

SHORT STORY TRENDS SINCE WORLD WAR II

by

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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

In the Graduate College

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

1961

STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The writer is greatly indebted
to Mr. Jack W. Huggins for his helpful
criticism, suggestions and advice.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to identify trends which developed in the American short story during the decade following World War II. This problem was chosen because the author believed that an attempt was being made to change the traditional structure of the short story. In addition to investigating the validity of this opinion, the author generalized the problem to include other features of the short story which became prominent from 1946 through 1955.

The trends identified in this thesis are based on the stories which appeared in the ten volumes of The Best American Short Stories edited by Martha Foley which were published during the study period. This series was chosen for two reasons. First, the series has been published without interruption since 1914, and it is generally praised by critics for the quality of the selections published. If there is general agreement that the best stories appear in this series, then we can expect that the stories will influence other authors. Secondly, the editors of this series make their decisions after reading every short story published in American magazines each year. The coverage is complete, and any trends which become evident are not representative of a certain type of magazine.

The author of this thesis was able to determine that the decade following World War II was marked by two trends in the short story: there was a trend to write low-conflict stories; and, the young and

the aged were used frequently as central characters.

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INTRODUCTION

The short tale is probably the oldest and most popular type of literature in the world. It has not been restricted to the literate world. Primitive societies have created stories which are kept alive by teaching them to successive generations. In both the literate and the illiterate societies the stories are used for instructing the young in the mores of the culture and for entertainment. The most important difference between the two types is that the repertoire of the primitive society is changed slowly while the literate group constantly creates new stories.

The changes which take place in the literature of the advanced society always receive a great deal of attention from critics and students of literature. Thus, given times in the history of literature are identified by words which describe the type of literature which received emphasis by the authors: romantic, realistic, naturalistic, etc.

The American short story has been evaluated and described by historians, critics and short story writers. Such descriptions record the growth and development of this relatively new form of literature. Notice the word "form." This is the key word which distinguishes the American short story from the short tales of antiquity. A definite shape has been given to the American short story by authors and critics since its beginning in the nineteenth century.

This thesis is concerned with recent developments in the American

short story, but a brief review of the development of this form will help to show the significance of later changes.

Many critics feel that the germ of the modern short story can be found in the essays written in the latter part of the eighteenth century.¹ Certainly, the outstanding American writers of that time were not interested in fiction. They were busy writing essays, speeches and state papers which spurred the emergence of the United States as a nation.

It is interesting to note that when American authors of merit began to write fiction they invented a new form. In England the novel was the new form. Since the cultures of the new nation and the mother country were entwined, why didn't Americans follow and write only novels?

There are several explanations for the development of the short story, but I believe there are two main reasons for this. First, Spiller in The Literary History of the U.S. suggests that American authors found it more profitable to write essays, short stories, and lyric poetry. This market attracted nearly all of the notable writers of the first half of the nineteenth century.² However, this does not explain why the authors found this to be true. The most important reason for this condition was that publishers were not restricted by international copyrights. They frequently republished novels and articles written by English authors without paying for the manuscripts. This was a very profitable enterprise. Publishers could choose material which had already

¹E. J. O'Brien, Advance of the American Short Story, p. 22.

²R. E. Spiller, et al., The Literary History of the U. S., p. 271.

proven its popularity... Since American tastes in literature were closely aligned with those in England the publisher seldom had to take any risk. The only field which seemed to be open to American writers was writing for periodicals.

The second reason for the development of the short story in America is a combination of ideas rather than a single fact. Some authors, as well as the readers, felt that the creation of literature should be a gentleman's avocation.³ From this it is easily understood why some writers were not able to get serious recognition—they lacked money, name, or both. Another restricting factor was that there was an overinfluence of Europe on the American novel. Thus, if an author was to be successful he would have to copy a European style. Another restriction placed on American authors was the lack of affinity between Puritanism and art.⁴ At one time Puritan ministers devised a complicated syllogism to discourage the reading of fiction.

1. Fiction is about imaginary people and things
2. Imaginary things are untrue
3. Fiction is an untruth
4. An untruth is a lie
5. To lie is to sin
6. Therefore novels are sinful⁵

Combining these ideas leads to the conclusion that the environment of the American scene was not conducive to the acceptance of long literary forms. It seems only logical, then, that the short story was

³Ibid., p. 245.

⁴Ibid., p. 191.

⁵E. A. Cross, et al., Heritage of American Literature, p. 632.

the only form that could fit the spirit and environment of America.

The men who are credited with having the greatest effect on the development of the short story are Washington Irving, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe, Henry James and William Sidney Porter. Some changed the complexion of the short story through criticism and some by writing stories in a new way.

The history of the American short story begins with the publication of The Sketch-Book by Washington Irving in 1819.⁶ Two long tales in The Sketch-Book, "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," are frequently cited as the first American short stories.

"Rip Van Winkle" is a story of conflict between an easy-going man and his fault-finding wife. One day, to escape his wife's vituperations, Rip goes hunting. While in the mountains he meets a dwarf who takes him to a bowling green where other dwarfs are engaged in the game. Rip takes a drink of a heady draught and falls asleep. When he awakes, his small friends are gone. His rifle is rusty and he has grown a long beard. When he returns home, he learns his wife has died and his children have grown up. In addition, he finds that he has been away for twenty years.

By modern standards there is too much description of the countryside, not enough action, and too great a time span for a straight narrative technique. To satisfy modern conditions a flashback situation

⁶O'Brien, op. cit., p. 21.

would need to be employed. This would help keep the action connected.

The story does have conflict, an essential ingredient in the short story, and a recognizable plot.

Nathaniel Hawthorne developed another ingredient for the short story and introduced a technique which has survived to this day. The added element was characterization. If the character is not a human being, the reader gets little more than entertainment from the story. The development of characters and the technique Hawthorne discovered are closely related. He was the first psychologist in American fiction and struck a feeble light in the dark mysteries of the mind. To him we can attribute the discovery of the subjective method for psychological fiction. Perhaps he is the only American author who inherited the mind of the essayist from Irving. This combination of the purposefulness of the essayist and the subjective investigation of the inner man led Hawthorne to the development of a drama of the conscience.

"The Minister's Black Veil" which first appeared in The Token in 1836 and was reprinted in Twice Told Tales a year later, is an outstanding study of the psychological reactions of people to the unusual. The central character of the story, Parson Hooper, appears before his congregation one Sunday wearing a black veil. Many of his parishioners thought he had gone mad. But, during his sermon many came to believe it symbolized secret sin. The sinners in the congregation felt the parson had developed omniscient powers and quaked in their seats. Only one person was unaffected by the veil--the parson's betrothed. When he refused to let her see his face, she left him. Parson Hooper wore his

veil until he died, and it was left in place when he was buried.

There are no explicit reasons given in the story for the minister's unusual apparel. The purpose of the veil is left for the reader to explain.

Edgar Allan Poe exerted a great deal of influence on the form of the short story. He convinced writers that a certain compactness was necessary in order to involve the reader in the story. Poe insisted that nonessential information should be omitted from the short story because it got in the way of the action. He gave the short story a weightiness that had been lacking in almost all types of previous fiction.⁷ The weight of these stories is to be felt by the reader. This was not an accident but was part of a very definite design which Poe added to the short story form. He was concerned with the effect that the story would have upon the reader and every word from the first to the last was designed to strengthen this effect. Each word, each line was to have a measurable weight, and the reader was to feel this weight as surely as if he had a pack on his back into which a small pebble was dropped with each step. In a short time the pack would be full and the weight, depending upon the desired effect, pressed the reader's feet deeply into the sand of the story. Where did this abstract weight press? Almost completely on the emotions of the reader. The reader of Irving was carried along with an interest in the story, but he never felt, nor was he intended to feel he was an actual part of this story. Hawthorne left the impression that the reader was looking at the person who is

⁷ Henry S. Canby, The Short Story in English, p. 231.

looking at himself and once again he was not an integral part of the story. The magical effect of Poe then directs the reader deeply and inextricably into the passion of the tale.

"A Cask of Amontillado" is frequently cited as a story which best exemplifies Poe's power of concentration on the effect of a story. The central character of this story, Montresor, feels he has suffered a thousand injuries by Fortunato, a rich, pompous Italian. Montresor does not let Fortunato know he is irritated in order to insure the success of his planned revenge. Montresor entices Fortunato to accompany him into the catacombs of the Montresors by asking Fortunato to taste and judge a rare wine--Amontillado. Fortunato considers himself a connoisseur of wine and is eager to taste the Amontillado. Montresor spurs this desire by constantly insisting he will get someone else to judge the wine. He frequently implores Fortunato leave the catacombs because it is too damp for Fortunato's health. Finally, they come to the end of the vault and Montresor chains Fortunato to the wall. Then he walls up the end of the vault and leaves Fortunato to die.

The reader of this short story easily recognizes the trap being prepared by Montresor but does not know what the revenge will be. The suspense is intensified throughout the story, never suffering from the insertion of extraneous description or dialogue.

Further refinements in the American short story can be recognized in the works of Henry James at the end of the nineteenth century. He developed the psychological situation far beyond that created by Hawthorne. In this endeavor he was influenced by Hawthorne's stories. James was

also a realist and his criticisms reflect the idea that realistic fiction is most effective.⁸ From the preface of some of his novels and tales we can gather a few of James's ideas of his literary method. Not only can we discover what he personally hoped to achieve, but we also find lasting comments by a great story teller on the art of fiction. In the preface to The Novels and Tales of Henry James he said, "A short story to my sense, and as the term is used in magazines, is to choose between being an anecdote and a picture and can but play its part strictly according to its kind. I rejoice in the anecdote but I revel in the picture."⁹ Also he refers to, "that odd law which somehow always makes the minimum of varied suggestion serve the man of imagination better than the maximum,"¹⁰ and continues with "we are divided.....between liking to feel the past strange and liking to feel it familiar; the difficulty is, for intensity, to catch it at the moment when the scales of the balance hang with the right evenness."¹¹ Henry James seemed to dislike that which was simple and found pleasure in the more difficult and complex problems of writing. As a final comment on James, I think writers could best benefit by a comment made in the preface to The Aspern Papers, "One has to choose ever so delicately among ones difficulties, attaching ones self to the greatest, bearing hard on those and intelligently neglecting

⁸Sculley Bradley, The American Tradition in Literature, p. 1053.

⁹Henry James, The Novels and Tales of Henry James, p. xxiv.

¹⁰Henry James, The Aspern Papers, p. viii.

¹¹Ibid., p. xi.

the others."¹²

Next in the sequence of contributors our attention should be placed on the man who discovered a technique which has been imitated unsuccessfully by too many authors. The man was O. Henry (William S. Porter), and the technique was the trick or quick-twist ending. This technique catches the imagination and too often presents an insurmountable barrier to those who might otherwise have developed into good, excellent, or even occasionally superior writers of fiction. Because of the impact that O. Henry had on succeeding writers, many critics are prone to condemn his accomplishment. Many have investigated and have tried to describe his technique resulting in long, learned commentaries which in the end propose what O. Henry himself proposed in a much clearer and simpler way: "Be concise and familiar and punch when your adversary is off guard. This stuns him, and you may then disappear."¹³ On the surface it would seem that this would be an easily imitated technique. The pinch of salt which is too often lacking is the personality of the writer. What spice did O. Henry add to this formula? He added enthusiasm, a sympathetic nature, and a sensitivity which recognized the small pleasures that make people happy and the depths of pathos which trap us all in our everyday lives. Edward O'Brien suggests that this be called O. Henry's zest for life.¹⁴

¹² Ibid., p. xxi.

¹³ O'Brien, op. cit., p. 201.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 198.

A typical O. Henry story using this technique is "The Gift of the Magi." In this story a young man and a young woman, recently married, are dismayed that they do not have money to buy Christmas gifts for each other. Each of them has a prized possession: the woman has beautiful waist-length hair and the man has a gold watch. Each of them discovers a way to buy a gift-- the woman sells her hair and the man pawns his watch. The surprise ending comes when the gifts are revealed to the reader. The woman bought a fob for her husband's watch, and the man bought combs for the woman's hair.

The main thing to be identified in this short story is that the ending is not dishonest. It is a logical conclusion in light of the facts presented in the story.

The stories and criticisms of Irving, Hawthorne, Poe, James and O. Henry helped to define the form of the short story, and, as a result, they influenced the authors who followed them.

Since many authors are not content to merely copy techniques of other authors, a variety of what can be called experimental stories have been produced by succeeding generations of writers. Occasionally something new is interjected into the short story and becomes an accepted part of it. At other times certain subjects or techniques receive great emphasis by the authors.

The problem of this thesis was to determine if there were any trends or new developments appearing in the American short story from 1946 to 1955. In order to discover any trends I decided that if I could find a series of publications which purported to reproduce the best

material appearing during this time, I could make valid conclusions.

After looking through several series which seemed to do this very thing, I chose the series entitled The Best American Short Stories. Each year for over forty-five years the editors of this series have printed a single volume which in their estimation contains the best stories appearing in the previous year. The indexes at the end of each volume list all the publications in the United States and Canada which printed short stories. This list includes "popular" magazines, university quarterlies, and "little" magazines. The coverage of this series is complete. And if the editor's standards allow them to reproduce stories of sufficient excellence, I assume that these authors will exert a measurable influence on this form of literature.

In the volumes on which this thesis is based there appeared 270 short stories from 64 magazines. All of these volumes were edited by Martha Foley who succeeded the originator of this series, Edward J. O'Brien. In the forward to the 1947 edition, she briefly answered the question: How are stories chosen for reproduction in this volume? She says that today it is generally recognized that there are no specific rules for writing.¹⁵ Writing depends too much on the author's experience, feeling, and other intangibles which will not fit textbook rules for writing. She continues to explain that editing defies a stylized procedure. If an editor could identify specifications of a short story, his job would be much simpler. Martha Foley says, "I am in quest of

¹⁵ Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1947, p. x.

literary adventure. When I feel that I have had an adventure in reading a story, when I think reading it has been a memorable experience, I hope that the readers of this volume also will find it memorable.¹⁶ The difficulty presented by this definition is immediately evident: will the stories that supply Miss Foley with the adventure she seeks appeal to other capable editors? This question perhaps could never be adequately answered directly. I felt that her success could be measured by the success of the authors whose stories were selected by her for reproduction. In Appendix A I have listed all of the authors whose stories were reproduced in The Best American Short Stories 1947-1956. There were 212 authors represented during this ten year period, and 110 were established authors at the time their stories were chosen for the series. Also, I assumed that many of the new writers would continue to produce good stories.

The following chapter identifies the elements most critics feel should be a part of the short story. The structure of the short story following World War II is compared with these elements in Chapter II. This comparison shows there was a change in structure during the period studied. Chapter III points out that children and the aged were favorite central characters for a large percentage of the stories. The themes and subjects of the short stories of the study period are discussed in Chapter IV.

¹⁶Ibid., p. xi.

CHAPTER I

BASIC ELEMENTS OF SHORT STORY STRUCTURE

The first attempt to describe what short story writers had been accomplishing was made by Professor Brander Matthews in 1885.¹⁷ His comments were made in an essay entitled "The Philosophy of the Short Story." Professor Matthews observed that short story writers were attempting to convey a single impression and that this was something new when compared to the short tale of the eighteenth century.¹⁸

In 1909, Dr. Henry Canby observed that since the publication of Professor Matthew's essay many able critics had recognized the special features of the short story.¹⁹ The significant thing to note is that the identification of certain elements has remained unchanged throughout the twentieth century.²⁰ These identifications are valuable, for critics must have standards. Not only the technique of an author should come under the scrutiny of the critic, but also the critic should question whether or not the flesh of technique is clinging to the proper skeleton. Although critics cannot agree to the size, shape, or relative

¹⁷ Canby, op. cit., p. 300.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 301.

²⁰ Virgil Scott, Studies in the Short Story, pp. 1-16.

importance of the component parts of this framework, generally, they agree that these parts should be evident in the total structure. Bement in The Weaving of the Short Story clearly states that if a dogmatic attitude is adhered to whenever critics discuss the basic form of any art, the results will be deplorable.²¹ He continues his argument by saying, "And it is significant to note that the writers who are more than 'successful'--those who have made outstanding contributions to literature of recent years--have been those who have expressed themselves in a form of their own devising, which fits their substance as neatly as a glove fits the hand."²² Throughout the first chapter of this book he makes a strong case against the adoption of rigid form. However, he maintains in several other places in the same book that there are some necessary ingredients in the construction of a short story. He is not contradicting himself but is merely warning that the basic ingredients should not receive all of the attention of the author or critic. Technique is the thing which should receive the greatest attention of critic and writer. What then are the underlying characteristics generally accepted by many students of literature?

It is doubtful that any one element is more important than any other in the framework of a story. Just as a skeleton would be weakened by the removal of one segment, so the short story could suffer by the removal of one of its basic parts. The order in which the structural

²¹Douglas Bement, The Weaving of the Short Story, p. 4.

²²Ibid.

elements are presented in the succeeding paragraphs is not indicative of their relative worth.

With the advent of the short story, it was soon recognized that the three classical unities—time, place, and action—when applied to this form, greatly enhanced its possibilities.²³ In this shorter work of fiction it becomes apparent that unity of place is desirable. An author could not in such a short span fully identify a story that took place in three or four geographical locations. There would be a kaleidoscopic effect and the reader would be confused by too many shifts in location. Possibly he would have to re-read, which is always distracting, in order to properly orient himself. This does not mean, however, that the author must stick to one locale (flashback technique, for instance, precludes this). Simply clarity of location should be the prime concern with this unity.

Unity of time in the short story usually means that the action of the story should take place in as short a period of time as possible.²⁴ When several days are encompassed, the writer may use a combination of narrative and flashback techniques.

Unity of action is perhaps the most important of the three unities. Because we are human beings we must think as human beings, and therefore the action of the story must be understood by the reader. He can understand this action only in the terms of his experiences be they

²³ Ibid., p. 187.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 188.

real or vicarious. If the action is disjointed, scattered or irrational, the reader will be left with a series of impressions separated by immeasurable gulfs not bridged by transition.

Harry T. Baker suggests that there is a fourth unity: unity of effect.²⁵ Immediately one is reminded of Poe and his overpowering desire from the beginning of his story to produce and heighten a particular effect. Rather than making it a true unity in the general sense, I feel that his suggestion should be considered in a discussion of technique. There is an association with this suggested fourth unity and the concept that the short story must be to the point. Deviations are distractions and the short story writer should strive for an over-all compactness by eliminating those things which are not necessary to the story.²⁶ This is the third unity: unity of action. Any writer who attempts to follow the demands of unity of action will be well rewarded. If he is able to resist the temptations of "flowery expression" and can eliminate facts which are preliminary and explanatory, his product will be an acceptable quantity to the critics. He must focus his attention on a single culminating situation. With this in mind, we can see the close relationship between the unity of action and unity of effect.

Critics recognize that the plot of the short story must contain

²⁵ Harry T. Baker, The Contemporary Short Story, p. 86.

²⁶ Bement, op. cit., p. 13.

certain elements. First of all it must be probable.²⁷ Even science fiction, to be successful in its use of as yet undiscovered technological facts, must present us with trappings which are feasible extensions of present developments. Whenever a writer is delving into the unknown, his assertions may not be recognized as probable, but certainly, they should be in the closely associated area of possibility.

The plot must also contain conflict or, expressed another way,
²⁸ must be dramatic. The main character of the story must be trapped by the developing situation and when he seeks a way out of the trap, he faces a dilemma. When the dilemma has been exposed, the author must come back to his first guiding principle in plot: probability. This means that he should present a logical conclusion. Even the trick ending must have the blessings of probability. The mere use of coincidence will prove to be an infinite weakness in the story.

If, then, the plot of a short story is to contain dilemma, it will have the element of suspense. The suspense is caused when the reader asks himself whether or not the character in the story will overcome, or be overcome by the problem facing him. The complication causing suspense can be fashioned in several ways: man against man, man against nature, or man against himself.

Still another important development in the short story is the

²⁷ Ibid., p. 75.

²⁸ Virgil Scott, op. cit., p. 2.

effective construction of characters.²⁹ It is difficult to present a fully rounded character to the reader in this brief form. Yet, it is necessary that the character be developed so we know who he is and what he is. Many short stories present only one facet of an individual and are successful because only this part of the whole character is facing the dilemma.

There are other characteristics which could be discussed at this time: style, theme, and use of suggestion. However, I believe that the elements discussed in the preceding paragraphs are the most important and most universally accepted short story elements. As it becomes necessary in the development of this thesis to discuss other structural considerations, they will be presented.

²⁹Ibid., p. 6.

CHAPTER II

LOW-CONFLICT STORIES BID FOR RECOGNITION

In 1935, Edward O'Brien remarked that there was a new and serious tendency developing in American letters. He recognized that critics and writers were evaluating short stories on the ground of politics rather than on the ground of literature. He further contended that the short story should not be subservient to political, economic or religious belief.³⁰

With the advent of World War II the passions of the writers were turned to other paths, and the trend to evaluate stories on the political basis died without seriously endangering the short story again. However, at the end of World War II a different philosophy from that of the 1930's gripped the imagination of the writers who were attempting to impress the critics and editors. Many seem to feel, and they were encouraged to feel, that World War II was fought to guarantee individual freedom. Consequently, many people believed that anything a person wished to do or say within "legal" limits would not only be acceptable, but should be given serious consideration by others. The national attitude seemed to be, "If it's new, it's good—if it's old or traditional, it's bad."

³⁰E. J. O'Brien, The Best American Short Stories 1935, p. xii.

This idea was reflected in many ways, but a simple example was the popularity of the "ranch" home and "functional" furniture. Tradition seemed to have no place in the scheme of things. Later, at the end of the Korean War, psychologists theorized that "brainwashing" was effective on our young soldiers because they did not have traditional beliefs on which to rely during a time of crisis. They were not "taught" the values of the American society; they were free to choose values for themselves. Because they had no standard presented by their elders, they did not know what to choose; as a result, they chose nothing.

If such were the attitude following World War II, then we might expect to see evidence of it in American literature. There was, in fact, a marked impression made on the structure of the short story at that time.

Of the stories selected to appear in The Best American Short Stories 1947-1956 nearly twenty-two percent are stories which I rated as stories which lack the dramatic element or have a low degree of conflict. Stories of this type made a strong bid for recognition, and succeeded for a time, immediately following World War II. In The Best American Short Stories 1947, which reprints the best published in 1946, nine of the thirty stories fell into the "lack conflict" category. In

five stories I was unable to detect any conflict.³¹⁻³⁵ Four of the stories contained an identifiable conflict, but it was not developed as a major part of the story.³⁶⁻³⁹ The highest number of low-conflict stories were published in the 1948 edition of the series (13), and the number remained high until 1950. From 1951 to 1955 the number of such stories diminished. Only two stories in The Best American Short Stories 1956 were evaluated as stories lacking conflict.⁴⁰⁻⁴¹

³¹ Truman Capote, "The Headless Hawk," The Best American Short Stories 1947, pp. 31-55.

³² Robert Fontaine, "Day of Gold and Darkness," The Best American Short Stories 1947, pp. 56-61.

³³ Adelaide Gerstley, "The Man in the Mirror," The Best American Short Stories 1947, pp. 62-75.

³⁴ Samson Raphaelson, "The Greatest Idea in the World," The Best American Short Stories 1947, pp. 336-349.

³⁵ Wallace Stegner, "The Women on the Wall," The Best American Short Stories 1947, pp. 440-460.

³⁶ Francis Broderick, "Return by Faith," The Best American Short Stories 1947, pp. 1-16.

³⁷ Edward Heth, "Under the Ginko Trees," The Best American Short Stories 1947, pp. 208-220.

³⁸ Allan Seager, "Game Chickens," The Best American Short Stories 1947, pp. 366-381.

³⁹ Sylvia Shirley, "The Red Dress," The Best American Short Stories 1947, pp. 401-415.

⁴⁰ Arthur Granit, "Free the Canaries from Their Cages," The Best American Short Stories 1956, pp. 167-183.

⁴¹ Jack Kerouac, "The Mexican Girl," The Best American Short Stories 1956, pp. 205-225.

Typical of the stories lacking the dramatic element is "The Man in the Mirror" by Adelaide Gerstley.⁴² The story is about a wealthy lawyer who maintained his residence in an exclusive club. For several years he had been sharing his bed with one of the maids who had a room at the club. The story began the day after the death of the maid. For some reason the lawyer felt that everyone was laughing at him, even though he was equally sure no one knew about his affair with the maid. He decided to go to Florida before the funeral in order to escape further embarrassment. On the train there was a mixup on the reservation and he was forced to spend the night in the men's lounge. When he sat down he saw himself in a mirror. What he saw was an old man with thinning grey hair and a rather unattractive face.

Obviously, the author of the story thought the lawyer's appearance was important to the story. However, there is no indication that the man ever thought he was attractive nor is it suggested that anyone else had any kind of impression about his physical attractiveness. The question which must be asked is "What dilemma or problem must be faced by this man?" If this question can be answered then the next question is, "Did he overcome his problem or did he fail?" Since I was unable to answer the first question, I concluded "The Man in the Mirror" was a story without conflict.

Forty of the 270 short stories appearing in The Best American

⁴² Gerstley, op. cit.

Short Stories series during the ten year period were rated as completely lacking conflict. Another nineteen were rated as having underdeveloped conflict.

Many of the stories which were devoid of primary conflict contained what could be called "secondary conflict." In other words, there is a conflict in the story, but it is treated in such a way as to be incidental to the story. Typical of this group of stories is "The World Outside" by Howard Maier.⁴³ The protagonist is a former tight-rope walker who does a side-show act. Because of a fall which injured his feet, he now fights a shark in a large tank. The story is nothing more than his observations about circus life. He feels no remorse about his lost ability, nor is anyone else in apparent danger of falling from his place in the circus society. He wanders around the circus grounds observing the crowd and listening to snatches of conversation. The story ends when he walks back to his tent.

The only conflict in the story takes place when the performer is in the tank with the shark. It is a classic man against nature conflict. However, the act is passed off as having some danger, and that is that! The act ends and the protagonist wanders around the grounds. The bulk of the story is simply a report of his observations.

Once again the reader must ask, "What is the problem faced by the protagonist?" In this story, the only problem is how to conclude the act without being caught by the shark. However, since this was not meant to

⁴³ Howard Maier, "The World Outside," The Best American Short Stories 1950, pp. 301-307.

be the point of the story we have to look elsewhere. Subsequent investigation shows there is nothing else in this story resembling a problem.

After recognizing this trend, readers might suspect stories lacking sufficiently developed conflict were the product of new and relatively young writers. Even a cursory investigation shows many established writers produced stories of this type. Whatever was impressing authors seemed to affect them without regard to age or professional status. Howard Maier, author of "The World Outside," had written many short stories, a novel and a play before this story was published. Of the 59 low-conflict stories, 37 were written by authors who had established themselves before World War II.

What, then, did these stories have in common? A number of characteristics are apparent when one considers the stories as a group. Naturally these characteristics would not be true of all the stories, but in each case a majority of them supported the patterns.

First, most of them are written in the naturalistic style. The product is a matter-of-fact rendition of events in which the protagonist is not presented as having a choice when he faces a problem. The events, or the environment, have already decided his future, and the author merely records the things which bounce him along the stream of life. Such a condition gives this type of story an air of hopelessness. If this is the tone, there is little chance of developing conflict.

This evaluation is not supporting the contention that there can be no conflict if the naturalistic style is employed—it is more difficult. John Steinbeck, a naturalistic writer, overcame this problem in many of

his short stories. In "The Leader of the People", his characters are trapped by their environments, but the environments are challenging one another through the characters.⁴⁴ Grandfather represents the time of the pioneer. Further, he was successful as a leader, bringing thousands of people to the West. When the migration ended, there was no need for his talents any longer. True to the naturalistic style, Grandfather was unable to change his life to fit the new society.

His son-in-law was born in the West. His environment was a rundown ranch. He envied his father-in-law, but derided him for living on past glories and attempted to make him see that no one cared to hear his stories of the trek again and again. The reader is made to sympathize with Grandfather and does not want him to see himself as the son-in-law sees him: a useless appendage in a new age. Grandfather is finally forced to admit he has no value. The conflict is resolved, and Grandfather loses.

Another characteristic of the low-conflict stories encountered in this study was the use of psychological development. The reader knew only the thoughts of the main character and the things he reported or experienced. Usually, the outcome of the story was told in the beginning and then the protagonist told how he had come to this point. With the answer known, it is nearly impossible to develop any kind of suspense. In addition, the narrator seems to say, "We have no choice in the things we do, and this is how I came to this condition." In other stories

⁴⁴ John Steinbeck, "The Leader of the People," Contemporary Short Stories, pp. 172-188.

there was no outcome to be considered. These stories simply described a day in a man's life, typical events of a lifetime, or a person who fits a pattern.

Stories typifying psychological development are "That's my Johnny-Boy" by George Clay, a story about a college boy's recollection of his father; "Herman's Day" by Harvey Swades, a report of a typical day in the life of a minor industrialist; and, "The Artist" by Ralph Kaplan, a pathetic description of an artist in squalid surroundings.

In all of the low-conflict stories, one of the most disturbing realizations was that no questions were answered--no illuminating experience was shared with the reader. If there is no conflict, then we have no right to expect any real questions to arise. However, the reader continually finds himself in a suspended state as he progresses through such stories. "What is this story about? What dilemma faces the hero? When is the story going to start?" In the beginning the reader does not feel frustrated because he knows from past experience in reading short stories that he must understand something of the characters and their environments before the conflict can have any significance. Once this is understood, he expects something to happen. However, in these stories the background information is supposed to "be" the story.

If we cannot find conflict, we must ask ourselves another question in order to find the purpose of the story: "What is the theme of this story? What does the author believe?" The theme of a story is a generalization and the story is written to give voice to the author's belief in the generalization. It could be something as simple as, "All men

love and all men hate." A theme of this type could be called a universal theme. On the other hand, the theme could be more specific and deal with a particular type of person in a special situation. The important thing is that the author does not stop when he has constructed his generalization, he writes a story which he feels will reveal the "truth" to the reader of fiction. The concept of theme has long been considered a basic element in fiction by critics.⁴⁵ Herein lies another characteristic of the low-conflict stories: it was difficult to detect the theme of an individual story. Once again in considering the group, I realized the only thing resembling a theme was the air of hopelessness in each story. They did not dramatically reveal that it is useless to plan or to try, but left the reader with the feeling that the best laid plans of mice and men always go awry.

It should be remembered that naturalism does not mean the elimination of conflict; the stories studied for this thesis revealed that most low-conflict stories were naturalistic.

One story which contained all these elements—naturalism, psychological development, low-conflict and no theme—was "The Headless Hawk" by Truman Capote.⁴⁶ The protagonist, Vincent Waters, works for an art gallery in New York. The reader learns that Vincent is a 36-year-old bachelor who is attracted to "unusual" women. He calls them "freaks." In some way all of his women are mentally disturbed. In this story he

⁴⁵ Scott, op. cit., p. 9.

⁴⁶ Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1947, pp. 31-55.

meets a girl who calls herself D. J. She is a sloppy dresser, refuses to say where she is from, and seems to have a mental age of about fourteen. D. J. had painted a picture which featured a headless hawk and a headless monk which Vincent buys. After several months of searching, he finds D. J. and takes her to his apartment. During the months she lives with Vincent we learn that she probably spent some time in a mental hospital and is under the impression that a "Mr. Destronelli" is looking for her so he can kill her. In time she begins to think Vincent is Mr. Destronelli. Vincent decides to break with her and puts her belongings outside the door to his apartment.

All of this is revealed by flashback. The actual time of the story is about two hours. Vincent leaves the gallery one evening and is followed by D. J., after their separation. She waits on the sidewalk while he changes clothes and follows him when he comes out. The story ends when she comes up to him under a street light. The flashback sequence occurs while Vincent is in his apartment.

In attempting to discover the conflict in this story several possibilities were considered and rejected. First, was Vincent faced with the possibility of taking D. J. back? He did not like to be followed by an ex-girl friend, and her silent tracking was unnerving. However, nothing suggested that this was a possibility. In fact, the reader feels she does not wish to be taken back. She seems to have attached herself to Vincent the way a puppy chooses a new master. The impression is also given that she will disappear if she does not get any response from Vincent.

In the flashback story the problem may have been how to get rid of her. Vincent admitted to himself that it would be more difficult because he could not reason with her as he had with other mistresses. When she came to the apartment and found her suitcase outside the door, she picked it up and disappeared. She did not knock on the door nor try to see him at the gallery. The episode was ended.

Another possibility was that she would kill Vincent because he was changing to the feared "Mr. Destronelli" in her eyes. The pattern had been that she ran from men who made this metamorphosis. Nothing indicates that it would be different this time. One could even consider the possibility that Vincent would kill her. There could be no doubt that D. J.'s strange conduct was affecting Vincent. He frequently had trouble distinguishing between reality and fantasy when he was with D. J. But, although he was pushed off balance by his association with D. J., the developing situation is stopped when he puts her out.

If any theme could be discovered in this story it would have to be "don't befriend the mentally ill." This would be stretching the facts unfairly. The only theme which could be supported would be "nothing changes." The reader knows the girl will never change and feels sorry for her. He also knows that Vincent will remain the bachelor gallery-director. In fact, this episode has shown him the value of sticking to familiar pathways.

This theme is typical of naturalism. The characters are what they are and their environments dictate the course of their lives. The story contains other elements typical of naturalism: it has detailed

description of neighborhoods, people and conversations; it deals with subnormal people; and, it generates a mood of hopelessness throughout.

Finally, the story relies on a psychological method of development. The entire story is told through the eyes of Vincent. His doubts and reactions are the only ones revealed to the reader. As he wanders through periods of fantasy, only his dreams are shown. There is no conflict in the action sequences. If any conflict occurs it is during the time his mind flies away from reality. This is prevented from becoming a major conflict because the author quickly returns Vincent to the real world.

The description and the characters are fascinating. The story is so well written that the reader feels he is in the midst of a most dramatic event. He doesn't know what the event is, but he is sure something spectacular is going to happen. When it doesn't the reader is naturally disappointed and wonders, "What was supposed to happen? What was I looking for?" In the final analysis, the reader has to say it was just an interesting episode in a man's life. There was no climax—it just ended.

Edward O'Brien said that a story is not a story if it fails either the test of substance or the test of form.⁴⁷ Since I agree with this premise I contend that many of the short stories published during 1946-1955 are not stories for they fail the test of form.

As was stated earlier, the short story is not to be developed

⁴⁷ E. J. O'Brien, The Best American Short Stories, 1935, p. xvi.

by following a formula. Certain elements, such as adhering to the classical unities, can be manipulated without endangering a good story. But, a story without conflict is not a short story.⁴⁸

If such stories cannot be labeled short stories, what are they? After reading a number of them, I tried to find a category in which they might belong. At first I tried to call them essays, or at least considered them to be "essay-like." However, an essay should have a clearly stated or understood purpose. Since there was no conflict nor a theme it was impossible to determine the purpose of such stories. Finally, feeling somewhat guilty about reducing the accomplishment of recognized artists, I found the word describing this group: exposition. Expository writing is a five-fingered exercise. Here the writer can practice writing prose. He can use dialogue, narrative or a combination of both to advance his thought; he can use omniscient or peripheral point of view; and, he is not expected to tell a story! In expository writing the author learns to manipulate syntax, use new words, color with metaphors, and generally increase his ability to communicate meaningfully with the reader.

Such stories lacking adequately developed conflict seemed to be just superbly done exercises.

If these stories are samples of expository writing, why do editors and critics accept them as short stories? Remember that most of the stories appearing in The Best American Short Stories series are written by professional writers. Even if there is a noticeable lack of conflict

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Virgil Scott, Studies in the Short Story, p. 3.

in many, a polished style and technique is equally evident. In addition the development of characters is usually very well done. In fact, many of the low-conflict stories are penetrating character studies. A friend of mine once remarked that he had read stories which failed to impress him, ". . . but they (the authors) could write like angels." It should also be noted that world events and the personal experiences which motivated the authors would be working on the editors at the same time, thus making them sympathetic to the writers' products. Together with the fact that many editors refuse to establish a rigid pattern for evaluating fiction because it would encourage "formula" stories, the door is always open for variations in structure. Martha Foley was ". . . in quest of literary adventure."⁴⁹ This attitude certainly does not eliminate the possibility of admitting low-conflict stories.

Do not take this to mean that I feel Miss Foley is a poor editor. After all, I liked four-fifths of her selections, and most anyone would be satisfied if they knew they would enjoy 80 percent of the stories they read. Miss Foley also commented in the preface of one volume that some readers may find thorns among the stories, but she hoped they would also find a lot of roses.⁵⁰ Another time she mentions that she served as a member of the Dana Reed Memorial Committee which grants an award for the best short story by a Harvard student. On the first ballot the vote was unanimous. Concerning this she wrote, "I mention it especially

⁴⁹Foley, loc. cit.

⁵⁰Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1954, p. xii.

because, as far as I am concerned, it establishes a record of unanimity among editors.⁵¹ This means there is room for spirited argument on the merits of a given story. Undoubtedly, it is this freedom from restriction which has made the short story a lasting and dynamic form of literature.

The observation here is that there was a trend to remove conflict from the short story following World War II. It is difficult to explain why such was the case except to generalize that literature reflects the public as well as the personal view.

⁵¹Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1956, p. x.

CHAPTER III

THE USE OF THE VERY YOUNG AND THE VERY OLD AS CENTRAL CHARACTERS

Since Hawthorne's time the adequate development of characters has been a prime requirement in the structure of the short story. If the author fails here, he does not produce an acceptable short story. It seemed logical that characterization should be analyzed to see if there were any trends in this area. At first it did not appear that anything new was developing. Without exception, the central characters of the 270 short stories were developed with finesse and understanding. I did not consider this unusual since the series is a distillation of all the short stories produced each year. What did become apparent was not "how" the characters were created but "who" the characters were. It was discovered that a large segment of the stories were about children or old people.

Statistically, 103 of the 270 stories were about children or the aged. The range was from 20% in 1947 to 55% in 1951, and the average for the ten year period was 37%. From 1948 to 1955, however, the number of stories is relatively constant. In The Best American Short Stories 1955 there were only six stories in this category. In the preface to this edition, Martha Foley made a significant admission: the first list was ready to send to the publisher when she noticed nearly all the stories

selected concerned children or the aged.⁵² Then she revised the list, drastically reducing the number of stories about children, and sent it to the publisher. If it had not been for the revision, the percentage of stories in this category would have been even higher for the ten year period.

In five of the ten volumes used for this study, Martha Foley mentions the increasing number of stories about children. In The Best American Short Stories 1949 she remarks it is interesting to note the number of stories about childhood. She continues by saying, "In fact, so many stories about children have appeared in magazines this year that one magazine has placed a taboo on accepting any more for six months."⁵³ There were eleven stories of this type in the 1949 volume.

In the 1950 edition, Miss Foley commented she had encountered, "... a tremendous number of excellent stories about children."⁵⁴ In the 1952 volume she again notes there were a great many stories about children or adults through children's eyes.⁵⁵ And finally, in the 1954 edition she says, "What did impress me most was that all kinds of magazines published the largest number of stories about children and old people I have ever encountered. And this in spite of the fact that editors and agents have been saying for some years now, 'Please! No

⁵² Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1955, p. ix.

⁵³ Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1949, p. viii.

⁵⁴ Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1950, p. xiii.

⁵⁵ Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1952, p. x.

stories about children and the aged".⁵⁶

There can be no doubt that a trend to write about children and the aged developed following World War II. The subjects of these stories, however, are not unusual. Generally, these stories concerned themselves with one of four categories: awareness of sex or the first sexual experience; difficulty in understanding adults; the very young and the very old are alike; and old people want to remain useful in modern society.

Concerning the first group, children and sex, there were a number of excellent stories throughout the study period. One naturalistic story told of a young girl who prostitutes herself in order to buy a birthday present for her brother. On the same night, the brother has his first sexual experience with a prostitute as a birthday present from his uncle.⁵⁷

"Sex Education" by Dorothy Canfield was another good story of this type. A grown woman relates how an event which took place when she was an adolescent changed in meaning as she grew older. The story changes from one of near-rape in the first rendition, to compassion for the man in the final version. The girl was lost in a cornfield. She panicked and ran in circles without finding her way out. Finally, she saw her cousin coming through the field. She ran and threw herself at him and believed, in the first telling, that he began to tear her clothes from her. In the second instance she believed the cousin thought she

⁵⁶ Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1954, p. xi.

⁵⁷ Mac Hyman, "The Hundredth Centennial," The Best American Short Stories 1955, pp. 123-146.

was making advances towards him. When she saw this in his eyes, she pulled away, tearing the sleeve from her dress. In the final rendition of the tale, the woman surmised she must have been frightened by the horrible scar on the side of his face as he turned towards her, and the dress was torn accidentally. She was also sure he must have been shocked by the realization that his face was so repulsive.⁵⁸

Victoria Lincoln handles the same subject with superb poignancy in "Down in the Reeds by the River." A girl of fourteen is sent to live with relatives in Kansas following the death of her parents. At first she was lonely and found it difficult to make friends. One day she discovers a shantytown and makes friends with a number of children there. Her best friend is Posy Moreno who is always cautioning her about Mr. deRocca. The girl does not understand what she is supposed to be careful of and, besides, she thinks Mr. deRocca is a very clever, very nice old man.

Inevitably, the day comes when Posy is not around to steer her past the opening gambits of Mr. deRocca. Mr. deRocca invites her into his yard. For a long time they talk about many things. Mr. deRocca frequently interjects compliments about her beauty which the girl likes. Finally, he asks her to go down to the river to see his fish nets. On the bank of the river, with soothing time between each advance, he puts his arm around her, hugs her, kisses her, runs his hands over her body,

⁵⁸ Dorothy Canfield, "Sex Education," The Best American Short Stories 1947, pp. 17-30.

and just as she is ready to completely submit, she hears Posy calling her. Mr. deRocca releases her and picks up his net.

Later, the girl realizes she should not have even sat in the yard with Mr. deRocca. Oddly enough, she still likes him, but never allows him to touch her again.⁵⁹

Although adolescent sex was a popular subject, one which seemed to be of equal interest to the authors was the lack of understanding between children and parents. Since most of these stories were written from the child's point of view the reader was made to sympathize with the child. The reader could understand why the child was puzzled by adult actions and attitudes and condemned the adults for not trying to help the child resolve his problems.

"The Pale Green Fishes" by Kressmann Taylor illustrates the classic struggle between parents for a child's undivided affection. Richard, the nine-year-old protagonist, is forced into a situation where he must decide whether or not to transfer the bulk of his affection from his mother to his father. Ordinarily, when his father returns from sales trips, Richard's older brother is at home and teams with the father. In this story the brother is at camp. From the time Charles, the father, arrives he alternately praises and condemns Richard for a variety of actions. When he praises, Richard is exultant. Each time the mother attempts to intervene during times of condemnation, she becomes the object of the attack. Finally, to keep his mother from being

⁵⁹ Victoria Lincoln, "Down in the Reeds by the River," The Best American Short Stories 1947, pp. 238-250.

hurt and because he is afraid of his father, Richard utters a phrase which stamps him as his father's boy from that moment on: "Well, she's only a woman; you can't expect her to have good sense." This is a phrase Richard's father and brother use frequently when talking about the mother. This pleases his father and obviously shocks his mother.

Richard is ashamed that fear rather than love made him desert his mother and he runs to the river. While hanging on a raft anchored in the middle of the stream, he wonders why he had to make a choice; while looking at the pale green fish under the raft, he wonders why he chose his father. In the last scene he performs a feat which is symbolic of his change: he swims under the raft. When he was with his mother he could not make it across; now, there is no hesitation.⁶⁰

In addition to the common factor that there is a lack of understanding between parents and children, stories in this classification had another bond in that they usually were about fathers and sons. Also, besides the conflict between the fathers and sons, there was conflict between the fathers and mothers.

"What We Don't Know Hurts Us" by Mark Schorer follows this pattern. Charles Dudley had been moved by his firm from Boston to a small California town much to his displeasure. In addition, his wife, Josephine, has forced him to buy a house which he dislikes. One day, while Charles and Josephine have been trying to get the house and yard in some kind of

⁶⁰ Kressman Taylor, "The Pale Green Fishes," The Best American Short Stories 1954, pp. 306-327.

order, their son Gordon comes home from school with a note from the principal. The note, without making a direct accusation, reveals that a girl is missing a dollar and that Gordon had "found" a dollar.

Charles forces Gordon to admit he stole the dollar, and Josephine attempts to help Gordon. Later, Charles finds a note written by Gordon: "You hate me and I hate you." As a result of this Charles decides that he needs the boy's love and is going to work for it.⁶¹

A final example of this situation can be found in "The Vacation" by Livingston Biddle, Jr. This story contains conflict between father and son, father and mother, and father and other people. The father, David Reid, is a competitor. He doesn't care what the contest is, he justs wants to get in and win. In this case he wants to catch the first tarpon of the year. His contest is with the Emerys, traditional winners of this contest. David also wants to remove his son, Davey, from the influence of his mother. He wants his son to be a smaller edition of himself: a pint-sized competitor. Davey catches the first tarpon and is sick when he realizes that catching is synonymous with killing. He doesn't like the attention he receives when the boat docks; he doesn't understand why his father made him fish when all he wanted to do was watch the porpoises play around the boat. David Reid is very happy and is sure his son loves the sport as much as he does--now.⁶²

⁶¹ Mark Schorer, "What We Don't Know Hurts Us," The Best American Short Stories 1947, pp. 350-365.

⁶² Livingston Biddle, Jr., "The Vacation," The Best American Short Stories 1949, pp. 19-38.

Stories which centered on the older persons of the American society usually dealt with them as being useless or as being the same as children. Concerning the latter point, there is a suggestion in stories of this type that the circle of life ends as it begins. They seem to follow the idea voiced by Jaques in As You Like It, that we leave life as we entered, "sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything."⁶³ Two stories, published in 1955, which typify this situation were "The Artificial Nigger" by Flannery O'Connor and "The Devil on a Hot Afternoon" by Ward Dorrance.

"The Artificial Nigger" is a story about a ten-year-old boy and his sixty-year-old grandfather.⁶⁴ Early one morning they catch a train to Atlanta. The trip is supposed to be a treat for the boy, but grandfather also wants to use it as a means to show the boy how worldly he is. The boy intends to show grandfather that he is just as grownup as it is possible to be. To heighten the impression that there is little difference between the young and the aged, the author describes the grandfather as having a youthful expression and the grandson's "look was ancient."⁶⁵ After a series of incidents in the city in which neither the grandfather nor the grandson succeeded in impressing one another with his worldliness, they become lost. Wandering in the heat

⁶³ As You Like It, II, vii, 166-7.

⁶⁴ Flannery O'Connor, "The Artificial Nigger," The Best American Short Stories 1956, pp. 264-284.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 264.

of the afternoon through strange sections of the city, the two become frightened and become convinced that they will never see their little farm again. They are portrayed as being illiterate, superstitious and full of false pride.

As they shuffle along, looking for the railroad station, they come upon a plaster statue of a Negro. Once again the similarity between the two is noted by the author:

The two of them stood there with their necks forward at almost the same angle and their shoulders curved in almost exactly the same way and their hands trembling identically in their pockets. Mr. Head looked like an ancient child and Nelson like a miniature old man. They stood gazing at the artificial Negro as if they were faced with some great mystery, some monument to another's victory that brought them together in their common defeat. They could both feel it dissolving their differences like an action of mercy.⁶⁶

They return to their farm vowing never to return to the city.

The technique used in "The Devil on a Hot Afternoon" differs from "The Artificial Nigger" in that the old woman, Miss Catherine, does not converse with the children in the story. Miss Catherine lives with her nephew. She has no responsibilities and is deferred to by the adults because of her age. The story takes place one afternoon. The only persons at home are Miss Catherine, a maid, and the children, David and Polly. Miss Catherine decides to look for the children after finding the maid asleep. She sees them crossing a field and sets out to bring them home. She catches up to them when they stop to splash in the river. Instead of bringing them home, she watches them and recalls similar experiences of her own when she was a child. She follows them through the

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 282.

woods to a shack occupied by a half-breed woman and a drunkard. Before any of them reach the shanty, the couple begins to fight. The children, still not aware of their aunt's presence, hide behind a bush and watch the violent action. The fight ends when the half-breed woman smashes the head of her companion with a stool. He falls into the river and floats away--face down. The children run home and Miss Catherine stumbles along behind them. She decides not to report the murder because she does not want to appear in court. She has a feeling the children will not tell either. She bases this assumption on the fact that she did not tell about something she had seen when she was a child. When the murder is discussed at the dinner table, the children exchange secret glances and Miss Catherine closes her eyes. The children, without knowing it, are linked to their aunt by the secret.⁶⁷

Many stories have been written about the conflict between generations and a variation of this theme was presented by authors following World War II. Instead of centering on the conflict between generations, the writers tended to sympathize with the older people and show how they attempted to get recognition.

"The Latter End" by George Loveridge is a touching story about a man in his eighties who lived with his son's family.⁶⁸ At first Grandpa Cartwright seemed contented. He took his grandson to the park every day

⁶⁷ Ward Dorrance, "The Devil on a Hot Afternoon," The Best American Short Stories 1956, pp. 90-104.

⁶⁸ George Loveridge, "The Latter End," The Best American Short Stories 1954, pp. 219-231.

and talked with another old man who brought his grandson to the park. The old man was James Sheffield, the father of Grandpa Cartwright's son's boss. The bond between the old men brought Grandpa Cartwright's son to the attention of the boss. James Sheffield died, and the boss called one night asking if Grandpa Cartwright could babysit for him. Grandpa was willing and the event did not seem to be important. However, two days later the boss called in Grandpa's son and asked if the old man had mentioned seeing a diamond ring around the house. The son repeated the question to his father who denied having noticed it. For some reason the son was suspicious that his father had lied. With this nagging doubt pushing him, he searched his father's room and found the ring. He also found a variety of things which came from dime stores. The man was a kleptomaniac. This realization made the son cognizant of his real attitude towards his father: "It was bad enough that he should grow old and feeble and a little touched, but the matter of the ring, and the probability that he would be detected some day at his innocent shop-lifting were worse."⁶⁹ The son returned the ring, confessing that he had taken it. The boss did not believe him but did not say anything. Grandpa Cartwright was not able to continue his life of crime because he became too crippled with arthritis. The son established the theme of this story when he asked himself, "Why did people have to get old anyway?"⁷⁰

One story made a special plea that the aged be given meaningful

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 227.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 228.

tasks to perform once they have reached retirement age. The plea was made through Mrs. Rayne, a seventy-one year old traveler in "Four Annas"⁷¹ by Christine Weston.

Mrs. Rayne is on a world tour, and on the day of the story she is in Delhi, India. Throughout the day of sight-seeing and shopping she relies on her guide, making no special nor idiotic demands of him. At the end of the tour Mrs. Rayne, weeping, asks her guide if there is something she could do to help the people of India:

I am seventy-one years old and there doesn't seem to be anything left for me to do... No one that matters, nothing that matters. But here everything seems to matter so much... There is such struggle... I can feel it... I've felt it all day, in you, in those children's hands reaching through the windows... I would like to do something.⁷²

The guide is confused and makes noncommittal answers which only serve to encourage Mrs. Rayne to continue with her plea. She tries to explain why it is necessary for her to do something: "To help people, to be with people night and day, working, never to be alone, to have . . . you know, some reason."⁷³ The story ends with her resuming her journey. The reader realizes that Mrs. Rayne will not be given a reason to keep living.

Of course, not all of the stories about children or the aged fell into one of the described categories. They were not about adolescent

⁷¹ Christine Weston, "Four Annas," The Best American Short Stories 1956, pp. 324-335.

⁷² Ibid., p. 334.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 335.

sex or useless grandfathers--they were stories about problems which could face a person at any age. In some stories a child was used as a ficelle, and in others the theme seemed to be that wisdom does come with age.

The most difficult thing to determine once a trend is discovered is why the subject, character or structural trait has become popular with the writers. One answer which comes to mind immediately regarding the trend to write about the young, is that perhaps this is the particular forte of the young writer. This was the assumption made by Martha Foley when she became aware of the increasing number of stories of this type: "The many stories about children can be attributed to the large number of new writers, since most beginning authors seem to write out of their childhood experience at first."⁷⁴

Although it is true that many of the stories published from 1946 to 1955 were written by new authors, it is significant to note that many established writers found interesting material in this area. Of the 103 stories in this group, 45 were by new writers and 58 were by established authors. I made the distinction between the new and the old authors in an arbitrary way: if the author had made his living or had been published frequently for five years prior to the time his story appeared in The Best American Short Stories, I listed him as an established author. This system of evaluation is valid because few of those listed as new writers had been writing for more than two years.

It is much more difficult to answer the question of why the child or the older person was used by an established author as a central

⁷⁴Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1950, p. xiii.

character in a story... It could be that the short story writer does not wish to "lose" his story because of the technical difficulty of presenting a simple problem through a complex adult. If he resorts to a stock character, he is being dishonest in his characterization.⁷⁵ The simple mind of a child may be all that is necessary to get his theme across.

Miss Foley seems to feel that the modern adult is an extremely complex commodity and could be most difficult for authors to handle in the short story. She observes, "Writers and editors both would like to avoid the kind of adult we have today."⁷⁶ I recognize that this is a nebulous answer. The assumption could be completely incorrect, and the only possible way of getting some kind of a valid answer would be to ask all the authors who used the young or old as central characters.

⁷⁵ Virgil Scott, Studies in the Short Story, p. 194.

⁷⁶ Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1955, p. ix.

CHAPTER IV

STATUS QUO MAINTAINED IN MOST AREAS

A trend does not manifest itself in a single year in any form of art. It is possible that it could take more than a decade before any innovations or changes of interest would develop in sufficient intensity to become apparent to students of art. Change comes slowly, and I feel that the two trends identified in this paper represent an unusual situation. We can probably expect that identifiable change will follow a world crisis such as World War II. Nearly every individual living under the influence of Western culture was affected by the war. Lives which had been sedentary were violently changed and charged with emotional conflicts. When the crisis was over, millions believed that no one had had exactly the same experience. Many felt it necessary to record their reactions, some because they wished to call attention to themselves, others because they wished it to serve as a lesson for future generations.

With such intense actions and reactions, many expected drastic changes in every phase of life--including the arts. It is notable, however, that there was relatively little change in the short story. Except for the inclination to write about youth and age, there were no changes in characterization. The structure of the short story, although pressed at times, did not go through any major revisions. But, what about the themes and subjects which received the attention of the artists?

A global war should have exerted a great influence on the subject of stories, at least one might think so. But, for some unexplained reason, this subject did not predominate at any time from 1946-1955, even in magazines which printed "popular" fiction. The greatest number of short stories which dealt with war, directly or indirectly, was chosen for the 1947 edition of The Best American Short Stories. Throughout the ten year period following the war, only 32 stories dealing with this subject appeared in this series. No one year stands out as the year when authors were writing war-based stories. There was at least one such story included in each volume of The Best American Short Stories except in the 1956 edition.

Some editors predict that the great war stories are coming.⁷⁷ They refer to stories of World War I as a case in point. There seems to be a long period of reflection necessary before the authors can identify the significant events of such a cataclysmic time. Just as the subject of war did not receive undue attention in the decade following the war there was no rush to produce stories developing the theme: "War is Hell." This identification may seem so obvious that it is foolish to mention it, but it goes deeper. Even in the stories about war there was no theme which seemed to be common to them. One might expect that these stories would be impassioned pleas for continued peace. Instead, they were stories which showed that soldiers face problems other than battle problems⁷⁸ or

⁷⁷ Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1952, p. x.

⁷⁸ Edward Heth, "Under the Ginkgo Trees," The Best American Short Stories 1947, pp. 208-220.

showed an analogy between peacetime and wartime experiences.⁷⁹ Whatever it is that prompts authors to write significant war stories, the stimulus did not appear in quantity after the war.

Another subject I looked for without success in this study was prejudice. Perhaps the success of Gentleman's Agreement early in this period suggested that more authors would find material here. Prejudice of any type, racial or religious, was identified, but in the first five years only two stories dealing with this subject were chosen for The Best American Short Stories. During the Korean War four such stories appeared in two volumes, and only two stories were included in the final three volumes. Primarily, the stories dealt with prejudice towards Jews or Catholics. The best story in this category was "Act of Faith" by

⁸⁰ Irwin Shaw. A much-decorated Jewish soldier, Norman Seeger, while waiting to be sent home after the war, receives a letter from his father predicting that Jews will be treated as Jews again. He even fears pogroms in the United States. The letter causes Seeger to look for even the slightest castigations in the looks and words of his comrades. Finding none, he decides he must rely on these friends at home as he did on the battlefield.

Perhaps, with the conflict centering on the integration of the Negro in the United States recently we will see more stories dealing

⁷⁹ Vurrell Yentzen, "The Rock," The Best American Short Stories 1954, pp. 396-409.

⁸⁰ Irwin Shaw, "Act of Faith," The Best American Short Stories 1947, pp. 382-400.

with prejudice. But, this definitely was not a subject of pressing importance to writers following World War II.

Another way of classifying short stories is by geographical locations. It might be more accurate to classify writers rather than stories as was done in the latter part of the nineteenth century and during the twenties. For this study I chose to classify the stories instead of the writers, not because I expected to find a great increase in regional stories, but to see which regions received the most attention.

Approximately ten percent of the stories selected for The Best American Short Stories fell into the regional category. And of these it can be established that the best regional stories are about the South. There were 28 regional stories, and of these, 24 were about the South, 3 were about the West and one was about New England.

To be classified as a regional story the story must be influenced by values and mores of that section, not merely located in the region. Most of the Southern stories were in the best Faulkner tradition: a caste system running through the white population and the Negro treated in the best 1850 style. There is little conflict between the groups and the story lies in its appropriate strata. Some dealt with the Negro society, independent of the white,⁸¹ and others with a single group in

⁸¹ Mark Van Doren, "I Got a Friend," The Best American Short Stories 1955, pp. 331-337.

the white complex.⁸²

Each of the Western Stories treated a different subject. One has the action centered on a wild horse chase set against a background of typical ranch life.⁸³ Another, "The Mexican Girl," was a treatise on the life of the Mexican laborer in California,⁸⁴ and the last was a compelling story decrying the condition of the reservation Indian in Arizona.⁸⁵

The lone New England story portrayed the exclusive beach society of the Boston elite.⁸⁶ The intricate mechanism designed to detect who is "acceptable" is revealed. A problem is created for the insipid group when one of the prominent beach homes is sold to an "outsider." To make it even more difficult for the group, the new family is Irish. Because one man of the group wanted to do something that would keep him known as the creator of "amusing things to do," he visits the new family and they are partially accepted into the exclusive circle. The new family is so energetic and sophisticated that they influence the group.

⁸² Speed Lamkin, "Comes a Day," The Best American Short Stories 1950, pp. 259-273.

⁸³ Paul Griffith, "The Horse Like September," The Best American Short Stories 1947, pp. 114-124.

⁸⁴ Jack Kerouac, "The Mexican Girl," The Best American Short Stories 1956, pp. 205-225.

⁸⁵ William Eastlake, "The Quiet Chimneys," The Best American Short Stories 1956, pp. 123-133.

⁸⁶ Nancy Hale, "Brahmin Beachhead," The Best American Short Stories 1952, pp. 190-203.

The "king" of the society, Percival Heath, not only deigned it proper to make one of his infrequent calls, but found them the most vital and charming people in the area.

Editors are frequently asked at the end of a calendar year what trends they have recognized in the stories that have crossed their desks. As a rule they do not make any judgments because they are busy working on the next issue of a magazine. But, once in awhile they are flooded with stories of a given type, and they are forced to wonder about the incident. The final judgment is, "I don't know why, but here they are." It is interesting to note what some of the reactions were at the end of each year of this study.

At the end of 1946 and 1947 editors noted that there were many stories dealing with emotional frustration.⁸⁷⁻⁸⁸ Short stories were concerned with the internal man; Martha Foley called them "tension" stories.⁸⁹ She also made the assumption that the American people were concerned with a vast searching of souls during that time.⁹⁰ During 1948 and 1949 the large number of stories about children were noted. It was also recognized that many new writers were succeeding in getting

⁸⁷Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1947, p. viii.

⁸⁸Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1948, p. vii.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. ix.

⁹⁰Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1947, p. viii.

their stories accepted for publication.⁹¹⁻⁹²

The stories accepted for publication in 1950 caused more than one editor to wonder if he had changed his standards. Many of the stories seemed almost Victorian values such as love, honor, pity and sacrifice became central issues again. One publisher remarked, "Why, these are... are corny! They're full of the old-fashioned virtues!"⁹³ The only answer the editor could make was, "But that's the way writers are writing now, most of the really fine ones."⁹⁴

The large number of child-aged stories was recognized again in 1951, but in 1952 a new note crept into the scores: many stories about university professors. Also coming in with this character was a tranquil, graceful quality.⁹⁵ During the next two years the university professor remained a prominent character in American short stories. It could be advocated that the interest shown in this person resulted from the association thousands of people had had with the professor following World War II. One enjoyable story dealing with this character and written in a most graceful style was "Bachelor of Arts." It is a story about a female student who has a "crush" on one of her professors. The girl is about to graduate and is unable to imagine how her life could mean

⁹¹ Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1949, p. vii.

⁹² Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1950, p. xiii.

⁹³ Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1951, p. viii.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1953, p. ix.

anything when she is forced to leave the company of this man. Although no embarrassing scenes take place, the professor is cognizant of the girl's attitude. He manages to turn the girl's attention to her future, slowly, surely and with the utmost finesse.⁹⁶

As was noted before, 1953 and 1954 were recognized for the children and aged stories. 1955 was not recognized as a "trend" year by the editors. If anything was apparent it was the introduction of many new writers to the literary world.⁹⁷

Undoubtedly the most influential type of magazine in setting trends which become evident in The Best American Short Stories series is the "little" magazine. In addition to giving birth to a new trend, the "little" magazine is the place where the majority of new writers get their start. It would not be proper, though, to suggest that the pressure exerted by these magazines is constant. The nadir of this influence occurred in 1947 and the zenith was reached in 1950.

In 1947 the "little" magazines devoted more space to articles than to fiction; and, at the same time many of the commercial publications were publishing outstanding short stories. Martha Foley explains this phenomenon by saying, ". . . there is a time lag between publication of new literary form in the little magazines and their appearance in the big magazines. The little magazines do the pioneering, the really creative editing, and then gradually the writing they foster gains wider

⁹⁶ Nancy Chaikin, "Bachelor of Arts," The Best American Short Stories 1955, pp. 25-38.

⁹⁷ Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1956, p. ix.

recognition."⁹⁸ The "little" magazines bounced back quickly and re-established themselves as publishers of outstanding fiction by 1950. In the 1951 edition of The Best American Short Stories only one story was taken from a "big" magazine. Since that time the stories appearing in the series have leveled out--neither the big nor the little magazines having the corner on good literature.

As a final note on the attempt to discover trends in the short story, two special categories should be mentioned. First, recognition should be given to the story of fantasy. Throughout the ten year period several good stories of this type were selected for reproduction. The "best" year for this type of story seemed to be 1947, but it never reached what could be called trend proportions. "The Cocoon" by John Goodwin in The Best American Short Stories 1947 is an outstanding sample. Secondly, much attention has been given to the science fiction story during this time by the public; however, much of it has not been of sufficient quality to make any significant impact on the world of literature. Ray Bradbury, a leading author in this field, had a story selected for the 1952 edition of The Best American Short Stories which most readers will like.⁹⁹ It is a prediction of what could happen following World War III.

Two other stories which have special significance are "A Great

⁹⁸ Martha Foley, The Best American Short Stories 1948, p. ix.

⁹⁹ Ray Bradbury, "The Other Foot," The Best American Short Stories 1952, pp. 49-60.

"Reckoning in a Little Room"¹⁰⁰ and "The Professor and the Poet."¹⁰¹ These stories should be of the most interest to teachers and students of literature.. The first, "A Great Reckoning in a Little Room," is a fictionalized version of how Christopher Marlowe was killed.. In addition to how he was killed, it tells why.. "The Professor and the Poet" is an ill-disguised anecdote about Dylan Thomas and one of his stops on his first tour of the United States.

This investigation shows that except for the two trends discussed in previous chapters, the short story remained much the same as it was before World War II.. The subjects and techniques generally are varied and defy classification.. Thus the short story remains an energetic form for presenting the opinions of the modern American.

¹⁰⁰ Geoffrey Bush, "A Great Reckoning in a Little Room," The Best American Short Stories 1954, pp. 1-13.

¹⁰¹ Marvin Mudrick, "The Professor and the Poet," The Best American Short Stories 1955, pp. 209-218.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The history of the world is a record of change... We do not expect 1980 to be the same as 1960, and we expect changes in every field of endeavor. This is the premise behind the study presented in this thesis... I expected to see some changes in the short story following World War II. Brander Matthews observed in an essay first published in 1905, that each generation refines the existing art:

Every generation is privileged to stand on the shoulders of its predecessors, and it is taller by what they accomplished... The art of fiction, for example, is a finer art today than it was yesterday; and so is every other art, even tho the artists themselves are no greater now than then, and even tho genius is no more frequent than it was formerly.¹⁰²

I believe this observation is just as valid when applied to the period of this study as it was in 1905. We expect change, but the unknown factor is the length of time it takes for any given change to take place.

Two trends in the short story from 1946 to 1955 were noted in this thesis... The first trend was that many authors wrote stories in which conflict was not highly developed. The second trend was that many authors chose to use the very young or the very old as central characters in their stories.

¹⁰² Brander Matthews, "An Apology for Technic," Literary Criticism in America, p. 217.

The greatest number of low-conflict stories appeared from the end of World War II to the beginning of the Korean War. Following the Korean War the number decreased sharply. If the number had increased we would have had to admit that the form of the short story was changed. This admission would have to have been made because most critics of the twentieth century advocate that a short story must have highly developed conflict.

The low-conflict stories have many things in common. Most of them are naturalistic and have an air of hopelessness in them. In fact, the common theme seems to be that we should not struggle to attain certain goals, let the environment take us where it will. In addition, most of the low-conflict stories make use of the psychological method of development.

It is impossible to positively identify the reason for the interest in this type of story. Perhaps the war with its impersonal dog tags and ration cards made us feel that we were only a number after all. Such an attitude would encourage the creation of naturalistic fiction.

The trend to write about children and the aged is even more difficult to explain. The number of stories in this category gradually increased throughout the ten years following World War II. The themes of these stories are not new. They deal with basic conflicts between generations; however, the conflict most often used is the one which exists between young adults and children. This trend is difficult to explain because no special group of writers could be identified as being most interested in this area.

The stories which use an old man or woman as the central character follow two themes: it's too bad we have to grow old; and, old people should be allowed to contribute to the growth of the society. We know that there are a great many more healthy, retired people in this country today than we have ever had. Perhaps the authors have become aware of the problems created by old age because they have been exposed to so many more aged persons.

Finally, I noticed that some of the things I expected to reach trend proportions failed to be of interest to the writers. Also, some things made an appearance and then died out completely before 1955. The one subject I expected to be discussed by many authors was the war. War stories appeared throughout the study period, but the number of such stories was always low when compared to other types of stories.

An interesting feature of the last four years of the study was the appearance of college professors as central characters. This could have been the beginning of a new trend. A study of the short stories published during the last five years would have to be made to determine the status of this feature.

It would be interesting to look for trends in the short story again in 1966. Several questions could be investigated, and the study could provide an enlightening extension of this thesis. First, I would like to know what happens to the trends noted in this thesis. Will they be apparent in the writings of the second decade after World War II? Will something new eclipse them? Or will some of the observations made in this paper which were not dominant factors in the first decade after

the war suddenly be of great interest to authors? Although these questions cannot be answered at this time, we can be sure that something new will develop and be of interest to students of literature.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Authors of stories selected
for The Best American Short
Stories 1947-1956.

Author status at time first
story appears in the series.
Established New

Number of
stories in
the series.

Agee, James	x		1
Albee, George	x		1
Alexander, Sidney	x		1
Angell, Roger		x	2
Angoff, Charles	x		1
Asch, Nathan	x		1
Aswell, James	x		1
Babb, Sanora	x		1
Ballard, James	x		1
Beck, Warren	x		1
Becker, Stephen		x	1
Bellow, Saul	x		1
Bennett, Peggy		x	2
Berge, Bill		x	1
Biddle, Livingston, Jr.		x	1
Bishop, Elizabeth		x	1
Bolte, Mary		x	1
Bowen, Robert O.		x	2
Bowles, Paul	x		3
Boyle, Kay	x		1
Bradbury, Ray	x		2
Broderick, Francis		x	1

APPENDIX A (continued)

<u>Authors</u>	<u>Established</u>	<u>New</u>	<u>Number of stories</u>
Brookhouser, Frank	x		1
Brown, Morris		x	1
Bush, Geoffrey		x	1
Calisher, Hortense		x	2
Canfield, Dorothy	x		2
Capote, Truman	x		1
Cardozo, Nancy	x		2
Carroll, Joseph	x		1
Casper, Leonard		x	1
Cassill, R. V.	x		2
Chaikin, Nancy C.	x		2
Cheever, John	x		3
Chidester, Ann	x		1
Christopher, Robert		x	1
Clay, George R.		x	2
Clay, Richard		x	1
Clayton, John B.	x		1
Coates, Robert M.	x		2
Connell, Evan S., Jr.	x		1
Coogan, Joseph P.	x		1
Cousins, Margaret	x		1
Curley, Daniel	x		1
Davis, Wesley F.	x		1

APPENDIX A. (continued)

Authors	Established	New	Number of stories
Deal, Borden		x	1
Deasy, Mary	x		1
DeMott, Benjamin		x	1
Dolekhov, Adele		x	1
Dorrance, Ward	x		3
Doughty, LeGarde S.		x	1
Downey, Harris		x	3
Duke, Osborn		x	1
Eastlake, William	x		2
Eaton, Charles Edward	x		1
Elliott, George P.		x	5
Enright, Elizabeth	x		3
Felsen, Henry G.	x		1
Fiedler, Leslie A.		x	1
Fisher, M. F. K.	x		1
Fontaine, Robert	x		1
Frazee, Steve	x		1
Froscher, Wingate		x	1
Garner, Hugh	x		1
Garrigan, Philip	x		1
Gellhorn, Martha	x		2
Gerstley, Adelaide		x	1
Gibbons, Robert	x		1

APPENDIX A (continued)

Authors	Established	New	Number of stories
Glen, Emilie	x		1
Gold, Ivan		x	1
Goodman, J. Carol		x	1
Goodwin, John B. L.	x		1
Gordon, Ethel Edison		x	1
Goss, John M.		x	1
Goyen, William		x	1
Granit, Arthur		x	1
Gregory, Vahan K.		x	1
Grennard, Elliott		x	1
Griffith, Beatrice		x	1
Griffith, Paul		x	1
Guerard, Albert	x		1
Gustafson, Ralph	x		2
Hale, Nancy	x		1
Hall, James B.		x	1
Hardwick, Elizabeth	x		2
Harris, Ruth		x	1
Hauser, Marianne	x		1
Heath, Priscilla		x	1
Hebert, Anne	x		1
Heggen, Thomas		x	1
Heller, Joseph		x	1

APPENDIX A (continued)

Authors	Established	New	Number of stories
Herschberger, Ruth	x		1
Hersey, John	x		1
Heth, Edward H.	x		1
Holwerda, Frank		x	1
Horton, Phillip	x		1
Housepian, Marjorie Anais	x		1
Humphreys, John R.		x	1
Hunter, Laura		x	1
Hyman, Mac		x	1
Jackson, Charles Tenney	x		1
Jackson, Roberts		x	1
Jackson, Shirley		x	2
Jarrell, Randall	x		1
Jeffers, Lance		x	1
Jenks, Almet	x		1
Johnson, Josephine W.	x		2
Jones, Madison P., Jr.		x	1
Kaplan, Ralph		x	1
Karchmer, Sylvan		x	1
Karmel, Ilona		x	1
Kerouac, Jack	x		1
Kjelgaard, Jim	x		1
Kuehn, Susan		x	1

APPENDIX A (continued)

Authors	Established	New	Number of stories
LaFarge, Oliver	x		2
LaMar, Nathaniel		x	1
Lamkin, Speed		x	1
Lanning, George		x	1
Laurence, Bethel		x	1
Lewis, Ethel G.		x	1
Lincoln, Victoria	x		3
Livesay, Dorothy	x		1
Loveridge, George	x		1
Lowry, Robert	x		2
Lull, Roderick	x		1
Lynch, John A.		x	1
Lyons, Augusta W.		x	1
Mabry, T. D.		x	1
Macaulay, Robie		x	1
MacDonald Agnes		x	1
Maier, Howard	x		1
Malamud, Bernard		x	2
Marsh, Willard		x	1
Marshall, Elizabeth		x	1
Martenet, May D.	x		1
Mayhall, Jane	x		2
McCoy, Esther		x	1
McHugh, Vincent	x		1

APPENDIX A (continued)

Authors	Established	New	Number of stories
Merril, Judith	x		1
Middleton, Elizabeth H.		x	1
Molloy, Ruth B.	x		1
Morgan, Patrick	x		1
Morse, Robert		x	1
Mudrick, Marvin		x	1
Nemerov, Howard	x		1
Newhouse, Edward	x		1
Noland, Felix		x	1
Norris, Hoke		x	1
O'Connor, Flannery		x	2
Parker, Glidden		x	1
Patt, Esther		x	1
Patton, Frances Gray	x		1
Payne, Robert	x		1
Pendergast, Constance		x	1
Pfeffer, Irving		x	1
Portugal, Ruth		x	1
Post, Mary B.	x		1
Powers, J. F.	x		2
Purdy, Ken	x		1
Putman, Clay		x	2
Rader, Paul		x	1

APPENDIX A (continued)

<u>Authors</u>	<u>Established</u>	<u>New</u>	<u>Number of stories.</u>
Raphaelson, Samson	x		1
Robinson, Rosanne Smith	x		1
Rogers, John		x	1
Rooney, Frank		x	1
Root, Waverley	x		1
Roth, Philip		x	1
Rothberg, Abraham		x	1
Salinger, J. D.	x		1
Saroyan, William	x		1
Schorer, Mark	x		1
Schulberg, Stuart		x	1
Seager, Allan	x		1
Segre, Alfredo	x		1
Shapiro, Madelon		x	1
Sharp, Dolph	x		1
Shattuck, Roger		x	1
Shaw, Irwin	x		3
Shepley, John		x	1
Shirley, Sylvia		x	1
Shultz, Henry		x	1
Stafford, Jean	x		5
Stark, Irwin	x		1
Stegner, Wallace	x		4

APPENDIX A (continued)

Authors	Established	New	Number of stories
Stewart, Ramona		x	1
Still, James	x		2
Strong, Joan		x	1
Stuart, David		x	1
Sulkin, Sidney	x		1
Sultan, Stanley		x	1
Swados, Harvey	x		2
Taylor, Kressmann	x		1
Taylor, Peter		x	1
Traven, B.	x		1
Tucci, Niccolo		x	1
VanDoren, Mark	x		3
Vukelich, George		x	1
Waldron, Daniel		x	1
Weaver, John D.	x		1
Welty, Eudora	x		2
Wesely, Donald		x	1
West, Jessamyn	x		1
West, Ray B., Jr.	x		1
Weston, Christine	x		4
White, E. B.	x		1
Williams, Lawrence		x	1
Williams, Tennessee	x		2

APPENDIX A (continued)

<u>Authors</u>	<u>Established</u>	<u>New</u>	<u>Number of stories</u>
Wincelberg, Simon		x	1
Wolfert, Ira	x		1
Yamamoto, Hisaye		x	1
Yellen, Samuel	x		1
Yentzen, Vurrell		x	1

APPENDIX B

Low-conflict stories in The Best American Short Stories 1947-1956

	Year	Source
"Return by Faith"	1947	<u>Atlantic Monthly</u>
"The Headless Hawk"	1947	<u>Harper's Bazaar</u>
"Day of Gold and Darkness"	1947	<u>Yale Review</u>
"The Man in the Mirror"	1947	<u>Story</u>
"Under the Ginkgo Trees"	1947	<u>Town and Country</u>
"The Greatest Idea in the World"	1947	<u>Good Housekeeping</u>
"Game Chickens"	1947	<u>Foreground</u>
"The Red Dress"	1947	<u>Harper's Magazine</u>
"The Women on the Wall"	1947	<u>Harper's Magazine</u>
"I See You Never"	1948	<u>New Yorker</u>
"That's My Johnny-Boy"	1948	<u>Tomorrow</u>
"The Farmer's Children"	1949	<u>Harper's Bazaar</u>
"Under the Sky"	1949	<u>Partisan Review</u>
"My Father and the Circus"	1949	<u>U. of K.C. Review</u>
"Exodus"	1949	<u>Tomorrow</u>
"The White Hound"	1949	<u>Hudson Review</u>
"Departure of Hubbard"	1949	<u>Tomorrow</u>
"Evenings at Home"	1949	<u>Partisan Review</u>
"Jerry"	1949	<u>Mademoiselle</u>
"Footnote to American History"	1949	<u>Va. Quarterly Review</u>
"The Vault"	1949	<u>Kenyon Review</u>
"The Men"	1949	<u>Perspective</u>

APPENDIX B. (continued)

<u>Low-conflict stories</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Source</u>
"Episode of a House Remembered"	1949	<u>Wake</u>
"An Island for My Friends"	1949	<u>Madelon Shapiro</u>
"The Wild Flower"	1950	<u>Kansas Magazine</u>
"A Sermon by Doctor Pep"	1950	<u>Partisan Review</u>
"The Pigeon"	1950	<u>Northern Review</u>
"The Artist"	1950	<u>Harper's Magazine</u>
"The Glass Wall"	1950	<u>Good Housekeeping</u>
"The World Outside"	1950	<u>Harper's Magazine</u>
"The Cape"	1950	<u>Harper's Bazaar</u>
"My Brother's Second Funeral"	1950	<u>New Yorker</u>
"Bright and Morning"	1950	<u>Kenyon Review</u>
"A Master Time"	1950	<u>Atlantic Monthly</u>
"A Wife of Nashville"	1950	<u>New Yorker</u>
"Portrait"	1951	<u>Epoch</u>
"The Glass House"	1951	<u>Northern Review</u>
"That Lovely Green Boat"	1952	<u>Furioso</u>
"The Unborn Ghosts"	1952	<u>New Yorker</u>
"Wood Smoke"	1952	<u>Harper's Bazaar</u>
"The First Face"	1952	<u>New Yorker</u>
"Palo"	1952	<u>Tomorrow</u>
"The Traveler"	1952	<u>Harper's Magazine</u>
"The Letters"	1952	<u>Hudson Review</u>
"Evensong"	1952	<u>New-Story</u>

APPENDIX B (continued)

<u>Low-conflict stories</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Source</u>
"The Sense That in the Scene Delights"	1954	<u>Partisan Review</u>
"The Firebird"	1954	<u>Prairie Schooner</u>
"Apple Seed and Apple Thorn"	1954	<u>Mademoiselle</u>
"Gertrude and Sidney"	1954	<u>Sewanee Review</u>
"The Red Mountain"	1954	<u>Harper's Magazine</u>
"The Shorn Lamb"	1954	<u>New Yorker</u>
"The Fisherman from Chihuahua"	1955	<u>Paris Review</u>
"The Day of the Equinox"	1955	<u>New Mexico Quarterly</u>
"The Professor and the Poet"	1955	<u>Shenandoah</u>
"Yore"	1955	<u>Hudson Review</u>
"Bird Man"	1955	<u>Botteghe Oscure</u>
"Herman's Day"	1955	<u>New World Writing</u>
"Free the Canaries from Their Cages!"	1956	<u>Commentary</u>
"The Mexican Girl"	1956	<u>Paris Review</u>

APPENDIX C

Magazines which published stories appearing
in The Best American Short Stories 1947-1956

Number of stories from
the magazine during
the study period

Accent	6
Adventure	1
American Letters	1
American Mercury	2
Antioch Review	2
Atlantic Monthly	20
Armenian Review	1
Bard Review	1
Botteghe Oscure	1
Charm	2
Commentary	3
Common Ground	1
Cosmopolitan	4
Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine	2
Epoch	10
Esquire	1
Fantastic	1
Fantasy and Science Fiction	2
Foreground	1
'47--Magazine of the Year	3
Flair	1
Furioso	4

APPENDIX C. (continued)

<u>Magazines</u>	<u>Number of stories</u>
Good Housekeeping	6
Harper's Bazaar	13
Harper's Magazine	22
Hopkins Review	2
Hudson Review	7
Kansas Magazine	1
Kenyon Review	6
Ladies Home Journal	2
Mademoiselle	15
Mainstream	1
McCall's	1
New Campus Writing	1
New Mexico Quarterly Review	3
New Story	3
New World Writing	4
New Yorker	29
Northern Review	3
Pacific Spectator	1
Paris Review	4
Park East, Magazine of New York	1
Partisan Review	8
Prairie Schooner	4
Perspective	3

APPENDIX C (continued)

Magazines	Number of stories
Quarterly Review of Literature	2
Quarto	2
Queen's Quarterly	1
Quixote	2
Saturday Evening Post	1
Sewanee Review	4
Shenandoah	1
Southwest Review	2
Story	6
Tiger's Eye	1
Today's Woman	4
Tomorrow	8
Town and Country	2
University of Kansas City Review	6
Virginia Quarterly Review	8
Wake	1
Western Review	3
Woman's Day	2
Yale Review	4