

Critical Insights: Flash Fiction

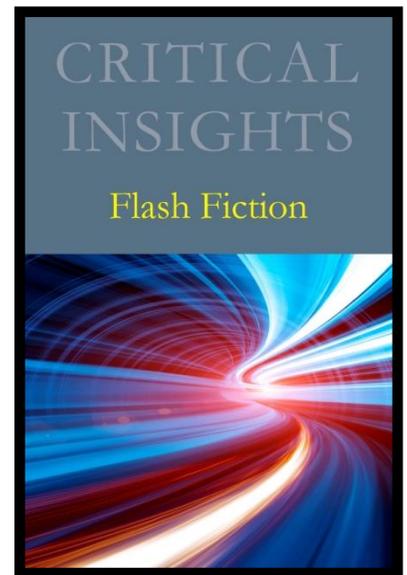
“With roots in the distant past, flash fiction, or the short, short story, is nevertheless only recently emerging as a target of genuine scholarship. This volume in the *Critical Insights* series takes on the literary genre of flash fiction with essays offering a range of perspectives on the works of a number of flash fiction practitioners.

Opening essays provide readers with **essential foundational material**, establishing a flash fiction history in fables and parables, its early critical dismissal, and the varying ways the genre is conceived and considered. The four essays in the Critical Contexts section expand on that foundation. Pamelyn Castro presents a survey of flash fiction anthologies going back to the 1920s and extending into today’s multimedia world. Megan Giddings, in “The Destroyer and the Rotten Heart: Comparing and Contrasting Donald Bartheleme’s ‘The Baby’ and Amelia Gray’s ‘The Heart,’” focuses on narrative technique in the genre. Ten essays bring diverse topics and points-of-view to the Critical Readings section. Robert C. Evans examines renowned writer Kate Chopin’s meticulous approach to her short, short stories. Several pieces like Laura Hatry’s “Latin American Flash Fiction: Julio Cortazar and Luisa Valenzuela” examine both contemporary and classic examples of international flash fiction. And Eric Sterling takes a look at the work of Isaac Babel, whose fleeting stories served (dangerously) as a vehicle of protest. Other essays explore the mechanics of **flash fiction character development, style, and wordplay**; look at **an author’s ability to create tension** in a short piece; and more. Essays touch on the work of Franz Kafka, Lou Beach, Lydia Davis, Amy Hempel, Kathy Fish, and others. A Resources section rounds out the volume and includes a good listing of additional works of flash fiction (collections, anthologies, literary journals, etc.) and a bibliography.

Overall, the volume is a **thoughtful collection** that will **engage anyone new to or already interested in the significant, if less known, genre of flash fiction.**”

—ARBA

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