfiction report that doesn't let us hear the human interaction tends to be boring. Note in the above opening how the writer appealed to our senses: visual (the runway was dark); tactile (the air was thick and hot, like wandering into a steam bath); aural (the use of "whoop"); and sense of taste (reference to iced drinks).

What is Creative Nonfiction?

Controversy surrounds creative nonfiction. The words "creative nonfiction" have been seen as a contradiction in terms. To some the word "creative" implies that you make up the facts; that it is not truthful; that it's really fiction. Cheney (2001) sums up the nature of creative nonfiction:

> Creative nonfiction tells a story using facts, but uses many of the techniques of fiction for its compelling qualities and emotional vibrancy. Creative nonfiction doesn't just report facts, it delivers facts in ways that move the reader toward a deeper understanding of a topic. Creative nonfiction requires the skills of the storyteller and the research ability of the conscientious reporter….[Creative nonfiction writers] must not only understand the facts and report them using quotes…, they must also see beyond them to discover their underlying meaning, and

AES Head Office: PO Box 5223 Lyneham ACT 2602 **ABN** 13 886 280 969
Ph: +61 2 6262 9093 **Fax:** +61 2 6262 9095
Email: aes@aes.asn.au **Website:** www.aes.asn.au

> they must dramatize that meaning in an interesting, evocative, informative way – just as a good teacher does. (p. 1)

Writing your evaluation report in creative nonfiction teaches the reader about your results in an entertaining and pleasurable way. Creative nonfiction writers of evaluation results inform their readers by an experience which is vivid, emotionally compelling, and enjoyable while sticking to the facts of the evaluation.

On Not Being Boring

I will quote Laurel Richardson's statement (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005) which has been given in the three editions of the *Handbook for Qualitative Research* (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005):

> A decade ago, in the first edition of this *Handbook*, I confessed that for years I had yawned my way through numerous supposedly exemplary qualitative studies. Countless numbers of texts had I abandoned half read, half scanned. I would order a new book with great anticipation – the topic was one I was interested in, the author was someone I wanted to read – only to find the text boring. In "coming out" to colleagues and students about my secret displeasure with much of qualitative writing, I found a community of like-minded discontents. Undergraduates, graduates, and colleagues alike said that they found much of qualitative writing to be – yes – boring. (p. 959)

Writing at least part of qualitative evaluation results in the form of creative nonfiction will bring interest and joy to the reader, and do away with boredom.

The Difference Between Dramatic and Summary Methods of Writing

Whether writing fiction or nonfiction there are two basic methods: the dramatic (or scenic) method and the summary (or narrative) method. The dramatic or scenic method is illustrated with the above opening. The difference between the two methods is the difference between show and tell. The dramatic method is the show and the summary method is the tell. Cheney (2001) uses the metaphor of cinematography to say that the dramatic method is the close up shot and the summary method is the long shot. "As readers, we believe the close-up shot because that's how we see most of life, particularly when dealing with people" (p. 11). Summaries mean the typical narrative journalists write, summaries of what happened, as distinct from a running account (a scene) of what is happening at the moment. Gutkind (1997) states:

> Scenes (vignettes, episodes, slices of reality, and so forth) are the building blocks of creative nonfiction – the primary factor that separates and defines literary and/or creative nonfiction from traditional journalism and ordinary lifeless prose….It is impossible to underestimate the importance of the first few paragraphs in an essay. They must be cinematically compelling and substantively communicative, getting people involved in the action of the scenic narrative while informing them about what they will be learning. The idea is to grab readers and thrust them into the heat of the action, before any other essay or article attracts their attention… (pp. 33, 42).

The following is an example of a summary method opening taken from *Dispatches* written by Michael Herr (as cited in Cheney, 2001, p. 26). It is about one night in a single Vietnam battle or about just one location. While it is dramatic, it clearly is a summary of what happened.

> You could watch mortar bursts, orange and gray-smoking, over the tops of trees three and four kilometres away, and the heavier shelling from support bases further east along the DMZ, from Camp Carrol and the Rockpile, directed against suspect troop movements or NVA rocket

AES Head Office: PO Box 5223 Lyneham ACT 2602 **ABN** 13 886 280 969
Ph: +61 2 6262 9093 **Fax:** +61 2 6262 9095
Email: aes@aes.asn.au **Website:** www.aes.asn.au

> and mortar positions. Once in a while – I guess I saw it happen three or four times in all – there would be a secondary explosion, a direct hit on a supply of NVA ammunition. And at night it was beautiful. Even the incoming was beautiful at night, beautiful and deeply dreadful. I remembered the way a Phantom pilot had talked about how beautiful the surface-to-air missiles looked as they drifted up toward his plane to kill him, and remembered myself how lovely .50-calibre tracers could be, coming at you as you flew at night in a helicopter, how slow and graceful, arching up easily, a dream so remote from anything that could harm you. It could make you feel a total serenity, an elevation that put you above death, but that never lasted very long. One hit anywhere in the chopper would bring you back, bitten lips, white knuckles and all, and then you knew where you were.

What makes this opening summary method rather than dramatic method? Cheney (2001) explains:

> The difference is that the dramatic form requires that all action be in a scene that occurs once and once only – as life's scenes naturally occur. As soon as the writer begins using phrases like "there *would be*," and "*as you flew*," we see that the action was actually a series of actions spread over time. The way to write dramatically is to write about one continuous action in essentially one place by essentially the same people. (p. 27)

Scene by Scene Writing

Writing scenes is essential to creative nonfiction – a way of creating a high sense of realism, of life, of movement, of action. In traditional qualitative evaluation reports facts are piled on facts, interview quotes are stacked on interview quotes – all in the name of rigour, completeness and accuracy. While creative nonfiction writers think facts and interview quotes are important, the basic building blocks of creative nonfiction are scenes. The scene creates sensual images in the mind of the reader. "The scene makes the past present" Cheney (2001, p. 54). It gives the reader the sense that action is unfolding in front of them – that the reader is part of the scene. The reader hears the conversation, sees the gestures and follows the actions of the characters.

> The reader can't take part in a summary narrative; as readers of narrative, were just students in a room listening to a lecture. As soon as we see the scene, we feel it, smell it, hear it, and believe, for the moment, that we're in it. (Cheney, 2001, p. 54)

Miller and Paola (2004) say the following about scene:

> Generally speaking, scene is the building block of creative nonfiction….Scene is based on action unreeling before us, as it would in a film, and it will draw on the same techniques as fiction – dialogue, description, point of view, specificity, concrete detail. Scene also encompasses the lyricism and imagery of great poetry….When you write scene, your job is to mimic the event, create an experiential re-creation of it for the reader. (pp. 9-10, 13)

The following passage from Russell Baker's (1982) memoir *Growing Up* shows how an insignificant incident can be changed into a scene. The incident relates to Baker as a child when he was taken to Brunswick, Virginia by his father to see Baker's uncles and Baker discovered that the city had electric light bulbs, telephones and radios. When they visited his Uncle Tom, young Baker fell in love with a miracle in a small room.

> At the top of the stairs lay the miracle of plumbing. Shutting the door to be absolutely alone with it, I ran my fingers along the smooth enamel of the bathtub and glistening faucet handles of the sink. The white majesty of the toilet bowl, through which gallons of water could be sent rushing by the slightest touch of a silver lever, filled me with envy. A roll of delicate

AES Head Office: PO Box 5223 Lyneham ACT 2602 **ABN** 13 886 280 969
Ph: +61 2 6262 9093 **Fax:** +61 2 6262 9095
Email: aes@aes.asn.au **Website:** www.aes.asn.au

> paper was placed beside it. Here was luxury too rich to be borne by anyone whose idea of fancy toiletry was Uncle Irvey's two-hole privy and a Montgomery Ward catalog.
> After gazing upon it as long as I dared without risking interruption by a search party, I pushed the lever and savored the supreme moment when thundering waves emptied into the bowl and vanished with a mighty gurgle. It was the perfect conclusion to a trip to Brunswick.

A traditional qualitative evaluation report might have written it as follows as indicated by Cheney (2001):

> He was impressed to discover that unlike Uncle Irvey's, Uncle Tom's bathroom had running water. He enjoyed listening to the water rushing down into the toilet bowl. The delicate paper next to the bowl was a far cry from the Montgomery Ward catalog in the two-hole privy he was used to at home. (p. 56)

This misses the potential to involve us in the experience and see the bathroom through the boy's eyes.

Using Realistic Details

Giving realistic concrete details and details of real life will conjure emotions in the reader. Strunk, Jr., and White (2000) write in *The Elements of Style*:

> If those who have studied the art of writing are in accord on any one point it is this: the surest way to arouse and hold the reader's attention is by being specific, definite, and concrete. The greatest writers – Homer, Dante, Shakespeare – are effective largely because they deal in particulars and report the details that matter. (p. 21)

A detail is "definite" and "concrete" when it appeals to the senses so that it should be seen, heard, smelled, tasted, or touched (Burroway, 2003).

It is important for the evaluator to be a careful observer in order to capture these details. From an interview, the individual's words might have been tape recorded. Any of these details may be dipped into when the qualitative evaluator writes creative nonfiction. The result is a evaluation report that creates emotion in the reader, has a sense of realism, truth, authenticity, and authority. Many of these details would not have been created or thought of by the fiction writer. Again, truth is stranger than fiction. The following example shows how observant the writer has been. It is from John McPhee's (1981) *The Pine Barrens*.

> In a straight-backed chair near the doorway to the kitchen sat a young man with long black hair, who wore a visored red leather cap that had been darkened with age. His shirt was coarse woven and had eyelets down a V neck that was laced with a thong. His trousers were made of canvas, and he was wearing gum boots. His arms were folded, his legs were stretched out, he had one ankle over the other, and as he sat there he appeared to be sighting carefully past his feet, as if his toes were the outer frame of a gunsight and he could see some sort of target in the floor. When I entered, I had said hello to him, and he had nodded without looking up. He had a long straight nose and high cheekbones in a deeply tanned face that was somehow, gaunt. I had no idea if he was shy or hostile.

Show, Don't Tell

"Show, Don't Tell" is standard advice given to writers. However, it is not always clear what this means. One way of showing is to give realistic details as discussed above. Burroway (2003) gives three writings on the same topic to illustrate what is meant by show rather than tell. I will give the first and third versions.

The first version is like academic writing which one might find in a typical qualitative evaluation report.

AES Head Office: PO Box 5223 Lyneham ACT 2602 **ABN** 13 886 280 969
Ph: +61 2 6262 9093 **Fax:** +61 2 6262 9095
Email: aes@aes.asn.au **Website:** www.aes.asn.au

> Debbie was a very stubborn and completely independent person and was always doing things her way despite her parents' efforts to get her to conform. Her father was an executive in a dress manufacturing company and was able to afford his family all the luxuries and comforts of life. But Debbie was completely indifferent to her family's affluence. (p. 76)

This version contains abstract concepts such as stubbornness, independence, indifference without concrete details from the evaluation data to illustrate them. What things was she always doing? What efforts did her parents make to get her to conform? What level of executive? What dress manufacturing company? What luxuries and comforts?

Burroway (2003) rewrites the first version to counter the telling rather than the showing:

> One day Debbie brought home a copy of Ulysses. Mrs. Strum called it "filth" and threw it across the sunporch. Debbie knelt on the parquet and retrieved her bookmark, which she replaced. "No, it's not," she said.
>
> "You're not so old I can take a strap to you!" Mr. Strum reminded her.
>
> Mr. Strum was controlling stockbroker of Readywear Conglomerates and was proud of treating his family, not only on his salary, but also on his expense account. The summer before, he has justified their company on a trip to Belgium, where they toured the American Cemetery and the torture chambers of Ghent Castle. Entirely ungrateful, Debbie has spent the rest of the trip curled up in the hotel with a shabby copy of some poet. (p. 77)

Now we know a lot more about Debbie and her parents as well as about Debbie's stubbornness, independence and indifference. Burroway has used conversation and used realistic details. She has shown rather than telling. In addition the above version has been rewritten in the active voice. In the generalised original version there are passive verbs: *was stubborn, was doing things, was executive, was able, was indifferent.* In the rewrite the characters *brought, called, threw, knelt, retrieved, replaced, said, reminded, justified, toured, spent* and *curled up*, which are all active verbs.

The Killer Be's and the Active Voice

Cheney (2001) for the first time made me realise how to fix the passivity of the killer be's: *am, is, was, were, been, had been, to be, be*. We first learnt the killer be's as a child and they keep popping up everywhere in our writing. Cheney (pp. 187-189) gives us some instructive examples.

> The marines **are** dropped on the landing zone by helicopters. (10 words)
>
> *Revised to*:
>
> The marines **slide** rapidly down ropes dangling from the helicopters hovering above the landing zone. (15 words)
>
> He **was** enticed by her black hair.
>
> *Revised to*:
>
> Her black hair **knocked** him for a loop.
>
> She **was** embraced by the clown.
>
> *Revised to:*
>
> The clown **grabbed** her and **hugged** her.

Each one of the above revisions has been put in the active voice. The active voice occurs when the subject of a sentence performs the action described by the verb of that sentence: *The clown grabbed her and hugged her* rather than the passive: *She*

AES Head Office: PO Box 5223 Lyneham ACT 2602 **ABN** 13 886 280 969
Ph: +61 2 6262 9093 **Fax:** +61 2 6262 9095
Email: aes@aes.asn.au **Website:** www.aes.asn.au

was embraced by the clown. Rather than saying: *Her hair looked beautiful*, say whether her hair bounced, tumbled, cascaded, or swung.

Captured Conversation

By recording conversation, the creative fiction writer captures reality (Gutkind, 1997). Rather than paraphrase a conversation they will use the spoken word in the form as people communicate in everyday life. Captured conversation enhances action and characterisation. It is a most effective technique for involving readers, making them feel as though they are right there. Conversation was used to great effect in the opening given above for "The Kentucky Derby Is Decadent and Depraved." The following example is from Michael Herr's (1973) "Khesanh" about the Vietnam war as collected in Tom Wolfe's *The New Journalism*. He writes about a US marine nicknamed Day Tripper who keeps excellent mental records of the days, hours, minutes and seconds he has left to serve.

> [Day Tripper] had assumed that correspondents in Vietnam *had* to be there. When he learned that I had asked to come here he almost let the peaches drop on the ground.
> "Lemmee…lemmee jus' hang on that a minute," he said. "You mean you doan' *have* to be here? An' you're *here*?" I nodded.
> "Well, they gotta be paying you some tough bread."
> "You'd be depressed if I told you."
> He shook his head.
> "I mean, they ain' got the bread that'd get me here if I didn't have t'be here."
> "Horse crap," Mayhew said. "Day Tripper loves it. He's short now, but he's comin' back ain't you Day Tripper?"
> "Shit, my momma'll come over here and pull a tour before I fuckin' come back."
> Four more marines dropped into the pit.
> "Where's Evans?" Mayhew demanded.
> "Any of you guys know Evans?"
> One of the mortarmen came over.
> "Evans is over in Danang," he said. "He caught a little shit the other night."
> "That right?" Mayhew said. "Evans get wounded?"
> "He hurt bad?" Day Tripper said.
> "He took some stuff in the legs. Nothing busted. He'll be back in ten days."
> "That ain't bad enough, then," Day Tripper said.
> "No," Mayhew said. "But ten days, sheeit, that's better'n nothin'."

If the writer had instead written a summary paragraph explaining the men's feelings it would have lacked the vividness, the real, and would not have involved the reader. Note how the conversation involves sentence fragments or ungrammatical snippets – for example: "He hurt bad?" Note how the soldiers speak in simple sentences with no subordinate clauses. Note how the writer has used very few tag lines in the conversation such "Mayhew said." Tag lines are often unnecessary and are to be avoided. If they are used, stick to fairly invisible works such as "asked" and "said" rather than "retorted" or "mused." Avoid using an adverb (such as "angrily" or "sadly") with each tag word. The conversation itself should imply these feelings.

The Elusive Truth and Rigour in Creative Nonfiction

Creative nonfiction writers give a "fly on the wall" report. They try to report the truth about some event or person. The traditional newspaper reporter is required by their editor to be objective, so that their subjectivity or personal feelings do not enter into the writing up of their report. While this is impossible, it is something they are

AES Head Office: PO Box 5223 Lyneham ACT 2602 **ABN** 13 886 280 969
Ph: +61 2 6262 9093 **Fax:** +61 2 6262 9095
Email: aes@aes.asn.au **Website:** www.aes.asn.au

expected to be aim for. Like Jack Webb in the old and often rerun *Dragnet* TV series, they are seeking "Just the facts, ma'am" (Gutkind, 1997). What the reporter thinks or feels about the topic of their report is irrelevant. In contrast the writer of creative nonfiction often feels passionately about their topic and has no intention to maintain a balanced or objective tone or viewpoint.

But keeping to the truth may not be easy as Gutkind (2005) indicates:

> If you are encouraged to use "literary techniques," straying from the literal truth for the sake of a more vitalized narrative can be easy and not necessarily an ethical violation. But how to be sure you are on safe ground? How can you be certain that the dialogue you are remembering and recreating from an incident that occurred months ago is accurate...How can you look through the eyes of your characters if you are not inside their heads? (p. xx)

Most qualitative evaluators know that people do not speak in correct sentence structure. If they are quoted in an evaluation report the quotations are often disjointed and not completely understandable. To what extent should quotations be doctored and cleaned up to make them more readable or understandable or to fit more smoothly into a longer narrative? A small minority of qualitative evaluators do not make any changes. The advice I give my students is to fix quotations up to make them more understandable, but do not fix them up to the extent that they are not recognisable as conversation. Conversational English is different from formal English. Gutkind (1997) recommends that if the writer has make changes, they reconfirm the quotation or conversation with the parties involved.

Creative nonfiction writers often use what is known as "compression" – meaning that multiple incidents or situations are combined or compressed in order to flesh out the narrative. Conversations about the same topic from different people may be combined. Minot (2003) is dead-set against compression or "consolidations" as he calls them.

Gutkind (2005) quotes Gay Talese in *Fame and Obscurity*:

> Though often reading like fiction, it [creative nonfiction] is not fiction. It is, or should be, as reliable as the most reliable reportage, although it seeks *a larger truth* [my italics] than is possible through a mere compilation of verifiable facts, the use of direct quotation and the adherence to the rigid organizational style of the older form. (p. xxvii)

Gutkind (2005) sets forth a code for creative nonfiction writers. First, strive for the truth. Be certain that everything you write is as accurate and honest as you can make it. Be certain your narrative is as true to your memory as possible.

> Second, recognise the important distinction between recollected conversation and fabricated dialogue. Don't make anything up and don't tell your readers what you think your characters are thinking during the time about which you are writing. If you want to know how or what people are or were thinking, then ask them. Don't assume or guess. (pp. xxx-xxxi)

There is a danger of losing credibility if the writer quotes the thoughts of a person, because readers know that writers cannot hear the persons studied think. The evaluator can ask the persons about whom they are writing what they are thinking at any given time and quote them.

Third, don't compress situations or characters *unnecessarily*. Compression of dialogue can involve gathering bits and pieces of conversations and moving them

AES Head Office: PO Box 5223 Lyneham ACT 2602 **ABN** 13 886 280 969
Ph: +61 2 6262 9093 **Fax:** +61 2 6262 9095
Email: aes@aes.asn.au **Website:** www.aes.asn.au

around, squishing or compressing them into one long conversation. If the evaluator compresses dialogue then member checking is recommended.

Fourth, do member checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This is a criterion of rigour which involves feeding back to people what you have written about them to see if you have accurately represented them and their words. They are able to correct any mistakes you have made or to reconsider anything they have said.

Closings

Closings are just as important as openings. Zinsser (1985) gives his view of closings:

> The perfect ending should take the reader slightly by surprise and yet seem exactly right to him. He didn't expect the article to end so soon, or so abruptly, or to say what he said. But he knows it when he sees it. Like a good lead, it works. It's like the curtain line in a theatrical comedy. We are in the middle of a scene (we think) when suddenly one of the actors says something funny, or outrageous, or epigrammatic, and the lights go out. We are momentarily startled to find the scene over, and then the delighted by the aptness of how it ended. What delights us, subconsciously, is the playwright's perfect control. (pp. 78-79)

The term "subtle" closing is used by Minot (2003) against hackneyed closing such as: "And so, in conclusion …" or "There are three reasons why he remains on the police force in spite of everything …" or "I should have realised that you can't go home again." Minot's advice is to keep it simple and keep it relevant and gives the following examples (p. 26).

> I took the next bus back without saying goodbye.
>
> We walked on the beach looking, I suppose, like a couple too young to have problems.
>
> "Well," I said, "see you around." "Maybe," she said.
>
> "So perhaps I'll take the job after all."
>
> There are times when I lose my optimism, but whenever I see an indigent prisoner defended with vigour by a lawyer pro bono, my faith in the system is restored.

You can end by quoting somebody else's ending such as:

> It's [creative nonfiction] a fascinating enterprise, this business of trying to tell the truth about the world through writing that is at once factual and literary. It calls for a reporter's investigative determination, a photographer's eye for detail, a historian's sense of documentation, a poet's passion for language, a storyteller's feel for narrative, a detective's nose for truth, a travel agent's ability to organise an itinerary, some wise forethought, a little courage to put yourself on the line, a pencil and paper, and a bit of luck. (Forché & Gerard, 2001, p. 4)

You can end with a quote:

> You must remind yourself that persuasion, description, illumination, story telling, exploration of values are the reasons you write. Remind yourself that you have something important to say, and that the initial instinct, the key to your point of view must be honoured. (Bloom, 1997, pp. 43-44)

You can end by making a recommendation: I recommend the book by Cheney (2001) as the best one I have found on the techniques of writing creative nonfiction.

AES Head Office: PO Box 5223 Lyneham ACT 2602 **ABN** 13 886 280 969
Ph: +61 2 6262 9093 **Fax:** +61 2 6262 9095
Email: aes@aes.asn.au **Website:** www.aes.asn.au

And my subtle ending is: Do the good old Australian thing and “have a go” at writing creative nonfiction in your next qualitative evaluation report. At least it won’t be boring.

References

Baker, R. (1982). *Growing up*. New York: New American Library.

Bloom, L. (1997). *The writer within: A guide to creative nonfiction*. Storrs, CT: Bibliopola Press.

Burroway, J. (2003). *Writing fiction: A guide to narrative craft* (6th ed.). New York: Longman.

Cheney, Theodore A. Rees. (2001). *Writing creative nonfiction: Fiction techniques for crafting great nonfiction.* Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2005). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Forché, C. & Gerard, P. (Eds.). (2001). *Writing creative nonfiction*. Cincinnati, Ohio: Story Press.

Gutkind, L. (1997). *The art of creative nonfiction: Writing and selling the literature of reality.* New York: Wiley.

Gutkind, L. (Ed.). (2005). *In fact: The best of creative nonfiction.* New York: W. W. Norton.

Herr, M. (1973). Kesanh. In T.Wolfe, *The new journalism*. New York: Harper & Row.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

McPhee, J. (1981). *The pine barrens*. New York: Farrar Straus, and Giroux

Miller, B., & Paola, S. (2004). *Tell it slant: Writing and shaping creative nonfiction*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Minot, S. (2003). *Literary nonfiction: The fourth genre*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Richardson, L., & St. Pierre, E. A. (2005). Writing: A method of inquiry. In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.) (pp. 959-978). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

AES Head Office: PO Box 5223 Lyneham ACT 2602 **ABN** 13 886 280 969
Ph: +61 2 6262 9093 **Fax:** +61 2 6262 9095
Email: aes@aes.asn.au **Website:** www.aes.asn.au

Strunk Jr., W., & White, E. B. (2000). The elements of style (4th ed.). New York: Longman.

Zinsser, W. (1985). *On writing well: An informal guide to writing nonfiction* (3rd ed.). New York: Harper & Row.

AES Head Office: PO Box 5223 Lyneham ACT 2602 **ABN** 13 886 280 969
Ph: +61 2 6262 9093 **Fax:** +61 2 6262 9095
Email: aes@aes.asn.au **Website:** www.aes.asn.au