

**YAWP
ANTHOLOGY**

Session A

9th – 12th Graders

June 1 - 12, 2020

Miss Michelle

Memory At a Distance
By Lily Fox

I remember less the more I try and try to remember.

Memory is a strange thing.
It comes in bursts, like sparks when starting a fire.

I can't recall the view from my window, which I loved so dearly.

I can't think of the name of the shopkeep who worked near my flat,

Or the smell of city spring time.

I do remember certain feelings,
The places and people and emotions that stuck with me.

I remember the dreary walks uphill in the rain.

I remember running for the 210 bus with my yellow coat thrashing in the wind.

I remember laughing a little too hard with my friends on the overground.

I remember the two lock clicks on our apartment door.

I remember staring at the advert for a horror movie, alone in the dark part of Charing Cross station.

I remember the lemony cornershop iced tea that doesn't taste the same here, even when I buy the right
brand.

I remember Ms. Acton, and the glorious moments of bliss in drama class.

I remember Friar Laurence's remorse at the end of the play.

I remember the drawn-out British twilights.

I remember the urban trees on Grove Place.

All this to cherish one thing;

A portrait of a life that was never mine to keep.

Sophia Hackett

That all [people] are created [and represented] equal [ly]"

After Law and Order

"In the criminal justice system, the people are represented by two separate yet equally important groups: The police, who investigate crime, and the district attorneys, who prosecute the offenders. These are their stories"

The screen is overtaken with flashes of the city set to a musical background

SCENE " _ "

In a court of law each person has a right to equal representation.
Everybody is innocent until they are proven guilty.
Sure.

To what extent does this actually occur?
It's just no use simply admitting there's a problem.

In a court of law each person has a right to equal representation.
Everybody is innocent until they are proven guilty.
Sure.
To what extent does this actually occur?
I don't want to be stuck in the constant cycle of a problem with no solution.

At school, we are each represented by the student council that we vote for.
I just bubbled in a name.

UNTIL, I saw a courtroom

SCENE " _ "

I had never seen a real lawyer. I used to imagine sharpened shoes down a polished path. Instead, they tap their feet to the floor while they search through stained papers.
Is that sweat on their forehead?

My stomach squirms and my heart beats and I want the day to be over so tomorrow will start again.

And I can do something

"We hold these truths to be self evident that all [people] are created [and represented] equal [ly]"
period

OR...

I saw a courtroom

SCENE " _ " [PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE]

*I had never seen a real lawyer. I used to imagine sharpened shoes down a polished path. Instead, they tap their feet to the floor while they search through stained papers.
Is that sweat on their forehead?*

My stomach swings and my heart drops and I want the day to be over so I can go to bed.

In my dreams: "Streets paved with gold": the rumor of America and those that sought a better life in it.

Anna (My Grandmother): came by plane with her family.

Home was better.

Shame: "a painful feeling of humiliation or distress caused by the consciousness of wrong or foolish behavior."

To go back would be to bow to shame.

So she was an American.

What does that even mean if not Equality?

I gave up.

I sit.

My armored knowledge rusted. A Farewell to Arms.

40 years later

Wasted

Waste d

What a waste

What have i done in the past?

I cant say I remember.

END CREDITS

The Superpower of Hope

By Ishaan Handa

Hope is an important thing in times of despair. I know that it is kind of paradoxical but it conveys the message to believe that things will get better though surroundings say otherwise. Having the superpower of hope influences others to have hope. When you believe that something will become better, you have a positive aura around you. Hope creates a new dimension for you and others to look at things. Hope gives the sense of feeling like you can do this. Hope is an essential part of life and if you don't have it everything will seem as it has plummeted. But if you have hope then your success is endless like a balloon free-floating in the sky.

When I was Younger, by Carl Justice

When I was younger, I spent hours in my front yard, endlessly playing sports as if nothing else was going on. As I ran routes and swung my bat, I focused on one thing and one thing only. As I got older, I began to recognize more important things than playing sports in the front yard. I sat in class eager to learn, scribbling down multiplication problems as quickly as I possibly could, listening to lectures from my teachers about science and history and different aspects of the world that are so important. I still dismissed many important ideas and arguments as I was still concerned with my own path and progress and wasn't interested in the bigger world. As I walked through my middle school as a student, it felt big and grand and something that I had to conquer. When I returned as a high schooler, it felt tiny and I didn't feel like I belonged. Now that I pay more attention to the tensions and complexities in the world, I sometimes miss my days of blissful ignorance but am certainly glad that I understand more as I can truly participate in society. Similarly, everyone needs to let their naive childhood behaviors go and participate in society. That entails reading and watching the news, voting, and advocating for what they believe in. A society with hope is one where everyone believes they are doing what's right for it and is optimistic for the future.

A Writer Who Dares To Dream

By Brock London

Im am a writer and a dreamer. I dream of one day captivating a crowd not with the power of my voice but the power in my words that hold so much dear to me. They are my expression of who I am. They tell my emotions, my pains and joys, happiness and sorrows, anger, fears, some gone and others still here. They have the ability to define; that's what words are, definitions. They can hold so much weight on them with just their meaning. When put all together those words form, phrases, sentences, expressions; of life and lost and what it means to dream. I want to be a writer because I have a dream. I dream to show my own strength to show a writer's strength. To change the tide, to flip the world, to be me. To tell how I've loved and lost, and how I pushed through and learned. How I struggled and overcame. A writer is what I see as a profession who dreams and I want to show the world how I've dreamed.

By Pranish Nyaupane

For thousands of years, humans have coexisted with each other. There are innate human rights, common amongst all. It was easy to live with one another, even with differences. However, a new pattern is trending, not one of equality and liberty but one of inequality and privilege. In writing, all men are equal, but not in practice. Time and time again people are discriminated against for traits they have no control over. Race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity. When will it end, or better yet, a more burning and pressing question in the back of many people's minds on both sides of the argument, will it ever end? No. For the unseeable future until we act to create change, it seems unlikely. Changes in government. Changes in the mindset of oppressors. Changes in law enforcement. Changes in society. Changes. People will continue to discriminate as long as we remain stagnant in our beliefs. Humans aren't discriminatory at birth. We're taught morals and values throughout our childhoods and onwards. Our minds absorb all the information presented to us. We listen, we acknowledge, we perceive, we believe, we execute. We form opinions revolving around our values. The golden rule: treat others how you want to be treated, doesn't seem to apply later on in life. To those who are accustomed to privilege, equality just feels like oppression. There are many ways to break out of this downward spiraling trend. Acknowledge your privilege. Don't abuse it. Use it as a platform. Staying silent in times of protest put you on the side of the opposition. George Floyd. Eric Garner. Rodney King. All victims of an abuse of power. How do we fix it? What steps must be taken? How do we overcome this challenge? How can we build hope? Unity. Fighting together, even if it doesn't affect me. It's an everyday struggle for the oppressed, but showing support can ease that tension. Everybody has the capability to change and induce change in the world, so why not use that power for the greater good. We all start out as powerless little caterpillars who feed on information given to us by others. But only the good-minded can blossom into beautiful butterflies by bringing change to the world.

My Voice

By AJ Paris

When I was younger I was told America is the place to be, that we as Americans stood on a pedestal far higher than anyone else in the world. I was repeatedly told a myriad of times that America is a place where people who practice different religions can come together, and people of different races are all treated equally, because that's what America is all about, right? There are some people who believe this, and those people are a serious danger to our society.

At first I wanted to spew vitriol and point my finger at the opposing side, my words would only incite riots and violence. The police brutality issue is not something new, but it's just now getting major attention by the media. The police system was flawed from the start. Because of the way the police system was set up and has been maintained, it's inevitable that this has become the outcome.

In Lubbock, there are numerous signs advertising the need for police officers in the city. For as long as I remember those signs have been up, because what does the city, or all cities, need are more police officers, correct? Incorrect, what we need are the right people and proper training. In places like Chicago, there's a specific amount of police that they need to have, because of the massive size of the city. Some of the applicants are not mental cut out for the task of being a cop, or are becoming one for the wrong reasons. They end up hiring the people who are not mentally prepared for the job because they need the man power, but in reality, they just need the proper training.

The higher ups of the police forces need to stop spending money on rubber bullets and use the money to give officers the proper training they need to be able to complete the task at hand. Instead of giving the police force bigger and more powerful guns, give them the training they would need to learn to deescalate a situation. Right now, it's almost as if the police force has turned into the military, always wanting better supplies that will effectively incite violence. Defunding the police is going to help no one, and will potentially worsen the situation. Instead the police need to use their money on deescalation training, and stop giving cops the minimal amount of training. If the cops receive better training, less of them will be needed, meaning that the mentally unstable, and the people who want to become cops because they feel the need to have power over others, will not be hired, overall benefiting the police force and our society. They hire the best-of-the-worst, the people who, out of the people who shouldn't be hired, are deemed less dangerous. This cycle has to stop now.

People argue that more white people are shot and killed by cops each year than black people. This is true because there are more white people in America than black people. The topic we should be talking about is why there are so many cop shootings taking place. This goes back to the previous topic of man power and the addition of fear. Fear changes the way a person thinks in any given situation. If a policeman, who shouldn't have been hired, is afraid for his life, he will shoot first and ask questions later. The police officers need to exhaust all resources before shooting. So if an officer doesn't have the mental strength to deal with high risk situations without resorting to violence first, they should be fired from the force, better yet they should have never been hired in the first place.

There are many other things wrong, not just with the police, but with laws, drug laws, the legal council for criminals, legal establishments and forensic teams. I'm choosing to focus on this because it is not well known. Without a police force, America would not survive, and many people don't want to admit this fact, so I need to make my voice heard. We need to show the people that are scared, that there is a way to fix this. It won't happen overnight, and there is no guarantee that it will work. But if the people band together and share what I have just said, I believe that we can change America for the better. Make it a better place for the next generations, and truly make America a place I'm proud to call home.

By William Ruff

Draft 1:

What is **Conflict**?

Conflict is a shadow creeping towards the sun.

Conflict is a predator eating its prey.

Conflict is people hiding in ruined buildings.

Conflict is the heart fighting the mind.

Conflict is when two friends argue.

Conflict is the sound of gunshots.

Conflict is trees spreading their leaves.

Conflict pushes to improve.

So, what is Conflict?

Conflict is the good and the bad.

Conflict is the force that pushes and pulls us to grow.

Draft 2:

What is **Conflict**?

Conflict is a shadow creeping towards the sun.

Conflict is a predator eating its prey.

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Conflict is the heart fighting the mind.

Conflict is when two friends argue.

Conflict is the sound of gunshots.

Conflict is trees spreading their leaves.

Conflict pushes to improve.

So, what is Conflict?

Conflict is what causes us strife.

Conflict is the force that pushes and pulls us to grow.

Conflict is part of life.

George Floyd: Another Example of Racism in 2020

By: Akshay Sachdeva

Racism. Racism is a form of prejudice that is defined by Merriam Webster as discrimination against someone of a different nationality based on the color of their skin. Some people believe that racism is “dying” or somehow “going down”. They could not be further from correct. In 2020 we constantly see through the media and even first hand just how diabolical this issue is getting to be in America. Recently, we learned of the death of George Floyd. Floyd was brutally murdered by former police officer, Derek Chauvin last Monday, in Minneapolis, and a video surfaced of the officer kneeling on Floyd’s neck for 8 minutes. People from all over the nation came together like a swarm of bees and took to the streets to take their anger out in forms of looting and robbery which did not help small businesses or innocent people trying to go by their everyday life. There were also plenty of peaceful protests led by leaders from all different fields. Athletes, authors, preachers, the whole state of Minnesota was basically on the streets. Floyd’s brother, Terrence was able to put out an emotional message to the public: “If I’m not over here wilding out, if I’m not over here blowing up stuff, if I’m not over here messing up my community, then what are y’all doing?” he asked. “Let’s do this another way,” he preached as suddenly a burst of energy was given to the mourning crowd. “Let’s stop thinking that our voice don’t matter and vote.” Change. This is what the African American community has been calling for, for decades. Many believe that there isn’t a clear answer to racism. And maybe they’re right. But it is up to us, the next generation to make a change in whatever way we can. The George Floyd murder was another big chapter in this long, eerie book called 2020.

Silent Hope
By Katherine Shi

Transcending the fear of the unknown with the hope of a better life of security, peace, and opportunity, she crosses the aquamarine waters that sparkle in the glow of the sun, and possibly the glow of her new life and future. The alien, dreaming big in red, white, and blue, arrives at the sweet land of liberty. The land of freedom where all men are created equal and endowed with inalienable rights. The land of citizens who are able to express themselves and believe without outside judgement. The land of beautiful spacious skies, amber waves of grain, purple mountain majesties, and fruited plains.

She heard that the majority in America are of Euro-American descent, and yet knew nothing, saw nothing, of them all. She read the books about the lovely America, that land of sun and beauty sheltered from the storms of the world, and felt pride in it and love for it upon arriving there, and yet knew nothing about it at all. As she grows up, she learns that there are other things here than sun and gold and hamburgers. She learns of the hates and fears of our country, and her love for it grows deep and passionate, but it is not enough.

No matter how hard she tries to blend in as someone of Euro-American heritage, others view her as inferior and different, a "forever foreigner" with poor language and social skills. Others are blinded by antiquated beliefs, triggering them to accept and believe the false stereotypes perpetuated in the media. She is played by the corrupt system like a pawn in a game of chess, her rights abolished, all because she didn't look American. And so she rejects her home language, clothing, attitudes, and behavior as if they were ugly scars to appear more "American," but she is unsuccessful as her past heritage leaves an imprint on her like broken butterfly wings. She is only left looking for her heart and questioning who she is.

In this morally censorious climate, one that does not readily tolerate weirdness, willfulness, or imperfection, she risks her health and happiness to meet societal standards, which are perceived as the basis for acceptability, even if they are constantly evolving. Society's blade cuts a message in her head that she is not acceptable unless and until she measures up to a certain standard. She feels as if being herself is an act of misconduct. Society prevents her from expressing herself because she is different from the norm. The voice in her head wishes to speak out against this system ruled by inequality.

Fear sits in her stomach like a block of ice. She fears the possibility of being deported, jailed, tortured, or even killed for daring to speak up; she fears that she might add on to the stereotype of being aggressive, threatening, defying authority. She decides that her voice would just get trampled on, silenced. Listeners won't listen. They won't open their mindset or put themselves in the shoes of those being oppressed by the system. The majorities won't stand up for the minorities, won't use their voice to help those whose voices are silenced, because they fear minorities taking over control and being more powerful than them. They pledge allegiance for one Nation with liberty and justice for all, but act otherwise.

A guide comes to her and tells her that if no one speaks up about this inequality, people will lose perspective of the moral ramifications of their actions. This guide expresses that speaking up can mean being censored, threatened, ridiculed, ignored. But no change is possible without someone speaking up. Everyone will not listen. But someone might, and that can be enough. The guide that provided her with spirit, determination, and voice was hope.

Inequality has been a problem ever since the founding of America. People refuse to accept differences. And thus God becomes a confused and inconsistent creature, giving gifts and denying privileges. We should set our own standards with health and happiness being the priority, accept and embrace our scars, and be fearless and confident of being our true selves. The beauty of hope comes in many shapes and sizes. Life is hard but without hope it's meaningless.

By Lauren St. Leger

1. 2017: A lab at the University of Iowa determines that I indeed have Retinitis Pigmentosa.
2. 1990: George H.W. Bush signs the Americans with Disabilities Act into law, ensuring all humans with disabilities are guaranteed accommodations.
3. 1893: Frank Haven Hall, superintendent of the Illinois Institution for the Education of the Blind, met Helen Keller at the World's Fair in Chicago. With her escort, she approached him. Upon learning that Hall invented the Braille writer she used so often, she gave him a huge hug and a big kiss.
4. 2019: The first time I touch a Braille writer and started to learn Unified English Braille. My writer is a Perkins Braille writer with six keys that click every press for each dot in a cell. A high-pitched bell rings when the embosser, which does the actual indentation to make the dots that you feel by hand, reaches towards the end of the line in regards to the set margins.
5. 1824: Louis Braille invents the literary code of Braille for blind people to understand. In this original edition, it includes both dots and dashes. In practice, the dashes confused readers, so they were removed in the later edition.
6. 1991: The International Council on English Braille developed Unified English Braille (UEB) to address concerns of increasing flexibility and robustness of Braille.
7. 1829: Louis Braille crafted the alphabet with intention. The first ten letters, a-j, start uses the first two rows of dots in the cell. The next twelve letters, k-t, adds a dot in the first column and third row to each of the previous letters. Letters u, x, y, z add a dot in the second column and third row. The letter w is unique because it was added in a later edition.
8. 1959: English Braille American Edition (EBAE) is formed for America, and no other country.
9. 1880: Charles Barbier invents the slate and stylus as a tool for night writing. Often blind people use it as a way to write individually. The slate and stylus consists of two plastic or metal pieces, depending on the model, long enough for a sheet of letter paper and the width of four rows. The pieces are clasped together and snap onto the paper. This is the slate. The stylus is a plastic ball on the end of a metal rod, like a pushpin. As someone punches in the reverse dots on the back of the piece of paper, the stylus flutters about dropping plastic clips gently on the surface.
10. While the slate and stylus works well for jotting down notes in a courtroom, the hand will feel tingling and numbness after working for too long. Using this to transcribe a book is equivalent to a monk scribing books by hand.
11. 1980: The first braille embosser is invented. It prints pages of braille by embedding raised dots on a piece of paper similar to ink. Now people with a vision impairment have many technologies at their peril to accomplish whatever they please.

Peace?

By Connor Swenson

Peace.

A systematic oppression on the shoulders of millions,
An ignorance of the oppressors,
A leadership built on fear and division,
A rebellion forming in the midst.

Peace.

The oppressed standing in unity and peace,
The oppressors denying the opposition's method,
The leader supporting the oppressors,
The violent revolt is around the corner.

Peace.

The oppressed deprived of it, rioting in the streets,
The oppressors, unsharing and still ignorant of the oppressed,
The leader threatening to fight violence with violence,
What will come of this country?

Peace.

Unachievable always for the oppressed,
Unachievable now for the oppressors,
Unachievable without a true leader,
The revolution will never stop.

By Sunny Zhu

If you can ignore something forever, does it really exist?

People. Feelings. Problems. All of these can be ignored. And what's unfortunate is this--a lot of these *are* ignored. You can put it past you and by removing it from your conscience, it no longer exists. Ignored, gone forever.

But you can not ignore your own conscience. Not forever. People, feelings, problems. The more you ignore these, the more you try to ignore your conscience. But ignoring them doesn't make them go away, and nothing is forever. People, feelings, problems--these accumulate as you try to push them aside, until the path you were focused on is blocked with the things you shoved into the back of your mind. You find yourself surrounded by that which did not exist to you, and because they did not exist, you do not know how to confront them.

But confront them you must. Because what happens if you don't? The people, feelings, and problems don't really go away. They're still there, weighing on your conscience. It's a burden that won't be lifted until you choose to take it on.

Don't let them all pass you by. Don't distance yourself. Don't make excuses. Confront the things you'd rather ignore--confront them head on, like an arrow fired into its target. If you can't pierce through these obstacles looking them dead in the eye, they will remain obstacles.

To fix a problem, let go of a feeling, or forgive a person, you can't ignore them or your part in creating a conflict. Have you really done all you can? Are you actually making things better?

Take a look around you. What have you been trying to ignore? What exists that you need to confront? Reflect and accept these things into your conscience. Face them and conquer them, lest they conquer you. That's the only way to fix things "forever."