

Ordinary Life, Extraordinary Form: Narrative Techniques in Flash Non-Fiction

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In my paper, I would like to focus on the representation of everyday life in the genre of *flash non-fiction* with particular emphasis on the contrast between the ‘ordinary’ content and the formal experiments. *Flash non-fiction*, which emerged from fictional *short-short stories*, is often rooted in autobiographical experience. It owes its existence to social and technological changes; the stories are often published in literary magazines and intended to be read on smartphone screens. Three important anthologies of flash non-fiction have been edited by Judith Kitchen and Mary Paumier Jones: *In Short: A Collection of Brief Creative Nonfiction* (1996), *In Brief: Short Takes on the Personal* (1999), *Short Takes* (2005).

Flash non-fiction typically captures glimpses of everyday life. The micro-plots are frequently centred upon defining moments, with the past and future only suggested. Those narrative snippets are complete, but the events depicted often serve as synecdoches of more general issues. Sometimes they limit themselves to observations or fragmentary depictions. The reader is invited to imagine the rest according to their own experience and knowledge.

A surprising feature of flash non-fiction is its use of extravagant narrative techniques, such as second person narration. It creates an effect of immersion, but also brings a literary, unusual dimension to the usual, shared experiences. In my analysis of several examples, I focus on this juxtaposition.