



Call for Creative Work
Creative Manifesto, *Translating Chronic Pain*

Since people living with persistent pain

often suffer **invisibility** and struggle for **legitimacy** and credibility;

since long-term pain is often wrongly assumed to be a **temporary and unnatural** state;

since pain experience is **diverse** and must be understood **intersectionally**
(through interweaved categories such as gender, race, sexuality, and class);

since pain's **CAUSES** can be cryptic, multiple, personal, social, environmental, transgenerational, and hidden;

since pain **science** is neither widely understood or well-funded, and requires wider dissemination;

since pain experience **exceeds the language** of medicalisation;

since pain **undercuts illusions of human autonomy** and self-sufficiency,

showing that all people are **vulnerable and interdependent**;

since pain may impair the ability to **work**, in which case those living with it may be
wrongly seen as not living a 'useful' life;

since **witnessing pain** makes profound claims on – and poses challenges for –
carers, family members, and healthcare practitioners;

and since chronic pain affects **every dimension** of life ...

... I call for creative work which engages these **invisibilities**,
these lacunae, these intersections –
moments in public or in shadows, in loneliness or connection.

Yet - pain experience may not lend itself to established forms of either
illness narration or survivorship story:

the experience may **lack an ending**, where resolution is reached;

it may **lack a beginning**, its causes hidden;

it may break the **positivity imperative** –

to be hopeful, a warrior, a survivor, a **meaning-finder**;

it may be **incommunicable**, resisting representation,

yet may simultaneously **engender language**;

it may be a story not (only) of a **personal** journey, but also of wider **social** calamities
and inequalities, both contemporary and transgenerational;

it may resist plot, instead being a thing of **fragments, glimpses, and moments**.

So I call for

'flash' illness writing: short-form creative work

- which expresses a **moment** or fragment of experience of persistent pain;
- which takes either the **perspective** of a person experiencing the pain or the perspective of a witness (carer or healthcare professional);
 - which captures **any dimension** of experience –
physical, emotional, social, economic, institutional, medical, spiritual, or creative;
- which communicates in **any emotional register**, positive or negative;
- and which can be **shared** and used by others to try and communicate the vivid, contradictory, and diverse realities of living with chronic pain.

The parameters:

- **short-form creative writing**, from 5 to 150 words,
in any form (e.g. prose or poetry; autobiography, fiction, or a blend);
- optionally can be accompanied by a **single image** (photograph or artwork)
- can also take the form of a **single comic 'panel'** or **short sequence**, to fit on a single screen;
 - the fragments/moments/glimpses to be shared online with attribution,
under **Creative Commons Licensing (BY-NC) 4.0**.
 - authors can choose to be **anonymous**, **pseudonymous** or **named**.

To submit work, please visit <http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/translating-pain/submit>

For further information, please visit <http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/translating-pain>

Sara Wasson, *Translating Chronic Pain: Creative Manifesto* (2017),
<http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/translating-pain>

