

Creative Commentary: *The Line*

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Abstract

The piece, A Different Space, is a five-page spread written in the style of a magazine feature article. The article gives a focused profile on Elizabethtown College's Bowers Writers House and its director, Jesse Waters. It explains what a Writers House is, what functions it serves, and what type of speakers it hosts. Through Waters and Jessica Lowenthal, director of the Kelly Writers House at the University of Pennsylvania, the profile also offers a comparison of a House in a relatively rural area to one in a metropolitan area. It goes over the struggles and successes of Bowers, in addition to telling stories of past speakers. The layout for the piece was done using InDesign and some of the piece had to be cut for space. The presentation itself goes over how it was decided what to cut out.

The Line is short film about a woman who is looking to buy a house in a white neighborhood. She faces trouble from the clerk even before she has the chance to speak to the agent. The clerk denies her pleasant service and constantly neglects her place in the line by putting other people before her. In the end when the woman is explaining that she is financially eligible to buy a house her request is denied by the real estate agent herself.

I have been watching films for as long as I can remember, and my love for movies is evident in the number of how many I have seen: close to two thousand. From an early age my parents (both poetry

and short story writers) have instilled the art of storytelling in me. So, naturally when it came down to it I started writing short stories and poems to help communicate my thoughts better. In the light of events that have taken place in the past few years, my focus has shifted from writing fictional poems and stories to realistic fiction.

The idea of "The Line" was an ongoing conversation on campus after attending the "courageous conversation" hosted by Karen Rice and led by Tyler Cook. My passion for writing a story about racial discrimination in society took a flourishing turn. I wrote out a rough draft and kept doing research on how the African Americans were treated in real estate business, especially if the area was mostly

devoured by White Americans. One of them being the incidents that occurred was 1957 William and Daisy Myers in Levittown, Pennsylvania. They bought a house in a mainlywhite neighborhood, after being harassed and discriminated against Daisy Myers pressed charges and took the drapes off the northern states racism and injustice. Stories like this still happen but are passive aggressive, “carefully handled.” The story I am trying to tell is rather microaggressive in its tone. The shooting and actors were from around the campus. Perhaps the most challenging part of this film was writing a story from a African American woman’s point of view. As a Pakistani woman who has lived in U.S. for less than a decade I haven’t experienced racism for near as long. I spoke to women of different generations and ask them about their experiences. Discrimination based on race, gender, and color (darker skin) were evident all across the board.

Then came casting, the film demanded a darker skin woman. I wanted to show those black women are on the bottom of this “privilege pyramid” even black men are treated better. Having Sophia Desir, an entrepreneur in making, play the role of the woman in story was delightful. Another detail I’d like to point out is that none of the characters have been given a name. This was done for a reason, my friends on campus who shared their testimonies of racial discrimination on campus chose to stay anonymous and the use of a name in this story would have made it farther from reality I believe.

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