

Writing for Magazines



Course outline

Course Tutor:

JEAN RAFFERTY

Biog:

Jean Rafferty is an award-winning feature writer who has twice been nominated for the UK Press Awards, an unusual honour for a freelance. She has worked for a wide range of newspapers, both broadsheet and tabloid - from the Sunday Times to the Sunday People - but she specialised in magazine writing and was involved in the first incarnations of the Mail on Sunday's two colour magazines – You Magazine and Night and Day. (She reported on the end of the world for the latter.) She also worked on Scotland on Sunday's first colour magazine, Spectrum, and on Plus Magazine, a colour magazine which served local papers all over the country and which was run by legendary editor Dennis Hackett, who had edited the Daily Mirror and also the iconic magazine Nova. More information can be found on her website, www.jeanrafferty.com

Duration: Two sessions of 120 minutes via Zoom

Course Content:

This course is for those who chafe against the restrictions of newspaper writing. Magazine writing generally requires more colour and more of the writer's personality. It also usually entails longer word counts and longer deadlines – the flipside of that is that it requires greater depth. If you want to specialise in writing about a particular subject and in more creative ways, this course is for you.

Session 1

Serving the Market

We look at the participants' own individual interests and the magazines which serve those particular subjects. Through examining recent issues and discussing participants' ideas for features we look at how to shape stories to fit particular publications.

Viewpoint

In this session we discuss how to approach story ideas creatively. Viewpoint and structure are inextricably intertwined and we study other writers' work to examine best practice.

Session 2

The Question of Questions

We look at a selection of newspaper cuttings about a well known figure and work out what the aim of an interview with them would be – bearing in mind the publication we aim to work for. What questions would we ask them and does the order matter?

Hitting the Target

Here we work out how to pitch our story idea, which publication to pitch it to, and who to pitch it to. We also discuss the elevator pitch for our story and how to pitch in person.