

The best writing is always about truth. But in an age of misinformation, we don't listen to fact-checkers. Stories are more effective than logical arguments when attempting to change hearts and minds. Every day we hear the news and become desensitized; we read articles or write essays on social issues like gun violence, but these are less impactful than, for example, the story of a girl sitting in her high school class wondering if the sinister boy in the neighboring room has a plan to kill everyone. Stories are vicarious experiences. They entreat the reader to examine lifelike perspectives. I want to earn my MFA in creative writing to become a truth-teller; so I can do my very best job telling the truth.

I was ten years old when Sandy Hook occurred. I read those headlines and still got up to attend school each day, even after one of my peers accidentally tripped the intruder alarm. I was twelve when Eric Garner was killed, fifteen at the time of the Parkland shooting, and a high school senior during the bulk of the pandemic. Reporters and pundits pontificated on all these events endlessly, but nothing they said spoke to my experience. Instead, I gravitated to books such as Saunders' *Tenth of December*, Bradberry's *Fahrenheit 451*, Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, Ng's *Little Fires Everywhere*, and Adjei-Brenyah's *Friday Black*, veracity in various forms.

Chapman University would undoubtedly cultivate the truth in my writing. Your institution offers electives in screenwriting, a medium through which I have explored via classes at Film North in Minnesota, but strive to foster alongside my efforts in prose writing. I hope to learn about the crossovers between prose fiction, writing for film, and the adaptation process. Your program also holds a level of respect for both literary and speculative fiction, with a number of your faculty having written speculative fiction or mysteries alongside literary stories, and having hosted visiting authors such as Kim Stanley Robinson and Karen Joy Fowler. I likewise hope to bridge the gap between these disparate focuses.

One such prospective project of mine delves into the psyche of a protagonist whose incognizant mind is under the observation of systems at large. *Unsleeping Eyes* would involve an investigation of our sociological marriage to technology that actively profiles and deceives us, alongside an envisionment of what life would be like if even our thought patterns were under constant surveillance. With writing as my greatest pastime, I seek to explore professorship as a profession, to investigate additional writing avenues offered in the proximity of Los Angeles, and strive to turn one of my projects into a publishable book.

When it comes to teaching, I have gained relevant skills from my position as prose editor for NOTA, the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire's literary magazine. I have sought and gained department permission to take additional advanced-level workshop courses beyond the normal allotted number for further experience in the discursive feedback process. I am also extremely productive, having—from high school and into college—written three and a half novels (among shorter works) outside of my classes.

I hope to reach cross-generational audiences who can empathize with disenfranchised groups and young people who've had a difficult time growing up after 9/11, through shootings, wars, the pandemic, AI encroachment, misinformation, and technological addictions—having all of what was supposed to be *the best years of their lives* clogged up with depressing, heavy, real-world and personal events. Solutions come from empathy and perspective-taking. They come from stories. Americans can stand at odds with one another for centuries and never move an inch, but when we sit down to read for ourselves again, we learn. We connect with each other, and we feel something. We no longer feel numb.