Acknowledgements

We are pleased to present the Best Essays Anthology 2017-2018. It is through such an anthology that we are able to honor our finest writers. These pages are the work of students enrolled in the West Valley CollegeÕs English department, English 1Õs, and Composition courses. The focus of these courses is mastering several varieties of essays. The WVC privileges and supports good writing; that is why this collection of student essays is so vital. Taken together, they illustrate that students work diligently to understand, master, and hone the skills that enable them to write perceptively vita

Although I am pursuing a degree in Finance, writing has always been a passion of mine. With one mor
before I transfer, I am grateful for all the opportunities West Va

routine. The mental routine takes place when I begin to feel incapable of making the decision on my own; before making a decision, I experience do

time with my family or spending time with my friends, I worry that my decision might offend somebody or compromise my relationships. I worry that if I choose to hang out with friends, IÕll miss out on quality family time that IÕll never get back; alternatively, if I choose to spend time with my family, I fear that my friends will think I donÕt want to put effort into seeing them. Although choosing between family and friends is a common dilemma, I take it to another level by overanalyzing it as a life altering decision. In these situations, I feel the need turn to my mom, tell her all of the previously mentioned concerns, get her input, and make a decision from there. This overanalysis stems from an exaggerated fear that my decision might hurt a certain group or blemish my overall character. Talking through a decision with someone distracts me from feeling anxious and incompetent, and it lessens my fear of negatively impacting myself and others. If I can hear someone affirm my decision, my feelings of uncertainty turn into confidence; I no longer feel incompetent, because someone else has told me that whatever I chose was smart. The impact of the physical environment is demonstrated in Lauren SlaterÕs chapter titled ÒRat Park.Ó Slater discusses an experiment which showed that rats living in Rat Park, a temperature controlled rat utopia complete with toys, fresh cedar shavings, scenic surroundings, and a sense of community, were less inclined to drug use than rats living in isolated laboratory cages. After studying the results of the experiment, Slater writes, ÒThe cramped and isolated caged rats loved cag

make decisions on my own instead of getting their input. I avoid getting advice from my coworkers because I feel that their decisions do not promote a healthy and desirable lifestyle; therefore, it seems that when I find myself in an unhealthy environment lacking respectable role models, my habit of seeking counsel subsides. If I did not have the favorable mental environment provided by my close family and friends, my habit might not have formed. The influence of my positive physical environment is not inherently harmful; it only has negative effects because my emotional environment takes advantage of it by using the easily accessible counsel to avoid anticipated feelings of anxiety and incompetence. Instead of coping with the emotional stress that occurs when IÕm faced with a decision, I rely on the many respectable role models in my life to walk me through my choices. Although I can work towards bettering my emotional environment, my physical environment would not need to change for me to adjust this habit.

In order to shift my habit towards only seeking counsel when necessary, I would need to change my cued routine and improve my emotional environment. Seeking counsel is healthy and beneficial in many circumstances, so I donÕt want to completely eliminate my desire to receive guidance; however, this habit becomes a burden when I seek counsel out of want rather than need. This habit causes me to second guess myself even more when making decisions, which leads to lower self-confidence; I have become so dependent on the affirmation of others that making complex choices independently seems daunting. In the Office Max example presented earlier, I was completely capable of deciding how many notebooks to buy, but because it was easier and eliminated the stress of making a decision on my own, I called my mom. Had I paused, resisted the urge to get help, and told myself I was able to make the decision by myself, I might have avoided this habitual routine; therefore, in order to shift my habit and only seek counsel when necessary, I must stop to evaluate the importance of the decision and try to make it on my own rather than immediately turning to someone. Additionally, my mental environment

could no longer revolve around routine emotions of ineptitude and anxiety. In response to the cue of having to make a decision, I would need to remind myself that I am fully capable of doing it on my own rather than succumb to feelings of self-doubt. Through shifting this habit and making more decisions on my own, the feelings of incompetence and stress should lessen, allowing me seek counsel only as needed.

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I wrote this essay in my English 17 class. The summer before second grade I was diagnosed with dyslexia and dysgraphia. Throughout my 13 years of education, it was very difficult to get the support I needed, which I understand that our education system is tailored to a very specific type of student. This leaves many students with learning differences to slip through the cracks, which leads to a growing dislike for education and the extra work needed to catch up with one's peers. I saw this not only in myself but in the students around me who were in the same system, and in some cases with more severe learning disabilities and without the support I had at home. David Sedaris' short essay, "A Plague of Tics," and his experiences through school inspired me to write about my own schooling in a similar style.

School Is Not For Me

-Neal McGinley-

My kindergarten teacher calls out, "Ok class, time for free time," my favorite time of the day. I get a break from the horrible addition tiles. My teacher comes over to me as I'm walking to go color. "Not you, Neal. You should have been done with those problems an hour ago. Go finish them." Sitting cross legged at my half-foot high desk, I beg my brain to figure out the answers to the endless addition problems so I can have fun with my classmates. Way too soon, free time is over and I have made no progress. I pray for my mom to come pick me up. My teacher tells me to pay attention and try harder. She is too busy with all the other kids to help me with something I should have finished hours ago. Time slowly moves on with no progress made, and eventually my teacher finds time to help me. Finally, I can move on to the next thing I need to practice, but once again I am behind all the other kids. Piling up piling up piling up. Every day, kindergarten is like this. Soon come the parent-teacher conferences, trying to figure out ways for me to keep up with the other students. Every day, I arrive, knowing this is the day it all works out. Every day, I leave, knowing it didn't. I'm 5 years old, and already frustrated and falling behind.

First grade starts, and I realize I have to survive six hours of not being able to work fast enough, not being able to focus long enough. I do well in reading, but my handwriting and

spelling are just as bad as last year. Memorizing multiplication and division is impossible. I learn how to cheat to succeed, reading the answers backwards through my math papers. My parents and teacher cannot figure out why my handwriting is not improving and why I do so poorly on spelling tests, why I cannot remember simple multiplication. When I try to spell, I write down what I believe spells the word, but I can tell itÕs not right. For me, spelling will never happen. It is impossible and completely incomprehensible.

My teacher gives me a piece of paper: Ò100 phonetic words.Ó Ò2222222¢! X™,¼Gé¢ic we. T

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ÒA Lass and a LackÓ was written for an Honors Classical Mythology course administered by the inco
Leigh Burrill. Conveyed with an emphasis on Gender and Queer Studies, this class juxtaposed the tra
cannon against retellings from modern authors such as Margaret Atwood and Ali Smith. Atwood's concise
masterwork, Girl Meets Boy, from whence my inspiration for this essay was born. At that particular time,
SmithÕs novel could not have struck a truer mark than my own tender, never-ending search for a cathartic
opportunity, I found in this paper a repository for at least a few disquieting apprehensions.

Noah Cooter earned an AA in Liberal Arts from West Valley College in 2018. He transferred to Stanfor
University where he studies Creative Writing. His children have since elected to live with their mother in
town named after its hypothetical fauna. He hopes someone will answer when he calls tonight.

A Lass and a Lack

-Noah Cooter-

Yesterday, an upstanding American looked me square in the eye and yelled, ÒFaggit!Ó His intonation carried the last syllable with an /a/, as opposed to the traditional /ɪ/. Immediately prior to this, the young man had thrown his extra-large fast-food fountain drink at me through the open window of my car. Before that, he had executed a series of illegal roadway maneuvers in order to drive the wrong way down a San Francisco alley and pull up alongside me, oriented in the opposite direction, so that his face was near enough to mine that I could smell the chewing tobacco on his breath. He was really a very adept road-rager.

embodied. I am his antithesis, and he hurled at me the most fatiathema he could muster, the word that best elucidated the seething hatred my countenance elicited from the bowels of his emphatically heterosexual soul. That is why his insult solicited in me, not outrage, but pride. I am exceedingly proud to be that man's opposite. As he weaved his way in and out of 19th Avenue traffic, hunting for sissies to accost whilst making easy work of his Taco Bell dinner, he must have spotted me, knowing at once that I didn't drink Coors Light; that I couldn't regurgitate the team's statistics. As he careened toward the sports bar, he must have understood that my trajectory was leading me to the art museum, that bastion of faggitry, where I was planning to earn some extra-credit points for my Classical Mythology with Emphasis on Women, Gender and Queer Studies course, a class fit only for chicks and sissies. Or, maybe I have it all wrong. After all, I did have Daphne in the car earlier that day. Maybe that goateed stallion was simply picking up on some residual gayness which Daph had left behind.

When my daughter came out, I found myself considering some curious, and admittedly bigoted internal notions. Specifically, I experienced a sense of relief, as well as an irrational excitement. Positive as these sentiments were, I was acutely aware that my reaction was not the neutral indifference of a truly unbiased observer. In theory, my inclination to greet this news as a blessing implied that I might have been less supportive of a pronouncement of heterosexuality. To that end, it's probably important that I recognize the subtle, and distinctly Bay Area-flavored prejudice I was projecting. At the very least, I feel it's important to acknowledge the implicit privilege we modern Californians enjoy in the prerogative to locate our gay community. In my parents' generation, if one's child came out of the closet, the protocol was to writhe in shame, asking one's self, ÒWhat did I do wrong?Ó Just a few decades later, I found myself asking, ÒWhat did I do right?Ó Was it the feminist subtext of all those Patti Smith and Bikini Kill records playing in the background? Or was it simply my general disdain of the accepted male paradigm? Is she

gay because I'm such a proud sissy? Yet, there again, I display a sort of photonegative prej udice. Surely, thoughts such as, ÒNow I'll never have to chase off horny boys!Ó or ÒSo much for birth control!Ó are not the musings of a truly woke dad. At least my bigotry is of the na•ve, privileged order, and not the goateed, Pepe-the-frog-tank-top spoting sort. If nothing else, I am at least cognizant that human sexuality is so much more than a learned behavior or some hereditary marker, despite my jests to the contrary. Nonetheless, there was already an irony taking shape in regards to my daughter's sexual preferences even before she was born.

Like any fledgling parent, I obsessed about the decision regarding my child's name, endlessly turning over options in my mind, searching for the one that sounded just right. For all the energy I spent attempting to anticipate any potential problems with the name Daphne, I never imagined the epithet might become a portent of sorts. What's in a name, you ask? Quite a lot, actually. Especially when a name is thousands of years old. As it turns out, the Daphne of mythological lore is remembered for her piqued aversion to men; or at least one man. We will never know her true sexual preference, for she was stripped of her humanity before she could adequately explore her romantic inclinations. You see, Daphne was being sexually harassed by godly Apollo, and an abduct assault appeared imminent. Upon appealing to her deific father, Daphne was transformed into a laurel tree, thereby desisting Apollo's dogged advances. Far be it from Peneus to rescue his daughter by some less lethal means, such as informing Apollo that rape is bad, for example. Rather than contesting the will of the Delphic god, Peneus chose instead to ostensibly bring his daughter's life to a screeching, leafy halt. No wonder teenage girls can't stand their fathers. Perhapan det

The exposure to Greek history that I gained from my Classical Mythology course has only bolstered my hypothesis that this lauded society was no friendly place for women generally, and lesbians specifically. For a culture so renowned for its celebration of homosexuality, ancient Greece appears to have engaged in a wholesale delegitimization of gay women. Unchallenged as the premier academic textbook on Greece's literary record, Classic Mythology offers but three explicit references to lesbianism in its sprawling 306 pages. The compendium's opening chapter, for example, contains a brief introduction to the theme of homosexuality in the ancient world. This section achieves rather admirable posterity by informing the reader ÒFemale homosexuality in Greek and Roman mythology and society is as important a theme as male homosexuality, but it is not nearly as visibleÓ (Morford 23). Driving the point home, the section continues ÒLesbianism is not so readily detectable in the mythology generally. Sometimes it can be deduced as a subtext here and thereÓ (Morford 23). This enthralling motif is picked up again much later in the text, where readers are treated to a full six-sentence paragraph under the heading Lesbian Themes. Here, the authors make passing reference to a few female myths in which ÒLesbianism is a latent motifÓ (Morford 237). Regarding the Jupiter/Callisto/Diana story, for example, readers are told

A delving into classic Greek philosophy reveals that gay women are treated with as much

sexual satisfaction, so that people would relax, get on with their work and take care of other aspects of their lifeÓ

fair, this particular tale was already rife with problems long before Ovid took up the cause. In short,Iphis was

remains an underlying motif that is perhaps even more important. To me, Girl Meets Boy is a story about family.

When I picked up my kids at our custody exchange last night, Daphne chose to stay with her mom. That decision marked a first in this screwed up arrangement, and the blow hit me hard. Our relationship has been strained this year, and I can't pretend I didn't see the writing on the wall. She's an angsty teenager, I'm a newlywed case; I suppose the floodwaters of our miscommunication were bound to spill over at some point. I just hope she's okay over there; she won't answer my phone calls. Somehow, I find reassurance in the fact that she has my copy of Girl Meets Boy. Fortuitously, I finished it last week while we were still amiable and had suggested she borrow it. I know the wry narrative will resonate with her, and I feel good about the message contained therein. I want her to know that, though she's been feeling empty lately, she's not lacking a damn thing. So, with my apartment a little emptier and my mind a lot fuller, I sat down this morning to rewrite the conclusion to the final essay for my Classical Mythology class. I did manage to type what you read here, but only after I sat around anxiously, engrossed in a melancholic reverie. I kept imaging that Daphne would arrive soon, ready to talk out our grievances. Instead, it was her brother who broke the spell, crashing through the front door in all his sweaty, adolescent boisterousness. Today, however, his playful energy was discernibly subdued.

ÒHey buddy,Ó I offered, Òsomething wrong?Ó

ÒMy friends wanted me to play guns with them,Ó he replied tentatively, Òbut I was reading my book and I didn't feel like playing with them.Ó

ÒAnd?Ó I coaxed.

Ò...And they called me a sissy.Ó

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they are not alone. Society has normalized this constant working attitude, forcing children to sacrifice sleep for work and adults to spend long hours in the office. People never idle; they never endeavor to save their already deteriorating mental health. If only these workaholics knew the healing powers of idleness or even their destructive nature of their actions. After all, the constant pressure to work continuously in our society damages mental well-being. Idleness, therefore, saves mental health and promotes a healthy lifestyle.

The pressure to work continuously is inescapable and remains ingrained into the very structure of society. Children from a young age are put to school, where they are given homework. As the years progress, more work is piled on: clubs, sports, volunteer time, chores, family obligations, etc. As Mark Slouka, in ÒQuitting the Paint Factory: On the Virtues of IdlenessÓ puts it: ÒToday we, quite literally, live to work. . . . We begin to see ÒhobbiesÉ as either ridiculous or self-indulgentÓ if they Òinterfere with workÓ (Slouka 281-282). Students focus more on their studies, and the ones who work continuously are given tickets to elite universities (like many of my peers in AP Biology). Soon, former students enter the working world, where they use endearing words like ÔworkaholicÕ or Ôrat raceÕ to describe their life. Working longer hours become the norm, and employees are expected to send emails or answer phone calls at home. Without a doubt, society nowadays demands its inhabitants to constantly work.

This continuous pressure to work is crippling

my mental health deteriorate because of the constant pressure to work. I then began to notice other peerÕs mentally unhealthy obsession over the pressure to constantly work. Students limited their sleep to finish more homework (like many students in AP Biology). They carried around pencil boxes full of flashcards, profusely studying its contents. They spent lunch studying instead of actually eating. Stress builds; soon, the stress becomes too much, crippling mental well-being.

This pressure most certainly isnÕt specific to students either; Adults feel the overwhelming pressure to work too. As Mark Slouka puts it: Òthe continent of invisible possessions from time to talent to contentmentÉ [is] rendered unclean, or translated into the grammar of dollars and centsÓ (Slouka 279). Unlike children, adults must work for money, which determines how often they eat, where they sleep, and how comfortable they are in life. Adults must, therefore, face large amounts of anxiety, or at least the mentally unhealthy obsession, to work, for if they donÕt then basic necessities are not guaranteed. Stress builds. Employers then take advantage of their employeesÕ fear, demanding employees to commit more time to work. Stress increases, just like the number of emails that must be read before the morning, the number of phone calls that must be made. Just like students, that stress becomes unbearable, crippling mental well-being.

Idleness, by contrast, restores mental health and promotes a healthy lifestyle. Idleness, essentially, is avoiding work and obligations. Refraining from folding the laundry, cleaning house, finishing a paper, reading the textbook, and any work obligation classifies as idleness. Think of idleness as being Òin the present moment and away from responsibilities (Slouka 288). Idleness is walking in a park or enjoying a cup of tea or listening to good music; itÕs having an Òuninterrupted conversationÓ or just plain Ócontemplating our lives before they are goneÓ (Slouka 288). Idleness saves mental well-being and promotes a healthy life.

Logically speaking, of course idle acts restores mental well-being. Idleness allows an individual to not participate in the continuous working attitude and to instead focus on whatever

empathize with them as they are forced to quickly shed denial and meet reality. The fact that a clip taken from a British show so accurately represents my experience in the US, suggests that perhaps this denial is prevalent in all first world countries, rather than just America. This false sense of mortal safety, regardless of health or habits, is most likely caused by the fact that the women in the video, much like most first world citizens, are so well shielded from death. This is so deeply ingrained that when it is occasionally brought up for them, they are left in a state of disbelief. Despite the fact that statistically, their loved one had all the traits of a high risk person, they believed they were the exception simply because they've never been the victim of that situation before.

PeopleÕs false sense of security in a wildly dangerous world is driven by a subconscious defense mechanism. The security the two women felt, prior to their emergency, is supplied by a variant of Terror Management Theory. Instead of just being the cognitive dissonance allowing people to avoid the (v)] TJ [-2 BT /P <</MCID 33>>BDCt

like gun violence, which killed 33,594 Americans in 2014, remain unresolved (BBC World News). Unfortunately, itÕs often people who have power and influence in our government who work to guarantee we never see a solution. Industries like firearm manufacturing, stand to benefit from a more armed and less safe society. The more gun deaths, the more they can convince people they need to protect themselves. They prey on the fact that weÕre scared to face the truth of mortality. They make up specious arguments like ÒGuns don't kill peopleÓ in an attempt to separate their product from the ugly reality. They take advantage of the fact that the argument against their industry is married to an unpleasant thought: people die. People are so afraid of confronting their mortality that they shy from anything that invokes those fears. The ironic truth is, America is so afraid of death, it wonÕt get rid of whatÕs killing us.

Stagnation of gun reform in the US is driven by each and every citizenÕs terror management. If they woke up with the realization that they, a loved one, or even their community, may be the victims of gun violence, they would vote differently. It is only when we see the world realistically that voting in self-defense becomes synonymous with voting empathetically. Somewhere in the US right now, a citizen is completely unaware that they are the next victim of gun violence. ItÕs the mass shooters today that become the victims of gun violence tomorrow.

Hiding from violence will not stop it. If we can understand and come to terms with the reality and possibility of our imminent dangers, we can begin to effect change. While this level of change and effort may seem impossible, it's not. America is bleeding. We have a duty to preserve life, stem the bleeding, and never give up. Whether thatÕs through backgrounds checks, age limits, or bans, we should do whatever is Ônecessary and proper Õ to help our country adapt, and help create the safer world our children, citizens and global onlookers deserve. It is in this way

that we will begin to heal and show the world that we will no longer allow ourselves to be the victims of our timid complacency and inactivity.

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My name is Jackie Lyons, and I am a part time student at West Valley College. I chose this topic as pa
English assignment. I really related to how the internet has made me into the person I am today. I was
introduced to the internet during my teen years. It has affected my life both, positively and negatively. At firs
believed everything that I saw on the internet. Later on, I came to realize that not everything on the int
In this essay, I explore how I was influenced by what I read on the internet and how family and friends were also
impacted by it. I also researched how the internet has affected obese people, negatively and positively

How the Internet Can Ruin and Save A Life

-Jackie Lyons-

In middle school and high school, my life consisted of school, sleep and basketball. I was not into video games or the internet and I was pretty fit. I had a cell phone but it really was not good for texting or social media. I was focused more on sports, fitness and real life than being on my phone. Once I got an iPhone, I was able to go on the internet, but still didn't go on it that much. Then the iPhone started developing apps like Snapchat, Instagram and Facebook. I was glued to my phone. I started to care less about fitness and how I ate, and cared more about what people were posting and texting. I gained a lot of weight because I was always watching tv and being on my phone constantly. I started to buy diet pills, buying into fad diets and waist trainers which never helped with my weight. My weight in particular was negatively affected by my increase in screen time. One day, last November to be exact, I woke up and actually started to look at workout videos online. I read articles and blogs online about what to look for when buying food. Using the internet helped me to become healthier. Based on my experience, I hypothesize that the internet can be a positive tool to help people get healthy, but it also can have a negative impact that can keep individuals from living a healthy life. Apps, fitness videos, and health plans on the internet have a lot of positive effects by helping people plan out their workouts and meal plans. It also provides videos that can target specific problem areas. On the other side, constantly being on your phone, looking at and buying into advertising about diet fads doesnÕt make or improve your physical health. It actually impacts people's lives negatively by

McCarthy had even used the stuff. My interviewee noticed there is a lot of advertising about diet fads on the internet which are not always healthy. She has found that using the internet and apps online can be beneficial but that you have to make sure to check references and be aware that not everything you read online is accurate. This can have negative consequences.

My family and friends on Facebook experienced positive and negative effects on the internet. I sent out my survey to all my friends on Facebook and family members, ages 20 to 65. Ten people responded. Two people answered the questions with short answers and did not elaborate. The rest of the people gave thorough answers. I asked how the internet positively or negatively impacted eating habits. A lot of their answers were similar. Most of them said that the internet positively helped them because they could find healthy recipes online. The internet also taught them how and what to eat right. This proves that the positive side of screen time in my hypothesis is correct due to people using the web to find meal plans and recipes to help with their physical health. On the other hand, people would say eating while watching or watching endless amounts of YouTube impacted their lives negatively. Doing this would cut into their time to work out or doing something productive with their lives. A Facebook friend also said, ÒIt is easy to get discouraged when the image of the Ò perfectÓ is portrayed as a bodybuilder or a muscle head type.Ó Others agreed with his point of view. They understood that spending too much time on Instagram and comparing themselves to models did not help them live a healthy life. As a result of my data collection, nine out of ten subjects found that the internet affected their lives positively. Four out of ten do not use online health apps. Seven out of ten felt that the internet affected their health negatively. The majority of the people I surveyed felt that the internet did affect their health lives both positively and negatively. This also seems to be the case with the obese test subjects who were interviewed by Sophie Lewis in a study that questioned

why certain people were more inclined to use the internet to gather ways to get healthy over other venues.

Lewis et al also discovered that obese people found the internet affected their lives both positively and negatively when searching for information about health and dieting. The authors studied the ways obese people find information to help themselves lose weight. This study found that people who are very overweight tend to use the internet for health information because it is an easy way to get the help they need without being embarrassed. Because obesity is a highly stigmatized condition, many obese people do not participate in exercise programs at the gym. Sophie Lewis et al. explained that obese people use the internet because ÒPhysical exercise programs may be socially challenging in public spaces, whereas diets can be applied in the privacy of individuals own homeÓ (340). The internet provides information and support for these people without the fear of being embarrassed by the outside world. There are many types of websites geared towards weight loss which include commercial diet options, medical sites, online chat rooms, and blogs. Individuals who searched for diet information on the internet were often so desperate, they were willing to try any type of diet, even if it was unhealthy or unproven. Lewis et al. said: ÒMost of these participants stated that the claims of amazing weight loss in severely obese individuals encouraged them to search for these specific types of dietsÓ (343). Unfortunately, the study found that many obese related websites and diet programs were not medically proven. These programs, without a doctorÕs supervision, can cause illness or more severe medical conditions. Sophie Lewis et al. designed the study to discover what information is searched on the internet, what their motivations are, and how they apply this information to their daily lives. After 142 interviews, the authors found two key findings. One finding was, ÒIndividuals repeatedly searched online for weight loss information in a desperate attempt to find a solution to their overweightÓ (347). In the second finding ÒParticipants had a strong desire to

connect with a community of others to share experiences for support and accurate health informationÓ (Lewis et al., 2348). Obese individuals are not only desperate to find solutions to their obesity which sometimes causes them to follow diet fads, but they also desire to participate in online support groups which allow them to find more accurate weight loss information. The internet was used positively when individuals were able to search for diet information in the privacy of their own homes. They were not subject to embarrassing looks or comments from other people. Without the internet, these individuals may not have sought health information at all. A negative aspect of internet use was many of the participants were so desperate to lose weight that they were willing to follow fad diets. The study found that many obesity related websites were inaccurate and misleading which could cause dangerous health risks. The Use of internet by obese individuals had both a positive and negative effect.

People of all shapes, sizes, and ages use the internet to find information about healthy living and nutrition. I noticed that the article showed how obese people use the internet for health information and my survey results showed that my family and Facebook friends do the same thing. The survey people use the internet for help with health information and different types of work outs. This is significant because the study that was in the article was accurate for not only obese people, but for regular sized people in my survey. People who took the survey and the people studied in the article both talked about the negative side of screen time, which is seeing advertisements about diet fads trying to get their attention. The people in the article and the people I surveyed and interviewed knew that they could find healthy recipes, diet plans, and workouts online. All three groups thought alike, even though the article was written in 2009 and the survey was done in 2018. Everyone who uses a phone or a laptop noticed that they used the internet a little too much. This affects their physical health by wasting time that could be used doing physical activities. I also noticed that the people I surveyed were not online as much

as the younger people I surveyed. The older generation used the internet to find information but most did not spend endless hours on Instagram or Snapchat. Using the internet to improve health can be a good thing, if used wisely. I have found that the people in the article and the people I surveyed found that the internet was positive because they were able to find workouts, healthy nutrition and diets. The people in the article and my interviewee saw the negative effects of fad diets and quick weight loss gimmicks that are advertised on the internet. Both groups realized that screen time had a negative effect on their lives because it can waste too much time, some information is inaccurate and advertising gives people a false sense of reality. So far, my hypothesis has been proven correct by the data I collected.

In conclusion, the internet does affect physical health, both positively and negatively. Personally, too much screen time affected my health and it was encouraging to discover that others were affected in the same way. The internet does provide a lot of positive information and applications that can improve health. The information seeker needs to be wary of unproven diets and programs that seem too good to be true. The problem is that many people believe everything that they find on the internet. There needs to be a more accurate way to determine if a plan is medically proven and safe. One solution would be to verify websites to make sure they are desi

write. Microtransactions may be beneficial for the creators, but in some cases theyÕve created serious real-world consequences. In fact, in December of 2015 a news report

Regardless of the PR narratives companies and their publishers have built to assure gamers of the benefits of microtransactions itÕs clear that theyÕre motivated by greed and self in b

microtransaction they not only guaranteed themselves additional sales, but in the process waived any reasonable deniability they still had. In a 2014 article titled, ÒGrand Theft Auto Parent Publisher Defends MicrotransactionsÓ the CEO of Take-Two Interactive Strauss Zelnick spoke in defense of their use of microtransactions saying that Take-Two is Ò... not in the business of erecting toll booths along the way of gameplayÉ [but are] in the business of delighting consumersÉ we want them to feae]

additional content thatÕs been added since 2014 to the multiplayer mode. So if players want the additional content they have the ÒoptionÓ of buying it through microtransactions spending actual days just to earn one thing out of hundreds more. Not only is this unbalanced, and blatantly predatory, but it is borderline extortion. The loud minority that argues this ÒoptionalÓ stance doesnÕt look beyond the face value of microtransactions and naïvely accepts what companies like Take-Two want them to believe.

We as the consumers have enabled companies to exploit us through complicity and blind acceptance of their actions. Business is a constant push and pull, give and take in relations between companies and consumers. A company can only survive if they provide for and meet the expectations of the consumer, and the consumer depends on the company to provide the products and services they need and want in life. ItÕs a fragile balance that only works if both sides maintain equal pressure on each other. WhatÕs happened in these past years with companies like Take-Two is an attempt at disrupting the balance for profit, and itÕs working. Enough of the community has been fooled into accepting microtransactions and because of it ever sin32TJ [-8(h)] TJ [- [-9(32TJ [-8(h)] TJ [- 0.24 12 589.92 cm BT9-[-2(e)] TJ [-2(d)] TJ [1( )] TJ [-10

send their daughters and granddaughters to take Emily's painting lessons with the same regularity and in the same spirit that they were sent to church on Sundays to show their respect to Miss Emily (83). When the supporters of the past South die as time passes, the new generation still regards Emily as a cultural symbol of the traditional values of Southern society, so people still acquiesce to her behaviors and privilege. Therefore, when Emily falls in love with Homer, a typical Northerner, the townspeople consider that Emily is a disgrace to the town and a bad example to the young people because the love of Emily and Homer poses a threat to their traditions and this is something that townspeople do not want to see (83). To protect their "icon," women force the Baptist minister to visit Emily and even call upon her relations to settle this matter (83). When people see Emily buying poison, they all say that she is going to commit suicide and also say that this would be the best thing. They are more willing for Emily to kill herself than be alive to destroy the icon in the hearts of people, showing that people have never treated her as a flesh-and-blood human being but only as an icon of the old Southern tradition.

The reason Emily subconsciously adheres to her aristocratic status and maintains her family's honor and dignity is because she cannot get rid of the spiritual imprisonment of being a noble. This intangible shackle is not only derived from] TJ [-10(p)] TJ [1(e)] TJ [-2(op)] TJ [1(le)9 TJ EM

in Faulkner's novels, which means men have the primary power and take the predominant position in the society (Easterbrook 63). In the townspeopleÕs minds, GriersonÕs family always appears with" Miss E=mily a slender figure in white in the background, her father a spraddled silhouette in the foreground, his back to her and clutching a horse-whip" (81). The posi, her fa

W

I had much to glean from Christopher Buckley's "Leaving the West Coast." His words are painfully beautiful; his contrition is authentic and relatable. As a fellow California native, I am drawn to his descriptions of the landscape unique to the West and I can empathize with his difficult decision to leave. "Leaving the West Coast" afforded me an opportunity to explore Buckley's intent and thoroughly develop the rhetorical devices complement direct textual evidence, I integrated a documented interview in which Buckley further expl "gleaming" prospects in the East around the time of his departure. This supplementary source better poem, providing readers with Buckley's retrospective evaluation of the choices he made. If any of us home. Even temporarily, an likely all relate to Buckley.

Remembering Your Roots

-Evan Brown

In his poem "Leaving the West Coast," California native Christopher Buckley reflects on a time and place in his life during which he was more satisfied. His tenure growing up and living in his favorite California province, Santa Barbara, offered him a sense of belonging that, as the reader discovers, he has not found elsewhere. Buckley's 1987 work is more than just a retrospective lament, however; this poem speaks to a universal sentiment many people may recall when they feel a decision was executed in rashness or ill judgment. "Leaving the West Coast" hones in on memory associated with a particular location, and resulting mental affectedness that comes from being displaced. By means of his imagistic, specific characterization of the Santa Barbara landscape and his reactions to sensory stimuli, Buckley creates movement such that the reader can come to a discovery alongside him about his decision to leave.

Buckley implements universally accessible objects in nature together with California's diverse topography in order to give these entities the subtle yet influential capacity to prick the speaker's conscience about leaving the West Coast. Unable to sleep in the early hours of the morning before his move, Buckley opens his poem with observations of common natural elements:

> Just as there are always the unaccountable
>
> clouds, dull silverware of the moon, shunting

over the hills, so too there is something

tuneless in sunburned eucalyptus leaves,

in stars salted obliquely over the sea. 106

The above-mentioned articles were familiar sights 24 0 0 0.24 12 589.95o s

into this dream-deep skyÓ (28). Some of the strongest connections to memories form by way of olfactory senses, and Buckley finds aromatic star jasmine filling his lungs, combined with ÒÉ violet air of jacarandas above the streets, / [and] lemon blossoms riding a salt breeze.Ó (31-32) These smells (and tastes, by extension) now combine with those aforementioned nearby sights he determines to dismiss, intensifying the sting he feels during his parting with Santa Barbara. Buckley displays inklings of a fight against his initial inclination to discount the West CoastÕs splendor by asserting to himself not to call his time in California a ÒdreamÓ (29). Since the atmosphereÕs fragrances have engulfed him, it spurs him to interject acquired understanding of his situation among his observations. As Buckley reveals understanding through his voice as a learning speaker, the reader increasingly recognizes BuckleyÕs deep connection to landscape. Buckley relays to Prevost just how integral the West Coast remains in his life: ÒAs a child, I could walk out my door and find the natural world: creeks, woods, hills, long and empty beaches É The older I become, the more my work then turns out to be about that transcendent time and place. My metaphysics is sourced in the natural, everyday world.Ó (97) No matter where Buckley may reside, he acknowledges value in not forgetting where he comes from; his collective West Coast experiences have shaped him into his current self. As a speaker in ÒLeaving the West Coast,Ó he has not come

outside commotion in the first three lines, and he takes the final stanza to explain what he hears and sees:

> É the extravagant procession
>
> of the night Ña two-toned Õ59 Bel Air idling
>
> at the light É
>
> [the] streets full of European cars
>
> the colors of money or champagne É red and white
>
> umbrellas, the Mexican beach cafes É
>
> even É the generally drunken noise downstairs É (45-63)

Buckley realizes he will not soon experience the social excitements he so enjoys on the coast again, so he bids a farewell to the vigorous atmosphere below him. Evidently, he partook in the exhilarating nightlife here, for he was ÒworthyÓ of (35). The shimmering, glamorous automobiles and the establishments in which to revel will no longer be a part of his life, and he seems to realize how sorely he will miss all of it. He notes those contributing to the Òdrunken noiseÓ will not Òremember a thing, come morningÓ (55-56). Besides describing the venues Buckley will no longer be involved with, he investigates a contrast between Santa Barbara residentsÕ feelings toward their place from his own view of the place he will soon go. The merrymaking crowd is there to stay, so they have no need to become sentimental about where they live. BuckleyÕs inspective voice at the end of ÒLeaving the West CoastÓ implies the people partying beneath him can afford to forget their night in Santa Barbara; for them, it is just another night. Because of the imminent move, Buckley yearns to take in every last bit of the West since being roused from sleep. He finds it imperative to remind himself of all that has made the region so special to him Ñ and so painful to leave Ñ evidenced by his portrayals of the natural and man-made landscape, taking in every possible sight, sound, smell, and taste.

Many would not dispute the tremendous amount of mental and emotional fortitude it takes to brave the journey to an uncharted destination. ÒLeav

This research essay is about the ways we normalize racial discrimination subconsciously or without ill
and the ways these slights illuminate the foundational discrimination of America. I wrote this essay for
1B class in response to the short story ÒThe Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in HeavenÓ by Sherma
Alexie is an Indigenous American writer and his work has a thread of analyzing his identity, history, an
an Indigenous man in the USA in relation to post colonization, rampant racism, and police brutality / surveillan
I was touched by this short story because he highlights the pain that commonplace, racially denigrating
produce and the fact that the impact of our words often means more than the intent. My goal for this essay was to
address our countryÕs political climate and history in an honest way while referring to AlexieÕs poigna
framework to begin to further understand the systems of power that are at the root of these injustices so

Colonized Mind

-Angela Harb

Institutional racism is ingrained into every aspect of western society, including subtle but dangerous racial microaggressions that serve to marginalize people of color in insidious and historically normalized ways. The manifestation of microaggressions is especially present in heterosexual, interracial relationships between white women and men of color. This is portrayed in ÒThe Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven,Ó through the narratorÕs experiences as an Indigenous American man navigating the commonplace degradation and criminalization throughout his relationships and the simplest activities of his everyday life. Throughout Sherman AlexieÕs depiction of the emotional, spiritual and cultural toll that indigenous people are forced to take for solace, itÕs apparent that the structural consequences of colonization are crucially necessary to address, as they hold a central presence in maintaining white supremacy and the oppression of people of color.

Racial microaggressions are a continuous reality in the dai9 ligg g(li)] TJ

privilege it takes to sustain these dehumanizing beliefs is a psychologically draining onus thatÕs placed onto marginalized groups. It produces fear, confusion and a constant battle to survive as a person of color amidst especially these frameworks, dangerous because of their embedded social acceptability and historical presence. In ÒThe Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in HeavenÓ, Sherman Alexie depicts a common experience of microaggressions towards people of color when the narrator states, ÒI gave him a half wave as I headed back to the freezer. He looked me over so he could describe me to the police later. I knew that lookÓ (Alexie 478). By this, the narrator is describing the patterned responses from white people as a person of color and his integral awareness of white peopleÕs prejudicial bias and internalized fear. This is an example of everyday microaggressions that people of color are exposed to, as it also depicts the blurred lines of what constitutes racial discrimination, as nobody can attest to the ÒfeelingsÓ of criminalization, hypervigilance and bigotry—except for the people who experience it on a daily basis. The denial and disbelief of the relevance of these subtle cues of racism is a necessary component in the sustenance of white privilege and the interpersonal, systematic oppression of people of color.

The presence of often unintentionally hostile indicators of racism are specifically emphasized in heterosexual, interracial relationships between men of color and white women, as they hold historical significance in the preservation of white supremacy and institutional racism through the active criminalization of men of color, and the perception of purity in relation to whiteness and white femininity. The intersections of misogyny and racism are fundamental aspects in understanding the dynamics between white women and men of color because they both have pervasive roles in upholding structures of objectification and oppression. According to Jolie Sheffer, Òwhite women have historically been regarded as proof of power for men of color to obtain, to elevate themselves in masculine status while simultaneously protecting themselves from

violent racismÓ by acting as extensions of white privilege and establishing solidified ÒAmerican identificationÓ through their proximity to white women. This highlights the intersections of racism and misogyny, as it also affirms the paradox of this notion because of the historically stratifying prejudice that occurs when men of color are with white women. This dates back to colonial America, during the instatement of Jim Crow laws. In this time period, white women were viewed as a trophy for men of color to obtain, and they would use this social status and privilege to tantalize and then criminalize men of color, almost as a pastime. While men held patriarchal stature over women of any race, white women simultaneously held racial stature over men of color. This aligns with Sherman AlexieÕs highlight of the abuse paradigm that exists within relationships, as well as the presence of racial microaggressions in interracial relationships when the narrator states, ÒOne of my girlfriends said Ih10(s)] TJ [13(i)] TJ [-1(a)] TJ [9(t)] TJ [-8iesI n t

complex. Furthermore, racial profiling is a driving force in sustaining white supremacy by targeting people of color based on their race, ethnicity, religion and socioeconomic class. This is represented in ÒThe Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in HeavenÓ when the narrator is describing an encounter with a police officer and the police officer states, ÒYouÕre making people nervous. You donÕt fit the profile of the neighborhood.Ó I wanted to tell him I didnÕt fit the profile of the country, but I knew it would just get me in trouble.Ó (Alexie 479). With this statement, the narrator is alluding to the reality of the rampant racial profiling in America and its infiltration into everyday life for people of color. HeÕs also illuminating the hypervigilance, scrutiny, dehumanization and the direct effects of colonization that are empowered by institutional racism and covert microaggressions. The narrator is also depicting the casual humor that is expressed by marginalized groups as a coping mechanism and a survival method to conceptualize and psychologically protect themselves from the reality of bigotry and violence.

Class disparities in America are solely associated with the financial displacement of people of color, which illuminates the intersections of racism, classism and the oppressive limitations of resources for marginalized people. These disparities are fueled by racist stereotypes, which limit any constructive discourse on class dynamics as it pertains to American discussions to be narrowly focused on the correlation of poverty and being a person of color. While this is a good start, a wholesome discourse will include a multifaceted conversation on the effects of hierarchical socioeconomic class frameworks on everyone as well as an acknowledgement of the intersections of racism, classism and misogyny. White privilege exists throughout all realms of American culture, as well as through class inequalities that disenfranchise everyone through capitalist consumerism. This continues to be a difficult concept for western culture to grasp because of the denial of white skin privilege existing amidst oppressive structures that affect everyone through varying identity intersections. Sherman Alexie depicts the psychological indifference when

unwilling to acknowledge the part they play in the perpetuation of white supremacy through ingrained racial biases, they continue to attribute violence and criminality onto people of color and use this to falsely construct their identities as criminals, while denying that itÕs related to race so they can uphold their appearance as Òcolor-blindÓ and Òinclusive.Ó In reality, their guilt and fragility lead them to overcompensate for their part in people of colorÕs oppression, producing even more racial microaggressions in social and public spaces.

Int] TJ [-2(i)] TJ [-10(r)] TJ [5( )] TJ [10( )] TJ [10( )] TJ [10( )] TJ [10(P <</MCID 3>BDC 50 0 0)

The detrimental psychological effects of colonization are distinctly pronounced in indigenous peopleÕs lives from the erasure of their culture, values, traditions and ancestry that have been indoctrinated throughout history. These internalized effects are often manifested into emotional, subconscious and spiritual outlets as a way to cope with the reality of oppression which is demonstrated in ÒThe Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in HeavenÓ when the narrator states, ÒThe vivid image of that dream stays with me. Three mounted soldiers played polo with a dead Indian womanÕs head. [..] I thought it was just a product of my anger and imagination. Even more terrifying though is the fact that those kinds of brutal things happening todayÓ (Alexie 481). This highlights the historical brutalization of indigenous peopleÕs bodies and minds and how the effects of colonization manifest into the subconscious psyche, as it also illuminates the intimate connection between dreams and reality. Correspondingly, the narrator is articulating the historical and modern-day significance of this horrific violence and the pain, anger and visceral surreality that is expressed in response.

The pervasiveness of racial microaggressions is a direct effect of institutional discrimination powered through the criminalization of people of color and the structures of white supremacy that govern western society. Prejudicial biases are normalized due to the historical and modern-day oppression of marginalized people as they are unquestioned and justified through casual dehumanization, objectification and degradation. These internalized biases are infiltrated through systematic and interpersonal social dynamics that create a reality of the constant battering of indigenous peopleÕs spirits through colonialist oppression, erasure, and appropriation by American society. This in turn creates deep rooted psychological effects that linger in each locality for indigenous people and are emphasized everof cal thinking are nec(a)] TJ [9(s

convalescence of human rights in America as it is crucially necessary to address the subconscious complacency and normalization that is powered through structures of oppression.

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