

ABSTRACT

WATER THE DESICCATED POET: APPLYING COMPOSITION THEORY TO THE TEACHING OF CREATIVE WRITING

Spawned from the same academic environment, composition and creative writing have competed against each other since their inception. The pedagogy of creative writing has suffered from static evolutionary progress that is damaging to students. Entrenched in the MFA design is the Starwriter system that nurtures a romantic and modernist approach to creative writing while not allowing students the freedom to explore other aesthetics. Students in MFA do not maintain authorial ownership over their texts and their artistic aesthetic is homogenized. As a result of this design and pedagogy, graduates are discouraged from further writing and are not empowered for employment because they lack critical awareness within their field.

The position of terminal status that the MFA currently holds is being unseated by PhDs with creative dissertations. The pedagogical approach in the creative writing classroom and the design within the university needs to change. Crossing the divide between creative writing and composition needs to occur. Access and application of composition theories and practices would solve the marginalizing issues of MFA programs.

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