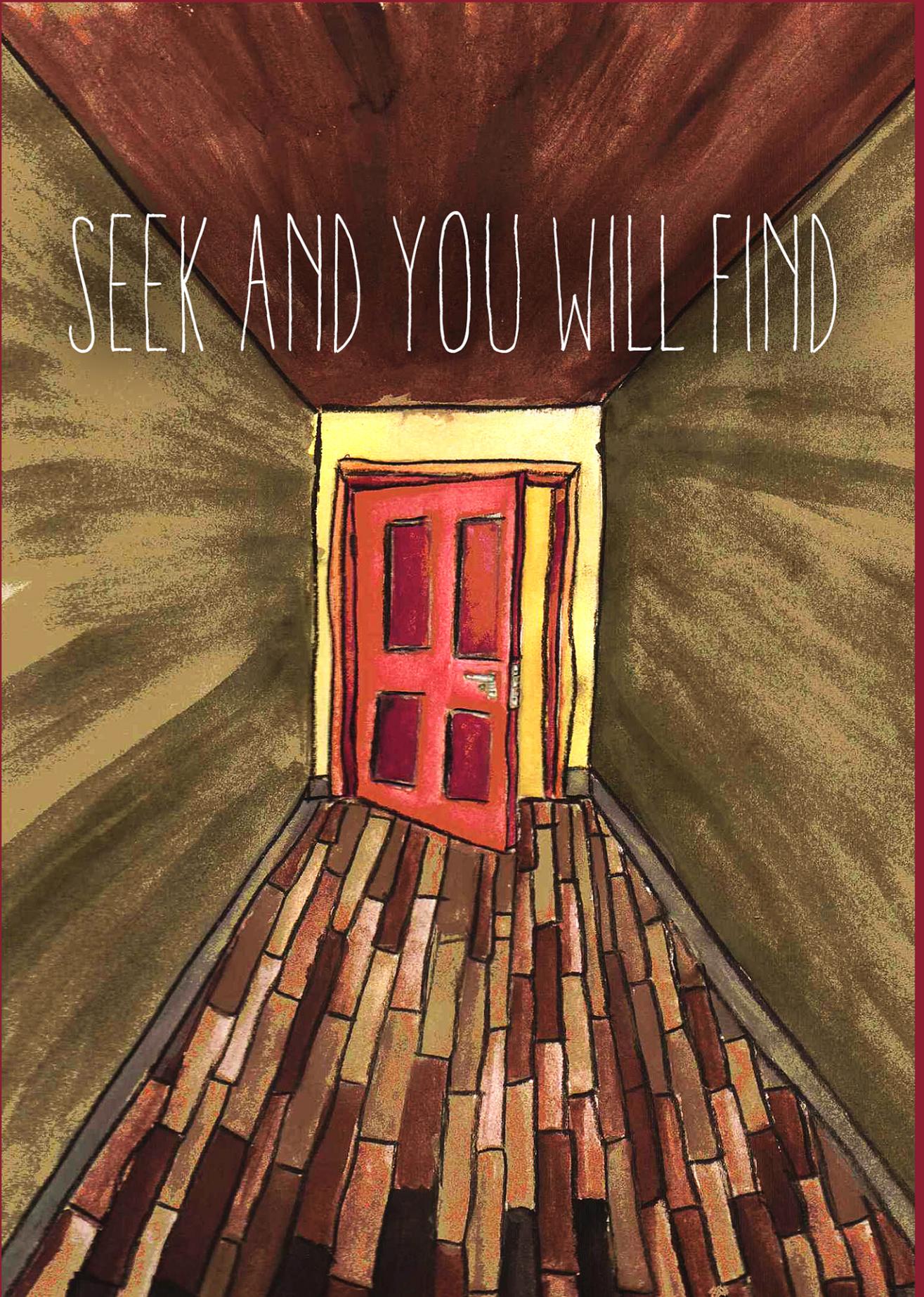


SEEK AND YOU WILL FIND



This magazine contains the Honors Composition Fall of 2013 CSU Stanislaus class works. Each work is individually fabricated to elaborate on an overall class theme. This Honors class strives in pushing students past their comfort zone and making them analyze works of literature. It is up to the reader to decide how to interpret the theme. The magazine is composed of poems, short stories, photography and artwork. We hope you enjoy our work and listen to our voices that are rarely heard.

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You are a
COLLEGE
student.

You are
POOR
and you
DO NOT
have your mother
to cook for you.

You either
STARVE
or
LEARN

Walls

Standing by the White walls
I find colors do not fit
the smooth white walls
all their perfections of smooth
White wood.

White walls
turned into white
Halls.
There is no other color,
White.
the moon glares at the walls
the white halls begin to glow

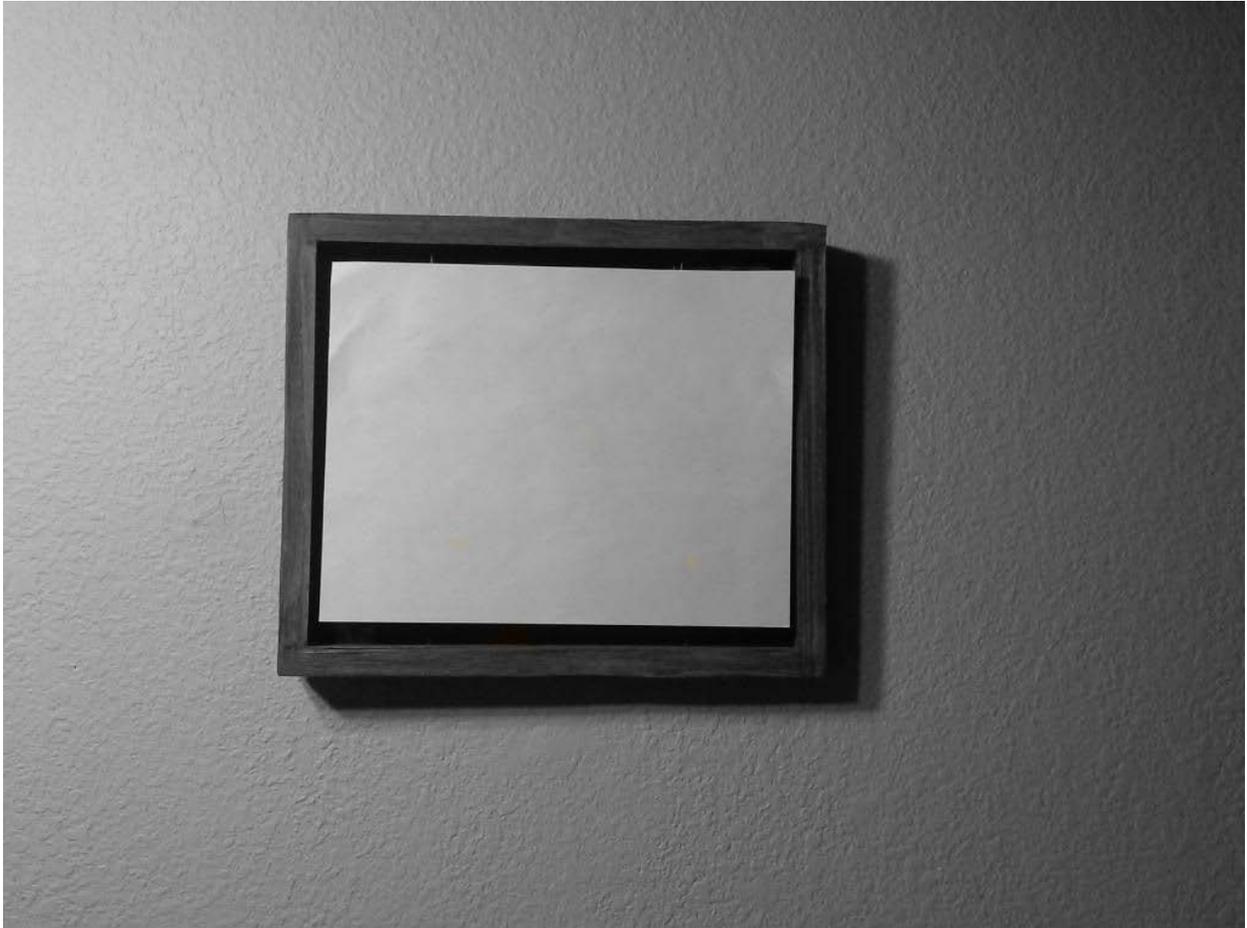
I begin to push forward.
The White halls do not accept my portrait.
Finally walking away
White turned into black.

Again.
I stand in front of Black walls
a saddened darker color.
Black is the complement of White
Whose halls are darker
and just like white
does not accept my portrait.

My portrait has color
fighting against each other
wanting to be the main event
the show.
A masterpiece,
but walls are not very accepting,
walls have ears,
and dead colors.
White walls and Black walls
do not want change.

My portrait will not be grey
My colors will mix together
create something new
but walls contain expressions,
they hold and choke
they leave no room
when all they have is room.

White and Black walls
will hide you
destroy the new,
they speak of you.
I live in a world with black and white walls
without room
to explore
a change in those halls.



iLife

As I was ingesting some artery-clogging fast food recently, a twenty-something professional type, suit and tie, came into the restaurant with his young son in tow. The kid was maybe three years old, and was totally immersed in a game on his father's iPhone. I was sitting near the ordering queue, so I could follow the scene as it played out, munching on the burger I had just ordered. The father asked the kid what he wanted to eat. Silence. Fingers moving rapidly over the touch screen. The father might as well have been a concrete statue for all the attention the kid paid him. Second attempt. What do you want to eat? No response.

The father gave up and ordered a kiddie meal. The food came and they moved to a table kitty-cornered from me. A few seconds later, there ensued an ear-splitting banshee wail of sufficient pitch and intensity to shatter glass. Ye heavens, I thought, an Al Qaeda torture specialist is plying his craft here in the restaurant.

Should I dial 911? Or hope that someone with a concealed weapons permit has a loaded .38 in his pocket to bring down the terrorist? Every head in the restaurant turned in unison to determine what was going on.

Yep, you guessed it. The father had apparently taken the phone away from the kid in an attempt to get him to eat his lunch, and the kid was throwing a temper tantrum extraordinaire: scream after scream, each louder, more piercing. The noise was deafening, and everyone from the grandmother sitting across the room to the attendant taking orders turned their eyes in stark amazement at the young megaphone.

The father, every eye in the restaurant on him, with a look of utter defeat, gave in and handed the phone back to the kid, who mercifully stopped screaming and resumed his

game. The kid's food remained untouched while the father ate his meal, and the kid was still engrossed in the game as they left the restaurant and walked to their car.

There are many addictions in today's world: tobacco, alcohol, drugs, junk food, chocolate, TV, and on and on. But I marvel at how many youngsters — sub-six years old — are enthralled with electronic devices. I see them everywhere, zombie-like, fingers moving over buttons or touch screens, totally oblivious to the world about them.

And then the question arises. Where does the addiction cease? At what point can we draw the line between childhood habits and adulthood addiction? Will this become the next drug of our culture? Our society is bad enough, does it really need another time-waster. Between the television and computer, we burn nearly 60 hours a week in the average home. Maybe it is time to rethink our strategy.

My adorable seven-year old cousin will likely one day eagerly pull the plug from her aunt's house because, a while back when we were watching them for a day, and I made her turn off her electronic game gadgets and put them away. "You can color, we'll read to you, you can play outside, you can drag Uncle Greg's shoes and clothes from the closet and play dress-up, but," I told her, "you can't play with these games while we're here." Before long we were riding scooters in the basement having a ball.

But really, is it right for me to set these rules upon my cousin, pretending that I have everything figured out? Is there not a part of myself, who owns one of these devices and receives all the information I need on a daily basis via my smartphone. I text, iMessage, Facebook, tweet, post, blog and do a myriad of other technological activities. Does that make me addicted? There was recently a batch of subjects who were admitted to the first internet addiction treatment facility on the East Coast. Somehow it won't surprise me if

more and more people end up in these institutions. Sadly. It is the drug of our 21st century culture, and our children are growing steeped in it, by the government, the media, our parents and our teachers. What can we truly do to resist it?

And yet, it doesn't take much to amuse me. The latest bit of evidence is the Temple Run smartphone application. It features a little animated man running through a maze. It's addicting. Apparently, I'm not the only one who thinks so, as Temple Run reportedly has been downloaded more than 160 million times to date. The reason that I'm bringing this up is that I currently am wrestling with my smartphone. I'd been holding off, waiting for Verizon to offer the iPhone, but instead, I opted for AT&T and upgraded to it. My hesitancy had nothing to do with cost; rather, the reason is a fundamental belief that such technology has more downside than upside when one takes a big-picture view of the situation. And yet. I still own one. Ironic no?

There is little question that each generation of communications technology makes us more productive. For example, fax machines were a quantum leap forward from overnight mail, which was a huge improvement over snail mail. However, faxing soon gave way to e-mail, which was better still. Soon thereafter we were able to send and receive e-mails using mobile computers, which made us productive even when we were away from our desktops. In the blink of an eye, that capability was extended to devices that we can keep in our pockets. Now smartphones entertain us, inform us, and allow us to buy goods and services from vendors anywhere on the planet — all while still enabling us to communicate via voice, text or e-mail whenever we wish.

Arguably, smartphones are the ultimate productivity enhancer. But what is the human cost of such wonderment? I am amazed, on a daily basis, at behaviors that are driven by the

obsession that so many have with smartphones. There is little doubt that people become addicted to smartphones — and fast. But that's not the worst of it; it has become equally clear to me that users just as quickly become slaves to these devices. As soon as they hear the ping that alerts them to the arrival of a text or e-mail, they spring into action.

This has created an expectation — amongst our families, friends, colleagues, bosses and clients — that we will be available to them everyday. All day. Without ceasing. I don't believe that is healthy. If an engine is left to run around the clock, it eventually will run out of gas. I think the same holds true for humans.

I wonder whether the time will come when people become so burned out from having to be "on" all the time that productivity actually will plummet.

All of that said, I suppose it is inevitable that I will join the legions of smartphone users.

My attention was taken by the sound of a beautifully crafted, soothing ping as an email arrived on my iPhone. I grabbed it and read the said email.

I know it is not just me. I receive emails now with that telltale signature strip of Sent from my iPhone. It seems again like it is a fully-fledged addiction.

Now, don't get me wrong, I love my iPhone -- and I don't mean just love it, I mean love it. I carry it with me everywhere. I scroll through its lovely screens, fiddle with its playful applications, caress its industrial design, and simply stare and marvel at its sheer beauty. I had given myself entirely to it without question.

It became apparent to me how much my sense of stress, of rushing without thought or reflection, of missing the important things, had increased significantly since I had become hard-wired into the 'always on' communication. How many times did I check for emails

instead of listening to the call of my brother down the hall or the lyrical melody of music in the kitchen?

It has taken me. It has taken all of us.

Puzzle Pieces

By: Britney Johnston

We are puzzle pieces in a huge puzzle called Earth.

Every man, woman, child, animal, and plant plays a role.

If one is missing, the puzzle is incomplete.

An incomplete puzzle may as well not be started

Because the picture will never be complete.

So if you ever doubt that you are important or needed,

Think about the puzzle that would never be finished without you.

Maybe you are an edge piece.

Or even a corner piece.

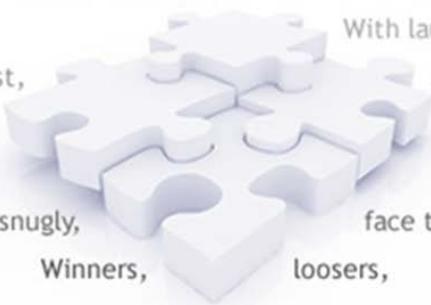
Forget the picture,

The puzzle would not even look right without you.

So always remember no matter how bleak things seem:

You have a place.

Know Your Place In sunlight bright, or wind and rain,
With laughter running down your cheeks,
When first, or last the line you cross,
If nowhere to be placed on podium plane,
Of fitting snugly, face to face,
Let heart and song sing loud,
Winners, losers, lookers on,
Together in unlikely yet united throng, **embrace**



<http://www.creativeiworld.com/talkcreative/culturalcommentary/the-cultural-olympiad-2012.html>

The Yellow Car

Once there was a new, yellow car
Awaiting the arrival of its new owners
Doesn't matter who the people are
Doctors, dentists, or even organ donors

Freshly shipped, a regular car fit for five
A golden yellow all around, as the color of the sun
Clean silver rims, bulky tires that are built to drive
A shiny gleam that says "That is the one"

Day after day, waiting out on the parking lot
Was the car invisible to the many buyers that looked?
Week after week, through the rain, wind, and hot
Watching as every head that saw the car shook

All hope was lost for the new, yellow car
Until one day, a boy in his teens came upon the golden machine
"I think I like this one", the boy exclaimed from not too far
Then it was settled, it was bought to a boy, eighteen

The car was a gift for the boy's eighteenth birthday
A boy who doesn't like to drive slower, but faster
With the relationship between the boy and car going okay
It will just lead to a bigger disaster

Driving on the road for the very first time to school
He thought it was the best car he had ever driven
Weeks to months of thinking it was cool
His satisfaction becomes less than when it was first given

To fix his troubles, the boy talks to his mom and dad
About his intention of finding a bigger, faster ride
Maybe the yellow car, hearing about this, was sad
But just like that, the yellow car was put aside

The next day, the boy went to trade the yellow car in
For a more sporty red car with the speed of a cheetah cat
What was once a new, yellow car still remains stuck by a pin
Waiting for its name to be pulled out of the hat

Through a couple more hard days a man comes in search for a car
A middle-aged man, in need of something to help him travel
The “new”, yellow car caught the eyes of the man like a star
He saw potential in the yellow car, being tough through rock and gravel

The middle-aged man was engaged, soon to be wed
To a beautiful woman, for the car was second best
All together they would drive around the world, he once said
But for now they are at home after work to rest

Through the next few years, the couple was becoming a family
In the last 5 years, they had two kids, a girl and a boy
“One more” is what the family needed to live happily
But what about the yellow car? A thrown-out toy?

Time has been catching up to the yellow car
Little scratches and scars from flying rocks
Dirt and dust cover where the sparkling colors are
Old age is at the door and still knocks

After the birth of the new baby, the family looked to buy a van
Where the kids can be comfortable and sleep where they lie
The time is short for the yellow car, for its connection with the man
Was an adventure, and ends with a goodbye

The man soon put the yellow car up for sale
Six grand, seven grand, eight grand, something to help the family out
Once again, standing on its own, the yellow car waits, floating in a pail
To a different island, where it can beep and shout

The yellow car ends up in a familiar sight
A different, older person, with the look of a handy-man
Took a close look at the yellow car through the light
And wanted to purchase the car, so no one else can

The yellow car is on the move again to a new place
Maybe it will be kept for longer this time
Will the yellow car be able to find its space
Where it won't have to arduously climb?

In the yellow car's new home, the handy-man cleans up the car
Repairs the dents, scratches, and washes the dirt
Days later, the yellow car looked like new with no scar
The handy-man smiled, a hug to the yellow car wouldn't hurt

The handy-man's family saw the yellow car and fell in love
To see the once beat-up car was golden yellow and new
The kids played inside the car, outside, under, and above
Was this the starts of a new life? No clue

Years and years have gone by, the handy-man has become retired from
his job
Of fixing cars and making them run all better again
His time was coming short, but he does not sob
For he has lived his life to the fullest, ready to face the end

The handy-man would soon pass away, the yellow car driving him once
more

The family in tears in the cemetery where he is to be buried
Twenty years since the yellow car was taken in and cared for
By the handy-man, who the yellow car's burden was carried

The yellow car keeps going strong until it will someday meet its end
Shining its golden glow to the world and showing its face
Moving from one area to another, never again
Through the hard times, the yellow car has found its rightful place

You may move from place to place, never knowing who you are
All your life, from young to old, know that you are a new, yellow car

Ready to shine your true colors, so everyone will know
Where you belong, the place that you will go



Everyone wants me as a possession
To be theirs
I am property
I am a thing
I am a girl.
I am supposed to be hidden and safe
But when will I be mine.
My OWN.
Myself.
I am obsessed with my freedom
because Everyone wants to own me
Like a piece of property.
I will go away.
I'll find my place within the streets of hell.
Where one is trying to claim me.
I will be my own.

Is That All?

See.
Cry.
Get up.
Crawl.
Walk.
Learn.

Is that all?

Read.
Add, subtract.
Divide, multiple, write.

Is that all?

Be responsible. Start driving. Get a job.
Get good grades. Be industrious.

Is that all?

Go to a good college. Get a degree.
Establish a career.
Get married.
Have kids. Raise your kids.
Be a good parent. Teach. Rear. Nurture.

Is that all?

Invest. Make good money.
Retire.
Play golf. Relax. Vacation.
Die.

Is that all?

toy dreams

tiny tin firetruck
little paper badge
plastic stethoscope

simple little times
simple little things
when i was just me
and not 'what i wanted to be
when i grew up'

imaginary friends
loving pet rocks
simpler times
easier times

when i wasn't my job
wasn't my house
wasn't my school
i
was just
me

Clear Waters

By Taylor Massengale

Oh the Naivety of Youth
I'm just at the edge
On the cusp of adulthood
Soon I will make the plunge
Jump into the rough waters

But now...

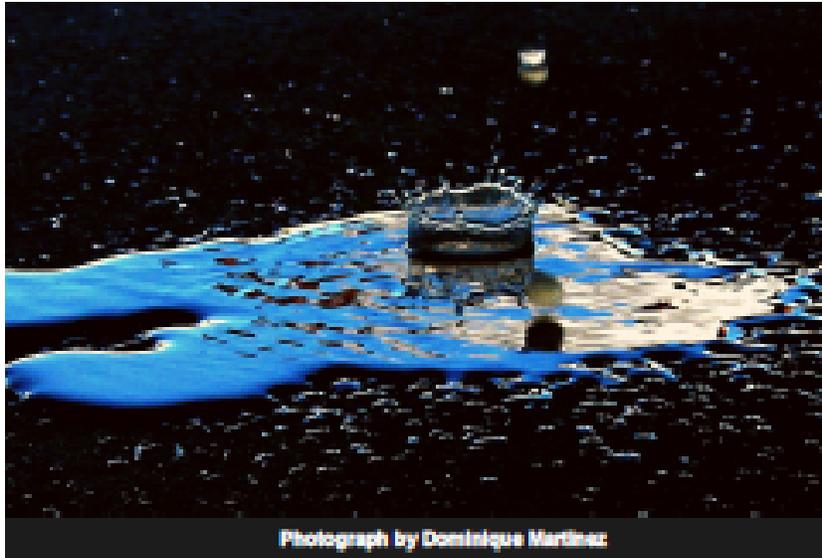
I will cherish the moments I have
Reflect on the time when I thought I knew everything.

Oh the naivety of my youth
That is what I will miss most
The simplicity
The knowing
The childish thought that life
Would go according to childish fantasies

But then that was shattered
I dipped my toes into the water
And felt a vast uncertainty
Realized that the ocean is huge
With depths unknown.

How will I ever know which way to go?

There is still hope for me though
For the water was clear.



Photograph by Dominique Martinez

Knowing Your Limitations

In my sophomore year of high school I witnessed a heart breaking scene. I had been walking to class when suddenly I noticed two girls verbally abusing and mocking another student. This nearly broke my heart and I knew I had to do something about it, but really what could I do? Me, a 4'11", 86 pound girl going up against two daunting girls. What were to happen if these two girls decided to jump me? Obviously the odds would have not been in my favor.

So, being the reasonable young woman that I am, I came to the conclusion that it would be best if I let an administrator handle the problem rather than confront the issue on my own without any backup. As much as I wanted to confront those girls about their offensive behavior, I knew my place and my own limitations.

As a student, I believed it was the administrator's place to deal with the issue and prevent the situation from escalating. The administrator's job was to resolve the issue and create a safe learning environment for students.

"Limitless"

By: Dominique Martinez

I had a dream, a dream of living in a world where love and harmony flourished and hatred ceased to exist.

I had a dream, a dream of peace without war where countries united to form one nation under God.

But my dream was merely a dream and nothing more

I walked down the streets of town and noticed a man in his car, but what I didn't see was the hatred in his heart.

I had a dream, a dream of good without evil, a dream of life without death, and joy without sorrow.

But my dream was merely a dream and nothing more

I saw a man concealing his face with his black hoodie as he stole a cd off the display case. He didn't see me, but I saw him.

I dreamed of a life without hatred and evil, but now I know that can never be.

I am limited not limitless. I cannot change the thoughts and evils of this world.

I had a dream, but my dream was merely a dream and nothing more.

What's Missing in Freedom

Put away your toys,
Clean your room,
Do your homework,
That's all she says.
I am done, I am leaving

Cookies, check.
Milk, check.
Skittles, check.
Hershey's bar, check.
Bye bye home.

Sunny blue sky,
Emerald green grass,
No naggers about snacking before dinner.
Dip crunch, dip crunch .
Mmmm this is life.

But something is missing,
I wonder what.

Who's that guy over there,
He's sitting on the bench by himself.
Maybe he has no friends,
Should I go talk to him?
He's probably mean and stupid.
And that's why he's alone.

Wait, but I'm alone too.
But I'm not mean and stupid.
Maybe he's not too.

He says he doesn't have a home.
Neither do I.
Are him and I actually similar?
He says no,
I say yes.

He says I have something he doesn't,
So I gave him my skittles.
He says thanks but that's not it,
So I gave him my chocolate bar..
He says thanks but that's not it.

So what is it that I have and he doesn't?
He points at something behind me,
Someone, a lady running around the park.
There's a man behind her too.
It's my parents.

They ran over to me and gave me a hug.
So that's what I was missing.
I gave them both a cookie and what little milk I had left.
They smiled and gave me another hug.

Before we went back home,
I went over to the homeless man,
and gave him a smile and a hug.
He says, Thanks
That is it.

Survival Class 101: Bread

Often times, when your mother or siblings or friends or whomever gives you food to eat at college, it's usually things like macaroni in cup, top ramen, cookies, water, cheez-its, BREAD is not included in there. However, BREAD will MOST DEFINITELY be your best friend. Unlike the living best friend you have back at home, even if you leave them in the closet for a week or so they will still act the same way towards you.

Think of all the possibilities you can expand with bread.

- PB&J that's everyone's favorite.
 - You can store peanut butter in room temperature so all you need is the jelly in the fridge
 - Its CHEAP! A normal jar of peanut butter and jelly would probably last you throw two packages of bread,
 - its \$2.99 at the cafeteria
 - You can make it and store in the fridge the night before so that it can be a quick grab breakfast or lunch
 - It is Easy to make. Your brains will be fried sooner or later (especially after taking midterms and pulling all nighters,) your body will refuse to think when given the chance to, so don't waste your time

- Turkey Swiss Sandwich
 - Why pay \$4.07 at the cafeteria when you can just buy turkey and cheese from your near by grocery store for about the same price with five times the quality. Who doesn't love extra turkey in their sandwich.
 - Good for any or all three meals (all three is not recommended)
 - Everyone will love you for giving them a bite
 - You can use string cheese instead of the other fancy cheese so that you can casually eat it or microwave it to put on the sandwich
 - If you have some extra bucks in your pocket, go buy BACON. It's a good investment while it lasts

- The Classic Butter Toast
 - Technically its against the rules to bring an toaster to the dorms, but trust me you can hide those relatively easily
 - You can steal butter at the cafeteria all the time, it's easier than asking for a water cup and filling it with soda at McDonalds
 - When you wake up late and you were too lazy to make something last night, all you have to do is stick the bread in the toaster before you go take a leak and by the time you finish changing the bread probably put on its nice golden brown outfit too

- Nutella
 - Enough said.

Survival Class 402: Equipments

Yeah it skipped from 101 to 402, its weird, I know. College is weird. Deal with it.

Sure you may have a checklist of what you need to bring to college, but do you really know what you need before you get there and it's too late for your mom to get you some fancy equipments from Bed Bath and Beyond? Nope!

A microwave and fridge comes with most of the dorms but if they don't, rent one or buy one. Those, you need more than you need your underwear.

- **Water Boiler Pot**
 - You don't have to wait 3 long dreadful minutes in the microwave for your ramen
 - putting Styrofoam in the microwave is bad for you
 - Nice hot tea when you are sick
 - By boiling it you are killing the germs and everything so you don't need to get water filter jugs where you have to change your filter every month or so
- **Water Bottle(no s)**
 - Eco-friendly, wallet friendly
 - Don't be those idiots who buys those 24 pack water bottles at costco or whatever
 - its like \$30 bucks a case or something at the "convenience" store on campus
 - there is a water fountain down the hallway, avoid freshmen 15 and walk there
 - You can bring it into the cafeteria where they have the soda machine and everything so drink some there and drink some back in your room without the need to go buy a gallon of orange juice at the grocery store

*These do not have anything to do with starving but keep it in mind anyways

- **Noise Canceling Earphones/Headphones**
 - If you are one of those unfortunate souls who got stuck with that one person who CANNOT stop talking, just put those headphones on and hopefully they'll stop talking to you, if not, you can't hear them so you won't feel guilty or ignoring them
 - If you are that loud person, just be kind to the world and crush one of your lungs
 - Even if it's not roommates, there are bound to be 5 year olds in a 18 year old's body and are running down the hall screaming obscenity. Don't waste your time with them
 - You don't want to stay in your room all day when you don't have class, put on some music and just walk around the campus, its a good stress reliever.
- **Wireless Mouse**
 - You feel like you don't need it, but BRING IT
 - If you are going to take some kind of math class, in which you need to use excel, unless you know every shortcut key that's not even that fast to type, a mouse will save you a good 10 minutes compared to the mouse pad
 - It's fun to hook it up to your roommates computer and controlling it from your desk
 - It's small, even if you don't feel the need for it right away, it's easy to store. Better be prepared than be sorry

Drinks

By Christina Robles

No one expects to mess up so bad

No one expects to feel so sad

No one thinks they'll make that mistake

No one thinks one poor decision can cause such heart ache

You didn't mean to hurt anyone

You just wanted to have some fun

One drink leads to two, two to three

So many you can barely see

You wake up in someone else's bed

You are overcome with feelings of dread

All you remember is feeling hands on you

Oh how you wish you were able to hit "undo"

You remember trying to push him away

What games was he trying to play?

What he did is what you can't recall

Those drinks were your downfall

Now you hate to look at your face
You are left feeling so out of place
You hate to look in the mirror
Because it makes the pain sear

You remember saying "no"
Why do you blame yourself so?
My dear, that is called rape
He knew you were in no shape

You need to get back to who you are
Eventually the wound will become a faint scar
Be strong and learn from it
Protect yourself and know when to quit

No one expects to mess up so bad
No one expects to feel so sad
No one thinks they'll make that mistake
No one thinks one poor decision can cause such heart ache

disOrder

REALITY i.

>BOOTING OS...

-com.yrisem.user...ok

-com.trgere.user...ok

-com.othal.user...ok

DestrudOS v. 1.6.7 ©2001

USER LOGIN_

I hate my life.

YTILEAR i.

The long hatch descends, it pointing towards the curvature of the earth. If one gathers the bravery to, you can see the white sash that splits the Earth and Space. The countless clouds float below, acting as a sea all on its own, the one that few men dare to swim.

The marvel of human accomplishment, the Orbital Dropship, the *Zoroaster*, orbits around the Exosphere of the Earth, pointing its lengthy hatch to the surface, a gun to the Earth's head, in a show of assumed superiority. Ace Pilot Adenoid S. Hinkle was not afraid, his Light Craft could have the probability of weakening and disintegrating in the heat of atmospheric re-entry, but one thing would have been sure: he would have died as he dared. He was simply not afraid. Of anything. Hinkle viewed through his cockpit, a digital panoramic display, the Sun as it peeked from the Earth, serving as a medium between a vacuum and life.

The radio burped. "We got three War Eaters ten thousand clicks down. They know where we are, and they're on their way. Hinkle, take Kirk and Fred with you and destroy them. Understood?"

"Roger." Hinkle acknowledged.

Three ships zipped out into the atmosphere, three red streaks cutting into the sky. Adenoid could feel the rumbling of his Craft as gravity was betraying him, his display warning him of distance, temperature, speed. The target was closeby.

"Thousand clicks left. Then they start shooting." The radio burped.

The clouds cleared, and above the foggy sea of white, rose three mechanical behemoths. Bits of malevolent light scattered throughout the area, originating from the War Eaters. The three fighters took evasive maneuvers, hearing the sound of the multiple projectiles hissing by.

"Aim for Target T-0, the one two hundred clicks away. Southwest!"

One fighter launched a Proton missile, a trail of smoke racing towards the nearest War Eater. It impacted with a bright yellow explosion, and the mechanical leviathan fell down to its foggy sea.

"One down!"

The War Eaters have noticed that one of their own have fallen, so they have gone into a more defensive strategy. Hinkle noticed that the haphazard fire had diminished, and now, thick trails of light poured out from the ships. The team of craft dodged the new artillery, but noticed that they barely succeeded in doing so.

“Damn it, they’re using Homing Lasers!”

The trails appeared much quicker as time passed, eventually passing through a craft of their own.

“Kirk! No!”

Their fallen comrade descended in a trail of smoke, to meet the white sea. Hinkle hit his craft in higher gear, and he head straight toward the War Eater directly in front of him. The on-screen targeting prompt locked-on to the behemoth. The missiles flew and the Mechanical war beast descended to meet his felled brother.

“One more left. One more!”

“Hinkle, let’s hit this one together, for Kirk!”

“Roger.”

Both craft zipped towards the lingering War Eater. No shots were fired toward the incoming craft, this seemed like an easy finish for both fighters.

“Alright, let’s shoot missiles at it in 3...”

The War Eater gathered a white light in front of it.

“2..”

It glowed.

“1..”

A bright light encompassed both fighters, a ray of heavenly light burst out of the front of the War Eater. Hinkle could see bits and pieces of his Light Craft rise and separate from its whole. The computer systems of his craft were shut down. Hinkle could see his comrade and his craft disappear into the white nothing.

This seemed like the end, was he was headed towards that metaphorical light at the end? It didn’t seem so, the light surrounded him ,it was killing him. He saw white. Hinkle chose to live. He seized the controls of his ship, and sharply turned them towards his immediate left. The light dimmed, and soon he could see another white.

REALITY ii.

Say, Anne, how’s your part of the prototype holding up?

Pretty fine, Adenoid.

Mine’s pretty buggy, the letters are reversed after you boot it. I must have typed something wrong in the code.

Yeah, you could have.

So, are you up for lunch by any chance?

No thanks, I just had lunch.

Oh, you already ate?

I already ate.

So, no lunch?

I'm afraid not.

Yeah, well, uh, I'll be eating lunch over there. Just in case, okay?

Okay.

Okay.

YTILEAR ii.

Pvt. Adenoid Spencer Hinkle
September 7th. 1972.

I became the jungle in these preceding months, stationed in this place. I no longer see through my corporeal eyes, but through the vegetation. I taste the spilled blood on the soil, which is my tongue. I hold the hanged bodies of the enemy through the branches, which are my fingers.

Some time ago, I do not know, I have lost all essence and knowledge of time due to my dark enlightenment, my company was sent out to scout out any enemy forces, many kilometers away from our base. This was a scouting mission, so we did not bring much heavy weaponry, only what we could handle. We took a small raft upstream this river, one that apparently a lot of villages relied on. We passed by, and saw the fear in the local's eyes. Our company stopped by one, we asked for any information regarding enemy rebels. They refused. They resisted. In the end, it was in vain. They were hiding in the bushes. Explosions burst out of the ground, they set remote mines scattered around the village. People turned into dark sprays.

We pulled out our guns and started shooting wherever we could find people. Fellow soldiers yelled out enemy locations before being struck by invisible fire. Then it seemed that the ambush had stopped. For a second we had thought it was a quick attack to lower our defenses, our overall moral. There was something bigger at work here, literally, and none of us could have expected it.

Before I go on further, let me take time to explain the background of the upcoming surprise, in the milliseconds that were between these two events. The Alliance Military has had this secret R&D team directly on the country, underground. They made all these crazy machines, that could cause immense amounts of destruction. So, the Rebellion raided this installation, and the war has been different since.

So, I introduce our own sower of destruction, that burst through the thin trunks of the trees of the jungle: Alliance Military Prototype Practical Tank No. 07 Mk. I. The *Angra Mainyu*. I think I have finally seen something so beautiful. So divine.

It towered at around twenty or fifteen feet. Black smoke smothered the sky as it poured from the machine's back. One glowing gold eye searched through the dark. Various metal parts,

moving in conjunction to the whole's movements, clinked and sparked. From its arms it contains fire arms, it mowed down my company. I couldn't feel anything, I couldn't think.

Every step it took seemed to cause sacrilege towards the earth, you could think that someone can feel the tremors miles away. Flame seeped out of its body, encompassing its immediate area, and the beings who are unfortunate to be within it. I remember feeling someone taking my hand. It was someone, can't remember who, but they told me to run for it. A couple of the others were running with us, too. But I looked back, and I could see the dark creature at its work.

September 8th, 1972

We've been breached.

The destructive spirit is back.

Everything's on fire.

If you can read this, then that means I have fought. And it was an honor to have die by the hand of that dark beast.

REALITY iii

Enter Adenoid Hinkle, he is wearing his typical office attire. The Boss has been waiting there in his cubicle.

Audience cheers.

BOSS: Did you know that you took 10 extra minutes for your lunch break?

ADENOID: I didn't know.

Audience laughs.

BOSS: Well, anyways, I need you to report me the progress on your part of DestrudOS 2.

ADENOID: I did sent one to you last Wednesday.

Audience laughs.

BOSS: Don't get smart with me, young man. I can fire you like I did Jugo last trimenster!

ADENOID: Jugo from marketing? Jugo, who embezzled thousands of dollars?

BOSS: That Jugo. Now send me the report by Friday, or else you get the pink slip!

Audience groans.

ADENOID: What? Fired?

BOSS: That's right!

ADENOID: You'd fire me just for that?

Audience laughs

BOSS: It's new company policy. We have to get DestrudOS 2 out in the market by the next fiscal year.

ADENOID: But we started development last month, how could we possibly finish it that fast?

BOSS: Our shareholders expect us to reap in much profit, due to the success of our previous operation system. In order to please them, we have to release the new version in the upcoming holiday season.

ADENOID: But, you...this isn't making much sense

Audience cheers.

BOSS: Remember, we need to start beta testing tomorrow.

ADENOID: I'm...I'm not feeling well.

BOSS: I expect the alpha build in my terminal by this afternoon.

ADENOID: This isn't happening, is it?

Audience laughs

ADENOID: Do you hear that?

BOSS: I already gave Steve from marketing some guff about not starting out on our marketing campaign for the new version.

ADENOID: You're not listening?

BOSS: Try not to go overbudget. I've sent memos to the guys in accounting about our budget on this project.

ADENOID: I can hear it! I can hear it!

Audience cheers.

BOSS: So, can you tell me how far you got in the project?

ADENOID: I'm going to kill myself.

BOSS: Anne told me that your version still can't boot up.

ADENOID: I'm going to hang myself with my tie.

BOSS: I suggest you start working on it, instead of wasting my time.

ADENOID: It's not worth it anymore.

Audience cheers.

BOSS: Well, remember. Alpha Build by seven o'clock.

ADENOID: I'm gonna die.

YTLEAR iii

Below the all-encompassing blue sky, on top of the rolling green hills, the grasses swaying from the cool breeze. There sat a boy, clad in black and white school uniform, contemplating on life, on the beauty that he sometimes takes for granted. He wondered about the

width of life, and how people thought, on what people thought. He held a black board, the newest in technology. It utilized the wind to propel and levitate people, for transportation and for recreation.

A girl with white hair approached him.

“Hey Adenoid.”

“Hey Athena.”

“It’s five minutes till class starts.”

“Then why are you here?”

“Because I like this place.”

“So do I.”

There was an activity that all the teenagers and anyone that just wanted to appreciate speed and the sky, it utilized the black boards and it was called “Skiing”. The boy and the girl zipped through the green meadows on that black board., the shaded grass until they reached the residential zones.

The same houses, row by row, all reached towards one blocky building. The Reznor Preparatory School. Here, in the town of New Brighton, any every day routine was pretty much the norm. Adults went to work ,and the children went to school. The bell had rung as the two entered the building. They snuck into the homeroom while the teacher had her back turned to the board, writing down the name of today’s lesson.

“Okay, class, today we’ll learn about the Rave Wars.”

“Oh, damn, I forgot.”

“The long war between the Beatniks and the Humans.”

“My dad was a Beatnik soldier, Adenoid.”

“Started in four thousand three hundred and seven, common era.”

“I know. I know.”

“It initiated with the assault by Beatnik forces on the Quadrophenia Capitol Building.”

“At least that’s what my caretaker told me.”

“An estimated three thousand people died on that attack.”

“Shit.”

The bell rang soon after, and everyone went out to the square yard, in their groups. The two of them walked toward the gate and stood there. Some students passed by.

“Hey, Adenoid, how’s your Beatnik girlfriend?”

“She’s not my girlfriend.”

“I’m not his girlfriend.”

“She looks so pale, are you sure she doesn’t get enough sunlight?”

“Shut up.”

“I’m surprised she can even speak English!”

“Shut up.”

The students walked away.

“Don’t listen to them, Athena. They’re just trying to get to you.”

“Yeah.”

The bell rang hours later. School was over, Adenoid and Athena walked down the road, by the wild grasses. The buildings can be seen in the background, beside the nature. They reached the center of New Brighton, some people were around, waiting for transportation, family, leaving out of the shops, closing up shop, it was late in the day. Eyes staring.

Is that the weird girl?

I heard her family's full of enemy soldiers.

Look at her hair, she's one of them, alright.

You'd think the boy would know better.

A couple blocks later, they arrived a colossal building complex. A half corroded sign stood in front of it. Folsom Blue Living Spaces. They stepped a couple flights of stairs, tired and worn, they reached their door. Apartment number 742. Athena and Adenoid step in, the radio is tuned on.

"This is Roger Bow on WCBN FM, here on the Afternoon Tech Drive."

"Could you turn down the radio, Adenoid? I think my head hurts."

"Huh?"

"Any news today, Jay?"

"My head hurts. Could you turn off the radio?"

"But the news."

Adenoid was washing his hair.

"Some Beatnik splinter forces have been arrested near Plastic Beach, President Santana is urged to make a statement on the remaining forces left in the State.

"Turn it off."

"I can't."

"Hey-wow, can ya believe they're still out there, Jay. Hell, I voted for G.G. Lydon last election. Man, have things changed."

"Please turn it off."

"Wait."

"I think my dad got a couple of those Beatniks in that one of battle of Tormato, probably tons of years ago."

"Turn it off!"

The radio hit the floor. Static burped, the plastic crackled all over the floor. Adenoid ran out.

"Jesus, Athena, what's wrong with you?"

"Ju-I-I ca..."

"What?"

"I can't."

"You can't?"

"All those people, I-"

"You're?"

"I don't know, Adenoid, I just don't know. It's always the same. Those people. They just-."

"They just look at you. Don't they."

"Not just that." She sat on the bed. She looked down. "Look at me."

"But you're-."

"Look at me! I'm not like you! I'm not like them!"

Adenoid didn't speak.

"I'm different! All my life, it's the same, that staring, that whispering. I can't feel like you. You wouldn't know about that feeling, to be so alienated. An alien. A real alien."

Adenoid still didn't speak.

“No birthdays, no celebrations, no one to say ‘good job’. No compliments. I’m the weirdo, I’m the thing that no one wants to see. I’m invisible.”

Adenoid didn’t speak.

“Sometimes I wonder why I even bother. Why do I even bother living?”

“Don’t say that.”

“It’s true, Adenoid! You think so, you think I’m a freak!”

“Don’t say that.”

“You-You’re just like them, aren’t you? You hate me, too!”

“Don’t say that!”

She stared at him. There was silence.

“You think I don’t know about how you feel, Athena? You think that if you leave, leave forever, that you’d solve these problems?”

Tears ran.

“I know how you feel, and it pains me. Remember, years ago, at Ridgemont Primary, your first friend?”

“You.”

“It’s because I saw how alone you were. You sat there, on the concrete bench, watching all the children play. Even then they knew you were different, you knew that.”

“Yes.”

Tears ran.

“It’s because I was alone, too. The raggedy kid. The kid everybody ran away from. The kid with no lunch money. The kid that was alone.”

“Adenoid.”

“I knew then, that you were alone, too. Maybe, if we melded our loneliness, we could feel a bit better.”

Athena said nothing.

“That’s why I don’t want you to die. Don’t die. We only live for so long, and then we’re gone. Forever.”

“We need each other.”

“I need you.”

It started to rain outside, the thunder ricocheted its waves across the mountains of the valley. Droplets raced down the windows, and if you could squint your eyes enough, no matter how you feel, you can see the rainbow, suspended between heaven and earth.

All your hopes are drawn towards that rainbow, so that it can live in your heart as one of the mysteries of life.

REALITY final

I don’t know anymore

I don’t feel anymore

Everything’s empty inside

It always has been

I don't want to live anymore

Because I don't want to be me anymore

So goodbye

I fare thee well

Arrivederci

What a wonderful

Beautiful

Cruel world

Goodbye

Bang

WHO ARE YOU?

Theme: Know Your Place

Discovering The Real You

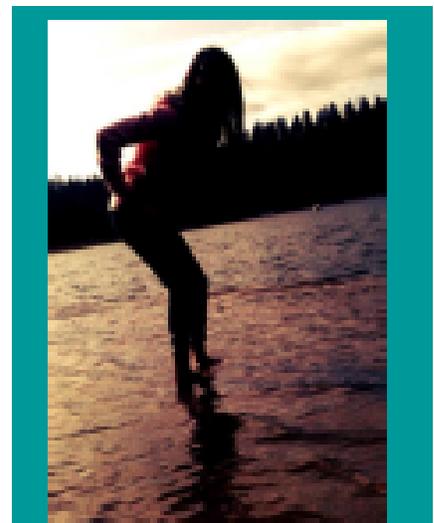
From the moment we are born, we begin the quest of discovering our individual identities and searching for truth. Through the process of finding ourselves, we are faced with challenges that influence our self-perceptions and often may distort our true identity.

Don't Let Others Define Who You Are

I have been exposed to multiple situations in which it was vital that I know my place and identity. Despite what others may say or do, I know exactly who I am. There is nothing anybody could say or do that would alter my own perspective of myself. Even my own negative thoughts are incapable of breaking me down. "I'm ugly?" No, I don't think so! I am the daughter of the living God, cherished, loved and adored. I know I am strong. My existence and being are not in vain. There have been times where others have attempted to bring me down, professing negative words towards me such as, "You're way too skinny!" or "Stop being so anorexic!" It's crazy how negative words can sink in and constantly run around in your mind. It was hard not to let the lies cultivate in my heart, but I know I am worth more than empty words. I am not what others say I am, I am what I define myself to be. My definition comes from the father, my heavenly father that is. Of course there may be bumps along the road that may cause me to question my significance; and at times I may need to remind myself of who I am. My name is Dominique Daniela Martinez. I am a dancer. My identity is found in Christ.

You are worth more than you could ever imagine because your worth surpasses all earthly things.

**“ I am the
daughter of
the living God,
cherished,
loved, and
adored”**



Following the footsteps of Jesus: Walking on water

"Lunch"

You are sitting in a room with hundreds of other people everywhere, voices creating a buzzing noise.

Each person has various versions of the same food, not one platter the same as the last.

Some sit alone some are accompanied, either way all engulfed in their own worlds.

You stand at the front of the room surveying everyone.

Your mind going a million miles a second trying to evaluate which seat would be the best.

Different groups of people scattered around making the choice more intense.

Out of the corner of your eye you see a window overlooking a small picnic area outside.



The sun shines bright and a soft breeze blows through the leaves of a shady tree.

The choice is yours to make.

Outside is where you are to go, not falling into the other "set" places in the cafeteria with the rest of the people.

Once outside, you notice you are alone to enjoy your lunch content with your choice.

Being you never felt so good.

(ME)

The Clone Wars

By Taylor Massengale

Walking among the tidal pools of North America's west coast, a bystander can be taken aback by the beauty of sea anemones. There is a species normally seen, with a green stout body leading into an oral disk surrounded by green, opaque, finger-like tentacles with tips of pale pink. To the untrained eye they look like a peaceful underwater flower, with graceful tentacles flowing with the currents. Each anemone is crammed close to its neighbor, like a bed of flowers, sharing its space with other members of its species; coexisting. But, this observation is very incorrect.

Raging on amidst these rocky shorelines is an ecological war between members of the species *Anthopleura elegantissima*. These aggregating sea anemones have a very strong bond towards their clansmen, causing constant conflict with foreign colonies in order to claim their territory. This war has been raging on since the beginning of the species, but it is best to follow a single colonies movements.

It starts with a lone sea anemone on a rock positioned in a tide pool; constantly in a flux, submerged under water or taking in the salty sea air. During low tide, the anemone bides its time by retracting its tentacles and surrounding them with an adhesive outer surface. When high tide comes, it takes action. The lone sea anemone splits itself into two smaller anemones creating a clone; this action repeats until vast clan forms.

Nearby, another colony is infringing on the outskirts of the clan. The outside ranks prepare for battle by extracting their acrorhagi or fighting tentacles. For hours the warriors wage a slow-motion war; waiting to come into contact with the enemy line and then stinging each other with their powerful tentacles. If a soldier is stung, tissue damage occurs, forever becoming a battle wound. The war ensues until anemones on one side perish or retract from battle. This time, our colony prevailed and a noticeable division was made between the rival clans. Until the next soldier steps out into enemy territory, there will be peace among the clans. For the bystander viewing these sea anemones there is an apparent demilitarized zone left showing everyone the place where the clans belong.

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My Perspective

By Shawn Ward

“Don’t worry about me... it’s the monster inside of me that has energy... I just don’t have anywhere to focus it.”

I glanced at my friend sitting across from me, before turning to my right to look at my second friend who had just uttered the sentence. It was almost midnight; we were sitting in a booth at Denny’s waiting for our food in silence.

Earlier that night the three of us had performed in a show at Modesto Junior College. The show went great and everyone had been in high spirits. That is, until we discovered that out of our group, one woman’s purse and my friend’s backpack had been stolen.

Determined to find the thief, the three of us searched downtown Modesto for hours.

Unfortunately, we never found who, or even what we were looking for. Knowing it was too late, we heavily started towards Denny’s in an attempt to raise our friend’s spirits. I looked at him and watched. His entire body was shaking with energy and anger, as though at any moment he could lash out. I glanced at my friend across from me. From the look in his eyes, I knew that he was not sure what to say either, so the silence resumed.

“The monster inside of me.”

The phrase still echoes in my mind. With it comes the memories of being unsure of how to respond to what friends and loved ones have said:

“I’m useless.”

“I’m not worth anything.”

“I’m an emotional wreck, I can’t be helped.”

“I’m completely broken inside.”

“Help me.”

It is truly amazing how easy it is to cover up these words in a mask;

“I’m fine.”

“I’ll be ok.”

“No, there’s nothing wrong.”

“I’m just tired, that’s all.”

I always tend to notice this in people.

Body language, eye movement, or even the smallest glimmer in the eye can give away how a person really feels. I suppose you could call it a certain sixth sense I possess; to be able to tell if there is something wrong in a person’s life. It doesn't matter whether I’ve known the person for years or just the person sitting next to me in English class this past semester. I can see when there’s a problem looming like a storm cloud in their mind.

My reaction to this is usually the same. For any amount of time, my mind will gear itself towards what I can do to help.

“What’s wrong?”

“Do you need someone to talk to?”

“What can I do to help?”

“You look like you need a hug.”

“Even if I do not know you... I am here for you.”

I can’t be the only person to feel this burning desire to help people right?

One morning I was walking to my first class of the day. As I walked through the courtyard I looked ahead. I spotted a young lady walking my direction. She was a very pretty girl, but she didn't appear confident in herself. She had her head down, eyes on the ground, walking to wherever she needed to go, but seemed to lack any focus or purpose. As she

approached, I felt the need to say something positive to her... something along the lines of “Hey, you’re beautiful. Keep your chin up, it’ll be ok.”

But I kept my pace and she kept hers. We passed each other without a word. I haven't seen her since.

Why didn't I say anything to that girl? What kept me from speaking a few kind words to a stranger?

To be honest, I am not sure, and it has been on my mind ever since.

I went to my class. I took my notes. I wasn't focused. I kept thinking about what had just occurred outside.

I silently decided to myself that I would not let any more moments like that pass, not without saying anything. I made this promise to myself because I have seen how emotions can run rampant through a person and consume them from the inside out. I could only imagine that girl getting home that night and breaking down into uncontrollable tears. I imagine all of those people who suffer from anxiety and depression who are unable to sleep at night because of the maelstrom of thoughts in their mind, tearing apart any last glimmer of hope that may be left twisting and turning.

Do they ask for help? Sometimes they do, but most times they won't. I have often heard a response that the lines “I don't want to be a bother to you. My story is nothing, I'm just overreacting that's all. You have enough to worry about.” I never settle for this answer. Thievery, bullying, and mistreatment. All caused by the selfishness of man that has made so many people to feel isolated, hopeless, and broken. It has become incredibly common to seek happiness at the expense of others.

Why?

Why would a person need to make another feel miserable? Why does it have to be that someone is driven to such a low state as to end up stealing backpacks and purses? Why does a father feel the need to constantly ridicule his own daughter, and drive her into the depths of anxiety and depression by the time she reaches her teens?

I suppose there could be many answers, or no answer at all. In my opinion, it is because those who spread pain were unable to find happiness themselves.

It doesn't always take being wronged to question the cruelty of the world. Sometimes, all it takes is simply sitting next to someone dealing with the anger inside of them. Sometimes, it just takes holding the person you love as they completely break down in your arms, weeping at the years of bullying, rudeness, and condescending remarks that have amassed over the years.

I have the shoulder to cry on. I have the arms to wrap anyone up in a hug when they need it. We all do, it's just a matter of letting others know that we care.

I cannot say that the experience will be the same for everyone, but for me, I have found that when I restore a bit of another's happiness, I gain a little bit as well.

CHANGES

There are no set rules to follow, no outlined instructions

You do what feels right.

Society has an idea of where to fit and who to be

Everyone is different, no two people are alike.

Be unique, be one of a kind

The walls put up may be hard to surpass until hope comes above the horizon.

The here and now is no longer enough, change is coming.

Embrace the new and unknown even though it is uncertain when it will come

It is an endless cycle always moving forward but in the end

You do what feels right.

(ME)

So Damn Alone

By: Rachel Ashley Heiss

If it's the people you encounter
that make your family and your home

Then why, in this overpopulated world,
do I feel so damn alone?

I could fill an empty room
with the tears I've cried

But I would still be alone,
left to drown in my sorrows and die

Because who wants a girl
who is lost in this world

They would rather laugh and deny,
that they were ever the one to cry

While they walk on by the girl
who will cry when she's alone

For the words she hears them say,
pushes her farther and farther away

While she searches for the people
who are as broken as she

That are filling empty rooms
and still somehow walk away

So I push on, day by day
and ignore what people say

While trying to find my family and my home,
with the other people who feel so damn alone

This I Believe

By: Malia Salas

Everything in life is based on timing. Whether it's the timer on the oven telling one their food is ready, or bumping into a stranger who becomes a part of one's life. I usually don't have the best timing; I burn brownies, leave too early, and bump into the wrong people. Throughout my bad timing I have always been optimistic, I happen to be the cheesy person who believes in fate and that everything happens for a reason. It is through my faith that I have gained this optimism. So far there has been only two points in my life when I questioned my faith.

Typically, I am the type of person who isn't easily disgruntled, but at this particular moment in my life, it felt like I was struggling to keep my head above water. I needed a sign. I suppose I should have been more specific, because my sign ended up being a light-blue minivan viciously crashing into my car one summer afternoon. I was on my way home. I looked left, then right, and as I proceeded while looking left once more, the minivan swerved into my life, just missing the driver's side of my car. The entire front end of my car was smashed together like an accordion, and my front window had transformed into a delicate spider web, waiting to fall apart. I will never forget the smell; the air reeked of gas, heat, and burned rubber. It felt like the whole world was pulsing ferociously with my heart. For a few moments, I thought I was dead. I kept hearing these obnoxious sobs, it was then I realized they were coming from me, I was having what I now recollect as an anxiety attack. I made it, though.

This accident changed me. For a while, I was scared of the world. Not understanding why one is alive is an interesting feeling. As time moved forward, so did I. I knew God had saved me for a reason. Maybe that reason is because I'm going to change the world one day, or maybe it's

because someday I'm going to be a really great mom; either way, I think both are worth living for.

Some days were harder though. Once again, my optimism was faltering; not because of the accident, but because of life. God sent me another sign. I was a host at a restaurant, so I sat people and did my best to make them comfortable before their server arrived. This woman walked in, she had auburn hair and the clearest blue eyes that I've ever seen in person. I complimented how pretty her eyes were and she smiled at me with the most genuine smile I'd seen in a long time. She started talking to me as though we'd been friends for years, not with the personal nonsense other guests vent to me with, but asking me about my day and telling me all about hers. She asked me to come by again when her husband arrived, so he could meet me too. I was taken back by her request, but I agreed. She introduced me to her husband shortly after and they both complimented me. I have been complemented a lot in my lifetime and it is usually by people who have an agenda or by my family, and when they spoke to me, it felt like I was talking to my family. She said she thought of herself as Dory, from *Finding Nemo*, because throughout the movie Dory says to "just keep swimming" and she believes that is her maxim. She said something to me that to this day I carry with me, "Sweetie you have such a gorgeous smile, I know life can get to you, but just always always keep smiling".

I didn't see her again after that, but I am eternally grateful for the stranger who gave me back my optimism. I haven't told anyone of my experience because I wasn't sure other people would understand just how much that encounter means to me. On the surface it seems like a car accident and a talkative stranger, but I know they were signs; signs telling me not to ever give up and that I am here for a reason. It is through those two miraculous signs that my faith remains here today. I believe in signs.





By Taylor Massengale

Homeland

By Taylor Massengale

Take me away time traveler
To a world full of mysteries
A place to live on the edge
A fantasy land
Where despite the ups and downs
Everything ends as planned
For if I travel through time and space
I want to find that special place,
One made just for me.

A home to call my own.

Little Brother, I Love You

Sheree Hickman

*Little Brother, I imagine that your hair will be like little curls, soft
between my fingers as I read to you goodnight stories.*

*And once you awake, you will see that there are clothes placed at the edge
of your bed, because you are too young to do it yourself.*

*And mom is not here, but it's okay because you have big sister to take care
of you, like my big sister took care of me- putting clothes on the edge on
my bed when I was three.*

*I ask what do you want for breakfast, and you insist on Fruit Loops and
Cocoa Puffs,
But I say "No.*

*How about Honey Nut Cheerios? Whole grain? Because brother, sugar is
not good for you in the morning, and I want what's best."*

*Out on the sidewalk you sprint ahead of me and I run, trying to catch up,
grabbing your hand, so soft, so small in mine. As I look into your eyes, full
of happiness like majestic rainbows on a sunny day, but Brother, mom is
gone.*

Still you give me a hug full of love and off you skip to the first grade.

So innocent, my little brother, I love you- have a good day.

*Today in art class, it was free draw, and all I could think about was your
precious face as I drew you onto white, blank paper.*

You're dad's curly hair.

Your mom's nose.

And my eyes.

Because Brother, you are in school right now.

And one plus one equals two.

And three minus four equals one.

Little Brother, I love you.

*After school, I stand next to the gate, glancing at the faces of
young, children as they search for*

*their parents, then I come upon you as I walk
you home in uniform clothing.*

*But wait little brother, you are too young to know that you need to hold
my hand, look both ways, then cross the street to the apartment building
that we call home.*

*And inside I set you on the counter and ask what do you want for snack
as you point to the chocolate bar and juice box in the fridge. But instead,
I pull out apple slices, and a fruit punch juice box, with a bendy straw-
sugar free.*

*Because Brother, chocolate and soda is not good for you, and I want
what's best.*

*I tell you to take out your homework as I make dinner. And on top of the
page, written in first-grade handwriting are the letters,
J-A-S-O-N.*

Meaning happiness, full of love, my little brother.

*And as I put mac and cheese with carrots and celery on a plate with a
glass of milk, you ask,
"Why veggies?"*

*And I say in a chuckle, "Because Brother, mom is not here, and I need you
to go strong. Because, I want what's best for you. And its okay that mom
is gone because you have big sister to give you a sticker for every word
that you spell right. Little Brother, I love you."*

*And as you change into your monkey PJ's and hold your snuggle buddy
teddy bear, I tuck you in. your hair soft between my fingers as I read to
you goodnight stories.*

But wait Little Brother, we have not met yet.

*Like and etch-a-sketch,
Create. Shake. And Erase.*

But mom is still gone,

And I imagine,

Little Brother,

I love you.

Names

By Christina Robles

Fag, gay, homo, queer

These words incite so much hatred and fear

There are so many words to describe one thing

You think the pain doesn't sting

How can a person know their place

When the world forces them to hide their face?

How can you look at another human being with such hate

Based on who they choose to date?

I don't understand how society got this way

But I do know that gay people are here to stay

So stop causing so much hurt and harm

And learn to embrace others with open arms

Live with kindness and grace

And allow these people to find their place

My Faith? My Identity.

By: Ana Viss

I like writing for fun. That is when I write the things I am most passionate about. I was told to write whatever I want and my immediate go-to subject was my faith. Not just that, but *who* I place my faith in, and the love that I both receive and am able to extend to others as a result of it. All I want to do is talk about it, because to be honest, to me it is the only thing *worth* talking about; the only thing worth your time as the reader, and mine as the writer. If there is one thing that I want to share with the people who pick up this magazine, this is it, right here. So hear me out. I am not here to “convert” you through what I express on a few pieces of paper. That is not my goal. I simply want to share how important my faith is to me and how it has changed the way I view and live my life; how it has become my identity and helped me find “my place”. I have to talk about it because that is what happens as a result of being consumed by a love not found in this world; it overflows within me and I have to pour it out into the lives of others.

The most important thing to me about knowing my place is knowing who I am in relation to who the God of the universe is. I am a *human*. An ugly, sinful, imperfect, hell-deserving human, that God, in His great mercy saved from an eternal separation from Him. I make mistakes, I am fallen, I do not have infinite knowledge, by any means. But I have chosen to put my trust in the One who does. So, knowing my place means understanding my limitations as a sinful human on planet earth, and therefore, and most importantly, accepting the fact that God is everything I am not, and *so* much more.

I am saved by grace. I am saved because God has a love for me, and for the whole world, that I will never be able to comprehend in this life. I am saved because I have chosen to accept

His gift of life, and as a result I *get* to live for Him. So, where does that leave me, besides sitting here telling you how it has all worked up to this point, and how it makes me feel? What is my role? My “place” in this world is to share this great love with other people, in everything I do. Hence why I have chosen to take full advantage of this opportunity to write freely about what it means to “know my place”, so that I can tell you about a freedom that beats all other forms the world has ever known.

Satisfaction. Knowing my place is about being satisfied in a state of *not* knowing what I am not entitled to know, and about being satisfied in God alone, because He is all that I need. I am very future-driven, and I think most people are. Who doesn’t want to know what the future holds? What grade you’ll end up with on that one final? What that concert will be like next weekend? When your crush will finally ask you out? Who you will marry? I fantasize about so many different aspects of the future so often. And the saddest part about that is that I miss out on what has been given to me in the present. It discourages me from being appreciative of what I have *now*, and raises expectations for what I might have someday, which are often disappointed because they are formed by *me* and not entrusted into the care of the One who absolutely holds my future in His hands. Yes, I believe this with every fiber of my being.

My life is an ongoing challenge to tame my mind and continually remind myself to bask in the present and appreciate all of the things I am blessed with right *now*. Even the hard things, which is really hard. But I believe that for those who love this God I speak of with all of their heart, He works *everything* together for good in the end. I may not know exactly how, but that is the point. What would faith be if I already knew the outcome?

Selflessness. The truth is, my life is actually not about me. My life is about being the hands and feet of my Savior and reaching the people in this world who are lost, looking for satisfaction through the things this world has to offer, and blind to a perfect love that is offered to *them*; who find their identity in school and work, and are beating themselves up because they are failing in both areas; who are afraid because their marriage is falling apart before their eyes; who are contemplating death because they feel like nobody cares. Well let me tell you, someone does care. The One who saved *my* life, cares about *yours*. The One who gave *His* life, cares about *yours*. And He offers you *new* life, that is how much He cares.

I found my true identity when I threw away the one the world made for me. I threw away looking for satisfaction in other people's opinions, in what I wore, in who I hung out with, in my educational success. I threw that away because that really was not me. *Me* is who I became when I let God take control of my life and give me a new identity in Him. Yes, I still struggle daily with these things, but that is to be expected of humans. What is not expected, which also makes it so difficult, is fighting it and choosing the right mindset. It is hard trying to have a good attitude in the midst of difficulties; it is hard trying not to live in the future and not idolizing my dreams and fantasies; it is hard trying not to care what other people think about me. But I just keep coming back to the reality that it is not about me. It is about God and everyone else. The only part that involves me is how He chooses to use me as a vessel to share Him and His great love with others. My "place" is simply living in obedience to the One who loves unconditionally.

I am rooted.
Deep within my branches



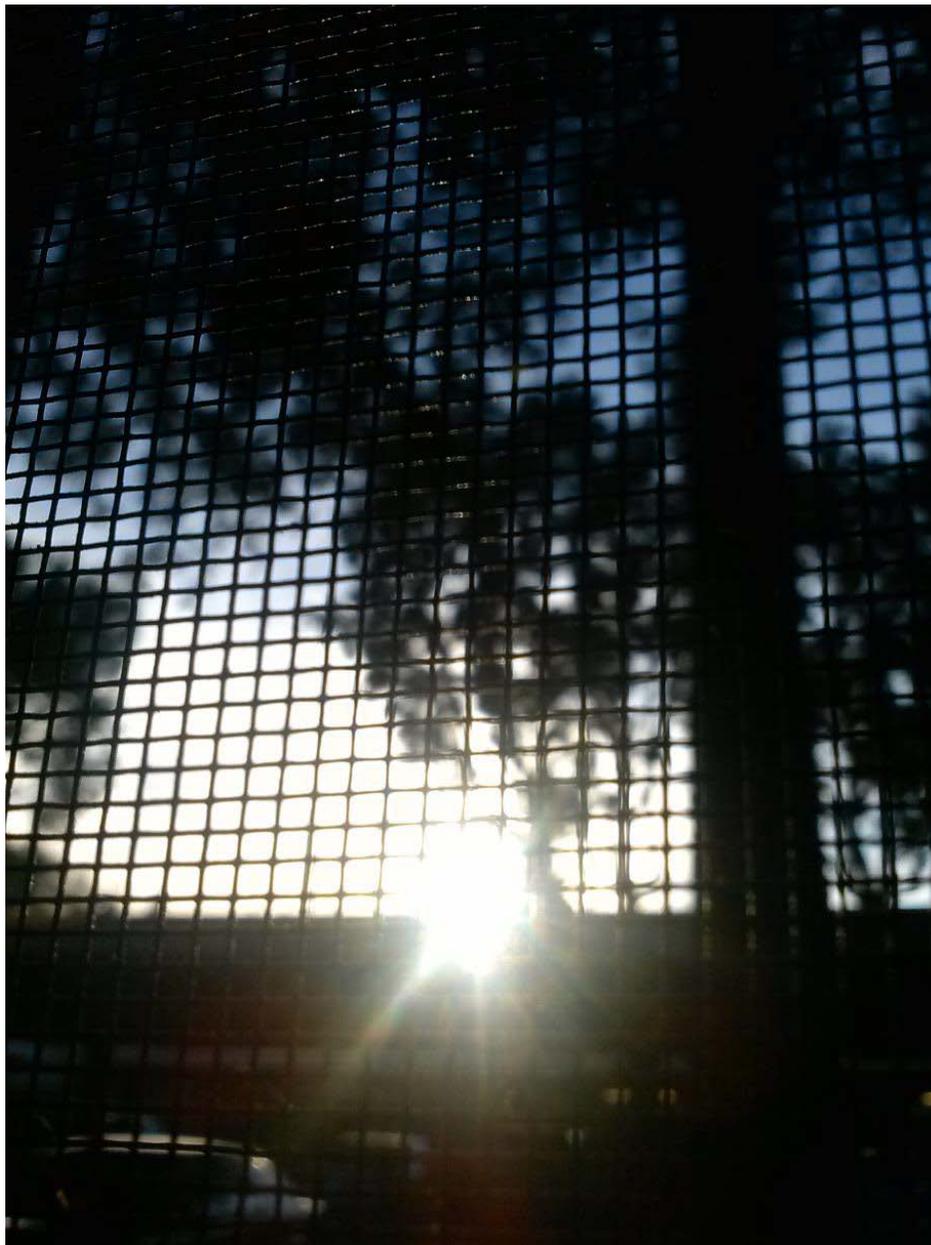
I am growing stronger everyday
I am growing around nature's obstacles
I bend and crack to the sides
where nothing can interrupt my growth.
But I am always rooted.
In one place
I continue to grow against nature's obstacles.
I am growing stronger everyday
until death.

I am rooted.



I am picked
Humans blow wishes
Empty wishes that are never fulfilled
I am used and dropped on the ground.
My brothers and sisters are used like me.
But I continue to grow
I continue to let my seeds flow out into the wind,
I am picked.

I am rooted.



I am in a cage.
I am only let out to follow rules.
If I break rules
I am put into my place
I am in my cage.
Looking for the sun
Searching for my outbreak.
I am rooted.
In my cage.

The Labyrinth of Solitude Response Paper

Written by: Gabby Peralta

The Labyrinth of Solitude was one of the more interesting readings we've been assigned and fits the unit theme of alienation quite well, though the essay is primarily about solitude and its effect on the human life. Solitude is a large branch that comes off the tree of alienation. As Paz says, solitude is "the feeling and knowledge that one is alone, alienated from the world and oneself"(195). That definition is extremely similar to that of alienation, which is "a withdrawing or separation of a person or a person's affections from an object or position of former attachment" according MerriamWebster dictionary. Solitude's definition even contains "alienated" within it.

Solitude is the epitome of human suffering. Being alienated by any being can be one of the most soul crushing experiences. Paz plays with the idea that the "pangs of love are pangs of solitude"(196), I believe this to be entirely true. Love can make us feel like we're on top of the world or it can crush us more than imaginable. While many people say they love being alone; this is rarely true. Nobody would be here if it wasn't for someone else. Most people on Earth are supposedly here out of "love" and not having someone to love or someone to love you, makes life impossible. Everyone longs for someone to remember them when they're gone. Everyone wants someone to love. When a child finds out that Santa Claus is no longer real, their whole world becomes a lie. The two people that are everything they know, that are the people who they have the most trust for, have been lying to them their entire life The sense of solitude in that moment of uncovering a lie, becomes overpowering; everything they've ever known comes into question. Is

anything their parents ever said truthful? Paz states that “(s)elfawareness begins when we doubt the magical efficacy of our instruments”(203). When children begin to doubt that their Barbies and cars no longer have feelings, that’s when solitude becomes a part of their worlds. When someone who is very real suddenly doesn’t exist, the magic in their worlds is lost. Only after growing up does one realize that there still is magic in the idea of Santa.

When I learned Santa wasn’t real (in the seventh grade), the world came down around me. I felt as if I had lost everything I had ever known; I lost my hero and I lost my faith in my parents. The only person I had left was my beanie baby, Bongo...but was he still real? I was alone in a world without Santa. A world without magic and miracles; an extremely dark world. My sense of solitude in that moment was unbearable, but to make matters even worse, I was alienated at school because I was one of the last people to find out Santa wasn’t real. There was nobody I could share my genuine pain with about losing Santa. Everyone else had found out years ago. That experience was one I will never forget, I have never felt so alone since; but even after going through that trivial moment, I would still let my children believe in Santa Claus.



Although there are many negative aspects of solitude, experiencing solitude and alienation is crucial to becoming an adult and appreciating what one has. As Paz describes, “the adolescent opens himself up to the world: to love, action, friendship, sports, heroic adventures”(203), through experiencing solitude. Solitude can be a blessing or a burden, it all just depends on one's outlook on life.

Sunset Promises

Rain drops splattered onto the window, dripping slowly without making a noise. The air smelled of wet pavement. Cars sped on by, ejecting the murky water as they did so. Children ran back home from school. Pink rain boots wet from playing in muddy puddles. Laughter and sweaters appeared. It was the first shower in months. The neighborhood was cheerful rather than its usual mopey and dull state. Soups boiled on stovetops and blankets were laid on the coach. Families chatted and ate. One particular home smelled of fresh cut cilantro sprinkled into a steamy chicken broth. The man, Denise, carefully rose the spoonful into his mouth. His girl, May, watched patiently waiting for a sign of approval.

"How is it?" she asked.

"Ok" he answered.

Simple answers that any girl hates. She walked away with rage and passion. She hated the man she loved. She was a simple girl that smiled at anything. He stole her heart from the moment they meant. But now all he could steal was her patience. The walls held frames of them together. Kisses at the park, blown candles in a small kitchen, all smiles at the carnival. Young and naive, that's what it was. May had ideas and hopes back then. Wedding bells and maybe diapers. He had none of those in mind. Both of them were young when they met. May only had the kitchen and a man who came home mad from work. She leaned on the kitchen counter waiting to hear him. She looked out the window. She imagined everything she wished she had done. Paris and runway shows. Dresses and cameras flashing. She was tall and beautiful. She wanted to be a model before Denise took everything from her. Everyone said she would have been perfect. Long legs for elegant strides and those hips perfect for dresses. And that smile, that smile could be flashier than all the paparazzi's cameras together.

"More chicken this time." Denise ordered

"You don't even like it" she murmured.

She picked up his dirty bowl anyway and refilled it with more chunks of chicken breast. He continued eating and she sat on the lumpy old coach they picked up at a yard sale. It had a yellow stain they never were able to remove regardless, of the sellers nagging that it would come off. She hated that old leather sofa. She wanted a light blue one that would make the ugly painted walls appear better. She hated the old house. It didn't have her touch. It was all the previous owners' handy work. Countless days went on just the same. Pasta was warmed up in the stove and ready in the man's plate. He barged in. his hair rustled due to the wind. Every curl no longer was soft, it had gone frizzy. His tight shirt stained with car grease. He sat on the old wooden chair and ate what was on his plate. She once again leaned on the counter.

"This needs more salt!" he groaned.

"It's Alfredo. It doesn't need it." she replied back.

"I said salt!" he yelled

"No!" she yelled back

The chair screeched against the tile floor and groaned as it fell. The heavy footsteps grew louder as they approached the little pastel flats. There was wrestling, struggling, and punches. Blood seeped through a cut on her cheek. She looked at the mirror. Tears filled her eyes. Every time this happened, she would promise herself she would leave. But where? He was all she had. There was no sense of direction, no distant cousin that could aid her. She was alone living with a monster. He walked into the bathroom. A sad look overcame his edgy face. He looked on at what he had done. Purple swollen bumps on her arms. A handprint on wrists, it was blazing red.

"Baby", he said "I'm sorry."

Silence.

"I'll control myself next time, you know how it is at work. I get frustrated."

Silence.

"Fine don't say anything. Stand there. You bring it upon yourself."

With that, he slammed the door. She jumped and put her hands to her face. She trembled with fear. The front door slammed and the car moments later roared to life. She rose her head and thought for a moment or two. Storming out of the bathroom she ran to the matrimonial bedroom. They were not even married. He didn't even propose after all these years. She grabbed a duffle bag and stuffed her belongings into it. She hauled it to the front door. May searched for a piece of paper and with a black marker she wrote with shaking hands 'I am leaving you. I don't know where I belong but I know it's not here. I'll find my place, while you stay here alone. Kisses, May'.

She was a girl without borders now. All she had holding her back was the heavy bag on her back. She walked as the sunset carried her away. Denise never knew where she went until he turned on the old TV set they had bought together. There she was smiling back at him in an elegant dress with diamonds on her ears and neck, posing for pictures. Her bright happy smile shinning on.



Disintegration

By Taylor Massengale

Stranded, alone, deserted
One board falls, but no one hears the sound.

Paint peels, fades in the sun
Its disintegrating,

Falling apart without anyone coming to rejuvenate it,
Give it new life.

Another board crashes to the dirt.
The wind howls through the openings.

It's being left behind for something bigger,
Something better.

Years from now the structure will still stand
And if a traveler passes by
They will wonder about the history of the decrepit building.
They can make theses about the nature of the building
But they won't ever know the True story
For that rotted with the boards in the dirt
Decomposed with the flecks of paint
And were carried away with the wind.



By Taylor Massengale

BORDERS

By: Rachel Ashley Heiss

Borders, boundaries, rules
Meant to keep you safe
Meant to keep you in your place

A brown man in a white man's world
Brown land enclosed by white-tinged walls

Neither one will claim for its own
But neither one exactly says no

For there are borders, boundaries, rules
Meant to separate
Meant to keep the races "safe"

But borders, boundaries, rules
Are meant to be pushed
Are meant to be broken

Between the drinks and the long lonely walks
There were two things she didn't know
One was her name and the other where she was

A girl lonely in the world
A world where it rejected her for who she was
A place where she felt she didn't belong

There was nothing she didn't try to become noticed
She wore the long fur coats
She smoked what they said was cool

No one smiled at her
Laughing behind her thin back
Someone said she would be great
But of course that was before

She stayed in the streets
Hoping for a glimpse of who she had been
She just waited
Waited for a delivered answer

An answer that never came just like that
She realized so much
With her last drink she said
Hurrah!

No longer could she think
They pumped it out
One last time he said
Her eyes looking at the bright light above
Take me she said

He looked down at her and said
No, not yet
She slept for days
Woken up by a woman in pink
Her face said it all
Another disappointment
Even a stranger felt it
She got up, and took off

Her ex in every corner
Sitting there at the top shelf
21 and over was his game
Tempting her in

No longer did she care
For his affection
He had let her live in the streets
Waiting until her death
She understood
The man said no more
Pick up and move on

The Stages of Life



Knowing How Far You've Come

Often times as individuals, we reflect on and romanticize our adolescent and childhood memories, our perspective of our childhood changes. As a child, we may not appreciate or believe our life is charmed. Even now our current lives may seem mediocre and routinely, but once we reach a certain age in our lives, we begin to reflect and look back with nostalgia, believing our college years were the best or that our childhood experiences were truly

enchanted. We leave out the negative, the heartbreaks, the long seemingly endless hours of homework, sleepless nights studying, and instead we embrace the romanticized memories. But even as we look back with nostalgia, we are content with where we are. One may say, "Wow! Look at the progress I have made! I have come so far." It's the knowledge and appreciation of our progress that allows us as individuals to understand our place through the journey of life.

-Dominique Martinez

The 7 Ages of Women

By: Dominique Martinez

Life is a cycle

As people we play many parts

A woman as an infant in need of love and attention

Then there is the school girl

Naive, not knowing right from wrong

Kissing up to the young boys

The lover with notes and diaries

Engraved with hopes and dreams lost in her fantasy

The wife living out her fantasy

The mother loving and caring after her children

Then the grandmother, her love only growing

And finally back to childishness and dependency

Unaware of the surroundings, in need of love and attention

Life is a cycle

Special events in our lives

- Graduations
- Celebrations
- Family memories

"We embrace the romanticized memories"



Photograph by Dominique Martinez

Stop and embrace the now

Jane Eyre
By Katie Rodgers and Aman Deep Kaur

An ugly duckling in Cage of Restlessness
Willful always saying what she wants
Justice armed with its code of right and wrong
The House of Misconception hiding an angel with a
devils face

The duck let out into the Pond of Restriction
Truth beaten down revealed by streams of light
Innocence taken away with the snuffed out candle in the
night
Currents draw forth a Lake of Contentment

Ambition seeking to be better and fly higher
Calm lingering in the webbed corners of what is
Eight years content at the Temple of Tranquility
Rejuvenation gaining new freedom through loss

Courage venturing into an unknown world
Uneasiness confusing the future
Entering the Mansion of prickling thorns
Existing continuing on till the last page is written

My Place

By Christina Robles

Six billion people on this earth

Only one that gives me such a strong sense of worth

Even though times can get tough

Compared to you, no one seems good enough

There's nothing anyone could do

To make me stop loving you

It's been almost two years

You make me so happy my eyes fill with tears

You're there through the good and the bad

You're there through the happy and the sad

When things start to go wrong

You remind me to stay strong

I do my best to show you

That I appreciate everything you do

This is a feeling not everyone can find

You, my love, are one of a kind

You took hold of my heart
It's been this way from the very start
Out of all the wonderful things you do
Let me tell you what I love most about you

I love the way you hold me when I cry
I love the kindness in your eye
I love when you randomly sing to me
I love the way you make me feel carefree

I love the way you never stay mad
I love how you make me feel happy when I'm sad
I love that you're there for everyone
I love that I know you'll be here for the long run

When I look at your smiling face
I know that I have found my place

Brothers by Mario Muniz

I remember when my parents brought my brother home. I was about 3 years old. I cried. I didn't want somebody else to have all the attention! I must have been a vain child, but I quickly accepted it, and soon looked forward to being an older brother. I still have photographs of me hanging over the crib and staring down at the small figure that was my brother. I sat with him as he grew older, and I dreamed of the fun times that we would have.

My brother is autistic. This means that his mind didn't develop like the typical person's. Pablo never played hide and seek with me, or gave me the second controller to play some Mario Kart 64 with him. We never talked about girls when we both went through puberty, and I've never sat in the passenger seat as he drove us to his friend's birthday party. And yet he was still my brother. And this was normal to me, because I had no other siblings, or any close friends that I saw on a day to day basis. He was just... Pablo. My brother. And together we have lived for 16 years.

I never really asked why I got a brother like Pablo, I just accepted it. It was, after all, normal, as far as I knew. As I grew older, I realized more and more that this was not typical, and that as a result, I was also different. I was shyer and related less to kids of my age. I preferred mind games and playing with my imagination, rather than talking about crushes and video games in Jr. High. Social norms and pressures such

as having a girlfriend and partying did not seem to be urgent to me. But I began to ask, why? Why did I have a brother like Pablo? Why did he have to be different?

A few years ago, I went on a trip to serve a poorer area of my city. I stayed at a community center where children would come throughout the day to play and have a place to eat food if their families didn't provide food for them. During the afternoons, I would work with my church throughout the city, and in the evenings we would return to the center to spend time with the children.

Most of the times, they would play tag and Sharks and Minnows. At some point in the night, I found myself playing a variation of freeze tag. I had been getting along with a heavier set curly haired boy in a red shirt. His smile was lovely, and he was a lot of fun to talk to as we played the games. At one point, a troubled child wearing a white t-shirt ran up and pushed him over. Immediately, many children began laughing, and it was obvious that this happened often. The red shirted boy slowly stood up, sobbing, and went to the side lines and sat himself down to cry by himself.

I'm not righteous, or innately good or anything. I'm just a normal selfish guy. I wanted to keep playing. I wanted to ignore the troubling scene. I certainly did not want to chase down the boy who had pushed the now-sobbing child.

I sat down next to the boy. I didn't know what to do. He was crying! What was I

supposed to do? Pat him on the back? Say it was okay? It wasn't okay! This boy had been pushed over because he looked different, or so I thought. Why did this have to happen to him? In a way, I identified with him because I thought I was different myself, and had gone through my fair share of teasing and juvenile torture.

I started by asking him his name, and how old he was. The normal stuff. Surprisingly, at least to me, he was able to speak through his tears. It was a bit easier to relate at this point, and I began to ask him about his interests. "Star Wars... I really like Star Wars..." At this point I noticed that his red shirt had an obvious Star Wars logo, and had a picture of Luke and the gang. So we began a discussion about Legos, and video games, and the movies. By this point, he was smiling, and I realized he had stopped wiping his tears away and rubbing his knees where he had fallen.

I asked him if he got teased a lot, and he said that he did because he was different. How so, I ask. And then he says he's autistic.

What?

I've been talking to somebody like my brother?

I've been having a conversation I didn't think was possible. Here was an autistic individual, and I hadn't even known it!

I told him about my brother immediately, and the way he smiled made me think I had never seen a real smile from a child

before. He smiled even more when I revealed I hadn't noticed his autism when I had started talking with him earlier that night, and he understood the irony, seeing that I had an autistic brother. So he started telling me about his own brother.

He told me he had named his brother Luke, obviously out of his love for Star Wars. His mother obliged him, which I found sweet. His face demonstrated the love that he had for his brother, and I realized that he was my polar opposite. I was the normal older brother, and he was the autistic older brother. We both had younger brothers that were different from us, brothers that we loved regardless of these differences. This was a bombshell to me. My night went from being just another night at the center to being one I would never forget.

We both heard his name spoken over the intercom, and I escorted him to the main desk where his mother and brother were waiting for him.

His brother had long wavy golden hair, and my eyes met with his older brother as we both recognized the appropriate name of Luke. I told his mother what a beautiful son he had, and they all left smiling. I went back to my everyday life, and I never saw the boy I had helped again.

That autistic boy helped me that night in a way that I don't think he'll ever realize. He answered a big part of my question: why did I have to grow up with a brother like mine? The whole answer? I'm still

not sure. But growing up with my brother has given me insight and experiences that many people don't have, and I now recognize that I share a brotherhood with those that have autistic siblings, and those that are autistic themselves. I've swam in pools full of autistic individuals, been in classrooms with those that are different from us. And I've learned that they're totally people too. It's something subtle, and it's something strange. People see them, and they see unusual people who jump up and down and make loud noises. People who can't speak or express themselves in the ways that we can. But they're people too. Beautiful people with feelings that can be hurt and broken, just like ours. People that are smart, like us. People that can talk about their troubles, and people that can like Star Wars. Just like us.

I can take pride in my differences. I can take pride in my place in life. Being different isn't necessarily bad, and in a way, I'm glad I was teased when I was younger. I'm glad I grew up with Pablo. I have an experience I can share with others, an idea I can communicate to the world. I can share everything I know about autistic people.

I am not special.

I'm "normal". It's these people that I want you to remember. When you see them sitting together at a bus stop, or see one at a store, or at an amusement park, look past their strange looking faces. Look past their strange actions

and behaviors. Wave, smile, look into their eyes.

They have eyes. Eyes that shine, just like ours, with tears or with laughter.

Look into their eyes, and think about how much they are teased and treated like sub-human perverts and monstrosities. They are stuck in their place because of what society has made of them. But for a brief instant, you can free them from that dark, lonely place. Look into their eyes.

You might see somebody looking back.



Pablo and his brother, the author, respectively

To Whom It May Concern

By Britney Johnston

*I've always been the black sheep,
At school, at home,
Anywhere I go,
I cannot find my place.*

*At school I was always that smart kid,
Like Alexie in Superman and Me,
Always being told to be quiet,
They did not let me have my place.*

*At home I tried to do everything
That was asked of me,
But if I missed one thing
I was told that I needed to know my place.*

*At the age of fourteen I had an epiphany;
Thinking that if I put everyone else first
It would be better, like The Senator's Son,
But that was not my place either.*

*I was lost in my own little world,
Feeling like no one was on my side
And that the world was against me.
Not a good place to find oneself.*

*I would walk through the halls at school,
Seeing everyone happy with their groups and boyfriends.
I had one friend in junior high.
Everywhere else felt out of place.*

*I always walked alone
Sometimes talking to myself,
No one understood the struggle of a 12 year old*

*Without a place.
High school was better because people were more accepting,
They were nicer and more considerate,
And the teachers seemed more human.
I thought this was my place.*

*But when my mother fell ill like the father in War Dances,
Everywhere became wrong again.
Home became the too clean rooms of hospitals,
A place no one wants to be.*

Mothers
hold their child's hand for a moment
and their heart for a
lifetime

*After a five month battle with cancer,
My mother lost the fight,
Leaving me lost with my father,
Neither of us having a place.*

*My mother had been my inspiration and motivation,
And she had kept my father from falling into a pattern of alcoholism,
But without her we were both floating in space
Without a direction, purpose, or place.*

*I continued to feel lost,
But my father moved on all too quickly,
Dating to his heart's content,
Leaving me alone to find my place.*

*After a few months,
He found someone he really liked,
And moved out to leave me
In the place of my mother's memories.*

*I felt on my own,
Without guidance or love,
Or being able to relate to anyone anymore,
Forcing me to be out of place.*

*I knew I would have to move for college,
And I knew I would have to do it by myself.
No one could hold my hand to guide me
To any place anymore.*

*My boyfriend's family was there for me,
And so was my mother's best friend.
Her daughter moved away for college,
And gave me a place in her home.*

*I've been hiding in a place deep inside myself
Trying to suppress the pain that I have to hide,
For no one will ever completely understand
That I will forever be searching for my place.*

*I try to appear strong on the outside,
A heartless shell with no emotions except anger,
But inside I feel everyone else's pain
And see that they cannot find their place either.*

*But lately I've been reaching out
And finding that the world is not as scary as it seemed before.
It is a little more empty,
But maybe I do have a place.*



You weave through the crowd of strangers.

**Pondering about the chores of the day
Or maybe of that love you lost
Your thoughts buzz in your head
And your boots slap the pavement**

**You make your way through the street
Easy people with things to do move along
You try to make your way**

**A stranger bundled up carrying a suitcase
Is walking straight towards you
Glasses at the tip of his nose
A fine watch on his wrist
Do you move to the right?
Or make him move?**

**Five steps before you two meet
You make eye contact
Your foot twitches
And you find yourself
On the right side
He passes on without noticing you moved for him**

**The bright city lights blaze on
The winter breeze sweeps the street
Moving on Main
A man in rags begs for money**

**You go around him
Avoiding his liquor breath**

**You stride passing stores
A child is running straight towards you
His balloon high in the air
His mother far behind trying to catch up
You don't move for him like you did for the man
The child moves to the left
Avoiding you**

**Every step you take
Is your place
Either moving or staying
You know who to move for
And when not to**

Taking Places

By Britney Johnston

People may notice the damage
The scars and bruises left behind
When they choose to do nothing
The most damage is done

If they had stepped up

Things could have been different

But because they did not take

Their place or the initiative

People have suffered

Because they are alone

And depressed or beaten

Into submission by cruel people

So when people say there was

Nothing they could have done

It is a lie because there is

Always something they could have

Done to save a life from pain

Or destruction or death

So whenever there is a chance that

Something you can do can make

A difference, improvement, or

Change, do it because you never

Know what good you may do.



(http://kruscic.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/art_umbrella_rain_girl-wide-300x160.jpg)



(http://poietes.files.wordpress.com/2009/03/521px-hammarby_angel_statue.jpg)

Fairy tale
By Katie Rodgers

ORCS UPON A ISLES,

in a far off place a war was waged between the fairies of the Sun and the Moon. It was a truly gruesome war. Many fairies died fighting for the honor of their kingdom but the greatest sacrifice was that of the earth. Without the fairies protection the earth and animals lost their magic. The flowers didn't bloom, caterpillars didn't turn into butterflies and the seasons didn't change. All the magical creatures of the earth, from the werewolves to the mermaids joined together to save the world. They formed a magical council and attacked the fairies. They ordered the union of the two kingdoms.

The Moon Princess and the Sun Prince were married and the war was put to an end. The earth was healed but the hatred remained. When the Princess Radiance of Moon and Sun was born five years after the union, she was the only one of her kind. She belonged to neither fairies of the Moon nor fairies of the Sun. The Queen trained her in the ways of the Moon while the King taught her the rules of the Sun. Though she studied hard and excelled at both forms of magic there was a wall between Radiance and her people. No one said a harsh word about her but it their eyes said it all. She was not one of them. Even her parents couldn't accept that she was both. Both pushed her to be what they were. She could not argue with them for it was not her place and she was too greedy for their love. She let the push her around and tell how to act and who to be. When she toured the land with her father she wore reds and golds. On tour with

her mother she wore whites and blues. She was the Princess of the Sun around her father and Princess of the Moon with her mother.

When she turned of age both tried to force her to marry a fairy of their kind. The suitors they brought told her how honored they be to have her as their bride but still had that look in their eyes. The King and Queen argued for weeks over whom she was going to marry. In one particularly bad blow out Radiance had an epiphany that changed her life. Her parents declared that she was to choose her life's partner. The Princess only heard two words "her life". She had spent so many years conforming to ideas of her kingdom that she had never realized that it was her life. She could choose how she lived. She could choose whom to be.

Empowered with that knowledge Radiance refused both suitors. She married a Will-o-Wisp. She wore only dresses that depicted both sun and moon. She learned to combine her magic and invented spells that greatly enhanced her kingdom's prosperity. Slowly she made changes that intermingled the fairies. Working side by side they were forced to learn respect for each other. She never let someone put her in her place again. It was true she didn't belong in a single race of fairies. In Truth she was of both the Moon and Sun. Radiance knew her place and she lived happily ever after.

THE END

Mountain of dreams

The mountain of many colors rises high spreading through the community of cardboard houses. The white, blue, red landscape attracts the small children to it. They hope to find the treasure of their lives in these heaps of soda bottles and paper. The smell of dead animals filter through the homes of those who live nearby. The constant stirring of the soup brings the children home from a day of playing and working hard. Little naked feet run through the dirt path. Smiles and hope for something better than the last meal spread out through the village.

A mother with a long black braid hovers over the tin pot and stirs the soup with her only wooden spoon. Her small child rushes in. His light brown hair is filled with little critters and his hands are covered in filth. " Lavate las manos" she orders her 9 year old son. He quickly obeys and runs to wash his hands in the outside well. Another day of living in the suburbs of Mexico.

No one chooses where to be born or what family to be born into. Even Miguel knows that at such a young age. He sometimes thinks of what the rich kids eat for dinner, he often pretends his watery soup is a decadent plate of carne asada with chiles rellenos or even what los Americanos call a 'cheeseburger'. He sits on the floor with the rest of his family eating in silence. Papa breaks the silence and states that they will move soon. Mama is ordered to pick up anything valuable and put it in a rag. Miguel listens to the discussion. Mama gets up rushes to the other side of the room to integrate her husband.

Miguel soon tries to mute the screaming but sees his little 5 year old sister wide eyed startled. Her little bow hanging off the tip of her braid. She stares at her parents and her lip begins to quiver. A tear runs on her cheek and Miguel takes her in his thin arms and walk onto the street towards the colorful mountain. Flies buzz around and the two children dig around. Papa promised they would no longer live there near the tall mountain. They would move to a place where the mountain was green and the breeze would fill their lungs with fresh air. It sounded beautiful to Miguel but his mother knew the risk they would take to get there.

Nine years later Miguel a legal adult, makes his way to his last day of Canyon View High School. A senior with great grades and the potential to be valedictorian. His hair swept to a side, books in hand. He had grown to become a great student and good son. His friends saw him as an example of hard work. Always raising his hand in class asking questions with a hint of an accent. There were always those who hated Miguel's success. They would ask him about the accent and asked where he belonged. He would say "My accent is a hint of my first language and I belong here in California with my family". He knew he came from Mexico. To him that was the country that saw him come to the world and the one that neglected him and forced his family to find better horizons. He had no place, nothing to go back for in that country. He had a chance here to be something better. His place was where his heart was and his heart was in America.

Transit

Sheree Hickman

Location to location to location we traveled.

Tall buildings, small buildings, short buildings, big
buildings we lived.

I remember rainy days as I walked to the school bus stop
from the hotel room we lived in,

And a mile plus, I arrived to my destination-

The apartment building we used to live in,

Just three weeks ago... before the eviction was finalized.

And I stood there, straining my eyes to see through the
foggy mist for the yellow school bus to take me to my
third grade class- Mrs. Smith

How she used to tell me each and every day that I
needed to study my multiplication tables.

But how could I learn them if I wasn't even able to go
home to a stable environment?

That to my mother, I was just another label of her
insane ways because...

Flat land to her was still rocky and as much as I climbed,
I just couldn't get the right footing to gain her
acceptance

And... I fell.

Back to the cliff I started on

*But instead of retreating and calling it quits. I looked
back up for another route to begin my climb once more.*

But I was only eight.

*And third grade turned into fifth, and fifth into eighth
where we found ourselves living in a boarding home on
the corner of ninth and pilgrim.*

Six bedrooms, two baths, one kitchen.

Where I attended school number sixteen

A's in English and History.

A C in Math.

And a D in Science.

*How I hated learning about ionic bonds and molecules.
I spoke the language of disrespect and rebellion towards
my teachers.*

Fights each week.

Detentions, suspensions.

I was on the road to expulsion.

*But something deep inside me told me to WAKE UP and
view the world before me.*

To stop with all the fights and disrespect.

To realize that just because my family went down the path of failure and selfishness does not give me the right to.

So... I eventually learned what an ionic bond was and what compounds and molecules were.

I eventually learned that $3 \times 6 = 18$ and $6 \times 4 = 24$.

I was so transfixed in my past, yet another part of me was transfixed on my future.

A high school graduate

College bound

From tall buildings to small buildings

From short buildings to big buildings

On the road to expulsion

Trying to gain the acceptance of a mother whose ground she claimed to be flat- yet it was always rocky.

From the times I fell to the cliff I began, how I climbed and I climbed and I climbed.

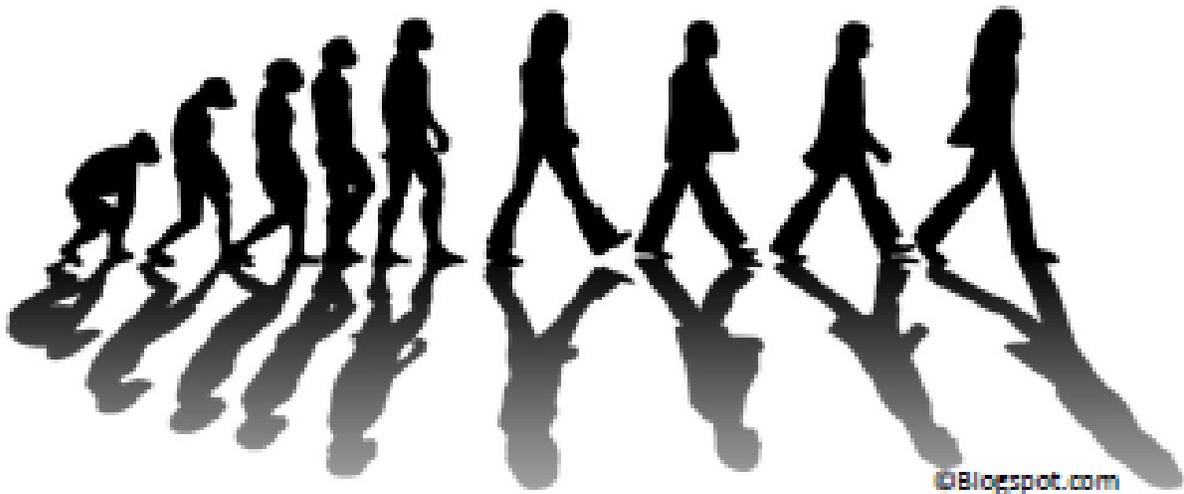
Year after year after year.

I survived.

Location to location to location.

Evolution

Change is a process with no end, just pit stops.



Who you are now will be different in the end. You may not know what is to come or who you are or will be but in the end you are you: a unique being that cannot be replicated.

(ME)

To Know One's Place

By: Malia Salas

The phrase “knowing your place” immediately exerts negative connotations for most people. A connotation in particular is the common cliché, woman belong in the kitchen. That five worded sentence causes woman around the world to roll their eyes, and men to giggle. When really thinking about this phrase, I am reminded of positive and negative definitions that I have come to know through personal experience. Knowing your place comes from experience; it's ultimately about doing what's right for yourself and being happy.

Throughout my life, I have been consequently drawn to people that need fixing. It is not to say that I view myself as superior, I have just always had a deep desire to help people. The first person I tried to change was a juvenile pot-head with an uncaring family; the second was a surprisingly judgmental semi-junkie who chose to go nowhere; and the third was myself. One could say the drugs are the common denominator between the two boys, and why I felt I needed to help them. However, there's much more reason behind the drugs. They were two not so different time periods in my life, and I loved them both. They treated me poorly, made bad decisions, and altogether there was no rational or easily explainable reason as to why I tried. The truth is, I saw potential. Perhaps that sounds cheesy or

mom-like, but I saw past everything they put out into the world and I saw a future. At those points in my life, I thought my place was to help them.

Obviously my attempts and giving years of myself, was wasted. Neither of them changed, nor has changed since then. I couldn't understand why I didn't change them, or help them see the light. The only thing that had come from my two lost loves was my own heartbreak. One day I stopped trying to make everyone else happy. I stopped, charged my batteries, and eventually continued on. It was once hell of a year, but I needed time to figure out what I wanted and to really just focus on myself for a change. I carried so much mistrust and hate in my heart in that year of my life. I can't tell you when exactly it happened, but one day I woke up and felt better, almost lighter. When I stopped trying, I met him. For once, fate was on my side; it was the right guy, at the right time. I'm not saying that he's my soul mate or anything like that; I'm saying that he made me realize why it never worked with anyone else. I see how easy it is with someone who genuinely just wants to make me happy. For the first time, I feel like enough. My place isn't fixing or changing people, I believe my place is to just be happy.

In the real world, you can't save people that don't want to be saved. I don't view those years as regrets, they taught me a lot about life and I've gained some experiences that even some people much older than me lack. My place throughout all of that was to learn. I needed to have my heart broken, I needed to see that the

world isn't always as beautiful and as nice as I had once assumed. It is through experiences that I am the person I have become today.

I have come to find that knowing your place comes from a series of steps. The first is to figure out what's right for you, not anyone else. The second is to realize that you can't change people, you can only love them. This brings me to the third step; make the choices that are going to be the best for you. Granted, all of the emphasis on the "you" I've been referring to sounds a bit selfish, but it is far from selfish to take care of yourself. I've spent too much time focusing on how to help other people; I forgot how to help myself. I don't mean to think of yourself as the center of the world and to only do things that strictly benefit you, but in the matter of happiness, always put yourself first. The people that spend their lives revolving around other people's desires are the people that end up unhappy and resentful. Knowing your place comes from surrounding yourself with people and things that help you grow as a human being, and of course from finding happiness.

KNOW YOUR PLACE



Dominique Morley

Know Your Place

By: Ana Viss

What comes to mind upon hearing the phrase “know your place” is the importance of being in touch with one’s own individual role in society. Knowing *my* place means recognizing exactly what my role as a young adult in modern society is on the basis of my faith and what I believe is my calling in life. If someone said to me “Know your place!” I would interpret it to mean that I should never be too aggressive or assertive, but rather take on the characteristics of a humble servant, and be submissive and respectful to the authority figures in my life. I think knowing my place means listening more than I speak, not wishing to be anyone but myself, and always being aware of opportunities to help others.

The very first word that I think of in response to “know your place” is “aggression”, (regarding both speech and manner), which has more negative connotations. My mind is immediately drawn to the teenage population of our society as the first example of aggression, and I imagine a day in the life of a young blossoming teenager, as he/she struts confidently down the halls of the high school, speaks out in the classroom for the sake of being heard and providing comic relief, and assumes his/her spot at the dinner table, serving him/herself first and leaving the dishes to be done by his/her mother. This over-confident attitude that often encapsulates a selfish aspect, like “things should be done for *me*, and *my* life revolves around *my* wants and needs” is one that is quite familiar to not only teenagers of modern day society, but anyone and everyone, despite age, ethnicity, gender, or profession. Knowing one’s place means not assuming oneself to be of a higher position than one ought, because life is not strictly about oneself.

Another word that I think of in relation to “knowing your place” is “respect”. Knowing your place means that whether one is a nurse, student, pilot, waitress, banker, president, vice president, or elementary teacher, one acts in such a way that reflects his/her understanding of this position, and therefore, respects the people around him/her. Most people naturally embrace the importance of respecting authority, but often forget that respecting fellow co-workers and friends is just as important. Doing so communicates that one knows where he/she stands in relation to other people - that is, on equal ground - and that one has high regard for their positions as well, not just his/her own.

Listening more than one speaks goes hand in hand with the idea of respect, and therefore supports what I believe to be the meaning of the phrase “know your place.” Being a good listener implies not being aggressive in speech, but instead being respectful by listening to what others have to say before making one’s own voice heard. In a society where the opinions of each individual are valued, it is especially important to be conscious of what characterizes a good listener. A good listener is more effective in his/her words because taking the time to listen instead of being so quick to speak gives one the chance to really think and allow what others have to say to sink in before voicing one’s own opinions.

Contentment is key in understanding and knowing one’s “place”. I think that if a person is constantly looking at other people and wishing they looked like him, or had her personality, or his occupation, or her boyfriend, that person is at great risk of missing out on knowing, and therefore *fulfilling* his/her place in society. This goes along with the idea of individuality (without which the world would be an extremely boring place). No two people are the same, therefore, each person has a different role to play in this giant societal web in which we live. Wishing to be someone else does nothing but take away from the beauty of individuality and

leaves one unsatisfied when one could instead be finding his/her own identity and role in society by living out his/her own life to the fullest.

Awareness can be applied to “knowing your place” because if one is constantly aware of his/her surroundings and circumstances, one will then be better able to see opportunities to help others, which is, what I think, one of the fundamentals of “knowing your place.” It may seem like living for oneself is satisfying, but in reality is it not more satisfying to see the people one cares about feel so encouraged by simple acts of selflessness? I think a person’s role in society highly depends on others rather than on oneself. Therefore, “knowing your place” is not just about knowing what you want and what you should be doing, it does not simply end after the part about you, but on a broader spectrum, it is about putting all of those things about oneself to use in a way that is beneficial for others as well. Knowing your place means knowing how to help people, how to put others first, and where one’s boundaries are when it comes to his/her position in society. If everyone “knew their place” and people were constantly looking out for each others’ best interest, society and the world as we know it would be a much more harmonious and pleasant place.

The Demon Within

“I am a demon.” The day I heard those words changed my life forever. Spoken by my closest friend, a friend who I had grown up with my entire life. These words crushed my very being, and changed the course of my life. But let us start at the beginning.

We lived in a dark time. Demons lived among the human populace, living lives similar to our own. In fact, to an outsider such as yourself, you would think that our world was entirely human. They looked like us, talked like us, walked like us. But they were still different. Demons have strength that humans could never achieve. They have tails with which they hid in their clothes. And their *eyes*, their *damn eyes*, were the most frightening thing about them. You only see their true eye color when they are angered, but it embodies the greatest fear you will ever know.

Incidents between humans and demons do not occur often, as demons are much fewer in number compared to the expansive human race, but when an incident does occur, the results are devastating. There was even a time when one lone demon leveled an entire city, though that happened long before my time. Demons’ true form manifest when they are angered, and how destructive that form is depends on their age. Imagine a bomb with a simple trigger, and the longer the period before that trigger is pulled sets the strength of the explosion. It’s the same idea, except the explosive strength doesn’t reset after the trigger is pulled, it just continues to build up. Demons are immortal, but we have discovered a way to kill them, and that is to cut off their heads when they are in their true forms.

We are raised to tread lightly in public, not knowing who just might be a demon. Being polite and respectful is of utmost importance in our lives, so as not to set off the wrath of an unknown demon. They are supposedly brought up to be patient, with the government mandating any known demon to practice meditation and other forms of stress relief. But still, the ticking bombs out there walking the streets will eventually go off, and the results are always catastrophic.

Now we begin my story. I was raised in an orphanage, having been abandoned by my parents for some unknown reason. It was there that I met Raphael, my closest friend. He too was abandoned, and so we shared a similar background with which we established our bond. The created stories where our parents returned for us, and we would be free on this alienation of being abandoned. We weren't alone, of course, but most of the other orphans had lost their parents to demons. We were the only two children that were abandoned. Oh, the irony if they knew what I know now.

The first time we witnessed a demon was when I was eight and Raphael was ten. It was a simple accident. The orphanage had taken us out to the local park to play and get away from the feelings of loneliness, and allow us to be kids. It was a slightly overcast day, and Raphael and I were playing ball in the grass, when he kicked it over my head. It flew far, and ended up hitting a passerby in the face. The wrong passerby. The next thing we knew, a blood-chilling scream ripped through the air, causing us all to freeze in fear. That man transformed before our very eyes, into the most hideous and monstrous *thing* I had ever seen. His hands became sharp talons, and wings sprouted from his back. And then blood. The rage of this demon erupted, and the children closest to him were the first to die. The talons ripped their little bodies into shreds,

and it began to rain. It happened all so fast. How did such a small accident cause all this death? Raphael grabbed my arm and tried pulling me away, telling me to run. But I was transfixed. What on this hell of earth was happening? As the rain increased, the demons ferocity appeared to as well. The kids began to scream as they were cut down by this monster. Blood in the air began mixing with the rain, and all I saw was red. Before I knew it, they were all dead, except for Raphael and myself. My friend yelled at me to run again, but I stood frozen in fear. And then I saw them. The demon had turned to face me, and I saw its eyes. The demon's soulless vision had pierced my very being, and then it was on me. A claw had cut into my shoulder before I knew it. And then all was black. I awoke later that day in a hospital, with Raphael asleep at my side. I never found out what happened until much later.

That day changed my perspective on life. I focused on being the most polite and honest person I could ever be. Raphael followed suit, and we went on with our lives at a new orphanage, with the scars of that day never fully healing. We grew up, became working adults, and lived our lives well, only hearing of other demon incidents. Time went on, and we began to feel secure in our lives, something we never truly felt before. For me, that security would soon be lost forever.

On an overcast day, much like the day we lost the orphanage, Raphael dragged me from work. He said it was important, and that he needed to tell me something. And so I followed him. He took me to the very park where the children were killed.

“Marcus, I have something to confess.”

“What is it? Couldn't it have waited until after work?”

“Do you remember the day we were attacked here, and you almost died? Do you ever wonder what actually happened?”

“I do, and you refused to tell me every time I asked you, so why now?”

“Well, apparently, a new law has been passed, and they will soon be hunting down all the demons in the world to kill them.”

“About damn time, we shouldn’t have to fear them anymore.”

“Well, what happened that day - I killed that demon.”

“What? How? You were ten, how in the hell of the world did you manage to cut off its head when it was rampaging?”

“Well, you see – I am a demon.”

I was absolutely stunned. “You’re joking right? This has got to be a joke. Tell me this is a joke. Raphael, tell me this is a joke. Tell me, damn it! Why are you shaking your head? Tell me this is a joke!”

“I’m sorry, Marcus, for hiding it for all these years. I knew that you would fear me, and I didn’t want to lose what we had, the friendship we formed. But apparently, it was all for naught, now that the government has decided we are far too dangerous to be kept alive.”

My consciousness was starting to fade. Lies. All lies. My closest friend, whom I have known all my life, had kept this great secret from me. Who else had lied to me? Was my boss a demon? How about my neighbors? I couldn’t trust anyone. I started to black out, and then I remember that day. The red. The blood. And my vision started to come back in, but in red. I started to feel outraged.

“YOU LIAR!” and I rushed him.

“Marcus, wait-“

And I was on top of him, punching every bit of him as I could. Beating away at his chest, his face. “Show me, damn it, show me your true self!” I was truly enraged, almost like a demon myself. He was crying.

“Marcus! Stop! Listen to me-“

“SHUT UP YOU LIAR! Why should I listen to you, you who have betrayed your closest friend?” I was beginning to tire out now, and I slumped off to his side, panting.

“I hate you, Raphael, and I hate all of you damn demons. Go die in the fires of hell, where you belong.” I stood up, and began walking away, listening to the groans of the monster that lie on the ground. Why didn’t he get angry? Why didn’t he fight back? That angered me even more. I went home and found a sharp knife. When I returned, he had managed to get himself up to a sitting position. I laughed. My closest friend, reduced to this pathetic excuse for what was supposed to be the most fearsome monster known to humans.

“Marcus, wait, just relax, we can work this out.”

“I am working this out Raphael, just as the government wants. Death to the demons. Now, show me your true self so I can end this nightmare.”

But he refused. He kept his patience, hiding the anger within himself. And we just waited there. It began to rain. I stared at him, he stared at me. What else was there to do? And then it hit me, what had angered him the first time. So I took the knife, and he watched as I moved it across my wrist. Then his eyes flashed.

“What are you doing?!” he struggled to get up, but the injuries to his ‘human’ form prevented him from getting far.

“There’s only one way to end this, one of us need to die, and if you won’t let me kill you, so be it.” I had gone insane, all sense of right and wrong in my head gone. All I wanted was revenge for the lie I had been told. The blood began to spill out, and he struggled to remain in control of himself. I began laughing.

“Look at you, what did you expect from this? You’ve known I’ve hated demons since that day, and you brought me back to where it all happened to reveal such a lie to me? Did you think I would just accept you for what you were and try and save you from the hell to come? You must be joking.” I cut deeper into my arm.

“STOP IT, MARCUS!” I started feeling light headed. The end for me was coming, and he would still not turn. So this is how it ends.

Then I saw his eyes flash again. The same soulless vision pierced me briefly. And then I heard the scream. Finally, he shows his true self. His talons formed, and his wings unfurled. But he was not hideous as the other demon had been. He had a beautiful appearance about him. But I ignored that. I was starting to lose consciousness, so I had to move quickly. As he approached, I drew the knife away from my wrist, and pointed it towards him and lunged for his neck. The blade connected, and I forced it through. It all ended. I stood there, lost, still losing blood. I looked over the creature below me. This magnificent being. I had just killed a lifetime of close friendship, all over one little thing, just as that demon from my childhood had killed all of those kids over a simple accident. Who was the demon now?

Rising Out of the Shadows
By Britney Johnston



False Illusion

The government thinks they are like God, but they do not know their place. People want a voice but the government takes it from them.

The Tree

By: Rachel Ashley Heiss

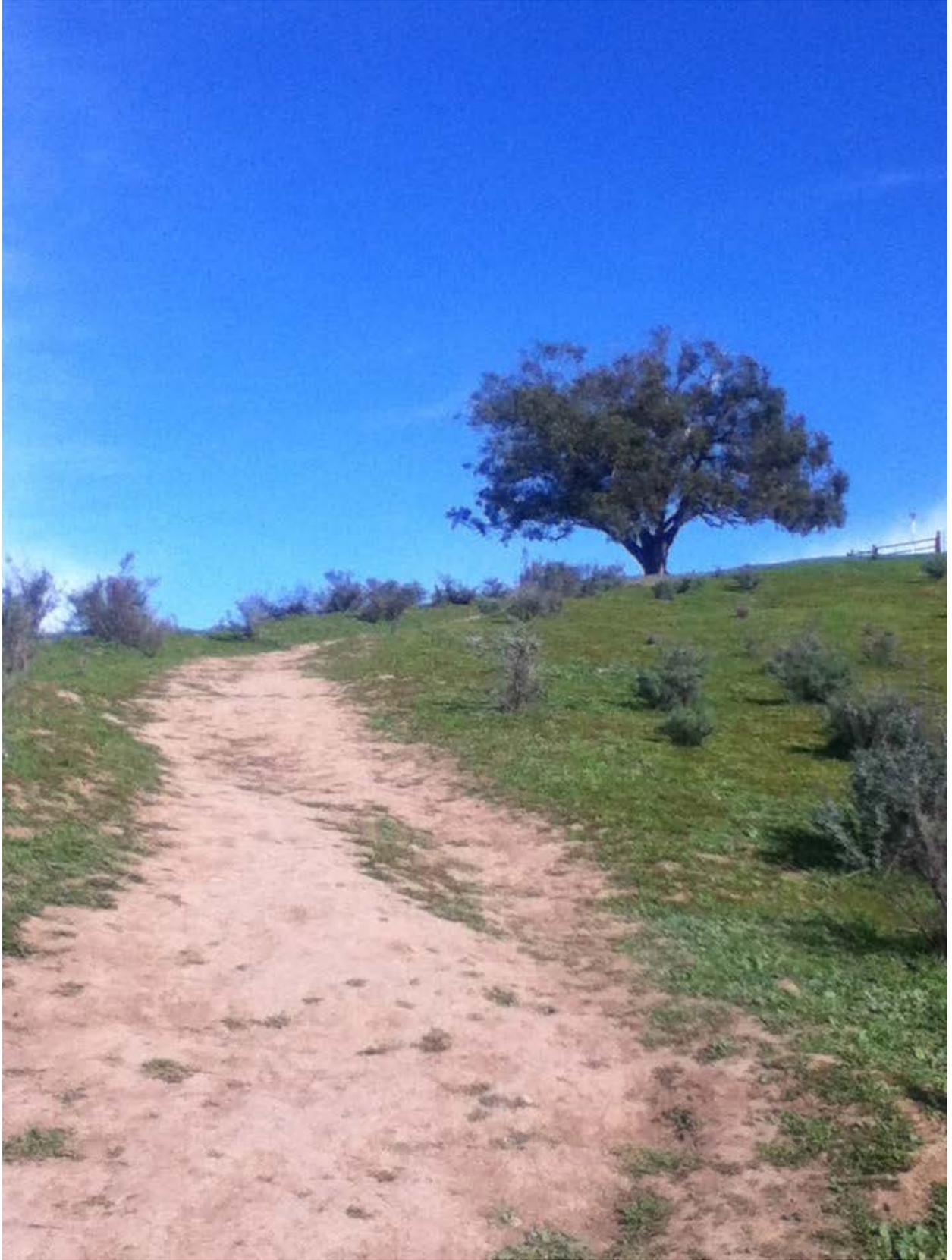
There once was a little tree, who wanted to grow as big and tall as it could be. It dreamed of all its possibilities. Its roots were rooted and reaching deep, the soil rich and nurturing. But there were troubles for this little tree: Brush and bugs and little weeds.

But the tree still knew what it wanted to be. It hoped to grow and succeed. Against all odds, it wanted to reach its future as a great old tree. No matter what the other little trees might say. But after fighting against brush and bugs and little weeds, a fire came to try to overwhelm the tree. It teased and lashed with its fiery tongue, not holding back until it was well and done.

But that little tree, after fighting through the flames, reached deeper than ever to bring forth water and nurture its veins. It found its support from the great old trees, dropping its leaves to support its greatest needs. And while it survived, other little trees died.

Because this little tree wanted to grow as big and tall as it could be. It knew the horizon of possibilities, if only it survived against the troubles that came its way. Its roots grew strong and reached deeper and deeper, nurturing its life and providing for the future.

For this little tree knew what it wanted to be. No matter what the other little trees might say.



"All Night"

At night when the city's quiet, when the crowds have long died down.

In my bed I am at peace.

The quiet darkness envelops me, cradling me like a small child to sleep.

A sleepy fog takes over taking me to a place that I have longed for, for too long.

Here dreams come true and anything is possible.

Only here can I be whoever I want and do as I please without the judgmental stares of society.

For what seems as mere seconds I am in this wonderland.

As the sun rises outside my window, I am pulled from the land of true freedom.

Little by little the city comes to life once again with the honks of horns and endless chatter.

The dreams fade and turn to bits of imagination and hope.

The day has started and now I must venture back into the world of compliance, waiting for night

to come again and let me break from this hard shell.

(ME)

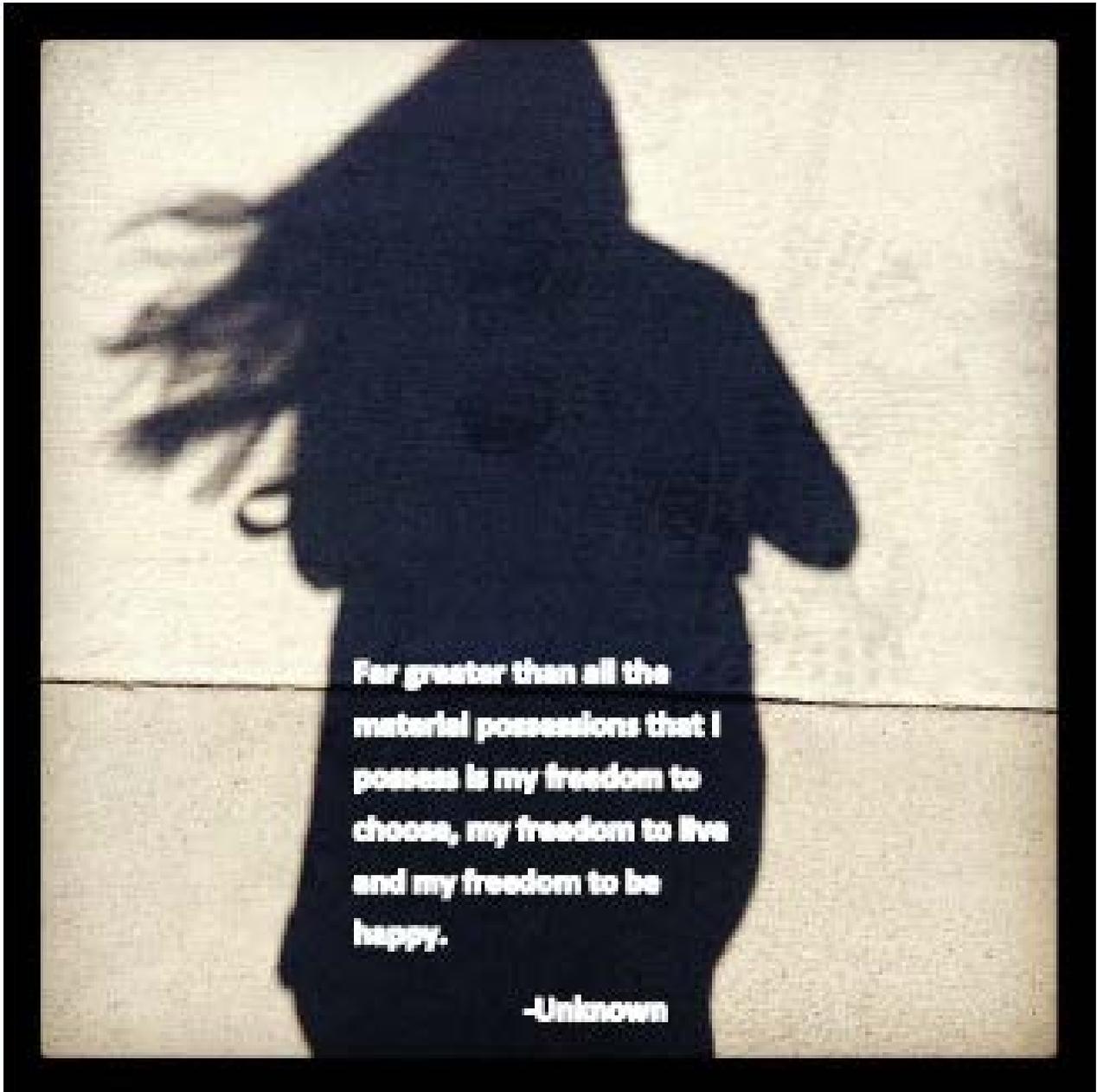
Fresh Princess of Stanislaus

sing to tune of Fresh Prince of BelAir theme song

Now this is the story all about how
My life got flipped, turned upside down
And I'd like to take a minute, just sit right there
I'll tell you how I became a broke college student today

In expensive Napa, yeah, born and raised
In the vineyards where I spent most of my days
Fighting with my mom, wishing I could leave
Not really fitting in, my biggest pet peeve
I hated my life, I didn't have a place
Water Polo and swim were over, get out with haste
Couldn't wait for college, finally find myself
Little did I know what I was getting into, I needed help!

Finally arrived at stanislaus Turlock
And I yelled to my dad, yo homes smell you later!
Looked at my dorm I was finally here!
To sit on my throne...or to fail with beer?



Whether it's reminiscing on past memories, thinking about the future, or embracing the now, our invisible cities help us establish our idea of place.

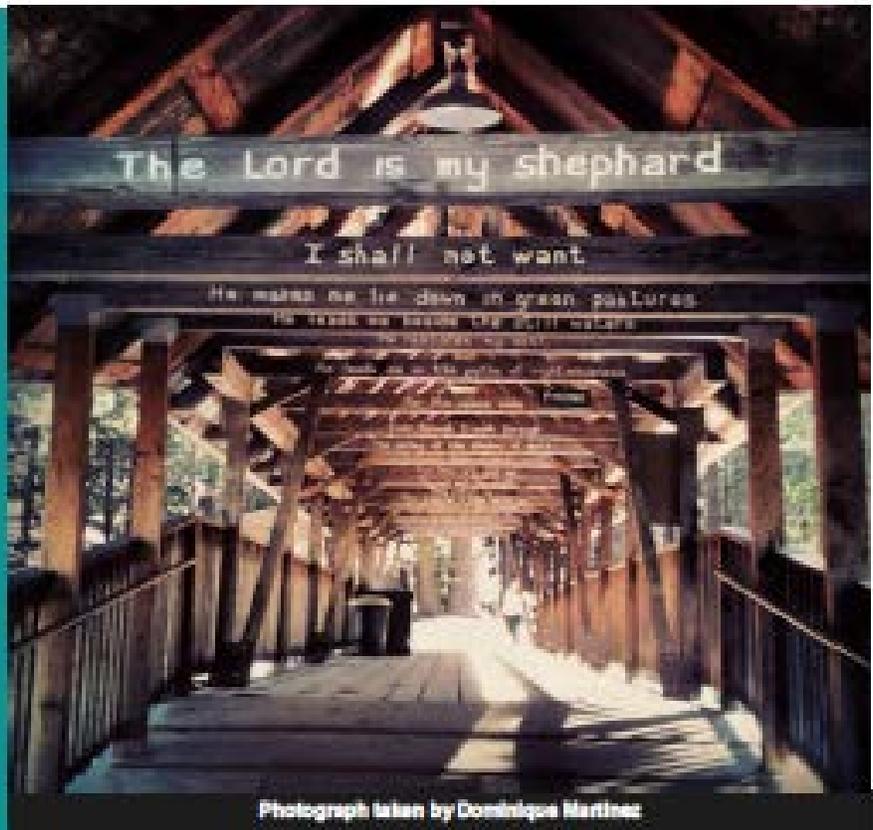
It's important that we know who we are and where we come from. We need to open up our imagination to discovering the many possibilities of life and perspective.

As Calvino says, "The bridge is not supported by one stone or another... but by the line of the arch that they form." (82)

This invisible aspect of human interaction wires the network of connection.



"Without a family, man, alone in the world, trembles with the cold." - Andre Maurois



The Importance of Community

Have you ever felt isolated or alienated from the world around you? There once was a little ant that was stripped away from his colony. Now as much as we don't really associate with these creepy crawly creatures, to them they have a place in this world. I wonder how this little ant felt when he was stripped away from his colony. Did he feel alone? Isolated? Abandoned? Trapped? I mean, he was separated from the only life he knew of. His sense of place had been shaken. He couldn't live without his colony. The insignificant little ant had a place in life that was very much significant, but without his colony he was as good as dead. Often times when we are alienated from the world we lose our sense of place. Community is what brings us all together as one body. As humans we strive towards community every day of our lives. The friends we have, the clubs and sports we join, we are constantly searching for community. No one wants to feel isolated or alone. What a lonely life that would be, no friends, no family, just you and yourself. We all need friends and family to help build us up. It's part of discovering who we are. We were born to be a community.

Borderland

By Taylor Massengale

An Indian who prefers a pen
To the singing of

Our
...Their

My
Song

Must find his way.

But which way should he choose?

The trails have all been paved over.

What borders does he need to

Pass

Break

...Jump?

He is caught between tribes,

A writer amongst hunters

Who just needs to find his place.



By Taylor Massengale

KNOW YOUR PLACE

By Katie Rodgers

When the teacher introduced “know your place” as the school year’s theme, my mind immediately thought up negative scenarios. I thought of Roman masters yelling at their slaves, of high society members making snide remarks to those of a lower class, and of adults furiously whispering to children. When I asked my brother what he thought of the phrase, he answered with a sexist joke. My mother gave me a questioning look that said, “What are they teaching my daughter?” Almost everyone I shared “know your place” with came up with negative responses. Hoping that the honors course wasn’t trying to put us down, I pushed myself to think deeper.

“Your place” those two words can have so many different meanings. Place could refer to a specific location such as your street address or even the school you attend. Knowing your place might be as simple as seeing the world around you and knowing you belong there (not that that is an easy task). The theme could signify your place in society both in the present and the future. Perhaps it’s about finding that group of friends that you can be yourself with. Maybe the teachers are pushing students to discover where their skill sets are best able to contribute to the world. “Know your place” may very well symbolize what job you want in the future but maybe that’s too specific. Possibly the theme just means your short and long term goals.

The Webster dictionary defines “your” as belonging or relating to you, so perhaps instead of focusing on the “place,” I should focus on to whom it relates. This

entire slogan could revolve around knowing yourself. (The teachers did give this to students in college, the time of experimentation). Stanislaus is full of people who have never met each other. College gives people the opportunity to reinvent themselves, if they so desire. Perhaps they want to be cooler or more studious or heck maybe they just want to let the inner freak out. A new group of friends might bring out different parts of your personality. College is an adult world, a time when students have to make it on their own. A teacher may or may not care if you show up to class; it's the student's responsibility. No parent receives a call informing them that their child is not attending class or turning in their assignments. It's up to the student to go to class and learn, and not flunk out of college. The student has to determine whether going to a party when they have a paper due the next day is a good idea or not. College is where you find out if you're responsible or a lazy procrastinator or a talented lazy procrastinator on Red Bull.

This is the time for self-discovery, therefore it makes sense that teachers want students to think about knowing themselves. College is chance to explore and discover hidden talents and abilities. If you want to be a lawyer, you can join a debate club and see how well you can persuade an audience. College is where a med student can take a creative writing class and discover he really wants to be a science fiction novelist. Once you discover the place you want to go you can start to plan how you are going to get there. Perhaps that is why, this theme was chosen for our freshmen year so that students can start thinking about what they want to do with the rest of their lives.

Of course, with all that in mind, perhaps this adage is about helping students stay grounded. Experimenting and expanding your horizons doesn't mean changing everything about yourself and becoming a different person. Humans crave a place to belong, it's in our nature. Sometimes the pressure of fitting in inspires people to pretend to be someone they're not or act out of character.

"Know your place" may have to do with not reshaping yourself to fit in the triangular hole when you really are a circle; don't forget who you are just because you want people to like you. The rocker place may be cool but it may not be your place. The world is full of unique individuals and everyone has contributions that only they can make. Hopefully, one doesn't become a doctor because they want to want to be rich, but because they want to help people. Knowing our place in the world should be about finding a place where we can make a difference.



Maria Esparza

I love science and that's why I've chosen major in Biology at CSU Stanislaus. Soccer is my true passion. After graduation from CSU Stanislaus, I will be attending medical school in hopes of becoming a doctor.



Vivian Gutierrez

Optimistic woman trying to find her place in a big world. Enjoys outdoor activities, wants peace in the world and harmony, self proclaimed hippie. Known for being silly and crazy but just an adventurous kid looking to be closer to nature.



Rachael Heiss

Going for her BA in Anthropology and plans for a doctorate. In her free time, she likes to read, explore art, discover nature, and spend time with her family and furry friends. Puts herself into her writings and finds it very personal hoping readers are touched and enjoy it.



Sheree Hickman

When I was a child, I moved around a lot, and it was difficult to find my place. Never would I have thought I could attend a college, let alone graduate high school. My sister dropped out her senior year and my brother became a criminal, but I superseded these expectations. I became who I wanted to be and make my own footsteps in life.



Britney Johnston

Manteca-born I graduated from East Union High School with Honors. I am studying Biology at CSU Stanislaus in order to become a zoologist. I have been through many family issues that have helped me to find my place on this earth. The world is not a place to be afraid of but rather a place to explore.



Adolfo Herrera-Lazos

A college student who is willfully looking for his Physics major, dreaming through life. Adolfo lives in a small town, a very lonely one at that. He enjoys japanese video games, dark, cool rooms and sporadic fits of self-loathing.



Brett Martin

Freshman at CSU Stanislaus, I love to run, bike and drinking tea as well as spending quality time with friends and family. As a computer science major, I hope to lead the new breed of engineers and programmers into the 21st century! I owe who I am today to the Lord and my amazing family, and can't wait to see where life will lead.



Dominique Martinez

I am currently a freshman at CSU Stanislaus pursuing a career in nursing. When I am not in class or studying, I volunteer in the Emergency Department of Emanuel Medical Center in Turlock, CA, enjoy dancing and spending time with my family. Through my walk of faith, God has provided for me and is the reason I am who I am today.



Taylor Massengale

Born and raised in Yuba City, California. Currently she is a undeclared freshman at CSU Stanislaus, where she is member of the Volleyball team as well as a representative for the Student Athletic Advisory Committee (SAAC). When she isn't on the court, she likes to spend time with friends and family, visit new places and experience new things.



Skarleth Moran

The definition of life is different to each individual. To me life is a journey that an individual goes through as a learning experience. It gives us the opportunity to find ourselves and find our place within the billions of other human beings on this planet. I continue to go through my life journey, discovering more about myself and the world in which I live in.



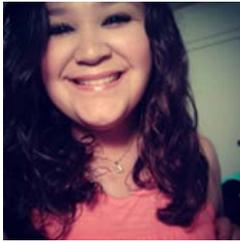
Mario Muniz

There is something really special about storytelling to me. Whether it be through photography or through written word, the concept of sharing your life experiences with others is very special to me. My hope is to positively impact people through my life and my stories.



Gabby Peralta

I am a freshman here at Stanislaus, currently an undeclared major but hope to soon major in geology. I graduated from Vintage High School on the honor roll and as captain of both the Girls Varsity Water Polo and the Varsity swim team. My dream is to one-day move to Alaska and change the world. I dedicate all of my work to my dad; without his amazing support and courage, I would not be where I am today.



Christina Robles

I'm 18, and I was born in French Camp, CA. I graduated from East Union High School, and am now currently a pre-nursing major here at CSU Stanislaus. After I receive my Bachelors, I plan to continue on to grad school at CSU Stan for my Masters. After completing my education I hope to become a neonatal nurse. I'm obsessed with all things Harry Potter.



Katie Rodgers

I enjoy reading, camping, boating and being with friends and family in my freetime. As a freshman I can say the knowing your place is not an easy thing. So to me the phrase means a journey. It's about finding yourself and your place in the world. A place you choose, not one chosen for you. I hope my writing display that message.



Malia Salas

I'm a freshman at California State University Stanislaus, and my intended major is Psychology. I live by Gandhi's idea to "Be the change you want to see in the world".



Neal Southern

I attended Waterford High School and am now majoring in Mathematics at CSU Stanislaus. I intend to go to graduate school after achieving my degree and aim to teach at the college-level. The concept of knowing your place has made me realize that I am currently living how and where I want to be, and I am enjoying my college experience greatly.



Stoney Thao

As a freshman, new experiences are still ahead and I want to experience them. My concentration is in computer information systems within the business administration. I graduated from John H. Pitman High School in Turlock as a distinguished scholar. A hobby of mine is making music. It always keeps me occupied and gives me inspiration to work on new projects. For now, I am focusing on my studies and working towards the degree.



Shawn Ward

I'm going to keep this short and sweet. I'm 18 years old and come from the "cowboy capital of the world" that no one has ever heard of called Oakdale, California. Although I somehow made it into the honors program, academics is not always what I excel in. I enjoy playing the piano, studying martial arts, singing, dancing (tap, ballet, jazz, hip-hop, and breakdance), and acting. Hope you enjoyed the works!



Ana Viss

I am a full time student at CSU Stanislaus, still trying to figure out what career path I want to take. I do enjoy writing and I write straight from my heart when given the opportunity. That being said, this magazine holds some very special values of mine that I was more than excited to express on paper, knowing that my work would actually be read. You can tell a lot about a person by the kinds of things they write about, so I hope that through the pieces I shared can better understand who I am and what I like.



Taiga Yamaguchi

Unlike many others, I have not lived a tremendously tragic nor eventful life; I am the epitome of mediocracy. But living such life is rather plain and boring, so I at least try to make other mediocre people's life a bit more interesting and entertaining by the way I act and write. Some may view me and my writing as straight up stupid, but that's okay, because we are all different and there really is no use in trying to have 8 billion people agree with you. Just as long as you yourself are happy with who you are, then no one else can affect who you are. I cannot say that I am fully content with my life but that just leaves room for improvement and come on, who doesn't love the feeling of making something or someone better than they were before.