

## THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO THE AMERICAN SHORT STORY

This *Companion* offers students and scholars a comprehensive introduction to the development and the diversity of the American short story as a literary form from its origins in the eighteenth century to the present day. Rather than define what the short story is as a genre, or defend its importance in comparison with the novel, this *Companion* seeks to understand what the short story does – how it moves through national space, how it is always related to other genres and media, and how its inherent mobility responds to the literary marketplace and resonates with key critical themes in contemporary literary studies. The chapters offer authoritative introductions and reinterpretations of a literary form that has re-emerged as a major force in the twenty-first-century public sphere dominated by the Internet.

MICHAEL J. COLLINS is Reader in American Studies at King's College London, where he teaches nineteenth- and twentieth-century fiction, life writing, and music. He is the author of *The Drama of the American Short Story, 1800–1865* (Michigan, 2016) and *Exoteric Modernisms: Progressive Era Literature and the Aesthetics of Everyday Life* (Edinburgh, forthcoming).

GAVIN JONES is the Frederick P. Rehmus Family Professor of the Humanities at Stanford University, where he has taught American literature since 1999. He is the author of four monographs, most recently *Failure and the American Writer: A Literary History* (Cambridge, 2014) and *Reclaiming John Steinbeck: Writing for the Future of Humanity* (Cambridge, 2021).

Cambridge University Press & Assessment  
978-1-009-29281-8 — The Cambridge Companion to the American Short Story  
Edited by Michael J. Collins , Gavin Jones  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

---

THE CAMBRIDGE  
COMPANION TO THE  
AMERICAN SHORT STORY

EDITED BY  
MICHAEL J. COLLINS  
*King's College London*  
GAVIN JONES  
*Stanford University*



Cambridge University Press & Assessment  
 978-1-009-29281-8 — The Cambridge Companion to the American Short Story  
 Edited by Michael J. Collins, Gavin Jones  
 Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)



CAMBRIDGE  
 UNIVERSITY PRESS

Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom  
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
 314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India  
 103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,  
 a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of  
 education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781009292818](http://www.cambridge.org/9781009292818)

DOI: 10.1017/9781009292863

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2023

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions  
 of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take  
 place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

First published 2023

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

NAMES: Collins, Michael J. (Michael James), 1984- editor. | Jones, Gavin Roger, 1968- editor.  
 TITLE: The Cambridge companion to the American short story / edited by Michael J. Collins, King's  
 College London ; Gavin Jones, Stanford University.  
 DESCRIPTION: New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2023. | Series: Cambridge companions  
 to literature | Includes bibliographical references and index.  
 IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2022040183 (print) | LCCN 2022040184 (ebook) | ISBN 9781009292818  
 (hardback) | ISBN 9781009292849 (paperback) | ISBN 9781009292863 (epub)  
 SUBJECTS: LCSH: Short stories, American—History and criticism. | LCGFT: Literary criticism.  
 CLASSIFICATION: LCC PS374.S5 C36 2023 (print) | LCC PS374.S5 (ebook) |  
 DDC 813/.0109—dc23/eng/20221020  
 LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2022040183>  
 LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2022040184>  
 ISBN 978-1-009-29281-8 Hardback  
 ISBN 978-1-009-29284-9 Paperback

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence  
 or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this  
 publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will  
 remain, accurate or appropriate.

## *Contents*

<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>page</i> viii
<i>List of Tables</i>	ix
<i>List of Contributors</i>	x
<i>Chronology</i>	xvi
Introduction	I
<i>Michael J. Collins and Gavin Jones</i>	
<b>PART I: CONTEXTS</b>	
1 Transatlantic Print Culture and the Emergence of Short Narratives	17
<i>Oliver Scheiding</i>	
2 The Short Story and the Early Magazine	31
<i>Jared Gardner</i>	
3 The Short Story Fad: Gender, Pleasure, and Commodity Culture in Late Nineteenth-Century Magazines	46
<i>Brad Evans</i>	
4 The Best of the Best: Anthologies, Prizes, and the Short Story Canon	62
<i>Alexander Manshel</i>	
5 The Story of a Semester: Short Fiction and the Program Era	80
<i>Loren Glass</i>	
6 The Short Story in the Age of the Internet	97
<i>Simone Murray</i>	

vi	<i>Contents</i>	
PART II: HISTORIES		
7	The War Story <i>Cody Marrs</i>	117
8	Narratives from Below: Working-Class Short Fiction <i>Owen Clayton</i>	131
9	The Short Story and the Popular Imagination: Pulp and Crime <i>Will Norman</i>	146
10	Love What You Do: Neoliberalism, Emotional Labor, and the Short Story As a Service <i>Lee Konstantinou</i>	160
11	Local Color to Multiculturalism: Minority Writers in the Short Story and Ethnographic Markets <i>Long Le-Khac</i>	174
PART III: PEOPLE AND PLACES		
12	Native American Short Stories <i>Hertha D. Sweet Wong</i>	191
13	African American Short Fiction: From Reform to Renaissance <i>Amina Gautier</i>	206
14	Little Postage Stamps: The Short Story, the American South, and the World <i>Coleman Hutchison</i>	221
15	Regional Stories and the Environmental Imagination <i>Sylvan Goldberg</i>	236
16	Concrete Illuminations: The Short Story and/as Urban Revolution <i>Myka Tucker-Abramson</i>	251
PART IV: THEORIES		
17	Short Fiction, Language Learning, and Innocent Comedy <i>Gabriella Safran</i>	269

<i>Contents</i>		vii
18	The Technology of the Short Story: From Sci-Fi to Cli-Fi <i>Shelley Streeby</i>	283
19	Homelessness: The Short Story and Other Media <i>Gavin Jones</i>	298
20	The Human and the Animal: Toward Posthumanist Short Fiction <i>Michael Lundblad</i>	313
21	The End of the Story: Grammar, Gender, and Time in the Contemporary Short Story <i>Lola Boorman</i>	327
22	The Affordances of Mere Length: Computational Approaches to Short Story Analysis <i>Mark Algee-Hewitt, Anna Mukamal, and J. D. Porter</i>	341
	<i>Notes</i>	358
	<i>Further Reading</i>	363
	<i>Index</i>	372

## Figures

2.1	“The Thunder Storm,” by Paul Revere. <i>Royal American Magazine</i> , 1774.	page 39
3.1	Cover of <i>Munsey’s Magazine</i> , May 1896.	57
3.2	“New York Awheel,” <i>Munsey’s Magazine</i> , May 1896.	58
4.1a	From Edward J. O’Brien, <i>The Best Short Stories of 1915 and the Yearbook of the American Short Story</i> (1915).	65
4.1b	From Edward J. O’Brien, <i>The Best Short Stories of 1915 and the Yearbook of the American Short Story</i> (1915).	66
5.1	Journals with stories in the <i>Best American Short Stories</i> since 1942.	81
5.2	<i>New Yorker</i> stories in the <i>Best American Short Stories</i> by year since 1942.	82
5.3	<i>Best American Short Stories</i> author MFAs since 1942.	83
5.4	Iowa MFAs in the <i>Best American Short Stories</i> by year since 1942.	83
5.5	Institutions employing writers in the <i>Best American Short Stories</i> since 1942.	84
5.6	Authors with five or more stories in the <i>Best American Short Stories</i> .	92
6.1	Jennifer Egan’s Japanese notebook for “Black Box.”	108
22.1	Number of fictions per year in the Women’s Magazine Archive (shaded by publication title).	344
22.2	Number of unique characters per 1,000 words in novels (in dark gray) and short stories (in light gray).	347
22.3	Boxplot of word movers similarity between beginnings and ends of novels (dark) and short stories (light).	353



## *Tables*

4.1	The <i>Best American's</i> top authors (incl. stories anthologized) by decade.	<i>page</i> 68
4.2	The <i>Best American's</i> top authors (incl. stories anthologized) by decade.	69
4.3	The <i>Best American's</i> top journals (incl. stories anthologized) by decade.	70
22.1a	MDWs of short story beginnings.	351
22.1b	MDWs of short story endings.	351

## Contributors

MARK ALGEE-HEWITT is Associate Professor of Digital Humanities and English at Stanford University, where he directs the Stanford Literary Lab. His work combines digital and critical methods to explore aesthetic phenomena in literature from the eighteenth century to the present. His work has applied network theory to dramatic plotting, used neural networks to explore the phenomena of suspense, and traced the history of the sublime through large-scale embedding models of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature.

LOLA BOORMAN is Lecturer in American Literature and Culture at the University of York. Her research interests include twentieth- and twenty-first-century American writing, literary institutions, the intersections between literature and linguistics, the short story form, the essay, and African American film and literature. She is currently completing her first monograph, *Make Grammar Do: Grammar and Twentieth-Century American Fiction*.

OWEN CLAYTON is Senior Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Lincoln. His specialism is late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century US and British literature, and his current research interests are the representation of vagrancy and homelessness. He is the author of *Literature and Photography in Transition, 1850–1915* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015) and *Vagabonds, Tramps, and Hobos: The Literature and Culture of US Transiency 1890–1940* (Cambridge, forthcoming). He is also the editor of *Representing Homelessness*, a multidisciplinary volume that was published as part of the *Proceedings of the British Academy* series (Oxford, 2021), and of a book of primary-source letters titled *Roving Bill Aspinwall: Dispatches from a Hobo in Post-Civil War America* (Feral House, 2022).

## Contributors

xi

MICHAEL J. COLLINS is Reader in American Studies at King's College, London where he teaches nineteenth-, twentieth-, and twenty-first-century fiction and life writing. He is the author of two monographs: *The Drama of the American Short Story, 1800–1865* (Michigan, 2016) and *Exoteric Modernisms: Progressive Era Literature and the Aesthetics of Everyday Life* (Edinburgh, forthcoming). His essays have been published in *Textual Practice*, the *Journal of American Studies*, *Amerikastudien*, *English Language Notes*, and elsewhere.

BRAD EVANS is Professor of English at Rutgers University. A specialist in nineteenth- and twentieth-century American literature, he is the author of two books, *Before Cultures: The Ethnographic Imagination in American Literature* (Chicago, 2005) and *Ephemeral Bibelots: How an International Fad Buried American Modernism* (Johns Hopkins, 2019). He co-produced the restoration of *In the Land of the Head Hunters*, a 1914 silent feature film directed by the photographer Edward Curtis and starring an all-indigenous cast from the Kwakwaka'wakw community of British Columbia, Canada. He leads the Pragmatism Working Group at the Rutgers Centre for Cultural Analysis, and his new project is tentatively titled *Missed Connections: "Relational Aesthetics" from Henry James to Felix Gonzales Torres*.

JARED GARDNER is Professor of English at the Ohio State University. He has authored or edited several books, including *The Rise and Fall of Early American Magazine Culture* (Illinois, 2012) and, forthcoming, a Norton Critical Edition of Will Eisner's graphic short fiction and, with Elizabeth Hewitt, an MLA-CSE textual edition of the final writings of Charles Brockden Brown.

AMINA GAUTIER is Associate Professor of English at the University of Miami. She is the author of the short story collections *At-Risk* (Georgia, 2011), *Now We Will Be Happy* (Nebraska, 2014), and *The Loss of All Lost Things* (Elixir, 2016), and is a recipient of the Pen/Malamud Award for Excellence in the Short Story. Her critical essays and reviews have appeared in *African American Review*, *Critical Insights: Frederick Douglass*, *Daedalus*, the *Journal of American History*, *Libraries and Culture*, *Nineteenth Century Contexts*, and *Whitman Noir: Essays on Black America and the Good Grey Poet*.

LOREN GLASS is Professor and Chair of English at the University of Iowa, specializing in the twentieth- and twenty-first century literatures and

cultures of the United States, with an emphasis on book history and literary institutions. He is the author of *Counterculture Colophon: Grove Press, the Evergreen Review, and the Incorporation of the Avant-Garde* (Stanford, 2013), republished in paperback by Seven Stories Press under the title *Rebel Publisher: Grove Press and the Revolution of the Word*, and the editor of *After the Program Era: The Past, Present, and Future of Creative Writing in the University* (Iowa, 2016). He is currently working on a literary history of Iowa City. He is a member of the Post45 collective and co-edits their book series.

SYLVAN GOLDBERG is Assistant Professor of English at Colorado College, where he teaches and writes on US literature of the long nineteenth century and the environmental humanities. He has published essays on environmental affect, the interrelation of literary and geologic form, and the roles that climate and environment have played in western American literature.

COLEMAN HUTCHISON is Associate Professor of English at the University of Texas at Austin, where he teaches courses in nineteenth- and twentieth-century US literature and culture, bibliography and textual studies, and poetry and poetics. A past president of the Society for the Study of Southern Literature, he is the author of *Apples and Ashes: Literature, Nationalism, and the Confederate States of America* (Georgia, 2012); co-author of *Writing About American Literature: A Guide for Students* (Norton, 2014); editor of *A History of American Civil War Literature* (Cambridge, 2015); and co-editor of *The Cambridge Companion to the Literature of the American Civil War and Reconstruction* (Cambridge, 2022).

GAVIN JONES is the Frederick P. Rehmus Family Professor of the Humanities at Stanford University, where he teaches courses on nineteenth- and twentieth-century American literature. He is the author of *Strange Talk: The Politics of Dialect Literature in Gilded Age America* (California, 1999), *American Hungers: The Problem of Poverty in U.S. Literature, 1840–1945* (Princeton, 2007), *Failure and the American Writer: A Literary History* (Cambridge, 2014), and *Reclaiming John Steinbeck: Writing for the Future of Humanity* (Cambridge, 2021).

LEE KONSTANTINOU is Associate Professor of English at the University of Maryland. He is the author of *Pop Apocalypse* (Ecco/HarperCollins, 2009), *Cool Characters: Irony and American Fiction* (Harvard, 2016), and *The Last Samurai Reread* (Columbia, 2022). He co-edited the collections *The Legacy of David Foster Wallace* (Iowa, 2012) and *Artful*

*Breakdowns: The Comics of Art Spiegelman* (Mississippi Press, forthcoming). He is currently working on a new project called *Platform-Art: Graphic Storytelling in the Age of Social Media*.

LONG LE-KHAC is Assistant Professor of English at Loyola University, Chicago. His research and teaching focus on American literature, relational race studies, Asian American studies, Latinx studies, migration studies, narrative theory, social movements, and digital humanities. He is the author of *Giving Form to an Asian and Latinx America* (Stanford, 2020). His other published work appears in *Post45*, the *Journal of Cultural Analytics*, *American Literature*, *MELUS*, *Victorian Studies*, and the pamphlets of the Stanford Literary Lab.

MICHAEL LUNDBLAD is Professor of English-Language Literature at the University of Oslo, Norway. He is the author of *The Birth of a Jungle: Animality in Progressive-Era U.S. Literature and Culture* (Oxford, 2013); co-editor, with Marianne DeKoven, of *Species Matters: Humane Advocacy and Cultural Theory* (Columbia, 2012); and editor of *Animalities: Literary and Cultural Studies Beyond the Human* (Edinburgh, 2017) and of a special issue of *New Literary History* on “Animality/Posthumanism/Disability” (2020).

ALEXANDER MANSHEL is Assistant Professor of Twentieth Century and Contemporary American Literature at McGill University. His writing on contemporary fiction and literary institutions has appeared in *PMLA*, *MELUS*, *Post45*, *Public Books*, and *The Atlantic*.

CODY MARRS is Professor of English at the University of Georgia. He is the author of *Melville, Beauty, and American Literary Studies* (Oxford, 2022), *Not Even Past: The Stories We Keep Telling About the Civil War* (Johns Hopkins, 2020), and *Nineteenth-Century American Literature and the Long Civil War* (Cambridge, 2015), as well as numerous articles that have appeared in journals such as *American Literature*, *American Literary History*, and *J19*. He is also the editor of *The New Melville Studies* (Cambridge, 2019), a co-editor of *Timelines of American Literature* (Johns Hopkins, 2019), and the General Editor of the four-volume series *Nineteenth-Century American Literature in Transition* (Cambridge, 2022).

ANNA MUKAMAL is Assistant Professor of Digital Culture and Design in the Department of English at Coastal Carolina University. Her work synthesizes new formalism and narrative medicine to show how writing and reading have served as a form of psychotherapy from modernism to

the contemporary. She has used computational methods to analyze discussions of feminist novels across online interpretive communities; applied linear discriminant analysis to contemporary therapy sessions and literature; and asserted the value of intergenerational feminist collaboration in Digital Humanities project management. Her current work examines mental health and social justice in the generational cohort Gen Z.

SIMONE MURRAY is Associate Professor in Literary Studies at Monash University, Melbourne, Australia. She is author of four monographs: *Mixed Media: Feminist Presses and Publishing Politics* (Pluto Press, 2004); *The Adaptation Industry: The Cultural Economy of Contemporary Literary Adaptation* (Routledge, 2012); *The Digital Literary Sphere: Reading, Writing, and Selling Books in the Internet Era* (Johns Hopkins, 2018); and *Introduction to Contemporary Print Culture: Books as Media* (Routledge, 2021).

WILL NORMAN is Reader in American Literature and Culture at the University of Kent, where he specializes in twentieth-century American literature and culture, and has held Fulbright and Leverhulme fellowships. He is the author of *Nabokov, History and the Texture of Time* (Routledge, 2012) and *Transatlantic Aliens: Modernism, Exile and Culture in Midcentury America* (Johns Hopkins, 2016). His articles on crime fiction have appeared in *American Literature*, *Modernism/modernity*, *Post45*, and the *Journal of Modern Literature*.

J. D. PORTER is Digital Humanities Project Specialist in the Price Lab for Digital Humanities at the University of Pennsylvania. He combines text mining and other digital approaches with specialties in modernism, race and ethnicity theory, jazz studies, and contemporary literary reception. His recent work investigates historic changes in the contents of literary anthologies; applies network theory to genre detection in music reviews; and examines the uses of distributional semantics for addressing problems in ordinary language philosophy.

GABRIELLA SAFRAN is Eva Chernov Lokey Professor in Jewish Studies in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at Stanford University. Her most recent monographs are *Wandering Soul: The Dybbuk's Creator, S. An-sky* (Harvard, 2010) and *Recording Russia: Trying to Listen in the Nineteenth Century* is forthcoming (Cornell, 2022). She is beginning a book about the rise of the notion of Jewish speech style, in multiple languages, as comical.

*Contributors*

xv

OLIVER SCHEIDING is Professor of North American Literature and Culture in the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies at the University of Mainz, Germany. His research focuses on magazine studies, print culture, and material culture studies. He is currently working on a monograph titled *Print Technologies and the Emergence of American Literature* (Wiley-Blackwell, forthcoming). His periodical research projects are funded by the German Research Foundation.

SHELLEY STREEBY is Professor of Literature and Ethnic Studies at the University of California, San Diego. She is the author of *American Sensations: Class, Empire, and the Production of Popular Culture* (California, 2002), which received the American Studies Association's Lora Romero First Book Prize; *Radical Sensations: World Movements, Violence, and Visual Culture* (Duke, 2013); and *Imagining the Future of Climate Change: World-Making through Science Fiction and Activism* (California, 2018). She received a 2021 American Council of Learned Societies Faculty Fellowship to support her current project on the memory-work and world-making of Judith Merrill, Ursula K. Le Guin, and Octavia E. Butler.

MYKA TUCKER-ABRAMSON is Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literary Studies at the University of Warwick. Her first book, *Novel Shocks: Urban Renewal and the Cultural Origins of Neoliberalism* (Fordham, 2018), argued for the centrality of post-World War II American urbanization projects in the transformation of both the modernist novel and the emergence of neoliberalism. She is currently working on a book on the road novel and the uneven geographies of American empire.

HERTHA D. SWEET WONG is Professor of English and Associate Dean of Arts and Humanities at the University of California, Berkeley, where she teaches and writes about autobiography, visual culture, and American literature, particularly Indigenous literatures. She is the author of *Picturing Identity: Contemporary American Autobiography in Image and Text* (North Carolina, 2018) and *Sending My Heart Back Across the Years: Tradition and Innovation in Native American Autobiography* (Oxford, 1992), as well as the editor or co-editor of three anthologies of essays on Native American literatures and the author of numerous essays in this field.

## Chronology

- 1644** Puritan governor John Winthrop publishes *A Short Story of the Rise, Reign, and Ruine of the Antinomians, Familists and Libertines, that Infected the Churches of New England*; this tract against heresy is one of the earliest recorded uses of the term “short story” in an American context.
- 1692** Clergyman Cotton Mather includes the supernatural tale “A Narrative of an APPARITION which a Gentleman in Boston, had of his Brother, just then Murdered in London” in *The Wonders of the Invisible World*.
- 1722** Ben Franklin adopts the pseudonym Silence Dogood, under which he publishes an essay series in the *New-England Courant*. Franklin’s contributions are emblematic of how short fiction was integrated into early American periodical culture, laying the groundwork for the form’s nineteenth-century explosion in popularity.
- 1787** Ben Franklin’s tale “Origin of Tobacco,” a satirical appropriation of a Susquehannock myth, runs in several North American newspapers and magazines.
- 1787** “Sir Bertrand: A Fragment,” a short gothic narrative by English writer Anna Lætitia Barbauld, appears in *The Columbian Magazine*. It was common for narratives like Barbauld’s to be reprinted in North American newspapers, helping to establish the short story tradition in the United States.
- 1819** Washington Irving publishes “Rip Van Winkle” and “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” in *The Sketch Book*.
- 1821** The first issue of the *Saturday Evening Post* is printed in Philadelphia.
- 1826** The first American literary annual, the *Atlantic Souvenir*, begins publication in Philadelphia. The elaborately illustrated and



- decorated volumes, intended to be given as gifts or tokens of friendship, featured short stories, poetry, and essays.
- 1830** Catherine Sedgwick publishes “Cacoethes Scribindi” in the *Atlantic Souvenir*.
- 1832** Nathaniel Hawthorne anonymously publishes “My Kinsman, Major Molineux” in the *Atlantic Souvenir*. His authorship of the story was not made public until 1837.
- 1837** Sarah Josepha Hale becomes the editor of *Godey’s Lady’s Book* and advocates for printing contributions only from American authors. Hale publishes Lydia Sigourney, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe, and several other prominent writers during her forty-year tenure as editor.
- 1841** Edgar Allan Poe publishes “The Murders in the Rue Morgue,” the first of his detective stories to feature Auguste Dupin.
- 1842** Lydia Maria Child contributes the short story “The Quadroons” to *The Liberty Bell*, an abolitionist gift book published annually from 1839 to 1858.
- 1842** Edgar Allan Poe reviews the second volume of Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *Twice-Told Tales* in *Graham’s Magazine*.
- 1845** Edgar Allan Poe publishes “The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar” simultaneously in both the *Broadway Journal* and the *American Review*; it is later reprinted by Hugo Gernsback, who views it as an early example of “scientifiction” – a forerunner of today’s science fiction.
- 1853** Frederick Douglass publishes his long short story “The Heroic Slave,” which appears first as a serial in *Frederick Douglass’ Paper* and later as part of *Autographs for Freedom*, edited by Julia Griffiths.
- 1856** Herman Melville publishes his collection *The Piazza Tales*, featuring “Bartleby, the Scrivener,” “Benito Cereno,” and four other stories previously published in *Putnam’s Magazine*.
- 1857** The *Atlantic Monthly* is founded in Boston.
- 1859** Frances Ellen Watkins Harper publishes “The Two Offers” in the *Anglo-African Magazine*. The tale is often considered to be the first published short story by an African American woman in the United States, though this claim is disputed.
- 1864** Henry James anonymously publishes his first known short story, “A Tragedy of Error,” in *Continental Monthly*.
- 1868** *Overland Monthly* is founded in California. The publication was an early incubator for regionalist short stories, including several by its first editor, Bret Harte.

- 1882** Frank A. Munsey founds *Argosy*, the first American pulp magazine. Seven years later, in 1889, he starts *Munsey's*, an illustrated magazine which also prominently featured short fiction.
- 1884** Brander Matthews publishes “The Philosophy of the Short-Story” in *Lippincott's Magazine*. Matthews will later revise and expand this important contribution to early short story criticism.
- 1884** Mary Murfree publishes her first story collection, *In the Tennessee Mountains*.
- 1884** Mary Wilkins Freeman publishes “On the Walpole Road” in *Harper's Bazar*.
- 1886** *Cosmopolitan* is founded in New York City.
- 1892** Charlotte Perkins Gilman publishes “The Yellow Wall-Paper” in the *New England Magazine*.
- 1893** Grace King publishes *Balcony Stories*, a collection of tales about Louisiana women who lost family, money, and status in the Civil War.
- 1894** Kate Chopin publishes her first collection of short stories, *Bayou Folk*.
- 1895** Sherwin Cody publishes one of the earliest guides to writing short stories, *How to Write Fiction, Especially the Art of Short Story Writing*. By the early decades of the twentieth century, several guides to writing and selling short fiction will be available on the American market.
- 1896** Sarah Orne Jewett publishes *The Country of the Pointed Firs*.
- 1896** *Argosy* begins to exclusively publish fiction.
- 1896** *Munsey's* begins their “storiettes” monthly feature – a collection of short stories each around a column in length.
- 1896** The University of Chicago offers the first course in story writing, “The Art of the Short Story,” taught by E. H. Lewis.
- 1898** Paul Laurence Dunbar publishes *Folks from Dixie*, his first collection of short stories.
- 1899** Charles Chesnutt publishes *The Conjure Woman*, a collection of trickster stories featuring Julius McAdoo, a formerly enslaved character.
- 1899** While imprisoned for embezzlement, William Sydney Porter publishes “Whistling Dick's Christmas Stocking” in *McClure's Magazine* – his first short story under the pen name O. Henry.
- 1899** George Horace Lorimer becomes editor of the *Saturday Evening Post*, a position he will retain until 1936. During his tenure, the

- Post's* circulation skyrockets; by the 1920s, it is one of the highest-paying markets for short fiction in the United States.
- 1900** Pauline Hopkins publishes “Tamlia Gordon,” the first mystery story by an African American author, in *The Colored American Magazine*.
- 1900** Literary magazine *The Smart Set* is founded.
- 1901** Zitkála-Šá publishes *Old Indian Legends*, a collection of traditional Sioux stories.
- 1909** Though still producing short fiction, Henry James chafes against the 5,000-word limit – “detestable number!” – which is standard for most periodicals of the time.
- 1910** German writer Paul Heyse, “writer of world-renowned short stories,” is awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature.
- 1911** E. Pauline Johnson publishes *Legends of Vancouver*, a collection of Native oral stories.
- 1914** H. L. Mencken and George Nathan become co-editors of *The Smart Set*. Under their editorship, Mencken and Nathan will publish several important authors, including James Joyce, whose fiction makes its first US appearance in the magazine (“A Little Cloud” and “The Boarding House” from *Dubliners*).
- 1915** American editor Edward J. O’Brien publishes the first-ever installment of *The Best American Short Stories* (as *The Best Short Stories of 1915 and the Yearbook of the American Short Story*). He will continue to edit the series until his death in 1941, helping to establish the careers of Sherwood Anderson, Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, Thomas Wolfe, and Dorothy Parker, among others.
- 1919** The O. Henry Award, given annually to a short story of exceptional merit, is established. The first winner is Margaret Prescott Montague for her “England to America.”
- 1919** F. Scott Fitzgerald sells his first short story, “Babes in the Woods,” to *The Smart Set* for \$30. Fitzgerald’s relationship with the magazine will become instrumental to his early success, although he will earn substantially more money from works appearing in the *Saturday Evening Post* throughout the 1920s.
- 1920** W. E. B. Du Bois publishes “The Comet,” a science fiction story, in *Darkwater: Voices from the Veil*.
- 1920** *Black Mask*, a pulp magazine known for establishing the careers of Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler, publishes its first issue.

- 1920** F. Scott Fitzgerald publishes his first collection of short stories, *Flappers and Philosophers*.
- 1923** Fred Lewis Pattee – sometimes called “the first Professor of American literature” – publishes *The Development of the American Short Story*.
- 1924** H. P. Lovecraft publishes “The Rats in the Walls” in *Weird Tales*.
- 1925** Harold Ross publishes the first issue of the *New Yorker*.
- 1925** Ernest Hemingway publishes *In Our Time*, his first collection of short stories.
- 1926** The first issue of Hugo Gernsback’s *Amazing Stories* is published, advertising stories by H. G. Wells, Jules Verne, and Edgar Allan Poe on its cover.
- 1929** At the peak of his career, F. Scott Fitzgerald is earning \$4,000 per story from the *Saturday Evening Post*.
- 1933** Raymond Chandler publishes his first short story, “Blackmailers Don’t Shoot.”
- 1936** The Iowa Writers’ Workshop is founded at the University of Iowa.
- 1937** Leo Rosten publishes *The Education of H\*Y\*M\*A\*N K\*A\*P\*L\*A\*N*, a collection of humorous stories featuring protagonist Hyman Kaplan.
- 1940** *Short Stories from The New Yorker* is published. With stories from John O’Hara, Dorothy Parker, James Thurber, and other prominent writers, the anthology cements the magazine’s reputation as a premiere venue for short fiction.
- 1940** Meridel Le Sueur publishes *Salute to Spring*, a collection of proletarian short stories.
- 1948** *Tales of the South Pacific* by James A. Michener wins the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. This is the first year that the Prize is not given to a novel since its first award in 1918.
- 1949** *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, edited by Anthony Boucher and J. Francis McComas, begins publication. *F&SF* creates important market space for fantasy stories, which are usually omitted from periodicals devoted to science fiction.
- 1951** *The Collected Stories of William Faulkner* wins the National Book Award for Fiction.
- 1954** Alfred Hitchcock’s *Rear Window* is released. The film was based on a 1942 short story by crime writer Cornell Woolrich, “It Had to Be Murder.”
- 1955** Walt Disney’s *The Lady and the Tramp* is released; the film is inspired by a 1945 *Cosmopolitan* short story by Ward Greene, “Happy Dan, the Cynical Dog.”

## Chronology

xxi

- 1959** *The Magic Barrel* by Bernard Malamud wins the National Book Award for Fiction.
- 1960** *Goodbye, Columbus* by Philip Roth wins the National Book Award for Fiction.
- 1963** Frank O'Connor publishes *The Lonely Voice: A Study of the Short Story*, an important contribution to short story criticism.
- 1966** *Collected Stories* by Katherine Anne Porter wins both the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.
- 1966** Scholar H. Bruce Franklin publishes *Future Perfect: Science Fictions of the 19th Century*, an anthology which links the short story's early history to the rise of modern science and technology as seen through the writings of Poe, Hawthorne, and Lydia Maria Child, among others.
- 1967** *The Best Short Stories by Negro Writers: 1899–1967*, edited by Langston Hughes, is published.
- 1968** *2001: A Space Odyssey*, a film based on Arthur C. Clarke's 1948 short story "The Sentinel," is released.
- 1969** N. Scott Momaday publishes *The Way to Rainy Mountain*, a hybrid work comprising memoir, folklore, fiction, and visual elements. The book exemplifies the blending of oral and written traditions often found in Native writers' engagements with short fiction.
- 1970** *Collected Stories* by Jean Stafford wins the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.
- 1972** *The Complete Stories* by Flannery O'Connor wins the National Book Award for Fiction.
- 1974** *A Crown of Feathers and Other Stories* by Isaac Bashevis Singer wins the National Book Award for Fiction, alongside Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*.
- 1974** Frank Chin, Jeffery Paul Chan, Lawson Fusao Inada, and Shawn Wong publish *Aiiieeeee! An Anthology of Asian-American Writers*.
- 1975** Ursula K. Le Guin publishes "Mazes" in the anthology *Epoch: The State of the Art of Science Fiction Now*, edited by Roger Elwood and Robert Silverberg; it is later reprinted in her 1982 short story collection *The Compass Rose*.
- 1976** The Pushcart Prize, which annually honors short fiction, poetry, and essays published by small presses, is founded.
- 1977** Leslie Marmon Silko publishes *Storyteller*, a multi-genre work which includes poetry, prose, and photographs.
- 1978** James Alan McPherson becomes the first African American to win the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for *Elbow Room*.
- 1979** *The Stories of John Cheever* wins the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.

- 1981** *The Stories of John Cheever* is the paperback winner of the National Book Award. (From 1980 to 1984 the Award recognizes both a hardcover and paperback winner.)
- 1981** Raymond Carver publishes his short story collection *What We Talk About When We Talk About Love*; the collection – a critical and commercial success – was heavily influenced by the revisions of Carver’s editor, Gordon Lish.
- 1982** Columbian author Gabriel García Márquez is awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in recognition of his novels and short stories.
- 1983** *The Collected Stories of Eudora Welty* is the paperback winner of the National Book Award for Fiction.
- 1984** *Victory Over Japan: A Book of Stories* by Ellen Gilchrist wins the National Book Award for Fiction.
- 1987** Donald Barthelme publishes his collection *Forty Stories*. Included in the collection is “Sentence,” an experimental story consisting of a single seven-page sentence.
- 1988** The PEN/Malamud Award for excellence in the art of the short story is established in honor of the late Bernard Malamud.
- 1991** Literary Agent Peter Miller claims that Ernest Hemingway penned a six-word short story to win a bet in the 1920s: “For sale. Baby shoes. Never worn.” (The link to Hemingway is unsubstantiated.)
- 1991** Sandra Cisneros publishes her critically acclaimed short story collection *Woman Hollering Creek*.
- 1992** Tina Brown becomes editor of the *New Yorker*. Among the many changes Brown makes to the magazine is to institute a tradition of printing only one short story per issue.
- 1993** *A Good Scent from a Strange Mountain* by Robert Olen Butler wins the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.
- 1995** *The Complete Stories of Zora Neale Hurston* is published, making the writer’s short fiction from the 1920s and 1930s widely available.
- 1996** *Ship Fever and Other Stories* by Andrea Barrett wins the National Book Award for Fiction.
- 2000** *Interpreter of Maladies* by Jhumpa Lahiri wins the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.
- 2005** Release of the Ang Lee film *Brokeback Mountain*, based on the widely acclaimed 1997 short story of the same name by Annie Proulx.
- 2009** *Olive Kitteridge* by Elizabeth Strout wins the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.

- 2010** The Sunday Times Short Story Award is established. The prize annually recognizes a short story published in the United Kingdom or Ireland, and, at £30,000, is currently the most lucrative prize in the world for a single short story.
- 2010** Chad Harbach publishes the essay “MFA vs. NYC” in *Slate*.
- 2011** *A Visit from the Goon Squad* by Jennifer Egan wins the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. (Egan has said that she considers *Goon Squad*, an interconnected series of stories, to be neither a novel nor a short story collection.)
- 2012** Jennifer Egan’s “Black Box” is serialized on the *New Yorker*’s Twitter account.
- 2012** Charles Yu publishes his short story collection *Sorry Please Thank You*.
- 2013** Canadian author Alice Munro, “contemporary master of the short story,” is awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature.
- 2014** *Redeployment* by Phil Klay wins the National Book Award for Fiction.
- 2015** *Fortune Smiles* by Adam Johnson wins the National Book Award for Fiction.
- 2015** French publishing house Short Édition installs its first short story vending machines in Grenoble, France. Over 300 such machines have now been installed around the world, including in San Francisco, Seattle, New York, Philadelphia, and Austin.
- 2016** *Arrival*, based on the 1998 Ted Chiang story “Story of Your Life,” is released to critical and popular acclaim, grossing over \$200 million at the box office.
- 2017** Kristen Roupenian’s “Cat Person” becomes the most viewed story in the *New Yorker*’s online history.
- 2018** Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah publishes *Friday Black*, his debut story collection.
- 2019** Beth Piatote publishes *The Beadworkers*, a collection of stories infused with Nez Perce history and culture.
- 2021** Robert Kolker’s *New York Times* feature story “Who Is the Bad Art Friend?” becomes a viral sensation. The feature chronicles accusations made by Dawn Dorland that fellow writer (and acquaintance) Sonya Larson used, without permission, a letter written by Dorland in the short story “The Kindest.”

Cambridge University Press & Assessment

978-1-009-29281-8 — The Cambridge Companion to the American Short Story

Edited by Michael J. Collins , Gavin Jones

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

---