

## **Affliction in Autofiction: The Suffering Writer and the Rejected Metaphor**

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**Abstract:** *This article examines the autofictional representations of disease in the works of several writers from successive epochs and different continents and their responses to Susan Sontag's formulation of a metaphorical literary presence of certain high-profile diseases. Sylvia Plath, Alexandr Solzhenitsyn, Hervé Ghibert, Pascal de Duve and Max Blecher are the writers under scrutiny with their key works of fiction. The article aims to establish the traits their works share with emphasis on the writers' ailing selves by examining their newly emerged literary identities. It also proposes to prove that the common response from them features a sincerity of the reproduced lived experience which should not be confused with the authenticity of mock autofictional representations of disease as would be J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* and which largely rejects the metaphorical representation. Through this analysis, the article also aims to challenge claims for glorification or victimization which may be associated with life writing in its fictional manifestations.*

**Keywords:** *identification; victimhood; confessional; autofiction; life writing; lived experience;*