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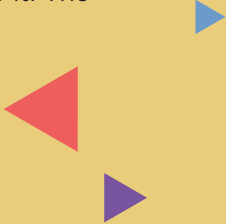
Nicole R. Zimmerman

I write to investigate. Patricia Hampl states in her book *I Could Tell You Stories*: “I don’t write about what I know, but in order to find out what I know.” Most of my creative work falls under the category of literary nonfiction, including nature writing, travel writing, journalistic essays, lyric essays, and memoir. Whether unearthing shards of family history or examining the inefficacy of memory, I write to shape meaning from the amorphous.

My collection of linked personal essays is titled *Just Some Things We Can’t Talk About*. The manuscript-in-progress follows four generations marked by sibling demise, parental delusion, and filial devotion: a family portrait of loss tinged with hope. Each story carries the weight of the past and looks to the all too unknowable future. Each considers the impact of our inheritance—which legacies we carry on, and which we discard. Mine is a retrospective narrator who in turn confides, recounts, and reflects to arrive at an emotional truth that resonates. It is a reckoning even in the absence of redemption.

My work relies on research and reportage to reconstruct tangible worlds. Associative imagery, grounded in physicality, conveys mood and tone: drawn drapes, a crawl space, night snow, bare flesh under a dress. This collection experiments with form, borrowing elements of the braided essay to weave a fragmented, nonlinear narrative. I opt for a topical, or thematic, frame over a conventional chronology, playing with scope and distance to measure dimension and the progression of time. The modular structure allows for multiple arcs to emerge and converge. This is not simply a retrieval of history but a reordering of it. The result: a meta-investigation of the stories we tell.

More about Nicole at [nicolerzimmerman.com](http://nicolerzimmerman.com)

A collection of four small triangles in the bottom right corner: a blue triangle pointing up, a red triangle pointing left, a purple triangle pointing right, and a blue triangle pointing down.