

THE STATUS OF CREATIVE WRITING AS AN ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE: WHERE IT THRIVES AND DIVES – WITH A SPECIAL FOCUS ON JAPAN AND ITS “KATAIZED” CULTURE

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“Culture is a prism through which we view the world” – Anonymous.

The purpose of this paper is to address the reasons why there are so few Creative Writing Programs in Asian Universities, especially Japanese ones. With the exception of success stories regarding popularity of creative writing programs in two Asian countries, there is a dearth of major programs leading toward a B.A., M.A. and/or Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing, and only a small number of classes in Creative Writing are offered in literature departments in most Asian universities. This stands in sharp contrast to American universities where Creative Writing has long been an academic discipline and several noteworthy breakthrough writers have come out of MFA programs in the U.S. (the list is long). The latter half of the paper addresses theoretical concerns and practical applications concerning how to teach writing to advanced EFL students in Japan.

In an April 9, 2015 article in the International New York Times entitled "Why Writers Love to Hate the M.F.A." Cecilia Capuzzi Simon wrote that in 2015 the Iowa Writers' Workshop reported a 10 percent surge in applicants to 1,380, despite 2015 being a year with a strong economy in the U.S. She went on to write that "explosive" is the best word used to describe the growth of MFA programs in creative writing in the U.S.

While the MFA at the University of Iowa was established in 1936 as the first university to offer the MFA, by 1994, there were 64 MFA programs. By last year, that number had more than tripled, to 229 in the U.S. (with another 152 M.A. Programs in creative writing), according to the Association of Writers and Writing Programs, which added that between 3,000 and 4,000 students a year graduate with the degree; last year, about 20,000 applications were sent out.

The implications of these facts are clear: American universities lead the world when it comes to the teaching and nurturing of emerging writers....

III. BRIGHT SPOT: HONG KONG

Professor Page Richards of Hong Kong University addressed the popularity levels of creative writing programs in Hong Kong and obliquely China.

Said she, “I can speak most specifically of my experience in Hong Kong. As I arrived from the U.S. more than fifteen years ago to HKU, I arrived to an envelope of articles cut from the SCMP and other local publications in English waiting in my new mailbox at the university. They outlined the relative absence of creative writing classes, workshops, or programmes with major and local institutional support in Hong Kong. There were already, of course, many and notable strongholds of the arts and creative writing across the city, both in Chinese and English languages, including the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts for undergraduates; Lingnan University’s long history of support to creative writers and writers in residency; Professor Shirley Lim’s Moving Poetry Programmes launched in 2000; local poetry and storytelling circles, such as the Hong Kong Writers Circle; and radio broadcasting of stories and local life writing, as we now call it, at RTHK, for instance, on the programming of “Songbirds," just to name only a few. Many of the articles, relating especially to education to the tertiary curriculum, however, outlined combined forces of history of impediment here to a flourishing

climate of professional expansion of offerings especially toward degree-granting programmes in Hong Kong: including a range of issues, from British and Chinese exam-based practices and models of assessment, to overstated and outworn clichés of mixed-language use, to postcolonial racist attitudes toward local aptitudes and creativity. The many disturbing articles marked, at the same time, a major shift of perception back in 2000, already growing; a deep raising of the awareness for a still relatively egregious scarcity of professional degree-granting contexts and encouragements, open to students and writers or all who are now in what is often earmarked as the ‘creative industries.’”

She went on to say, “The urgent need to address and redress this situation was a call to arms. And, skipping ahead now fifteen years, this period has marked a major change in the region. I was hired at HKU to help contribute to this expanding turn-around of perception and practice. And the growing support beginning in 2000 was already in full swing: from colleagues in the School of English and at the other local universities; to writers and artists in the community; to international and visiting writers and artists joining us throughout the years to expand and catalyze new dimensions. My work at HKU included, upon arrival, for instance, reanimating local drama study and practice at HKU and in the community; building on local foundations for what is now the thriving Creative Writing Studio in the School of English, a Studio that now offers home to the Writers’ Series; the Drama Series; the internationally circulated literary journal Yuan Yang, with a focus on local writers; the HKU International Poetry Prize and First Book Award with HKU Press; writer-in-residency programmes, and much more.

As for finding a job after graduation, I discussed, is such a field of study considered too high risk for conservative, by contrast, Asians who tend to gravitate to the sure thing of STEM majors (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)?

She said, “We do recognise, all of us global travellers, cultural imperatives in major cities of business, such as New York or Hong Kong, bending a path toward immediately recognisable financial awards and degrees. Having grown up in the U.S. in major cities, I recognise such encouragement toward visible success, especially in relatively young cities on the historical map, earmarked by drives toward immediate position and global performance. Such pressures of course exist in Hong Kong, too, for instance, as they did and do in the U.S. At the same time, the risks of pursuing the creative fields, high as they are anywhere in the world, are met in Hong Kong with the equally high drive to take the risk. The spirit and drive here of creative writers and artists, in fellowship with their peers worldwide, happily, is taking full stride, forging a new path here in Hong Kong, as the degree-granting and creative writing programmes and communities of writers grow. While programmes such as the Iowa Workshops began more than fifty years ago in the U.S. to take hold and to offer alternatives at the academy for the writers and artists, so too Hong Kong in its unusual postcolonial politics is now establishing the MFA degree in creative writing, and other professional proliferation, unique to its multi-language and regional uniqueness.

“Briefly, the field of ‘creative industries’ is taking off, so to speak, and the potential and interest in ‘creativity’ across all jobs and markets has never been higher here in the last fifteen years. The HKU MFA in Creative Writing, for instance, has already offered its writers professional opportunities for its graduates that give chances not only to new openings but also to promotions and repositioning of field. One of our MFA graduates, for example, found that the MFA studies and degree ignited his latent compositional talent in music, and transformed his life: he changed fields after graduation to his professional calling in music after graduation. Others discover more about their convictions and find their professional field sharpened, not to mention their continuing work as writers, as they pursue their craft and field in drafting, revision, and publications.”

My response here focuses on the PhD in International Relations degree, but its premises could easily apply in part to the non-terminal degrees in the field, preceding it as well. Moreover and finally, they do this along with researching, writing, and defending a dissertation with a view to qualifying for the Institute's PhD in International Relations degree with specialization in any one of these three disciplines. Related Questions. More Answers Below. Is international relations a difficult major? What should your interests be like to study international relations? Why do we need theory in international relations? What careers can I pursue with a bachelor's degree in international relations? What is a good major to combine with international relations? William L. academic discipline is one of possible positive steps. The other way is creating university centers of academic. for text writing in accordance with international rhetorical conventions and training independent researchers who may become active participants of. discipline, I. Korotkina defines the term academic through the word scholastic and counters it as a scientific one. Such interpretation is probably related to. The discipline is based on the comparative studies in a wide range of areas, such as anthropology, psychology, sociology, international management, and linguistics. Look through the following definitions of culture. What do you think of the academic background of their authors? What is the focus of their studies? ¼ Culture is communication (E.T. Hall). ¼ Culture is the collective programming of the mind (Geert Hofstede). ¼ Culture is how things are done here (John Mole). ¼ All communication is more or less cross-cultural (Deborah Tannen). ¼ Culture is a kind of storehouse or library of possible meanings and symbols (Ron Scollon). Within each of these areas intercultural researchers have focused on the following issues: identity, intercultural communication competence, and adaptation. As an introduction to university writing, this course will take students through the necessary elements of writing for academic purposes: the process itself, its genres, features and conventions. Alongside with the key theoretical concepts and major practical issues, the course will develop knowledge of linguistic structures, including grammar, punctuation, and spelling, through practice in composing and revising. Students will write something for or in every class. Writing Academic English, Fourth Edition. The Longman Academic Writing Series. Special Equipment and Software Support. Classroom equipment for visuals (PPT presentations and video). Page 6. The Emergence of Creative Writing Studies "Where to Begin? 8. Establishing Creative Writing Studies as an Academic Discipline. 13. Section One: A Taxonomy of Creative Writing Pedagogies. 15. Where Meaning Lies "A Multi-faceted Approach. 21. Orientation of Critical Theories. creative writing, a discipline which is unaware of the histories and theories that informs its practice. As such, its creative writing teachers are, of necessity, implicated in questions of theory and practice" (Bishop "On the Same Boat" para. With a goal to ascend creative writing studies as an academic discipline, the second part of my argument explores the history and current practices of the workshop model. The workshop, now an interchangeable signifier for the practice of creative. 4.