Cheatography

Jonathan Franzen's 10 Rules for Novelists Cheat Sheet

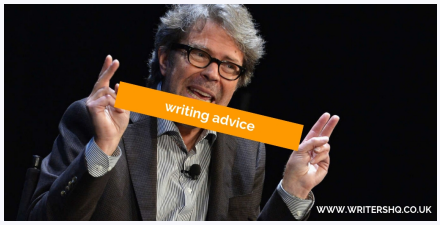
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Introduction

Jonathan Franzen is the author of Purity and four other novels, most recently The Corrections and Freedom, and five works of nonfiction and translation, including Farther Away and The Kraus Project, all published by FSG. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the German Akademie der Künste, and the French Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. His latest book, The End of the End of the Earth, is available from FSG.

Source: https://lithub.com/jonathan-franzens-10-rules-for-novelists/

Jonathan Franzen



Rules

1. The reader is a friend, not an adversary, not a spectator.
2. Fiction that isn't an author's personal adventure into the frightening or the unknown isn't worth writing for anything but money.
3. Never use the word then as a conjunction—we have and for this purpose. Substituting then is the lazy or tone-deaf writer's non-so-lution to the problem of too many ands on the page.
4. Write in third person unless a really distinctive first-person voice offers itself irresistibly.
5. When information becomes free and universally accessible, voluminous research for a novel is devalued along with it.
6. The most purely autobiographical fiction requires pure invention. Nobody ever wrote a more autobiographical story than The Metamo-rphosis.
7. You see more sitting still than chasing after.
8. It's doubtful that anyone with an Internet connection at his workplace is writing good fiction.
9. Interesting verbs are seldom very interesting.
10. You have to love before you can be relentless.

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