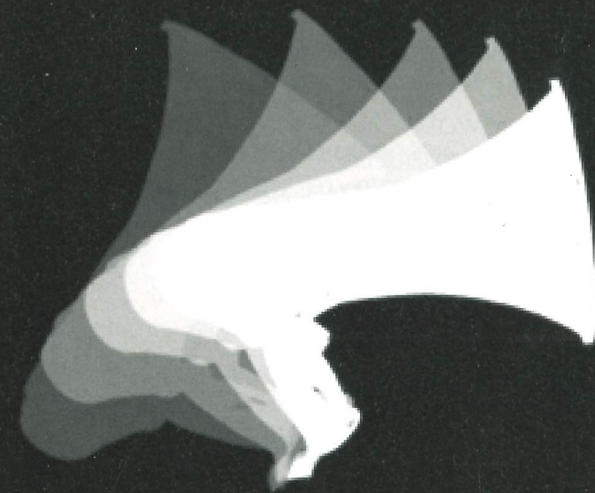


CultureSHOCK!

Breaking the Silence
an anti-racist review



volume nine
[two thousand and eight]

Social Issues Commission
Alma Mater Society
Queen's University

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We dedicate this collection of works to all those who bravely and brilliantly continue to BREAK THE SILENCE around oppression with their poetry, prose, artwork, and music everywhere and everyday.

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My thank-you, without a doubt, goes to the rest of the dedicated CultureSHOCK! committee for providing a much-needed medium in which to give voice to those traditionally, systematically, and wrongly oppressed. I appreciate your efforts to break the silence blanketing this institution.
- Brhmie

Thank you, first of all, to the contributors who make this publication meaningful and worthwhile. Thank you to cultureSHOCK! friends and supporters for your dedication and encouragement. Thank you to my amazing cultureSHOCK! family who worked overtime and went above and beyond to put out this stunning silence-shattering statement against racism! For bursting the Queen's bubble of oblivion, and for keeping me safe, sane, and myself – I'm grateful for you all.
all love,
- Aliya

wha dem say! there is not many thanks left to be given which the beautiful people who have worked on this review have not already given. therefore i must thank those amazing people who put us here together. their lived experiences and memories are far from being forgotten. our words pay testament to their struggles. to our families and ancestors, we thank you. 30/05/1845
- kavita

Thanks to all our contributors, all of our hard-working editors and layout crew, and thanks especially to Laura for bringing it all together. Shout outs to Worth & Naka...
I love you!
- Naomi

Thank you to each and every member of this year's CultureSHOCK! Committee. This publication would not have been possible without your passion and dedication to artistic creation in the struggles against oppression. You have been my inspiration.

I dedicate this publication to my 할머니; translation of my spirit and eternal inspiration. These words that come from our ears, our mouths, they collide in the space between us. You leave me behind, but to shape my own location.
Our stories entwine and loop around and this will never change.
You linger here, with me, even now.
- Laura

thank you to all those with the courage and conviction to raise their voices against oppression in the past, and to those who are yet to come. you have made the voice of the past, present and future a voice worth listening to.
- Tania

Breaking the Silence.

If only you could understand how much that really means.
It's only the starting of a beautiful revolution.
No longer will they hold us down.
- We write these words within the Ivory Tower
- We resist within their institutions
- We remain ourselves even when they try to assimilate us.

My Thank You goes to my heroes around me. The ones who never give up...and keep going against all odds...
those who make the colonizer uncomfortable.
My Sisters who walk down the street with PRIDE. PROUD of their identities, their presence, themselves.

My Thank you is to be eternally grateful. To those who came before me, those who will come, and those who are here right now. My thank you goes to warriors around the world that give their life to resistance.
Sisters and Brothers In Occupied Palestine...Stand Strong - LONG LIVE PALESTINE

My Thank You is to my Indigenous Sisters and Brothers who are hosting my presence as a visitor/tourist/settler here on Turtle Island.

Break the Silence - Long Live the Warriors

-aruna zehra khambalia boodram

As I depart
I remember I am more
More than your degree
More than that sour taste in your mouth
More than what your small mind will allow you to conceive of
Naw, you aint my nigga
Naw fool, I aint your fuckin mammy
And Naw, I won't do the damn souljah boy
So Farewell Queen's
Although there was nothing *fair* about you.
As I depart
I remember my Soul Sisters
Kept my Soul burning
Kept my sanity flowin'
Kept the blood running
Forever, and ever eternally grateful
With Love (For some),

- Eden

I'd like to say THANKS to everyone at culture-SHOCK! You taught me more than you will ever know and I will carry it with me throughout my life. I only wish I had more time with you all!!
- Allison

Iskwew Sipiy

Shauna Shields

I spoke my language today
I spoke of tall grandfathers shadowing me, keeping me safe
I told stories of the wapoos playing
I spoke of brave warriors, ceremonies, and love
My mothers face filled with joy

I spoke my language today
I used my voice to give life to the land
I told of my nimis and I down by the lake
I spoke of kohkoms weaving baskets
I spoke of gathering sweetgrass for the old ones

I spoke my language today
I expressed the pure joy of watching the moose
I told stories of journeys that have passed
And journeys yet to come

I spoke my language today
and they beat me

I spoke my language today
they stole me from my family
took me away to reform me, assimilate me

I spoke my language today
they beat me again
I cried aloud for my mother—yelling her name
they beat me yet again

I spoke my language today
they called me an unruly Indian
they beat me once more

I spoke my language today
And I think it might be my last time

Black and White

Ryan Quinn Flanagan

White collar
White knight
White wedding
White listed
White teeth
White magic
White robed
White dove
White hope
White house

Black hearted
Black balled
Black Death
Black eye
Black hole
Black Tuesday
Black listed
Black market
Black mail
Black sheep
Black magic
Black ice
Black humour
Black out
Black widow
Black head

Sometimes
Racism is built

right into the lan-
guage

Permission to Speak

Thomas Simmons

tick, tick,
there's a sound that's wellin' up
growin' up it dwells in us
ever-expandin', attention-demandin'
takes at aim at the conquerer commandin'

Hush, Hush
Be quiet, your views are too violent
Keep it civil and get rid of the riot
The full belly of culture is needing a diet
Keep your eyes downcast and your speaking silent

tick, tick,
lightning'll hit my beat like zeus struck it
my words will be heard, my issues are ruckus
my eyelids are pluck-ed, run but you can't hide
i'm hungry for truth, not institutional lies

Hush, Hush
I know you exist and I'd like to acknowledge you
But this isn't something to put a college through
I have friends like you, isn't that enough?
Our bubble is safety, your tongue it too rough

tick, tick,
ya listen with your ears but ya ain't hearin'
inside i know it's me that you're fearin'
i'm makin' a clearing each time my letters hit
ya publish ya papers with ridiculous rhetoric

Hush, Hush
Abstractly, hypothetically, in theory
Let me think, give me time and prepare me
Dear sir or madam: I'll give you the choice
To either leave or please lower your voice

Shhhhh
fuck that, this spat won't end 'til i'm passing
ignorance to the issues is fuel to my passion
the fire's everlasting; my heart is the ember
and as you try to extinguish, just remember:
you can duct tape my mouth but never my eyes;
you can press on my shoulders but still i'll arise
this roof that i'm raising'll shatter glass ceilings
the echoes of my sound will crumble ya buildings
ya see, somewhere in history justice turned sour
peaked through her blindfold to give you the power
and i'm here, right now—not to reclaim it
but to turn it somewhere you never aimed it
this is my court, you can await for my verdict
i'm breakin' the silence, believe that ya heard it



ROCKS... and gravel

Grace Ooreofe Adeniyi

You saw it happen

You heard them

BUT YOU DIDN'T SAY A WORD

I was humiliated

I, right in the sun - - - cold torrents of tears streaming down

You, averted your gaze

You pretended it was a cloudy, dark day

And that you couldn't see. Really see.

The first rock hit my KNEES.

I fell.

They said... it was so I could know where I belonged.

That I didn't deserve to stand or walk freely in this land

THIS LAND OF THEIRS

But I got up.

The second rock hit me in the STOMACH

I doubled over.

They said they were just 'warming' up.

I didn't scream. I didn't run.

You didn't scream. YOU RAN.

But it's okay, they weren't after you.

The third rock hit me in the HEAD.

I thought that I might just die.

They said I was UGLY.

And maybe a bruise might make me look better.

I felt the blood gushing from the wound

The wound they kindly gave me.

So willingly...

The fourth one got me in the THROAT

They said maybe that would knock the wind of audacity out of me.

The audacity I had to think that I could belong in this land of theirs.

I fell again. This time it was more difficult to get up.

They 'magnanimously' waited for me.

They were patient as I tried to stand up straight;

But only to push me back to the ground.

They pinned me to the ground;

And forced me to open my mouth.

And they rubbed gravel on my TONGUE.

They said that it was to remind me that I could never belong.

Because I couldn't speak like them.

They said my tongue would always mark me as an outsider.

I might as well go back to the 'jungle' I came from.

I struggled to spit the gravel out. But they stopped me.

Then I saw you.

You peering at me. And them. From behind a tree.

They finally left me. After a few kicks.

And after one of them jeered that I was darker than their #2.

You also walked away.

I laid there.

Nobody came. You didn't even look back.

I got up. My spirit and my heart more pained than my body.

Then I screamed. Finally. And Screamed. And Screamed.

The next day when I saw you.

You ignored Me.

When I tried to speak about it, you said NOTHING HAPPENED.

But something did happen

I LOST myself. I Hated myself.

And I CHANGED MY TONGUE.

Especially after it was cleansed by that dirty gravel.

Now nobody believes that tongue was ever my mother tongue.
 I got back up that day - - -
 For all the wrong reasons.
 I wanted to be like you.
 I wanted the freedom to run. Away.
 The freedom to remain silent. Not even a scream.
 But I've noticed that I can only run so far
 Before another rock is thrown at me.
 But now, I throw rocks back.
 My rock has edges, sharp like a knife.
 It cuts through your SILENCE.
 It's my defiant SCREAMS
 Given life through my writing; my resilient strength.
 The strength given to me from above to persevere and keep my head high
 And even as I silently write this
 This silence speaks great volumes
 It can't be suppressed
 It is free – even in this land of theirs
 It is audacious
 It is beautiful – it can't be bruised.
 I now spit gravel in their faces.
 Are you still watching?
 You better get ready to run
 Get ready to finally scream
 Because my rock
 is heading your way.

Ninety Six
 Tian Liang



The Skin We're In
brenda wang

We live
in a world
of self-tanners
and
skin lightening creams,
of diet pills
and
protein powder,
too dark
too light
too natural
too normal.
We are
too fat
too thin
too curvy
too flat.

Why do we hate
the skin we're in?

The simplest of experiments,
but brimming,
overwhelming,
with meaning.
One room,
one child
- one black child, that is -
two dolls:
one white
one black,
one question -
"Which doll do you want to play with?"
Overwhelmingly,

one response:
"the white one"

the white one.
...the white one?

The child is asked
another question, and another,
"Which one is the good doll?"
<the white one>
"Which one is the bad doll?"
<the black one>
And then the clincher,
the one that stabs
clear through the heart.
"And which one, little girl, looks like you?"

a pause
an instinct - she wants to point to the white one,
an internal conflict as
she looks
from one to the other,
from one to the other.
Then,
silent resignation,
a look
of defeat
on her face,
as her hand
s l o w l y moves
to the black doll.

Why is it too easy
to empathize
with this child?



Blooded
Irene Mukasa

Kissed by dark continent skin
The blessing or the curse?
The answer I search for on the outside, yet I'm told the true answers lie within.

Searching for something like me,
Looking for the image that reflects, expresses me, tells MY story
Yet I come up empty handed, at a loss,
Because what I see are not the true depictions of me,
but instead the depictions that YOU want me to be.

African blooded
African boned
African cultured

the things in which I know I am, the things in which I embrace
yet why do YOU get to determine my worth,
what warrants YOU the power to tell me Africa is under developed and a dying race?

Colonization mixed with environmental degradation
Cultural rape, assisting westerns who dis- associate, disengage, disappear.
Hoping that their false missions of aid,
will mask their hatred for black people and hide the elements of their TRUE fear.

Western blooded
Western boned
Western cultured

The things in which you wish me to be
But my African blood runs thick
My African bones stand strong
My African culture remains untouched,
untouched by your ignorance to know me,
untouched by your need for comfort and supremacy,
untouched by your own cultural insecurity.

And thus I remain Dark Continent kissed, a child of the motherland,
the cries of someone's slaved ancestors within me..
Calling me,
Reminding me
That what runs deep within me is
AFRICAN BLOOD!

Maintaining the Main Line

Ryan Quinn Flanagan

If it wasn't for the invasion
of Afghanistan
the price of heroin
would not be so favourable
on the streets of Vancouver.

It's almost enough
to make one register to vote
between highs
that unfurl
like the flags
of Freedom.

Somewhere
junkies share rigs as
they join in a chorus of
O Canada.

The tourniquet of nation
ever tightens.

A Paris Newsstand

brenda wang



The Drought

Aruna Zehra Khambhatia Boodram

I understand now...

Your obsession with us.

It is equally the same reason for my obsession with you.

Everything you are is something you've taken from one of us.

It's something you feel is owed to you for us to share, because its globalisation's fault you're obsessed with yoga, chai and saris, not yours!

I understand your obsession because it's one with my own.

You want to feel home as much as I do.

You're lost within your own identity enough to take over someone else's

So, to "find" yourself, you try on the dreads one year, then the Namaste chanting yoga poses the next year, and maybe even the Green tea and Tai Chi the year after that.

Although I cry when I see you wear that Om tattoo on a body that ingests kosher beef

Or you sport untamed blond dreads while preaching pro-colonialism and capitalism as a means for better living.

I understand, you need to fill that gap.

You need to fill it so that you, like your colonial ancestors can alim that piece you feel has been missing.

You're watering your drought.

The drought has been cause by your own ends, its your own fault.

Everything you are is based on something else, someone else's mind, body and soul.

You've fed your drought with the beauty of others, encapsulating yourself and consuming the Others...

We've influenced your music

your dance

your food

your language

your clothes

your culture.

Without us, there would be no you.

You need us to survive, to create, to understand and to live

...because without us, there would be no you.

I understand now, because I see those like, dying out.

You've assimilated to our ways and you don't even know it...

And I understand because your faux-superior facade doesn't work as well as it used to,

and people who look like you, are dying out.

We've realized the beauties of our own skins

our own faces

our own foods

our own musics

our own dance

and our his/herstories

We've realized our own potentials and are going to play by your rules and destroy you

ALL at the same time.

As you are feeding your drought, we are feeding ours.

We are both feeding it off the same essence we need to survive.

You can consume all you want, that will make our job easier.

The reason I understand your obsseion is because it is one with my own.

Because I am in love with my Brown-ness.

I once was obsessed with Whiteness, but I stand corrected...

My Brown-ness is the only way to go.

But I see it like this...

If You're so consumed with Us...then ME being consumed with YOU is basically like ME

being consumed with MYSELF anyways...right? Right.

So you see, I understand your obsession with us beautiful people of colour.

And I understand your obsession with our Aboriginal brothers and sisters.

You need all of us...to survive.

You feed your drought...

While I feed mine.

Dis-Oriented

Tania Cheung

Orient this.
 Orient your mind to the Oriental kind.
 The pearls of the world;
 Those yellow, yellow, slanty eyed pearls
 Pearls for you to buy, pearls for you to commodify
 Oriental chicken, oriental lickin'
 Oriental rice, oriental spice
 Pidgin-holed into your disoriented space
 A space where whiter-is-better, but egg-shell or crème will do just fine
 Just enough rice to spice up your life.
 Enough spice to yellow-fever up your life
 (because malaria would be just divine)
 Exoticised and eroticized
 Embellishing those western lies with western eyes,
 Hoping not to be stigmatized
 So do not fear...
 We'll be the model minorities to wipe away
 the stain that the 'yellow peril' left,
 and by stain I don't mean the stain on your shiny white country,
 by stain, I mean the stain left on our identity,
 the stain of distain,
 the stain that explains
 why we are so dis-oriented.

22

Untitled

Laura Jean Kwok



23

A Time Apart

Aliya Shamshudin

We are just a time apart;
Our beating hearts are a hot breath apart;
We spit fire with our words – light up the night sky
Like a sea of deep dias: burning so we return to the truth.
I will build my own pyre with the truth:
Because I am just a time apart from wives who died their husband's death;
From women slashed, bruised, and beaten from heart to head:
Bloody and bereft.

I am just a time apart from white men with white words:
Blank and empty, hollow as they hallow our bones with their truth.
My "other"-ness is an excuse to entrap me:
Steal our sisters from their land in shackles,
Naked on an auction block.
Steal the land from our sisters in rhetoric:
Land never before marked with dotted lines.
Stolen and divided with their lies.

24

My hair is like a night without stars: stars that've migrated to the deep dark of my eyes.
Stars that they longed to douse with tears from all the women,
Some taller, lighter, darker, deeper than me – stronger, louder, brighter, bolder
than me:

But always burning:
My mother walked this path I take,
My grandmothers walked this path I take,
All the women of my blood walked this path I take,
And we are all, women of color all, just a time apart.

Lover, as we pray together, exchange dreams under palm trees together,
Our lulling laughs don't last longer than the line that brought us here:

Than that time line ticking tock that won't out-echo this humming heart – life won't stop.
Let them shatter us with bullets, our dreams will heal over them.
Let them hollow us with hatred, our love will heal over it.
Let them tell us we are less than.

Less than the evils that sweep through our history,
Our land fought over and crawled over for centuries by strangers:
We were brought here by strangers, we draw lines in soil and river water
To divide a land we inherited from the robbers:

When an Amerindian man can't buy a lot of land, I think:
We are just a time apart from when this whole continent was his.
We are just a time apart, I pray, from when we will not
Repeat the colonizer's mistakes:
Assume that our way is the right or only way,
That the west knows best and forget
That we are all human.

We have all been shattered, we are all too broken to not stand up and change:
This country is ours today because of the backs that broke making it:

From plantation to rain forest to sugar cane estate,
This country is ours today to change and shape it: so that freedom rings louder than the past.
We are but a time apart: the same beat is in my foremother's hearts,
The same rhythm pounds the pulse of my blood that they marched to off of those boats:
That they were whipped and wearied into under that hot sun
That they were lost to when the conquerors had come:

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We are just a time apart
And this time is just a part of us
And this time is just a path for us, a chance for us to change a past for the children who come
after us:
So that this time is just a part of us,
And not all of us.
And the time is now.

Regarding Internalized Shit aka I Will Not
Love You Long Time

Laura Jean Kwak

Let me tell you about a young woman whose life was turned around
One day she woke up to a world where her brothers could not be found.
They are up in arms, young sister, with weapons to ease your fears
She walks through shattered glass, stings like the cries that she hears.
Towards the family garden, sweet scents are now replaced with the stench of na-
palm
In the distance are people fleeing from showers of American bombs.

They are promising us freedom and democracy
They say we can only get there through war and treachery
Because our own nation has an "inferior governmentality"
We need to be saved, apparently.

Lights, Camera, Action
Scene: the Vietnam War
Papillon Soo Soo or Da Nang Hooker enters
Approaches Joker and Rafterman at a street corner
Speak woman:
Me sooo horny, me love you long time and Me sucky sucky, in exchange for fifteen
dollars.

Me love you long time Me love you long time Me love you long time...
We invoke history with language
These histories are painful
Do you remember?
How do you forget?
How do you forgive the murderer of your mother?

How easily we forget...
How do we close our eyes to this beast that informs the present?
Survival? Cause it's easier?
How nice for us...how nice that we can afford to forget...
But can we really?

Context, language, history is LOADED
What do you read here?
Because, you see, whether you acknowledge it or not,
The words are loaded
The colonial language is loaded
Our languages of RESISTANCE are loaded
Our SILENCES are loaded

Lights, Camera, Action
Scene: 2007 (pick a day), Bay St. and Front St.
Hey you chink pussies! Me love you long time. (laughter)
I am shot back into the reality
We invoke history with language
These histories are painful
I remember...
I cannot forget...
That the World Bank encourages the "tourist entertainment industry" in the name
of "development"
That a gross majority of these prostitutes are Asian women and children.

These words I speak aren't new, they have been spoken but it seems the world
hasn't listened
New generations of sisters and brothers, these histories cannot be forgotten
They are written on our bodies as we move through this world



They are the pulse of my blood, the crystallization of my soul.
The voices of women and men before us are speaking through the elements
Messages of oppression and resistance, but also remembrance

Their names, faces and stories are in the margins of the colonial curriculum
Read the words that have been written in these margins
Read the silences that have been written in these margins.
And then think
Think
Before you contribute to the same forces that murdered those who came before
us

There are no new ideas
Just new ways of doing things
The present has inherited the past
Please recognize the tidings that it brings.

The more you read
The more you search
The more you realize that the change has been cyclical
The "change" is just a new way of keeping this shit the same.
Don't be fooled
While you're dealing with that internalized shit
There are gold lions working towards something more
More than this

Like Elaine Kim I'll provide fresh talk and daring gazes
Words and images by Hagedorn and Fung will influence the writing on my pages
Like David Eng before me, I'll theorize the complexities of Asian identities

Like Trihn T. Minh- Ha I'll engage with postcoloniality
I'll remember the electrical fields of internment like Kerri Sakamoto
I'll write and dream about my grandmother like Hiromi Goto
The blood of V. Chin, the divide and conquer mentality of the LA Riot
With the spirit and heart of a gold lion, I will never forget.

And as per those questions you love to ask me:
Yes, I can speak English
Only better than you can
I was born in Canada; yes, I'm *from* Canada
And I know my roots are Korean; do you know your roots?
No, you have roots too,
Yes, you're an immigrant too
Because this land rightfully belongs to the Indigenous peoples.
And no, I will not spell "strength", "love" or "peace" for you in Korean so you can
tattoo that shit on your ass.
I am not your china doll, your geisha girl
I will never be your dragon lady, your harajuku girl
YES, I AM OFFENDED!
And
NO, I WILL NOT LOVE YOU LONG TIME!



From "How to Kill Your Man" 1

Naomi Mukai

AFTER THAT I WAS PRETTY SCREWED UP. I BOUGHT INTO ALL THAT SHIT THEY FED ME. ANNALISE DIED AND NO ONE REMEMBERED HISTORY WHEN IT HAPPENED. EVERYONE DENIED HER. THERE WAS OPPRESSION FORCING ITSELF ON ME FROM ALL SIDES. I BECAME SELF DESTRUCTIVE IN NEW WAYS. I WAS EMBODYING YOUR GENOCIDE. I PLAYED MY PART AND READ YOUR SCRIPT OUT LOUD. I GOT A BOYFRIEND. HE BEAT ME, AND BEAT ME, AND BEAT ME. I DIDN'T GIVE A SHIT. I GOT PREGNANT AND LOVED THE THOUGHT OF MY OWN BEAUTIFUL, DARK-SKINNED BABY. HE STILL BEAT ME. I MISCARRIED AND SHE DIED.....



From "How to Kill Your Man" 2

Naomi Mukai

SIX MONTHS LATER I WOKE UP WITH MY HANDS AROUND HIS NECK. I KILLED HIM. I WAS TWENTY YEARS OLD. I DIDN'T CRY, OR SCREAM, OR CALL FOR HELP. I SAT THERE LIKE IT WAS NORMAL. I SMOKED A CIGARETTE AND DID A BUMP OF COKE. I STRIPPED HIM NAKED AND RUBBED ASHES ALL OVER HIM. NOW HE COULD BE THE DIRTY SKINNED ONE. I TOOK OUT SOME MARKERS AND I DREW ALL OVER HIM. I DREW A MAP ON HIS BODY. IT WAS A MAP OF ALL OF OUR LIVES. I DID IT SO THAT THEY COULD NOT FORGET OUR HISTORY WHEN THEY FOUND HIM LYING THERE. I WROTE SO MUCH ON HIM HIS WHITENESS WAS MASKED BY THE BLACKNESS OF MY WORDS.

"LOOK: MY BODY CURLED AND ASLEEP
BECOMES A MAP OF THE AMERICAS"
QWO-LI DRISKILL



cultureshock at 12

J. Rosel Kim

the first trip to the
grocery store
no, Superstore

(is it because
everything is
bigger
in
Canada?)

buying milk
and bread for
the first time

they are not the same.

not the same as back home

(where bread was just
a delicacy
a snack,

where I only saw a
small carton of
the opaque white liquid
maybe once a week,

and never made a habit of
familiarizing
myself)

so this is what they eat and drink

white, multigrain, rye,
pre-sliced and fresh out of the oven

and
humongous pearly cartons
of calcium and dairy

"who's going to drink all that?"
mom asks, incredulous.

we will,

eventually—

my little
bewildered
Korean
family.

(remember preamble) Human Dignity

Lara Szabo Greisman

I lost my nerve to keep both eyes blind,
To keep the dark and light of army objectives in mind.
Distracted, sidetracked
By simple similarities
Not instant and miraculous
Enlightened humanity,
Just mundane truths
Between this man, me, us.
This actual reality we could have discussed.
No time now, no means,
Just a window of opportunity in obscurity's seams, (fast!!)

I had a
realization that despite some complications
this precarious situation in my video imagination
involves alien nations playing public relations
with cultural implications causing media sedation
the entire foundation based on mis-communication
on a fucking load-of falsification, of skewed fabrications
the hidden information
is that cross nations
this game has no teams.

And post-traumatic stress is warning label-less
And it does not address that it is dangerous,
Worse, it is inconvenient to have a human enemy.
One shared compound on two different sides
With two different lies telling us we're right.
Last night, you didn't, killed me,
I loosed your cuffed wrists, a risk,
Resulting in respect,
A liberation, both yours and mine.
Free to fight me, you faced the wall to piss.
chose human dignity
not one enemy less
But that was a chance I shouldn't take,
To make you comfortable
While suits stake our fates.

Back turned to protect me
My superiors might see,
Might discipline my defiance of their unjust policy,
But I could face that if I could face me
If I could face my role in your captivity.

Hope in Heaven

There is no place in this room for a girl
only a twisted
used
broken
some
body

This is a dead room
a shuffling of feet
and you end up
ending at a wall
dead
end

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Mamasan is coming
Do you think she'll care...
What will I do when she sees...

Trouble means one less chance to leave this room
one less chance to taste something different
a taste of kikiam, a taste of freedom in the white hands of a stranger
a stranger made less strange in the silent exchange
in a different room

One less quick intake of a sharp breath of sour air

and one more visit to the cold, metallic room in the clinic
where dignity flees into the bin of dead, cold instruments that poke and prod and
prick and pry
into the deepest recesses of her being

The men in their church and their government and their rules
in her
strip her of protection
confine her to two prisons:
one invisible,
one visible
both in this room
this casa where there is no place for life
only a death ensnared in regulations called a living

There is no room in this place for humanity
what is was
lost beneath
crusted walls, sheets and rags, stained
dried semen stop swimming
blood
old
and sinister
stench of
injustice

ignorance

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I nauseate

You internalize

(Do you desensitize?)

This room
Has no place for hope
Only a twisted
used
broken
vacancy
of hope

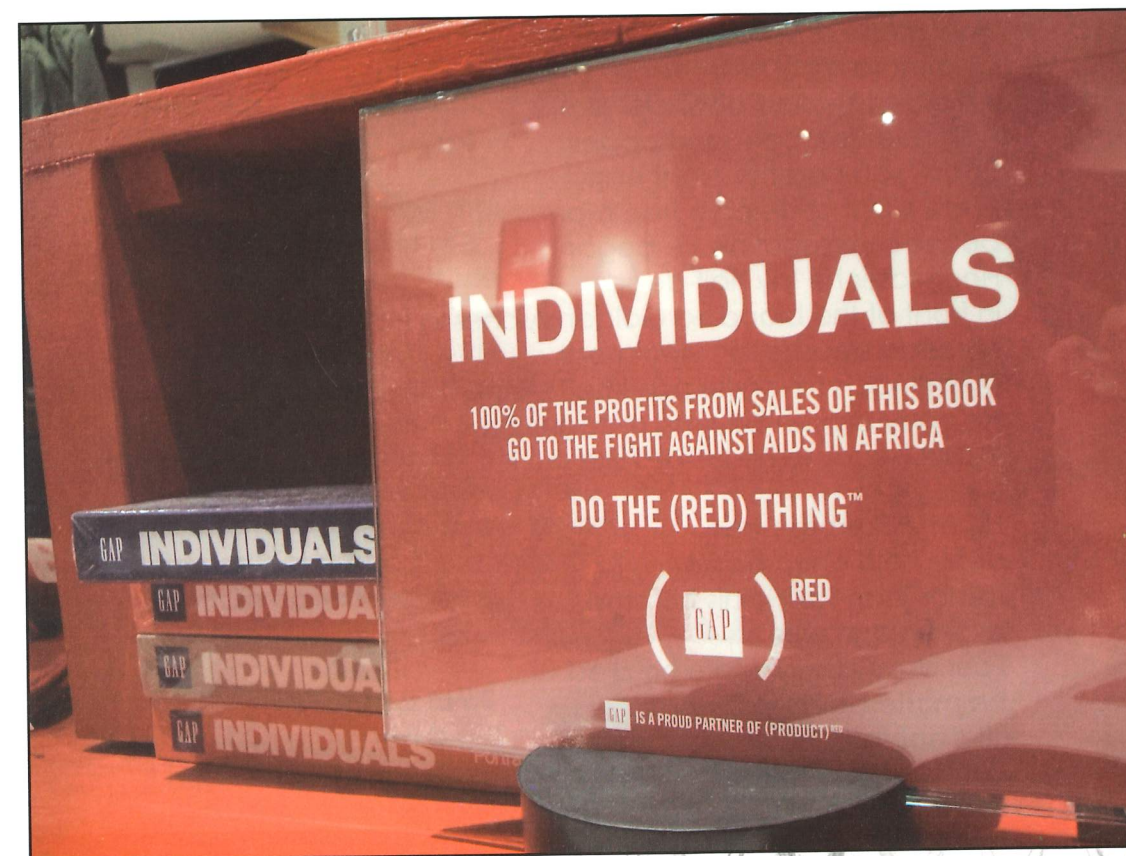
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This was written in response to watching "Hope in Heaven", a film by Dr. Meredith Ralson from the Department of Women's Studies and Political Studies at Mount Saint Vincent University documenting a CIDA-funded project working with prostitution and sex tourism in the Philippines. For more information, go to www.hopeinheavenfilm.com.

by eleasa sieh

Individuals... at the Gap???

brenda wang



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W Chin

Florence Li

It was June 19th, 1982
or was it just yesterday
How many of you actually know?
One more night of freedom
An old-fashioned bachelor party
with buddies, beer and babes
Spirits high and the night early
A last night of being a free man
before the rest of his life began
Hours later he lay half-dead
in front of the bloodied Golden Arches
His head smashed in with a bat
("America's favourite pastime" – baseball or beating?)
His body broken beyond recognition
Was it because he looked like a...?

His attackers ran free
as he held on to his life
rather than taking his first steps
as man and wife
Four days later, before he died
he muttered his last words:
"It's not fair"

But fair was a four-letter word
For his fiancé, his friends, his family
for his mother who left the country
after losing faith in the nation

Her son was dead
because they thought he was a...

People fought on behalf of this dead man
Thousands joined together
Quiet no more
Because of this dead man
But his soul does not rest
It has yet to find servitude
Is that what it takes for us
To rise up and speak out?
A man must be slaughtered
for us to have a voice
A voice they ignored
and now the White Men run free
after throwing down a few dollars
Still won't admit that they did it
Because he looked like a...

If it happened today
Who would fight for him?
Would Monsters run free?
It happened twenty-five years ago
But it could happen today
It could happen to me
Because I look like a...



the space in the hyphen

J. Rosel Kim

Jihyun Rosel Kim

Jihyun-Rosel

Who do you feel more like today,
Jihyun-
Rosel?

It's true,
I

own a Canadian passport and
write in this secondary language that now
feels more at home and
mentally
create the quiet mountainous suburbs of
Deep Cove when I say
"home"

But "home" was something else.
Home was coming into
a first-floor apartment of
many complexes outside the rectangular brick building where I
learned how to multiply and sew and then at sneak out to
a snack truck full of hot broth and 떡볶이
Playing with 공기

I forgot.

I was busy looking
at other people's pasts
acclimatizing to the world so vast
where just one province enveloped my former country
twofold and over.

But no, I was not
around when the Stanley Cup happened, I
do not know Mr. Dressup or Mr. Rogers, I
never grew up eating peanut butter from a jar.

In university
I learned to
think critically and
be suspicious of the notion of "home"

and that
multiplicity, rather than unity was
really alright

So, I asked:
나의 과거를 찾고싶다.
내가 누구인지를 다시 발견하고 싶다.

With determination of
Western Enlightenment I
uncovered the
unvisited books in my parents' shelves, my
born-again first language, my
rich history of a home I left
so long ago

I remember now.

and

understand

the space in the hyphen
the space in the hybrid wor(l)d

Korean-Canadian

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Untitled
brenda wang



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Culture SHOCK! breaking the silence Culture SHOCK! breaking the silence Culture SHOCK! breaking the silence Culture SHOCK! breaking the silence Culture SHOCK! breaking the silence

Woman of Colour

Kenji Kimani

No matter how tight you press your outstretched fingers together over your eyes so that light won't get in
On the outside of them, life still goes on.

And Men still want a taste of your commodified exotic quality booty, lips and pussy
For the single fact that you're ancestors were dehumanized by their ancestors to divide and conquer yall and that's all they know you as now...capital
To be exploited.

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Squeeze those fingers together tighter girl, the cracks between em are still revealing the fact that
Even though you know to get offended by a racist remark regarding your people and cleaning...
Your father owns a janitorial service
At which your mother bleaches, and soils her clothes and skin along side your younger brother
And your older sisters, one of which is married with children
and all because of the racist remark regarding your people and cleaning that came straight out the mouth of white politic.

You know, the one that rules this country.

And if the truth still manages to trickle its way past your hand covered eyes?
Then, make a wall of white people, the whitest of them.
Make a wall of hipsters and hippies and nazis and yuppies and then when you peer out from behind those woman of colour hands of yours the reflection your expecting to get
will be them.
And you can forget who you are.
Only, they won't. After all, they're looking at you.

All eyes on the prize that's going to win them most diverse friends first place and when they pounce to start the race on your race,

you better jump.
Up.

You are woman of colour.
You are my sister.
my hand is here for you.
My feet are strong standing in solidarity with you.
But you can't feel me
If you don't see me,
so open your eyes.

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Sweet Dreams

Lara Szabo Greisman

How many cries for charity will be naked to see
Within a community that emulates serenity
Buddha fountains by the back yard gates
Cause the barbeque grates burn steaks
They don't raise them,
They don't risk them
And I bet no-one cares how theirs is done if they're hungry.
But exotic pain is a painting, a heart aching injustice
So I pass the local homelessness
And the ketchup.

Excess change slides into an assorted range
Of little plastic boxes with children's faces, graceless
But tastefully placed, in case
The percussion from my pockets attracts unwanted attention
from the self-fulfilling stereotypes, out to get me.
It's just a minority, or some kids cracked out and lonely.

A silent solution to a denial of homeland crisis:
The societal equivalent of a goodnight kiss.
It's called structure.
Luxurious ruptures and syrup reassurance
That everything stays stratified blind eye same.
Comforting, familiar classes that see destruction only in foreign masses
From afar, the French fundraise for northern maple communities
Cause there is no immunity to being globally aware,
Cause we all care.
So I'll adopt an Asian baby
Name her Jennifer or Lindsay Davy
And grown, I'll send her
To build schools in Botswana
Empty the carpenters' hand of his hammer.

So dream sweet child,
Rest soft and easy
No monster can get you if he's busy overseas.

Hello Kitty Finds Her Voice

Tania Cheung



t shirt design courtesey of David & Goliath

Board of Games

Jemi

Hey Mr. Monopoly, you think you're so cool sitting on top
of that golf hill sporting your top hat!
Clutching them dollars in one hand,
with the other you carve out the land creating provinces
and borders and property lines disrupting the
natural flow of this Canata land.
This village land that was once free,
as it tried its best to run away, get away,
looking left to right but finding no where to stay,
it stood in silent protest and resisted,
while it was being handcuffed and placed under house arrest.

The land and its once long green grass was divided, sold,
owned, and it could do nothing
but watch pieces of itself taken and loaned,
out to the pockets of white picket fences
and barbed wire snares,
property split into two, three, four divided squares,
and taxed.
Freedom of access, and access to freedom beyond reach.
we're told to play this game in the commercial's speech.
To have trust and live in fabricated lies,
that tell you how to live your lives,
not with the earth but on it by drilling,
reaping and draining oil from its veins.
We watch the earth bleed dry as there's money to be made.
As the dice rolls, you land on a six
that takes you six steps to red coloured bricks,
Where upon entering,
you're charged \$6000 in tuition!

but how can you afford this education system?!

You roll the dice again to get out of this institutionalized space,
and walk into a job that pays 8 bucks in this case.
Though, your boss tries to do you a favour
by giving you full-time hours in the day,
but in the end, you're still receiving part-time pay.
So you take another roll and it lands on a ten,
you drive your electric car and as it rolls across the bend,
a border guard appears and says 'stop! who goes there?!'
Immigrant? Refugee? Illegal alien? and STARES.
I'm just passin through you say,
But it doesn't matter to him today,
Cause he thinks you're a terrorist anyway,
Taking his privilege and power position,
he rips apart your car and tears it into shreds.
The dice rolls again and you land on number seven
hopping on a train cause now your electric car's in heaven.
And you travel to purple silicone valley.
There you're told that you're not very pretty...
cause they want you to be sold to their epitome of beauty
that's fake, cause people go there to operate
but you're proud of your beige/brown skin and dark eyes,
so you don't believe in all the hype and all the lies.
Taking a break from this constant game playing,
you go to City Hall and give shout outs to freedom
to Aung San Suu Kyi and all who are peace and anti-war.
You hear the monks pray as they go door to door,
Someone's profiteering from all of this war.
So the truth is exposed and you figure out what it's sayin,
this boardgame's pre-set and we always end up payin!
Mr. Monopoly feeds on his monetary obsession
having created this pyramid scheme of oppression.
So you take this game and smash it all to pieces,
never to play again cause it's time to live for peace.

Untitled
Anonymous

I have spent so much of my life hiding.
I would scour in corners, lurk in dark shadows
I never want to steal the gaze
Own the gaze
I have spent almost a quarter of a decade afraid to speak
Afraid to be heard
Afraid that no one would want to hear me
I have spent all my life rejecting her
Being ashamed to hold her hand
Being afraid if you knew she was my mother
"you don't have to be ashamed dear"
"i am not, i just.... i just... i just don't like holding hands" or "you just walk to slow"
Stammering my words
Walking three feet in front so no one would know my secret
I have spent almost a quarter of a century laughing at your jokes
Joining in
Mocking my own culture to emulate yours
I have spent 23 long years denying it is in my blood
In my soul
In my spirit
In my mind
I want to scream Chi-Sach-heetan at the top of my lungs
I want to be proud
The darkness is so cold
I want to live in the light

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No longer will I spend my time hiding
I want to be free
I want to have the chance to hold your hand
Encircle your long slick black hair in my fingers
Pier into your almond shaped brown eyes
See through you to my ancestors
I spent all that time hiding—that you can't find me anymore
I don't know if I can find me
I have spent far too long to deny it anymore

I will walk with pride
Your words cannot break a spirit that is older than your country
Your words cannot make me hide—feel shame
You are powerless—I am powerful
I will no longer run from the words that leave your lips: Indian, Squaw, Savage, le sav-
age, Heathen, Princess, slut, whore
I will stand and fight
I am proud
My days of lurking have long since passed
My days of compliance are no more

My days for revolution are upon me
I will stand and fight
I am Anishnaabe
I am Cree
I am proud

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2007, in emulation of How!

Lara Szabo Greisman

I saw the best minds of my generation defined in Times New Roman
Flaunting in chosen fonts their chosen reflections of a digital self.
Who Facebooked and fazed out picture moments worth deleting
Of headaches worth suppressing, of personal accountability worth fearing
Narcotic solutions flushed down with anorexic caffeine.
Carbon-footprint angels walking, disappointed by their individual fleshly manifestation,
Who are either godless or justify intangible divinity to cynical ears hearing intolerance.
The entitled generation calling home from Rome for more,
A Mandela-quoting white elite, rich in an internet-nation of information
Brandishing definitions, diagnostics, video footage and Wikipedia answers.
54 They cry a suction seal into the phone to lovers at long distance calling rates,
Scornfully search out their fathers' lava life profiles,
Cyberfuck the Thai ladyboy twins in a second simulated existence.
Who fly to Africa to make the difference that wouldn't be safe to face
In the screaming sterile prison visiting halls, a few blocks north.
Who tele-fundraise for aids education before their boyfriend pulls out each night,
Then call their friends to ask why they're pregnant.
Yoga dreamers that intellectualize immigration over burnt fair-trade coffee
That neither their sponsor child, nor their cabdriver can afford,
Then wonder between extra-curriculars, why they can't find peace in their ipod playlist of 3000.

Eva
Naomi Mukai



For Women of Color that have Considered Suicide

Laura Jean Kwak

Running through the map I find that
The eyes that gaze upon my body
Are the eyes that skim the bodies of my sisters
With promises of freedom
Broken
Shattered
Promises of freedom from
My brothers? My father? My grandfather? My self
My...
Tanned, glowing...written on
My body
Tantalizing that gaze
Fixated on my
mother's breast,
sister's lips,
daughter's hair
tantalizing sites of...
I must have that
I must own her
I will take them
Through her
Threw her
On a boat,
Hospital bed,
Floor of her daughter's room,
Cell of a prison
On the ground -
Up into shattered terracotta -
Tan, glowing, beautifully shaped -
Into vases, exotic bowls, oriental figures
Masticate

Masticate the writing her body
As they masticated the writings on their bodies
Of women that I feel
Throbbing through my body
Screaming through my body
Puncturing my body
Written on my body
Where do we go?
When the sun, clouds, wind, and rainbow aren't enough
Where do we go?
When the voice of grandmother is ripped from our chests
Where do we go?
When there is only in/between
When we are not meant to survive
When we were never meant to exist
When we wake up on boats
In brothels
In prisons
Laying in pools of salt-deficient tears
Of lava rushing from blue webs
Where do we go?
When the sun, clouds, wind, and tri-colour rainbow are never enough

My sisters weep
Their tears cultivate the soil of the land
My brothers weep
Their blood washes the tides of the ocean
And I cry
And I cry
For the lies, deceit, blindness, audacity
I must've died fifteen minutes ago
In the pools of lava that envelope my feet now
Under the tears of the womb that bore me
I am rushing with lava from veins that were not meant to exist



In this body that was never meant to exist

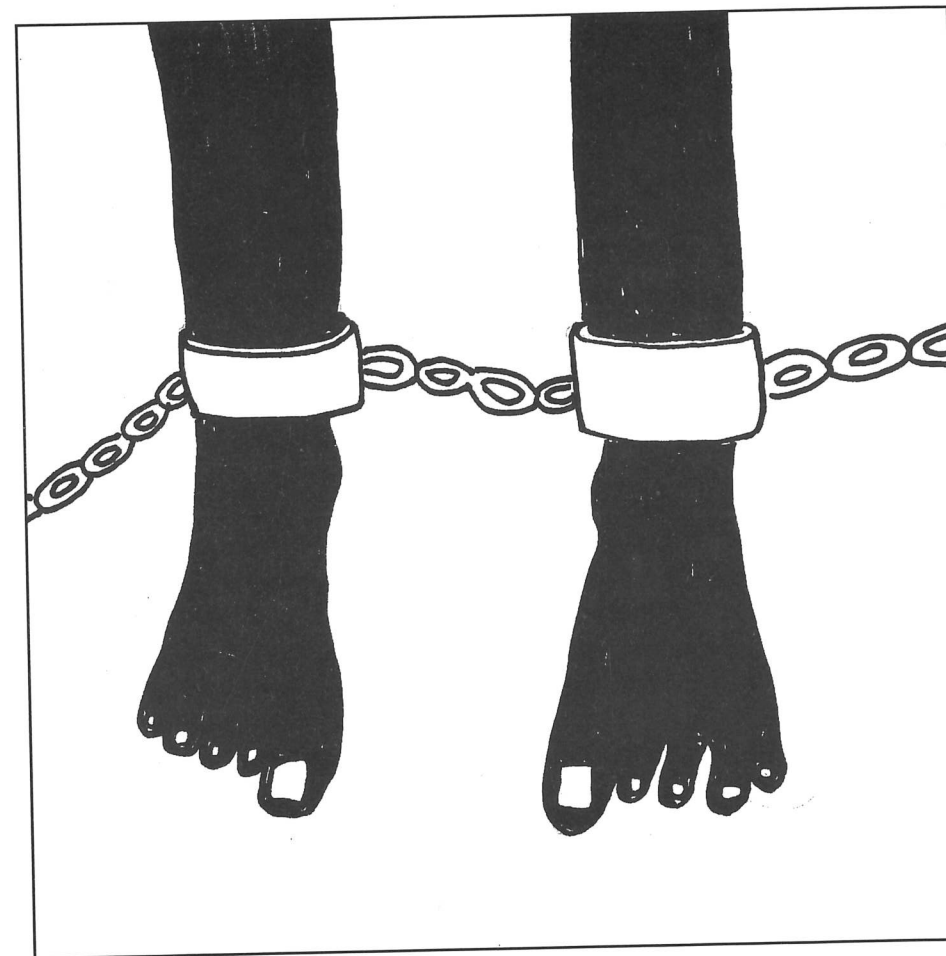
I believe that the hand of a creator has
Kept this blade from kissing my lava again
I believe that the tears of my sisters have
Kept this blade from cutting through this blue web again
I believe that the voice of my mother has
Forced this blade so far from the fiery depths of the lava that flows in and out
And in and out

I do not fear you
I have seen you
And your kin
I have fallen at your feet before
Trembling with fear
I have died at your hands before
Many times
And I do not fear you for
I have already died
Many times
My death has married my life
The daemons also play with the shadows
Not only in my dreams
I have gazed upon you before
And your kin
Through the dark lenses behind almonds and pockets and shattered glass
I have seen into your eyes
And I do not fear you
Taste the lava of my soul
Sip from punctured tan cups of reference
Does my poison tantalize your lips
And your kin
The poison is bountiful within these cups
So drink... and sleep... sleep
And I do not fear you

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Shackles

Naomi Mukai



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Culture SHOCK! breaking the silence Culture SHOCK! breaking the silence Culture SHOCK! breaking the silence



Culture SHOCK! breaking the silence Culture SHOCK! breaking the silence Culture SHOCK! breaking the silence

To My Sisters:

Shauna Shields

to the brave hearted
RESISTANT
Strong womyn that I know...

I want to CELEBRATE you
I want to celebrate the struggle that we live through
that we persevere
that we resist
and RESIST
and RESIST

you wont stay silent
you cant stay silent



you resist when in your classes "they" deny colonialism
"they" tell you you're free
"they" think you're complaining
you're whining
you're emotional

and yet:

powwow keggers mistresses alflies blackface COLONIZERS wanna-be-monks wanna-be-
Black wanna save Afrika wanna play cow boys and Indians deny you stand on Native
land hate me hate my sisters burn Ramadan posters rip down Black history month dis-
plays racist slurs racist profs racist bricks built by racist hands Islamaphobia enslavement
of a Black man absord appropriate and steal our identities

it is this we RESIST
in spite of/because of this we still remain standing
still remain fighting
still remain strong

Still my sisters
We Simply remain



Please address all correspondence and
submissions to

CultureSHOCK!

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