

Flash Fictions as Creative Writing

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Creative writing is a style that will always be prevalent in society. It brings is the foundation of the greatest novels, movies, and even makes its way into journalism, which affects the news human beings receive. More specifically, a type of creative writing which many are not too familiar with is a genre called, “flash fiction.” This style’s focus is to draft a definitive moment in time. The work can be written in a word to paragraph but usually does not exceed a few pages. The beauty is all choices are made by the author and does not need to fit a certain structure. Though, this style is not to be confused with other types of creative short story writings. It is the detailed description of a specific moment that makes a writing a piece of flash fiction. The Most notable subgenre of flash fiction includes the “six-word story.” In just a few words, the author sends a powerful message. Writer, Ernest Hemingway is credited for making this style so popular. His six-word story, “For sale: baby shoes, never worn” is the at the forefront of the flash fiction movement.

I have observed throughout my academic career and especially in times like these, that creative writing provides an outlet for many people, whether they enjoy or do not enjoy writing. This is because when given the option to write about any subject matter, people can channel their other interests and desires into the work. Flash fiction writing is particularly a great starting point for someone who does not regularly engage with creative writing, because it focuses on a specific moment in time. It also can still challenge long-term writers because it forces them to delve into that moment with vivid detail and description. I want to bring light to this style of creative writing because it is not widely used in the writing community. It is an underrated genre which needs more recognition for its beauty. These pieces to be presented provide survey a diverse range of flash fiction writing. Some were a challenge to compose and others were written more naturally.

One of my first attempts at flash fiction was creating the famous six-word story. As previously mentioned, six-word stories are the most recognizable form of flash fiction writing. This is very difficult to master because the goal is to convey a powerful message in only a few words. Still, I was inspired to write one of my own. I wanted to write about an experience and thought the six-word story was the best way to tell the story. The vagueness in the text leaves the reader wondering, but the title gives the reader direction. This is called, “Describing the Crash.”

Describing the Crash

Stop. Look. Look again. Go. Boom.

Punctuation was a key factor as I was writing. Many writers forget that there is more than word choice that tell a story. Punctuation, font, spacing on the page, and overall visuals play a key part in a good text and a great one.

This next piece is significant in two respects. First, although every author brings their own perspectives and experiences into their work, sometimes it is better not to. A good writer can act. They can observe others and pretend to be them. I was always encouraged to take on the persona of another throughout this course. Even when a writer has not experienced something, they will surprise themselves. I have observed many great pieces by my peers about such complex issues which moved me, when they have never even met someone who has gone through that event. Second, as a creative writer, artistic choices that go against social norms are the most fun to play with. I am against titles for my writings. Many of my pieces do have titles, but generally I do not like them, because I want the text to speak for itself. They hold preconceived notions. Most of the time, I want the reader to be left wondering. Other times, I do include a title because it is an important subject matter that should be brought to light. Here is a piece with no title. I find it easy to navigate without a name.

Together we walk to the beat of the music. Strolling down the lace ribbon fixed neatly on the floor, just for that special day. She is beautiful. Dressed in all white. Out of all the men in the world, I am the one who gets to hold her hand. Just for a moment though. The song shifts, and I don't want her to, but she lets go. At least I trust the new man who gets to hold her hand. And he better hold onto her for life.

A lot of ideas I have for my pieces come from inspiration such as a personal even in my life, but this came from listening to a song. It is about what it would feel like for a father to give his daughter away on her wedding day. The goal way to create something lighthearted and take on the challenge of writing from the perspective I could never place myself into.

Issues in society that one may never encounter still indirectly leave an impact on their mind and on their heart. Mass shootings have been a problem for years and as I aspire to be an elementary educator, they are a haunting and chilling fear. I was inspired by a peer in my writing class as well as the movements to protest gun violence in America. I wanted to create something personal as well as impactful.

Brian

She takes out her notebook and asks Brian a series of the same 13 questions for the third week in a row now. He responds with the same series of 13 answers. Though, his answer to number 8 was a little different today.

“It takes a lot to wake up in the morning and think this way.” said the therapist. Still, in these circumstances, she didn't do anything about it. In contrast, Brian took it into his own hands that he would in fact do *something* about it.

That *something* he decided to do would eventually proceed to be the last things he would ever do. Not only for him, but for the lives of 12 others. 12 others with families waiting for them to return that day from school. 12 others with hopes and dreams. 12 others who were innocent except for the fact that they were the reason Brian quickly wished his and their lives away so quickly. They would not return home that day from school.

At approximately 11:08am in a math class, Mrs. Johnson proceeds to put up homework problem number 8 on the blackboard. Brian decides to get up from his desk and go to the front of the classroom.

He looks at every one of his classmates in the eye. He closes his eyes and whispers to himself, “Time to blow this shit up.” Things happened so quickly there was no time for even a scream.

And the therapist?

She hears about what happened to *Mrs. Johnson, Lilly, Jackie, A.J., Sasha, Emma, John H., John G, Spencer, Maggie, Sammy,* and *Riley*. She looks in her files of Brian and asks herself, “What the hell am I going to do?”

It’s a little too late now.

Although “Brian” was written in third person, it is still a perspective I have never and hope to never experience. The writing process for this made me very emotional. I also wanted was nervous about diminishing this social issue. Thankfully, discussions with peers and my professor I overcame that fear and attempted to tell a sensitive story.

“The Merritt” was a flash fiction idea brewing in my head for months. This story is an allusion to the parkway located in Connecticut. The highway holds a lot of the state’s history and I find it fascinating because it is always a topic of discussion. However, I wanted to amplify the story. One peer editor in my seminar describes it as almost “post-apocalyptic” because of the word choice. The moment being described is someone sitting in the middle of traffic, with a twist.

The Merritt

I sit. And wait. It is a standstill. Awkward one-second looks are being exchanged between machine operators for miles to their left and right. The other side of the wooden divider is steady moving in the opposite direction. Each and every single one of these machine operators are trying to get somewhere. Some have more important places to go than others. In each machine, people have either given up on making it to their destination on time, or they’re clinging on to the false sense of hope they will. I suddenly stop my immense daydreaming. What is the hold up?

Turns out, that five miles ahead, a machine operator hit another.

My last piece is an excerpt of a larger text that has been in the works for a while now. If given the opportunity in the future, I would like to draft a novel. I think flash fictions are a significant part of a books and novels because they are like a scene in a movie. They give the reader an intense scene of a moment that contributes to the theme of the story. Character

development is found in these little moments. This is excerpt written in first person of a female character, Angelina, and begins en medias res.

Angelina walks along a path in the middle of the woods and comes across what appears to be an injured fawn

It is injured. I can tell it is scared for me to approach it, but I want to help. I know you're not supposed to just go up to wild animals, but I want to help. It does not get up and run so it begins to cry out due to fear. I pet it, almost like a dog but even more gently. It begins to place its trust in me. I open my backpack and before I can give it some food, I pull something else out by accident. I hear a noise. I turn around. About ten feet away is a giant buck. It must have been the baby's father. I back away slowly but that doesn't stop it from creeping closer. I don't want to run, but fight or flight kicks in. I continue the path I have been following previously for miles but just after a few minutes I start to lose stamina. The path curves and I think I am losing him, but I am far from it. I want to stop running, but I don't. In my hands I hold the end to all of this chaos, but I refuse to resort to that. I refuse. I start to yell. "Stop!" I keep running. "Stop!" I yell at the buck like it understands me. It does not. I keep running. I try to scream to scare it away, but bucks don't get scared of humans like me. I scream until my lungs are about to cave in from the running and the yelling combined. I'm praying for the buck to stop chasing but it doesn't. Its either life and death for either me or the animal. I can't believe I do this, but I turn around and point my gun. I close my eyes. I hope it stops. I hope it runs the other way or even runs past me. But no. I feel it keeps coming. I open my eyes and we make eye contact for just a second. I let go of the trigger.

I scream. And scream again. Its dead. I just shot a buck. I don't know how, but the fawn I thought was injured makes it to the scene. We make eye contact. It runs from me. It must have been its father. The baby takes off. I thought I couldn't cry anymore today but I do. It's an animal, yet I feel like a murderer. I fall to the ground and sob some more. Something magic happens, a boy who appears to be my age comes from behind a tree. He stands over me offering me a hand. "No need to cry," he says. "It was just a simulation."

This story describes the moment Angelina needs to kill animal to save her life. Mentioned previously, this is a small part of a greater story. A good writer revises and always actively tries to make their work better. I strive to become a better writer whether its revising a piece or drafting something new.

Flash fiction writing is an undervalued genre of writing that should be tackled by more authors. Although this style was not designed necessarily to convey formal and academic writing, it is a creative outlet for those who want to tell a fiction story. It contributes to larger pieces of writing and by focusing on a specific moment, is often more meaning to the reader. The

author can also take on the persona of another; completely different from who they are. There is much thought that goes into creating a powerful piece of flash fiction, but nothing confines the reader even if they are trying to master something as complex as a six-word story. Presented in my work is a variety of texts grown from personal experiences, societal events, and different perspectives. In times like these, we need to channel our energy into something positive. As the wording is making unforeseeable changes, writing has been a support system many times during this process. I am very passionate about the art of flash fiction writing, and I hope that either by sharing this style or sharing my works with another, I have a positive impact on their life.