

“The Shortest Stories Ever Written: Where to Find Them and How to Write Them”

Presented by: Lawrence C. Connolly
Saturday, May 31, 2:00-3:00 PM

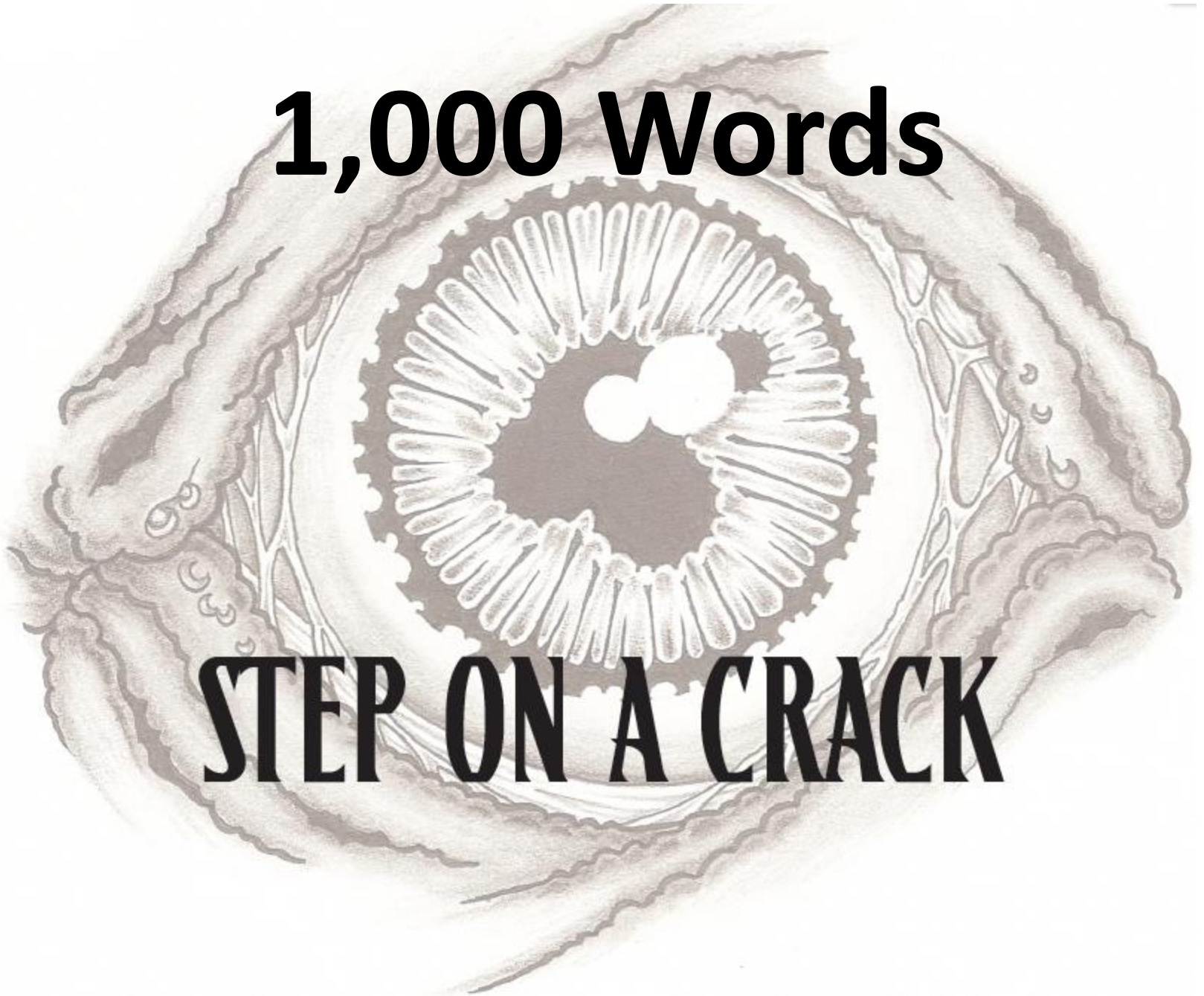
This workshop will consider the shortest stories ever written and determine what makes them work.

FLASH-FICTION:

- 55-1000 words
- Setting
- Character
- Conflict
- Resolution

1,000 Words

STEP ON A CRACK



175 Words

Imagine
Frederic Brown

Imagine ghosts, gods and devils.

Imagine hells and heavens, cities floating in the sky and cities sunken in the sea

Unicorns and centaurs. Witches, warlocks, jinns and banshees.

Angels and harpies. Charms and incantations. Elementals, familiars, demons.

Easy to imagine all of those things: mankind has been imagining them for thousands of years.

Imagine spaceships and the future.

Easy to imagine; the future is really coming and there'll be spaceships in it.

Is there then anything that's really hard to imagine?

Of course there is.

Imagine a piece of matter and yourself inside it, yourself, aware, thinking and therefore knowing you exist, able to move that piece of matter that you're in," to make it sleep or wake, make love or walk uphill.

Imagine a universe-infinite or not, as you wish to picture it- with a billion, billion, billion suns in it.

Imagine a blob of mud whirling madly around one of those suns.

Imagine yourself standing on that blob of mud, whirling with it, whirling through time and space to an unknown destination.

Imagine!

55 words

The World's Shortest Stories

Edited by
Steve Moss



Murder. Love. Horror. Suspense.

All this and much more in the most amazing short stories ever written—each one just 55 words long!

BEDTIME STORY

“Careful, honey, it’s loaded,” he said, re-entering the bedroom.

Her back rested against the headboard. “This for your wife?”

“No. Too chancy. I’m hiring a professional.”

“How about me?”

He smirked. “Cute. But who’d be dumb enough to hire a lady hit man?”

She wet her lips, sighting along the barrel.

“Your wife.”

JEFFREY WHITMORE

17 words

Knock

by Frederic Brown

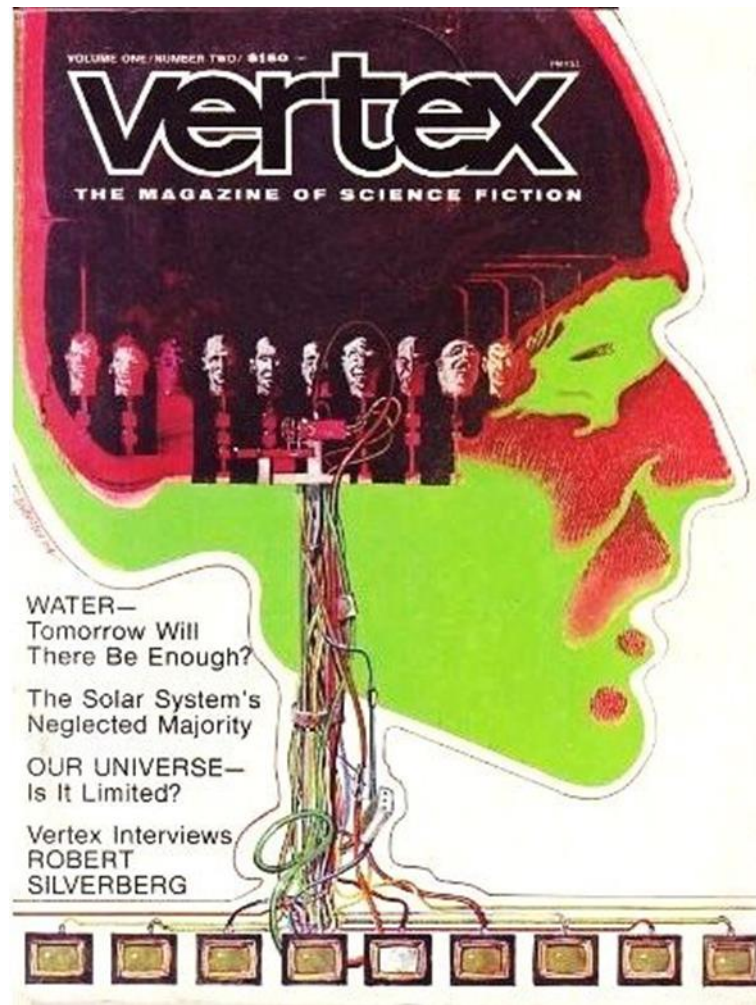
The last man on Earth sat alone
in a room. There was a knock on
the door.

6 words

Shortest Story Ever Told
by Ernest Hemingway

For Sale, Baby Shoes, Never Worn.

Shorter?



Shortest!

Writing Flash

- Brainstorm concept, premise, twist, and/or surprise.
- Draft the set up (200 wrds max.)
 - Setting
 - Characters(s)
 - Conflict / Action
- Draft resolution, twist, or surprise (50 words max.)

Editing Flash

- Cut modifiers.
- Delete repetitions.
- Use active voice.
- Show (don't tell).
- Use vivid nouns and verbs.
- Use dialogue (but not tags).



Our reading periods are:

1. February-May
2. August-**November**

Vestal Review accepts only original material. No reprints, please. Even if it has been displayed on your own Web page, we consider it published. If the story has been posted and reviewed at a password-protected e-workshop with a controlled list of participants, we consider this a plus.

Vestal Review

Vestal Review is a magazine for flash (short-shorts) fiction. We realize that there are different definitions of what a flash story is and all of them have merit. In our definition, a flash story is no longer than 500 words and it has a plot.

Don't forget that the title is an important part of the story. Make it pertinent but don't tell too much. We generally don't favor one-word titles.

The cash payments:

Stories up to 100 words (excluding the title)--10 cents a word.

Stories between 101 and 200 words--5 cents a word.

Stories between 201 and 500 words--3 cents a word.

Stories of great merit receive up to \$25 flat fee; 3 cents a word is a minimum pay in any case.

<http://www.vestalreview.net/html/guidelines.html>



FLASH
FICTION
ONLINE

We pay fifty dollars US (\$50) per story.



This payment provides us with first electronic publication rights, including HTML, PDF, Plain text, and MP3 (Podcast) formats, as well as inclusion in a FFO anthology (print or electronic) after the original publication.

Your story may be distributed through a variety of electronic means, including email, our Web site, podcast, Kindle or other similar electronic publication, and RSS feed. All other rights remain with the author, including the right to republish at will following the privilege he/she allows us to be the first to do so anywhere in the world.

<http://flashfictiononline.com/main/submission-guidelines/>

Fantasy & Science Fiction

Writer's Guidelines

- We have no formula for fiction. We are looking for stories that will appeal to science fiction and fantasy readers. The SF element may be slight, but it should be present. We prefer character-oriented stories. We receive a lot of fantasy fiction, but never enough science fiction or humor. Do not query for fiction; send the entire manuscript. We publish fiction up to 25,000 words in length. Please read the magazine before submitting. A sample copy is available for \$7.00 in the US and \$15.00 elsewhere (to NJ address).

- We do not accept simultaneous or electronic submissions. Please type your manuscript on clean white bond, double spaced, with one inch margins. For a good article on standard manuscript preparation, see www.sfw.org/2008/11/manuscript-preparation/. Put your name on each page, and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Writers from abroad are encouraged to send recyclable manuscripts with a letter-sized SASE and an International Reply Coupon or \$1.10 in US postage. You can obtain information on how to place an international order by going to faq.usps.com and enter "postal store – International Orders" in the search box then the top entry in resulting list of links provides the necessary details.
- We prefer not to see more than one submission from a writer at a time.
- Allow 8 weeks for a response. Please write and enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope if you have any questions.
- Payment is 7-12 cents per word on acceptance. We buy first North American and foreign serial rights and an option on anthology rights. All other rights are retained by the author.
- Our columns and non-fiction articles are assigned in house. We do not accept freelance submissions in those areas.
- Since we use so little art—just six covers a year, no interiors—we have no separate artist's guidelines. Please send art samples to Gordon Van Gelder at the address below.
- Send story submissions and cartoon queries as well as orders for sample copies to Gordon Van Gelder, Fantasy & Science Fiction, P.O. Box 3447, Hoboken, NJ 07030.

<http://www.sfsite.com/fsf/glines.htm>

FLASH QUESTIONS

ANSWER CORRECTLY

WIN A PRIZE!

Putting the Flash in Fiction

October 6th, 2013



What makes for a good **flash fiction** story?

The answer is elusive.

We know the good stories when we read them. They're the ones that grab our attention, hold our interest, and conclude with a punch.

Next week, I'll be giving a presentation on flash fiction at the Pittsburgh Area Independent School Teachers Association (**flash fiction**) conference, held this year at Sewickley Academy, just north of Pittsburgh. I'm currently in the process of assembling my notes, rereading some classic stories, seeking out some new ones, and trying to. . . .

[Read more at [The 21st Century Scop.](#)]