

Presented by the Dean of Students Office & the Office for Diversity & Multicultural Education

# INSIDE

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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

After what seemed to be one of the longest winters ever, the sun has lit up these spring days as well as people's spirits. Spring brings with her fresh hope, fresh air, and fresh starts. Last weekend, which was filled with 48 hours of perfect weather, was the perfect motivator for spring cleaning in my house. With windows opened, I tackled the grime, dust, and dirt that had found warm, homey places in nooks and corners over the long winter.

With shovel, rake, and wheelbarrow in tow, I added room and beauty to my gardens that were screaming with color for joy for the new season. My children helped me look for large stones in our backyard to add to the border of the gardens. We finally were able to pry loose beautiful stones that had been buried deep by years of storms, moss, and dirt. Proud of our discoveries of these treasures, we gently placed these stones in the wheelbarrow to carry them to their new homes where they could bask in the sun and no longer hide in the ground.

Each semester it seems for many students that the dirt pile of student issues is still under the rug – issues related to racial dynamics in and out of the classroom, campus tensions around identity-based housing, and the growing student frustrations around 'being real' about the discourse (or lack of) about racism and other forms of oppression. Can we not just sweep all of the dirt from all corners of campus into one big pile? Well, the winds would carry it all back...each and every time. That is the nature of our world. Sometimes I do wish I had one big vacuum cleaner to suck away all of the recurring negativity that finds itself in the nooks and corners of students' lives. Is it JUST that students will be graduating with an unsettled acceptance that the racialized experiences they have had throughout their college career will continue to be part of the status quo?

Oh this accumulation of dirt and grime can make the view out the window difficult to see.



Photo by PR

I don't have a giant racism vacuum cleaner, but what I do have is the light that comes with students unearthing every so often the stones of hope. With the spring semester almost coming to its end, I have felt the power of Spring stirring the winds in and out of the Cultural Center. I have seen how the stones of history, struggle, community, and hope that the Cultural Center and SOURCE student groups were built upon are resurfacing as students place closure on their academic year and look forward to what's next – as soon-to-be graduates, as SOURCE group signers, and more. I have seen how older students have dusted off chairs for their younger peers. I have witnessed how two students have opened windows together and reached out to touch the sky. I have been a part of student celebrations of new seasons and of old. And I have seen many students not be afraid of getting dirty.

We all have the ability to help clean up this campus for each new season. Let's all do our part.

#### MISSION & DISCLAIMER:

The mission of Inside Newsmagazine is to ignite dialogue throughout the Hampshire community in relations to the issues that reflect students of color and international students, as well as larger issues that impact the Hampshire Community-at-large. It is important to recognize however, that although this publication is funded by the Cultural Center, it is not a SOURCE publication. Inside Newsmagazine welcomes the voices and perspectives of students on campus regardless of their ethnicity or race. Every article, story, or commentary published in this magazine is at the sole discretion of its writer; Inside Newsmagazine serves as the medium to facilitate those voices.





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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



I'm overwhelmed by the incredible amount of creative work that Hampshire students produce. We're an unmatched bubble of creativity, with students who are able to so diligently put together the culmination of their past four years (five years for some) into a last hooray – a DIV III project. More than the excitement over DIV III projects, I am infatuated with the people who take on this year long task. In this vain, I would like to make my "last letter from the editor" to bid farewell to five amazing and resilient individuals, who make

living on campus as a person of color and an international student much easier – our Cultural Center staff graduates.

Daliza Nova, our Peer Mentorship Coordinator, wrote an amazing (and LONG) DIV III about housing structures; Prateek, the CC's Design Coordinatoor, took on a dual DIV III project, he built a car – like literally, this dude BUILT a friggin' car! And, he did an amazing photography project taking photos of students; Stephanie Lim, Arts Coordinator wrote about transnational adoptions; and J.D. Stokely put on an amazing theater production called the Sexual Liberation of Mammy; and Ria, the quiet storm, who I adore and look up to with much admiration.

Seldom do the good work these folks do at the CC get recognized. And quite frankly, they take on the complicated responsibility of producing programming and being default ambassadors and counselors to the SOURCE community. That is no small task. I would wish them all well in life, but really I don't need to. Because somehow I know, they will all turn out just fine.

## WHERE I AM COMING FROM OR COURTNEY HOOKS, AS HERSELF.



by Courtney Hooks

Both of my parents are Black. But in the first day of life on this earth, the babies in my family would not look out of place clasped close to the chest of a Chinese woman: we have light skin with yellow undertones, eyes that slant and a full head of hair that refuses to curl. Days later, our skin gets darker and within weeks, months our hair texture changes, gradually, until it reaches varying levels of of coil, wave and kink. By age 3 it is straight up nappy.

### [Scene 1]: Sacrifice

I am 4 years old and have learned a few things about beauty from my mother. She says, "It hurts to be beautiful," as I complain while she tries her best to de-tangle the mess on the top of my head. "Well, then I don't want to be beautiful!" I whine with tears in my eyes. My father looks at my mother with a sly smile and shakes his head. He squats down to my level. "Yeah, she's evil isn't she? He pokes out his bottom lip and sends a look of sympathy my way. "Shut up, Cobbie." My mother laughs a little and gently rubs the sore spots. "Eeevil," he whispers in my ear. My mouth lets out a little laugh as a tear slips down the side of my face.

### [Scene 2]: Surrender

My mom gives me a hat that I don't want to wear. It's itchy and I don't like the way it looks. She tells me to quit acting up and that, "it's too cold to be cute, Courtney." Being "cute" refers to appearances, it also refers to my little attitude. A blizzard is on its way. I open the door and find out the hard way that being cold hurts and doesn't even come with the consolation prize of feeling pretty. I feel scammed.

### [Scene 3]: Sit Still

I am 5 years old and in Kindergarten. I am sitting on a pillow, on the floor, in between my mother's





legs. I am complaining again. "Can't you stop? When are you gonna be done?" "I just have to get these knots out," she says. I huff and mutter something about how I wish my hair weren't the way it is. "What? Do you want white girls' hair?" "Yes." "Girl..." My mom sucks her teeth, rolls her eyes and continues to comb through my thick strands. When I really think it through, I know I don't mean what I said. White girls' hair is nice too. I like to play with it at recess and sleepover parties. But I like and want my hair. What I don't like is the tugging and the pulling and the parting and the "ow mama!" and the "sorry-courtney-but-if-if-you'd-only-sit-still"s. I don't like having to tilt my head at a 45 degree angle away from my mother's hands as they move swiftly, around and under, around and under.

"If you don't tilt your head your braids will turn out short and stubby and ugly," she warns. Ugly.



I don't want to be ugly, so I get my act together. I stop squirming, shut up and do what I need to do to be prettified. My mom diligently greases my scalp, detangles the knots and twists my hair back around itself again in a neat pattern. She wraps the ends of the braids with brightly colored baubles we call bon bons. My mom passes a handheld mirror my way when she is done, lets out a sigh, and asks, "What do you think?" I smile at myself, nod, and say, "thank you, mommy," before I kiss her on the cheek and run off to play.

[Scene 4]: Stand Strong

I am 7 years old and in the first grade in Whitehall, Pennsylvania. I am watching my mother get ready for work, following the steam as it escapes from the curling iron's clutches, bearing witness to the sweat circles congregating at the place where her baby hair meets her temple. Our heads bob in unison to "nappy heads in the zone and we're not goin' home. Yo, Mona Lisa could I get a date on Friday and if you're busy, I wouldn't mind takin' Saturday ay ay..." by the Fugees. I am wearing two big afro puffs at each side of my head and polka dotted technicolor leggings. I have sworn off skirts because my mom told me I can't do cartwheels when I wear skirts because I shouldn't show everyone my "stuff." I have come to the conclusion that my inverse, in-the-air engagements are far too important to let skirts get in the way. John, a skinny white boy who stealthily samples paste in my art class, has straight black hair and a cowlick that sticks up at the top of his head, as if he's giving everyone the middle finger, calls me Minnie Mouse. I call him Mickey. We poke each other in the stomach and smirk when we pass each other in the school hallway.



## WELCOME TO CHRISTOPHER STREET: A NIGHT WITH QUEER YOUTH OF COLOR

by Steven Emmanuel Martinez

It's 12:35am and police officers are getting ready to dispatch the queer kids from perhaps their only solace of safety at this time of night—Pier 45. Following the officers is a member of the Christopher Street patrol, a slim, black bearded man, who dons a red cap and a red jacket with the words "Guardian Angels" encrypted on the back. His presence is snidely booed by some of the queer kids. They begin to get louder as the man stands in unity with the police officers. He lets out a small grin, which infuriates one young man who yells, "Get the fuck out! Get the fuck out!" The other gay kids cheer and applaud. But some refuse to be fazed, brushing the man aside as though he holds no existence.



"I pay him dust," said L.M., a 19 year old, light skinned, student who goes to college in Florida. "I'm surprised it's only one of them out tonight. There are normally at least 5 or 6 of them."

The Christopher Street patrol is run on a volunteer basis and was founded by Dave Poster (or Uncle Dave depending on who you're talking to), a short, Caucasian older gentlemen, in his early 70s with bushy

size 11 foot, and masculine features gets her taunted, and Christopher Street is her way of staying afloat, and not be seen as something unusual.

Lined with trees, blocks of clean pavement, and apartments that reach up to \$4,000 a month, the street has not only become a gathering spot for queers of color seeking a safe haven but also a notorious spot for sex workers. Young gay men and transgendered females turn



black eyebrows. He created the patrol in the early 90s to reduce the theft in the area. He has been running the patrol for nearly a decade and has yet to miss a weekend in which he doesn't go out to patrol his neighborhood.

Cool nights like this, when winter and spring collide, and the temperature is cool enough for a jacket, and warm enough to enjoy outside, always has the gay kids flocking onto Christopher Street and into Pier 45. These nights always bring in all types of characters--there's a drag queen with colorful locks of hair—bronze, silver, and gold, not the best mixture of color, but it works with her outfit. A masculine gentleman has a scripted tattoo that reads salvation. He wears white capris that reach just above his ankles, white Nike uptowns, a Black fitted cap with the letters NY scripted in yellow, and holding his hand is a much feminine man, who I assume is his boyfriend. The feminine man is carrying a Louis Vuitton bag, his shirt is tightly fitted, and his face shines with Vaseline. For a moment he lets go of his boyfriend to greet a male friend with an intense hug and a kiss.

Christopher Street is a hot spot for predominantly queer kids of color. All of whom enter the street through the Christopher Street and 7th avenue corner. Everyone who steps onto the pavement of Christopher Street has a story: the Black gay 17 year old, whose parents kicked him out after learning of his queerness, therefore inducing him to turning tricks to make ends meet; the self-identified dyke whose mother hated the fact that she wore masculine clothing; the transgender female whose Adam's apple,

tricks for money. Many of them come from broken homes, a lot of them were kicked out, and some have run away due to the neglect or abuse they suffer at home.

"I was homeless for about 2 months before my mom let me back in. I was turning tricks for some time. It was quick money, easy money, but I hated it," says K.S., his eyes moving away from my face.

At 16 K.S. came out and, with a less than supportive mother, he had nowhere to go but Christopher Street.

"Honestly I don't know what I would have done without Christopher Street," K.S., searches around Pier 45 at the other teens knowing some of them share the same story, "It helped me survive for a while. I'm not proud of how I had to do it, but I did it and I don't offer any apologies about it."

Christopher Street and Bleeker only a block south of Pier 45 is where many of the sex workers gather to turn tricks. The spot usually attracts older white men, many who are married with children, a large percentage of who are coming from New Jersey.

"Prostitutes are usually on Christopher and Bleeker," K.S., says to me as we trail the block. For the most part the block is empty.



"The only good part about being a prostitute is you get to set your own hours," K.S., extorts barely audible as he trails off around the block. He begins to study the street. Looking around for I don't know what. He spits on the pavement and begins to make circles with his saliva.

"I remember there was this older white guy who use to come on the regular over here. We would make schedules. He was definitely a regular around here. He was in his 50s. The thing about him was he would get tricks from trannies and from the other gay guys, but never from me."

And why was that?" I asked.

"He liked talking to me. He said he enjoyed my conversation and wouldn't feel right having sex with me."

Jonathan sits on top of the fountain that greets those who walk onto the boardwalk of Pier 45. He lights his Marlboro cigarette, the third since we began our interview. Jonathan is a 19 year old androgynous gay man. He's wearing baggy jeans, with a baggy shirt, but his mannerisms are quite feminine, he stands about 5'8, with a foul mouth, and intense facial features: a defined nose, high cheek bones, and golden nut eyes that reveal tragedy, neglect, but amid it all, a resistance to misfortune.

"You know what I hate? I hate people who can't tell the truth," he says with his cigarette hanging from his lip. "I can't stand fake people. People who swear shit is sweet. A'ight, on the real--"

Jonathan pauses to observe a gentleman who passes by us, "Nigga' is sexy." I raise my eyebrows, he proceeds.

"Anyways, yeah, I hate fake people. I'm going to be honest: I prostituted when I left home. And that's another thing. A lot of these niggas' that come out be lyin' when they say they be kicked out. They are looking for sympathy and shit. A lot of them run away because, yeah, I guess 'cause their parents don't accept them, but the way I see it if your parents still love you and still give you a place to lay your head at then you should be grateful. I didn't have that. So I left."

Jonathan recalls having to crash in homes of his friends, park benches; sometimes the men who he 'serviced' were willing to pay for a hotel room in exchange for tricks.

The clock hits 1am and without any words the youth begin to retreat out of Pier 45 and onto Christopher Street. The streets get crowded now with all the teens drifting onto the boulevard in crowds. The kids of Christopher Street never travel individually they travel in herds---voguing down the avenues, stealing kisses from their partners, the flaming gay boys dabbing foundation to cover their blemishes, the aggressive girls anking their ace bands around their cleavage to hide the appearance of their breast. My eyes set upon the openness the queer teens share with one another, something not at all unusual for me to see, as I come here often; but for some reason as I jot down my notes all of the action around me becomes more and more apparent.

Christopher Street is a metropolis filled with cafes, video stores, leather fetish shops, bars, and sex shops, a street that many call the epicenter of gay America. The queer kids who flock here are predominantly Black and Latino, the Caucasians can be found in Chelsea. The segregation is quite evident, yet it is rarely talked about.

Be that as it may, many queer youth don't see a problem with the divide. "I don't really care too much for it. I don't pay attention to it, nor does anyone else," L.M. shrugs.





# THE EXIT INTERVIEW — MAYBE

by Steven Emmanuel Martinez

*Acting President Marlene Gerber Fried may or may not be our next permanent college president. But one thing is for sure: students, staff, and faculty alike, hope that if there is to be a predecessor s/he would be just as charming, brilliant, and committed to the nature of this college as she. In what may be her final interview as Acting President, President Fried speaks about the challenging nature of her post, new diversity initiatives, and what she would like to see in our next president.*

SM: Thank you for granting me this interview again.  
MF: It's a pleasure always to talk to you.

[LAUGHTER]

SM: This is your exit interview for your presidency. So, you're definitely not in the running for president?  
MF: I can't answer that question. So it may be that you shouldn't be doing this interview right now.

SM: What has your tenure been like?  
MF: It's been great. It's been really exciting. I like a challenge, it's been really challenging. I've also had tremendous support from all over the campus, which initially made it possible to stabilize things relatively quickly and then to move on. It has felt like a great time of energy and emotion. Sometimes I say that I feel like I was the person who got to take the cork out of the bottle, in terms of people's energy and creativity and really wanting to go on a positive direction.

SM: Or it maybe that I shouldn't be calling this "The Exit Interview."  
MF: Make no assumptions.

Oh, that's ok we can get around that.

SM: You've mentioned you've gotten grants for new

For years community members, predominantly white, many of them paying thousands of dollars a month for an apartment, have complained about the noise level on Christopher Street. An array of board meetings, petitions, and rallying has follow the tenants and the queer kids on Christopher Street every year with both sides arguing that they have just as much right to the area as the other. These events are all a result of the 11pm curfew that the locals want to implement on Pier 45 because the noise level is unbearable. This has many of the youth arguing that the locals only want them to retreat because they are of color.

Perhaps the noise level is a bit exaggerated. An older man sticks his head out earlier that night, and politely says, "Lower the music please." The young man outside of the car sucks his teeth- his companion ups the music. The older man retreats with a deep sigh and shuts his window in frustration.

This would have been OK if it was earlier, but it was 11pm, almost midnight, and it was a Thursday night.

"Yeah these faggots get loud at times. I use the word faggots, because it's always the faggots that are loud. Yelling stupid shit so that they can be noticed," Jonathan exclaimed almost frustrated. I lost the gentleman who with sophistication shook my hand and greeted me with a smile.

"But I'm saying still, where are they going to--- nah, where are we going to all go? For example if there's a guy whose mad feminine and gay shit and faggoity, like, you can tell... He can go to a shelter and shit but 9 times out of 10 they goin' be full. If he goes somewhere else, at like, 3am to sleep he's probably going to get harassed 'cause he feminine."

Jonathan prompted me to remember a cold December night when I was returning home from a party in New Jersey at 5AM and exiting the PATH train (a train line that connects New Jersey to New York City) at the Christopher Street station. I found young people, some as young as 14, lying on the ground of the station sleeping. Where were their parents? This wasn't a rhetorical question. I looked within myself, and for a moment, I thought I had the answer. Perhaps they're homeless too. But I was 18 and I knew better. Their parents were home asleep, nestled in warm quilts, comforted by fluffy pillows and not hardwood floors. Something about myself being queer and of color and being able to return home to a warm environment, to a mother who has never thought twice about abandoning me as her child, just didn't feel

right and until this day has yet to register with me. I find it unfair. I could sleep knowing that I can wake up to my mother's kisses and "I love you" but these young gays and lesbians cannot, because they don't bend toward societal perceptions of what love should look like.

As I walked with Jonathan and his friend L.R. out of Christopher Street I turned to notice that the pier was becoming barricaded. They're barricading our safety spot? I shook my head and looked over at Jonathan, about to ask him his thoughts on the barring of the pier when I overheard someone in front of me asking the person beside him, "Where you sleeping tonight?"

I looked over at the gentleman awaiting his response. He fidgeted, looked worried, and a bit uneasy, "I don't know yet I'm going to try going uptown and see if the shelters aren't full."

Jonathan, L.R., and I stopped in front of a Chinese store where two young men were battling in vogue, an artistic form of dance, usually comprised with model-like poses, and picturesque dance movements. The crowd surrounding them—about 15 people—were yelling and chanting in excitement.  
"You vogue?" I asked Jonathan.

"No. You?" He asked almost stubbornly.

"I wish," I responded.

A crowd began to walk past us heading up Christopher Street. As some of the teens saw the locals, and more of the Christopher Street patrol and officers, they began to get louder.

"You want to finish the interview?" Jonathan asked trying to upstage the noise.

"No," I responded, "I think I have my story."

And with that we joined the crowd marching up Christopher Street and began to cheer and yell not as a statement, but because this is our space too—and like the \$4,000 a month apartment renters, we too call this our place—and we cannot be told otherwise. ●





initiatives. How would these initiatives benefit the SOURCE community?

MF: We have a grant to work with underresourced and at-risk young people from Holyoke to basically create a bridge to college for these students. We're working with the CARE Center Women in Holyoke who are pregnant and parenting teens. And they're going to spend two weeks here in the summer. And their time here is going to be divided one week half days at the farm, one week half days at the Lemelson center. They've come a couple of times this semester partly to feel like the Hampshire campus is a welcoming place for them and to begin to envision themselves as students, maybe not here, but at other colleges. We are also working with Tree House and it's youth aging out of foster care. In the Fall both of these groups are going to continue and engage in some work in the Fall. We're hoping there are going to be a lot of opportunity for Hampshire students to engage with them. This is a pilot initiative where I see enough opportunity for growth. Our hope is that this is something that can be expanded, we would like to expand it to other organizations. I guess the other piece of this is the person who gave the money was really interested in supporting work that helps at-risk and underresourced community and kids, and the other part is to strengthen these non-profits that work in the community that are relatively small and relatively fragile, and to have them have a partnership with something stronger like Hampshire college.

SM: Is there anything internal that is being done for the SOURCE community?

MF: I've been working a lot with Jaime – for example there's a diversity initiative that's coming out of the strategic plan. It has in it some really strong parts

about increasing the number of students of color and faculty and staff of color. There's a recommendation to recreate the position of Dean of Multi-Cultural Education, and then there are specifics under that in terms of recruitment. There was a consultant that created a recruitment plan for students of color and some of the ideas have been implemented. There's been a lot of focus on where admissions need to go in the future. Not just racial diversity, but all kinds of diversities. One of the clear objectives or goals is increase the number of applications. Which would, in an interesting way, probably add to the diversity both in terms of who is in the pool, but also if you had a different balance of the economics you might be able to meet more needs of more people then trying to spread it thin around a whole lot of people.

SM: Could it just be that Hampshire College just doesn't have traction with students of color and international students? Maybe we're underestimating the outreach efforts that are already being conducted.

MF: I don't think so. For example, I've been listening to a ton of stuff now, and everyone is trying to recruit international students and it's very expensive to do it. One of the admissions counselors did a swing through Asia, I can't remember how many weeks he was going, but it was a lot of weeks and it was pretty expensive. And it's one person, so it's kind of limited to what you can do. A lot of schools are outsourcing this. They pay people to recruit, but I think the problem with that is that you want to be sure that whoever is recruiting for you knows what they're recruiting to. I think that there's like a tipping point. There has to be enough people here that new students of color and international students would want to come.

I've talked to several faculty of color about the degree to which they end up informally mentoring students of color who aren't their advisees at all. And so partly that says to me that there is a need for more adults of color who understand Hampshire and what it means to navigate this place. I think there needs to be an ongoing general awareness around race and diversity. I think that's why these inter-group dialogues need to continue. I think it's also about resources. I think it'll be really important coming out of the strategic plan – there's been some discussing, there are somethings like community space. Community space is apart of everything, its part of everything you need to make a good college, and diversity is sort of like that to.

SM: I definitely want to ask you about the presidential search –

MF: We are in the cone of silence here.

SM: What can you tell us?

MF: You know what everyone else knows.

SM: What's the diversity like on the search committee?

MF: I don't know.

SM: Are you allowed to tell me about the applicants?

MF: I'm not part of the search committee. That's why I can't talk you about it. I know what everyone else knows. I don't have any inside track here.

SM: What are you looking for in a candidate?

MF: I'm looking for what most people on this campus is looking for. Somebody who really is proud of and loves and is committed to the core values of the institution. Which includes, the core pedagogy; the commitment to social justice, the commitment to diversity. It has to be someone who can lead Hampshire, and leading Hampshire is a complicated matter. But I think one of the lessons of the last several years is that leadership Hampshire has to be collaborative and consultative. It doesn't mean you can't act, you do need someone who is strong and that can take it all in, and listen to a lot of voices and then who can make the best decisions even if it isn't the most popular decision. I think the other thing is about resources. There's so much potential here. We've done an incredible amount under "more is less." I keep thinking about what we can do if we have more. I want Hampshire to be as great as it is.





# THE PARADOX OF IDENTITY BASED HOUSING:

by Ari Burton

Every year the subject of identity based housing gets brought up in some form or another. Usually the question center around whether identity based housing is a relevant function of the Hampshire community. Yet in the attempt to characterize Hampshire as an environment intellectually beyond issues of oppression and marginalization, a larger question isn't brought to attention: what are the current problems facing the sustainability of identity based housing?

Right off the bat the policies and language surrounding identity based housing come to mind. Like much of the language used at Hampshire, the language around identity based housing is confusing, vague, and relies heavily on implications. There is no standard, clear cut definition of what identity based housing means as an operational definition. There are no following paragraphs clearly outlining the necessary procedures for sustainability. Essentially there is a lot to be desired. For a month community members have been in meetings to flesh out such language.

From a personal perspective, I see another issue facing identity based

housing which meetings cannot solve. American society on a whole has lulled itself into a deeper fantasy about our country being post-racial, post-homophobia/transphobia than before. We're in a world where people who point out the racism of cultural appropriation are labeled as being oversensitive or ignorant of historical cultural exchanges of traditions amongst people. Such claims, however, don't consider the difference between consensual cultural

exchange and blatant theft of cultural practices. We're in a world where people think the success of certain gay and lesbian celebrities like Ellen DeGeneres means that homophobia is not a problem anymore, because if it were an open lesbian like her couldn't be successful. Yet the suicides of several LGBT youth at last fall easily debunks the idea that there are queers, they're here, and America's certainly used to it. We're in a world that pretends the majorities of the histories composing this country aren't immigrant histories, and to deny entrance to newer generations of immigrants because they aren't pilgrims on the Mayflower is contradictory to the founding values of this country. We're a world where misguided allies think they can reclaim slurs due to existing



photo by prateek rajbhandari

friendships, and are disappointed when they are denied tragic attempts to show they are indeed "down with the people".

Instead of generations interested in understanding the mistakes of our collective ancestry as a global culture. Instead of utilizing such knowledge to work towards a better world, we are instead defaulting to positions of ignorance, apathy, and general disdain for discussing and acting within the political and cultural framework for "those complicated issues". Such a plague on the collective conscious of our world makes no exception for a school like Hampshire. Just because our community works to include anti-oppression work into its pedagogy doesn't prevent our student body from ignoring the need to carry anti-oppression work from the classroom to the living spaces to the study spaces and support centers. Anti-oppression work is slowly being supplanted by the desire to appear liberal. What was one a viable political philosophy has been dwindled to an identity where people can easily stake the claim "I'm not a racist. I'm not homophobic or transphobic. I'm not against XYZ. I am perfectly right on in the world of political correctness." Yet the claims of liberalism are progressively lacking the necessary groundswell needed

to bring true change to this country and ultimately the world. It's difficult for a group of people dedicated to anti-oppression work to push against a current of those who don't see its validity.

This push and pull between active and passive is at the heart of the identity based housing problem. We are working against many factors, but most important we are working against a clock. There isn't enough time to reverse the damage done to a generation of people lulled into a false sense of complacency. There isn't enough time to educate people on the continued need for identity based housing as a safe space for historically oppressed, under represented or underserved populations. Instead those dedicated in whatever capacity must push forward to change the structure of identity based housing for future generations. We must work to engage students from all walks of life in the conversation, from prospective to accepted to incoming. And meanwhile, in the private moments we take to ourselves, we must hope, dream, and even pray for a day when the collective conscious has shifted, and the relevance of identity based housing is no longer questioned, but implicitly understood.



# BUT I LOVE IT

by Brittany Williams

I love how it feels when it touches my back  
From the way it rubs up against me when it feels soft  
And other times when it's nice and hard  
Though it's usually supple and gentle  
There are days when it's rough and tough...  
You know, the days when you just can't take it  
Days where you spend... time after time trying to handle it—but you can't...  
I especially hate it when I try to get it all in but it doesn't go  
That's when I realized I had to try it all natural...  
You know with nothing coming between me and it  
No man made concoctions to keep us apart  
I could just love it unconditionally whether it's soft or hard  
I never had to worry about it being dry though, you know I got that under control  
I've been... dealing with it this way for about 2 years now  
When I first told my mom she was scared but supportive  
She told me if I was ready and I thought the time was right that I should go for it  
None of that cliché PROTECTION stuff... Just do it...  
  
I know somebody in here has to feel me? No?  
  
(sigh)... I tell you... It's so so hard dealing with black hair... But I love it...



# BYB

by Brittany Williams

Being young and Black on the Westside of Atlanta meant being cool...  
Instead of listening to the stories of cats, who wore hats, in all Black, with actions that were down-- rather than jeans we decided to ignore them... Where girls wore- Mini skirts in middle school  
And brought babies to show and tell  
Arriving to school late and leaving early to hang with men more than twice their age  
Where idolizing Beyonfakes who won't read beyond 8 lines because they were taught to sing and rhyme by the time they were 9... was the norm.  
And memories of educators telling us we could be more than what we see within the realms of Westside projects became the beginning of another WestSide story  
Instead of Maria Maria it was Brittany Marie  
The oreo, the cracker, the boujee wanna be white girl who thought she was better than everyone  
The oreo because she read books and made straight A's  
The cracker because she wore polo's and Chuck Taylors  
Boujee because she had long good hair and always walked with her head high  
And all of the above because of the obvious... Skin color...  
Because of course self pride and nonconformist reactions meant acting in a way that wasn't Black  
  
Fast forward. 25 college applications. 23 acceptance letters; commitment to Hampshire College.  
Young. Black. Inner city... Subtract the predominance of Black and insert whiteness.  
Introduction to a culture of privilege and power where I almost always felt the poorest in the room  
Where questions about my happiness are asked daily and assumptions of anger are in abundance  
To be young and Black at Hampshire is the expectation of calling out ignorance; breaking down stupidity; and bare the weight of having to shrink in your seat when



you're the only Black student and you're asked about the one African diasporic content based discussion in an entire class... The assumption that you can speak for all Blacks..  
Where titles like Woman of Color, Person of Color, and Student of Color are placed on you without explanations of what that means  
Where togetherness turns into a cultural lump, melting pot, too hot to discuss and too important to dismiss... Black because of my racial heritage...  
A woman of color because it's more comfortable for whites to say...  
and  
A student of color because the color experience of non-white students is important  
And all of the above because it's PC to recognize the differences we see even though we ignore the (re)actions that happen as a result  
  
Being this light skinned young Black woman once meant being confused and constantly negotiating the way I identify to please those around me... Today it means being who I want to be whether it is accepted or not.





# POR AMOR

by Daliza Nova

About papa, he always said he wanted to die “Como un pajarito, sin molestar a nadie.” Like a little bird without bothering anyone.

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He hears them when they're not being loud; he hears them when no one could. Maybe that's why he always woke up so early, but he didn't complain his biological clock was on point, better than any cheap or expensive alarm; he woke up every day at the same time to feed his gallinas y gallos. Everyone in the house was used to his no noises, and the one made by his birds. The day they were gone it was difficult to conceive sleep. He shook the house with his snore, but it's what reminded all his grandchildren and children that they were in the presence of papa. Papa would talk to his chickens, and even the fruit trees in the house.

“ Si tratas a los arboles con amor te daran buen fruto.” If you treat the trees with love they would bear good fruit, he would say. At times, the mango tree bore so much fruit that some branches would drape over the neighbors fence next door, when the winds would escalate to the point where the nappy hair of the neighbor's daughter would move with it the mangos covered the sidewalk, and not only would everyone in the house taste the fruit but so would the passer byers.

The chickens were the early birds, it was una

rutina, wake up to the sound of the chickens, and roll around in bed for a little bit before he actually managed to get up, his giant belly making it harder to stand. His feet would swing around until they landed on the floor as he slipped his beat up, torn apart, messed up plastic slippers. He had tons of new ones his children would buy him, but he still preferred the broken ones. The relationship he had with his slippers was one similar to that of his khaki jeans, and the dozens of shirts he had in the closet but chose to remain shirtless.

I'm coming he would inform his chickens as he walked to the bathroom. That was his pastime, his hobby and some would argue his love; to care for those birds. Brushing his teeth he would hum the national anthem that came on every morning and every afternoon. As toothpaste dripped from his chin not hitting the floor because they were captured by his large overgrown tummy, he thought of breakfast and what he would make his grandchildren before heading off to school. As he finished, grandpa would make his way out of the bathroom and into the backyard. It was a 3 bedroom house, with pink walls, the color chosen by the youngest grandchild and the only girl, he didn't mind as long as he had his backyard and his chickens. To get to the back yard he had to pass the living room, and he laughs as he reminisces on the time when his granddaughter got attacked by a chicken for touching her little chicks, but he got there on time before the 4

year old got too hurt. He would make breakfast for his grandchildren every morning after feeding las gallinas. Chocolate con pan, oatmeal, or a fresh squeezed juice was on the menu, and thinking about the menu for lunch was added to the list every morning, and he never forgot to make sure if he had enough dried corn.

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Eventually, Papa was left con sus pajaritos and a friend for company in the house because his daughter moved to the states along with her kids' grandchildren. But the summers were always very active, that's when his grandchildren all returned. He always made sure to take mangoes when they weren't quite ready yet and store them until his granddaughter and daughter came back. When they would arrive on the island although it wasn't mango season, they always had mangoes, not only that, but fresh chicken and even pigeons.

The pigeons were faithful visitors of the house on calle cuantro manzana 3616, they were there every day at the same time. The electric cable would be completely covered as if the palomas were just standing on air. As he threw the corn it would rain pigeons in front of the house, rushing, like if it was their last meal. The smile on his face when the birds would shower the front of the house was contagious, he radiated and happy took a new form.

Papa would make lunch and dinner more often than his daughter would, “estas de vacaciones” you're on vacation, he would say, and she never opposed because she understood he wanted to do it for her. Some days he would wake up earlier than usual and head to the backyard as he did every morning. But instead of coming back empty handed he would return with one chicken on each of his hands. That day the meal would be fresh chicken, and that day his daughter would also cook, and he would only cook the arroz con habichuela, with no chicken.

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On the morning of October 4th, 1999 papa woke up like every other morning. He rolled around in bed, put on his slippers and walked over to the yard. This morning though, one of his chickens was missing. He walked from the back yard to the front of the house and on the sidewalk found his gallina, muerta, just lying there lifeless.

“Cono, ese maldito perro!” That fucking dog! he cursed one of the neighbor's dogs for killing his dear bird. He picked up the chicken and took it to the backyard. He then went to the kitchen picked up a glass of hot chocolate and a piece of bread. As the phone rang he passed his granddaughter sitting on the table eating breakfast, and answered.

“Aqui quillao, el perro me mato una gallina pissed off a dog killed my chicken, he explains to his daughter who's calling from Spain.

“Ay papa tu, y tus gallinas”

They speak for a few more minutes, and then he gets off the phone.

Hearing the chuckling of the chickens and the soft whisper of the morning breeze he goes to the galleria, which is the outside inside part of the house. It's surrounded by decorative bars to shield from the outside but that allow you to enjoy the weather. He makes sure his corn is ready for the pigeon's arrival. As he rocks himself in the rocking car enjoying a glass of hot chocolate and bread, he takes his last breath.

He always said he wanted to die like a little bird without bothering anyone, that's exactly how he left, like a little bird without bothering anyone.



# DIANA DIAZ: AN INTRODUCTION




Que hubo? My name is Diana Isabel Diaz Munoz and I have been a SOURCE Group Coordinator (SGC) since January 2011. I was born in Cali (unfortunately not Cali-fornia but Cali, Colombia also known as the world capital of Salsa). I immigrated to the United States on August 7, 2004 to reunite with my mother in the heart of Jackson Heights, Queens, NY. Even though it was not my decision to leave my childhood friends, my family, the tropical weather, the great grandma's cooking, the all year long happy people because there's no winter to cause seasonal affective disorder, I found out that it was meant to be for me to leave and like my first fortune cookie said on August 9, 2004, "today is the start of your new life." I dominated English very fast and easily assimilated to the New Yorker lifestyle, always busy and in a rush. My education experience has been beyond what I imagined for myself when I was 12 years old. I thought I was just going to finish secondary school and go to the university my mom went to and study medicine there. Instead I went to an international middle school and high school where I learned the value of diversity and where accents and clothing became unnoticeable. Then ended up in a

non-traditional college where we learn because we want to learn. I came to Hampshire in 2009 looking for a well-rounded education, and ready to integrate arts and medicine into some sort of division work. However, after a couple of courses and a lot of introspection I realized that public health is what I am passionate about. Of course as a Hampshire student I am not solely interested in public health, but also in media studies, Latin@/Latin American studies and Mandarin Chinese. I am a signer for Raices and as I said before an SGC for QIPOC, Umoja, PASA, DIG and Mixed Heritage. Working at the Cultural Center has been great, everyone welcomed me wholeheartedly and that's just great.

# FANTASY

by Foto Hamilton



No need for a beat  
I'm ready to speak some things  
I keep locked in a box, buried, and dipped in chocolate thoughts  
beneath what's so easy to see  
So what's been eating at me,  
so eagerly I wanna scream "Hey how's your evening"  
No please don't perceive me as a being who's being to cliché  
when I say your face is so serene to me  
And what seems to be so  
EYE CATCHING, JAW DROPPING,  
is the way you smile your teeth at me  
and say "I'm doing good"  
soo good is good  
well is all well, but time will tell if you'll join the same team as me  
and geniusly that team of we  
will take the on the world so seamlessly  
"oh that's cool"  
but I really don't know what you think of me  
and we all got flaws of ours so your's aren't a thing to me  
so easily i'm aware of the way you wear your hair  
and them jeans that bring out them curves you bare  
but really  
I could less if your breast would impress all my mans..  
giving me dap, saying..  
"yea you got that"  
anyway like I said this only inside  
just an emotion, a notion of one day eloping  
with this special kinda guy  
BYE





# THE CONIFER SEED BUG

by Luis Vargas

On a cold Saturday morning, I stood from the chair and looked through the window: the trees had not moved since last week and the birds that fly in circles around them were not there either. From behind the trees, a wind blew the old leaves towards my window. I opened it to feel the breeze and noticed, at the bottom of the screen, a small creature moving calmly up the stool and into the room. I left the window opened for a moment. I walked back-and-forth from the window to the door, contemplating on matters neither obvious nor too important. I took the seat and placed it in front of the window. I looked down at the stool, and the creature seemed to be looking at me.

The colors of the day had also changed. Evening was coming faster each time, so the sky was dark by the time it was a little after six. The colors of dawn did not engage too much with the wilderness outside. I lost interest in these trees and their colors, and focused on the things that my reality and my choices forced upon me. I moved my chair back to its place and left the windows half-way opened.

I didn't think of anything that Saturday morning but on the trees and on taking a walk to the supermarket for some groceries. I didn't choose to go to the supermarket however, the wind and the pale colors of the sky had in them a kind of stillness that expressed the most unpleasant sadism. I decided to remain in my room and smoke a cigarette. As I pushed the smoke through the screen, I noticed the small creature against the wall, motionless. I blew smoke over its body and the creature moved slightly. I turned the tobacco off and looked at the creature for a while. The color of its back was covered with a brown color, like a branch from a tree, though the color of its legs and stomach were undecipherable - they were black and gray, which made its legs almost impossible to see. I didn't know if whether the creature was aware of my presence. I knew though, that the creature was well-aware that it had invaded someone's territory. I read elsewhere that they enjoyed invading people's homes for the warm temperatures. In these regions they cannot live for long



photo by prateek rajbhandari

since their food is outside in the woods, where at this time of the year is too cold for them to make the woods their habitat. They like to remain in the cold, but not live in the cold. I was astonished at its particular form, its laziness. But I decided to forget about the creature and return to my world.

I ate a light meal for lunch. I walked back to my room, sat on the bed and looked straight across towards the window. It was a slow day, one of those where people would make soup, a large container of soup for the entire day. I was beginning to feel a bit sleepy until I noticed the creature moving down the wall that is next to the table. I rouse from my bed to look at it more closely. I ran my finger through its body, its stomach and turned the creature upside down by pulling it through its short fragile legs. The conifer seed bug did not seem disturbed by this. I was also not disturbed by the creature's presence. It brought with it a kind of peace. This could have been because of its laziness, I don't know, but the fact that it was in my room, my territory, and not

behind my window or outside in the trees made me want to look into this creature more closely.

The conifer bug lived in my room for three days. During the first two days, I studied the creature. I contemplated its body and movements from across one corner of the window to another. Each time I left the room and came back in I would look around to see if the creature had changed its previous position or changed its setting. I didn't spend enough time with it to think of it as a friend, a friend bug who lived in my room. I didn't see as a pet either. I didn't have the intention of taking the creature into my world in that way. I also didn't think of killing it. This just shows that I contradict myself, and that spending moments with it, looking at it and touching its body once in a while, would mean that I have no sense of guilt, no shame of myself.

I enjoyed its company, and that was my final thought about the creature. I didn't talk to it, that would be silly, but I did talk to myself as I looked at the creature. Then, for the first time, something else happened that made me re-think about the poor creature. I thought about its situation. noticed that it had been in my room for two days without any food. It was mostly moving from one place to another, but never did it bother to search for any food beyond stool of the window. This had never occurred to me. I was never too interested in insects the way I was then.

The poor thing, and I say poor because I am not certain how else to describe the thing that was slipping from the window's glass and landing on its back as if it had no desire of living, was struggling with itself. The moment I noticed this, I opened the window so it would leave, but for some reason or another, it did not want to. The glass was cold, so I assumed that the creature did not want to take the risk of searching for food. It was a difficult situation, and I at the moment, I was not inclined to find the creature any of its food. I was focused on other things that took my mind away from thinking about the creature. I was occupied in my own world.

On Monday morning, I realized that I had not given any attention to the creature. I was not interested in its movements or its body. I did not even question its existence in my territory. At noon, I noticed that its body was laying flat on the stool, next to the window's screen. I moved its body slightly, but there was no sign of life. The creature had died. I do not know when or of what exactly, but that is not a question I should ask myself either. Its existence did not have any stake in my existence. Perhaps it would have been better for both if the conifer seed bug had invaded my home in the first place. I moved the insect with a pen, removed the screen from the window and saw the wind take its body. Outside the trees were naked and empty, as if though they did needed to be filled with life.

<b>how can I get involved?</b>		<b>student</b>  <small>building the movement for reproductive freedom</small> <b>group</b>
<b>FALL 2011</b>		
<b>CLPPStudents E-Mail List network &amp; connect</b> Join for internship and job opportunities, news and ways to get involved with local and campus organizing	<b>Abortion &amp; PopCulture view &amp; critique</b> How many times have you heard the word abortion on television? Let's watch tv & talk about it.	<b>From Abortion Rights to Social Justice: Building the Movement for Reproductive Freedom</b> annual conference for over 1100 students & activists Take an active role in the conference organizing by developing your skills & attending Fall conference planning.
understand the issues <b>Reproductive Justice Workshop Series</b> build your organizing skills Workshop sessions facilitated by current students will be held every one-two weeks so that you can familiarize yourself with various social justice issues.		
Contact Lani · <a href="mailto:iblechman@hampshire.edu">iblechman@hampshire.edu</a> · 559-6834 · at Hampshire College		



# WHAT IS LEFT IS WHAT WILL REMAIN

by Melanie Lopez

As though the world isn't full,  
Without a connection to those who have passed.  
When the rain falls,  
When the sun rises  
I am always O'odham

Si'alig to Hudnig  
0 to 99  
I come from land of my ancestors, I come from the earth.  
I am always O'odham

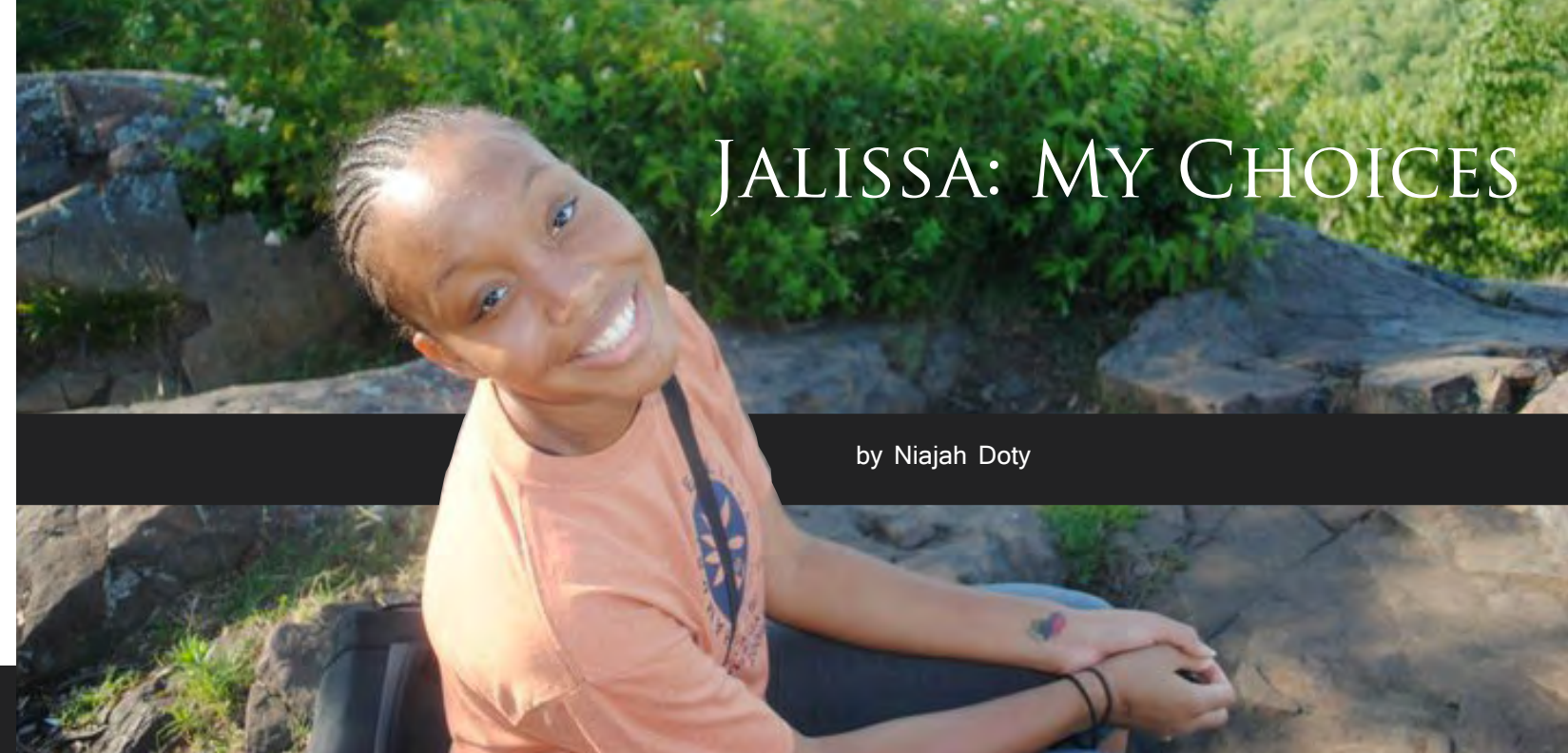
l'itio never leaves his people without purpose,  
He never leaves us alone wondering of his return.  
Himdag is what's left of him and it's what we have to share  
Mumsigo, Hua, Gomili,  
I am always O'odham

What is left is my Himdag is scarce.  
Time is changing day after day.  
People are not as connected as before.  
But as I grow older, as generations die and grow  
I am always O'odham

Tohono O'odham  
"The Desert People"  
Created by l'itio but destroyed by Mi:lgan  
As long as we still walk this earth,  
We will always be O'odham



photo by prateek rajbhandari



# JALISSA: MY CHOICES

by Nijah Doty

Jalissa is my youngest sister. She attends Maynard Jackson High School formerly Southside High School in Atlanta, Georgia. She is the popular girl in school, although she would never admit it. She says, "My school is very friendly in that way. We don't separate into groups of cool kids and geeks. We all just talk to everyone." I'm not sure if I believe that everyone in her high school talks to each other without conflict, but I definitely know that everyone talks to Jalissa. Every time the phone rings, it's for her. I'm surprised my mother doesn't make her pay the phone bill. I joked that she's humble in her popularity, and she laughed. In our initial meeting at the West End Library, Jalissa entered the meeting room wearing her hot pink and black track jacket, with a light blue and green shirt underneath reading, "Smart is the new Gangsta". All heads turned, and she spoke, "Hey ya'll", waving her hand. The beauty mark beside her nose rose as her high cheek bones formed into a balanced smile. She found a seat at the table with the other participants and began talking.

Jalissa appears to like being the center of attention, from wearing flashy clothes to commenting on people's every move, not so much in a judgmental way, but more to be funny. She wants everyone to know her name and who she is. Her boisterous laugh echoes through the air, often making it hard for others not to laugh along with her. With broad shoulders and long legs she glides through a room. In the library, she moved deliberately, being sure to fill in the room. Back at home, off duty, she moves slowly around the kitchen table and our little brother's toys. She's hyper aware of space and how she moves through it. I guess that's the dancer in her.

As if I didn't know it already, she tells me that she loves to dance, and how she would love to tell me this story of how her outlook of education changed with this one occurrence in school. Jalissa choreographed

most of our conversations, characteristically starting off each story with, "Well." Her story of change, as she calls it, is one of the biggest lessons that she's learned in school. She explains, "Well, it was the last day before we got out for winter break when an announcement over the intercom rudely interrupted a conversation that I was having with my friend. It was Mrs. Connelly, the school's registrar. I could tell by her scratchy voice – always sounding like she needs a glass of water. Over the intercom, she said that if anyone failed a class that semester we would get kept back if we didn't go to summer school. That was it, the announcement went off and I continued talking to my friend. I really didn't worry about anything, even though I did have two low grades in my classes. I was just ready for vacation."

"About an hour later, the bell rang and we were out for two weeks. Free of school. Everybody bum rushed the door, falling all over each other to escape. I was in there pushing and shoving people over to get my taste of fresh air too. FREEDOM! When I got home, I put my book bag in the corner and made me a sandwich. After that, I sat in front of the TV and went to sleep. Much of my break went the same exact way. Before I knew it, the two weeks had passed by and I found myself back at school sitting in the counselor's office holding my breath. Mr. Scott, who never wore deodorant, handed me some summer school papers and I threw them away. Well I didn't exactly throw the papers away, I filled them out and gave it to him, but I never went, I threw them away in my mind...I never went to summer school. I spent the whole summer not thinking twice about summer school. I got me a job instead. I was making money and hanging out with my friends having a good time."

"BIG MISTAKE! I got to school in August, fresh dressed like a million bucks of course, and my schedule had a 10th grade homeroom on it. Doom. I was so embarrassed! I had to talk to the thirsty throat lady, Mrs.



Connelly, the musty man, Mr. Scott, and everybody else and their mama for like two months before I convinced them to put me into my rightful homeroom. There was so much paperwork, and more paperwork, processing and more processing, sending it here and sending it there, giving me the run around. It was the most stressful thing that I have ever had to go through. They finally figured out that I had more than enough credits to be in the 11th grade all along. I was too through. Why couldn't they figure that out at first? I don't know. I guess it was all worth it in the end, because I'm now where I'm supposed to be."

"So what did that teach you, Jalissa, and how does that have to do with your relationship to your education?" I asked with a smirk on my face. She threw her head back and put her hand on her face, saying, "Well" and lingering for a minute. "This taught me that I cannot blame everything on the teachers and administration because it was all on me. I slacked, I messed up, and I had to fix it on my own, which was difficult. So my lesson is learned, if something is done right the first time, it makes things so much easier. I think that's what teachers and parents try to tell us all the time" She smiled then let out a deep sigh of relief, letting me know that she was finished. "What about, what does this experience have to do with your relationship to your education?"

"Oh yeah" she says. "Well, I take my education for granted a lot of the times. Things come easily to me, so I do my work just to get it over with. I don't know, I think this experience has a lot to do with my relationship to my education, because it shows that I have to start respecting my education more, as in taking it more seriously. I know that I still have a lot to learn, and I need to stop taking it for granted." When she was done talking, I asked her why she wanted to tell me that story so badly, and she said because she's really proud of herself, "although it came from an unfortunate situation". The ability to prove that she can do something for herself was empowering. She didn't ask anyone for help, she knew what she had to do in order to not be retained. This lesson is one that she will keep with her beyond high school. Sometimes, the best lessons come from personal experiences and not from parents and teachers talking at you about lessons they've learned that they want to pass down to you. Some may call that 'learning the hard way'. But she learned nonetheless.

\* \* \* \* \*

Jalissa is fervent in all things about herself. She'll say things out of the blue and laugh hysterically about them, even when no one else joins in. "Dancing and music, the loves of my life" the sixteen year old tells me. "I don't know which one I love more, it's like

breath to life...one cannot exist without the other. In fact, I wake up every morning at 6:00am with the sound of Frank and Wanda on V-103 'The People's Station', blasting through my radio. I do this out of habit, because I cannot go to sleep without listening to my music. And when I get up, I dance around my room and into my clothes."

"Is that what you want to do when you grow up, be a professional dancer?" I ask her. She looks at me across the gray oblong library table and say, "No. Actually, I either want to be a history professor or go to the army." Pause. The Army? That came from left field. As long as Jalissa has been my sister, I've known that she's wanted to dance. So I had no idea where that came from. I was not expecting that answer, "why would you want to do such a thing? I mean, they're so drastically different from one another?" I said. She replied, "well, I'll be living in this country for most of my life, why wouldn't I?" I thought to myself, let's see - war on innocent people, death, injustice, greed, I don't know, just those little things. The look on my face must have given what I was thinking away, because she said "what?" "Well Jalissa, I don't think that makes a lick of sense, and I really don't believe that is a strong enough reason to go to war and risk your life for this country." She looked at me and smiled, moving her shoulders forward. "Well Niajah, it doesn't have to be a good enough reason for you, but it is my reason, and it's good enough for me."

For a second I found myself responding differently to Jalissa. Why are the only options, college or the military? I was thrown off, because I saw Jalissa as a vibrant student with the passion and talent to do anything she put her mind to. I recognized the biases that I was working from, and I had to check myself. These are her choices, because as she said, it doesn't have to be a good reason [to me], but it is hers. No matter how much I am opposed to her choices, they are hers at the end of the day, but as her sister I still felt conflicted. Jalissa will still be a vibrant and talented person, regardless of whether she's in the Army or a history professor. As I continued with the interview, Jalissa told me that she doesn't want to leave Georgia, "Not enough money for that. I know that I can get a scholarship, but that still wouldn't cover everything. Right now I'm looking at Georgia State and West Point."

Jalissa switched the conversation, "You know how we grew up Rastafarian?" "Yeah" I said. "It's had such big impact on who I am because of the way we carried ourselves, you know covering our hair and wearing long skirts down to our ankles. I never really paid attention to people though, until I got to middle school. That's when people started noticing me and asking me a lot of questions about why I dressed the

way that I dressed. I started changing really fast. I didn't want them to question me. I just wanted to go through school like everyone else. It took me a minute to realize that what they eat don't fill my stomach." "What do you mean?" I asked. "I mean that I don't have to feed into what they believe, or what they want me to be. They do not make me a whole person. I mean that I'll always be me, Jalissa - the one and only. No one can take that away from me. Besides, part of me believes that they are just jealous of me - I'm too real for them. That's even how I feel about the people I go to school with now, but in High School they give me more respect because I am different."

\* \* \* \* \*

After an hour of talking, we finished our first interview at the library. I told her when she got home she needed to finish up her writing prompts and think more about some of the questions that I had asked her during our interview. The next day at home, I concluded our interview. She came downstairs wearing her pink and red plaid pajama set, with a brown head scarf on. Rubbing the crust from her eyes, she handed me her yellow writing pad and went back upstairs to brush her teeth. In perfect hand writing the first line on the page was, "If the walls of my school could talk, they would say to the students, 'Damn! Sit your ass down and listen.'" I burst out laughing because of the abruptness of it, and remembered what she said about being, "too real". It continues, "Most students don't take advantage of the opportunities they have. Many students don't understand, and I don't either sometimes, why it's so easy to sit there and find out things you don't know. That's why the teacher is there. The walls would cry from what they see: people having sex in bathrooms, violence in the hallways. They would smile when they see our relationships with our teachers; they would appreciate the amount of respect that we show them and still be comfortable enough with them to speak our minds."

When she came back downstairs, still wearing her plaid patterned pajamas, I asked her about her response. "Oh yeah, man, the kids play around all the time at my school and it gets so annoying. I'm not innocent, because I do laugh when it's really funny. But it has to be really funny, and that's the only time I'll make an exception. The only time they take their education seriously is when they realize they failed a class and have the possibility of getting held back (like I did), or when they're threatened by a teacher, and then they miraculously straighten up and start acting right. The part where I was talking about me not understanding is because I get suspended a lot, but mainly for stupid stuff."

"How much is a lot, Jalissa?" I asked. "And

what is stupid stuff?" She retorted, "A lot is like 5 times, and stupid stuff is like once I was suspended for sitting in a classroom during the lunch period. I was just suspended a couple of weeks ago for being at my locker, right after the bell rung. They couldn't give me a warning or even in school suspension. The answer is always out of school suspension. Suspension in general is just a waste of most students' time. Suspension is supposed to be for students who are misbehaving in a negative way. Sitting in class during lunch and being one second late for class is not a reason for me to be at home for three days doing nothing."

"My teacher, Mr. Styles, would never do anything like that. Whenever an administrator did something like that, I would tell Mr. Styles and he would fix it right away. Mr. Styles was my favorite teacher." Jalissa's 9th grade Humanities teacher was the best teacher that she says she had. He no longer teaches at her school, but she still wrote a letter to him to show her appreciation:

Dear Mr. Styles,

*Remember when you told me that no matter what my family does or where I come from, it will not determine how far I will go? Well, I remember and I will never forget those words you spoke. You always spoke the truth. You didn't only feed us information from the books, but real life lessons that we can take with us and learn from. You taught us that nothing will be given to us, and we will have to work for everything that we want. You'll be proud to know that I'm striving hard and working hard to get what I want.*

*I wanted to thank you for waking up each morning and loving what you do. Thank you for seeing me as more than a paycheck. Thank you for always giving 100%, even if you weren't up to it. Thank you for being my teacher. There's not much to say, just that you're a really great teacher, and I always looked forward to going to your classes and learning something. You are very appreciated and respected. Wherever you are now, know that your students are lucky to have a teacher like you. Thank you!*

Your biggest fan,  
Jalissa

Jalissa looked at me and said, "He really was a good teacher."



# THE LITTLE THINGS: MY CRICKET WORLD CUP EXPERIENCE

by Avik Roy

The sounds of fire crackers, dancing, and the roar of a billion people echoed around the world, as Mahendra Singh Dhoni, the captain of the Indian cricket team finished off the world cup finals in style. His final shot, smashed for six runs into the stands, delivered India their first world cup in 28 years. In a nation which is obsessed with Bollywood and Cricket, you can believe that April 2nd, 2011, was one of the happiest days in the history of post-independent India.

The politics, economics, societal differences, were all put aside for the month of March-April, as India went against 13 other nations to compete for the Cricket World cup. They went in as favorites to win the title, but would be the first team in cricket history to win a world cup on home soil. They beat the best, to be the best. Facing Australia, the defending champions for the last 12 years in the quarter finals, Pakistan, their arch rivals, and possibly the biggest rivalry in sports history, in the semi finals, and finally Sri Lanka in the finals. Expectations were high, people were preparing, for April 2nd would be one of the most momentous or disappointing days in the lives of many Indians, not only in India, but around the world. It was also to be the final world cup match for the greatest batsman of all time, called the little master, Sachin Tendulkar. Indians had one final request for their little 38 year old hero, who has been carrying Indian cricket on his shoulders since he was 16, Sachin Bhai World Cup Dila de(Sachin Brother, Win us the world cup). Once we won, he was paraded around the stadium by his fellow teammates, while 1 billion fans were bowing at the little master.

6000 Miles away, I was sitting, watching this momentous occasion, of course the boundaries of nationalism still engorged in my mind. Hampshire education tried to affect the way I enjoy my sports. But I didn't care, I didn't care about those boundaries, about that familiar rhetoric, no one was going to stop



like that we're done. I look at her and smile, telling her "thank you." She laughs her goofy laugh and asks, "For what?"

\* \* \* \* \*

"So, let's talk about family Jalissa." "Family?" she asks in an uncertain tone.

"Yes, family" I say. "Tell me about your family and how they play a role in your education." At first she looked at me, and then shuffled in her seat and then said, "Niajah, really?" I told her, "yes, really. But if you don't want to do it, I can't force you, but I would really like if you talked some about it." Rolling her eyes and letting out a heavy sigh, she says, "okay. But it's not like you don't already know everything." "That's true," I say, "but I want it to come from you." I tell her she can stop whenever she wants.

"Well, my mom, your mother, is the type of person that will be like, 'yeah, you finished high school, now let's see if you can finish college, then we'll celebrate'. She is definitely the person that pushes me further. She would be disappointed if I didn't finish. Graduating from high school is something that is looked at as a great achievement in my family whether you're a boy or girl. But I would say that the girls are more accomplished than boys. I mean, that's just how it is. The boys, I guess everyone really, depends on the girls in the family. In a family of 10, there should be choice of whose house we're going to spend time at. It shouldn't always have to be at one the girls' houses. To me, that shows how the guys really need to step it up on all levels."

"I don't want to disappoint my mom. Making her come up to my school or teachers constantly calling her will only stress her out. I feel like if I just sit down and do the work, she won't be disappointed or stressed out about me getting suspended, so I'd rather just get it right the first time. I don't like to see my mom struggle the way that she does. She told me that she had to go to pregnant people's school. Even though that's funny in a way, it's sad too because she didn't get the whole high school experience, she was pregnant at 16, she didn't even get to be a child."

"I'm proud of my mom because she has done so much and overcame so many obstacles. She went to Atlanta Area Technical College to get her associates degree to own her own business. I'm so proud of her, even though it took her so long to do that, that's just because of money though. She's 45 now, but it was a while before she became a registered daycare provider. My family plays a big role in my education, because they make me better. I always try to make them proud." "Aww, that's so sweet Jalissa!" I tease her. "Whatever, Niajah!" She stops. "Is that all?" I ask her. She says, "Yup!" "Are you sure?" I ask. "Yeah, I'm sure." Just

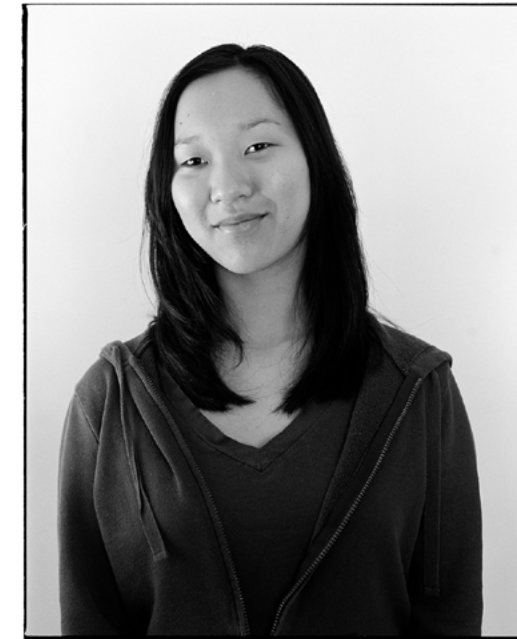




me from being proud of my nation that day. I dressed up with my Indian flag behind me, off to watch the game at 430 in the morning with my 3 other Indian friends, accounting probably for 90% of the Indians on this campus. Unable to sleep, we went through 8 hours of shouting, cursing, clapping, and screaming, until finally, coming to the realization that we had done the unthinkable. While at home millions of people paraded the streets in celebration, we tried to be with them in spirit by having a tiny celebration in greenwich, but what a celebration it was. Struck by the happiness of the occasion and the disappointment of not being home to witness the anarchy, I was torn between my joy and sorrow. At the same time, I realized that it is these little events, these small moments that transcend the boundaries of politics, economics, and of course the like. At least for that one day, for those few hours, these differences are forgotten, and a collective happiness is experienced. Not that they can be ignored, or thrown away, but they are put by aside as this joy breaks boundaries, bonds people. 2 days later of course, India is back to normal, and those vast divides, corrupt politics, and distorted and un-distributive economic policies are once again born by the vast majority of the population.

Its bewildering however, even amongst an avid sports fan like me, how those few moments can transcend

these vastly existing differences, fragmenting society on any other day. When that final shot was hit, it wasn't the huge skyscrapers, the astonishing growth rates, and the nuclear deals that made people proud to be Indian. It was a group of Individuals, athletes, from different castes, classes and religions, that came together and struck down the divisive politics of our notorious and power hungry politicians and elites. So even though it could be regarded as just another final, the point is that it is these little moments that stand out in the lives of many individuals and communities. We should never forget as students and responsible members of our community, that as we fight for justice, peace, and equity on a larger scale, it is these small events that bring people together, spreading happiness, letting us be human. Lets fight for our struggles, but keep a light head while doing it. Lets see people as people, and not just a person directly related to their political agenda, as it is also these little interactions that make a difference. Let us remember that even though macro policies implemented by governments affects daily lives and communities, such small events can do so as well. Lets make the difference, one step at a time, but enjoy the little moments of joy that life brings us. April 2nd was one of the happiest days of my life, and I'm glad to share it with a billion other people. It is cricket that did this for us, it is cricket, that for a moment, brought us all together.



## A goodbye from the Graduating Staff [including the photographer]





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