



The Issue is a new *arts + culture* magazine from *The Alliance Youth Media Initiative, designed to inspire* a creative future *where we all belong*. The Issue is a model of *intergenerational collaboration* and *mutual reciprocity*, where diverse voices are artfully represented and joyfully celebrated.

Whew! That's a lot of info in such a short amount of space, so let's define some terms.

*Arts + Culture* -- The Issue isn't just an arts magazine; we also examine the culture(s) that create(s) it. Trends and controversial societal topics are unpacked in our pages through various forms of art: film, creative and essay writing, photography, and more.

*The Alliance's Youth Media Initiative* -- The Issue is a project of The Alliance Youth Media Initiative, which produces platforms for collective learning, expression, and creation for those in increasingly broad field of youth media. We believe that the foundations of youth media learning through hands-on experience, tackling sensitive and authentic personal and political issues, engaging youth and those in their intersecting communities, and using media as a tool and strategy to examine ourselves / communities / world (Dahl, 2009)—provide the best way to realize a future where all belong.

*Designed to Inspire* -- Design matters, and it starts not with aesthetics but with structure. We view design as a conversation between the Editorial Team, Contributors, and Partners. An open flow of ideas allows for aesthetics to emerge in a way that honors all perspectives while building consensus between writer, illustrator, editor, and designer.

*Where We All Belong* -- The Issue centers the voices, identities, experiences, and expressions of those historically and economically pushed to the margins, including black and brown folks, people with disabilities, trans and gender non-conforming folks, women, poor folks, migrants, queers, youth, non-commercial artists and media makers, and the myriad combinations / intersections there within.

*Intergenerational Collaboration* -- Every aspect of The Issue showcases our dedication to intergenerational collaboration, from the editorial team to the contributors involved.

*Mutual Reciprocity* -- The Issue values intersections and the dynamic synergy that exists in that space. As a publication that has limited funding, we believe that contributing to The Issue must be of benefit to both the magazine and the contributor. We honor the contributions of our volunteers through clear communication and crafting marketing materials that center them. We encourage finding opportunities for cross promotion and publication too.

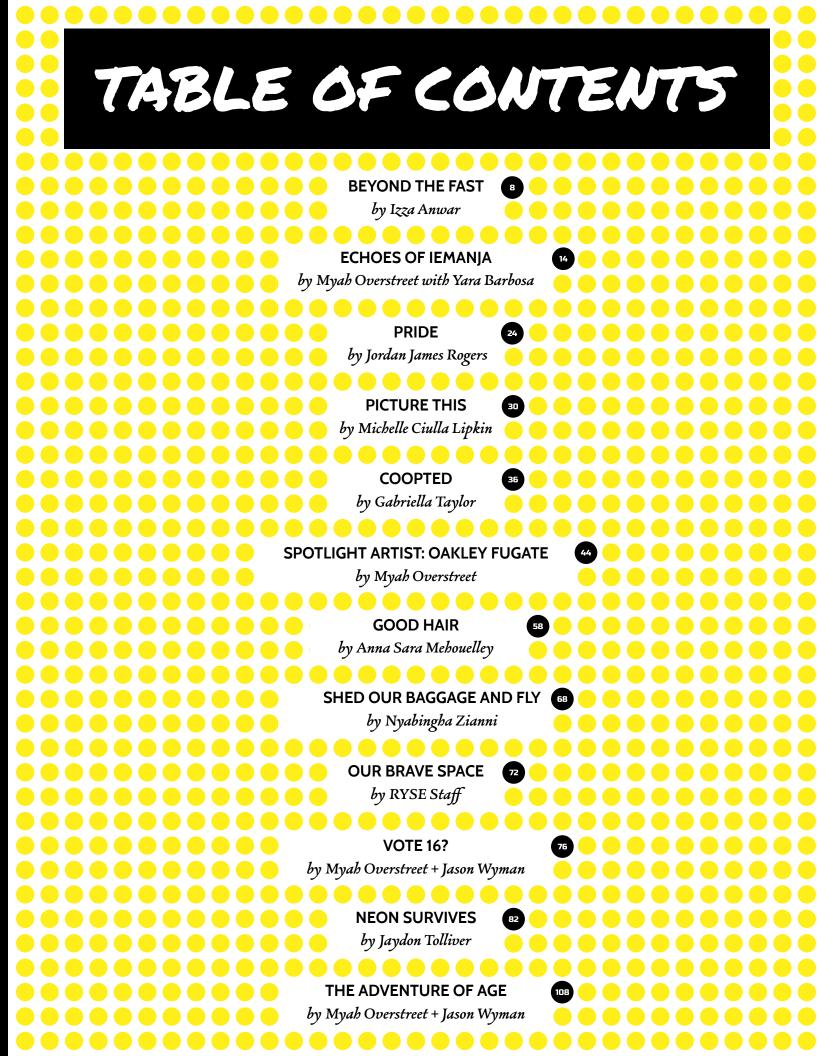
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We all have issues that we need to express in some way, shape, or form—whether that's through poetry, film, photography, essay writing, or by word of mouth. We all have things that bug us.

That's why we created this magazine. The Issue is for everyone's issues, turned into a learning opportunity and created to provide a glimmer of inspiration for others to read.

You may be wondering what on earth you are going to get out of reading about other people's experiences, hopes, and dreams. What could you possibly learn? Why is it any of your business?

Well, to start, you'll learn about the deepest and truest meaning of Ramadan in "Beyond the Fast" by Izza Anwar, our opening essay. In "Coopted", written by our guest editor Gabriella Taylor, you'll take an analytical approach to learning about the misappropriation of millennial activism. Jaydon Tolliver shares his dreams for his community in rural Kentucky in a zine called "Neon Survives". And Nyabingha Zianni urges women to break from the stereotypes that have hindered our growth for generations in her poem "Shed Our Baggage and Fly".

After hours of brain juice about how to incorporate intergenerationality in a piece, I thought, "Why have young people write about age when old and young people can simply talk about it themselves?" Thus, the idea behind "The Adventure of Age". We interviewed two adults and two young people about their perspectives on age and the journey of aging, and took a glimpse into the future by asking them how they see themselves 50 years from now.

This magazine is fun, dynamic, colorful, bright, diverse, up for interpretation, and deeply personal. It is meant to be a catalyst for storytelling and conversation. Each contributor has ripped a page from their diary to share with you in the hopes that you find the courage to talk about your deepest thoughts and feelings. By sharing our issues, we give hope to others.

We are here for you.

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# a letter from the Creative Director

The vision of The Issue started in a small cafe on a corner of San Francisco over coffee and strawberry scones. Gathered around a rectangular table, Myah, Gabby, and I shared stories of identities, sketched ideas on printer paper, and discovered the issues about which we are passionate. It was in this raw, intimate place that we birthed not just The Issue, but our guiding theme / image / archetype for our inaugural issue: a journal or diary.

The guiding philosophy for our cover was to create something that felt like it was ripped from someone's sketch book. We wanted it to intrigue people, make them go, "What is this?" And compel them to pick it up. It needed to be something that spoke to different generations and conveyed complex, varied emotions.

I walked San Francisco streets looking for inspiration, and found it in Keith Haring's "The Life of Christ" (1990) in Grace Cathedral. I noticed the ways in which something as simple as a line could communicate so much pain, loss, love, and possibility. I knew the cover needed to be equally moving.

With the cover done, I turned my attention to the broader magazine. I asked Myah to share what ideas were emerging and what her vision as Editor-in-Chief was for both the individual articles and the larger magazine as we noshed on homemade bread and cheese. I listened as she told me how each writer laid bare their truth and that truth needed to shine. Our goal became clear as we drank more coffee: each article had to be beautiful and match, in color + emotion, the cover.

I hope we captured the essence of every issue, contributor, and voice. It was a joy working in collaboration with Myah and Gabby to develop The Issue. In fact, I can't imagine working any other way. As an artist this experience captures what it means to create in community with others: it is greater than any singular component.

And I'm just one among many who helped make The Issue the work of art and passion it is.

The process of collaborating to create The Issue, from developing its theme to having the privilege to contribute my own article, has been such a rewarding and informative experience on so many levels. I am incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to work with Myah and Jason on this project, as well as with the many other amazing writers and artists who shared their own stories and ideas with us.

We spent a lot of time thinking about who we wanted this magazine to reach and what its desired impact would be, and I hope that our initially brainstormed mission - "To share personal stories that honor intersecting identities to cultivate an intergenerational bridge to future communities"— is reflected in this final collection of stories.

Thank you for your support!



THE ALLIANCE **VIDEO ROUNDTABLES** 

# a letter from the Guest Editor



TO SIGN UP EMAIL: jason@thealliance.media

## BEYOND THE FAST by Izza Anwar



(1)

**EACH YEAR** as the holy month of Ramadan comes closer, I feel more and more homesick for Pakistan. I originally migrated from there when I was eight years old.

Ramadan in America is a joke. It's like celebrating your birthday on a planet that doesn't have days, months, or years; so how do you explain your birthday to someone who doesn't understand dates? How can you truly celebrate your birthday if no one around you understands the concept?

Ramadan is a month in the Islamic calendar where the Quran-- the holy book for Muslims-was revealed, making this month holy and spiritual. It's a month of celebration, doing good deeds, fasting, spending time with family, and eating a surreal amount of delicious foods. This month is like the food and family traditions of Thanksgiving combined with the excitement and joy of Christmas. For Muslims like myself, Ramadan is a very special time of the year.

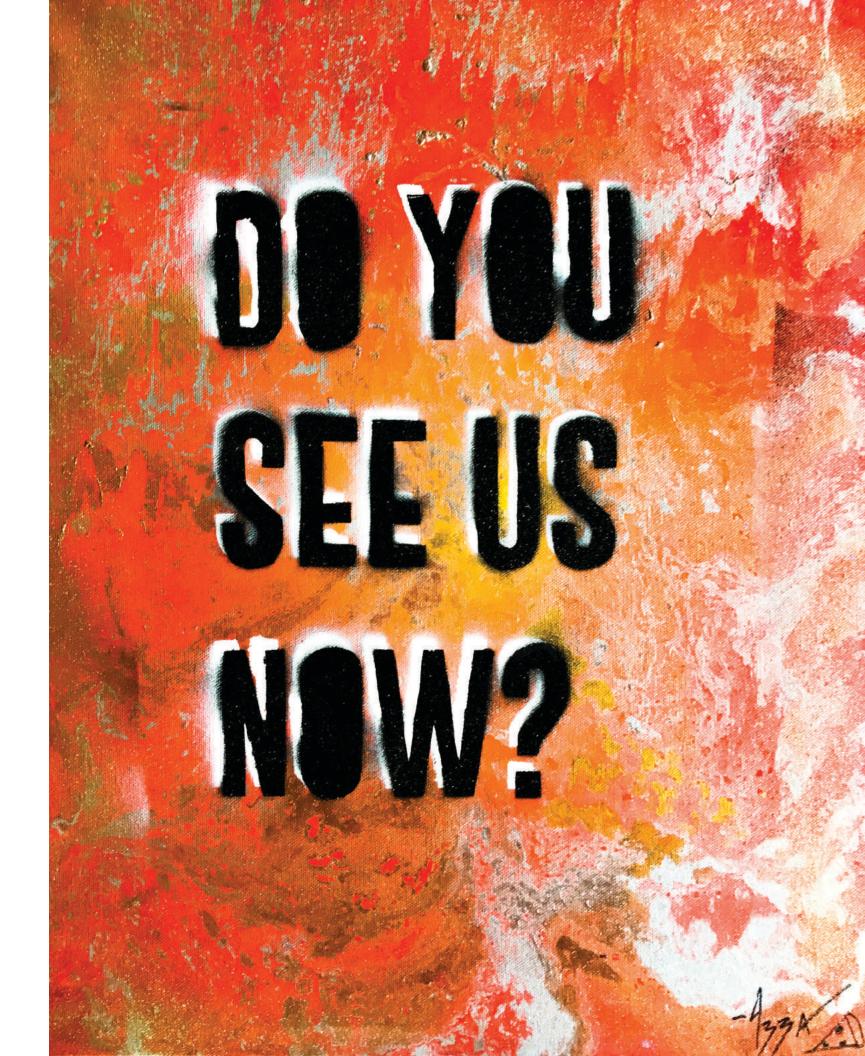
In America, Ramadan is so uncommon that explaining its customs to others often becomes an awkward translation between cultures. When I am fasting, I have to constantly explain to my classmates why I am choosing to go all day without food and water. "Not even water?" they'll ask me as I shake my head "no", which leaves them with a horrified look on their face as they again ask, "For a whole month? Don't you die?"

It's come to a point where I avoid bringing up fasting for Ramadan because it's exhausting to constantly have the same conversation. It's difficult for a lot of non-Muslims to truly understand the concept of fasting. To them fasting is practicing a religion that encourages you to starve yourself, when in reality fasting is an emotionally rich and spiritual experience. It's about perseverance, empathy, and faith.

I once told a friend I was fasting for Ramadan and his immediate reply was, "Ramadan? More like Rama-DUMB!"

I laughed it off, because that's what the "Good Muslim" does; the "Good Muslim" doesn't get offended at such jokes. But that joke really stuck with me. It was a reality check of how something so special to my culture is perceived in my community's eyes.

I completely understand why someone might not agree with fasting. I understand how it sounds when I try to explain it to another person. With the exception of a few instances, people are usually supportive about my decision to fast. Some of my friends have even tried to fast with me, which was truly incredible.



Even with this, I feel like I am not making any progress. The reputation of Muslims in America is getting worse and worse by the day. Because of the ignorant stereotypes that are thrown carelessly at the Muslim community, I am afraid that it might come to a point where people will lose interest in even asking about my culture because they already believe the stereotypes they've heard.

When I am fasting, the difficult part isn't going the whole day without food or water, the real challenge is going without the bad habits that I am so accustomed to in my daily routine. When you're fasting you aren't just forbidding yourself from food or water, you are also forbidding yourself from sinning and bad intentions. A key part of fasting is to be the best version of yourself.

Fasting is about water are essential much so that without or go thirsty. Our our hunger and thirst our brains to remind but by fasting, we Fasting allows us to with the poor and may only be going 16 hours, but every with a delicious feast and my hunger is but millions of people not. do not have the Ramadan makes me feel brave, so that I can face the Islamophobia that is rising in America because I know that I am one of many.I know who we are is not represented truthfully and that I have it in me to speak up.

discipline. Food and needs for living, so either we starve bodies respond to by sending signals to us to eat and drink: practice control. empathize better hungry worldwide. without food for evening I am greeted to open my fast with, once again satiated; worldwide, Muslim or luxury. When I fast, I

relearn the luxury of always knowing that there is food available to me when I need it. I learn to appreciate everything I eat and reduce all food waste.

I want to share my culture because I am proud. When someone says they like who I am as a person, I want to be able to say that my religion heavily influences me and my personality. As a Muslim in America I am taught to never reference my own religion. I am taught to hide my religion as much as possible.

Why should I? I have never believed in Islamic extremism, nor have I ever heard another

Muslim say, "Yeah those ISIS people are doing great work." But why do I have to answer for the actions of people that I am fully against? Why do I have to change my entire appearance so I don't get targeted as a hate-crime? If the entire White population isn't responsible for the actions of the KKK, then why is the entire Muslim population responsible for the actions of ISIS? I am against ISIS as much as you are against the KKK, but no one is asking you to apologize for them.

Regardless of what you may believe, I come from a culture that taught me empathy, forgiveness and love. I want to be able to practice those things without having to constantly defend myself.

This is what makes Ramadan so special. Ramadan feels like achieving that new year's resolution. I am always happier. I hug my mom a little tighter. I donate as if my bank account has no end. I feel the solidarity of the millions of Muslims fasting with me. I feel supported from the never-ending Ramadan memes. But most of all I feel confidence and love. This month makes me feel brave, so that I can face the Islamophobia that is rising in America because I know that I am one of many. I know who we are is not represented truthfully and that I have it in me to speak up.



**Izza Anwar** is a young artist and aspiring photographer based in San Francisco. As a Pakistani-American she offers a unique perspective, reflecting identities in America. Izza has had her artwork at the DeYoung Museum, SOMArtsCultural Center, and the windows of the Cartoon Art Museum. And she's always looking to collaborate with other artists and creators! (She also makes really good chai.)

Hopefully this film will open their eyes so they can [stand up] for what they want.





Yara Barbosa grew up in Minas Gerais, Brazil, and she's now a Youth Leader and Producer at the Global Action Project in New York City, NY. Editor-in-Chief, Myah Overstreet interviewed her about her film "Echoes of Iemanja", which is about how even a stranger can change one's destiny.

**HUSSI** 



her eyes and give her hope and strength to pursue her dreams.

MYAH: What was most exciting about making this film?

YARA: A couple of things were exciting for me making this film. I am from Brazil and I believe this was the first time that

Yara Barbosa

MYAH: Tell me about the film and what it's about. Your interpretation of it.

YARA: ["Echoes of lemanja"] is a movie based on a young, undocumented, immigrant girl from Haiti who has big dreams about going to college. In the beginning, there's a conflict between what her mom wants for her and what she wants for herself. so her mom does not give her the support she needs. [During the scene on] the beach, she speaks with Iemanja, [who is] a total stranger but turns out to be someone who's able to open up

Global Action Project produced a film that focused on Brazilian history. That was really exciting.

Also, my mom and I made the fancy dresses that we used in the film. Me and my mom were the same person in the film so we wore the same dress. We bought the fabric & sewed the dresses ourselves. We made them in one night, too!

MYAH: What inspired you to make/ participate in the making of this film?

YARA: What inspired me to make the

film was its message to not give up your dreams or silence your voice. We need to [learn from] our history to change things in the world. A lot of young people follow what their parents want them to do and often this means giving up their dreams. Hopefully this film will open their eyes so they can [stand up] for what they want.

**MYAH:** Tell me about the making of the film. What were some of your fondest memories from the pre-, production, and post-production phase?

YARA: [During pre-production] I remember how we came up with the idea for the film. I was talking to Jesus (Media Educator for Global Action Project) about how the name lemanjá means Mermaid or water spirit. I shared a story about lemanjá, then spoke about my own strong connection to water. If I am sad and you put me by salt water, my mood changes immediately. That's how it all started, with a simple conversation.

YARA: The actual production was a bit crazy! It seemed like we did a hundred takes of the same scene sometimes. But after multiple takes we started to connect with each other more and also see how our characters were connecting. Seeing it on paper is one thing but then acting it out is a totally different experience. Once we were sure about the movie's title, things began to fall into place, the characters,

the locations. The support and energy from every single person involved in the production was fantastic!

We were so happy how the movie turned out. The editing was beautiful! It was a relief that after the long production process, all the energy and work that every person involved committed came through in the final edit.

MYAH: Why is this film important for both young people, adults, and elders to watch?

**YARA:** We wrote this film as fiction. but we know this is a true story. One of my messages is to keep trying. If it doesn't happen today, maybe it will happen tomorrow. Don't let other people get you down. So it's important for everyone to watch it and see what message they get from the film.

MYAH: Any fun facts about the film?

YARA: The bloopers, or outtakes from the movie, are hilarious! We could make a short comedy from the bloopers we have!

MYAH: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

YARA: The movie is done! Watch it on YouTube here. But there will be some surprises coming soon, almost a continuation of the movie. But that's all i can say. Stay tuned!



Echoes of Iemanja , 2017



Echoes of Iemanja , 2017



Echoes of Iemanja , 2017



Loving yourself truly is vital in living a healthy and happy life. But what people often neglect to discuss about loving yourself is that how this process can be a journey-a journey that often is difficult, draining, triggering.

by Jordan James Rogers

**NOWADAYS**, there is a necessary emphasis on the importance of this idea of "self-love". Loving yourself is vital in living a healthy and happy life but what people often neglect to discuss about self love is that this process can be a journey-- a journey that often is difficult, draining, and triggering. I believe that in order to truly say that you embody self-love, you must learn to love all aspects of yourself. But in this society that we live in, it can be very difficult to love all aspects of yourself when certain parts of what make you whole are under constant attack. I am Jordan Rogers, a Black, gay, male from Compton, California. I love myself beautifully and unapologetically, but getting to this level of self-love felt like a battle that I was destined to lose. In my opinion, I didn't begin to conquer this losing battle until I learned to embrace my sexuality.

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I am a Black male, with Black parents, and a Black family, from Compton, which is a majority Black city. I grew up constantly hearing how terrible it is to be gay. Not from my parents necessarily, but more from the kids at school, neighborhood, and from extended family members. Homosexuality in the Black community is looked down upon as one of the worst things that a person possibly can be. In many Black families, the Pedophile Uncle gets more love and respect than the Gay Son. The Gang-Banging, murdering cousin gets more love and respect than the Transgender Aunty. That's just the way it is and it is very sad we as a community have accepted it.

My first exposure to the LGBTQ Community was seeing the rainbow flag. I would see it everywhere: on the news, on social media, and on television programs, etc. Growing up in Compton, I had never seen LGBTQ individuals living their lives openly before I made it to San Francisco State University. It was virtually was non-existent. I hadn't see two men loving each other freely or two women happily married with two kids, a house, and a dog. All I ever really knew about the community was the Pride Flag and the brave individuals who proudly waved it. So for me, that colorful flag represents the little exposure I had to my own identity as a child. That flag that I would see e reminded the adolescent Jordan that who he is, was someone to be proud of. I was reminded that I was normal person and that there were other people out there just like me who were living their best lives. Seeing such

a miniscule representation was hugely impactful on my young mind. The Pride Flag before the addition of the Black and Brown stripes in my opinion truly embodies the actual representation of the LGBTQ community. I have been openly gay since 2016 which really isn't that long., But navigating through life as a gay man in a major city like San Francisco, my young soul has learned so much. One of the most important things that I have learned since being in San Francisco is that White Supremacy is as real and apparent in the LGBTQ community just as it is everywhere else. The flag represents this false idea of love and unity amongst everyone in the community, but in reality, that is not the case. Because in my lived reality, White supremacy is alive and well in the community. Discrimination, prejudice, fetishzation, and blatant racism are all forms of White supremacy Black and Brown people have to face in the community. I used to work in the Castro District of San Francisco at a clothing store. My manager was a White gay man who opened up to me and told me how he was accused multiple times of being racist. He then goes on to tell me, "How can I be racist when I love Black penis?" This White man literally said this to me, a Black man. Sexualizing and devaluing Black bodies is a prime example of racism. He also told me I wasn't allowed to play my music in the store speaker because I was playing too much rap and R&B and it would attract the "wrong crowd". My first thought was, "Just say you don't want Black people in your store." After he said all of those things, he still denied that he was racist or had said racist things. And that right there is one of the biggest problems. White queer people believe they cannot oppress other people because they themselves face oppression because of their identity. Dear White people, at the end of the day, you still have White Privilege. Because your skin is lighter than mine, because your facial features don't look like mine, because you are who you are, you have privilege over me. Sadly, that is the world we live in. You then have the power to exercise that

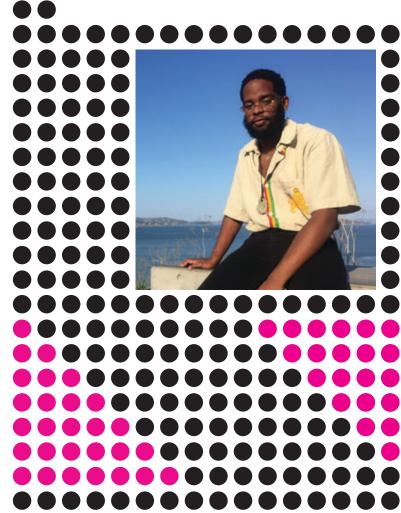
privilege through oppressing people who look like me, Black and Brown folks. And as long as those who have White Privilege continue to ignore the fact that they're oppressing people of color, nothing will ever change. And nothing changes, if nothing changes.

It doesn't surprise me at all that people were bothered by the addition of the black and brown stripes to the Pride Flag in Philadelphia in June of 2017. The addition to the flag means actually acknowledging the importance of the lives of Black and Brown people in the LGBTQ community. This addition means recognizing the contributions, the successes, the history, and the equality of all people in the community. But as well all know, White supremacy does a great job of silencing the voices of oppressed people. And this backlash is a perfect example of that. When your ancestors spent hundreds of years building nations and making billions of dollars because of African chattel slavery or committing genocide on the land and indigenous peoples, it only makes sense that White supremacy continues it reign of control and power.

The Pride Flag in its historic version is meant to sell a story of unity and love for everyone. This story of unity masks the discriminatory reality that Black and Brown people face in the LGBTQ community. And the non-admittance of racial oppression within a flag being sold as one of unity continues to support White Supremacy. I believe White LGBTQ members want to sell this story that the community is all about unity and love for everyone. That rainbow flag symbolically means acceptance of everybody; but in actuality, the flag masks the truth of what happens to people of color in this community. As a Black gay male part of this community, I want give you all some truth: Black and Brown bodies are not valued in any way, shape, or form. As a Black male, I'd like to speak for myself and say that I have been severely fetishized and sexualized by White, Asian, and even Latino men. People only wanted to use my Black body like a machine. To dehumanize me. Because in the eyes of the oppressor, my body is nothing more than just a sexual object. This idea stems from slavery and needs to be addressed in the community. White people had the power and access to use and abuse Black bodies for hundreds of years, and they have yet to let go of those beliefs. The issue is that people don't want to acknowledge it. They want us to forget it. But how can you forget something that is engraved in this country forever? We need to put an end to White Supremacy in all spaces.

I honestly believe people could care less about the original rainbow flag. I think those who are upset about the addition of the Black and Brown stripes are using the original flag to cover their true racism. How can White members of the community preach that they want to be respected and have equal rights while simultaneously oppressing and denying people of color those same privileges? But like White Supremacy, it doesn't make sense. I think the opposers to the addition of the black and brown stripes are angry at the fact that people of color are enacting dire change in the community. The addition of these stripes are essentially saying "f--- White Supremacy, people of color matter too". Our accomplishments are valid and our bodies deserve respect. We aren't asking for it, we are demanding it. And when people start demanding instead of asking, that is when the fear of losing control sets in.

Self-love is so important. Being able to look at yourself in the mirror everyday and love what you see in the reflection gives you the ability to say "f--- you" to the people who try to bring you down. My journey to fully loving myself has only begun. I am only 20 years young and I have so much more life to live and so much more to learn. Liberation is my true goal in life. Liberation for my people and liberation for those who seek it. I believe we need to liberate our minds and our hearts in order for change to happen. Decolonizing our minds from this toxic mindset that systematic White Supremacy has created for us. For those who are reading this, just know that Black Lives Matter. Black LGBTQ lives matter. Know that the addition of the black and brown stripes to the Pride Flag in Philadelphia actually means something powerful. It's the rejection of White Supremacy and the acknowledgment of the beauty and importance of Black and Brown Lives in the LGBTQ community. Lastly, if you see injustices being done and you don't say anything about it, you're a part of the problem.



Jordan James Rogers is a third year student at San Francisco State University majoring in Africana Studies. He is from Compton, California. Rogers uses social media as a platform to express himself as a photogenic, care-free, Gay, Black man who lives his life for himself, unapologetically. He's not too sure what comes next, but he would love to be of service to African Americans through education. As long as Rogers is alive, he will always share his experiences in hope to enlighten, inspire, and educate others.



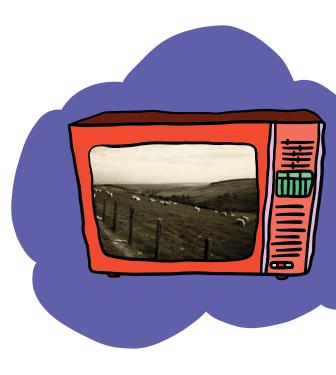
**PICTURE THIS.** Four days before Christmas. A suburban house decorated. Ornaments on the tree. Presents underneath. The house is ready. A middle-aged woman in the kitchen preps dinner for her family. Her husband is due home from an extended business trip. Her son is coming home from college for winter break. Her daughters are finishing up at work and high school so they can get home for dinner. All five of them will be sitting down for a meal together for the first time since Thanksgiving. Finally together. The woman can't wait.

The TV is on in the background. Breaking news interrupts the program. The news is about a plane that has crashed in Scotland. An American airliner. The woman pauses, reads the paper where her husband's travel itinerary is written, and life, as she knows it, is over.

I know this house. I know this story. The woman is my mother. The husband she was waiting for? My father. He never did get home that night. There was no family dinner. The five of us never had the chance to be together again.

On December 21, 1988, my dad boarded Pan Am 103 in London. He and the other passengers were unaware of the bomb that had been placed in a piece of luggage in the cargo hold. 35 minutes after take off, 270 people would be dead at the hands of terrorists. For years, I believed what I saw and heard on the television.... It did not occur to me to think there were parts of the story that were not being told. It was the news reports that identified the cause of the crash as a bomb. The TV brought us endless images of the destruction. The fires. The crater in the small Scottish town. Homes and lives decimated. The now iconic image of the cockpit of the jetliner in the Scottish fields. These images were delivered to our home just as they were delivered to anyone watching the news anywhere in the world. We watched as this very personal, very real international terrorist incident went from being the top story of the news, to the second, to disappearing to make way for more pressing matters. The screen was our only source of information. When the newsrooms went on to other things, we were left in the dark.

For years, I believed what I saw and heard on the television. I thought the images I was seeing



It has been almost 29 years since that life-defining day. So much changed the day my father died. I would not realize for some time all the ways it would impact my life and my future, in particular my relationship to media. At the time, I was a 17 year old who had little interest in TV and no interest in the news. Like many teens my focus was very personal - school, my friends, boys. If I wasn't taught it in class, I was both uninterested and unaware of it.

The TV screen in our den suddenly became our only source of information about my father's death. Through the screen, we heard of the crash. A news anchor spoke the words "no survivors" over the air. It was through the television that we learned of the ignored warnings.

the end of his days 6 miles from the center of the crash on a quiet and vast Scottish sheep farm. His body was found the furthest of any victim from the crash site. We even met the family who found him that night, 20 minutes after the crash. The years of thinking my father's body was alone in the frigid winter air for days on end were replaced with the reality of Scottish sheep farmers checking his pulse for signs of life and shielding his body from the prying eyes of reporters. All this information was news to us. Breaking news, I guess you could say.

"You look just like your dad" was the the first thing they said to me even though they had only ever seen him that night. I will never forget watching them walk confidently to the spot on their

were the images that best reflected the tragedy. It did not occur to me to think there were parts of the story that were not being told. I didn't wonder what was missing. I didn't think about what went on beyond the video footage.Four years after the crash, my family would take our first journey to Scotland, a journey almost as transformative as the crash itself. It was on this trip that we discovered that my father had not died among the flames and destruction. It did not take 10 days to find him as we had been led to believe. He had instead come to

900 acre farm where they had found him, a spot that had become sacred to them over the years. They asked if they could plant a tree in his memory. These were

who felt our loss and cared for our

father. They gave us back hope and peace, and the nightmares that had been haunting us instantly were eliminated in these moments.

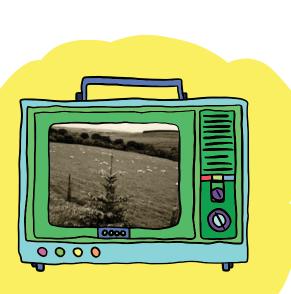
real life people

Learningallthis changed truly me forever -

not just easing some of the fear and terror - but it woke me up to so much about the world and how it is reported. I felt that I had wasted years of recovery by believing without question what I was seeing and reading. I felt angry-- angry at the news for what felt like deliberate manipulation; angry at myself for not understanding the role of the news and for being so blind to what now feels obvious. Of course, the story was incomplete. Of course, the news could not tell us everything.

After that trip, we decided to tell our story. Over the last 25 years, my family

has done countless interviews appearing on news networks all over the world. While the tragedy of Pan Am 103 played out on the news through stories of the



investigation, trials, lawsuits, memorials and anniversaries. continued we share our to personal story. We learned to cope with the discrepancies of what we saw and heard on the news by sharing what we knew to be true. We

learned how to use the media as a tool to tell our story rather than letting it use us.

During these years, I found myself seeking an education and then a career in film and television. I knew firsthand the impact of media, and I wanted to be a part of that world. I wanted to influence it. It didn't take me long to realize that even though I enjoyed making media, I was more interested in understanding media.

My personal and professional journey has led to my current role as Executive Director of the National Association for Media Literacy Education. To me, there

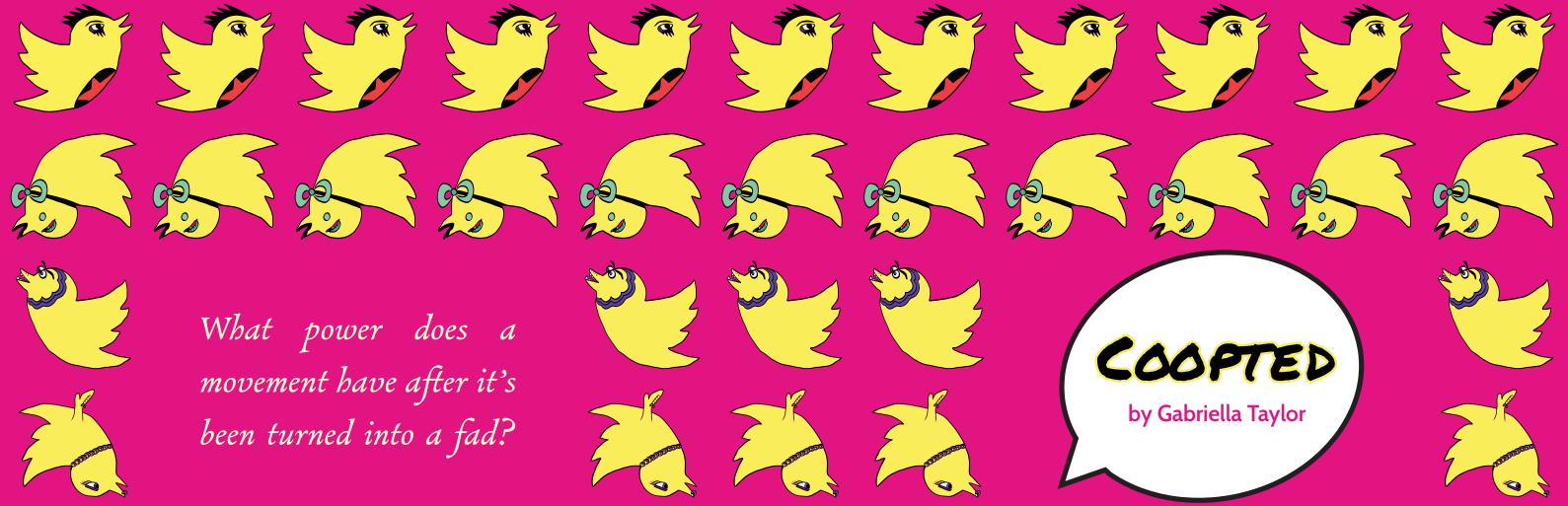
is nothing more important than being aware of how the media shapes our ideas, our relationships, our beliefs and the way we live our lives. We must learn to question the messages that come to us through the many different screens that now accompany our everyday lives. We must be skeptical and curious. We must analyze and evaluate all we hear and see each day. I often wonder what it would have been like for me so many years ago if I had had the skills to ask the questions I didn't even know needed to be asked.

Almost three decades have passed since the breaking news interrupted my family's dinner plans. From the very first moment the newscaster told the world of the crash, my relationship with the media has been intertwined with who I am as a human being. It is an extraordinarily overwhelming and intrusive experience to be the subject of a decades long news story. I don't wish it upon my worst enemy yet it is what has allowed me to become who I am. The story continues to unfold. Both on-screen and off. It is up to me to continue to be the author.

From the very fist moment the newscaster told the world of the crash, my relationship with the media has been intertwined with who I am as a human being.



Michelle Ciulla Lipkin is the Executive Director of the National Association for Media Literacy Education and launched the first ever Media Literacy Week in the United States. She began her career in children's television production, in various roles on both corporate and production teams. Michelle is currently an adjunct lecturer at Brooklyn College in the TV/Radio department where she teaches media crticism and media literacy.

























































































































































I am proud to say I have been avidly watching Kenya Barris' sitcom, Black-ish since it first premiered on ABC in 2014. Starring Tracee Ellis Ross and Anthony Anderson, the show is centered around an affluent black family and the struggles faced by Anderson's character, Dre, as he tries to ensure his children maintain their Black identities despite their upbringing in a predominantly White neighborhood. Along with being witty and consistently hilarious, Blackish has offered a crucial and rarely seen representation of a Black family in America.

As the show moves into its fourth season, the storylines are expanding. One that's specifically advancing is that of Zoey (played by actress Yara Shahidi), the eldest child in the family. Zoey is gearing up to have her own spin-off show, Grown-ish, that will show her at college. And on "Liberal Arts" (Season Three, Episode 23) there was a segue episode that followed her at orientation at the fictional "Southern California University".

The students at orientation are asked to introduce themselves and state their gender pronouns. An over-eager and somewhat smug group leader starts by sharing that they are a "Tri-racial, gender-fluid, panoramic demi-sexual" and their pronoun is "they." Annoyed and alienated by this exercise, Zoey and another girl, Miriam, immediately ask to be excused and leave their orientation tour to explore campus together. While walking through the campus, they find the "Social Justice Dance Squad". The student representative tries to recruit them by asking "Do you believe either the cops and/or rhythm are gonna get you?"

These scenes address both the obsession with self-defining in college and how students impose their identity and affiliations on others. A counterpoint comes when Zoey and Miriam introduce themselves. Miriam says, "Can you just tell me your name and nothing else? No pronouns, no sexual preferences, none of that?"

After they exchange names, Miriam says, "Now if we actually become friends you can learn things about my private life that you can tell other people behind my back."

And Zoey replies, "Right, like you're supposed to."

The show argues here that these labels are personal information that should be shared selectively with people once you feel comfortable with them. While I understand the commentary, it still left me confused about why this small plot point was included at all. couldn't understand how a show that is ultimately itself about identity politics (it's called Blackish) could miss the mark on this overlapping issue of intersectionality, gender, and sexual identity.

This drew my attention to a larger problem of how many Americans view identity politics as a trendy and over-indulgent kind of social-branding and, more specifically, the myth that young people embrace it to only to appear interesting and socially conscious. Take terms like 'Social Justice Warriors' and 'Snowflakes'. They have become a dismissive shorthand that strips the activism of young people (and everyone that embraces a philosophy of inclusion and representation) of its meaning.

Columbia University professor Mark Lilla wrote in a New York Times piece following the 2016 presidential election (in which he condemned identity politics as a polarizing force, making American liberalism untenable), "[...] the fixation on diversity in our schools and in the press has produced

narcissistically self-defined their to the task of reaching every walk of life." He they reach college many discourse exhausts political shockingly little to say about as class, war, the economy

The notion that identity rhetoric, embraced by the rising generation of increasingly out of touch, imageidentity-obsessed and millennials, is not purely a myth perpetuated by bitter conservatives. *Black-ish* also shows how this stereotype has seeped into the the easiest way to observe what identity liberalism has popular imagination. In fact, come to represent in mainstream America is to look at the ways in which it has guite literally been branded and used to sell everything from <u>Pepsi</u> to <u>sneakers</u>. Although brands have had varying levels of success in their efforts to commercialize the ethos of inclusion (Pepsi, for instance, faced swift backlash after releasing the infamous Kendall Jenner ad, which blatantly misappropriated the imagery of the Black Lives Matter movement), there is no question that being woke has become a marketing tool. Although I wouldn't go so far as to argue that there has been a cause-effect relationship between the trivialization of activistism culture and its commercialization, it's clear that there is a link between the two. Further, just looking back over the last few decades, it is evident that the aestheticization of activism and multiculturalism

a generation of liberals and progressives

of conditions outside unaware

groups, and indifferent out to Americans in continues, "By the time assume that diversity discourse, and have such perennial questions and the common good."

politics are empty

...there is no question that being woke has become a marketing tool. is not necessarily a new phenomenon. Coca Cola's 1971 '<u>Hilltop</u>' ad, for instance, serves as a great example of just how old this trend is.

Costing \$250,000 to produce, this TV spot set the record as the world's most expensive commercial at the time. But before the commercial had even been produced, the jingle, 'I'd Like to Buy the World a Coke,' had gained world-wide fame. As Travis Andrews and Fred Barbash described it in a <u>Washington Post article</u>, "The song hit radio

stations on Feb. 12, 1971, and it gained immediate popularity. DJs immediately began receiving calls asking them to play the jingle...Bill Backer [the song's author] had the New Seekers record a slightly different version of the song, titled 'I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing (In Perfect Harmony),' which peaked at number 7 on the Billboard Hot 100." Running at a little over a minute, the original songs lyrics were:

I'd like to buy the world a home and furnish it with love, Grow apple trees and honey bees, and snow white turtle doves. I'd like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony, I'd like to buy the world a Coke and keep it company. It's the real thing, Coke is what the world wants today.

Soon after, the accompanying commercial aired on television, featuring a multicultural crowd of people, standing side by side on a hilltop, all holding out bottles of coke and joyfully singing out the infectiously catchy song. The end message of the ad read, "On a hilltop in Italy, we assembled young people from all over the world...To bring you this message from Coca-Cola Bottlers all over the world. It's the real thing. Coke."

In this sense, Coca-Cola managed to be wildly successful at doing something similar to what Pepsi would attempt and fail at some 46 years later. This ad campaign managed to capitalize on the zeitgeist of the late 1960s/early 70s, borrowing from the counterculture, flower-children of the era to create something that managed to simultaneously convey vague messages of world-peace and diversity, while avoiding being controversial in any way. Coke

successfully repackaged activism and inclusion to be something marketable-more of an aesthetic and less of a stance. But considering the context of when the ad was released, this seems far less surprising. By the time the Hilltop ad aired in 1971, the Civil Rights Era had come to a close, President Nixon was already in office, and the U.S. was gradually moving into the age of 'law and order.' Although the counterculture movements of the 1960s had not yet disappeared, they were on the way out.

Looking at this past era alongside the current one ultimately raises the larger question of what power does a movement have after it's been turned into a fad? Is our current cultural moment just a trend, intensified by the current political climate, or will the age of identity liberalism have staying power? As Identity Politics are increasingly becoming the scapegoat for not only Trump's presidency, but more recently the events in <u>Charlottesville</u> as well, it's imperative that we not just purchase and perform 'wokeness,' but actually define it.

\*Note: Since I wrote this article, SNL actually aired a sketch that encapsulates everything I discussed here. Titled "<u>Levi's</u> <u>Wokes</u>," this parody ad sells "Sizeless, styleneutral, gender non-conforming denim" for "a generation that defies labels."



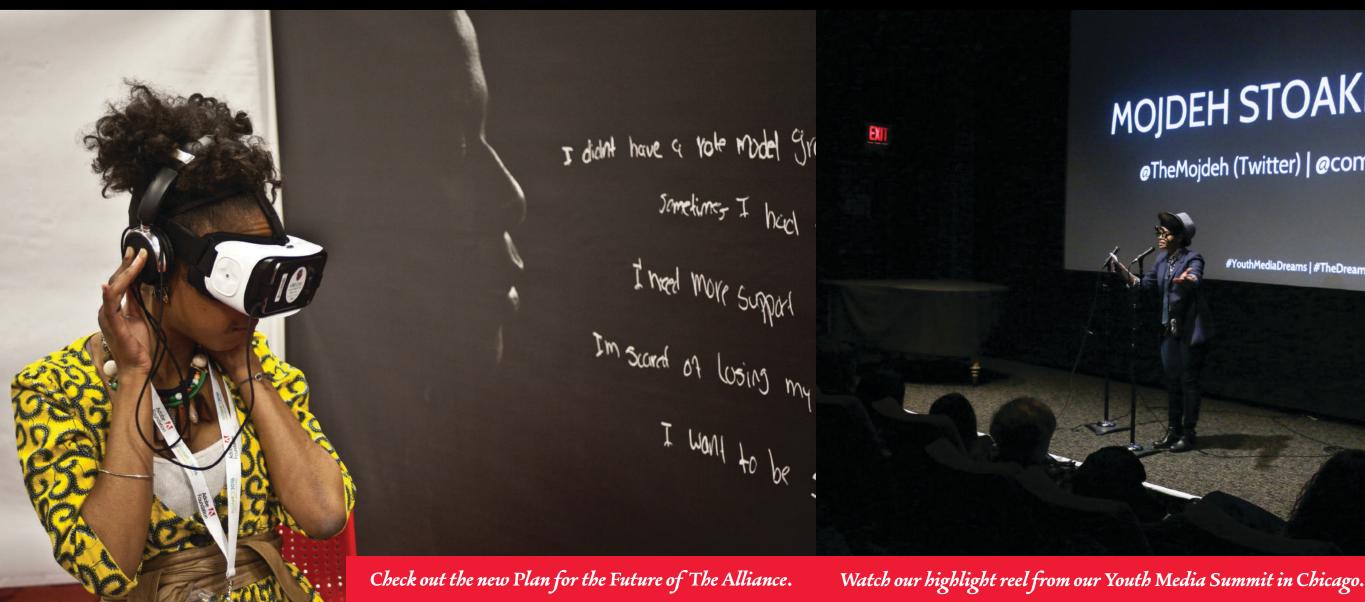
A senior in the History and African American Studies departments at Princeton University, **Gabriella Taylor** is from San Francisco, California. Her area of interest is African American culture and citizenship in antebellum New York City. On campus, she is a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow, a Head Fellow for the Scholars Institute Fellows Program, and an ambassador for QuestBridge. After completing a semester abroad at University College London, Gabriella interned with the Alliance for Media Arts and Culture as the guest editor of The Issue.



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### MOJDEH STOAKLEY | Poet @TheMojdeh (Twitter) | @commandermoj (IG)

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OAKLEY FUGATE is currently an Open Society Fellow at Appalachian Media Institute (AMI) in Whitesburg, Kentucky. We met Oakley through his short film "Not a Daughter," a poignat and moving documentary that tells the story of Oliver Baker, a transgender teen in Kentucky. Fugate's passion, though, is horror films. Editor-in-Chief MYAH OVERSTREET, sat down with Oakley to learn more about his passion for film.

MYAH: Tell me about yourself.

OAKLEY: I am 23 years old. I was born in Whitesburg, Kentucky and I was mostly raised in a small holler (a place that used during the coal eras) called Carbonglow. I have produced 8 films, 4 watchable films. The titles are *The Devil Awakens*, which I made when I was 15 and completed when I was 18, *Jack:The Serial Killer*, which was made when I was 20, *Lost in Darkness* and *Nobody's Child* at 21, *Eyes of Misery* was made when I was 22, and *Fallen Souls* at 23. Horror. Mostly because it doesn't require Oscar-worthy dialogue, and a lot of practical effects.

#### MYAH: What got you into film?

OAKLEY: I got into films because I couldn't draw and I'm a bit hyper so I couldn't write a lot. I saw a behind the scenes of Rob Zombie's Halloween and it was how they actually used a real knife. They'd break the blade and use magnets to hold it together. So when you stabbed someone, it'd fold and it would look real. And I thought "I can do that".

**MYAH:** Who do you look up to most in the film industry and why?

**OAKLEY:** There's not really a lot of people in the industry I look up to. Mainly it's smaller budget indie films because they don't have fancy tools or a million dollars worth of CGI. So they're limited and when they're limited, they get creative.

**MYAH:** What inspires you when producing a new film?

OAKLEY: Mostly just playing on ideas. When I made my latest film, *Fallen Souls*, it seemed like my town was becoming divided, and people were stuck in the past and proudly so. So I thought "What if a killer from the past started motivating others to do his work, hence the past affecting the present and the future decaying because they were set in their ways"?

**MYAH:** What are/are there central themes in your films?

**OAKLEY:** Death is always a central theme. Other than that, it's just traditional slasher films. I do like to play on irony a lot. If someone always carries a gun, they won't have the chance to use it. Or the

killer will use it to murder other people after they're dead. Isolation is a central theme a lot. I often start films after it's too late. The person is the film is too far gone and often it's about them killing people and the consequences. Kinda like if you just watched *The Dark Knight* without seeing *Batman Begins*.

**MYAH:** What do you aspire to communicate in your films?

**OAKLEY:** I think the best thing about these films is that anyone can make them. If a tripod breaks, I do without. If money's an issue, I just tough it out. Nothing can stop you from making films. If you don't have a camera, you can buy one for \$100 that tops the ones I used when I was starting out. And I want to inspire other people to make their own films.

**MYAH:** How do you think film has shaped/changed our society?

Film is a way to express ideas and it affects us without us knowing it. How many times has someone said "I'll be back," in a poor Australian accent. People buy things they see in a movie. They'll buy cars that are overpriced because their favorite character drives one. Or they'll buy medieval weapons because of *Game of Thrones*.

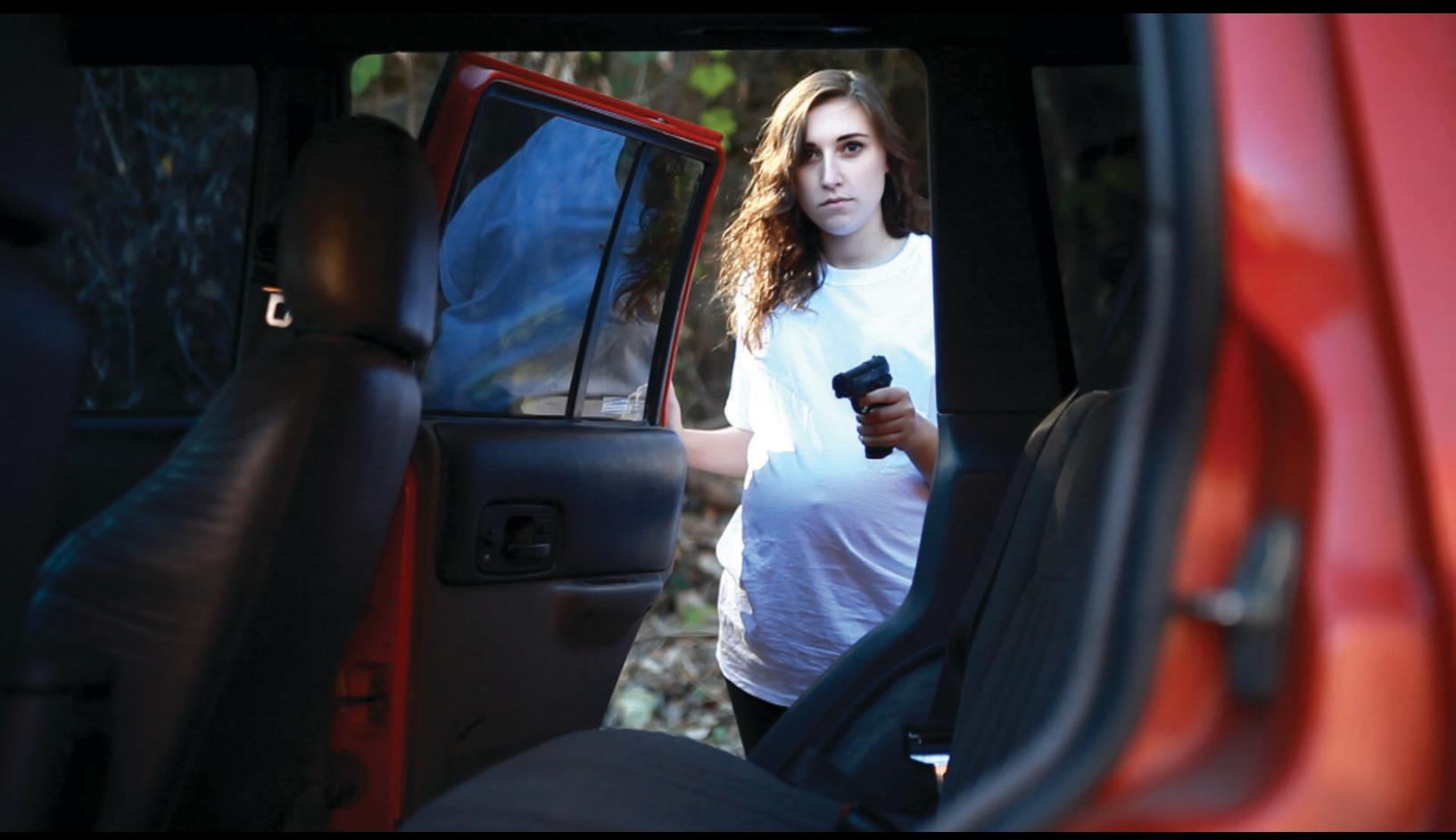
Also films can inspire people. Good or bad. If you feel alone and feel nobody understands you. You can watch a film and that film may have someone who says something that makes you say, "Whoever wrote this understands. They've been at the edge and now they write films".

MYAH: What are your goals as a filmmaker for your future and for the future of film? In other words, how would you like to see the film industry change, and how do you think your films and other youth films are shaping that future?

**OAKLEY:** My goals is to keep making films. Documentaries. Slashers. Camera work for someone else. As I said, a film can inspire people; it can show change. You don't think the world's changed much when you grow up. But watch someone's 2007 Youtube video, the world looks completely different. A film can document better than most other media. I'd say my main goal is to be one of the future Spielberg's inspirations. Even if it's, "Look how awful that guy's film is. I can do better."

**MYAH:** Would like to add anything that you feel is important for the readers to think about?

If you feel you want to make a film. Do it. Buy a camera, borrow one, use your phone. Express yourself. I've gone from a \$15 camera to getting a Fellowship to produce films. If I can do it, you can easily.



Fallen Souls, 2017



Nobody's Child, 2015



Nobody's Child, 2015





That's when I realized, I was trying to grow it out of hate. I wasn't prepared to tend to my hair out of love at that time, so I gave up.



by Anna Sara Mehouelley

#### HAIR IDENTITY

do

would

True Black girl happiness is visibly scarce in my reality. I have yet to see a Black girl happy to just be herself without conforming to society's beauty standards, without feeling judged for her looks, her speech, her aura. Everywhere I go, there's always some Black girl struggling with parts of her Blackness, whether it be her skin, the way she talks, the way she looks, her hair.

I used to be one of those girls. I've been brought up in schools that boast various interpretations of diversity: "Our student body is 60 percent minorities!", which is great for them. Nonetheless, everywhere I went before high school, "good hair" was straightened hair. Why is it that in 2017-- a so called "progressive" era-- in the radically diverse and accepting cities of the Bay Area, a common Black girl's perception of beauty is still a straight weave? Now, in my small liberal arts school in downtown Oakland, CA, "natural hair" is trending. But even still, the straighter the better.

Sometime around middle school, I thought I knew who I finally was as a young black woman. I thought I could finally be myself until I realized that my hair was always involuntarily hidden in braids. This changed my whole perception of confidence-- something had until I realized what I was doing to myself. Hiding my hair in braids turned I had no idea how to fix what I knew out to be a long term problem for me. risk displaying my trials and errors was wrong, and I was too scared to at school. Going natural was not so much of an option to me as was throwing out perms. My mother started to perm and in elementary school-- a braid my hair consistently mistake that a number of Black women make in their children's hair, causing lasting damage to their natural hair textures. For a long time, I permed my short, kinky afro, about my day, waiting for two concealed it in braids and went months to repeat the process. All of this was my way of excusing my short "nappy" hair to make myself more comfortable in a that braids were different and eurocentric society. I thought much prettier than an afro. Most of the Black went to school with girls

the same or

straighten their hair. We all had different ways of going about it, different ways of damaging our hair, our self esteem, and our culture for the satisfaction of others who knew nothing about us. In the rare times I mustered up the courage to go to school natural, I would receive embarrassing remarks about how my hair looked better in braids. So I went back to the beauty, not willing to rise above these comments and see the beauty in my curls at all. In a recent turn of events, as my hair became a trend among people that want to be cool, I began to see my curly hair differently; as a crown; as my own.

The summer before high school I tried going natural, ditching the braids and ignoring the rude comments. To be perfectly honest, I failed at first. I failed not only because I had no idea what I was doing and wasn't taking good care of my incredibly fragile hair, but because I didn't go natural to be true to myself. I went natural because I wanted to be pretty. I went natural so I could have "good hair", desirable hair, hair that is acceptable in this eurocentric society. I wanted the big and free natural curls that were promoted on social media and on my TV. So I dove into some research and found that tons of Black women were helping others on their natural hair journeys through Youtube. They were growing their hair outrageously long and using all kinds of gimmicks to achieve this. "Grow your natural hair overnight" they said. "Achieve a bigger afro with this holy grail" they said. Unfortunately, they were selling me a dream. And like many, it took me a while to figure out that my hair was not theirs; that my hair was kinkier and it was going to take a lot more determination than some overnight remedy. That's when I realized I was trying to grow my hair out of hate. I wasn't prepared to tend to my hair out of love at that time, so I gave up.

#### HAIR JOURNEY

The one major setback that leads to the "Black hair is bad hair", "Kinky hair don't grow", "Black hair is ugly" stigmas is that most Black people, like myself, don't know how to care of their hair. No matter who you are or your hair type, unhealthy hair has an impact on self esteem. In fact, we spend the majority of our lifetime damaging our hair without even knowing it. In 2009, comedian and actor Chris Rock starred in the award winning film Good Hair, which explores the importance of hair in African American culture. Perms, presses, and constant protective styling such as braids, wigs, and weaves, without proper maintenance leads to damaged hair. Since kinky, curly hair is already so fragile and vulnerable, not taking good care of our hair leads to "bad hair" according to European beauty standards. Because these standards and trends portray straight, silky, smooth hair, many Black women find themselves ostracized, having to constantly damage their hair by straightening it when all they have to do is focus on health. Healthy hair is the best hair.

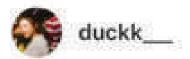
Fortunately for the world, which could use more culturally appreciative people, the natural hair community has grown. However only a small number of women in the African American community have started to embrace their natural curls. You'd think a movie would solve that problem, but Good Hair was released in 2009, and no one seemed to care. However, the now naturalistas who've committed to their hair have noticed a change in their confidence, lifestyle and their cultural awareness which is now rubbing off on the masses. Taking care of your hair is like taking care of any other part of your body: it is a necessity for personal esteem. There is no pressure to grow long hair, if that's not desired; but the one thing that's mandatory is to at least be healthy for yourself and yourself only. This article is not about making your hair long and beautiful like everyone else's, but rather about knowing that no one should have to sacrifice anything or live in such a way that forces them to change themselves or to be well liked. You can do whatever you want with yourself, but a healthy journey is key. My favorite naturalista youtuber, Napp Queen, can attest to this in our interview below.

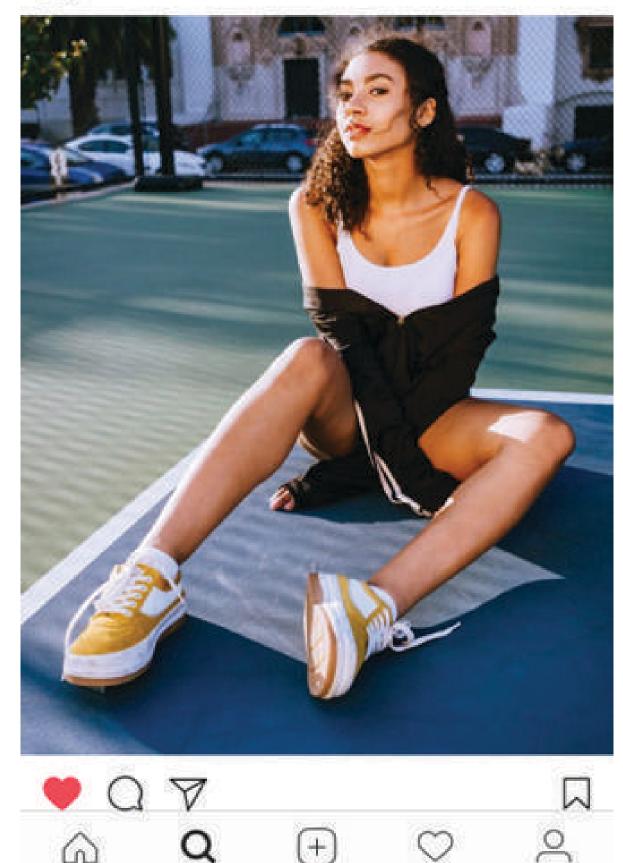
#### HAIR LOVE

I didn't love my hair until I went natural the second time around, when I actually took the time to figure out what my hair liked and what I wanted it to be based on my standards and not society's standards. I now see my hair as an essential part of my identity. It's the one thing other than my chocolate skin that differentiates me from any other community in the world. I appreciate all that it is and constantly water it so that I may see it come back to life like a once wilted flower. There is no reason any girl should not feel this way about her hair.

One of my good friends, Satya, whom I invited to talk about self-love in today's teenage community on my blog mentioned that her hair played a big role in her personal journey. I interviewed her again for this article so that her read her story as well.

I was born with beautiful curls so I don't see why I should go about my life trying to cover up something I was born with.





....

#### **SATYA**

#### INSTAGRAM: @duckk

#### **SHANA**

#### What made you go natural?

After years of literally flat ironing my hair every single day, my hair couldn't take it anymore and began to dramatically break off. I was so upset and confused about the loss. And my then boyfriend-- who's now my fiancé-- told me to stop straightening it. We figured the heat styling is what caused the breakage. After quitting heat, I pretty much transitioned to natural. It was difficult in the beginning but it's been a valuable journey of appreciating my unique beauty.

How has going natural changed you?

I wouldn't say that it changed me at all. If anything it made me more of who I am but was afraid to be due to the fear of judgement. Now, I am more myself than ever before and I love it!

hair?

People in my everyday life, from classmates at my university to family members. People would always ask me about my hair everywhere I went, and it dawned on me that so many of us [Black people] have no clue on how to take care of very kinky, coarse hair to where it is healthy and grows. I figured it out for myself through trial and error and wanted to share my journey with other women who wanted the same for themselves.

#### Why is being natural so important to you?

Honestly it's not. What's important to me is being my most authentic self by doing what makes me happy and feel good. Being natural makes me feel most like myself but if wearing a different wig each day of the week gave me the same feeling my name on here would probably be "wig.queen" or "weekly.wigs" or something like that. Basically I'm trying to say being natural isn't what's

What gives you the confidence to wear your hair natural and proud?

When I was younger, I went to a mostly white middle school. So growing up I always wanted my hair to be straight and I would always try to pull it back or wear it in braids. But throughout the years I've realized how special and unique my hair is. I was born with my beautiful curls so I don't see why I should go about my life trying to cover up something I was born with.

#### What's the biggest struggle you have faced having to do with your natural hair?

Some of the biggest struggles I've faced throughout the years of wearing my hair natural are all the negative comments I've gotten. Whenever there would be a big event such as prom, performances, or a job interview, I'm usually expected to straighten my hair as if curly hair isn't "formal".

#### What does your hair mean to you?

To me, my hair is a reminder of my natural beauty. It's a reminder that I should be bold and proud.



11251 110521

INSTAGRAM: @nappqueen / YOUTUBE: Napp Queen

#### What made you start a YouTube channel promoting natural

important to me; it's being myself that's important. I feel most like myself when I wear my hair natural.

What is the number one thing you tell other 4C type naturals to encourage them on their hair journey?



Do you boo. As 4C naturals our journey is very different and complex. Each natural-especially 4C ladies-- needs to find what hair routine works best for them according to what they want out of their hair. No one is an expert on your hair: no doctor, no Youtuber, no auntie or beautician. The only person that can become an expert on your hair is you, so embrace that role, learn your hair, and love your hair, and it will flourish.

#### HAIR AND SELF LOVE

It's amazing how much Black women have supported each other through this natural hair movement. Natural hair festivals like the annual CurlFest and the wealth of available information has lead to more love being spread. It may seem daunting to some, unreasonable to others, but the truth is, there is nothing more liberating than being comfortable in your own skin, or in this case, your hair. Black or Latina, Asian or White, no matter your gender or sexuality, a healthy dose of self-love will change you for the better. It starts with loving all of you.

YOU BOO.



Anna Sara is a 16 year old writer and editor in chief of Thrive by Design Blog. including painting, dancing, and performing arts. At 13, she was awarded The Golden State Warriors BHM essay contest and continues to write in many styles. Anna Sara hopes to inspire teenagers and her peers especially to challenge the norm and follow their own paths to success.





*Mojdeb Stoakley* @commandermoj (IG)



by Nyabingha Zianni

For Centuries We have been made Mary Magdalene Jezebel Housewife Mami Hooker But our bodies are more temple then taboo They are more scripture than street corner A sacred silhouette where our wooly Locs twist from our scalps like roots in this **Richmond Soil** Without water it's hard Black Benatar/Beatrice L. Thomas to grow *@*iheartunixcorns (IG) Without natural rhythm it's hard to flow We have been mixed and mastered Auto tuned and packaged into this mannequin mentality our fair skin, straight hair, soft spoken

we wrap our bellies with waist trainers trained to hate what makes us most beautiful But we can only shrink ourselves so much until we disappear It's time for us to reclaim our wings It's time for us to be seen to be heard we are here women Royalty in our hips strong, beautiful, hebrew, thick and thin as ever we are here men tearing down the brick wall of pride exposing the flower bed of emotions held hostage behind rib cage we are learning to love ourselves lt's time to shed Zena Carlota @zenacarlota (IG)

baggage stop singing the blues 'break out that cocoon And Fly And Fly And Fly..... Lisa D. Gray *@*randomlisasf (IG)

> Davia Amerasu Spain @gender\_is\_canceled (IG)

Illustrations by Jason Wyman from photos posted on social media of black women + femme artists. Follow them on Instagram to learn more about their life and practice.



Nyabingha Zianni is a Native of Real Richmond California. She is an accomplished poet, playwright, and actress who has starred in Po' Boys Kitchen, Bag Ladies' Butterfly Blues, Fairytale, and Richmond Renaissance. She also is interested in crafts and jewelry making starting her own business The Sistaaz Collection. Letting her one of a kind glow break through her idea of fashion. As Creative & Healing Arts Assistant since 2015 at the RYSE Youth Center Nyabingha guides the process of healing through the arts. Nyabingha is passionate about sharing love, building with her community, and the youth. She believes that youth are the light and that it's her place to help them to keep shining. She also believes that they are the future and we can't let them soak in that trauma. Because no one wants to feel like they are alone.





by DJ Agana + Deandre Evans + Ada Gamez + Francisco Rojas + Dan Reilly + Nyabingha Zianni

# TOGETHER, WE WILL CREATE BRAVE SPACE

We will be authentic to ourselves,

Hold each other's authenticities with love Step up to the plate,

Swing, hit and be brave

Hold truth as truth

No judgement

All love, honesty, and confirmation in this place

### TOGETHER, WE WILL CREATE BRAVE SPACE

A space that lets you fall,

Get back up,

Stand on our feet together

Where we be free and authentic

In silence of words,

Holding complex movement of self love, self worth

# TOGETHER, WE WILL CREATE BRAVE SPACE

Active listening on our face time To clear up that place in our minds Yes, it's time for that focus to rewind Become blind to our selfishness And feel responsibility to bear witness

## TOGETHER, WE WILL CREATE BRAVE SPACE

Freedom can be beautiful

And it can be ugly

Together, we create brave space

By encouraging each other

By believing in one another

### TOGETHER, WE WILL CREATE BRAVE SPACE

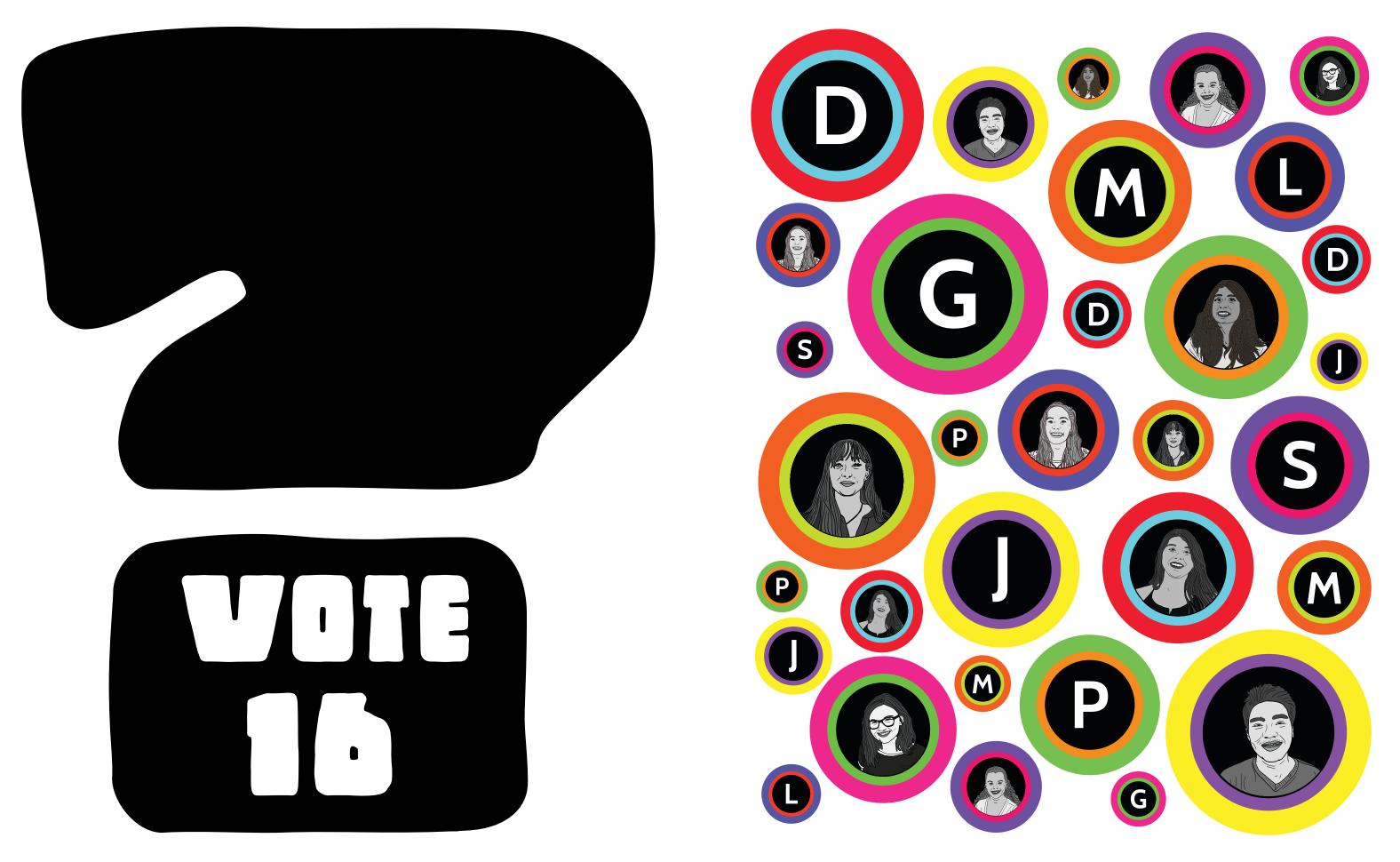
And once we create it

We have to maintain it

## TOGETHER, WE WILL CREATE BRAVE SPACE

This poem was composed during a workshop at RYSE Youth Center facilitated by Jason Wyman. It is inspired by the poem, "Invitation to Brave Space" by Micky ScottBey Jones.





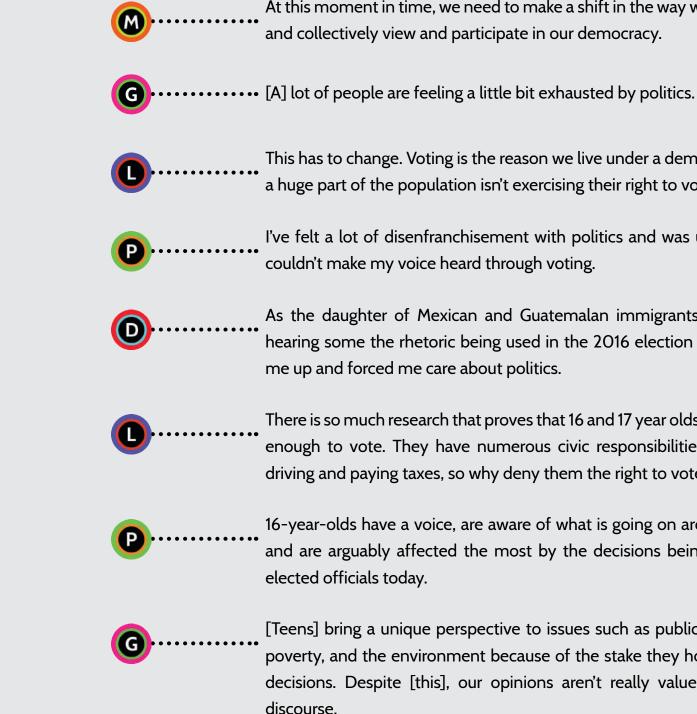
Interviews with Daviana Soberanis, Grace Adee, Joshua Park, Lorelei Vaisse, Melina Fike, Pooja Patel + Simelia Rogers. By Myah Overstreet + Jason Wyman.





Berkeley High School | Berkeley, CA

enfranchisement, media-based storytelling, and grassroots organizing. was visionary, and we felt it required a strikingly graphic vision to tell it.



High school students across the United States of America are organizing to win the right to vote in local elections. This movement, known as Vote16, is engaging new generations of civic leaders through political education, voter I interviewed youth organizers in Chicago, Berkeley, and San Francisco to find out how the world would change if

16 year olds were given the right to vote, and my partner, Jason Wyman, illustrated their selfies. What they shared

At this moment in time, we need to make a shift in the way we culturally and collectively view and participate in our democracy.

This has to change. Voting is the reason we live under a democracy, and a huge part of the population isn't exercising their right to vote.

I've felt a lot of disenfranchisement with politics and was upset that I couldn't make my voice heard through voting.

As the daughter of Mexican and Guatemalan immigrants, I feel like hearing some the rhetoric being used in the 2016 election really woke

There is so much research that proves that 16 and 17 year olds are mature enough to vote. They have numerous civic responsibilities, including driving and paying taxes, so why deny them the right to vote?

16-year-olds have a voice, are aware of what is going on around them, and are arguably affected the most by the decisions being made by

[Teens] bring a unique perspective to issues such as public education, poverty, and the environment because of the stake they hold in those decisions. Despite [this], our opinions aren't really valued in public I find it pretty infuriating when adults make assumptions about 16 and 17 year olds today, for two main reasons. First, I don't believe they fully remember how they or their friends were at that age. Second, times have changed, and our lives are very different. A study by VOX shows that this generation of high school students drink [and] smoke [less], and have less teen pregnancies than any generation before!

When we're seen as actual constituents, people will start responding to our concerns. This would be giant a step forward.

If given voting rights, I see 16 and 17 year olds becoming more empowered, given a sense of purpose and importance, and possibly feeling more trust in a system that has given us [many] reasons not to [trust it]. I see more of a cultural bridge between young and old. I see more engaged, informed, passionate voters in our country.

Teens have the amazing ability to reflect on their experiences, political perspective, and the policies in place in order to improve the quality of the community. Ultimately, there are very few ways to make effective change as a young person without a vote because constituency takes priority over just opinions.

I have seen over and over again when 16 year olds need to be creatures of sophistication, depth, and knowledge that they will be just that, and that version of us will be the ones who vote.

We're the future generation, we're not going to disappear after we're done with school. We have opinions about things that are going to impact our futures, opinions that can offer a new perspective on these matters. We all have issues that we care deeply about, especially those in our communities that aren't always seen or felt by adults. Most of all I would like to express that voting rights for young people should be inclusive of all perspectives and beliefs. Specifically that voting rights for young people is nonpartisan campaign and that people of all political values can benefit from such enfranchisement.

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I feel that 16-year-olds are completely able to comprehend what is going on around them in terms of politics and deserve the opportunity to vote because the decisions that are made by elected officials right now will heavily impact both our present and future.



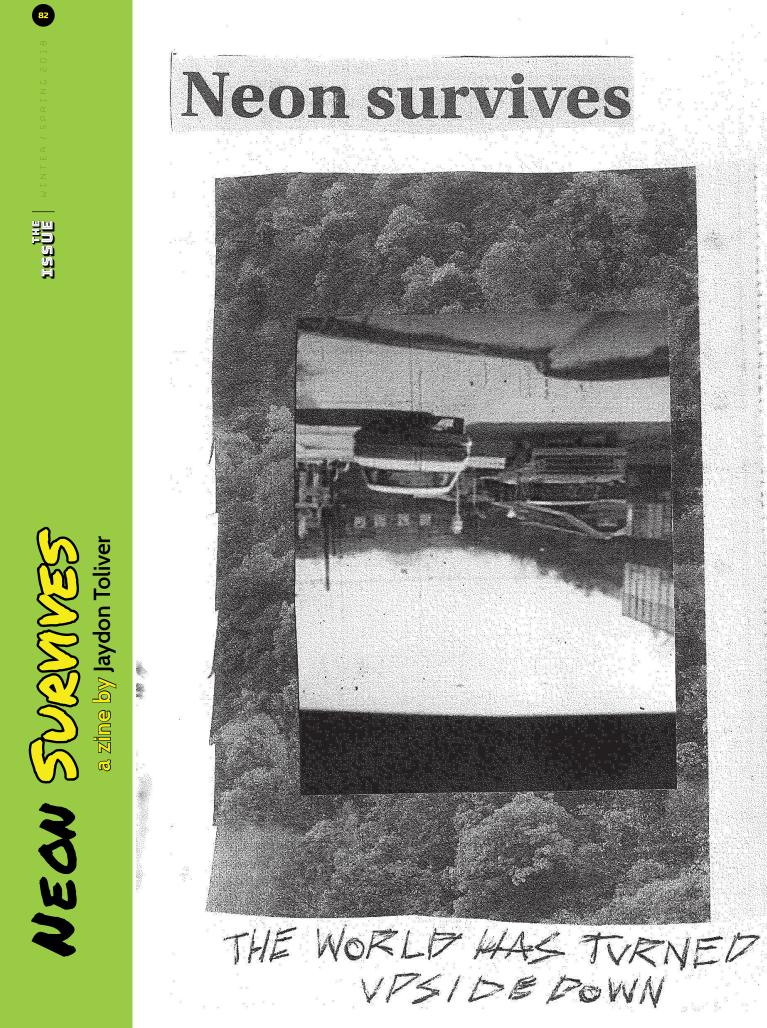
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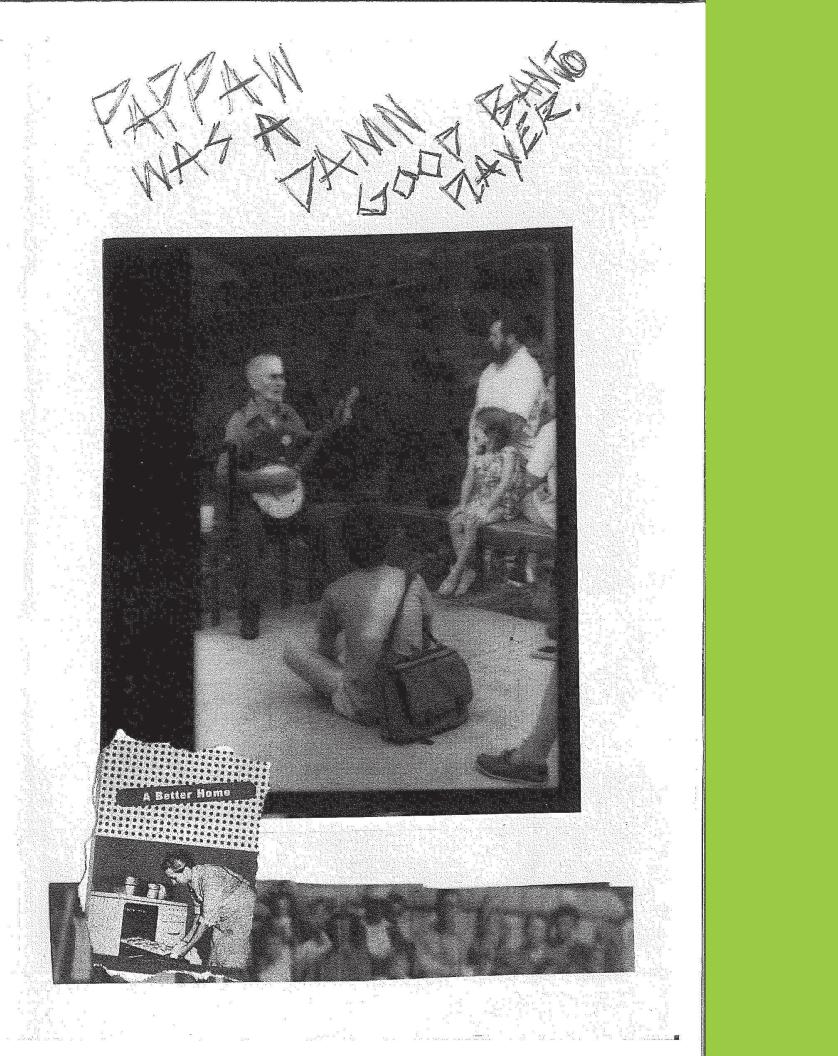
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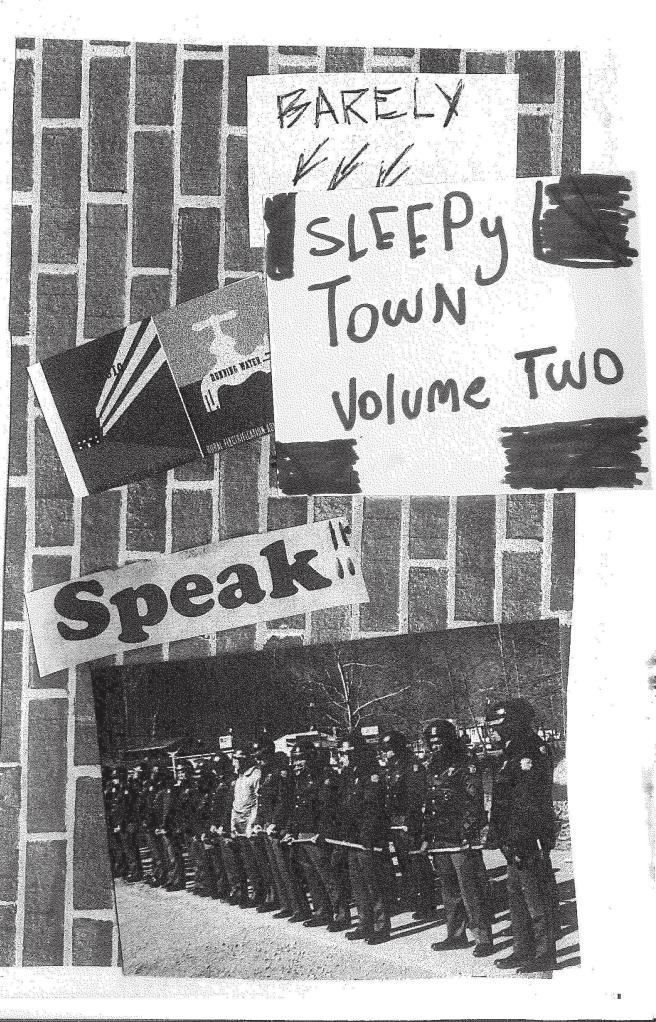


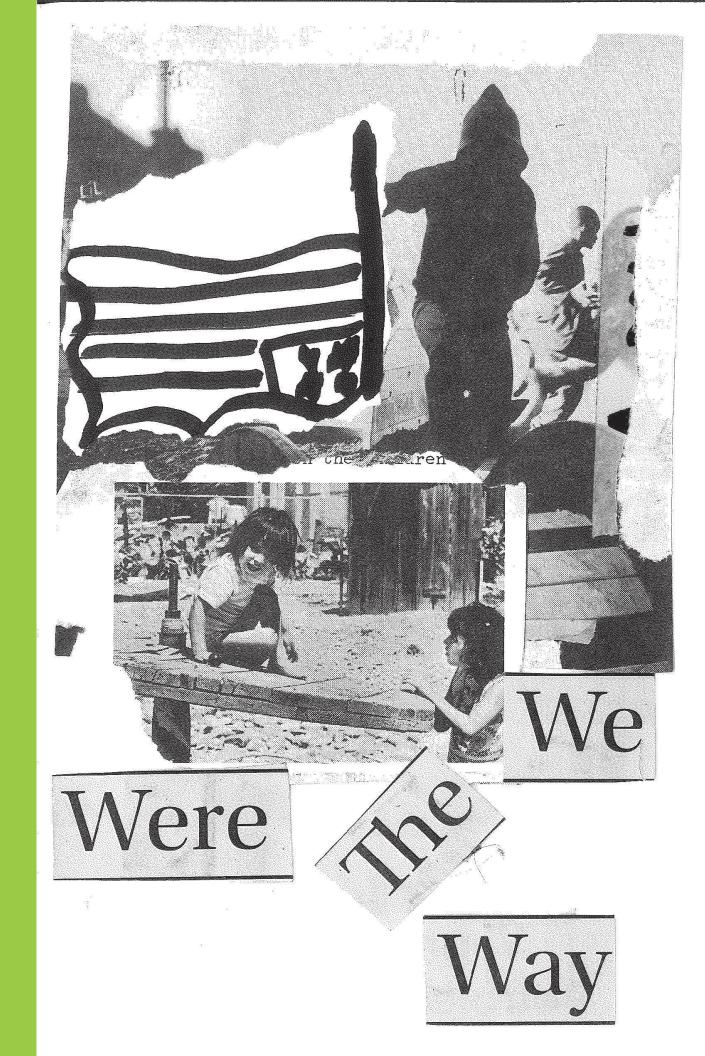




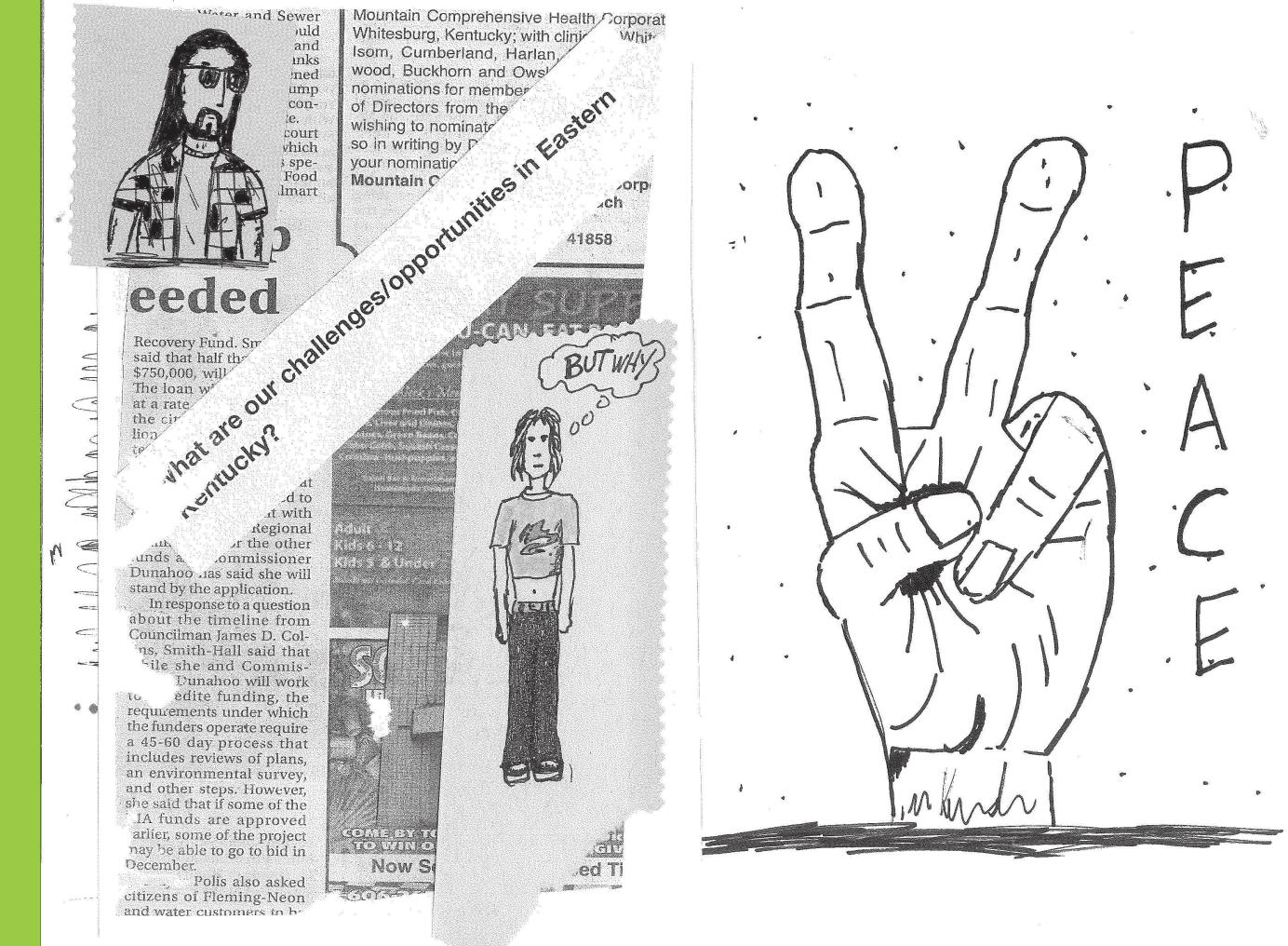






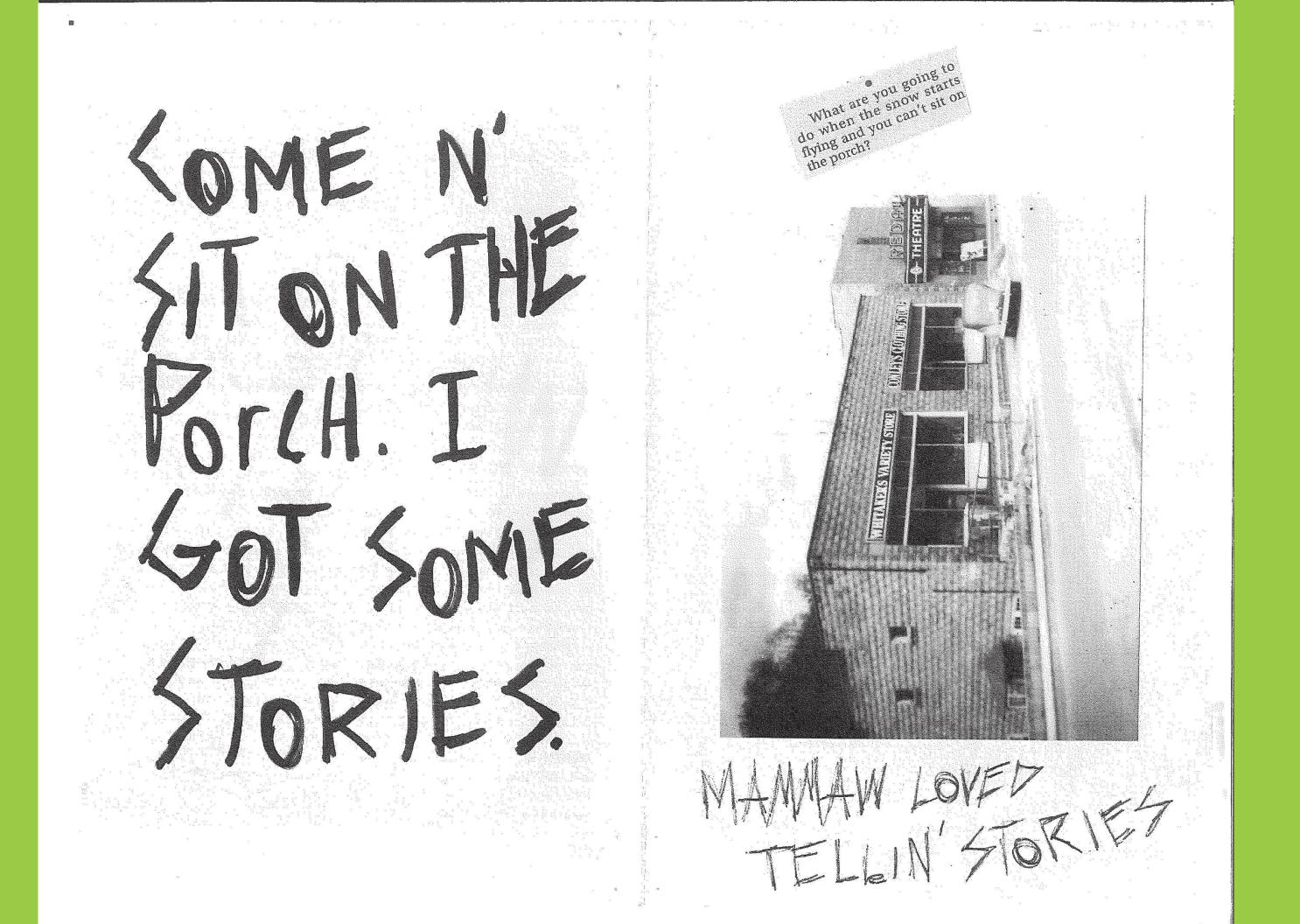


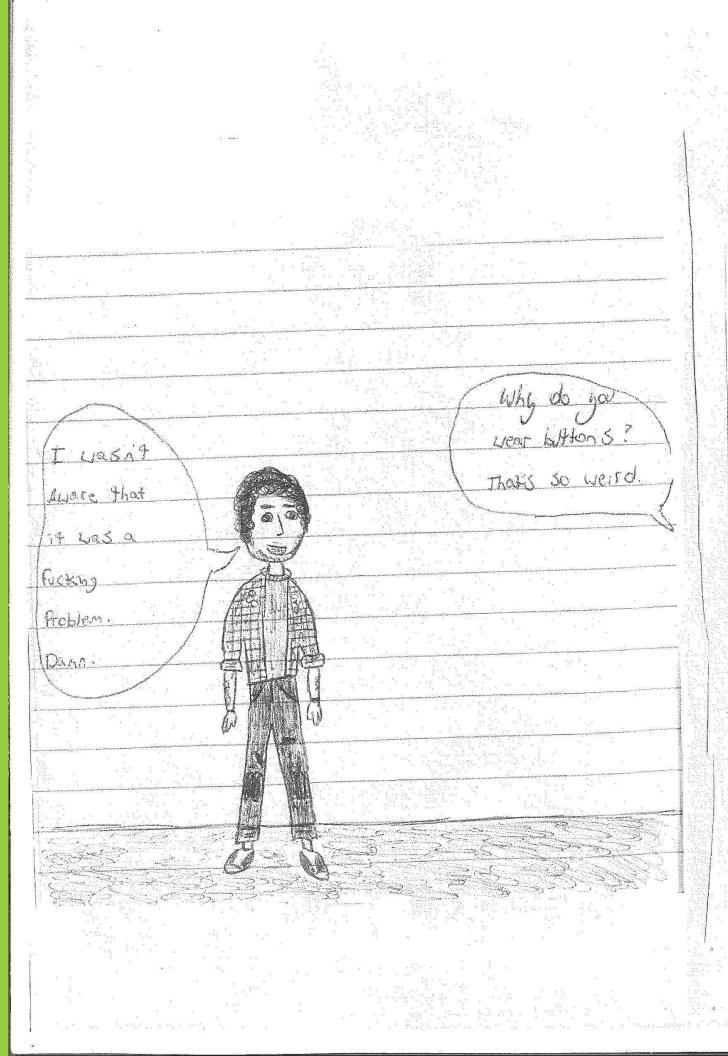
ALL I WANT FOR THIS TOWN IS FOR THE PEOPLE TO OVE LIVING HERE AGAIN...



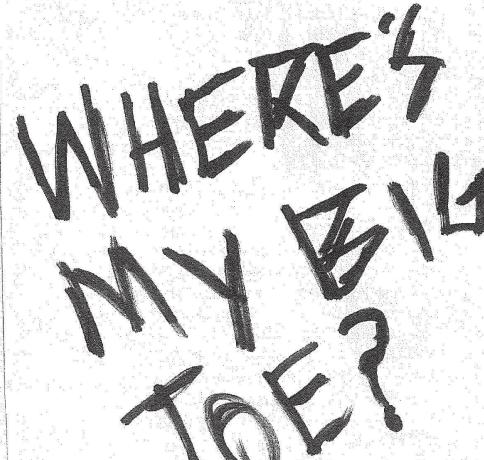
ISSUE







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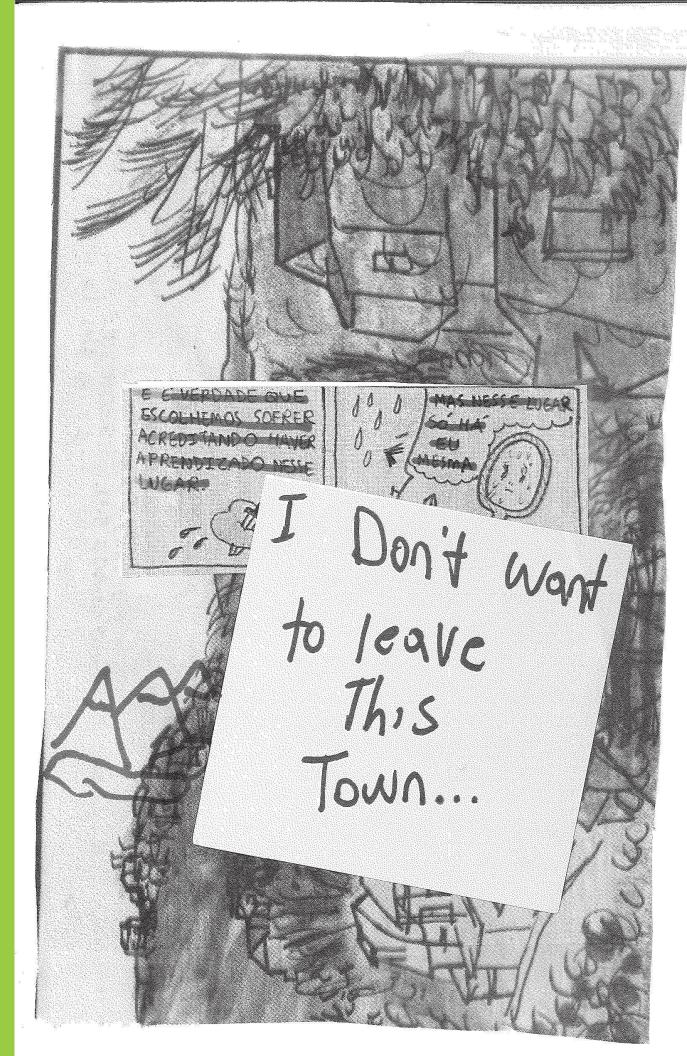
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44 00 MC NIMPL 43 55 43 Pit Bulls and Parolees Pit Bulls and Parolees Pit Bulls & Parolees: Pack of Pits (N) O Pit Bullš South Park South Park 41 82 41 \*\*\* Hot Tub Time Machine (2010) (CC) \*\* 50 First Dates (2004) Adam Sandler OM Alaskan Alaskan Alaskar 24 43 34 Alaskan Alaskan SC Bunk'd O Walk the Walk the Jessie A Bizaard Stuck 39 40 68 Cali Style K.C. K.C. K.C. SN 28 23 27 PlayStation Fiesta Bowl Ohio State vs. Clemson. (N) (Live) (CC) SportsCenter (N) (CC) Postgame PN 29 24 28 PlayStation Fiesta Bowl: Ohio State vs. Clemson (N) (Live) (CC) Postgame SEC Storied PN2 (2009) Daniel Raddliffe. 🔿 20 48 38 \*\*\* Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire (2005) \*\*\* Harry Potter and the u-E B S UFC UFC 219 37 219 UFC Greats **UFC** Greatest UFC (2014) Jonah Hill. O (CC) 49 29 49 The Hange \*\*\* Neight (2016) Nikki DeLoach. 60 76 60 My Christ Cnt. Cars Cnt. Cars 23 62 Queen Latifah. (CC) WMMT 88.7 Life Below Zero (CC) Loud Loud (CC) SEC Now Tim Robbins. A (CC) Tw FM wi. Zone Twi. Zone ND A 9 16 is proved to host icKellen. (CC) (DVS) King Whitesburg, KY's very sley Chrisley Rules Search own GIRLS ROCK 2,2017 onda 11:30 Ε J. Fallon 3 Colbert 11 GAIMPI J. Fallon from May 15th - 19th Insider 8 3 Kentucky 6 6 Colbert Kimmel Iger G bert 6 8 °C) 31 41 47 Le For updates and more information go to 44 38 . Sh PL 43 55 43 Las https://www.facebook.com/wmmtgrc Park C) 41 82 41 Futu and like our page or call (606)633-0108 and 24 43 34 Stree 39 40 68 K.C. 28 23 27 Rose B 12 29 24 28 Baskett 20 48 38 Harry Po 219 37 219 Women's not (CC) (DVS) 49 29 49 \* Grown Gold Girls Gold Girls 60 76 60 Last Man Pawn Pawn Pav <sup>)</sup>awn 23 63 32 American P (CC) Mommy, I Didn't Do It (2017) Danica McKellar 27 30 39 Bad Twin (2) --er: Money Never Sleeps (2010) Michael Douglas. Premiere. StarTalk "Hope Solo" 44 51 44 American Mo Full House Full House Full House Full House Friends O Friends O 40 36 18 Paradise Thurser Thunder Nicky 75 90 75 Women's College Basketball College Football: Outback Bowl Process 19 33 22 \*\* Fast Five (2011, Action) Vin Diesel, Paul Walker. (CC) \*\* XXX (2002) Vin Diesel, Asia Argento. 0 (CC) 15 62 40 Twi. Zone Twi. Zo 17 39 36 \*\* The Mechanic (CC) \*\* Limitless (2011) Bradley Cooper (CC) (DVS) \* Law Abiding Citizen (2009) Jamie Foxx. The Andy Griffith Show Raymond Raymond Raymond King King Griffith D 42 49 17 Griffith 14 34 30 Mod Fam Mod Fam WWE Monday Night RAW (N) (S Live) (CC) \*\*\* The Other Guys 1 9 9 9 4 \*\*\*\* Million Dollar Baby (2004) Clint Eastwood, Hilary Swank. (CC) Elementary 6 (CC) Elementary 0 (CC) Conan Actor T.I Miller

THETA - 6 WE DIDNT KNOW HIM ... I DIDNT KNOV 41M ... YOU NEED TO GO TATLE A WALK " AWEY JUS?

"ZUND FOUGHT D06"

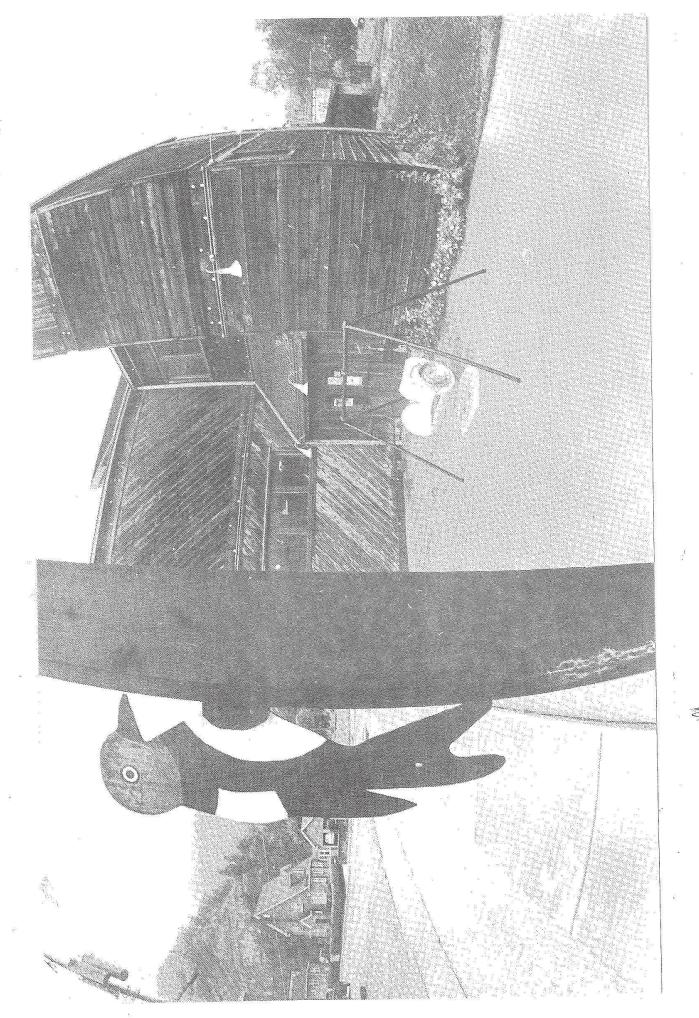
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Sin Boldly Be in private The Sime person That you are -in public. While you will have reprets (all of us make mistakes), don't expect to be without blame, and don't let the blame grow. Look those mistakes in the eye and learn from - them, then more on. Live joyfully. Love your family, even when you disagree. harby anily





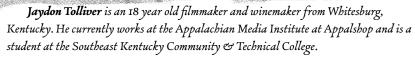


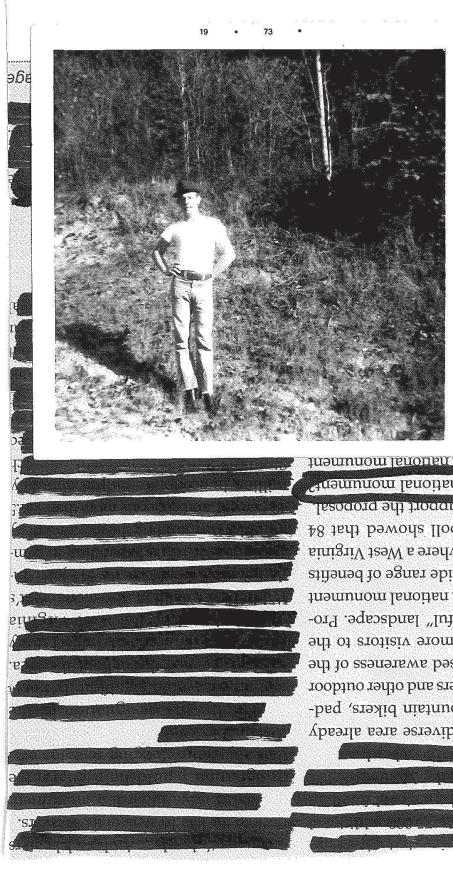
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First, says Linarg, a nauonal monument Why create a national monuments percent of voters support the proposal Rivers Coalition poll showed that 84 for West Virginia, where a West Virginia would provide a wide range of benefits tecting the area as a national monument "wild and wonderful" landscape. Proarea could bring more visitors to the enthusiasts. Increased awareness of the dlers, anglers, hunters and other outdoor attracts hikers, mountain bikers, pad-The naturally diverse area already



# DESIRES HATCHLAB/YOUTH URBAN + RURAL EMERGING ARTISTS BUILDING THE ALLIANCE NAMLE FOURTEENBLACKPOPPIES DREAMS +

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PALACHIAN MEDIA INSITUTE | WHITESBURG, KY

HOW HAVE YOU CHANGED AS YOU'VE GOTTEN OLDER?

HOW DO YOU SEE YOURSELF 50 YEARS FROM NOW?

by Myah Overstreet + Jason Wyman with Azibuike Akaba, Santiago Alvarez, Harry Overstreet, II + Harry Overstreet, III

ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 20, 2017 THE ISSUE'S EDITORIAL TEAM INVITED INTERGENERATIONAL PAIRS TO JOIN THEM AT THE MIX @ SIPL, THE PUBLIC LIBRARY'S TEEN CENTER, TO DISCUSS THE WAYS IN WHICH TWO DIFFERENT GENERATIONS VIEW AGING, YOUTH, AND THE WAYS IN WHICH YOUNG PEOPLE AND ELDERS INSPIRE AND DISAPPOINT.



WHAT

WOULD YOU

TELL YOUR

YOUNGER

SELF?

IF I COULD SHOW THAT GUY A CRYSTAL BALL SO THAT HE COULD UNDERSTAND WHAT'S COMING... MY PERCEPTIONS ABOUT AGING? IT'S A JOURNEY THROUGH LIFE THAT'S JUST CONTINUAL GROWTH. IT'S A CHANGE OF VALUES AND PERCEPTIONS.

HARRY OVERSTREET, IL (50)

EXPLAIN TO HIM THAT THERE ARE CERTAIN, THERE'S A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY FOR EVERYTHING. SO TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE TIME. HAVE AS MUCH FUN --FUN THAT DOESN'T DETRACT FROM YOUR PROGRESS --AS POSSIBLE. ENJOY LIFE.

THERE IS INSPIRATIONAL AND DISAPPOINTING STORIES, OF COURSE, OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND OLD PEOPLE. IT'S ALWAYS INSPIRING WHEN YOUNGER PEOPLE FIND A WAY AND HAVE THE DRIVE TO SUCCEED AND LIVE AND PROGRESS.

ON A PERSONAL NOTE, WE JUST BURIED MY GODFATHER. HE ATTENDED CAL IN THE 60S. HE WAS A HUGE INSPIRATION TO PEOPLE, JUST ACROSS THE BOARD. HE WAS VERY SUPPORTIVE AND HIGHLY LOVED AND ALL THAT. AND EVERYBODY DOESN'T HAVE TO BE LIKE THAT.



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AND SWIMMING EVERYDAY FOR SURE.

### I'LL BECOME SOMEONE WHO'S REALLY GIVEN MYSELF TIME TO LISTEN TO MYSELF, AND I WON'T DO THINGS FOR OTHER PEOPLE'S APPROVAL.

I JUST DO THINGS BECAUSE IT FEELS RIGHT WITH ME. I SEE MYSELF HAPPY IN 50 YEARS FOR SURE.





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