

Factual Fictions: Narrative Truth and the Contemporary American Documentary Novel

By Leonora Flis

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Factual Fictions: Narrative Truth and the Contemporary American Documentary Novel focuses on contemporary American documentary narratives, specifically the documentary novel, as it re-emerged in the 1960s and later developed into various other forms. The book explores the connections between the documentary novel and the concurrent rise of New Journalism (a.k.a. literary journalism) in the United States, situating the two genres in the cultural context of the tumultuous 1960s and an emerging postmodern ethos. Flis makes a comprehensive analysis of texts by Truman Capote, Norman Mailer, John Berendt, and Don DeLillo, while tackling discussions on various theoretical complexities with assurance and rigor. Interested in the precarious divide between fact and fiction, the author productively complicates traditional notions of the two poles. Furthermore, the book examines parallels between contemporary Slovene documentary narratives and their American counterparts. Flis' work, with its systematic and innovative approach to the subject matter, adds an important historical dimension to the developing field of literary journalism studies as well as to the more established area of 20th Century American literature.

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Editorial Review

Review
Factual Fictions offers a compelling and comprehensive new evaluation of the literary importance and the historical value of the modern version of the genre that is deeply rooted in the cultural, political, and social upheavals of the 1960s America the nonfiction novel. It builds on various theoretical and socio cultural premises and perspectives, emphasizing the precarious question of adherence to truth claims and referentiality in the nonfiction novel. Flis's book represents a singularly welcome addition to literary scholarship in that it is a tool for rethinking the reader's understanding of the fictional and the factual. -- Jerneja Petri , Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

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In an era when the boundaries between fact and fiction have become more permeable in public discourse, when distinctions between the memoir and novel are contested with increasing frequency, Flis s book is provocative and timely. --Mark J. Madigan, Nazareth College of Rochester, Rochester, NY

About the Author
Leonora Flis earned her Ph.D. in American Literature at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. She is currently an Assistant Professor of Literature and Literary Theory at the University of Nova Gorica, Slovenia. She also works as a freelance journalist, film and book critic and a literary translator.

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