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OUR VOICES

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VOL. IX

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*“I will not have my life
narrowed down. I will not bow
down to somebody else’s whim
or to someone else’s ignorance.”*

[bell hooks]

OUR VOICES

in collaboration with

the 12th annual
DIVERISTY MONOLOGUES

Dear Reader,

We're often taught at a young age to ignore differences. We conflate difference with disagreement, so we start to forget. We forget about these things that are integral to our identity, as if they don't matter.

But they do.

Because when we forget to acknowledge each other's differences, we forget to acknowledge how those differences have shaped how we navigate the world. We tend to live in a way that ignores difference for the sake of "avoiding conflict." What if we didn't?

What if we noticed, and honored those differences, understanding how they've affected each of us? What comes next? What would we see?

This journal is an approach to difference that asks you to confront perspectives you may not be familiar with. The artists and authors published in this journal are often sharing personal experiences that take bravery and resolve to share, and we hope you give each piece the due attention and care they deserve.

This—difference, sharing, empathy, and more—is what Our Voices is about. We hope it means just as much to you as it does to us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mie Nyz". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mie" and last name "Nyz" written in a single, connected stroke.

Marianne Nacanaynay

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Asian and Black Solidarity: Hmong-Americans for Black Lives

[Tia Moua]

When creating this art piece, I was inspired by the “Black Lives Matter” artwork by Monyee Chau. As an Asian American woman, I knew I wanted to show my support and solidarity with the Black community, especially with our Black students on campus. By Asians and Asian Americans showing solidarity with the Black community and organizing together, it resists the dominant American society, which seeks to keep marginalized communities from working together. After the murder of George Floyd in May 2020, I recognized my own complacency in fighting against racism and white supremacy and that I had biases and anti-Blackness to unlearn. I recognized the fact that there is still anti-Blackness within the Asian community that needs

to be unlearned to prevent further harm. The term “Asians For Black Lives” has been used to unite Black and Asian communities against oppressive forces. On social media, I saw many Hmong Americans and other Asian Americans at BLM protests, fighting alongside Black folks for liberation, which inspired me to create this art piece. I realized the power of uniting for the purpose of fighting for collective liberation. These images reminded me of how there is a history of Black and Asian solidarity in the U.S., yet it is largely erased. For example, there was Black support for the Filipino community during the Philippine-American War; Asian American women activists’ work, such as by Yuri Kochiyama and Grace Lee

Boggs, in Black liberation and abolition; and Black opposition to the Vietnam War. Also, there was the Third World Liberation Front, in which BSU leaders at San Francisco State University urged students of color to form their own coalition, the Third World Liberation Front, and together they battled the administration, demanding reforms such as the hiring of minority faculty members. This art piece is an acknowledgement of the long history of Black and Asian solidarity in the U.S., despite the fact that white supremacy sneakily tries to keep marginalized groups oppressed by keeping them from mobilizing to fight this system. The names added around the yin and yang symbol were all the Black folks in the U.S. who

were killed by law enforcement in 2020, gathered from <https://sayevery.name/>. I created this visual representation of the people killed to show we must do better as a society to fight anti-Blackness. I wanted this piece to represent a goal I have for society to ensure no more Black folks are killed due to police brutality, racism, and white supremacy.

I added the quote by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., “No one is free until we are all free” because I wanted to send the message that everyone’s liberation is interconnected. At the bottom of the piece, it says “Black Lives Matter” in Hmong, which is the language my family and I speak. Hmong people have also been harmed by the systems of racism and white supremacy. For instance,

Hmong people have been harmed by the “Model Minority Myth,” which lumps all Asians together and makes it appear that all Asians are wealthy, well-educated, obedient, and law-abiding. But, my parents are immigrants who escaped the Secret War in Laos in the 1970s and grew up in poverty, as did many other Hmong immigrants. Asian Americans have the largest wealth and educational disparities among all racial groups, so lumping us together is very harmful and ignores important issues we face because of racism and white supremacy. Also, similar to the Black community, Southeast Asians have been disproportionately harmed by policing and racial profiling in comparison to white folks. This art piece represents how our struggles and liberation are intertwined. Asian and Black

communities’ histories and struggles have always been intertwined. Our collective liberation has always been dependent on our unity. Looking at history, Asian and Black communities have been the strongest when we have attempted to dismantle white supremacy together. We must all seek to liberate Black lives, and in doing so, we are able to liberate ourselves and all of society. I hope this piece inspires people to unlearn anti-Blackness, have courageous conversations regarding racism, learn how to become a better ally, and stand in solidarity with the Black community.



I See No Changes

[Sydney Rains]

Tupac has been one of my favorite rappers for as long as I could remember. Funnily enough, my mom was the one who introduced me to his music. I have many memories of jamming out to Tupac with my mom in the car. She even passed her copy of Tupac's "All Eyez On Me" album onto me when I got my first car, which had no aux input, only a CD player. I listened to that album for months.

I have always admired Tupac's musical versatility. His discography ranges from catchy, pop rap to songs with really raw, powerful messages. Tupac brings an important layer of beauty, vulnerability, and social awareness to the genre of gangster rap. During the summer of 2020, after the murder of George Floyd, I was doing some

thinking. I thought of Tupac and the way his music highlights social injustices like police brutality. Then, the idea for this piece emerged.

This piece is meant to represent America's chronic issues regarding systemic racism, bias, and violence. Our country has been battling these issues for far too long. I wanted to demonstrate that in my art by bringing in Tupac's lyrics from his song "Changes" (1998) and connecting them to George Floyd's tragic plea in 2020, "I can't breathe". I hoped that my art would encourage others to take the initiative to educate themselves on these topics. More importantly, I wanted them to realize that change is imperative, and that it's up to all of us to make those changes.

"I SEE NO **CHANGES**, ALL I SEE ARE RACIST **FACES**
MISPLACED HATE MAKES DISGRACE TO RACES
WE UNDER, I WONDER WHAT IT TAKES TO MAKE THIS
ONE **BETTER PLACE**, LET'S **ERASE THE WASTED.**"



- TUPAC SHAKUR
1992

Little Family [Tanzania, 2019]

[Hannah Richter]

Realizing how many hardships the COVID-19 pandemic had caused for many families across the world, I decided to choose this photo to represent how much family truly means in life.

In 2019 (before the outbreak of COVID-19), I traveled to Africa for a month-long trip to explore the wildlife and to learn about the different cultures in Kenya and Tanzania. While in Tanzania in the city of Arusha, I came across this group of children (seen in the photo). Even though this was the first time that I had met these children, it felt as though I had known them for years. These children were the most loving, compassionate, and happiest children that I had ever met. Knowing that these children live in poverty and yet still prevail with love, has left an everlasting mark on my heart.

After the children and I were done talking, I hugged each of them and before I said goodbye, I was able to capture their beautiful smiles.

To give love and to feel loved is one of the greatest feelings a human can experience. By blood or by choice, family are those who love and support you in any condition. The pandemic has helped me realize that all I need in life and all I will ever need in life, is my family. This epiphany has helped me appreciate this unique gift of life, and has reassured me to live life not only to the absolute fullest, but also to live life together, with one another, as a family.





A Nation of Plum Pits

[Asha Douglas]

The rocks you throw
strike my skull and
shatter. The shards
sink into my stomach,
transformed into candied
plum pits. I stomp my
soles into blood-stained
soil, and those stones drop
deep in the ground, planting
seeds that spread a legacy
into the trees of my tribe and
make it clear that
I am meant to be here.

A Prayer for Orphans

[Jasper Leung-Chau]

As we fold our hands and bow our heads, we ask dear Lord be beside
their beds.

When they wake in the morning, guide them through the day.
Lead good people to care for them soon and always.

Send over parents to cherish them like you.
Let them feel valued and even go to school!
Grant them love in a safe and secure home.
Embraced in someone's arms, never again to feel alone.

May they see through a parent's eyes, they each have great worth.
Your Plan for them, a new life, a generous rebirth.

Provide O Lord, a kind smiling mother.
Maybe include some fun sisters and brothers.
Provide O Lord, a strong, caring dad,
who lifts them up to the sky, never again to feel sad.

Abandoned no more, give them your Grace.
Help us all to "see" Lord, see your Light in each face.
Give them strength to carry on, till that miraculous day,
when they get chosen to belong in a beautiful new place.

Send resources to orphanages, foster care, and group homes.
Let us all know real love, let You be known.
Most of all, send help, work through people like us.
Hear our prayers dear Lord, in heaven above.

Amen

Addict

[Tara Hollander]

I open the report card
And shove one more pill down
my throat.
Feel it loosen each string in my
stomach,
Undo the knots of unease,
Travel up the crossword of
veins—
Each letter
Lightening my head with a dose
of euphoria.

My parents told me they were
proud.
Like one long hit,
Filling my lungs,
Spreading to my fingers and
toes.
Making me forget
The pounding inside my head.

President's list.
I'm already buzzing,
I feel free,
I am free,
I undulate to the rhythm of the
blood passing my ears.

Such a sweet,
Sweet high.
The praise,
Soothes me into numbness.

You think I don't deserve this?
A few unadulterated moments?
I am a slave,
Giving you everything—
My worth,
My time,
My life!

It is too late to call morality.
So, clap at my detriment,
Award me for this destruction.

High functioning addict.
I can feel it,
Crumbling inside.
A foundation upon a pebble,

Beautiful words come at a cost,
And you, dear, are my dealer.

Little White Flowers

[Tara Hollander]

They love pearls
And hoops
And whole things.

They love smiles
And straight
Teeth.

Oh,
How they love little white
flowers,
All the way around.

They love clean skin
And slim bodies
On pretty girls.

They love children's books
And happily ever afters.

They would not love the
creativity,
The expressive,
The light.

They refused to see color,

Chose grey over beauty,
Chose easy over right.
All for their square boxes
Of half lives, lies,
And little white flowers
All the way around.

Black and Blue

[Jasper Leung-Chau]

A poem dedicated to the Police Officers of America and Black Lives Matter

Black and Blue, I see you.
Black and Blue, can you see
me?
when you patrol the beat,
protest on the streets
with heavy hearts and deafening
drums
listing atrocities, wrongs and
faults
pointing fingers, committing
assaults
on minds, bodies, flesh and
spirits
on young and old
The air is cold...

Can you see beyond the badge?
Can you see beneath the skin?
Through the angry eyes, the
hurt within.
Pride thinks it sees
but can't move from "me" to
"we"
I see you but you can't see me.
Stuck in the past, grasping for
power

Intergenerational innocence
pass down sour
Ideologies, self-interests,
agendas
Versions of "what's right" kept
front and center.
Blocking sight, keeping us
locked
Trapped in harmful
justifications, mirages, lost

You are not all that different,
Black and Blue
We live on the same earth, in
the blue lagoon
Keep our world peaceful
Share properly
Honour each other
Pass it on clean
Remove the pollutants: racism
and greed.

Authors Note: The objective of this poem is to encourage us to remember our common humanity and unity, over differences that ignite polarity and discord. This is not about minimizing or ignoring differences however, but to refocus our attention to a higher consciousness, a higher and deeper spiritual state. One that transcends personal differences in identity. Please consider this famous quote by poet Rumi to further reflect:

*Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing,
there is a field. I'll meet you there.
When the soul lies down in that grass,
the world is too full to talk about.
Ideas, language, even the phrase 'each other'
doesn't make any sense*

Rise above the politics that
make us all fall
Partner together. Let our
children stand tall
History speaks volume but
release the past
Build a future of respect,
relations that last

Black and Blue, I see you
Black and Blue, can you see
me?

It's me: Truth
Can you believe?
The face of selfless love, the
heart of mercy.

Some may disagree, roll their
eyes, ignore
Keep nursing that hate,
negativity, scorn
Where will that lead us?
What legacy do we leave?
Consider now, what and how
you voice.

Be humble I ask. Be kind I
plead.

Go be my hands and be my feet
to hug and uphold, to serve and
free
Each person deserves dignity.
Go be my side and be my tears
that shed for you and know
your fears.
I hear your prayers, understand
your sorrows
Draw from my hope,
forgiveness will follow

Black and Blue, I see you.
Black and Blue, Come, see me.
Look deeper,
in every living being dwells the
Almighty.
Reach further and Care for
Humanity.

June 30, 2020

For My Younger Self and All Children of Immigrants

[Tia Moua]

Grandma called, “los pab kuv,”
“come help”
Sun beating down on us on that
bright day
The heat of their words will
make you yelp
Being a brown daughter is what
keeps me at bay

Pulling weeds, dandelions, for
hours on end
They’re nasty, dirty, yellow
things
That’s what they say about us
now, my friend
We pulled them ‘till sweat
dripped down swings

My dad called, “Why aren’t you
in school?” “Grandma asked me
to pull weeds”
I lost my language through
imperial rule
“Pulling you from your Hmong
roots is what you need”

I meet my kindergarten
teacher’s warm smile Feel
the judgment from my peers,
“you’re late” It’s the last day of
school for a while
Yellow stains on my hands are a
heavy weight

My fingernails still packed with
dirt
Staring down at my yellow and
brown stains
My hands are sore and they hurt
A thousand cuts of racial slurs
are my growing pains

“Chink!” “Dog-eater!”
“Chinese girl!”
These are the things people will
say
Too many insults that they will
hurl
I wish to go back in time so I
could play

They’ll blame us for a virus
A virus that does not

discriminate
6 women in Atlanta shot dead
who look like us
Are dead people not enough to
show there's hate?

My teacher asks, "Would you
like a snack?" I'm ashamed of
my brown hands
There is so much I'll have to
unpack
So for now, how about let's just
dance?

Now I'm at the sink and begin
to scrub
The yellow and brown stains off
my hands
I want to wash my hands white
to get into the club Maybe then
I'd have a chance

I thought, if only my hands
were clean I'd be more
desirable and beautiful
This brown skin is why they
demean

They can't see why we need a
life more colorful

Exhausted. Heated. Sweaty.
Anxious.
My blood will be boiling from
the heat outside Smothered by
racist remarks. Eyes curious
Like I'm a strange, foreign
object with no pride

"Where are you from?" they
ask
"You speak English so well,"
they say
As if it is not a slap on the mask
I'll just keep on smiling anyway

You must have thick skin
Things people say will make
you groan Learn to embrace the
body you're in
Just know, you're not in this
fight alone

Ghost Train Tracks: Ode to a Degenerative Spine

[Sasha Dailey]

Railroad tie holding so tight
Limiting movement
Making it just right

Along a track you go
Driving mercilessly to some
new abode
Feeling the signals
Reading the mood, the weather,
the route

How can you hold?
Speed is gaining
Land is shaking
A roaring avalanche

A sinking mood
Thrashing the air
Winding down the notion
Disaster withstood

Such lies
Such deceit
A rail bent and gnarled at a
train's feet
Wheels still crawling to midair
halt

A flame is lit
Swirling about

Quickly!
Water!
Where are the passengers?
The workers?
The conductor?
Train's been abandoned before
being torn asunder
Not a log
Not an entry one
Where did this train come
from?

Spilling, dowsing, snuffing it
out
Endless hours invested
Many a shout
Crisis averted?
Fire contained?

Truly a disaster
Avoided in vain

Who made it go?
To what purpose?

Railroad ties lay shattered in
pieces
Must repair
Must hurry before another
leaves the station
That roundhouse

Quickly breathing
Repairs in progress
Hurriedly
Track forever under
construction
Teetering into a canyon

For if no log could find answers
at this ungodly hour
How are we to know when the
next train track will devour?

For when does the next ghost
train leave?

Such a phantom
A specter
Resulting in unnecessary
disaster
Heralding resilience
Heralding pain
Technology helps unless it is
strained
To the brink of operation
Were there no messages?
Were no telegraphs live wired?

Rolling up the hoses
Hoisting equipment
Smoke hazes air

love in its entirety

[Lillian Piel]

i consider myself lucky
lucky that i grew up in a bubble,
a safe haven where i never had
to worry
about anything, really
but every time I return home, i
lock a piece of myself away
i wish family was synonymous
with unconditional acceptance
and understanding
though no matter how badly
i wish that was true, that isn't
always the reality
i've spent the last five years
trying to make sense of who my
heart can love
what's in a label, anyway?
empowering yet confining,
more for the benefit of those
who don't fit the category of
"other"
it grows tiring when home is a
place where i worry if it is safe
to unlock all the pieces of my
heart
because even though i fall in
love with the person, regardless

of gender,
which i learned to love about
myself,
that doesn't make the fear in the
back of my mind go away
that when i choose to tell
family, be it by blood or by
choice,
their love for me might not be
the same anymore
despite my own expansive
capacity to love someone in
their entirety

Me Too

[Alexander McCurdy]

Content Warning: Mentions of sexual assault & suicidal thoughts

I remember the moment
when I didn't tell you to stop.
Words like "no" didn't leave my
mouth.

None of the less,
you knew what I wanted.
I wanted to do something else.

I mentioned it not once,
but multiple times.
You knew I was stressed,
but continued to climb.
All you cared about was
pleasuring yourself,
nevermind that I wanted lunch.

Now
I'll never feel heard
no matter how much I say.
I'll always want more
because you took so much
away.
Some days I'll feel empty
as if I have nothing to give.
Everything I am
tainted by your unwanted gifts.

Other days I'll feel broken
like I shouldn't live.
Going through the motions
like a zombie coming back
from the dead.
I wonder sometimes
if I'm just a burden,
too many scars
to ever be normal.

To you it was nothing,
but for me,
now I'm haunted.
Just another reason
to never trust anybody.
I wonder sometimes
if I'll ever be happy
with someone that isn't...
toxic.

Messed Up Mind

[Ariana Chin]

I've been busy wasting my life,
been busy counting the time.
Waiting for the day I can look at myself,
and find something that I like.

Too many times have I drowned in my cries,
And too many times have the little white lies,
hurt me.
Creating deep, deep lines.

My mask still on, my scars still here thousands
and millions of mounting fears as I struggle to
keep up in the race,
with strings of blood rolling down my face.

Deep dark voids and shattered dreams,
I sit and smile but inside I scream,
Help me.
Please.

Let them walk all over me,
I laugh and wave, but no they don't see,
The hidden pain that goes and flows,
Finding its way from my head to toes.

Slowly burning I feel the sun rise,
The warm embrace, the tears will they dry
And yet it all just falls the same,
broken pieces, here I remain.

Mutiny

[Tara Hollander]

She said if you had a cloned
child of yourself,
You would not like her.
And I didn't hate the words
But remembered only those
closest to you can cut deep.

When my sisters debated on the
best surrogate
They said not me,
I'd be on suicide watch.

I wonder how they know so
much
But understand so little.

"Just tell him you're gay."
I wish I could.

I don't respond to texts often,
But when I didn't respond to
that one
They thought I was dead.

Every time I fight for agency,
Finally convince my brain that I

have some control
Outside of the castle I build
everyday,
I am destroyed from the inside
out.

Right Isn't Always Right

[Jasper Leung-Chau]

Being right isn't always right.
If to win means the need to
fight.

To enforce that another's ways
are wrong
Making people feel small like
they don't belong.
Unless they agree precisely
with our views,
yield to our beliefs, bias and
skewed.

Sometimes the higher path is to
let go.

With people, it's often better to
journey slow.

Meet them wherever they are at,
without insistence, judgment, or
a list of facts.

With humility, an open mind to
learn,
and a respectful curiosity that's
genuinely years
to deeply connect,
as opposed to correct;
where our paths cross and
intersect.

At a common place called the
human heart
that beats in unison, not apart.

A central place without pride or
greed.

Where I see you and you see
me.

Each as imperfect human
beings,
continuously trying towards a
new beginning.

Let us first seek to understand
even if an agreement is not
where we initially land.

The Creator made us both,
for a mystery no one fully
knows.

What matters is that I want to
be your friend,
so please take my hand, let us
not hurt again.

When we are ready, you can
lead.

Sowing trust and a stronger
form of mustard seed.

Slowly sprouting new fields of
wheat
where our future generations
gather, drum, and eat.
Sitting in circles listening to
tales from the past
and the collective pain is finally
healed at last.
We will not forget the hard and
difficult lessons,
but still find joy,
cherishing life's beauty and
simple blessings.

Dedicated to all Peoples of Canada.

Oro

[Jessica Hernandez]

I cannot hide my culture.
It is embellished in my entire
body.
From the way I make my
chongo,
to the way I eat with my hands.
I cannot hide my culture.
It is in the way my hoops move,
in the way I sing, in the way I
rhyme.
I am covered in gold, I am
covered in culture.
Covered with indigenous
wisdom,
covered with the laughter of my
survivors.
Covered in dark skin that makes
the elite feel challenged.
Fighting for my liberty in the
language of my colonizers,
And humming abuelitas songs
for comfort.
I am not yet defeated for I am
covered in gold.
Remaining stable, even in the
heat.

The Spectrum of Love

[Evelyn Elston]

If love exists in the senses,
then we sensitives are the
translators
of the languages communicated
between the snow and our
boots,
and rain trailing against beams
of streetlamps.

Maybe we find God
in that particular periwinkle
that runs a gradient banner
across the post-sunset skyline.

True also that we find
romance in cheesy pasta,
or in goldfish crackers,
thinking ourselves clever, for
who else but us would think to
look?

We, the keepers of a secret
affection
hide it in the ceramic of hot tea
mugs
and in the pockets of flannel
sweatpants.

If love exists in the flash of a
camera,
if love exists in unchipped nail
polish,
in skirt fabric, seawater just up
to the ankles,
if love exists in any ordinary
thing,
we autistics, the lucky few,
find it everywhere all at once.

This Right of Way

[Abigail Lennah Marquez]

to cross is to divide at the
right of way.

tama.

when a man on the corner
says “go home,”

i flash a cautious smile

and draw my arms together at
the front.

this is the first mistake:
to draw an X marked no,
standing off and away,
mistaken for makeshift target
practice. my mouth begins
before—

“you w****, we have enough
prostitutes here.”

hindi tama yan

this is not a friend, no.

show your hand and do
not call bluff. nothing
hides under the amorphous
clothing clinging to this
undersized figure except
phone and keys steady.
sir, I am not even twenty, but

to try to speak is the second
mistake.

to cross is to multiply anger.
i have done everything right.
mother’s advice screams

tama, tama

but somehow my posture,
my figure, myself yells
wrong and somehow bows
infantilized to a white
banner.

“you brought this virus, go
back to f***ing asia.” the
lights flash green but i cross
the street pooling red against
the pavement.

my cheeks steam from failing
my roots. to fall silent is to
surrender complicit. this is the
third mistake.

it took so many years to build
courage

in this identity as an filipino-
american woman short in
stature, shrill in voice

only to submit by the
marionette of his words.

to cross is to move as an
immigrant

ragging barriers a thousand
miles across the sea. this
place is home, and my veins
still bleed
red, white, and blue, times two,
but all you scream at feet away
is for

a brown girl to sell her life
for White Man, for are not all
Asian Women reduced to

this scapegoat commodity? here
she always lays, forced to gag
on the excuses and desires

thrust upon her until she
transforms to a delicacy to taunt
because of her skin,

for what excuses can modeled
meekness make? her arms fall
slack throat trained by society
to submit with a whimper,
mouth strapped down

tama na, please

growth in life sharpens
tenderness to daggers even
without White Man.

i am still learning about my
limbs, and never know if i can

cont. This Right of Way

cross the street to board the
bus or smile to others passing
the streets without his residue
clinging to my stomach

agitated as he wheeled across
the street in a motor chair to
reduce me down

but i reckon for certain

to cross the street with
daggers for eyes and
sharpened teeth coated with
bitter demure will make
others yield for standing
here undisturbed without the
demotion of my
skin, my womanhood, the body
containing her— that's my
right.

White Passing

[Sophia McKinstry]

The other day I made a hurried
comment about how I was white
passing.

My mother looked at me
shocked,
disturbed almost.

“No, you don’t look white!” she
said.

“Yes, I do,” I replied.

Her eyes widened,
her face dropped.

My Filipina mother, unsure if I
was trying to hide, or ignore, or
leave behind my Asian identity.
Being mixed is hard.

But the biggest thing I’ve
learned is that I don’t need to act
like the ½ Asian I carry inside of
me is non-existent, because it’s
a huge part of who I am.

Whenever my mother shows me
her favorite pork adobo recipe,
or cooks tinola for me when I’m
sick,
or takes me to get ensaimadas
from the food truck at the park,

she is sharing a part of her
heritage with me.

And so,

Now I am Filipina, and I am
proud

and my mother’s smile lights up
a room when she looks at me



[ALLUG] Campus Safety and Communication

[Red Kwenda]

TO: Gonzaga Students
FROM: Al Yousis Whitman, Diversity Incident Responder
SUBJECT: Update on Tuesday's Incident in Lincoln Resource Center
DATE: September 17, 2021

Dear Students, Gonzaga
Colleagues, and Families:

On Tuesday at approximately 4:15 PM, an adult male from the local community, not affiliated with Gonzaga University, stood just outside the door of the Lincoln Resource Center in Hemmingson Center. He was acting in a concerning way and yelling at students inside. The individual did not display a weapon, and student interns were quick to act, shutting the door and locking it. The individual then began slowly kicking the door, causing it to crack slightly at the bottom.

The individual left Hemmingson and walked toward St. Aloysius Church, continuing to yell at people around him who were observing what was happening. Campus Security officers responded quickly to an area just north of College Hall and were able to make contact with the individual and his parents who had arrived on the scene. Campus Security officers recognized the individual as someone known to them who is dealing with mental health challenges. Upon arriving, the officers quickly de-escalated the situation and were able to assist the parents in getting the

individual to leave safely in their vehicle.

In light of the Lincoln Center incident that occurred earlier this week, many of you have reached out with direct, honest, and very thoughtfully worded concerns and recommendations about building and classroom security, and also insisting upon safety plans that are responsive and especially sensitive to the needs of LGB faculty, staff and students. We also recognize that the timing and content of our communications have caused confusion and concern, which has adversely impacted your learning and being fully present in your day-to-day lives. Thank you for this candid feedback.

At this time, I want to share more information about actions that are being undertaken.

While we would normally only offer nominal responses to incidents involving identity, enough of our cisgender heterosexual faculty, students, and staff have reached out to us expressing their discomfort with existing in a space where they can hear homophobic/transphobic slurs directed at other people. In light of this, we will be increasing campus security campus-wide in order to make those members of our campus feel safe in their daily activities on campus.

In the coming days, an officer with CSPS will be reaching out to faculty and staff in an effort to coordinate and offer classroom/workspace safety planning. The officer will be reaching out first to faculty and staff who identify as LGB so that the officer might best

cont. [ALLUG] Campus Safety and Communication

tell these individuals how to avoid such incidents in the future, such as removing LGB affirming paraphernalia from doors and rooms, as well as making sure to dress in ways that do not attract further violence to our campus.

While many of you have asked to see consequences for the person involved, we must remind you to be patient with the individual as they were suffering undisclosed mental health issues, and we do not want to be accused of discrimination for treating him differently than we would regular people. We would also point out that – as the individual reminded us on Tuesday – the Pope himself has referred to same-sex marriage as a sin, and so we are legally, morally, and financially bound to honor his freedom of speech,

as we cannot punish him for acting based on the directives of the Vatican. In writing this letter, we are taking an incredible risk as it might appear that we are choosing sides, something we have been expressly forbidden by our board of trustees from openly doing. As such, this will be the first and last communication about LGB-related incidents on campus.

We are requesting that Gonzaga faculty, staff, and students download and familiarize themselves with the new PEACE Guardian smartphone app, which allows you to make a call to CSPS or a 911 call in two clicks, in the event that you see a suspicious-looking person on campus. If you have concerns about how this app will affect Black students – and Black

men in particular – please call or email the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, who we will promptly ignore. Also, just a reminder that if any students need support, CSPS is available to chauffeur around campus those who feel safer in the back of a squad car than they do on the streets.

We believe the above positive steps will help create a safer campus, but we realize these steps are only an initial response, and a more engaged campus conversation is needed. Again, please submit your concerns to the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, from where your concerns will be compiled into a single report that will be placed in File 13, where we keep all reports about negative incidents on campus. Your input is essential as we

seek to understand who knows how safe this campus really is so that we may forget their concerns when marketing to prospective students, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds.

I am grateful to be part of this community that advocates for its members and is willing to speak up when our approach or response needs to adjust. We are hearing your comments about incident response and communication processes, though we are admittedly doing so through noise-canceling headphones. Your candid feedback has been helpful in identifying the issues we want to ignore. I hope you will join us in ignoring these problems together.

Most sincerely,
Al Yousis Whitman
Diversity Incident Responder

Bruised Fruit

[Red Kwenda]

When he came into my office, he called himself a tangerine. I don't remember what he really was, so seared in my mind was that final image of him after I had finished my work.

The Tangerine asked for a simple procedure.

"I would like to be made pure again," he said. I questioned him on how he would like to become pure, as there are many methods of purifying the body.

"You are an expert of fruits and vegetables," he said. "When fruit becomes bruised, you cut away the skin. I would like you to cut away my bruised skin."

"And where is the bruise?"

He looked at me questioningly. "Didn't you ask yourself what

business I would have coming into a place of agriculture? Didn't you see the mother grasp her child tight and pull him close when I walked past? My skin is bruised, dark and evil, and because of this no one can see the rich pure fruit beneath."

I didn't tell him that this bruise was genetic, that he would be cursed with it forever. But then I looked at him again. Was he really willing to shed the skin of his parents, of his ancestors, to cut himself off from them?

"We are a barrel of bad fruits," he said when I expressed my doubts. "We were bruised by waves, by ropes, and by shackles. Everyone else was afraid to do what needed to be done, but not me. I would like to be absolved of my bruises."

I nodded and told him to lie down on my desk. The Tangerine stripped himself down to his feet, on which he left his socks. "I get cold feet," he explained.

I picked up my favorite paring knife, the Adolf-Washington, a knife so sharp that fruits and vegetables wouldn't even know they were being peeled. But the Tangerine stopped me, handing me his own blade, a dull dirty butterknife.

"Use this. I got it from a dinner I once attended. I was forced to confront my bruises, and I took some silverware when I realized what I needed to do."

I washed my hands, asking him how he became aware of his condition.

"This was a welcoming dinner for bruised fruits and vegetables, though I suppose any fruits would have been welcome there." He smiled, though I didn't get the joke. "The dinner was supposed to make us feel better about being as bruised as we were, to let us know that our bruises are not our fault. Of course, I know this to be false."

I nodded at the fact.

"I had arrived before everyone else, so I had to wait a bit for them to come. But when they did, I noticed a pattern: as they filed in, none of the other fruits and vegetables sat next to me. It wasn't as if they hadn't seen my table, because I caught many of their eyes, those big, bulging eyes and sneering, twisted mouths, and I saw them sit at tables with the less

cont. Bruised Fruit

bruised. At first, I was angry, thinking I was experiencing some sort of discrimination. But then I realized that their response was only natural. I was bruised, and like the proverbial bad apple I exist only to spoil the bunch.

“When I knew what I had to do, I began to peel the bruises away, so determined was I to prove my worth.” He showed me the back of his hand, pulpy flesh exposed and drying. “But I realized I needed a professional. You’ve been peeling fruit for years, and when I read your advertisement in the newspaper, I knew you were the man for the job.”

I told him I had never peeled a fruit like him before.

“I am just like any fruit,” he said.

“Purify me, as you would them.”

And so I did.

I began at his thighs, marveling at the structure and power of their physicality. So in awe was I that I was unable to penetrate the skin for several minutes, for I had underestimated both the thickness of his skin and the dullness of his blade. For a moment, I considered using a tenderizing method such as boiling to help remove the rind, knowing that that helps loosen the skin of fruits from their flesh. Nevertheless, I was able to pierce the bruised rind, and on doing so I was sprayed with a gentle red mist, a sweet smell not unlike sea salt on a scourge filling the air.

I made more long cuts along the body of the Tangerine, cuts

that would enable me to remove his skin in one piece. That was my specialty, removing the skin of a fruit in one piece. On my wall I had displayed various skins and rinds I had peeled over the years, but none of them compared to this. If I was successful, the Tangerine's skin would be displayed over my desk.

Because of the difficulty posed by the rind and the blade, I feared that I was applying too much pressure with every penetration I made. Fortunately, I was able to make each incision without penetrating the flesh, as that would have caused irreparable bruising. I wanted this to be as painless as possible, both for me the peeler and the Tangerine.

That is not to say he felt no

pain. He screamed incessantly from the first incision, and eventually I had to tie him down to prevent him from moving and making me tear his skin in two. The juice of his flesh ran red down the desk and puddled on the floor. And still that smell persisted, like sweat rolling off a cotton gin.

Also, I removed his socks early on. Once I had started, I wasn't going to stop, not when I was so close to receiving my prize. Too bad if he had cold feet.

I didn't blame him for screaming; I was ripping apart every nerve between his skin and his flesh, after all. But I could sense he wasn't just screaming from the pain. There was sadness there, yes, but also anger, a Black rage against the world, and as he screamed, I heard more of the pain that led

cont. Bruised Fruit

to this bruising, a vicious cycle of fear and injury. I heard of elevators, and of the pure, unbruised women who feared he would defile and violate them there, and how they would dash out without saying a word. I heard of the men who broke every bone in his body before calling him lazy for not being able to walk. I heard of how everything he touched became bruised, such as his car, and all the times he feared being pulled over and executed for driving a bruised car. And through it all and over it all was that sweet, sweet smell, red and hot like a bullet killing a Dream.

The last place from which I removed the bruises was his head. Fortunately, he had lost consciousness, so I was able to remove most of the skin of his face without difficulty. It was

only by a lucky miracle that I removed his scalp, however, as by then he awoke and resumed screaming and thrashing. With one final slice, I removed the last of the bruises and that rotten, kinky, nappy hair.

After many hours, I had finally finished my work. Before me was no longer a bruised fruit but a man with the purest of flesh, and even I was jealous of the beauty of his physique. Like Isayama's Berutoruto, here was a man without bruised skin, the fruit of his flesh visible to all. When I held a mirror in front of his face, he grinned. He feared his bruises, so he escaped the disgrace of living in the cage of his skin. He was finally able to present himself as he truly was.

I didn't tell him that he now had days to live before hypothermia and infection set

in, if exsanguination didn't get
to him first.

While he got dressed, I nailed
the bruised skin above my desk,
and as I did, the last of the juice
flowed down along the wall,
carrying with it the smell of
tears on shackles, shackles that
the man had finally been freed
from.

He allowed me to keep the
knife, telling me I had wielded
it better than he ever could.
When he left, I hung the
butterknife in the rind's mouth,
a grim reminder to all of the
Earth's price for being bruised.

The Resident of No. 18 Vieux Carre

[Antonio Campos]

Looking In

Notwithstanding his prominent position in the gossip of Louisiana's curious gentry, shockingly few concrete details were established concerning the singular personage known as Monsieur Louis Dauphin of No. 18 Vieux Carré in the French Quarter of New Orleans. Quite out of place in this age of jazz music and rollicking parties, he could still be seen garbed in the breeches and frock coats of Old France, peeping through his upstairs window in the gloaming or strolling through the back alleys of the city by lamplight. Monsieur Dauphin, in his embroidered waistcoat and his stately black hat, appeared to be a gentleman directly transplanted from the now-defunct Court of Versailles. His crinkled black hair was

tied with scarlet ribbon into the prim queue of a European nobleman, although it perhaps bore the most distant trace of African blood. Similarly, his skin, though naturally tanned and rich in color, was powdered in courtly white lead, creating an appearance so anemic and so pallid as to appear almost deathly. Furthermore, not a trace of silver was ever to be seen upon the enigmatic monsieur, but, instead, his every vestige was emblazoned with the purest gold. There was gold upon the tip of his strong ebony cane, and there was gold upon the buttons of his long-tailed frock coat; his two front teeth appeared to be made of solid gold, and there was a golden sparkle in his narrowed and distant eyes.

Seldom seen by the light of day,

the secretive gentleman could occasionally be spotted going out in the late evening, just as the glowing, subtropical sun sank behind the spires of the old cathedral. Yet more rarely, he could also be seen slinking back up the steps of his wrought-iron enclosed porch just before the break of day. Nobody knew where he spent the long evenings of his seemingly nocturnal existence. The Frenchman was never seen at the adjacent public houses, nor at any of the numerous parties in the Quarter, nor at the glittering estates of the nearby Garden District.

Out of curiosity, a young boy once tried to follow the cryptic gentleman; however, he lost Monsieur Dauphin in the weeds of a nearby cemetery, which the pursued had apparently crossed as a shortcut on that

moonless night. A young woman—the boy's elder sister—had also attempted to shadow the enigmatic French cavalier. Unfortunately, due, indubitably, to some unforeseen misadventure, she had been found dead the following day in Lake Pontchartrain with bloated features and pallid, limp flesh.

Thus, the man remained a mystery, and the rumors about him cast yet longer shades.

Looking Out

Yes, I know quite well the rumors about me that circulate throughout the great city of New Orleans. I know that, on quiet nights in the public houses, the inebriated boatmen and bricklayers mock me as the living ghost of the old French Quarter. I know that the children dare each other to

cont. The Resident of No. 18 Vieux Carre

approach my house, claiming that it is the residence of some foul haunter of the swamps. I even know that the dear old nannies of the Garden District mansions call their little ones into their houses at night with warnings of old Louis Dauphin and his coven of bloodthirsty vampires.

I tolerate these rumors, and, in fact, I promote them.

It is easier, somehow, to be a creeping phantom or a nocturnal terror than to be what I truly am—a wealthy Southern landowner, descended from generations of harsh Louisiana planters, in love with a poor Congolese woman from the bayou. I hoped that the world might be more tolerant by the changing of the year to 1920; I thought that, perhaps, the old ways might have been disrupted

by the Great War and the changing country. However, people like me must still live in secret, even in the relative freedom of the Crescent City.

The old frock coats, the golden canes, and the black silk cravats are all mere elements of a false façade and artifices of a superficial identity. I wear them to misdirect the rumors concerning my nightly outings, just as I creep across the nearby cemetery in order to meet my beloved creole queen, Harriett, at the discreet café on the other side.

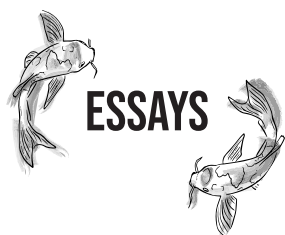
I did not mean for that boy to follow me and get lost in the cemetery on that moonless night when the fog from the lake rolled across the tombstones like ghostly breath, and the mosquitoes descended upon me in thick clouds. Certainly, I did

not intend for his worried sister to follow him, and I did not want her to become disoriented and fall into the old canal. I tried to save her! Earnestly, I did! And yet, when she saw my hand descending towards her and my pale face in the moonlight, she screamed rather than accepting my aid. “God take me!” she cried, “Take me before he gets my soul!”

What am I to do now that I have caused so much pain without good reason? Am I to continue to live this miserable and liminal life, or should I finally elope with Harriett, and let the whole sordid matter disappear into the past? Is it time, at last, to remove my ghoulish disguise and join the sunny world of the living? Or, in so doing, would I have to reveal the truth of the girl’s death and my own

unexpected aspirations? In so doing, would I be forced to dissolve my connections with she whom I love?

Far better to live under the tyranny of rumor than under the tyranny of prejudice. Far better to be feared as a ghost than to be ridiculed as a man. Far better to visit Harriett by night than to never be with her at all.



Asian 101

[Mikaela Daza]

What's it like to be white?
What's it like to eat steak and potatoes for dinner, lacking the presence of a single grain of rice on your plate? What's it like to go out on the lake in your boat, cruising on the water with your nuclear family and dog, smiles all around? What's it like for mommy and daddy to give you the world without even asking for it? This. I am not proud of this mind set. These thoughts have circled my brain since the day I learned that people are defined by the color of their skin and ethnicity. These were and shamefully still are the stereotypes I hold against white people, but I know they are not entirely true. Of course, there is truth in stereotypes, but the amount of it varies. Not all white people like steak and potatoes or have a big, fancy boat, but today's environment

conditions children and adults to judge every person and come to the consensus of their class, background, and personality based on their physical appearance alone. This mindset is not something new, there was and still is segregation and racism in the United States, a land where, supposedly, all people are treated equally. Stereotypes divide us, and this has to change. As an Asian American, I, as well as other Asians, are believed to be the "model minority", but this is not the set truth. From the outside eye, we are naturally bright and ageless, yet our inferior eyesight strays us away from this title.

According to Zara Abrams, author of "Countering stereotypes about Asian Americans," the "model minority" stereotype

defines Asians as “a uniformly high-achieving racial minority that has assimilated well into American society through hard work, obedience to social mores and academic achievement.” The model minority myth is used to downplay the racism that Asians receive, but I can guarantee that this is how people view us, even if they deny it. In fact, the stereotype that Asians are good at math and go into STEM fields is due to this myth. In high school, people I had never spoken to had asked me to help them with their math homework because they thought I was good at it without any prior knowledge. Many Asians do go into STEM fields of study, but it is because this is what our parents believe is best for our future, and people of different backgrounds often fail to

understand this. For example, I am horrible with dealing with computers, but in high school, my coach asked me to help him with his computer because “You’re Asian. You should be good at this,” which I took lightly because I knew he did not mean it as an insult, at least I hope. While my family, friends, and extended relatives fit into this stereotype, this is not true for all Asians and it should never be assumed that ethnicity should directly correlate with one’s intelligence levels.

Intelligence: the ability to acquire, retain, and retrieve information, or as I like to say, the core value of any Asian home. I was born and raised with this belief. My mother is from the Philippines and was born into a wealthy Chinese family. My father is from New

cont. Asian 101

York and was raised with his younger sister by a single mother with little money. While their backgrounds are quite different, they were taught to work hard in order to become smart and successful and to obey elders. They instilled this mindset into my siblings and I, and it was not until I was older that I realized that many other Asian children face this while white children typically do not, causing harsh comments to be said about the discipline and teaching techniques of my parents. But this stereotype of Asians comes from the belief that hard work will get you money and you need money to survive. In order for children to be successful, they must be disciplined, obedient, and smart. Do your homework. Wash the dishes. No TV, you have to study. I better not see any B's on your report card or

you are going to get the belt. You can't be an artist, you won't make any money. You want to live on the streets? Then go ahead and be an artist. Our parents have the right intentions for us, but people only skim the surface and say that Asians are born smart and hardworking. We were taught this; it is a lesson of nurture, not nature. This was our bread and butter because each generation is taught that being Asian will take opportunities away from you, so we have to be better and smarter than everyone else, and that's why we were told to put down our phones and pick up a textbook instead.

Of course, this stereotype does not define every Asian person. Not every Asian student is going to excel in school and get all A's. There are many students who struggle to keep up with

the class due to learning disabilities. During the 2015-16 public school year, the National Center for Education Statistics found that 7% of 3-21 year olds receiving help from Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) were Asian. In this study, the National Center for Education Statistics delved deeper into the prominence of learning and mental disabilities and found that Asians had the highest percentage of students with speech or language impairment at 26% and with autism at 21%. These students are not able to work at the same pace as other students in their grade, and prove that the stereotype that Asians are born effortlessly intelligent is not always true.

In addition to being smart, Asians are also believed to be drinking from the fountain of

youth, and everyone wants a sip. I have lost count of the amount of facial oils, massage techniques, and face masks that I have seen on the internet that supposedly turn back the clock and make you look younger. What I have noticed is that for Asians, while we do use these products and treatments as well, we have a natural, youthful look that follows us around. This observation that I and many people before me have made has led to the phrase “asian don’t raisin”, meaning that asians, physically, don’t seem to age. People of an Asian background do embrace this, even joke about it, but it is the constant comments about our appearance that lead to insecurities, as it has happened to me. Comments about youthful appearance are not always a compliment because as a child and young adult, all

cont. Asian 101

you want to do is fit in. You don't want to stand out like a sore thumb, looking like a middle schooler when you are amongst people that are the same age as you, but they look like 30 year olds. While there is a stereotype that "asian don't raisin", there is only partial truth in that statement.

When I was fifteen, I went to dog sit at my mom's coworker's house for the night. I slept over with the dogs and waited for my mom to pick me up in the morning. When my mom and her coworker arrived, we were all talking and her coworker asked me how old I was. I told him I was 15 and he said "Really?! You don't look 15. I thought you were 12. Asians really do look young." At the time, I thought this was a compliment, and I believe that he did mean it in a nice way.

Although, as I got older, I started receiving these "compliments" more and more often. As a junior in high school, I was helping my brother return his textbooks at his middle school, and his principal asked me if I was there to pick up my 8th grade promotion diploma. Just last week a family friend thought I was sixteen even though I told her multiple times that I was eighteen and attending college. I will admit that I do look young for my age, but comments like these make me insecure. I want to look my age and not have people think that I am in the wrong area or offer me the kid's menu at restaurants. This stereotype is true, but only partially. My sister, who is nineteen months older than me, gets mistaken for a twenty-five year old. People always comment about how

she looks older for her age. For her, it does not seem to affect her much, but I worry for her sake about people making unnecessary comments. She proves that this stereotype is not 100% true and that these “compliments” can actually dehumanize us.

While we are supposedly “blessed” with brains and looks, one thing that is inconsistent with the “model minority” belief is our poor eyesight and small eyes. Of course, many Asians have poor eyesight, as I am one of those Asians, but how could a person just assume that we have terrible vision because we are Asian? Although, this stereotype is partially true. Everyone in my immediate family wears glasses or contacts, and a good amount of my aunts, uncles, cousins, and other relatives wear glasses.

What is even worse is when people think that poor eyesight is correlated to our small, Asian eyes to which people then make the assumption that our small eyes must make us bad drivers, another lovely stereotype against Asians. While many of these statements are based in fact, not every Asian should be forced into these dehumanizing categories.

Most Asians you see around will probably be wearing contacts or glasses, but this is based on our environment and genetics. Just like literally anyone else, constant screen time with your face pressed against your computer, TV, or phone will lead to damage to your eyes and eyesight. Regarding genetics, Dr. Danny VanDan, author of “Why do Asians Have Bad

cont. Asian 101

Eyesight?” explained a theory that in the past, Chinese men were chosen as soldiers for their strong physical characteristics and normal eyesight. Because they were killed in war, the remaining men passed on their genes of bad eyesight and shortness, leading to today’s population. Eyesight is something we can not control. People should not assume that all Asians have poor eyesight, or that our poor eyesight makes us bad drivers. In any place where there are cars, there are going to be inadequate drivers, but not all are going to be Asian. This stereotype continues to be prevalent in our world, including one incident involving an Australian politician apologizing for commenting that Asian drivers had “no comprehension” of traffic rules (The Guardian). To counter this, there is research

that shows that this stereotype is not 100% true. In the 2017 article “Truth or Myth: Asians are bad drivers?”, The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration found that the crash fatality rates for Hispanic, white, and African-Americans were between 12 and 12.5 deaths per 100,000 people, while Asians had the lowest rate with only four deaths per 100,000 people. Even though this myth has been proven false, many people still believe in it. Like any other stereotype, even if it may be true, people should not be automatically categorized into it.

It is human nature to judge people based on appearance. We are not perfect. From day one we already have expectations about how a person is going to sound, act, and even walk because we take

in information from the world
and store it in our brains,
keeping it in the back of
our mind the next time we
see a new face. Even if this is
a natural instinct, we, unlike
animals,
have the ability to defy
ourselves. We have the power
to think and restrain harmful
things from
leaving our mouths and even
rewire our brain to be more
accepting of others. This will
take time
for people to change their
mindset, but there will come
a time where skin color truly
does not
matter. Everything in this world
comes to an end, so the idea of
stereotypes will eventually go
extinct. Eventually, the only
piece of information people can
judge you on will be your
personality and that alone.

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Invisible Borders

[Madeline Gatewood]

According to Gloria Anzaldúa, a queer Chicana poet and feminist theorist, “Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish us from them. A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge” (Anzaldúa 25). A decade later and her words still ring true at the U.S.-Mexican border, a 1,950 mile-long third country that acts as an unnecessary boundary and third space. Within *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, Anzaldúa describes the complex collision of earth and ocean, both gently coexistent and apparent opposites. These natural boundaries are divided with a contrasting artificial border described as an “open wound” in a constant state of transition that keeps white inhabitants in power. The first evidence of humankind in the

U.S., found in Texas, begins with the Chicanos’ ancient Indian ancestors that date back to the year 35,000 B.C. After a long history of conflict and violence between native settlers and colonizers, what stands today is “a thin edge of barbwire” (Anzaldúa 35). In a less literal sense, the works of Mohsin Hamid and Wesley Clark subvert sociopolitical borders that maintain the power dynamics of the current world order. Hamid’s *Exit West* challenges the construction of borders as a means to maintain national identity and Clark’s benchmark piece of art, *My Big Black America*, denaturalizes invisible borders and their use as a political weapon.

What is meant by the term invisible borders? Despite the rise of globalization, communities are constructed

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around social and psychological codes that we become acutely aware of the more we try to cross them. Jennie-Keith Ross, an American anthropologist, adds that “the concept of boundary systems provides a common framework within which societies at all stages of development are comparable” (Ross 53). Across societies, the markers of different characteristics are used to construct social borders and are not simply present or absent, but existing in many degrees of the definition. Hamid’s *Exit West* details the intimacy of two people navigating their cities on the brink of war, a plotline that is detailed in the first sentence of the book. The establishment of refugee characters that are “capable” of loving amidst chaos and change, normalizes behaviors typically only written for white characters. Hamid

during an interview adds, “It might seem odd that in cities teetering at the edge of the abyss young people still go to class...but that is the way of things, with cities as with life, for one moment we are pottering about our errands as usual and the next we are dying, and our eternally impending ending does not put a stop to our transient beginnings and middles until the instant when it does” (Hamid 3). Both Saeed and Nadia cross physical and intangible borders throughout their journeys into Mykonos, London, and San Francisco. Specifically in London, Hamid works to highlight the collapse of British identity and nativist backlashes, all while the government develops a plan to get rid of refugees. Saeed and Nadia are victims of xenophobic political agendas, hidden under the disguise of

nationalism, contemplating, “From dark London, Saeed and Nadia wondered what life might be like in light London” (Hamid 146). And while they may have experienced the literal shut-off of power, the narrator contrasts the difference between crossing a border as a refugee and entering into a native homeland. The discriminatory practices that function to confine refugees to certain geographical neighborhoods are the direct attempt to maintain national identity. Hamid does not tell us what we need to do politically with refugees but offers us to engage our imaginations into what it may look like to welcome or become a refugee. His detailed description into the plight of refugees reminds readers that no one is exempt from forced displacement, and therefore no one is exempt from human dignity. Especially since,

“everyone migrates, even if we stay in the same houses our whole lives, because we can’t help it. We are all migrants through time” (Hamid 207). Hamid works to break borders between readers and refugees, amidst a paradoxical reality where Saeed and Nadia work to cross their own borders.

Exit West ultimately explores the idea that invisible borders are far more strict than the physical borders meant to keep people out since they manifest themselves within the ideological patterns of people. According to French philosopher Étienne Balibar, the limitations of refugees to restrict movement are often carried out through different levels of violence. The three categories that Balibar attributes include “institutional, reactive, and ideological,” and

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within Hamid's *Exit West* there is the presence of ideological violence like the use of "drones and helicopters and surveillance balloons" (Hamid 146). In earlier sections of *Exit West*, Hamid begins constructing a city enacting small spells of violence with curfews and checkpoints suggesting a highly dysfunctional and restrictive culture that skew what safety means for them. The normalization of violent reactive behavior and "the invasion of public space by practices of non-right" is described by philosopher Gilles Deleuze as "microfascisms" (Halle 2019). The characters that Hamid writes about, Saeed and Nadia, are constantly searching for contentment and refuge amidst an unwelcoming and prejudiced society that challenges the construction of national identity maintained

through borders. Ultimately, the portrayal of refugees eventually reaching safety and fulfillment undermines the conception of national superiority, serving as a small act of rebellion for foreigners constantly reminded they are not welcome.

In a similar fashion, both Shirin Neshat's *Women of Allah* series of photographs and Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West* parallel in their treatment of the idea that there is "a far more complex and paradoxical reality behind the surface" (Young 2019). The focal point of Neshat's photography includes Muslim women in traditional veils, some with calligraphic text that is common in Islamic art. Created over 25 years ago, these black-and-white prints are centered around a different woman in each photo, contrasted

with violent symbols, guns. Neshat commonly utilizes contrast to make her subjects stand out, making their veil fabric the opposite color to the background. This series addresses the Western representation of the veil, violence, calligraphic text, and the gaze of the “other.” *Rebellious Silence*, specifically, shows a woman bisected by the barrel of a rifle while staring intensely into the camera. Here, the dichotomizing line corresponds to the borders that Neshat and other women cross while engaging in this photography. This particular series was constructed after Neshat’s trip to Iran after several years of exile during the 1979 Islamic Revolution, serving as a more literal act of border crossing that was previously not possible. This multi-layered and striking

piece of work is loaded with elements of feminism, religion, and extremism that pull the consumer in several directions. From the surface, the veil that each woman wears as a symbol of objectification through the eyes of Western culture. The male “gaze” that protects women, is juxtaposed with these anonymous women gazing right back into the camera. Not only does this contradict the normative idea that the veil is solely used to break the gaze of men and oppress women, but highlights Islamic women wearing veils for their personal religious empowerment. Women have traditionally been silenced and stereotypically portrayed to be mild and silent. Something unique about her series is that her subjects speak without words, and Neshat gives them a voice by directly writing

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text onto the printed photos. Neshat's dichotomy within her photographic narratives parallels the division that borders place on people, showing freedom and oppression, and silence and rebellion. Her works serve to challenge stereotypes while offering a refreshing take on women, a reality hidden just beneath the surface.

Structuralism emerged out of France in the 1950s under the idea that "language structure provided a model for the analysis of many different kinds of cultural production, from myths to kinship networks to literary genres. Structuralism, therefore, views cultural practices as being made up of a system of underlying structures" (D'Alleva 126). Since culture is inherently a structure, in theory, a border

or lack thereof, is a structure. Within *Methods and Theories of Art History* D'Alleva covers the idea of binary oppositions that exist in isolated pairs, helping to sort out experiences. Because binary pairing is often not equal, with one term typically being placed at a higher value than the other, terms like healthy/sick have an obvious preferable term of "healthy." When we begin to look into the binary pairing of "native" and "foreigner" the experiences depending on which side of the border you stand on are quite different. For Saeed and Nadia, they began to wonder how London would have looked as a welcomed native rather than with foreign refugee status. Borders are both a physical and cultural reminder of colonialism, violence, and nationalism that pass history through them, telling a story

that lasts longer than the people it keeps out.

One artist by the name of Shahzia Sikander spearheaded a visual revolution when she presented her five-foot-long painting, *The Scroll*, back in 1991 at the National College of Arts. Sikander made it her life's work to perfect and challenge the discipline of Indian and Persian miniature painting that resembles the styles of Indian Mughal Painting from the Mughal Empire dating back to the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries. Sikander explores "how you can create work that somehow transcends place and time" (2001). Something that sociopolitical borders function to do as well. *The Scroll* uses vegetable color, dry pigment, watercolor, and tea on wasli paper. For Sikander, she describes the meaning of her

works as a means for which history to pass through, telling a story the closer that you look at it. When stepping away and perceiving it as its whole, there is a vast element and within the scope of being fairly large for the scale of detail, a viewer can only perceive colors and large shapes. *The Scroll* ranges in earth tones, including browns and oranges, and at first glance, the only perceivable elements are the large white bordering and shapes of large buildings. Touches of red and gold leaf add dimension to the deemed "unpopular" art form. What is unique about Sikander's work is that her geometric lining patterns are not all that her work offers; with the simple addition of a magnifying glass, the scale of her work dramatically unfolds private stories that connect with the consumer.

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Her contemporary and unique take on the style of miniatures within *The Scroll* engages in personal narratives that depict young women engaging in reading a book, eating, and also painting. Visually, it creates stories within the story that require a viewer to look into the work rather than just at it, generating a multidimensional and narrative-based work that would be missed from just a glance. For her, “[the] whole purpose of taking on miniature painting was to break the tradition, to experiment with it, to find new ways of making meaning, to question the relevance of it,” (Sikander 2001). Sikander’s interruption to the art community crosses social borders and bridges the divide between history and contemporary art that revived a dying art form, previously discounted by Western teaching methods.

Over a decade later, the work of Wesley Clark intertwines history and radicalized visual art that ruptures invisible borders bounding certain people as “citizens.” After the campaign and subsequent election of Barack Obama in 2008, Clark was inspired to create a piece of art that commemorates the achievements of African Americans and their foundational claim on the country. *My Big Black America* utilizes random pieces of wood, some from the original version that he created as a project for his graduate studies. His multi-layered and textured art claims a space that has historically been a space for white nationalists and racist pasts. This ten foot-tall and sixteen-foot-wide installation is more than hard to miss, and is solely constructed from

aged wood, a medium he chose, “because of its parallel characteristics to human flesh; it holds scars and visibly ages, adding individual character to each piece” (McMillan 2020). The geometric structures that naturally form into a map view of America are intentional, yet effortless, a dichotomy that evokes contemplation for art consumers. My Big Black America conjures reflection in a white consumer, that forces one to ask how we may be contributing to the structures that Clark is working to subvert. This level of reflection breaks borders between white consumers of the art and historically diminished minorities taking claim on their country. His mediums of stain, spray paint, and latex layered overtop turned furniture, tree limbs, and timber represent generations of

African Americans that built this country, both economically and socially. At first glance the art is black, but the subtle gray and black shade range correlate to the diverse culture range that falls under the umbrella term “black.” Clark’s work challenges the historical boundaries of what traditional American art can be and whom it includes.

Overall, the working definition of border is varying depending on where one may look. For Anzaldúa, the deep wounds left from living on a border, are a constant reminder of harmful social implications that came from being the “troublesome and queer” Chicano forbidden from a place her ancestors once called home (Anzaldúa 25). Borders work to make abstract people and cultures comparable, an invisible divide that prevents

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valuable connections between people, hindering a more tolerant and understanding view of what lies on the other side. Hamid's *Exit West* is a fictional, yet hyper-realistic narrative that details the response foreigners garner from crossing physical and invisible borders. This work reminds readers that a border does not exempt one from violence and war, through building empathetic and intimate companions that previously engaged in life all too familiar to the average reader. Neshat provides a rebelliously silent contradiction to the normative Islamic woman as portrayed in western media, a border that is dangerous and powerful to cross. The current world order structures borders to maintain a privileged status, marginalizing the "inferior" individuals that sit on the other side. In conclusion, the works

of Mohsin Hamid and Wesley Clark subvert sociopolitical borders that maintain the power dynamics of the current world order. Hamid's *Exit West* challenges the construction of borders as a means to maintain national identity and Clark's benchmark piece of art, *My Big Black America*, denaturalizes invisible borders and their use as a political weapon.

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My Qipao

[Raegan Bowyer]

I found my qipao at a thrift store. A qipao, also known as a cheongsam, is a type of Chinese dress. I was overjoyed to find one secondhand because I could not fit into the ones my mother owned. I wore it for the first time in the fashion show of last year's AAU Night Market. It helped validate my sense of belonging in the Asian American community. I am half-Chinese, and I struggle with my cultural identity. However, over the past couple of years, I learned to embrace the Asian side of my heritage due to encouragement from family members and the welcoming atmosphere of AAU.

I grew up in a predominantly white town and in an attempt to fit in with my classmates I rejected different aspects of

my identity. As a child, I did not want to learn how to speak Chinese or how to read Chinese characters because I was afraid of being bullied. This decision did not really impact me until I traveled to China to meet my relatives for the first time. My mother served as the interpreter throughout the trip. It frustrated me that I could only speak in fragments with my relatives. I only knew a few phrases such as 你好 which means hello or 谢谢 which means thank you. Visiting China made me want to learn Chinese, so I could talk to my relatives and learn more about my culture. Currently, I am learning Chinese which is a daunting task, however, I enjoy it. So far I am at the introductory level, but I aspire to talk with my mother, grandmother, and aunt fluently in Chinese someday.

Size of the Fight

[Bodie Garda]

Have you ever had a day or a moment that you thought changed your entire perspective on something very important to you? Well, I had a day just like that. I was working my summer job as a soccer camp counselor a couple of years ago, and we were playing this game called, "One Truth, All Lies." The way this game works is the counselors line up and tell a story on the spot, and the campers have to guess which one of us is telling the true story. On this particular day I told this one ridiculous story where a player on the other team attempted a bicycle kick and failed so badly that he actually kicked me in the face. Now I can bet by y'all's reaction that you completely think that story is true; well, it was not. After the other counselors shared their stories which were admittedly much

more convincing than mine, all the campers sat next to the person they thought was telling the truth. I stood up because I lied about my story, and the kids who picked me were immensely shocked, which is always the best part. But while that was happening, I noticed one 5-year-old kid who curled himself into a ball and started crying. After the game finished, I went to him. He lifted his head up while still crying and said, "I hate being wrong," and I was like "Hey, it's all good man. This game is pure luck, it's not a big deal." Then he replied, "But I am wrong, and I have always been wrong."

This message he gave me was very vague and was open for interpretation, but the moment I heard those words, I knew exactly what he was going through. When I was a toddler,

I was diagnosed with a series of autisms and learning disabilities that caused me to fall behind on the learning curve. So, when that shy kid said those words, I understood exactly what he meant, because I used to have a similar mindset. Ever since that day, I have become very interested in and dreamed about a career as a special education teacher. Ever since that day, I have come to the realization that there is a severely underrepresented group in our society that goes through massive struggle: individuals with disabilities, and more specifically, kids. To understand the challenges these individuals go through, we will first, come to understand the scope of the problem and how it affects vulnerable populations. Then we will look at how our culture discriminates and stereotypes against these people

and the harm of doing so. Finally, we will understand how we can learn to respect these individuals and provide them with the advocacy they deserve.

You know, there are times where I ask myself, "Just... what if I never had any learning disabilities?" But at the end of the day, I consider myself to be one of the lucky ones. I say this because as a child, I had the support of my parents who helped me in the process of mitigating the effects of those disabilities. But I realize that for so many others that is not the case. Right now, I want you to think about two numbers. The first is how many disabled people you think there are in the United States. The second is the number of disabled people that you think are in your family. I'll give you a few seconds to think of those two things.

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Well, according to the National Organization of Disabilities, there are over 50 million people with disabilities, including nearly 3 million children aged 5 to 15 in the United States. This means that for every six Americans, one is disabled. In my family, accounting for cousins, aunts, uncles, etc, there are about 40 people. So, if my family had the same proportion of disabled people compared to the rest of the U.S. population, six or seven members of my family alone would have a disability. Now, think about your family. Statistically speaking, you are guaranteed to have at least one family member that is disabled, and you may not even know it. If you are in poverty, the chances of being disabled become even more likely. As Rebecca Vallas, senior fellow at the Century Foundation, in 2014 puts it, “Poverty can

limit access to health care and preventive services, and increase the likelihood that a person lives and works in an environment that negatively affects their health.” So as a result of being in an already disadvantaged population, impoverished people are more likely to become part of another disadvantaged population. In other words, disabilities affect people in our society that already need more help than anyone.

Now that we have looked at how serious the scope of the problem in our current society is, we will now understand how and why we discriminate and have biases against these people. Like many minority groups in society, disabled individuals have a disadvantage in many key aspects of life such as recreational opportunities

and healthcare, among others.

However, there is one area in which disabled people are However, there is one area in which disabled people are discriminated against and isolated the most: education. Now, I could talk all day about the disadvantage of being a disabled child in the classroom, but I think for us to truly understand the broader significance of this issue, we have to look at the history of how this came to be. Insert: Brown v. Board of Education in 1954. We all understand this Supreme Court case to be the monumental moment in the history of U.S. education, and it should be, as it paved the way for an inclusiveness in education that continues to this day. But that does not mean that segregation and structural racism was still not taking

place. When Brown v. Board of Education made it illegal to segregate on the basis of race, state governments started to develop subjective disability testing to put racial minorities into special education classrooms, so that they could isolate them from general educational courses taken by white students. Because of this, people in power deciding which students to put into special education classrooms were able to disproportionately select racial minorities so that they could exclude them from being in an integrated classroom environment. Now isn't that something? Special education, which today acts as a way to provide educational services toward children with disabilities, was originally used as an excuse to isolate minorities from a quality education solely

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based on the premise that they did not belong in the same classroom with whites. Fast forward to the present day, where Black students make up only 16 percent of the student population, yet make up 40 percent of the special education population. And according to Professor James Conner in 2005, Black disabled students are 20 percent less likely to graduate high school, 5 times more likely to be diagnosed with “mental retardation,” and 10 percent more likely to drop out. But really, how could you blame any disabled child for not wanting to go to school? Can you imagine being a victim of bullying just because of a label? How would you cope if you had difficulty doing a task that a “normal” child would be able to do with ease? These are experiences that disabled children have at every level of education, and

every level of their life. This only reinforces the idea that the disabled individual has inferior intelligence, is solely reliant on other people, and does not have a chance of ever succeeding. And because these individuals are handicapped, they do not have the power to stand up for themselves nor reject the pedestal of prejudice against them. This goes to show that the disabled community is one of the most underrepresented and silent minority groups in the entire world. For me, the worst part about all of this is that the problems I have faced in my educational journey are so small compared to the average disabled child. While I had to worry about controlling a stutter when I talk, others have to worry if they could ever be understood. While I have to work harder than the other kids in my class to achieve the

and anxiety. This treatment towards students with disabilities is my motivation to have an impact on kids with special needs. I want to help provide an education that will help students discover their true potential, to provide a voice for a community that does not have a voice, and to provide an open mind for kids who need it the most.

One of the reasons I love working at the camp so much, besides the fact I spend so much time with kids, is because I simply love sports. There are a lot of reasons I love sports, but I'll tell you the biggest reason why: Sports is the place where the underdogs of the world get to shine. I love it when a team or an individual can show the world that they can compete with the best of the best. I love it when underdogs

never give up, even though everybody is so convinced that they have absolutely no chance of winning. Above all, I love the joy they get from winning. But all underdogs have one thing in common; they all have great teamwork and a great support system. It is the work of multiple individuals that paves the way for an inspirational success story. Disabled children have that exact same potential to create their own success story, but they need a team of people willing to help them so that they can make the most of their work ethic and incredibly unique talents. Special education has great intentions, but the system still lacks the personal instructor and student relationships that special education students need. A way to solve this is to put them into smaller and more inclusive classrooms so

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that they can develop these relationships. Additionally, society can take an even greater step by eliminating implicit biases that we have by not judging someone based on their differences but instead judging them based on their work ethic. In one of the most remarkable upsets in college football history between Boise State and Oklahoma, Tom Brannaman broadcasted the famous words, “It’s not the size of the dog in the fight, it’s the size of the fight in the dog.” While children with disabilities may have brains that operate slower or body parts that don’t hold up, they all have the only thing that really matters. And that part is right here. Their resilient heart and relentlessness to grit and power through life is what makes these children so incredible despite all of the everyday challenges they face. So, if you give these

children just one chance, trust me, they will do more than enough to show you how big the size of their fight really is.

The “American Dream” Effect

[Dominic Pe Benito]

The “American Dream” is a constant theme that is brought up when describing immigrants. This dream of moving to the United States and working your way up from the bottom of the barrel to reach the top of the social class. It is about leaving the motherland and starting a family to have children that can pursue new things and achieve the hopes and dreams that parents cannot achieve. It is about finding ways to tell yourself that your decision of leaving your home country is the best decision of your life.

This is how I view the “American Dream” because that was how I was raised. I am the immigrant’s child that lives the life my parents could never have. I am the one who will be the living proof that the decision of moving to the United States from the Philippines was the

best decision my family has ever made.

This is where I finally admit I am scared out of my mind because of it. The pressure of being an immigrant’s child is something many first-generation children can agree upon. I definitely would be lying if I did not say I wished I were a second-generation Asian American, instead of being the first-born and first-generation Filipino-American my parents want to succeed. Every parent wants their children to succeed in this country, but no one wants their child to succeed and make good money out of college more than an Asian-American parent. All the stereotypes you can think of from Asian parents wanting kids, to having straight As, to receiving a college degree, to becoming a nurse or doctor and many more are

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almost 100 percent true. Trust me, I know the feeling, because that is my life.

Like I said before, I am a first-generation Filipino-American from California, and my story starts off as a poor kid from San Jose, California. My parents are both from the Philippines and they immigrated here in their early teens. They met in high school, and a bit after graduating, they both got married while attending college. After about two years of marriage, they had me at ages 23 and 25. My parents were still attending college as part-time students because they had to work so they could pay for their small condominium in South San Jose. Me coming into the equation was definitely a dream come true for my parents, but it was also a hardship they were not prepared for. My father

had to drop out of school to focus on working and trying to raise me, while my mother worked as a pharmacist and was trying to graduate to obtain her Bachelor's in accounting. A few years passed by, and my mother finally graduated, then was offered a job to work at an accounting firm. This is where her “American Dream” starts to become fulfilled as she finally has a full-time job, can contribute financially to the family, and can help provide for me more. However, my father's “American Dream” was always going to be seen through my accomplishments, and he knew that since the day he dropped out to focus on me.

I have to admit that even though I am proud of both of my parents and how they were able to come from struggling to pay for our housing and food, it

food, it also brought on a lot of pressure on me.

My parents raised me in a very unique way: I went to private school my whole life, because they thought it was the best way to groom me into the person they wanted me to be. Who is this person you may ask?

This person is a well-oriented young man who has aspirations of graduating with a college degree in honor of his father's hard work and sacrifice to raise his children, and of following every single step of his mother's plan for him. That is what I did as I went to the high school my family wanted me to go to, even though it was not my first choice.

There was never the pressure of receiving straight As throughout high school like other Asian-American children, but there

was the pressure of going to a "good" college. What even is a "good" college? According to my parents, a "good" college is any school equivalent to a UC, or a school with a big, advertised name. That is why I feel like all their expectations sadly were not met as I chose to attend Gonzaga University because I liked the culture, but also as I did not make it into the universities my parents desired for me. After receiving very few acceptance letters and not meeting my parents' expectations, I felt like a disappointment. I hate to even admit it, but I was indirectly told I was. For example, the same day I accepted my admission into Gonzaga, I bought my whole family Gonzaga gear to celebrate but they did not happily wear any of the merchandise until I had a graduation party in front of

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other people. It took a family gathering, which was months after the purchase, for them to wear the merch. The sad truth is that they only wore the gear because they had to show others they support me even though they wish I chose elsewhere or excelled more in school. In other words, my family felt like they sometimes wasted their money in putting me through private school because many people believe that private school is equivalent to “big named” colleges. This was the first time I did not meet my parents’ expectations.

The second time I felt like I disappointed my parents was when I picked a pre-medicine track instead of an accounting major as my parents desired. I feel like the one reason I did not want to become a business major was because I did not

want to follow every wish my parents had for me. They always chose the path for me, from picking my schooling, to them only allowing certain activities for me to participate in. I wanted to feel independent and try something I felt passionate about, and that was being a pediatrician who could help kids. I was always attracted to this idea of helping children ever since I coached girls’ basketball and helped tutor kids at my old elementary school. However, my parents never believed in me, as my mother always said that I would switch majors, and my father would openly say that he did not like the idea of me becoming a human physiology major. They would say this because they believed that I could not handle it and because they did not have any sort of belief that I could reach this goal. They always felt

like I was in some “La La Land” whenever I would talk about it. It feels pretty crazy to this perspective, but this is the reality for many Asian American children. Many Asian immigrant parents want their kids to be doctors, nurses, or lawyers. My parents did not believe I could be any of those. I think my Asian American experience similarly affects other kids, but also a unique perspective on the effects of the “American Dream.”

How am I doing, you may be asking? Well, I will admit that all this pressure somewhat led to my downfall during my sophomore year. I started off the semester with a bumpy relationship with my family due to these conflicts and the lack of belief in my abilities. I was not supported for all the activities that I participate in

for Gonzaga, such as being on the Filipino American Student Union (FASU) board, and being part of many other diversity organizations. My parents felt I was wasting my time and thought I should be focusing on just doing schoolwork, as my involvement in other things was not something they were proud of. They also wanted me to switch majors to business because they openly admitted this past summer that I cannot handle science courses, and that a four-year degree going straight into a job is something that can be beneficial to me. Every decision I made in the past year and a half was something they could not be proud of.

This idea of fulfilling my parents’ expectations still haunts me today, but I chose to go against their wants. This is

cont. The “American Dream” Effect

what impacted my relationship with my parents, as I felt like a disappointment for every decision I made. I felt like my parents did not believe in me, and that impacted me so much, especially mentally. I struggled with trying to stay focused in all my classes, because this thought that my parents did not believe in me was triggering my own doubts in myself. It affected my confidence and my mental health. One moment, I would be studying for exams and quizzes and feel confident. But the next, when taking this exam or quiz, I would suddenly feel this pressure and disappointment that my parents had on me, and blank out on problems. This affected me so much that at some point, I hit rock bottom and started failing many of my classes. I lacked motivation and felt like a failure for months. I felt like I was

drowning in my thoughts and that I could not climb my way out of this feeling. This led me to skipping classes and using so much time to think about how I was a failure that I would stay in bed and feel terrible. I would pull my hair, stay up late without realizing it, and I felt like I deserved something bad should happen to me.

However, even though I was raised to believe that mental health was not real and that it is up to how your parents raise you to determine the strength of your mentality, I once again secretly went against my parents' wishes and reached out for help. I wanted to stop feeling sad and like a disappointment. I wanted to put away the thoughts and remarks of my parents aside and carry on with my life. So, I reached out to my teachers and my

advisors, and they helped lead me to Health and Counseling Services. I met with a counselor to talk over my fears and feelings, along with trying to put together my confidence again.

After numerous meetings, I came to a new understanding of how I wanted to live my life. I realized that my schoolwork was impacted so much that I was too behind to follow through with my pre-medicine track and human physiology major, so I chose to switch into being a business major. Even though it was not what I wanted before, I realized that I can make an impact in any area of expertise that I had, and that helping children will always be my goal even if I am in the business industry. My parents were disappointed after I disagreed about becoming

an accounting major, but I talked passionately about how I wanted other opportunities. Even though they disagree, I had to learn how to focus on caring about myself. I have to start realizing that this whole “American Dream” effect on me is just an ideology and nothing I have to truly believe in.

I started off this semester with a terrible mindset and zero confidence because of my parents, but I learned a lot about myself. First and foremost, I love my parents even though sometimes it feels like they do not support me for what I want to do. Even though they have this idea of what they have wanted for me my whole life, I have to understand that they wanted the best for me, not the worst. They put all this hard work and effort into raising me, and even though I felt like

cont. The “American Dream” Effect

I failed them, I cannot fail myself. Yes, they influenced me heavily due to their desires for me because of this “American Dream” effect, but I have to grow independently, and I understand that now. I might not have met their expectations, but I have to meet my expectations.

I learned that mental health is a real thing and that if you need help, you have to get it. You are not wrong or crazy if you try and get help. You are instead brave for understanding that you need the help. Getting help was the best decision I ever made because it stopped me from fighting my demons and helped me realize that I can be happy by doing things I love. If I did not come to this realization, I would not have met any of my new friends or have this dream of wanting

to become president of FASU someday. I can finally dream again and be confident in what I want to do. Even if this rough patch made me feel lonely, depressed, and affected a lot of my relationships with my friends and family, I think it helped me grow. My parents might not believe in me with full confidence, but I do know that I have made them happy in many other ways and I have to be okay with the fact that I cannot be their perfect prodigal son that they shaped in their heads prior to them moving here decades ago.

I feel better about myself and I want to slowly bring back how I was prior to all this drama. I want my family back. I want my friends back. I want the people that cared and loved me wholly to come back. I want the old me back. The “American

Dream” is possibly what caused me to go through all this struggle in over the past year, but I know in my heart that even though the negative effects may have led to my downfall, that there is always an upside to this and that I will make those around me proud and make myself feel happy.

Health and Counseling Services:
(509) 313-4052

[https://www.gonzaga.edu/
student-life/health-well-being/
health-counseling-services](https://www.gonzaga.edu/student-life/health-well-being/health-counseling-services)



a chilly autumn morning

[Aaron Danh]

the autumn leaves drift down
seemingly one by one with the
chilly autumn breeze,
it's as if they could count, the
times i've fallen down.

my aunt used to tell me to keep
going and that falling is okay
who knows how long I will
keep trying
who knows if I'll be done
falling today.

bruised knees alongside the
trees
the will to keep going, caught
in yet another common breeze.

my red bike is fearless
even as it lies fallen with each
tallied leaf
a remnant of the times she
picked me back up.

i can see her face glowing
the urge to keep going as each
attempt

only keeps growing

a feeling so superb
even though i keep on falling.
and if you could see

those autumn leaves
you'd feel the need
to keep on growing.

a young boy and his red bike
on that chilly autumn morning.

A Memory

[Amari Troutt]

To be
To become
To have been

I remember

As the leaves fell
The kids laughed
Their parents smiled
And the cars passed

We lived without worry- those
kids
We loved with compassion
And we laughed until we
couldn't anymore

We were kids
Who would one day become
adults
Who used to be innocent
I remember

What life was like before the
troubles and the worries
Before I became an adult
We were oblivious

But one day we would become
aware
And we would reminisce on the
way things used to be
The world was kind in our eyes
But it would grow into
something cold and dark
It is no longer a safe place for
children

I remember

The day a 17-year-old boy
Became the face of the 'Black
Lives Matter movement

He was kind, loving, and
gentle.

I remember

The day someone's daughter
died
Became, 'Say Her Name'
and we begged and pleaded
for those around us to see her
worth

cont. A Memory

She was strong, brave, and
loved.

I remember what it meant as a
child

To be
To become
To have been
But it's different now
In a world where I've become
a target

I live cautiously
My ability to love has become
hidden
And everything has darkened
around me

I was an innocent child
Who became a tainted teenager
as society began to paint me
like a canvas with their labels I
grew to be a cautious adult
peeking behind every corner of
life to ensure my safety

As I try to fix the generational
curse

And I break the chains
I remember what it was like and
how it will be

To be
To become
To have been

A Shift in Mindset

[Tara Phung]

If any of these statements align
with you, please raise your
hand or say me.

Who here is first-generation
student?

Person of color?

Low-income?

Knew they were going to
college but didn't know where
or how to even start?

Same. My name is Tara Phung,
and I am a senior studying
business administration here
at Gonzaga University. As
a first-generation student, I
knew I was going to university
somewhere. Growing up
with Vietnamese parents who
immigrated to the United
States, I remember them telling
me how I needed to pursue
higher education so I could live
a better life than them. And
so, that became my goal. It
wasn't until high school where
I was immersed in college

application resources where I
remember learning out about
the act six scholarship for
Gonzaga University. With my
school counselor's guidance,
they motivated me to apply. I
was skeptical, reasons being
finances and not being able
to step outside my comfort
zone, especially since I grew
up in Spokane. However, I
knew this was a once and a life
opportunity. Four years later...
here I am at Gonzaga, a place
that has transformed me into
someone who I am proud of,
someone who is happy.

Coming into Gonzaga, I was
expecting to stick with my
majors for all four years. I
declared as sociology and
broadcasting because I liked
how it sounded and felt like
it aligned with my passions
for volunteering and public
speaking. Even though I liked

cont. A Shift in Mindset

my classes, I found myself wondering... what am I going to do with these degrees? Am I going to be happy working in news or social work? No. It just didn't make sense to me, and I felt conflicted as I thought I came into Gonzaga knowing what I wanted to do. After my freshman year, I reflected where I soon declared my new major in business. I have been able to challenge myself by learning new things and applying those new skills to my own life. I was able to fill out my own taxes and help my mom with hers after taking accounting! My switch to business gave me the opportunity to step out of my comfort zone and truly find a sense of clarity.

The next unrealistic expectation I had was wanting to keep my friendships with everyone I met at the start of college. When

I was a freshman, I lived in Coughlin, 5th floor, a tight knit community. I got to know a lot of people, and I liked keeping up with everyone. However, once COVID hit, I realized that I had tried so hard to maintain friendships with certain people who had not reciprocated the same commitment of wanting to spend time with each other. I realized I needed to cut off these so-called friendships because it wasn't worth it anymore. I came to internalize how I deserve to feel valued in whatever space or relationship I'm in.

And lastly, I had to shift my mindset when I involved myself in one too many clubs, stretching myself out to be this "perfect act six scholar." My freshman year, I was involved in the bulletin, and I worked as a staff writer. I joined the

school newspaper to add to my “broadcasting experience” while trying to find a sense of community. I was involved in the bulletin for the entirety of my first year, but I found myself not fitting in. I knew I needed to find organizations that genuinely made me feel happy. These past few years, I have discovered and come to love being a part of Gonzaga’s Asian American Union, Gonzaga’s Women in Business, and Alpha Pi Phi Sorority. Throughout these extracurriculars, I have been able to further my leadership by holding different roles while participating in a variety of service and professional development activities.

Reflecting upon my experience at Gonzaga, I had to change my perspective a lot. I had to adapt and establish new goals

when I realized I wasn’t happy. I couldn’t hold on to something because I liked the idea of it. Throughout these four years of undergraduate, I’ve had huge periods of growth and self-transformation. I came in as a new student who didn’t know anything about college, and I felt as though I was obligated to stick with all the expectations I came in with. I didn’t want change, but I soon learned to embrace it. I was able to take new leaps where I re-grounded myself and found my purpose.

Disconnect

[Audriana Alfaro]

Nicaragua:
Home yet I don't live there,
Home yet I can't speak the
language,
Home yet I've only visited
twice.

Six-year-old me, with
Bare feet, sticky skin,
and sweat dripping down my
face
Ran chasing mi primo
Around the house.

I remember the fun times
We had there, my family and I,
Wishing we could have more.
But we left, 1,000 miles away,
back to the US,
My "real" home.

The air, the heat, the smell,
Still linger with me.
It all feels familiar,
Like I belong in this incredible
country.

Yet there is disconnect.
COVID, language, finance,
distance,
There are many things I can
blame it on.
Yet I blame myself.
My own family feels like
strangers.

I feel inauthentic,
That I am an imposter
With my own identity.

I blame myself
For not doing anything.
I know that it's my own fault.
It hurts me,
that I barely have any
relationship
with my own family.

But I'm trying to grow and do
better.
I have hope,
That I can make up for lost
time,
And to make these
disconnections
Connect.

Dry Rain

[Bradley Carrera]

April 7th, 2013. 6:00 AM on a muggy Sunday morning. I remember the windows, covered with doleful raindrops, and the colorful yet bleak flowers that bed in the wet grass outside. As I stare outside the window, the raindrops fall, steadily. Listening to every drop as it hits the floor in slow motion. A collection of raindrops that fill the cracks in the driveway of my home until eventually three inch puddles form. I remember stepping outside in my empty driveway to find peace in water sliding down my face until it adds to the collection diving off of the tip of my nose. Puddles. One drop leads to another in the formation of an overwhelming amount of water. In every drop of rain comes a splash of the ripple effect. One drop after another it becomes too much to drain, too much to

handle eventually drowning me. For a while now I've been overwhelmed, the rain affects me but splashes on to other people around me and for that I'm sorry, I'm still trying to figure out how to navigate this category three storm that is life. So that one day I can figure out a way to help others prepare for theirs.

My Heart that Loves

[Micah Bell]

I consider myself human like everyone else.

I have a brain that thinks, a soul that feels, and a heart that loves.

But there is this problem with my blood, my heart that loves has ruined my blood. My blood cannot save lives, my blood cannot be shared, my blood is not wanted, but my blood is needed.

If my heart that loves loved a different way, and every other part of me were kept the same, my blood could have saved lives, my blood could have been shared, my blood could have been wanted, even though my blood was always needed.

The problem really isn't my heart that loves, but it's the

brains that fear. The fear of difference, the fear of normalization, and the fear of acceptance. Accepting that every human need not be the same, and that everyone is free to live their live the way they so must. Acceptance that one human's lifestyle, lacks any and all effect on another. Acceptance that we all on the inside are the same.

While my blood is legally different, I understand I am constructed the same. I still have a brain that thinks, a soul that feels, and heart that has so much love to give.

I still consider myself human like everyone else

My Humanity

[Rodney McGee]

My Humanity,
endowed by our creator,
self-evident... Right?

-

Sharp eyes poke holes through
my skin and look upon my
psyche,
as curious... or fearful as a Cat.

Is it by design that this feline
evokes power over me,
with a look... a glance, turns to
stares.

Piercing eyes

I am no dog I promise, no
threat, I swear.

Concessions made since
conception, fearful of my
existence being purely
detrimental.

“Try to keep your hood off”

“Just listen WHEN they pull
you over”

“Always be ready to explain
yourself”

“Smile at them, so they know
you mean no harm”
I did it.

For them, not me.

-

I’m just a child.

Right?

Why must I regulate myself?

Why are you scared of me?

... Why am I scared of me?

My complexion, did it age me?
My curls, did they add a few
years?

How can you look at me so
intently, with such disdain, and
not recognize my adolescence?

A child.

cont. My Humanity

How can you speak at me with
such entitlement, growling
even, with zero remorse?
-gerrr

Who taught you that word?
Maybe you're the dog. Well
trained... Well... trained like a
prince who is meant to sit atop
their throne in time
Trained to accept advantages
as they come WITHOUT
QUESTION
Trained to take advantage
of those without such luck
BECAUSE IT'S NATURAL
Trained to judge even kids by
their tone, not of voice but of
skin, all while feigning ignorant
to the youthful glint – in – their
- eyes.

Your eyes trained on me, finally
putting to practice the faces
your reflection makes at you
each morning.

Please
Stop
Projecting

Your protection is more
valuable than mine,
That's what I was told, so that's
what I believed

They trained me different then
they trained you.
BUT.
I'm grown now, and I get it
You lied, STILL, you lie
But I'm not so gullible as to fall
for the same trick twice
Your fear is not my problem

YOU already fooled me.
But I'm grown now,
I'm ready now,
Yes.
It's true,
No more deception,
I matter and that is apparent,
abundantly.

I'm strong and your thinking
cannot brainwash me,
I'm alive and no matter what
I'm going to keep living,
I'm human and nothing you say
can change that.

I'm persistent and eyes like
blades can't slice me.

I was a child, and I'm grown
now
and I get it, so you failed.

I MATTER.
YOU FAILED.
I MATTER.

you failed.
I matter.

Pala

[Jocelin Garcia]

Resilience

The word I hear over and over when people take the time to listen to all that is going on after I've already survived the drowning.

It's all a blur in my mind when I try to look back.

Maybe it's the seven concussions or maybe it's my body's way of trying to shield me from the trauma that I can't seem to heal from.

I've started to cringe at the word resilience. Cringe because it's become a trigger word to my PTSD, flashes of the times I couldn't breathe, flashes of times when the only reason my body was running was because it was in survival mode.

Instead, I like to think of how strong I've been. The strength in me that led me to be the powerful human being that I am today.

Strength

Strength for Pala. Pala was the reason we moved to Spokane. Pala was my reason for stepping up. Pala was my reason to be better.

Because of Pala, I became a protector, a therapist, a chauffeur, a baker, a sister.

It's the common feeling all big sisters get when their younger sibling will ultimately have the same struggles. It's the responsibility, always on us, to leave every place a little bit brighter and better so that when it's their time to shine, they have the resources and space to be anything they want to be.

Leadership in predominantly white institutions as a woman of color has been my saving grace.

First it was in the same elementary and middle school that now Pala attends. Then with the high school she will soon thrive at. Now, I'm navigating these walls as a first-generation student so that when the time comes, she has someone to ask.

At the end of the day, it's all for her. The sweat, the tears, the adversity. It's being in an environment that proves over and over again how unwanted you are just so that when it's her turn, she'll have the path paved for her.

She is my hope, she is why I keep fighting after every racial injustice, after every hit, after

the world is on fire. She is the one who gets me out of it without even realizing it.

It always comes up, the question to how I do it, to how I survive.

It's the realization that I have gotten so good at surviving because Familia is everything.

It's why my 4'9" grandmother's tamales are so important to our traditions.

It's why a good work ethic was shown to me from my mother constantly being gone, and yet always providing.

It's why music is so important and now bitter sweet ever since my grandfather passed away.

There won't ever be a good enough explanation that I can

cont. Pala

express with words because
no words are good enough
to explain the pride and hope
that I have to see my family
succeed.

Success

Success looks different for
everyone and yet tends to have
the same definition.

For me, it's always the question
of will I succeed. But for Pala,
the question won't be will she
succeed. The question will be in
what ways will she succeed.

And that's what makes us
together so unbreakable. Our
success comes together. I
succeed, she succeeds, therefore
we succeed.

Soldier

[Jacquelyn Gaither]

I have always been told that
God gives the toughest battles
to the strongest soldiers
And I can't help but to ask why
me?

Why Am I chosen to have the
hard conversations
Where hushing the ignorance
is my obligation and met with
self-evident realizations
And I ask why
Why do I have to walk through
life being a rendition of my
black brothers and sisters
In mainly white spaces and
defending our entire race
and Why
Do I have to be a fighter every
time
Just because others cant see my
skin as beauty but crime.

I deeply wonder how it would
be to sit in a class effortlessly
and comfortably
Never having to be on edge and

alert for the inevitably
In a classroom with brown skin
you have two roles when you
step in
Try your very best to get your
education so you can be free
and then educate others on their
racial illiteracy
I wonder what the feeling is
of being on the payroll but
actually getting paid
Because sometimes it feels like
a full time job just to create a
space where I don't have to be
afraid

I wonder what it would be
like to not always have to be a
soldier

To not always say yes to
everyone in distress
To not always be exhausted and
left depressed
To not offer the little hope I
have left to give
For it to be squashed and asked

cont. Soldier

to be forgiven

Just like a soldier I have to get
up as I get shot down
And get up as I get shot down
But feeling like I will never get
that crown
Every death, every case, every
article, every word
Leaving so many black lives
abused and unheard
But somehow I get up with a
fight still in me.

I wonder what it would be
like to not always have to be a
soldier

To not always have that
protective wall up
And have to cover the
reminisce of my tears with
makeup
To not always have to walk
with an indestructible shield
So my fear and exhaustion
won't be revealed

Praying for the day where I
don't have to fight anymore

I need you to care as much as
I do

I need you to fight alongside me
Instead of silently watching me
plea
We need the voices of all
Not just the brown voices

Deep flesh wounds covered by
bandages to heal
That leave scars that remind me
every time I see another kneel
And as I sit and reflect at every
meal

I remind myself that I am only
toughened by these scars and
turned to steel.

I am a social justice warrior -
tough skinned and resilient
I am black excellence that
demands to set precedent
I am a soldier for the unheard

and afraid
I am a fighter for the broken
and betrayed.

I wonder what it would be
like to not always have to be a
soldier

The Losing Game

[Red Kwenda]

The game I play
Is a losing game.

The rules are simple:
DON'T DIE.
And you would think these
would be easy rules.
An easy game to play.
And it is easy to put one foot in
front of the other.

But this is a losing game.
Because I don't control the
pieces.
I am moved as you want,
I go where your hand goes.
But when you win, I always
lose.

The game I play
Is a losing game.
When I talk about the game I
play,
People always ask me,
"Why don't you stop?"
"Why don't you give up?"
Like I'm a child controlling the

pieces,
And if I lose or get bored
I can turn over the board and
pack away the pieces.
But I'm just a piece.
For me,
The game is my life,
And it is a losing game.

How much I lose depends on
who's using me at the time.

For example,
Some of you choose me for
my hair.
You select my piece because of
how exotic it is,
How cultured it makes you
feel.
What you don't see is
how much effort goes into
maintaining that look,
Into being "clean" and
"respectable" for you,
You who can comb your hair
with your fingers
Easier than I can with a comb.

You choose me because I make
you feel exotic in the moment,
But the second I comb my
fingers through my hair,
The second I roll out of bed
without making myself “clean”
and “respectable”,
All you with your easy hair
Don’t give me so much as a
sideways glance.
And in that instance,
I go from being a game piece to
a piece of shit.
And your hand passes over me
For an “exotic” piece,
But a “clean” piece,
A “respectable” piece.

Or,
There may yet be those of you
Who don’t want to use my
piece as an accessory.
You chose my piece for its
performance.
All you “brothers” out there at
the cash registers
With your fists held out.

You want me to bump yours
and say,
“Yo, man, wha’s good?”
Because in that moment,
Like some Wonder Twin 70’s
bullshit
You become the piece,
And you get to drive around
Lookin’ all gangsta and shit.
But the second I raise my fist,
The second I say,
“Hi, how are you?”

What we have on our hands is
A theft,
A riot,
A war,
Because no one like me speaks
this well
Unless they’re up to no good.
And when I raise my fist,
You raise handcuffs,
And suddenly May’s big story
Is the ungrateful destruction of
property,

cont. The Losing Game

The fear creeping into good
neighborhoods,
And the looting,
ALWAYS the looting.
And you forget all about the
man
Under your knee
That you're killing in cold
blood.

Now I see some of you are
nodding your heads,
Which means you choose my
piece because you like what I
have to say.
You like how critical my lens is,
How I challenge injustice,
How I speak up for the silenced.
And you clap loudly when I
finish talking
Because I've sure shown those
bigots the pain they've caused
me!
But the second I turn to speak
about you,
You become defensive,
Because how dare I question

your experiences,
Everything you've suffered,
Everything you've survived?!
How dare I question why you
quarantine yourself six feet
away
Like you still care about this
fucking pandemic?
How dare I question your
motives
For cowering in the corner of
elevators,
For telling my bosses you don't
want me in your space?
I question because I see who
you question.
When it's some nice, All-
American gentleman,
You whisper amongst
yourselves, saying,
"Oh my God, he's so evil!"
"Can you believe what he said?"
"Can you believe what he did?!"
But you do nothing!
And you let him go.
But when it's me,
Suddenly you find you voice,

And you look me straight in the
eye and ask me
How dare I question your
experiences,
Everything you've suffered,
Everything you've survived?!
But I get it.
I'm just a piece on the board,
Your piece,
And this is a losing game.
So when I question you,
Your lens becomes critical,
You challenge my injustice
against you
And in that moment, I am
silenced.

So why do I keep playing this
game,
This fucking losing game?
I never win:
When I pass GO,
You collect \$200,
And then call me lazy for
stopping to catch my breath.
How could I continue like this,
Knowing what I have to do to

even get on the board?
All metaphors aside,
My parents have excellent
health insurance,
And for a \$3 copay,
I can think about this shit
Without losing my mind.
But that's cheating.
Pills are the weak way out
Because happiness is a choice.
And I should be a real man
Instead of popping pills.

But I'm not a man.
Not at all.
And the color in me you think
you see
Is a beautiful amalgamation.
It's a foreign color, yes,
A beautiful Eastern color,
But it's your color, too!
Because I was born of the East
and the West
Who came together as two
kindred spirits.
I grew up eating sadza at my
house,

cont. The Losing Game

And listening to Paul Simon
and Andy Grammer on the ride
to school.

But I also grew up under two
schools of thought.

One said I could have it all,
Because I was my parents'
child.

And with my Granddad's
charm,

Everyone would love me.

But there was another,

One that taught me to always
dress in a suit and tie,

Even if my skin is the only suit
you'll see.

It said to wear a belt when
wearing pants,

Even when it pinched and
pulled and squeezed.

It was a philosophy of recovery,

One that told me to greet people
in the morning

Even when we had fought the
night before,

Even when they said my hair
made me look homeless

Because I used my fingers,
And it wasn't "clean",
Wasn't "respectable".

It said I should always seek to
recover,

Because I need people.

And whether the price is six
thousand, twelve thousand,
Or sixty thousand dollars,
I can't fight with people who
are giving me food and shelter.
Or just shelter.

Because the wise Doctor who
came up with that school of
– Not thoughting, thinking –
knew I would be playing a
losing game.

My whole life I had been taught
the rules,

And I never even knew I was
playing.

I continue to play this game
Because I hope that eventually
You understand who I am.
Not what you see,

Nor expect,
Nor want,
But who I am.
And maybe then I can stop
being a piece,
And instead be a hand,
Moving others and paying them
\$200 when they pass GO,
Because after everything I've
experienced,
Everything I've suffered,
Everything I've survived,
I think it's time we started
playing a winning game.

The Wind

[Analesa Mason]

Steadfast in my path
as I learn to conquer the wind.
“Its too hard” they say,
I tell myself that I cannot break
but I may bend.
The air is cold and the night is
dark,
just like my skin.
A reminder to stay true to
my identity and know how to
defend,
against (the wind),
a world and its people
that make the journey a little
longer.
Let that not be the reason I fall
but instead I grow stronger.

Who am I to be in the face of
adversity?

When the rain pours
and the lightning strikes
let it cover my tears.
I refuse to unveil my deepest
fears,
the true pain behind my eyes,

and the worry that lives in my
glass heart.
Giving them no reason to
question what “sets me apart”
from the rest...

The rest?
I’m not sure who she is.
Black women don’t get a break
to stop chasing their fate.
To sit and inquire about what
makes the ground shake,
an earthquake?
Maybe.
Or,
is it the weakness in my knees
that lack stability?
From standing with the weight
of the world
on my lone shoulders.
Please bring me a jacket it is
getting colder.
I don’t know rest and she has
never met me.
But I was told she is kin to the
wind
and the sister of the night.

I know one day
the dust will settle
and the sun will rise,
for the first time.
I will breathe the wind in
instead of her pushing
against
my skin.
While I wait
let me grab unto the tree with
the oldest roots —
That has held up the rope of my
elders' noose.
I want to soak in her history and
see the past,
reimagine the life that was
taken too fast.
The branches blow and the
leaves fall
but the tree stays still amidst
it all.

My arms grow weak
I am holding on for dear life,
I close my eyes and hang on
tight.
I beg the wind to

cut me some slack,
the ancestors speak
“There is not a place for that.
Instead, scratch your name into
the bark
and know the importance of
leaving your mark.”

“Come back later
and see this tree,
know that your presence will
forever be.”

The rain is heavy
but my heart is heavier.
The river of emotions is
overflowing,
how do I go on without
knowing
what lies ahead?
I must follow suit of the
examples before me
Trust in them and know it won't
destroy me.
It may be hard now,
a 400 year storm,
but soon this will not be the
norm.

cont. The Wind

Release the tree and run
towards the dark clouds.
Scream while you chase her
out loud, about how
PROUD
you are to be
BLACK.
Be not afraid of the night
she is only skewing your sight.
Grab the wind
by her hair and
force her to repair the damage
she has done.

The fight is not over and
the jig is not up.
My soul still aches from the
eternity of
“bad luck.”
To mend my being and heal my
inner self
I find beauty in all things
like fresh collard greens, Mr.
Brown scenes, and finally
sitting at the adults table on
Thanksgiving.
This is my culture.

This is my identity.
I am restored by knowing
myself.

Thank you to the wind but your
time is up.

Too Rare to Die

[Maisha Cole]

If you have ever gotten a tattoo, you know the way the buzzing of the machine, the fluorescent lights and the sting of the needle can bring you so consciously into your body. This sensation can be a rude awakening. Something like the last jolt that springs you awake from a nightmare. This is what I felt when I was getting my tattoo in July 2020.

As I am sure many of you remember, 2020 was a great year. My 2020 began with me coming back to my freshman dorm, the beautiful and serene CM. I was ready to get out of my small hometown that felt like it had been suffocating me for the last 18 years. I had started to shed the skin of what had been defining me, and stepping into myself at Gonzaga. I found a community and a sense of autonomy in

deciding who I wanted to be. One month into my oasis of what was my new life in Spokane, Covid took over and sent us all packing. We were moved out of our now dangerous dorms into what should've been the warm embrace of safe and loving homes. For me this was not the case.

I was thrown back into the breeding ground of all my trauma amidst a terrifying global pandemic and social unrest, in a conservative town that did not make me feel safe. In the beginning of the pandemic, I was in survival mode. I clorox wiped every surface in my house, did not come in contact with anyone, social distanced from my mom and brother, would only leave my room if no one was home, and would make myself run

cont. Too Rare to Die

a mile everyday to prove to myself I didn't have COVID, because people with COVID can't run a 7 minute mile. These, I would later find out, are called obsessions and compulsions. This level of stress on top of preexisting anxiety and depression, and mourning of a life and college experience that I had seen about to unfold right in front of me, became too much to bear.

Very quickly summer 2020 became a blur. My life was flashing before me like a movie trailer only stopping on the scenes that were important enough to draw me back to reality. In the moments of fast forward, there was a lot of laying in my bed all day and being out all night doing God knows what. Literally only the universe knows because I can not remember. I was

drinking and smoking at every chance I got. I had a horrible nicotine addiction and would puff through a disposable vape every day and a half. My body was weak, I wouldn't eat. I spent my days looking for something to make me feel anything. When you have fallen into a dissociative state, sometimes the only thing that can keep you grounded in reality is physical sensation, something as small as hunger pains reminded me I was human. I enjoyed the physical pain of what my behavior was doing to me. Being exhausted and hungover and hungry with a raging nicotine cough was the combination of pain that matched what was going on in my head.

In the movie trailer that became my life, a pivotal point in the plot line was one I think I

remember very clearly. Trauma and mania take away your privilege of fully believing in your memories. One night, two of my close friends came by my house. We had been doing something eventful that day but I honestly can't remember what. In front of my friends and my mom I was explaining how over the last few weeks my anxiety was now making me throw up throughout my day. My friends were of course very worried about me and my mom was very dismissive. She hit me with the age old, "you just need to stay home and get more rest." My one friend, Emma, saw that I was on the edge of an anxiety attack after using everything in me to finally ask for help, after years of suffering that was finally on the brink of boiling over. She said I should stay at her house that night and offered to drive me there, but I

told her I would pack my bag and just meet her. I grabbed my necessities, which were all already sprawled around my room in arms reach because I was basically living out of a bag at that point. I got in my car, my safe haven, the place I spent most of my time and began the 15 minute drive to her house.

About halfway there, I felt this overwhelming feeling of moving away from my body. I was on a road with medians in between the opposing lanes, with trees in them. The road was long and dark and windy. It was the road I drove everyday to get to high school, the road I drove to get to my sister's house, the road to get to my dad's office, and the road I was assaulted on when I was 14. There was a game I played often on this road. I would

cont. Too Rare to Die

drive on its dark narrow lanes,
a central orienting point of the
pieces of who I was. I would
turn the music up, close my
eyes and just accelerate. And
this night, I decided to play my
favorite game. I knew the road
like the back of my hand and
am often taken back to it oddly
enough as a place of comfort.
I was driving, speeding up,
no real concern with what
could happen because the life
I was living wasn't real to me,
nothing had consequences, it
truly was like a game. I knew I
was coming up on one of those
medians with the trees. I wasn't
fully aware of where I was in
the lane but knew if I turned
the wheel just a little to the
left something would happen,
something that would make me
feel. At that moment my friend
called me, shook me awake,
like the last jolt of a nightmare.
I answered the call and didn't

say anything. She asked where I
was and I just couldn't talk and
finally I said I needed her help
and I pulled over shaking and
threw up, mostly dry heaved
because there was nothing in
my stomach.

That night she begged me to
get help and the next morning
I googled "therapist," called
the first one that showed up
and made an appointment. But
getting an appointment didn't
end my cycles of mania and
depression. I needed a sense
of release. A few days later
things had settled a little bit,
but I couldn't let that happen.
I couldn't be alone with my
thoughts yet. I remember
having the idea of getting a
tattoo and the rest all kind of
blends together. I ended up at
one of the only shops taking
walk-ins during Covid. I asked
to get a tattoo and the guy told

me to pick a font and we got to it. No questions asked. A lot that happened during the tattoo session is a blur that I've tried to remember but really can't. The next thing I know I'm sitting in my car, with the residual stinging of a fresh tattoo and my heart is POUNDING.

I had gotten a tattoo on my hand. My hand was wrapped in plastic wrap, and I had no idea what had just happened.

Everyday for the next week I woke up and thought the tattoo wouldn't be there. I fully believed this insane thing I did was a bad dream. Everything in my life at that point was a bad dream. I hid the tattoo for a long time because I was so ashamed of the insane thing I did. The irreversible, scary, thing I didn't remember doing.

I hid it from my therapist because I thought for sure she would send me to the hospital for my unconscious impulsivity.

I hated the tattoo for months. I hated seeing it and it made me want to crawl out of my skin. When the pain of it became too much I finally told my therapist and she helped me change the narrative I was telling myself about my tattoo. She reminded me that in my lowest point, at my weakest, when I wasn't there, my brain was still looking out for me. I almost unconsciously put a permanent reminder on my body that my life is worth living. That there's something greater, that I was meant to be here. The tattoo is lyrics from a Frank Ocean song, Lost, which was the song playing the night I was driving on my dark windy road. The lyric says, too weird to live, too rare to die.

cont. Too Rare to Die

Over the last year I've worked really hard to heal and to be mentally strong and healthy. I have never been more happy, grateful, present, alive, in my whole life. The first time I shared this story, my friend Peter asked me to think more about how all of these good things have manifested in my life, to share something more specific. I realized, the most powerful change I have noticed is in the mundane moments of my life. For 18 years every waking moment I had was a battle for my life, a battle against my brain and my environment. I was always exhausted and out of hope. Now in the moments where my brain isn't preoccupied with whatever is going on in my day, I have peace. I finally have stillness. I don't feel like I am fighting for my life anymore, I

get to just live. I get to just be for the first time. Finding that feeling, the feeling of freedom, is what saved my life.

And that is the story of how I got my hand tattoo. And a story to remind you that you too, are too rare to die.

Unrooting Model Minority

[Aaliyah Mae Maniego Lewis]

Model-Minority. A myth that has given a name to the feelings I have felt since Elementary school – without even knowing it. This myth structured my life in Americas societal system. A myth that rooted itself inside me and connected each action with a second-hand thought, causing me to second-guess every movement I made, because one wrong move would make me out of place.

I fell into this trap of climbing to meet each expectation that White America pounded on a girl that looked like me. It was a never-ending climb to feel I was a part of a community. Even the one I was born into looked further away by the day, leaving me stranded between two communities that I had no place in. I remember dismissing my first encounter of racism because I finally felt a part of

the conversation, I remember telling my teacher the jokes that were made about my physique and being proud that I was finally making “friends”.

My words never spoke for me, my silence was my personality, but being the topic of a conversation gave me relief that I could still be a part of something.

I look back at it now and feel a rush of disappointment. Wondering why I let my classmates pull their eyes to make it look like mine. I feel ashamed for laughing with my classmates when they made a joke about me, I look back and feel sad that my mother did not say anything but “don’t let it get to you.”

I wonder to this day, if I have been so connected to this myth,

cont. Unrooting Model Minority

that I have let it play a part in almost every aspect of my life.

The parts of life, that I've wanted to be present in but always had that extra lingering thought of whether I am meeting standard.

There are times in this lifetime, that I question if my narrative is written by the hands of my heart, or if it's written by the façade of being the child that my white-step father expects me to be.

I have always felt that I hold myself together well – subconsciously that's what I've learned. And I set myself up successfully for whatever obstacles may interfere. But this time, it's different. This time, there's this ache that I am not living a truth that satisfies my heart.

I have fallen into this conformity within my own comfort zone, convincing myself that I am on the right track because I am good at what I'm doing. Convincing my heart that this feels like the right path because it comes naturally.

A natural, artificial feeling.

A feeling that has subconsciously stuck to the back of my mind, letting me know that something was off, but never understanding why.

Until recently.

For a while, I was in a spiral of what my life should be looking like. What my purpose is supposed to be. I remember over summer; I was going back and forth in deciding what I need to change for myself. It was my first summer alone.

Alone in Spokane. Working in the work that I have been wanting to do since grade school. Yet, I felt more unsatisfied in my life than I ever had.

Not because I didn't like the work I was doing, but, because I felt that I was only doing this work to get me by.

You see, for 18 years I have grown up to believe that I needed to maintain a grip on each part of my life. I was taught to never let things slip between my fingertips, and when it came to facing the unknown, I drew back to what I knew and allowed myself to stay stagnant.

And when I recognized this unhealthy habit of mine, it became the moment of my breaking point. A breaking

point that made me realize that I have been working all my life to upkeep this image of model-minority.

An image that has been engraved into my mind by a parent that is privileged to be a part of white America, and while he gets to live freely of his own determination, I am left to keep up with his expectations while trying to also learn what the hell it means to be a Filipino Woman in America. A Filipino woman that was planted in a pot rather than the garden, because from the beginning it has been a question of where I should belong.

And as I sprouted in the pot, my stem stood tall like a sunflower, yet it still created an upset with the gardener.

I didn't grow like I was supposed to, along the other

cont. Unrooting Model Minority

flowers in the yard, and maybe that's ultimately why I had to be re-potted in front of a home that recognized that my differences were equally as important as the others,

This home I was given was willing to take me in and teach me that my identity is not to be the same as the identity of the white man that had tried to assimilate me into his world.

This home had to watch me, nourish the soil I was rooted in.

At 16 years old, I had to learn how to water my leaves, and adjust to new seasons, to assure that the blossoms I held never faded.

Like a sunflower adjusting its position to face the sun, I had to adjust to a world that made me find light on some of the darkest

days just to avoid the pedals of my bloom from falling.

It has not been easy

To unlearn and relearn who I'm supposed to be.

But who I'm supposed to be, is just this flower learning how to embrace each pedal willingly.

And as I've grown even further along, I had to be moved to the earth, as my roots have expanded past my reach.

And so to say, who I've learned to be, is a Filipino Woman that is grounded in the soil that has been nourished by the nutrients of her own hands.

What if this is ME too?

[Angie Elguero-Mateo]

Dear
America,
to the rumble of thunder, she
quicks her pace. the lightning
couldn't keep her hidden. while
the wet pain of
tear chilling droplets drowned
her sight. she knew the fear
of being caught
with their inescapable grips
calloused from years of hard
labor.
the mother who drilled in her
daughters ear accusations
of disrespect, carelessness,
and neglect. spittle flying
everywhere, as the striking of
the paddle lands.

slapping the tortillas between
her dried out hands, that would
soaked in saltwater gloves,
gripping the handle of the
muddied clam rake, she kept to
her comforting habit
of cooking outside.
placing the tortillas one by one

on the pan that balanced on the
propane stove. hoping to pass
the practices on to her children.
“Angi, tráiga me un plato!”

opposite of the consistent plap
plop
of the tortillas, i ramble
whenever my mouth opens.
the words fly without my
consent.
unable to be straightforward
or clear. i assume myself to
be unprofessional and clumsy.
chic and girlboss aren't words
associated to describe an
Oddball
that often speaks a continuous
string of stumbling
lips and gasps.
constantly i overthink
everyone's intentions.
in my mind, i'm overtaken by
“um's” and “i'm sorry, i just
forgot what I was about to say.”
whether
English or Spanish, i'm

cont. What if this is ME too?

stuttering out
vowels and consonants
not knowing if they are serving
their purpose, afraid
my message is getting lost.

“what was that word?”
it’s quite depressing pretending
to not be embarrassed.
i’m reminded of my ma,
sacrificing her youth to feed her
eight siblings.
traveling to the wheat grinder
every morning,
feeding the cattle and chickens,
seeing her first pet die of
disease, and
finding out what puberty is
without her mothers support.
everyone is conditioned to
bathe and drink
out of the same river the
livestock do.
rarely did she get to go to the
city, much less get education
past the third grade.
because some part of her

wished she was the
younger sibling
that got the opportunity to
do so.
with that many kids, it’s always
the nature of “picks who gets to
....” she missed
out
on developing important skills
and social cues.
i mean, i cannot count how
many times i’ve had to shush
her or apologize for her
innocent, yet inappropriate
comments.
i cannot blame her, its
reinforced by her
countries harsh reality.
families breeding several hands
to tend to the land,
many who are alcoholics,
drinking to fill
empty stomachs and avoid the
traumatic
stress that comes with the
lack of wealth and increased
environmental degradation.

memories recalling how many
of the family members whose
life had been snatched
from the desired lines, the
newborns
taken by disease, and the
unfortunate situations that lead
a cousin to run
away to start a family at twelve
with her thirty-eight year old
predator.
this toxic environment is
transparent
in habits passed through
generations.
así es Guate, nina. no puedes
cambiar las tristezas de su
mundo.

it's too bad.
my sister and i confessed
to our parents and older sister.
of our need to talk to a
therapist.
we stressed the damages of
intergenerational trauma.
that keeping everything in was

destroying
Us, but
mom processed it as an excuse.
throwing it into my little sisters
face

“un berrinche”
“que te calles!”
my father kept his
silence.

i cannot,
not forgive them,
they are blinded by their
hardships.
to overlook this enclosed
way of thinking and the
experienced
lack of understanding, i will pay
my fated consequences
to anxiety. i am
afraid to come out
as possibly unhealthy
mentally.
to try to voice my fears.
i see the alternative solutions for
my problems, knowing i've lead
myself into these situations,
however, i'm stuck

cont. What if this is ME too?

in this cycle of wanting to reach
out,
put the effort in,
unwilling to become a burden.

us three
younger siblings sympathize
with each other.
we recognize how the older
ones cope.
my older sister who plagued the
house
with her mood swings, one
missed placed word and quick
the match would light. be ready
to comply with her anger:
“why are you giving me
attitude?”

while one of my brother's was
completely absent after his
divorce. and the other one not
acknowledging his drinking
problem.
he filled our ears with political
rants;
how good we had it compared

to his childhood.
occasionally hearing the past
stories of sleepovers and family
gatherings. being free without
expectations.

using drugs, not going to
school, hanging out with
the wrong crowd,
didn't
matter.

all because they were
not being supervised by mom
or Jose.

normalized it became to
lock our shared bedroom door,
avoiding leaving for everything,
even for the restroom.
tip toeing around him,
as we would self-inflict the
silent treatment,
filling the house with an
uncomfortable tension.
sometimes going on for days.
even now they don't see how we
are affected by their actions. we
don't have any of that
distant memories aren't the ones

where we receive a phone call
from our mom, worried about
our whereabouts.

i cannot blame them though,
it's the hand we've been
dealt.

Jose slaves away from dusk to
dawn,
my papi
reminds me to do better at
school

and to stop staying out
so long.

i don't see him much.
mostly when he can pick me
from swim practice
or from the several other after
school activities,
he's always hours late.
however, he's never lenient
when I miss the bus.
i can either stay home from
school or take a two hour walk.
i couldn't burden him with the
task to take me,
when it's out of his way
from work.

sometimes I go to work with
him.

where he picks salal,
huckleberries, or mushrooms,
grinding his joints away,
he walks

for long periods of time under
extreme weather.

his story is different from ma's,
but he's quiet about it.
doesn't let us into the tragedies
of his Mexican childhood,
unless he's had

a ton of beers

but he has a high tolerance.
it's even harder to get a reason
why he says "no" to me.
because differentiating his
emotions is impossible.

ma answers my questions,
tells us her homeland stories,
unless it hits a nerve.

i can picture her
slowly reading out of her bible,
mouthing
out the Spanish words that calm
her.

cont. What if this is ME too?

throughout the day she tends to
her chickens,
making sure they don't get run
over or getting the cops called
on again
and not forgetting the loneliness
that resonates from inside her as
she spends hours looking out
the window, worrying over us.
a pressuring tension
builds inside my chest whenever
i try to recall it.
emotions that are comforting
and toxic at the same time. a
warmth that follows envy,
jealousy, anxiety and pain.
i learned from ma
to always look
both ways while crossing the
road.
soon after i needed to push
away
to grow independent.
certain maturing would fill in
the hole
created by her lack of
understanding.

because our realities are
different
from her, my older siblings, and
the community.
in my backyard, infiltrate the
conservative,
middle class white people
with their retirement homes.
those fortunate commuters.
who managed the shellfish
industry, the shipyard, the mill,
and the educational positions.

at first being out of the city
limits,
living by the native reservation
with my five siblings, it was easy
to avoid the question of "what is
it like outside of our bubble?"
to not worry i was "fucking up
the vibe"
but eventually it became
apparent.
we've moved to a new house,
one inside Shelton.
at a different school.
social media provides

glamorized answers.
students with connections.
in this small community, you fit
in because you are each other's
family friends. some would
reminisce about their lovely
vacations
and summer mission trips in
Mexico.
Snapchat stories filled with
friday night football games,
with rebellious
drinking and drug
use,
and wild adventures
to the strictly enforced closure
of the High Steel Bridge.

self-conscious i became
of how i spoke
and of myself.
panicked over the idea of
communicating
it takes a lot
telling lies.
i used to have fun
now it's hard seeing someone

else having fun.
imagining those interactions
being meaningful.
instead i'm plagued by
recollections
ones that lead me
to avoid looking at burry
outlines
funny i celebrate and cringe
looking at the floor, clammy
hands clasped tightly, shaking,
helpless to the jitter's and
tension rips through my
body, ready to spring apart
like a snake inside a fake
pringles can. hyper aware of
everyone's bubblegum thoughts
questioning
everything i did
"how to do i please them?"
"do i look alright, my skins not
to dark is it?"
"does this make me sound
stupid?"
instinctively i smile
feeling rejected regardless
of the others reactions.

cont. What if this is ME too?

analyzing my texts, afraid of my emails.
comfortable swimming for reassurance, yet only sliding further into my loneliness.
haunted by cursed interpretations,
butchering explanations.
and turning translations around and around,
into essays of coughs and the occasional dried out tongue embarrassment. insecure to answer ma's question:
"que es el significado de la palabra....?"
seeing on repeat my older cousins accusations surrounding middle school me.
the fluorescent light shining on her older friends
thinking i was too good to speak Spanish.
"you can only speak to me in Spanish! come on, say something!" "i don't want to."
"hey! answer in Spanish or else

I'll tell my dad you can't speak Spanish." holding my breath, i already knew my Spanish was bad
yet the badgering continued, demanding, digging around seeking out bits of my private life out
keeping this a secret was okay until i overhear my ma crying.
a harsh phone call from my Uncle,
a degrading rumor going around about my family.
already, half the time we were ostracized from the rest of the extended family in the United States.
enjoying their gossiping and backstabbing.
its a commodity served by the Hispanic culture
spreading each other's lack of cleanliness,
confidential conversations and financial situations.
we stand on thin threads,

continuously
feeling estranged from the
locals.
it the way it usually goes,
rarely did we feel safe to go
or get invited to birthday parties
and church brunches.
self involved, i thought it was
my fault.
his yelling echos
“qué sucede contigo. diana dijo
que tu hija ni siquiera habla
español” i can’t remember much
else.

repetitively cycling the self
criticism
and nonsense assumptions of
myself.
consuming me were the
pressures
of my parents’ sacrifices and
the desire to assimilate, fueling
the insecurity and self doubt
growing inside. solidifying the
metaphorical walls
that keeps hidden a burning

void.
my passion to isolate
my home life and school life.
i never allow my friends to step
into my home,
for the chance they might see
the broken mind behind those
stones.
not to far away,
their might still be the girl who
screamed for hours, at the top
of her lungs
because papi broke her frame
of the first award she received
from school.
lost in his careless action.
set off by pride and helplessness.
“he doesn’t care”
“how can i impress him.”
“when can i see a genuine
reaction.”
i’m scared to address it but I
know it’s there.
the little girl who fears
she isn’t enough.
praying that someday slowly the
belief that,

cont. What if this is ME too?

i am
 enough.
 is true.
hoping, thinking it is progress
toward acceptance. how do i
stop the suffocation
of externally and internally
drowning.
i used to get by
seeing white clouds as my
persona.
so that paranoia of being
directly
judged or rejected wouldn't
waste my mind.
it's getting harder for it to not
affect my relationships.

standing alone, i miss the
carefree days
expecting the hold my mom
had on me
hand pulling me across the
road.
no one knows more about what
she's been through than her the
cruel reality of growing up

without healthy parenting or
support.
in front of la Guadalupana,
curled up on the floor, praying.
sobs rack through her small
body.
it still effects her
that reality exist for me too.

i can't remember how else
my days went by, growing
up, the toxic environment has
transferred to toxic habits for
each one of us.
know
that my coping mechanism is in
the disappearing memories, the
loss of self-esteem, and the loss
of enjoyment in interactions,
but the opportunities to escape
from the cycle exists. to find
better ways to cope,
not be the owner of a mind
that drills accusations of self
disrespect, carelessness, and
neglect.



Audriana Alfaro

[Disconnect]

My name is Audriana Alfaro, I'm from Spokane, and I am a human physiology major in my first year here at Gonzaga.

Micah Bell

[My Heart that Loves]

Micah Bell. Second Year, Biology. Sophomore from Spokane.

Raegan Bowyer

[My Qipao]

Raegan Bowyer is a current junior from Twin Falls, Idaho. She is the secretary for AAU. She is a Biology major. One of her hobbies is catching and identifying different species of insects and arachnids.

Bradley Carrera

[Dry Rain]

Bradley Carrera, Sociology major, I'm someone who just wants to spread smiles.

Antonio Roman Campos

[The Resident of No. 18 Vieux Carre]

Antonio Roman Campos is a Gonzaga University Honors College junior currently pursuing a major in civil engineering along with minors in English, writing, Catholic studies, and philosophy. In addition to being a hard-working student researcher currently investigating transportation engineering technologies, he is also the president of Gonzaga University's chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers; he is the captain of the concrete canoe design team; and he is a member of the Tau Beta Pi and Alpha Sigma Nu international honor societies. While he hopes to find a career in STEM, in his free time Mr. Campos enjoys reading and writing, with an emphasis on the styles and topics of late nineteenth and early twentieth century literature. A highly decorated Eagle Scout from Colorado, Mr. Campos also considers himself to be an outdoorsman, and he enjoys hiking, backpacking, and horseback riding. He has won awards for speechwriting, visual, and performing arts. He enjoys volunteering at local charities, and he believes that all people have the capacity to become great men and women. He is a committed environmentalist, an active member of the Catholic community, and he hopes to own a ranch one day.

Ariana Chin

[Messed Up Mind]

I am a third-year senior in the GU honors program quadruple majoring in Political Science, International Studies, Criminology and Sociology and minoring in Psychology. Being 100% Chinese, my parents immigrated from Hong Kong and my younger brother and I were the first generation within our family to be born and raised in the United States (specifically within Tigard, OR). Growing up, I attended private school, was homeschooled, went to online school, and attended public school. I have been playing violin for 16 years and was a competitive swimmer for over 10 years, traveling internationally for competitions. Some things that I love to do when I am not studying includes traveling, swimming, skydiving, snowboarding, experimenting with fashion, hanging out with friends, being with my dog, and drinking bubble tea!

Maisha Cole

[Too Rare to Die]

My name is Maisha Cole and I am a Psychology Major and Leadership Studies Minor. I am from Kennewick, WA and currently work as an intern at the Lincoln LGBTQ+ Resource Center.

Aaron Danh

[a chilly autumn morning]

Quam nossene fac ventere, erei perobus oc, non Itastam intiam pris?
quamquem nonc re diu esta, es ac rebus nihintuus hos cone ta abustra
chiliem ficae que perarices, con nonsulum ad inte qui pliceus erisqui
sedLin tare dienam mentera vena essusa pretrae condacrem inatus.
Soltorecto nere ego us, se antiu me ernihilinit, occhuius nostarita, de
miliam habit, facenatium ina, ditaberi satilla befachi, C. Quonsilis
consus labit; Cuppl. Evid nem pecum in peribemortem octam

Mikaela Daza

[Asian 101]

Mikaela Daza is a freshman majoring in Psychology on the Pre-Med track. She is from San Diego, California coming from a family of six. She loves to run, workout, and draw. She isn't much of a writer, but she felt that Our Voices strongly spoke to her. This is Mikaela's first time submitting one of her papers anywhere. She is excited to get out of her shell as she is a shy person, and this is a great opportunity to do so. Mikaela is also very excited to get to know Gonzaga and Spokane more during her time here.

Sasha Dailey

[Ghost Train]

Sasha (Kelly) Dailey was born in Monterey, CA and grew up in Salinas, San Ramon, and Modesto, CA. Now living in Las Vegas, Nevada. No culture shock-family has lived in Vegas over the decades. A graduate of Mills College (B.A. Political, Legal, and Economic Analysis), Prescott College (M.A. Arts and Humanities, thesis focus disability studies), and currently a student at Gonzaga. Antiquated train stations and railroad tracks in the central valley of California and the same in Nevada and Arizona inspired this piece. Spinal fusion resembles train tracks to them. Since age nine they have dealt with spinal complications. They have a senior dog named Geoffrey, a nine-year-old fish named Laguna and are in the process of being paired with a counterbalance/mobility service dog. They live with family in an apartment working from a desk or from bed during flares. Life consists of coffee mugs and piles of books and papers for research and creative writing. They are an elder goth who lacks spoons to dress up all the time anymore. They love supernatural topics, interfaith discussions, sci-fi, graphic novels, manga, beaches, and cute collectibles.

Asha Douglas

[A Nation of Plum Pits]

Asha Douglas is a fourth-year student at Gonzaga University, where she is pursuing a degree in English with a concentration in Writing and minors in Political Science and Film. In her studies, Asha is focusing on poetry. "A Nation of Plum Pits" was written in honor of a young black woman who survived a racist attack in her neighborhood while walking home from school. A truck filled with white men targeted her because she was wearing a hijab. As they threw rocks at her and yelled racial slurs, she stood her ground. Her story is one of resistance and strength and is, in itself, a revolutionary act.

Angie Elguero-Mateo

[What if this is ME too?]

Angeline Elguero-Mateo, Act Six Scholar, International Studies, Public Relations and Comprehensive Leadership minor.

Evelyn Elston

[The Spectrum of Love]

Evelyn Elston is a senior law and public policy student with a creative writing minor. They are originally from Beaverton, Oregon, and attended a small public arts magnet high school for theater and writing. Besides writing silly little poems, they enjoy improv, hiking, and making short TikTok videos about autism education.

Jacqueline Gaither

[Soldier]

My name is Jacquelyn Gaither and I am a junior studying criminology and communication studies on the pre law track. I have a huge passion for activism and have found my voice as a tool for that!

Madeline Gatewood

[Invisible Borders]

My name is Madeline and I am a Sophomore Political Science and Philosophy double major. I am a Spokane-native and have a passion for traveling once I get my degree. Currently, I have my sights set on law school after my undergrad and am interested in Family Law. I have always has a passion for academic and research-based writing and hope to continue that throughout my four years as a Bulldog. When I am not in class I spend time with friends and family, work, and enjoy time on campus.

Jocelin Garcia

[Pala]

Jocelin Garcia, Major(s): Sociology & Criminology, I'm a Junior from Spokane

Bodie Garda

[Size of the Fight]

I am a freshman at Gonzaga who is from New Orleans. I am a special education major. This piece is about children with disabilities and things that they have to experience in everyday life. Much like race, gender, and religion, people with disabilities have been historically isolated from opportunities in the workforce, education, and just about every other area of life. Providing advocacy and advancing civil rights for people with physical and mental disabilities is something I am passionate about which is conveyed in this oratory that I wrote during my senior year of high school.

Tara Hollander

[Addict, Little White Flowers, Mutiny]

Tara is a second-year student at Gonzaga studying English and Biology, with a minor in Women and Gender studies. She finds peace in the process of poetry and the opportunity to turn experiences into art.

Jessica Hernandez

[Oro]

A Latina attempting to thrive, while keeping her spirit intact.

Red Kwenda

[ALLUG Campus Safety, Bruised Fruit, The Losing Game]

I am a sophomore studying music and computer science. I enjoy writing music and fiction, especially around identity, fantasy, and human connection. My favorite show growing up was Shingeki no Kyojin, and I reference it at least once in every piece of fiction I write. I use they/them/theirs pronouns.

Jasper Leung-Chau

[Black and Blue, Prayer for Orphans, Right Isn't Always Right]

Jasper is a Catholic Canadian student within the Master of Counseling program at Gonzaga University. Poetry has been a form of artistic expression, personal therapy and a sharing of voices to promote introspection and a conversion of hearts. Her hope is for more to fully see and bear witness to the beauty and great power that comes from Unity in Diversity. To love and understand others, especially those who are in-need and different from ourselves.

Abigail Lennah Marquez

[This Right of Way]

Abigail Lennah Marquez is a senior civil engineering major from Anchorage, Alaska. Besides writing in her spare time, she enjoys going on five mile hikes to take nature photos, singing bad karaoke with friends, and riding Lime scooters even if she crashes most of the time.

Aaliyah Mae Maniego Lewis

[Unrooting Model Minority]

My name is Aaliyah Mae Maniego Lewis, I'm from Tacoma, Washington. I'm currently a second year, majoring in Computer Science & Computational Thinking with a Concentration in Communications. Here at Gonzaga, I work with 3 different departments, those being CCE, UMEC, and being a member of the GUCDEI Council. All while participating in clubs such as FASU, AAU, and HPIC and being a current ActSix Scholar in Cadre 12.

Analesa Mason

[The Wind]

Analesa Mason, Sophomore, Sociology and Criminology Major Tacoma, Washington. Analesa comes from a big family that is mostly women. "The Wind" was inspired by all of the incredible Black women in her life that have shaped her into who she is. It is dedicated to the long and prosperous life of her grandmother, Tina Thelma Mason, and her unconditionally loving mother, Lynette Mason.

Alexander McCurdy

[Me Too]

I'm a senior majoring in Applied Mathematics with a minor in Solidarity and Social Justice. I use They/He pronouns. I've been writing poetry for years now. I use it as an outlet to express myself. Last summer, I was sexually assaulted by my ex and I wrote this piece to tell my story. I've experienced a lot of abuse throughout my life and poetry is one of the ways I deal with it... among therapy, of course.

Rodney McGee

[My Humanity]

RJ McGee (he/him/his), Sports Management Major, Aspirations to coach basketball

Sophia McKinstry

[White Passing]

Sophia McKinstry is a sophomore at Gonzaga University majoring in journalism and Spanish. In her free time, she enjoys spending time in nature, listening to music, and writing poetry and short stories.

Tia Moua

[Asians for BLM, For My Younger self and All Children of Immigrants]

Tia Moua is a Junior, double-majoring in Communication Studies and Sociology and minoring in Solidarity and Social Justice. Last year, Tia was the Vice President of the Asian American Union club. She helped organize a virtual Asian American cultural festival to celebrate different Asian cultures through singing, dancing, spoken word poetry, and a fashion show. Tia also organized a virtual discussion on the rise in anti-Asian hate crimes and bias incidents with over 100 Gonzaga faculty, staff, and students in attendance. In her current job, she focuses on civic engagement, lobbying for racial justice, and community outreach to support Asian Americans. She is currently leading the Asian American Activist group on campus to fight for an Asian American Studies Minor and other demands to help Gonzaga become more diverse, inclusive, and equitable. In 2017, Tia was Miss Spokane's Outstanding Teen and went on to become Miss Washington's Outstanding Teen. She was the first Hmong-American state titleholder in the Miss America Organization. Tia enjoys dancing, listening to music, cooking, and riding her bike on the Centennial Trail. She has a passion for advocacy and activism work, especially advocating for the civil rights of Asian Americans, women's rights, and racial justice.

Dominic Pe Benito

[The “American Dream” Effect]

My name is Dominic Pe Benito and I am a sophomore Business Major from Gilroy, CA. I wrote this piece to discuss my struggle as a first-generation Filipino-American and talk about the importance of discussing your mental health. The message of my writing is meant to make people believe that the “American Dream” can lead to a lot of different cultural issues, but also to discuss how taking care of your mental health is a serious and real problem.

Lillian Piel

[love in its entirety]

Lillian Piel is a junior majoring in communication studies and minoring in sociology and social justice. They are a news editor for the Bulletin, and they enjoy theater, swimming, improv, and art.

Tara Phung

[A Shift in Mindset]

Tara Phung is a Gonzaga senior studying Business Administration with concentrations in Human Resources Management and Law & Public Policy. As a first-generation, Vietnamese-American student, Tara is proud to be graduating this May with plans to work in Talent Acquisition!

Sydney Rains

[I See No Changes]

Sydney Rains is a junior majoring in Public Relations and minoring in Communications Studies. She grew up in a small town along the Columbia River Gorge called Lyle, Washington-population 500. In her free time, she loves to read, play ukulele, play guitar, listen to music, and create art. She's loved art ever since she could remember. She admires its ability to elicit strong feelings and emotions through imagery and symbols. Her favorite mediums are colored pencil and collage.

Hannah Richter

[Little Family]

Asha Douglas is a fourth-year student at Gonzaga University, where she is pursuing a degree in English with a concentration in Writing and minors in Political Science and Film. In her studies, Asha is focusing on poetry. "A Nation of Plum Pits" was written in honor of a young black woman who survived a racist attack in her neighborhood while walking home from school. A truck filled with white men targeted her because she was wearing a hijab. As they threw rocks at her and yelled racial slurs, she stood her ground. Her story is one of resistance and strength and is, in itself, a revolutionary act.

Amari Troutt

[A Memory]

Major: Sports Management with a minor in General business
Hometown: Spokane, WA
Fun fact: I've always been drawn to the arts and the creative processes

To the contributors to this journal: Your vulnerability is what makes this journal personal and meaningful. I hope you are immensely proud of your work and for sharing your stories.

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