

# inside

Multi-Cultural Recruitment

HC  
336.24  
.B48

Action Awareness

HC  
336.26  
.A43  
1989

& Row

Pathway to Inclusiveness

HC  
336.26  
.F45  
1990

Affirmative Action

HC  
336.26  
.K668  
1997

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

HC  
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.W43  
1991

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.A56  
1999b



SOURCE for CHANGE

#### OUR MISSION

To better serve and retain students of color and international students, the Lebrón-Wiggins-Pran Cultural Center provides a range of programs and resources to support and promote the success of students of color and international students at Hampshire College.

Additionally, the center provides programs and resources to the larger campus community for engagement in issues related to race, culture, and under-representation, with the underlying goal to effect social change.

We enhance our longstanding commitment to community and social change by:

- providing and advocating for services, programs, and resources that assist international students and students of color for a successful transition to, matriculation at, and graduation from Hampshire College
- offering services, programs, and resources that foster academic success among international students and students of color
- ensuring a space for multicultural community building, individual expression, and the exchange of ideas
- fostering leadership skills for multicultural competence for students of color, international students, and multicultural student groups
- continually examining the fluidity of race, culture, and identity; specifically examining how race and culture intersect with other social identities and their impact on one's view of self and of the world
- serving as a campus partner in promoting multicultural competence through community engagement on topics related to race, culture, and under-representation



Melissa Scheid Frantz  
Director of Multicultural & International Student  
Services

## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

The academic year will come to an end in a few weeks and so will the celebration of the Cultural Center's 20th anniversary. We've celebrated its history, community building, and commitment to social change through numerous events and activities: collecting stories from alumni, holding an arts and activism discussion during Family & Friends Weekend, dedicating a dialogue bench and tree, and recently organizing a 1 ½ day Five College community ASK for Social Justice workshop on building multiracial strategies for advancing racial justice. The CC furthermore has made it a priority to collect and archive historical documents about the SOURCE community, community issues and student activism (check out our 'history/publications' site online: <http://www.hampshire.edu/culturalcenter/16229.htm>).

Come this August I will have been working at Hampshire for eight years. Throughout that time I have had countless conversations with students, staff, and faculty about what the Cultural Center means to them. I've read students' viewpoints in old newsletters and have seen archival videos that give voice to those experiences. For many multicultural students over the last 20 years, the CC has been their refuge, their home away from home. For other students, the CC means exclusion. Over the years, there have been many faculty and staff who have been very vocal and active in their support of the CC's mission and of assisting multicultural students. At the same time, misunderstanding, misconceptions about the CC have and continue to exist among students, staff and faculty. Every week I'm on this rollercoaster ride experiencing the highs and lows of feelings about the CC and what it represents to individuals. Race and privilege are difficult topics. Sometimes while I'm sitting in my office in the CC with no one around, I hear creaks and twitches coming from the house. I think the Cultural Center is exhausted at times from all the racial tension from the campus that ultimately lands in its hands. After 20 years of this, it needs to stretch and take deep breaths to breathe in new hope and compassion...yes, sometimes I need to stretch and breathe.

I wanted to sum up what the CC experiences on an average week through my own mock magazine cover. Bring on the next 20.

Happy birthday bud,  
Melissa



### **CC20th Anniversary Issue**

#### **"Safe Space" Makeover**

#### **Bad Race Day:**

#### **How to work through it in 5 easy steps**

#### **20 sure ways to justify the existence of the CC & of Identity Based Housing (once again)**



#### **10 methods to combat racism in the classroom**

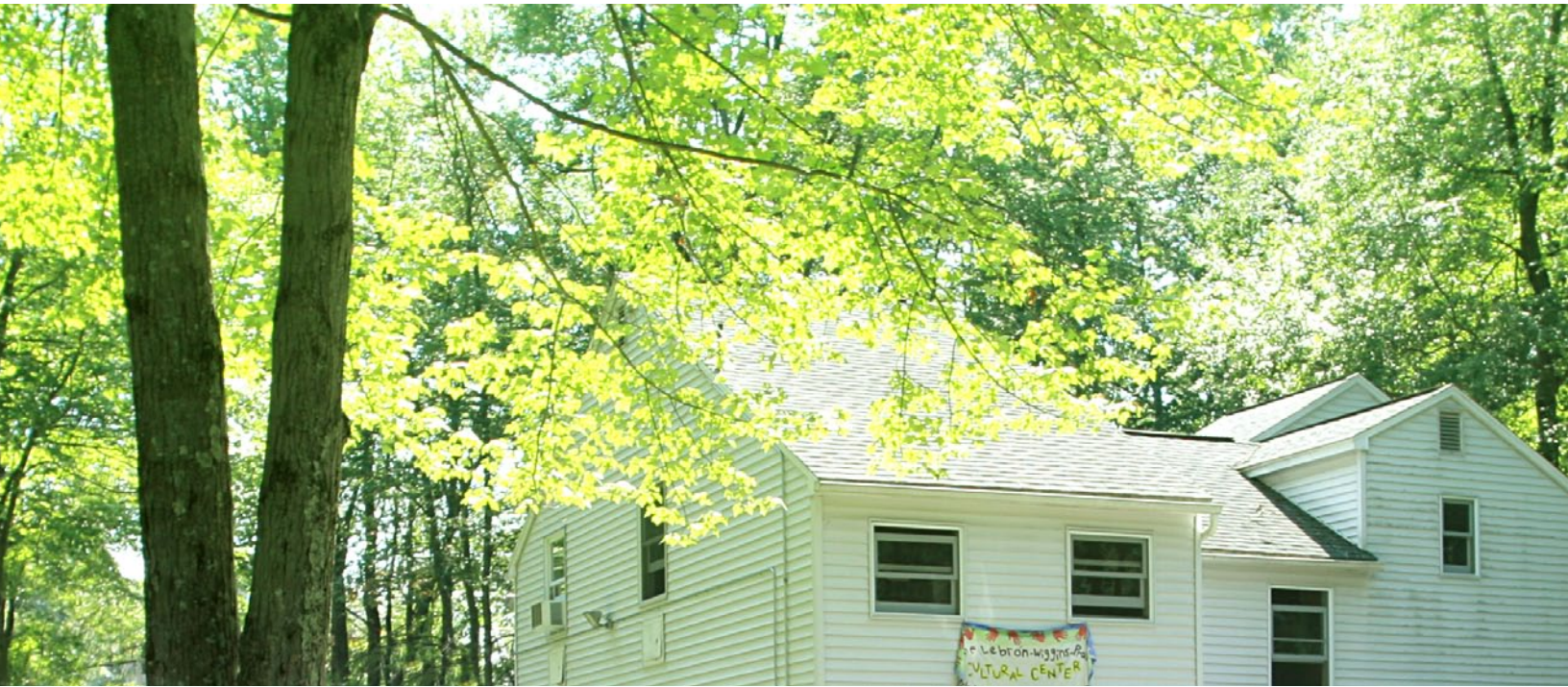
### **Multicultural Community**

#### **One Fun and Exclusive Program at a Time**

#### **"Did they really say that ?" Students share their stories in CC Poll**

#### **Funding Woes ? SOURCE Tells All and Then Some**





**Co-Editors** Luis J. Vargas & Steven E. Martinez | **Design** Prateek Rajbhandari  
**Inside Logo Design** Joyce Li

## EDITOR'S NOTE

As the semester ends, we're both very excited about bringing you the final issue of the year. Piecing together an issue for Inside is a collaborative and exhaustive process, but we both feel that the sweat is worth it. This go around we wanted to ignite discussion around Diversity in Higher Education, what it means, what it looks like, why it's important, and how it could be made better. For this reason, we dug into the multi-cultural recruitment process at Hampshire College with an interview with Assistant Director of Admissions Diana Alvarez. Professor McKinley E. Melton contributed an essay on working to recognize the potential of diversity in higher education. And we also include, a powerful essay by SOURCE liaison Cyree Johnson about campus organizing, where she shares anecdotes about her experience working to build a more diversity- inclusive campus.

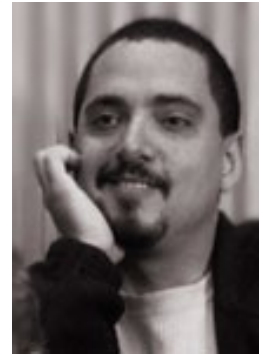
Next year, Inside with the collaboration of other five campus multi-cultural programs will be distributed throughout the five colleges. We want to bring the conversation of

inclusiveness to all campuses in the area with the mission of building a better student community in the Pioneer Valley. We want to thank you all for allowing us in your thoughts, your conversations, and debates. Now, on to the next!

Thank you,

Steven Martinez & Luis Vargas  
Co-editors

# TWENTY YEARS OF THE CULTURAL CENTER



A letter from Jaime J. Davila [*Associate Professor of Computer Science, Special Presidential Assistant for Diversity*]

Given that I started working at Hampshire in 1999, I have experienced first hand only the later half of the history of the Cultural Center. For the first half, I have to refer to the history as narrated by others. Student newspapers, archives maintained at our library, and special materials stored and available at the Cultural Center itself identify it as a place where underrepresented students can recharge their energies and their intellects. Intellectually and culturally stimulating, it has also served as a welcomed safe space, a center of information, resources, and advice, and as a place to simply relax. Students have found a real home there. The Cultural Center has helped many to successfully navigate Hampshire.

The Cultural Center obviously also has a great history aside from the main group of students it serves, organizing and delivering cultural and academic programs to the general Hampshire community. All of us can think back at the many great events that we have seen advertised and attended at this place. Many faculty members have had an initial presentation to the campus community there. Talks on a multitude of topics have been hosted at the Cultural Center, as well as series engaging us all in a variety of explorations of our curricular and social environment.

For the ten years I have been at Hampshire, though, the Cultural Center has been defined for me in great part by the incredible people I have come to know there. Students that come to a place as different as Hampshire, and not only survive but thrive, making great art, developing great proofs, building great systems,

writing great literature. Employees from all across campus that come to learn and to make their professional lives dovetail with our community. Seeing all of these people in our campus grow and collaborate makes it obvious that the Cultural Center is central to making Hampshire College the special place that it is. It has been essential to the success of many of our students. It has also given many of us that work at Hampshire the opportunity to fulfill our mission in very special and significant ways. The stories and the energy of all these people cover the walls of the building, and the hearts of those that have the privilege of getting to know them. They not only meet and exceed our intellectual mission, they also continue a history that pushes every one of us to think and internalize what it means to be an inclusive campus. I have no doubt that I would not be the person I am today without that Cultural Center, the one that is defined by the people that walk through it. I also know that Hampshire would not be the same place without it. The Cultural Center is a place of history, and a place for our future.

Today, then, as we celebrate the last twenty years, I also celebrate and look forward to the future. That future is definitely brighter because of the Cultural Center. Congratulations, and thanks to all of you that have made this a reality. I raise my glass to you all!

My very best,

Jaime

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# DIVERSITY OF OPINION AND CAMPUS ORGANIZING

Cyree Jarelle Johnson [07F]

Hampshire, on its surface, is a community that values difference, respects individual liberties, and champions personal freedom of all types. This freedom is, in many ways, allowed by the utter lack of actual diversity on campus, whether it be racial, cultural, class, sexual, or the myriad other styles of human difference that exist. The most overlooked type of diversity at Hampshire College is difference of opinions, since attitudes here usually range from liberal to radical. Tolerance is far less difficult when there is only one right opinion, and this is the case for most issues at Hampshire College.

One place where differences of opinion are least tolerated and least talked about are in identity based organizations and centers. This stems from the erroneous idea that all members of a marginalized group share the same opinions about their culture and the

politics surrounding it. In an attempt to build a community, organizers often endeavor to standardize opinions into political statements, and construct oppositional ideas of right and wrong around narrow ideas of liberalism.

My first encounter with this sort of prohibitive radicalism was my second semester, during the time I was helping to organize a campus action called "Action Awareness Week." As a first year, I sought the plentiful guidance of upperclassmen to help me avoid making mistakes based on my then limited understanding of Hampshire's history and distribution of power. While every upperclassman I spoke to was enthusiastic, intelligent, and dedicated, I quickly noticed that there were just some parts of my system of ethics that they believed ran counter to the ideals of SOURCE.



# TAKE TWO

The most controversial instance of this occurred at a late night meeting where the topic of “white allyship” was the issue of the day. This term is extremely loaded, regardless of where one locates themselves on the political spectrum, because of a vagueness of the concept. Who decides who is a white ally and who is not one? How can one justify that title? Is allyship a destination or a journey, and even more fundamentally, who is *white*?

Coming from a tightly knit, historically Black neighborhood, who was white and who was Black was a non-issue. I knew someone was white by the color of their skin, very little else entered into the definition. Never before I came to Hampshire was I ever implored to inquire about someone’s ancestry before assuming someone’s race, because where I come from race has everything to do with color, and class.

When I articulated the above position during this particular meeting, my cohorts looked at me as though a exceedingly foul stench was emanating from my mouth as I spoke. My point was neither addressed, nor countered. No one complained, no one asked me any questions. The meeting proceeded and adjourned as usual. The next evening, I received a phone call from another organizer explaining that I should come and talk about the meeting with them. When I arrived to have this conversation, I was immediately told that my idea of “Whiteness” ran counter to “what SOURCE stood for.” This confused me, because SOURCE is made up of many people with very diverse identities. How could it be that this huge and largely separate group of students all held the same definition of whiteness that this particular student was enforcing?

This occasion brought to my attention that in order to be truly accepted in circles that consider themselves “radical” at Hampshire, one must strive not for honesty and personal integrity, but for a herd mentality. To ask those with opinions that differ from group consensus to think differently or be silent does not preserve unity or display a commitment to diversity, it forces homogeneity. A diversity of opinions that can exist without direct hostility cultivates an environment that allows people to change and grow in their ideas, without creating a right answer to an open ended question. ●



Stephanie Lim [07F]

When I received the prompt for this semester’s issue of The Inside, I was perplexed. Diversity in higher education. How do I respond? I must admit that the first version of the article I submitted was tongue-in-cheek. I attempted to speak back to the superficial ways that colleges and universities promote diversity, the montage of multicolored students photoshopped onto brochures, all smiling but not

necessarily at anything in particular. My essay was without much context and didn’t feel complete. So here is my second attempt to write about how I feel about this very loaded concept.

Diversity within an education context triggers notions of inclusion that do not extend beyond teams of admissions counselors assigning points to students of color and international students when reviewing their files. I’m sure every school has a system of coding students, eventually trying to bring them into the fold of their institutions. A code, a number, a percentage. Will Admissions ever regard me as a real person?



# THE GIRL IN THE MIDDLE

Diversity. It sounds like a marketing tactic, a term that wants to create a single category for such a wide range of students, particularly students of color and international students. During Accepted Students Weekend, I volunteered to table at the RCC and was there as a student staff worker for the Cultural Center. Luis, my friend and coworker (and co-editor of this fine magazine), was there with me. We were each other's wingmen, trying to stay awake at 8 in the morning on a Saturday to answer questions about where we worked and why the Cultural Center existed on campus. In case of provocation to the point of gross speculation, we prepared for instances of mistaken identity, jokingly coming up with a list of countries to say we were from, especially to parents. But those instances (fortunately or unfortunately) never happened. Instead, the question that white parents in particular kept asking was "What countries do most of the international students come from?" and "What percentage of students here are international?" Over and over again Luis and I said we didn't know. I wondered then why they were asking that question and not others. Did Hampshire specifically focus on its international community as a selling point for this incoming class? Did white parents want proof that their children would be integrated into an international, global campus? Is that what they wanted to pay for – an international experience for their children? Did they look at me and Luis and want to hear us talking about our internationalness? Did they conflate international with nonwhite? I won't speculate any further, but stress that a question like this stems from the rhetoric of diversity and inclusion and integration that is so ingrained within educational institutions. What happens when that's put on students to uphold and live out? I have enough on my plate, Hampshire. I am almost done with my Div II and itching to write an amazing Div III and finally leave this place.

Dear Hampshire, I have better things to do than to be part of your Benetton ad. ●

## An excerpt from Niajah Z. Doty's Div III [06]

I have always been enthralled by school. Although I don't remember much from Pre-K to 2nd grade, I do remember that I was not as traumatized by my experiences as my older sister. Unlike her, I was always excited for school to begin. It commenced the changing of seasons and attitudes. Forget about Christmas, this was the season to be jolly! There was something about walking into a 'school supplies' section of a store and being completely drawn into its beauty. The pastel colored Disney character abounded folders and pencil cases called my name. Fresh, unadulterated perfection in a pack – school supplies: number two pencils, black and blue ballpoint pens, loose leaf college ruled paper, rubber multicolored erasers, Elmer's (only Elmer's) glue sticks, colored pencils, crayons, and my favorite: scratch and sniff stickers to beautify my worksheets. This feeling can only be described as pure bliss.

The first day of school symbolizes a fresh start. All transgressions from previous years have been forgiven (but not forgotten) – it is a time to turn over a new leaf. I remember my first day of 3rd grade at Murray Henderson Elementary School in the Lower Ninth Ward of New Orleans, Louisiana. I was dressed in the standard uniform – a white collared shirt, a blue pleated skirt, ruffled socks and black and white penny loafers. Holding onto the straps of my brand new book bag I boldly entered class. Students sat neatly in their seats in rows of individual desks, looking up to see who was next to cross the threshold. Posters of legendary African-American leaders were positioned high on the walls. Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,



Rosa Parks, Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth were amongst the many. Each corner of the room had its special function; there was an arts and crafts area, a math corner and a reading corner. I smiled at the spectacle of my new home away from home, my escape zone. I took my seat and my teacher Ms. Grier\* extended her hand and welcomed me with a radiant smile. As more and more students trickled in, I began to feel at ease. When all of the desks were full, my teacher took attendance and we were prompted to line up single file so that we could head outside to recite the pledge of allegiance and listen to the daily announcements.

Standing on top of the United States map, which was drawn on the blacktop of the playground, a teacher initiated us in the recitation of the Pledge by instructing us to put our right hand over our heart. I looked over the crowd and in solidarity everyone placed their hand over their heart and directed their attention towards the American flag. I stood silently, my eyes focused on the tip of my shoes, and my hands at my side while my classmates pledged their allegiances. As "justice for all" rang in my ears, I lifted my head.

My teacher motioned for the class to come towards her so that we could head back to the classroom. Before I stepped into the room Ms. Grier pulled me aside, kneeling down to level with me, she asked me why I chose not to recite the pledge. Without giving me a chance to respond, she said, "You should be proud to be an American". In a shaky voice I told her that my

mother didn't allow me to recite the pledge of allegiance, and I couldn't explain to her why because I didn't fully understand. Ms. Grier shook her head from side to side and said, "Fine, Niajah". I looked to her as tears filled my eyes. She smiled and asked me to go inside and please take a seat.

I fought my tears, but Ms. Grier's words got the best of me. That was the first time that I had ever felt uncertain about my position in school. Was I in school to be educated or to be judged on my beliefs and treated differently because I didn't do the same things as others? I was confused by the way my teacher acted towards me. I couldn't decide whether she was serious or not...maybe she was just in a bad mood. ●



# DIVERSITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION



Prof. McKinley E. Melton [*Visiting Assistant Professor of Literature Humanities, Arts, and Cultural Studies*]

We've all seen them: the photographs permeating the websites of institutions of higher learning. There's always a collection of smiling faces, of every tone and hue, every last student and professor looking comfortable and at ease in what must certainly be a welcoming environment. Sometimes, the word "diversity" is emblazoned across the photograph, prominently placed within the caption, or is the focus of the mission statement that is clearly juxtaposed with the smiling faces. In the absence of the actual words, the implicit message of the photograph remains clear: "Diversity is Valued Here." At a relatively early point in my career in higher education, I learned that the value of diversity can never be fully articulated in an image, no matter how artfully constructed, or well-intentioned, that image might be. Rather, diversity is and always should be an active and moving force, with the ability to challenge and change spaces, institutions, and the individuals within them. When we allow ourselves to settle for a reassuring image, as opposed to embracing a powerfully transformational force, we allow our environments to remain as static and frozen in time as a photograph.

In order to realize the full potential of diversity, the goal must always be to move beyond surface imagery and acknowledge the multifaceted identities that lie underneath. For me, the key element in this process is the reclamation and recognition of VOICE. In order to move from the acceptance of imagery to the appreciation of identity, we must all demand the right to speak while acknowledging the rights of others to be heard. This, as

I consider it, is the first step in moving from a visual to a vocal and active diversity.

As an African American male whose earliest years were spent in Catholic Schools, issues of diversity have been a constant in my life. I must admit, however, that I never spent a great deal of time thinking beyond my own experiences or my own feelings of being one of the only people of color in "the room." This changed for me once I truly began to see myself as part of the bigger picture, during my senior year at Duke University, after I had already committed to a career in higher education.

At the time, I was completing a senior thesis project, very similar to Hampshire's Division III process, and I had elected to complete my thesis in the English department, rather than in my "second" major in African & African American Studies. On the surface, we were a very diverse cohort, despite being a relatively small group of about a dozen students. There were Asian American and Latino "representatives" in the group, as well as myself, the sole African American. Not only was I distinguished by my race, but by my chosen project as well, an examination of literary representations of the Black family in slavery and Reconstruction. My project, interdisciplinary by nature and equally concerned with issues of social inequality and liberation as with literary narratives, was certainly a standout in a group of students more concerned with postmodernist discourse and theoretical examinations of text, and one particularly inventive student who was writing a collection of vampire fiction.

While I recognized their projects as simply different than mine, my work was deemed, explicitly and implicitly, to be deficient and not in keeping with the standards of one who wanted to graduate with “Distinction” in English. For the better part of my senior year, I spent weekly meetings with the cohort and the director of the thesis program defending my work and my right to be “in the room” with such “serious minded” English majors. To complicate matters further, as the thesis program was not a graduate requirement like the Div III, but rather an option for those who were most commonly interesting in pursuing graduate study, I was constantly aware that these were to be my future colleagues, my peers who I would surely encounter in graduate school and throughout my career in higher education.

Although I had certainly never been oblivious to my race before this point, I had always been a strong student, and the classroom was a place where I had always excelled. For the first time, truly, I felt uncomfortable and unsure in an academic space, and so soon after I had decided that I would pursue a professional life in the academy. Moreover, I felt continually silenced in this academic environment. Not only had I been made to feel as if I personally didn’t have a voice, but also as though there was no place for the literary voices of African American authors in the world of true intellectual discourse.

This experience, occurring as I was applying to graduate schools, had a tremendous impact on my determination of exactly what kind of professional academic I wanted to be. I decided early on that I would never settle for representing diversity simply by virtue of being a Black male professor. Rather, I work consistently, and I hope successfully, to embrace diversity in all its forms and to treat it as vital to the educational process. I aim to incorporate the narratives of those who have been consistently silenced in the academic world, introducing and considering texts, authors, and voices that have long been absent from university syllabi. Moreover, I wholeheartedly strive, again I hope successfully, to make sure no students feel silenced in the classroom environment, and recognize that their voices and their stories are just as valuable as those of their peers.

Of course, at the end of the day, it’s not about me, it never has been. I’m only one aspect of a much bigger picture. Without sounding too preachy, I hope, I encourage us all to remember that simply “showing up” is not enough. Diversity is never realized by organizing faces in photographs or bodies in rooms. Rather, we each have a voice, we each have a story that needs to be told, and it is my sincerest hope that no one will allow themselves to be silenced, but rather allow their voices to resound throughout every space they occupy. Then, perhaps, the institutions to which we dedicate ourselves can truly claim: “Diversity is Valued Here.” ●





**Critical Studies of Childhood, Youth, and Learning (CYL); a program that connects the schools of Hampshire College**

The CYL students, staff and faculty will assist you with learning how you can: Design your own projects within the community, work with a variety of programs outside of Hampshire, connect your Division work with your work in; the community, fulfill your divisional requirements, better understand what “Community engaged Learning” really is.

- **Wednesday, May 12, 2010**, help us celebrate the CYL Division III Presentations in ASH Auditorium from 12pm-4pm, refreshments will be served.
- April 14<sup>th</sup>, The Childhood, Youth, and Learning program and Center for Queer and Women’s Services will host, A Day at Hampshire College, a college-awareness collaboration Peck School in Holyoke.
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To Get involved in the CYL program, and to learn about upcoming courses, events, teacher licensure, projects, and samples of student work: go to the CYL website <http://CYL.hampshire.edu>

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# CHANGING EDUCATION



## An Independent Study on “*Changing Education*” by Kyla Kuvach [07F]

### What Is Education?

Education is central to my life. It was my first love, outside of my Mom and Dad, and even now that new loves have crept in, it remains my hub.

Education is marked by the hundreds of books I’ve packed into my tiny college dorm room, books that have been well-loved and learned, with writing underlined, page corners folded, and page bottoms dirtied with oils from my hands.

Education is evidenced in the blue and black marks that appear on my hands any time I pick up a pen to write; the ink will not be confined to the page. The words I transcribe onto paper also make their way onto me and into me.

Education is classrooms with eager learners exchanging ideas and challenging one another, classrooms not dominated but accompanied by a professor. He or she has dedicated the better part of his or her life to the quest for knowledge and the act of imparting that knowledge onto the younger generation. I think this is the noblest pursuit, as my father always told me it was. If they do their job well, move and inspire me, support and push me to grow, then they become my heroes.

Education is triggered by the itch that resides in me, that entices me into buying books, paper, pens and pencils. The journey of education and pursuit of

knowledge pulls me out of bed in the morning, places my thin feet firmly on the cold floor and walks me into my kitchen for coffee, whose consumption I will complement with a good book, generally one that makes me angry at the world I was born into and desperately optimistic for the place I hope it can become.

Education gives my life meaning and substance, it is the stuff of power. Frederick Douglass acknowledges education as the path to freedom and self-realization, and his words are no less true today.

Education pushes us to uncomfortable places and beyond. These places, if we can learn from them, are ultimately beautiful and more powerful than staying in the safe zones of conservative textbooks. They are made up of, but not limited to, class discussions that challenge our beliefs, that push us to question authority, the world, and everything we think we know.

Education should be as diverse and multi-faceted as its followers, the fired-up learners of the world. I feel it was put on the earth for me, and I was put on the earth for it. By the end of my life, when I have gathered as much knowledge as was possible, we – Education and I, Knowledge and I – will be one in the same. Kyla and Education is a love story. Ideally, The Whole World and Education would be a love story. ●



Anthony A. Thomas [08F]



Education is the manifestation of knowledge, it's thinking, learning, and questioning what you know to be true. It is being open to things, people, places, cultures, and answers you may find on your quest. Certainly, education is a personal, international, inter-generational, and inter-gender journey for peace, justice, and understanding. Education forces you to be conscious of your place in the world, only to ask why you are there. Moreover, it is a voyage for truth; it is questioning privilege across race, gender, and class lines on a globe scale. In particular it is understanding the world, its history, people and their stories. Thus it is viewing the world in many ways as a classroom and its people as not only learners but educators. Education is about listening, talking, healing, and building a community that is reinforced by trust. It is learning how and why people relate to each other in the world. It is understanding a history of pain and struggle on one side and that of force and injustice on the other. Education is not a system of training, it is an instrument of human development. Education itself is free; there are no borders, walls, or physical structures that can stop its process and yet there are many social ills that deny access to realms of it. True education is not bought and sold because it is shared. Education is much more than circumstance, history, and capitalism has made it out to be. Education is about taking action, it is what drives the movement for justice. Education is liberation and yet it is so much more. •

Lily Johnson [10S]



I believe that education is made up of the experiences one goes through in formal and informal schooling. Obviously this is based on my personal educational history. I went to public school until high school and then went to a private boarding school in MA. These were two very different experiences; both were necessary for me to have a better understanding of different types of schooling, learning and helped form my overall opinion on the education system. I have been educated in the

classroom, I memorized facts and dates and information but at the same time I have been educated outside of the classroom. I have learned so much outside of formal schooling. I would say a lot of it is in the field of sociology. Learning how to understand, deal with and interact different types of people. I learned a lot from my parents, who are two very intelligent people. They have educated me in botany, Native American studies, comparative religion, outdoor survival skills and so many things that can't even fit into a category. Simultaneously I was taking math, science, literature and history classes in middle school. Both of these sides of obtaining knowledge have contributed to what I would consider my complete education thus far.

Education is the collection of knowledge gathered within a lifetime. Everything teaches us something; we gather knowledge throughout all of our life experiences. Life is education, we learn through living. Education is something that is very difficult to address or wrap your head around but it is one of the most important aspects of life. Starting at birth you are immediately and constantly learning, everything is new and has yet to be explored or discovered by the individual. One cannot live without receiving education, it is impossible. ●

### Luis Vargas [08F]

Education to me is not something given. There is a generally a struggle that we all must undergo in order to achieve the goals that are inherent in education: that of fulfilling the mind and soul of a human being. The struggle I am referring to is internal, which can be understood as dialogue between oneself and with the external; with our surroundings. Education cannot be accomplished without the assistance of society, since this enables us to reflect on ourselves, and then transform our minds each time the process of self-consciousness takes place. For this to happen, we must always be reflecting on our experiences and actions. Hopefully, however, these transfigurations will become pathways, doors that will open only when we are prepared to accept a reality, usually, the reality that we feel most attached to. What will these doors open to? This is precisely the struggle; we will discover out truths as we continue to reflect on our experiences and actions. Therefore, education is a lifelong process, something infinite.

Nevertheless, one can live and experience without the need of instructions, guidance or educational knowledge. Educational knowledge, in this case, is the ability to imagine, conceptualize and produce from what was gained through education. The knowledge that one gains from education is a set of particular skills, consciousness about of oneself and ones surroundings, and so forth. The reality of those who do not experience education or who cannot, for many reasons, capture and understand everything that occurs in their educational settings, in the exchanges of dialogues, etc., are dependant of the other things that society has to offer. Now, if one were to "have an education", one essentially depends on the knowledge that education provides, for the simple sake of one's own well-being. In that case, education is a privilege, generally speaking.

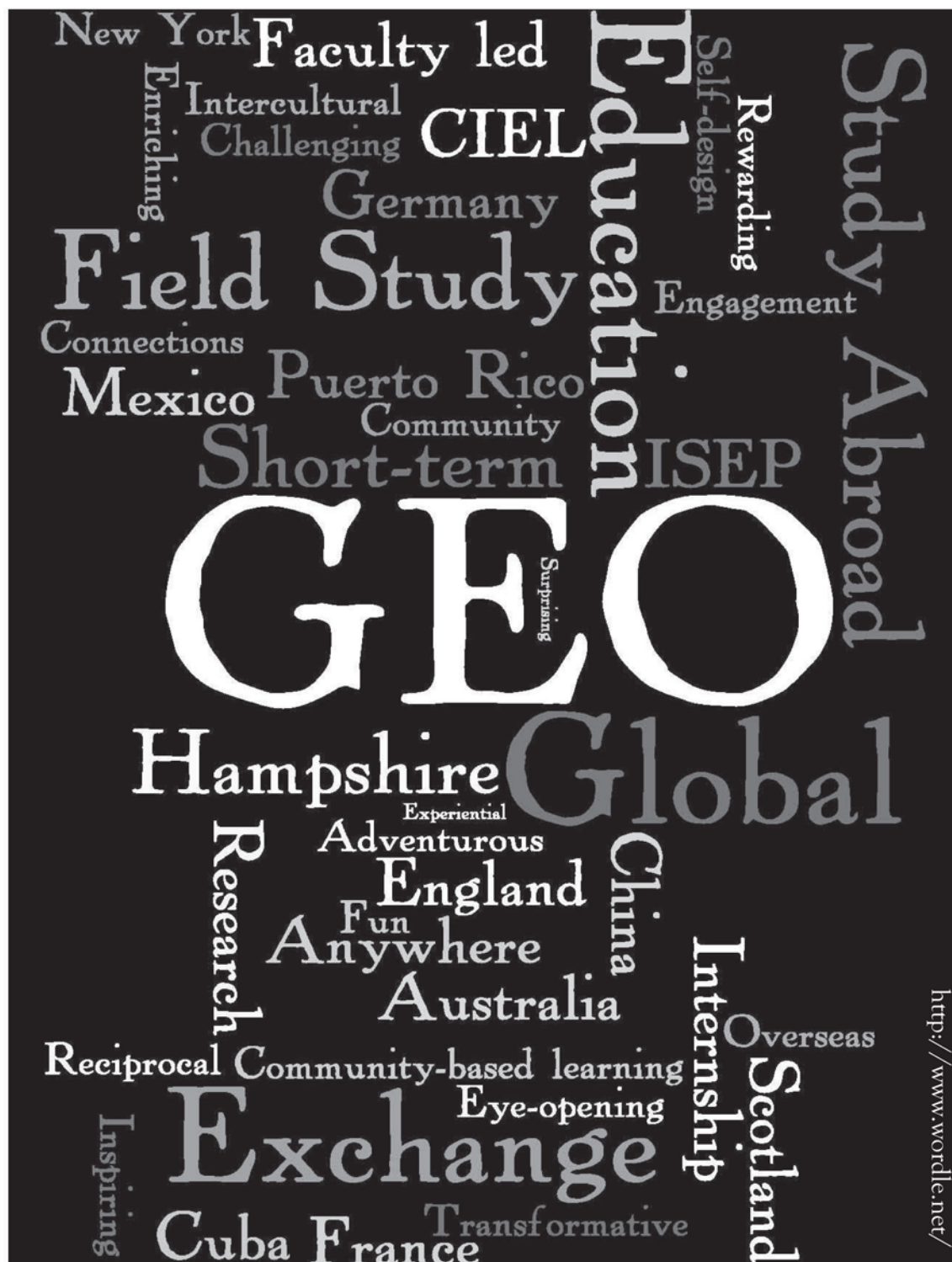
Nonetheless, education is a gradual process that allows many structured discourses to exist within a physical setting. In other words, education allows many disciplines/ subjects that contain particular structures to function on a regular base within an institution. For instance, science



as a discipline, defines our environment by observing and exploring certain concepts and ideas, but it is a discipline that operates differently from art or mathematics. Since disciplines within an educational institution work differently from one another, the fact that they are all in the same physical setting, the institution provides a large scale of knowledge through the curriculums. However, it wouldn't be wise to focus on the function of the educational institution and ignore the content of the disciplines. It is important to distinguish the content of education from the structure of an institution; that is, the content of the disciplines and the ways in which a subject is taught or, the depth at which the subject is being explored. In that case, the point I make is that one needs to be critical about the degree at which the structure of the disciplines are allowing space for the learners to summarize, question and comment on something. ●



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# THE MULTI-CULTURAL RECRUITMENT PROCESS

An interview with Diana Alvarez on Higher Education *[Assistant Director of Admissions]*

*What does diversity in higher education mean to you?*

Diversity in higher education to me means equitable representation of the world's races, ethnicities, classes, genders, and sexualities in a college classroom. While I personally don't rank one type of identification over another, in my work as Coordinator of Multicultural Recruitment at Hampshire College, I focus greatly on equitable racial and ethnic representation, because Hampshire College, like many private liberal arts colleges, is predominantly white.

I don't believe true education can happen without diversity. A college's commitment to diversity enriches multiple perspectives in the classroom and also combats structural racism, sexism, classism, and homophobia in higher education.

*What is multi-cultural recruitment?*

The phrase "Multicultural Recruitment" usually succeeds the words "coordinator of," "office of," or "department of" at a college. Multicultural Recruitment is typically one aspect of a college's Admissions office. Whatever form it takes, Multicultural Recruitment is a college's powerhouse for strategies and plans to create more diversity on campus. At Hampshire, I am a full time Admissions Counselor at and also the Coordinator of Multicultural Recruitment. While schools with greater resources are capable of creating professional teams or entire departments dedicated to this work, I am pretty much it at Hampshire. Because I'm only one person, most of my energy goes into planning for Hampshire's largest Multicultural Recruitment events--the fall and spring Multicultural Overnights.

*What are the recruitment goals set by the college?*

Some multicultural recruitment goals include reaching out to high schools that typically enroll high percentages of multicultural students, hosting multicultural students overnight to visit and understand Hampshire, and nourishing the James Baldwin Program.

*Do officers give "extra points" for admissions to students of color?*

Well, first, we don't give points. We holistically evaluate a student's application by carefully reading a student's personal writing and essays. We account for things like critical thinking skills, self-initiative, academic achievement, and potential community contribution. When a student identifies as multicultural, we see this as a positive part of potential community contribution, and part of a very holistic view of an application.

*Can you explain the admissions process?*

Where do I begin! I'll just say: cycles. In the Fall, all admissions counselors travel the country and visit schools to tell students about Hampshire's unique opportunities. In Winter/early Spring, we read (read: TONS) of applications and make decision recommendations to our director, Karen Parker. In Spring, we create events for admitted students at Hampshire and across the country to celebrate their acceptance. Summer is mostly spent planning for the next school year!

*Do you look for any particular characteristics in deciding on whether or not an applicant should be accepted into the school?*

I always ask, "In the context of their education (charter school, public school, private school, homeschool, etc.), has this student utilized the resources available to them?" This is usually my personal way of understanding an application--it's a question that requires lots of thought.

Beyond my personal understanding of an application, Hampshire Admissions looks for academic achievement, critical thinking skills, writing skills, interest in interdisciplinary learning, and potential for community contribution. At the top of that list are academic achievement and critical thinking/writing skills, but as I've mentioned before, it is really a holistic process where every aspect of the application is taken into consideration.

*What is the day in the life of an admissions officer like?*

Why don't I just tell you about my week? Last Friday I worked in the Admissions office, collaborating with Melanie Kates, Monika Martinez, and Matt Gonzalez (Multicultural Recruitment Ambassadors) to plan for our Spring Multicultural Overnight. We discussed programming, hosting, and the relevance of the Cultural Center dialogue. On Saturday, I traveled for 13 hours to Texas to coordinate spring event for admitted students in Austin and to attend a HUGE college fair. I've spent one weekend day with family in Texas eating my grandma's tortillas, and the next two days will be spent on the road. By the end of the week, I will have coordinated (possibly and hopefully) Hampshire's largest Multicultural Overnight event, purchased many bus/flight tickets for admitted students to visit Hampshire, and, oh! traveled 4000 miles within three days.

*What are some things you think should be improved on in regards to recruiting more students of color?*

We could create immediate positive change in student of color recruitment if we dedicated an entire department or team to this work. Admissions counselors are not short of commitment to diversity in higher ed--we are short of time, and thus, are unable to take on significant, long-

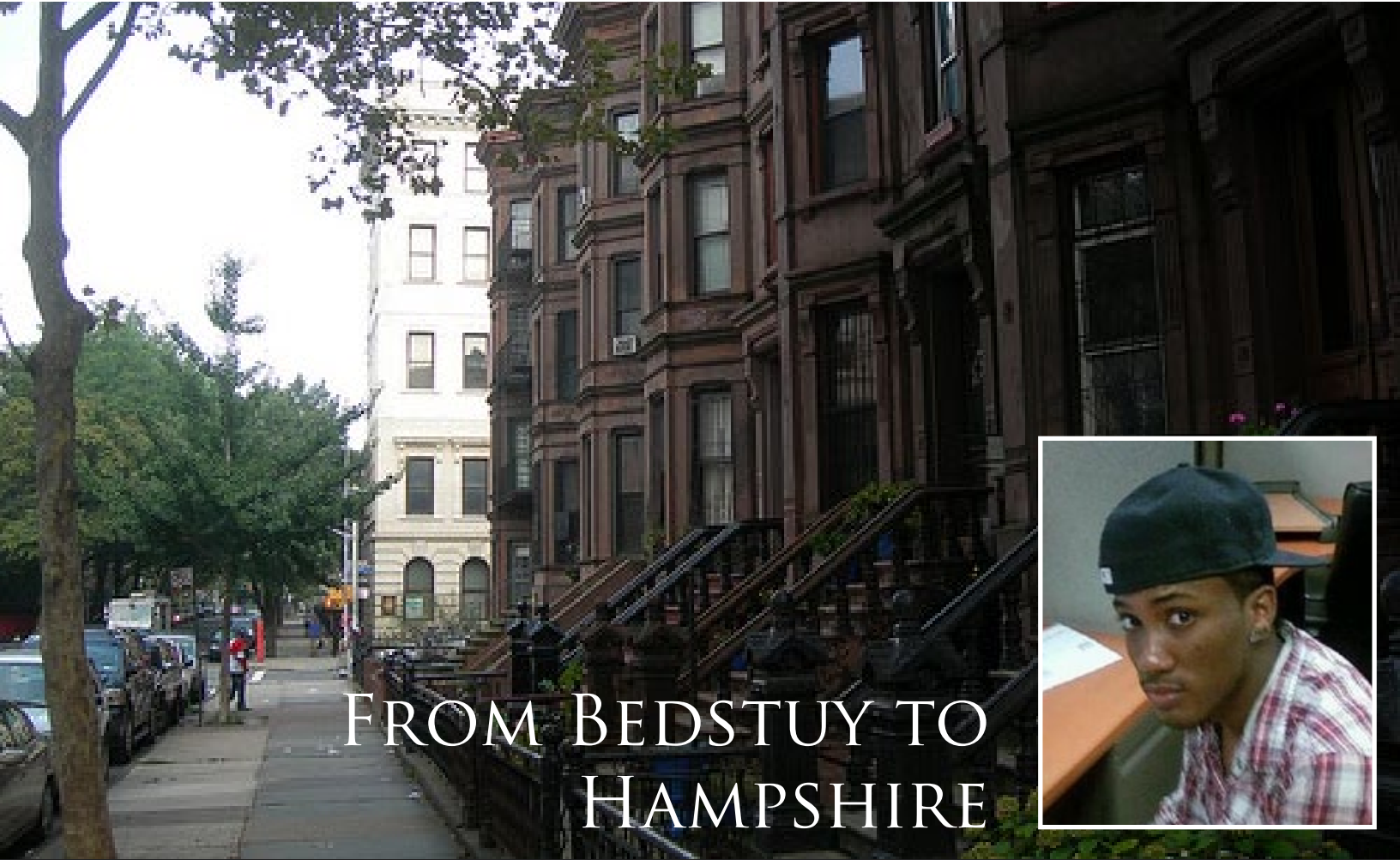


term Multicultural Recruitment projects that would greatly benefit the college.

*What are some ways Hampshire College can retain more students of color?*

Hampshire can retain more students of color by addressing the needs of students of color while they are enrolled. When students of color enroll at Hampshire, they are acknowledging a great deal of faith in the school's philosophy and potential support systems. The best thing Hampshire can do is to continue supporting--philosophically and monetarily--the Cultural Center, the James Baldwin Program, and Multicultural Recruitment, and Student Life. These are all places/programs/departments that stress the importance of resourcing students of color. Students of color will stay at Hampshire when they feel that they have a support network at a school that wants them to stay. •





# FROM BEDSTUY TO HAMPSHIRE



Steven Emmanuel Martinez [07F]

While in high school, I tried endlessly to convince my mother to get off of welfare, stop receiving welfare coupons, and move us out the projects. My mother is a woman of steel. She's worked exhausting hours as a Nurse's aide and as an immigrant whose second language is English, she knows more about the shitty system of politics than most of American-bred citizens. A few weeks before leaving for Hampshire, I asked my mother if she'd be able to move us to another apartment, outside of the projects. My mother offered me an unexpected answer, "Are you embarrassed of us? I'm staying here for you and your sisters. If we move, we won't be able to get by. So in four years, you can pay my rent out the projects." I wasn't embarrassed at all about living in the projects. What embarrassed me is the stereotype that goes with it, none of which plays into my mom's favor. The projects made my family look weak and swiping our benefits card at the supermarket made us (along with thousands of

other families) look seemingly unstable. In a sense we were, but not because we weren't try to be financially independent off of the system, but because the system was doing everything to keep us at the bottom of the barrel. That was certainly something I did not enjoy.

Bedford Stuyvesant has long been a neighborhood warped in a culture of failure. A culture that has long been perpetrated by the notion that Blacks and Latinos cannot make it out of the cycle that condemns them to a life of poverty. A culture cycled by mothers on welfare, fathers in prison, young people becoming parents, and the succession of government in recognizing the needs of low income folks and not doing much about it. I'm no activist. I'm no advocate — yet. I see what's happening to my neighborhood, the clear divide of low income folks of color and the 'gentrifiers' purchasing condos two blocks away from my project building. I don't fettle or grow perturbed. I

know this transformation is healthy for the aesthetic of my neighborhood, but not for the people in it. I enjoy telling people that I'm from this small Brooklyn oasis. Bedstuy has been my place of residence for the past twenty-one years of my life. I'm Bedstuy-bred, and I breathe this neighborhood into everything I do. It is who I am. Everything from the accent, to the Yankee hats I bear, to the Nike Dunks I rock, the blood of this neighborhood runs through my veins.

However, the stigma that comes from living in Bedstuy validates systems that do not work for people of color. Many of my friends have turned to a life of dealing drugs, theft, and joining gangs as means of survival. Many leave high school early without the reservation or intervention of their parents often becoming parents themselves. It's almost as if dropping out of high school is hereditary in some families. The government and our supposed local politicians have done little to curb the disparities in the community and the only way this desolate neighborhood is being restored is through gentrification. This sort of urban renewal is devastatingly raising rent and pushing out locals. When I entered Hampshire College I

felt that the only way out of this community was to use education as an exit strategy. As I progress in my studies, I realize that I can't leave. I can't leave, because much is required out of me.

Low income folks of color continue to rely on social services to passively assist us in our standard of living. It only makes us unwilling to do better for ourselves, it keeps us at the bottom of the economic pool, it regards us as second class citizens, and it vetoes us in conversations of economic justice. If poverty is the symptom of systemic injustice, then educating and mobilizing a consortium of individuals who are willing to flip and buck the system is the absolute cure for economic injustice. History shows that protracted revolutions and movements are just the sort of bitch-slap the system needs. Right now, I choose to not make noise. I'm too occupied in my studies, trying to prove the system wrong, so I cannot be disturbed. But I certainly notice how the landscape is changing. I'm not sure other residents in my neighborhood do, but I certainly notice. The promise goes, once I'm finished with my studies, all hell will break loose. ●





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