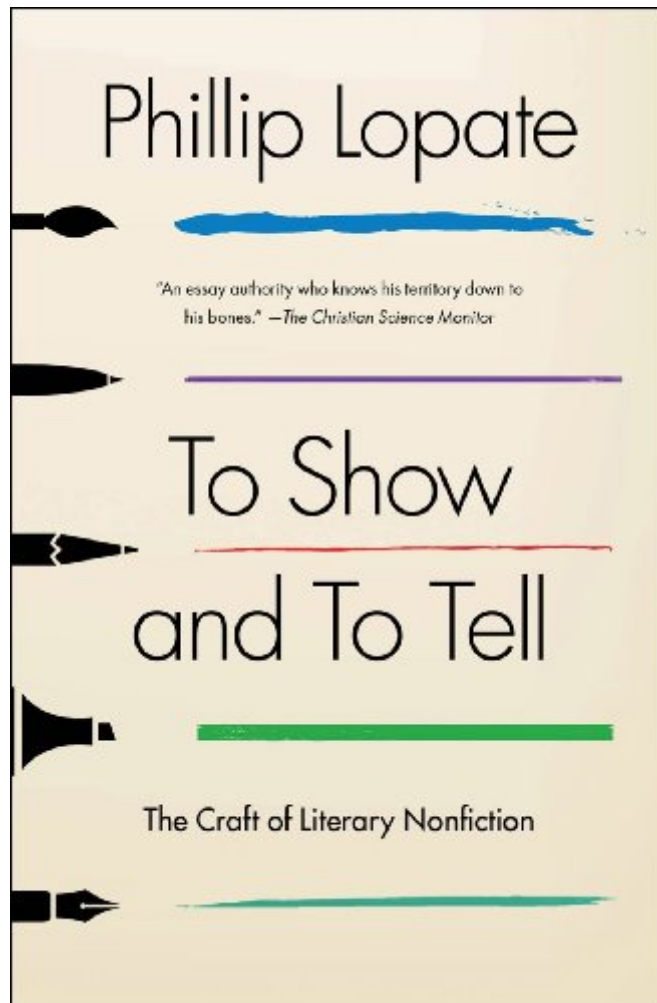


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# To Show And To Tell: The Craft Of Literary Nonfiction



## Synopsis

Distinguished author Phillip Lopate, editor of the celebrated anthology *The Art of the Personal Essay*, is universally acclaimed as "one of our best personal essayists" (Dallas Morning News). Here, combining more than forty years of lessons from his storied career as a writer and professor, he brings us this highly anticipated nuts-and-bolts guide to writing literary nonfiction. A phenomenal master class shaped by Lopate's™ informative, accessible tone and immense gift for storytelling, *To Show and To Tell* reads like a long walk with a favorite professor—refreshing, insightful, and encouraging in often unexpected ways.

## Book Information

File Size: 1777 KB

Print Length: 240 pages

Publisher: Free Press (February 12, 2013)

Publication Date: February 12, 2013

Sold by: Amazon Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B008J2AFP6

Text-to-Speech: Not enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #72,223 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #63 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Literature & Fiction > Essays & Correspondence > Essays #92 in Books > Literature & Fiction > History & Criticism > Books & Reading > General #155 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Literature & Fiction > History & Criticism > Criticism & Theory

## Customer Reviews

In "To Show and To Tell," Philip Lopate practices what he preaches. This is an especially interesting book because it is quasi-meta nonfiction. It is nonfiction about nonfiction. As such, it grants Lopate the interesting opportunity to put into play the various writing techniques he is describing to his readers. In many ways, this piece is simply a collection of personal essays wherein Lopate examines what skills he has acquired over the years through endless drafts, revisions, more revisions, and finally publication of his works. For writers, it is undoubtedly worth reading and rereading with a

highlighter in hand. Lopate writes in what William Hazlitt, a prominent figure of the Romantic essayists, would term "the familiar style." The familiar style is not the abandonment of form or focus. It is a higher form of teaching and self examination which elevates the reader to the level of the author. Lopate achieves this as he instructs how to show and to tell in writing. Hazlitt explains what it means to label writing as familiar saying, "Many people mistake a familiar for a vulgar style, and suppose that to write without affectation is to write at random. On the contrary, there is nothing that requires more precision, and, if I may so say, purity of expression." I believe the purity of expression • Hazlitt speaks of is the emotion that accompanies a thought. A thought in its true, pure state is always accompanied by some sort of feeling, whether it is powerful or subtle. The inseparability of the two is a large part of what makes us human. The greatest writers excel at marrying thought with emotion and conveying the two effectively in ink. They find meaning in the everyday, the quotidian.

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