Firstly, thank you to all the students and professors who submitted, making this journal a possibility. We greatly appreciate the time, passion, and creativity that went in to each and every submission. We would also like to extend a special thank you to Kimberly Schmidt, for allowing us to use her beautiful photograph, “Descending”, as our cover art.

When we began this process, we thought that we wanted to use the journal to celebrate the diversity of this program. We both feel that part of its greatness is how all of the students have such varied interests and gifts, yet we are all united by the Honors Program. For this reason, we wanted a journal that would demonstrate that quality. This goal is what led us to ask for a greater variety of submissions, including video submissions (which we have included using QR codes) and works by the professors, who are just as much a part of this program as the students. However, somewhere along the way a common theme began appearing in the works we received. We began noticing how the overwhelming majority of our submissions addressed an issue which we all have in common: facing and overcoming struggle and adversity. So, our purpose for this publication adapted. Rather than focusing on the differences between us, we decided to emphasize this shared human experience and make a journal that celebrated the paths we take to handle it. Using our submissions as inspiration, we developed a path that we felt represented the Honors student response to adversity and struggle. The resulting journal is an attempt to take you along that path. We hope you will experience the same joy-filled learning experience that we have.

Kensey Nichols & Sarah Summers
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Voice</td>
<td>Aja Lenae Johnson</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Personal First Amendment</td>
<td>Ravi Singh</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better than an inch, a drought</td>
<td>Claire White</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Year’s Progress</td>
<td>William Hahn</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made of Stars</td>
<td>Samantha Stoddard</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Heiner Muller’s Hamletmachine</td>
<td>Roberto D. Pomo</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love as Resistance</td>
<td>Saugher Nojan</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosary Prayer</td>
<td>John Paul Ochoa</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Glimpse of Slavery</td>
<td>John Hetzel</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Real Simple Life</td>
<td>April Adalim</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Upside Down Door Latch</td>
<td>Vanessa Arnaud</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Benefits of International Travel</td>
<td>Kristen Cecchettini</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptation, Assimilation, and Avoidance</td>
<td>Kimberly Schmidt</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ode to Puck, Dante, and Terza Rima</td>
<td>Jeffery Brodd</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First they told us we were so pretty</td>
<td>Aja Lenae Johnson</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Voice

By Aja Lenae Johnson

What I’ve taken from my short life thus far is that if we have the physical and emotional ability to speak out against injustice and to tell our stories of struggle, we have a duty to humanity to do so. In my eyes, many of the barriers of understanding we face stand because we haven’t delved deep enough into the vast seas of personal stories of those around us. In my life, I’ve found that when I learn about not just who, but why somebody is, it gives me a much more compassionate view of them. In addition, by telling our difficult stories of pain and triumph, we can help give others dealing with similar issues some reassurance that they are not alone and that there will always be some hope to find.

I feel my niche in this world is to educate others about the importance of our individual stories and those of collective communities—of our varying experiences and common humanity….I don’t know if this pursuit is overly optimistic or naïve, but I know that being a first year college student, PRIDE Center employee, and a member of the Honors Program has really solidified this concept for me. So I guess this was really just ramblings of philosophy I wanted to get off of my chest and onto paper.

A voice can plead for an audience until its cries move the pacified waters in which it stands.

It can crawl from the shores, knees raw from pebbles and sand, and quest to reach new mountaintops.

It can climb to those peaks in spite of trying opposition, to spread its unsung melodies across vast lands.

A voice is an earth-shattering quake when it finds its range.

If only it can coat itself in the sweet honeys of infinite compositions.
How do we deal with Adversity?

We Face It
My Personal First Amendment

By Ravi Singh

As someone who was born with a speech impediment, I was encouraged to learn ways to overcome my stuttering. Eventually, I discovered how to calm my stutter and speak more easily. Over the past few years, I have participated in performing arts, including improv and various musical groups. My piece describes my journey in becoming the person I am today.

I open my mouth, breathe in, and produce a sound that will hopefully turn into some phrase to represent what I believe at that moment. This sound repeats, and I am left with only one constant sound. I never knew what was going on when I stuttered; however, I did know the embarrassment that followed. I was well aware of the shame of having to start over, and try again. I used to think I would always stutter, having to permanently start over constantly, apologizing as I kept talking. I was unaware of the potential I had to save myself from my own nightmare. I would soon become my own hero, guiding myself out of my daily vocal hardships.

Stuttering was indeed my weakness for many of the years of my youth; nevertheless, I kept on trying to master the art of fluency. Numerous therapists and my family helped me to become fluent. I believe hearing how to do something is one thing, but actually doing it is another. I learned that accomplishing something that one truly wants is not as easy as it may seem and that it requires practice in order to reach my personal standards. The stutter I had developed as a child helped me push myself to get out in the world and try everything in order to see how far I could go. I decided to venture into areas that I was afraid of attempting, activities involving vocal performance. I joined choir and became an actor at my elementary school. I acted in three musicals. Although I had no lead roles, I still enjoyed the feeling of excitement that I received from performing. I was convinced the fear I had developed from stuttering would not stop me from anything I wanted to do.

I never knew a mere stutter could affect one’s life so much. I never thought I would be
able to overshadow my stutter with the confidence I gained by stepping out of my personal boundaries. If I had never picked up the confidence I received from stuttering, I would never have taken AP classes, joined the Pleasant Grove High School Improv. Team, or attempted to play five instruments. I participated in high school band and the Elk Grove Community Band, where I played among highly experienced musicians. My stutter helped me to explore new activities that I might have dreamed of participating in, but had previously intimidated me. The stutter I was so afraid of turned me into the ambitious, motivated person I am today. If I had not stuttered in the first place, I might not have followed the successful path I have followed.

While stuttering may have restrained me from earlier opportunities, I have learned to never look back. I have remained the person I am due to my earlier struggles with speaking. I am able to voice my opinion; I have decided that I will not be suppressed by something I can control. I have been able to make friendships that will last a lifetime. Stuttering has always been a part of me and forever will be. An anonymous source once expressed the way that our flaws shape and better us by saying “it is the space inside that gives the drum its sound.”
"Better than an inch, a drought" is a man's account of his partner's death. It touches on the desperation and ambiguity that comes from such an inconceivable loss—a loss which transforms his perspective on life and on his own existence. The man's evaluation of the situation is meaningful because he does not dejectedly subject himself to the painfulness of the death, but continues to appreciate the wholeness he has received as a result of his relationship.

I tried to dive on it before it could push you into the tunnel, but the fur on the hood of my jacket winked to delight the snagging reflex of those whatcha-ma-call-its on the ceiling of the cave. So anyway, I guess you could say I was hoodwinked into losing you. Our synchronized time schedules were thrown off balance. Our scattered mess of a backpack didn’t know what to do but spill its granola bars and 5 hour energy, protein supplement things, and Gatorades to make the first ever rainfall in a cave. 2 inches. Looks like the drought wasn’t really all that cured. So you fell into place among all those other hieroglyphics we didn’t know were there. And I squirmed, spit reverberating from my thick, slobbery lips as I ranted on, not making any words, trying to connect a part of myself to anything you might touch or see in there. Even if it was just saliva. But what I lost you to wasn’t a part of me. It didn’t contain my saliva or anything that we carried. The cave was your body, shredding itself to be recycled for someone else that could use the organs. But no one could use your hair, the sweet scent of it, not far from grass mowed in the spring when the daffodils tried to complement it with subtle flirtations carried on the wind. Inch by inch, you couldn’t walk any more than a foot. I carried you and you fell to the concrete floor of our basement where our son’s mini multicolored cars swiped at your feet when you tried to let me go. And I don’t know at which point my salty rivers passed the canyons of my lined face to embark on that trek with my wrinkly fingers trying to push them away. But if I didn’t cry as you were sprinkled everywhere I hoped I’d ever be, so did my heart drool, sloppily, drool all over eternity because I want to see you there... I spit into the air, trying to mix our different textures once more. And I realized that I hoodwinked myself into
believing that you ever were gone. So, I drained myself into the drought that evaporated you and we spilled together into the first ever non-rainfall that cured what I’ve ever lost. And we became the hieroglyphics that no one understands until they’ve learned to recycle an incurable drought.
I started yo-yoing about a year ago when I began working at Learning Express Toys. My boss said, "Will, you're gonna learn how to yoyo!" One of my coworkers showed me a trick, and it just took off from there. I love yo-yoing because of the infinite possibilities for tricks and the way it challenges me to hone my skills. At Learning Express, there is a yoyo club that meets every weekend called Yolex. This club provides an opportunity for others like myself to experience all that yo-yoing has to offer.

When I was new to yo-yoing, I felt humbled; I was surrounded by strangers who were incredibly talented. I had no clue if I would ever get to their level, but over the past year I've climbed up the ranks! At the same time, I see kids, whose ages range from 8 to 17, working up those ranks. Many of these kids show up at our store shy and quiet but really open up at the club meetings. They ask how certain tricks work, which yoyos are good or bad, share tricks of their own, and meet new friends. Yoyoing has given these kids an outlet that allows them to unleash their creativity and socialize with a whole community. It's amazing how a toy so simple can open up doors.
How do we deal with Adversity?

We Bear It
When I wrote “Made of Stars,” I wanted to portray a very basic need in the most fantastic way I could; I wanted to write about simply needing someone to be there for you. Everyone will come up against adversity in some form in their life, that is part of the ‘package deal’ of being human. However, it is always nice to know that a tough journey does not have to be taken alone. While the exchange in this piece is not between the most traditional of friends, it portrays an incredibly strong relationship, and having someone you know will be there for you is the best way to prepare to face any adversity.

The clock says there are only sixty minutes until I can escape. I know that’s an hour, but sixty minutes sounds shorter. I gaze through my hair, watching as the sun plays with the hazy edges of a red curl. I should be worried that Mommy and Dad will come in and see me sitting on the counter, my boots leaving mud in the nice white sink. I can hear them shouting in the other room, and a tinkle of glass. They’re too busy to worry about me.

I listen to them for a bit while the clock ticks heavily on the wall behind me. Eventually, they quiet down and Mommy tells Dad to sleep on the couch. This morning before school I asked him why he didn’t just put his bed in there, since he likes it in the living room so much, but he just took a deep breath. It’s the same breath he took when I put a frog in his briefcase, but this time I wasn’t actually trying to annoy him. Time fuzzes around the edges as my mind wanders, the silver faucet on the sink throwing pale light onto the ceiling. I stare at the wall, listening to Mommy and Dad talk in hushed voices, insults blending into stuttered apologies and then back into curses. It’s tempting to glance at the window to see how dark it is, but the sun always sets faster when I don’t watch it.

The shadow of the trash can stretches up the kitchen wall, coloring the yellow paint a dark orange. I swear I only blink a few times, and then the whole room is grey. It’s time! I’m off, the sight of Mommy’s bedroom window before stretching out in the grass. Slowly at first, but there’s a long beat of silence, everything painfully normal. I worry that I’ve offended them and they won’t
come out tonight at all. Slowly, the sky droops again, shuddering with my breath. It’s more hesitant this time, unfurling as a silver banner. Dark oceans smudge at the edge of pinpricks of light; I swear I can hear the faint echo of flutes and trumpets.

“Hello,” I try to whisper, but in the quiet my voice echoes for miles. Everything seems so normal, the distant sounds of the highway, Mommy and Dad finally growing quiet in the house. The last grey bits of sun hang around the horizon, crickets shouting from the bushes. The fight is heavy in my stomach. Looking up, I’ve never felt so little.

They are there because they always are. The night comes alive; its depths swim around me, the Milky Way snaking out to fill the silence, throwing the sky into detail. Shapes take form, ready, holding perfectly still.

“Mommy and Dad talked about divorce today, they didn’t know I could hear from the other side of the wall. Do you know what that is?” I shiver against the grass, but I wouldn’t dare move. This spell is fragile; if I so much as breathe wrong the whole thing will vanish.

We do not. We are forever, and this game of marriage and separation is too temporary for us to understand.

The voice of the stars, all singing as one, isn’t made of sound like most voices, but pictures. It’s too big for words, and too simple.

“I don’t know what to do! Please help.” My face is hot, my palms sticky. The stars might live forever, but I’m happier with my family the way it is now! Things are flying apart and I feel like I’m biking down a hill way too fast. The quiet slips and my friends start to grow still and distant. I take a shaky breath, rubbing my eyes with my hands. “Please don’t leave.”

We don’t leave...it’s you who stops listening.

I want to howl. How could they be so cruel? They’re flat against space and I’m alone. A car honks on the highway and I flip onto my stomach, letting the little bugs in the grass scratch my cheeks. I won’t cry, I won’t. I’m torn up until I feel their gaze prickling along the back of my neck, my eyes remain dry.
Turning over, I sigh and my stomach uncurls. “I’m…sorry,” I just about choke on the apology trying to get it out.

There’s a long beat of silence, everything painfully normal. I worry that I’ve offended them and they won’t come out tonight at all. Slowly, the sky droops again, shuddering with my breath. It’s more hesitant this time, unfurling as a silver banner. Dark oceans smudge at the edge of pinpricks of light; I swear I can hear the faint echo of flutes and trumpets.

_We will tell you a story._

I let out my breath, and as the sky gets blacker I can see sketched images. A crown traced in light, a harp vibrating with music plucked by invisible fingers. A great bear rolls to her feet, silver flickering around her silhouette like the light from a movie projector. Her cub noses over the horizon behind her, still a faint blue from the setting sun. I tilt my chin back until I can feel my neck strain to see the dragon stretch up the opposite side of the sky, baring silvered teeth at the warrior. Sword strikes scale, and steel sparks streak across the night. I watch until the pictures everyone is supposed to see fade away, and the warrior is a pirate drawing his sword, leading his crew towards a ship docked on a moonlit river, stretching out of sight towards the ocean.

His ship rolls through waters swimming with silver fire, battle cry mingling with brass music. On the banks of the Milky Way, I stand beside the warrior on the ship’s tossing deck, gazing on as mother bear crouches before her cub, teeth bared at the oncoming dragon. Scale tears into fur, their figures wrapping around each other in a nova of blurred light. The cub crouches against the horizon, shivering, as his mother’s battle lights the sky. Unnoticed, the warrior slips from the ship and into the dark, offering a gloved hand to the cub. As he draws the little bear into our haven, the edges of the ribbon river flood out, washing dragon and mother bear away and out of sight behind the hills.

I hum with delight as their drama unfolds above me. Marvels unfurl as the warrior sails away with the little bear, chasing after fallen queens and a woman with hair of snakes. The stars assure me this story is older than anything, even America and some other countries too. I wish I again, the warrior sheathes his sword and turns his eyes towards the princess once more. Their outlines blur until all I can see are dancing lanterns a thousand miles away. Inside, Dad rolls over on the couch and Mommy puts his picture face down on her bedside table, shutting off the light.
Tomorrow will probably be messy too, but the sun hasn’t come up yet. I wonder if the dew will settle on me if I lay still long enough. I keep my gaze fixed up; waiting for a star to fall so I can make a wish.
Once I had mountains in the palm of my hand
And rivers that ran through ev’ry day
I must have been mad
I never knew what I had
Until I threw it all away

Bob Dylan
The esteemed editors of the 2011-2012 Honors Journal have requested that I write a brief introduction to my essay based on Heiner Muller’s postmodern dramatic work entitled *HamletMachine*, but with an eye towards the concepts of ‘human suffering’ and ‘adversity’. Given that Western dramatic structure is rooted in the elements of Aristotelian tragedy, it might behoove us to understand that human suffering and adversity are foundational to Western drama. Aristotle reminds us that tragic action traces the “fall” of an individual from prosperity to misery, usually through an error in judgment, and tragic heroes are human and thus susceptible to failure bringing about human suffering and adversity. Hubris (hybris) is more often applied to this defect of character, and it is frequently defined as “excessive pride,” though this phrase in used too narrowly. To the Greeks hubris was applied to any form of excess, as it meant “swollen”; it was most often used to describe nature run amok (as in a swollen or flooded river). A popular Greek motto was “medan aga,” or “nothing in excess,” a reminder that excessive behaviors often lead to human suffering, adversity, an ultimately, catastrophe. Pride is the most common form of excess displayed by tragic characters. It is often synonymous with the attempt to be godlike, to transcend one’s mortal limitations.

Tragedy occurs not because the tragic protagonist is defeated or dies. Death is a natural part of the life process, a journey that allows us to comprehend that human suffering and adversity are the key ingredients in understanding our human condition. As Hamlet states:

*If it [death] be now, ’tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now;*

*if it be not now, yet it will come; the readiness is all. Since no man has*

*aught of what he leaves, what is’t to leave betimes? Let be.*

The tragedy is that the hero is defeated or dies precisely at the moment when he/she is most “alive,” that is, when she gains an absolute knowledge of the great design—a realization that can only take place once we experience and understand the concept of human suffering and adversity.
In his deconstructionist adaptation of Shakespeare’s tragedy, *Hamletmachine*, Muller modeled the character of Ophelia after Ulrike Meinhof, a member of the Red Army Faction, a German terrorist guerilla group responsible for the kidnapping and murder of various German officials throughout the politically turbulent 1960s and 1970s. This preoccupation with his nation’s sociopolitical occurrences, coupled with Muller’s own personal encounters with a German political system that has shifted the paradigm of a global political and economic reality, is at the core of his thematic literary canon. From his journalistic writings to his poetry and ultimately in his grounding anti-linear theatre, Muller transformed the structure of twentieth-century dramatic composition. As a disciple of Bertolt Brecht, Muller crystalized and refined the Epic Theatre in order to create one of the most stunningly vivid and mesmerizing pictorial landscapes in the history of Western theatre.

Muller’s apocalyptic and phenomenological theatre examines the historical and cultural ashes of a Western society gone amok through two world wars, a myriad of international political upheavals, and the destabilization of global economic foundations. Surely, his theatre is rooted in the identity of his own nation, having witnessed, from his early years, a leading political infrastructure collapse at the heels of a major world war, specifically the defeat of Adolf Hitler’s Nazi imperialism. Concomitantly, the 1949 division of Germany into two separate states, the
Federal Republic of Germany (West) and the German Democratic Republic (East), altered Muller’s psychological, intellectual, and political sensibility. Although his dramatic work *Hamletmachine* was completed in 1977, its conceptual framework was rooted in yet another major European geopolitical event, the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. As a liberal Socialist, Muller was appalled by the excesses of the Soviet Communist regime. The combination, therefore, of the sociopolitical and economic ramifications of his Eastern European experience, together with a unique and distinct theatrical imagination, influenced the meticulous crafting of *Hamletmachine*.

When asked to define the essence of his theatrical *mise en scene*, Muller stated, “I have no message, I just want conflicts, even between the audience and the text.” This six-page manuscript, in five fragments, is a complex, nonlinear assemblage of epic-like settings, scattered dialogue, narrative passages, and stage directions bathed in Artaudian effects:

*The university of the dead. Whispering and muttering. From their gravestones (lecterns), the dead philosophers throw their books at Hamlet. Gallery (ballet) Of dead women. The woman dangling from the rope. The woman with her arteries cut open, etc....*

Muller’s disregard for anything naturalistic in the areas of dramatic writing, acting, and stage images propelled him to construct a montage of tightly woven sequences, depicting the plight of the easily identified Western tragic character as a metaphor for the illnesses inherited by our Westernized condition. But in *Hamletmachine*, gone are the traits of classical tragedy where formal and moral order is shattered by the actions of a sole individual. In Muller’s cosmology, we as citizens of the world are communally responsible for our own destruction, for in the current era there are no cosmic sanctions left. Instead, we have become ‘products’ of an industrialized, mechanical, and digital society in which value systems are based on sheer quantity, speed, and the knowledge that we can annihilate an entire civilization in the twinkling of an eye. In fact, in Fragment 4 of the narrative, as uttered by The Actor Playing Hamlet, exemplifies Muller’s view that we have forged our destiny by allowing our identities to be manipulated by the forces of political control. Muller sees the process of history as a repetitive pattern of violence and chaos, while simultaneously suggesting that our cultural traditions have been appropriated by
the banalities of a frivolous existence.

Muller’s scenic descriptions mirror his intellectual vision of a world in constant flux; they become signifiers, collapsing the past, present, and future into one collective reality. His stage directions are often not directions at all but rather a guide, a map for the stage director to interpret according to her or his own vision and understanding of the work. While in a rehearsal for his 1986 production of *Hamletmachine*, Robert Wilson, the iconoclastic American director, made a decision not to stage some of the vivid stage directions found in the script, while choosing instead to have an actor speak such descriptions as lines of dialogue. When asked why he accepted Wilson’s directorial interpretation, Muller swiftly replied, “Why should he do the stage directions? It’s in the text.” As Muller’s drama blends factual life occurrences with excerpts from the Shakespearean text and narratives borrowed from statements uttered by contemporary populace, his dramatic characters are a mixture of spoken dialogue, textual descriptions, and directions, embodied by Muller’s outlandish epic settings. The characters, therefore, are only microscopic entities in the ebb and flow of historical continuity, to be interpreted by the hands of the stage director; Wilson’s meticulously precise 1986 Obie Award-winning production lasted two-and-a-half hours.

If Muller is often regarded as the most prominent German playwright since Brecht, perhaps it is safe to assume that Muller was a visionary with an insightful understanding of the human condition. When asked in the 1980s where he would prefer to stage or witness the production of his plays, Muller replied, “I would like to stage Macbeth on top of the World Trade Center for an audience in helicopters.” In the writing of *Hamletmachine*, even Muller’s preoccupation with terrorism could never anticipate the horrific events of September 11, 2001, as his imaginary playing space for a play about ambition was obliterated by a terrorist act never before experienced in the history of the United States.
How do we deal with Adversity?

We Rise Above It
Love as Resistance

By Saugher Nojan

The Classic Slave Narratives are the epitome of human suffering and adversity. This essay attempts to show how Olaudah Equiano and Frederick Douglas used civic engagement in the form of love to overcome their adversity despite the terror of slavery. From their example one can learn how to overcome one’s hardships without becoming a victim to the system.

Civic engagement may be defined as the ability to make a difference in civic life after developing the knowledge, skills, values, and motivation that help make that difference and reflecting upon those actions as a part in the whole diverse community (Ehrlich). Civic engagement is also an act of love. The institution of slavery is based on fear; thus to act civically within slavery is to resist the system through the opposing force, love. Love is the ultimate fuel and truth on the path of freedom for slaves such as Olaudah Equiano and Frederick Douglass in The Classic Slave Narratives, edited by Henry Louis Gates, Jr., that they reach through civic engagement. Within a degrading system like slavery, the ultimate act of resistance is to fight the “unjust system, lovingly” (King, Jr. 378). This is exactly what Douglass and Equiano do as they resist in a fashion that promotes civic engagement, leadership, and perseverance. By submitting to the consequences of the unjust system, they are claiming their basic human rights by forcing their slave owners to see the humanity within them.

In America, Ralph Ellison terms democracy as love (357). He then states our task is to always, “challenge the apparent forms of reality—that is, the fixed manners and values of the few—and to struggle with it until it reveals its mad, vari-implicated chaos, its false faces, and on until it surrenders its insight, its truth” (357). Equiano embodies this struggle his quest for salvation. He struggles with the “mad, vari-implicated chaos” of the system of
slavery as he tries to reconcile how slave owners can be Christians at the same time. After watching a slave owner cut off a negro-man’s leg for running away, Equiano asks, “how he, as a Christian, could answer for the horrid act before God? And he told me, answering was a thing of another world; but what he thought and did were policy” (Gates, Jr. 102). In the process of becoming educated with several religious doctrines, Equiano uncovers the ‘false faces’ of slavery until he can come to peace with Christianity and discover its truth for himself. Equiano's quest for the perfect means of salvation is a perfect example of civic engagement. His desire to be saved gave him the motivation to make a difference in civic life by becoming a better citizen and developing new values, knowledge, and skills to make that difference. Equiano states, "I was continually oppressed and much concerned about the salvation of my soul, and was determined (in my own strength) to be a first-rate Christian" (170). Finding salvation and a suitable religious sect provides Equiano the moral foundations he needs to discredit the establishment of slavery and draw upon the universality of human rights.

Douglass uncovers the ‘false faces’ of slavery as well. In a struggle to become educated, he is continually aware of the chaos of the slavery system, causing him to doubt his commitment to education, for ignorance is bliss, as he suffers knowing the injustice fed to him without seeing a clear remedy for it (2089). His master Mr. Auld correctly states that education would “forever unfit him to be a slave” as it did after he ingeniously found ways to teach himself to both read and write (2061). The motivation Douglass shows pursuing this end was the ultimate act of resistance toward the institution of slavery. Douglass becomes a human catalyst as he displays civic engagement, leadership, and perseverance when he educates himself, and is intent on “bettering the condition of [his] race” by educating them as well (2108). Douglass may have lost hope many times along the road; however, in the end he displays the will to finally shake away the chaos of the system and
embrace the natural rights all men deserve. Emma Goldman states, “the demand for equal rights in every vocation of life is just and fair; but, after all, the most vital right is the right to love and be loved” (Human Rights). In this case the right to love implies the right to be civically engaged and the right to make a difference by resisting and developing the knowledge and skills to make that possible. Goldman’s quote justifies Douglass’s actions of resistance because they are striving to achieve a right taken away from him unjustly. As Saint Augustine argues “An unjust law is no law at all” and Douglass has every right to resist and educate his fellow slaves in order to promote love and justice.

An interesting way of resisting is through self-preservation, for self-preservation is self-love. Slaves have a right to be civically engaged because their basic rights have been breached and their life is forcibly taken away from them, so they constantly strive to ‘preserve’ themselves. John Locke argues through his Law of Nature (his basis for human morality), that we are prohibited from harming one another’s “life, liberty, health, and property” and that we have the power to resist the will of a master if these are breached (Tuckness). He also introduces various duties, the first to be self-preservation. Thus, Douglass and Equiano have every power to resist the chains of slavery and overcome the fear that renders one’s life in bonds.

Equiano embodies the duty of self-preservation in a number of ways; first his attempt towards salvation, and second that of freedom. While still carrying his chains, Equiano develops the skills and knowledge to purchase his freedom through commercial trading. He reflects, “finding my tumblers so profitable, with this one bit I bought two tumblers more; and when I came back I sold them for two bits equal to a shilling sterling” (Gates, Jr. 113). While civic engagement initially might provide the definition of bettering the community, by helping himself to freedom, Equiano is creating a path for other slaves to follow in his footsteps and purchase their own freedoms as well (although
his case is very unique). The idea of freedom and self-preservation drove Equiano to develop the necessary knowledge and skills to attain 40 sterlings and purchase his freedom, thus making a difference in civic life.

Douglass displays his self-preservation in his fight with Mr. Covey. Being on the brink of hopelessness, thinking himself broken “in body, soul and spirit” Douglass resolves to fight his master for his life (2100, 2103). In doing so, Douglass provides insight as to why slavery is successful – nobody resists. He states, “My resistance was so entirely unexpected, that Covey seemed taken all aback. He trembled like a leaf” (2103). It is Douglass’ inherent right to fight for his life as a means of self-preservation and self-love, given his life, liberty, health, and property are all taken away from him by the institution of slavery. This act of resistance in itself is civic engagement because it brought awareness to the slaves’ inherent rights and capabilities for love.

Although Gandhi would condemn Douglass’ actions for his physical resistance, he would condone his mental resistance in his strive to become educated and Equiano’s strive to attain Truth. Gandhi articulates:

The soul is informed with knowledge. In it burns the flame of love. If someone gives us pain through ignorance, we shall win him through love. ‘Non-violence is the supreme dharma is the proof of this power of love. Non-violence is a dormant state. In the waking state, it is love. Ruled by love, the world goes on’ (Bailey, 183).

Douglass displays this waking state as he overcomes his fear and finds love for life once again, love for his own life and reason to fight for it. As he states: Mr. Freeland was the “best master I ever had, till I became my own master” (2108). It was Douglass’ mental courage that helped him carry out his physical resistance. This form of non-violent resistance takes on the role as civic engagement and displays as love. Dr. King, Jr. combined Gandhi’s philosophy with the tenants of Christian love to advocate resistance to the unjust system. He declares, “In any nonviolent campaign there are four basic steps: 1) collection of the facts to determine whether injustices are alive; 2) negotiation; 3) self-purification; and
4) direct action (376).

Equiano demonstrates these steps in his nonviolent campaign against the institution of slavery by first determining it is wrong for the slave masters to do unto others what they themselves would not want done to them (102). Secondly, he negotiates with his master to free him after acquiring the money to purchase his freedom (131). Thirdly, Equiano embodies self-purification as he works toward becoming a ‘first-rate Christian’ (170). Finally, Equiano attempts direct action by seeking the salvation of his brethren when he wishes to go on his missionary to Africa (213). Despite being removed from his post as a missionary and his remedy for the corrupt and abusive governments be "without effect," Equiano continues to care for the plight of Africans as he writes a letter to the Queen regarding the "tyranny in the West Indies" (220). His unfaltering motivation and his ability to find the means to make a difference, demonstrate his civic engagement and love. Furthermore, Equiano's ability to attain freedom is a testament to his civic involvement within the institution of slavery.

Dr. King Jr. states, “We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed” (376). If one fails to challenge oppression then they are as much of a brute as their oppressor. Civic engagement is an act of humanity and love. Douglass decided to break the unjust law and deal with the consequences — he was willing to fight for justice. This is another form of non-violent resistance because it causes humility from the public; it causes shame to those watching these people be transformed into brutes for the color of their skin. The first act of resistance, if done through love, can cause ripples in the pond of life. In *The Classic Slave Narratives*, Equiano and Douglass overcome the fear that slavery instilled in them through love. Love in this context is defined as civic engagement. Civic engagement became a means
of resisting and therefore to love is to resist.
Works Cited


Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam:

"Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will. All I have and call my own. Whatever I have or hold, you have given me. I return it all to you and surrender it wholly to be governed by your will. Give me only your love and your grace and I am rich enough and ask for nothing more." ~St. Ignatius

The Dialectic, the Dao, and the Form of the Good exist within the Beatific Vision of God. Through His Holy Spirit, all Goodness transcends through the empirical world. Through God's graces and gift of free-will, we (by means of our rational agency) are able to choose whether we use that Goodness for our own ends or whether we return that Goodness from whence it came in reason, adoration, and gratitude. Human adversity then, is teleologically overcome by submission to God's infinite wisdom through our participation in his logos--Love--and our recognition of the sacrifice made by the Incarnate Christ: the New Adam.
Rosary Prayer
By John Paul Ochoa

Our Lady of Transcendent Grace
Mother of Agape
Womb of Eudaimonia

“I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered, “may it be to me as you have said”
(Luke 1:37).

Thy, meek and humble, bowed to the Lord:
To deliver unto the world His son,
One to “endure the whips and scorns of time.”
You gave birth, withstanding
eyes of judgment—
Humble paradox: Virgin mother.
Upon crimson rubies you walked,
From throne of Herod:
Streams of innocent blood.

Yet.
Loving Carpenter fathering,
A Child to fulfill the prophecy—
Our infinite Protection.

Miracles; teachings: “a Kingdom not of this world.”

Thy name is Bringer of Light:
Hope of the sick, the troubled, the afraid…

Watch: He cries upon a mule,
Crowned,
Cloaked with red velvet.
Bowing three times
His lambs watch from below.
Thunder falls: begotten.
A Glimpse at Slavery

By John Hetzel

Slavery in the United States caused much hardship for all involved. The slaves in this piece chose to fight against this maltreatment; they sought to rise above it through education and speaking out about their beliefs. It was through the struggle of these individuals that the United States was able to truly become a land of the free and the home of the brave (Intro written by editor, author’s intro never received).

Each slave narrative has its own unique story to tell about the horrors associated with the practice of enslaving human beings. In many instances, these individuals are treated worse than animals and forced to live in constant fear for their lives. Although Olaudah Equiano, Mary Prince, and Frederick Douglass do not give three identical accounts of slavery, there are universal experiences faced by those “who have been a slave…have felt what a slave feels…and know what a slave knows” (Gates, 288). The injustices that are common to these three accounts can be considered common to all of those who experienced the horrors of slavery. These experiences, when compared to one another, give an accurate and complete depiction of what it meant to be a piece of property, as opposed to a human being of equal status and ability. In these narratives, the most powerful tool slaveholders use to control slaves is fear. Constantly overworking and physically abusing slaves instilled fear in their hearts and minds. Equiano notes, “I have seen a negro beaten till some of his bones were broken, for only letting a pot boil over” (112). The purpose of punishing slaves in such a manner was to rob an individual of his or her will to resist. If such a punishment was given for letting a pot boil over, the consequence for any serious offence would be unimaginable. In theory, slaves would become more submissive as a result of the brutality they endured.

Frederick Douglass explains in his narrative how slaveholders use labor and physical exhaustion to break a slave’s mind and body. Douglass admits, “Mr. Covey succeeded in breaking me. I was broken in body, soul, and spirit. My natural elasticity was crushed, my intellect languished, the disposition to read departed, the cheerful spark that lingered about my eye died;
the dark night of slavery closed in upon me; and behold a man transformed into a brute!” (387).

The success of slavery depends on the ability of a slaveholder to transform a human being into a brute. A person’s will for freedom must be suppressed through physical and mental exhaustion. Breaking an individual’s mind, body, and spirit is no small task; it requires knowledge, brutality, and persistence.

This brutality was also present in Mary Prince’s narrative. She describes an instance where a slave could not keep up with the rest of the slaves due to his old age and lame hip. The master would:

order him to be stripped and laid down on the ground, and have him beaten with a rod of rough briar till his skin was quite red and raw. He would then call for a bucket of salt, and fling upon the raw flesh till the man writhed on the ground like a worm, and screamed aloud with agony. This poor man’s wounds were never healed, and I have often seen them full of maggots, which increased his torments to an intolerable degree (269).

If a slave were to survive to see old age, this is the kind of treatment they would receive. In this case, the only value of an old slave was to further instill fear in the slaves who had the ability to work. In many instances where such cruelties were suffered, death was the only relief from the toils of slavery. A slave who could not work was considered useless and expendable.

In addition to being beaten and overworked, families and friends were also separated on a regular basis due to the practice of slavery. Throughout all three of these narratives, one sees how slavery separates parents from children, brothers from sisters, and husbands from wives, destroying families and friendships. Equiano describes this by saying:

are the dearest of our friends and relations now rendered more dear by their separation from the rest of their kindred, still to be parted from each other, and thus prevented from cheering the gloom of slavery, with the small comfort of being together, and mingling their sufferings and sorrows? . . . Surely this is a new refinement in cruelty, which, while it has no advantage to atone for it, thus aggravates distress, and adds fresh horrors even to the wretchedness of slavery (63).

No accommodations were made to improve the lives of the slaves. Keeping families and friends together was not economical and was also potentially dangerous. For this reason, slave holders and traders did not hesitate to separate friends and family from one another. In Frederick Douglas’ narrative he mentions that, “our greatest concern was about separation. We dreaded that more than anything this side of death” (409). Slaves had very little to treasure and call their
own, but their relationships with one another were their most valuable treasures. Masters intentionally took this treasure away because it was more convenient. Whatever is in the best interests of the slave holders and traders will take place, no matter how cruel or wretched; this is one of the few unfortunate certainties of slavery.

Such wretchedness, brutality, and cruelty creates a hostile environment for slave holders and slaves alike. Equiano states in his narrative that, “when you make men slaves, you deprive them of half their virtue, you set them, in your own conduct, an example of fraud, rapine, and cruelty, and compel them to live with you in a state of war!” (117). In his *Second Treatise of Government*, John Locke comments on the condition of slavery saying that, “what I have been discussing is the condition of complete slavery, which is just a continuation of the state of war between a lawful conqueror and a captive” (9). Living in a constant state of war is both unnatural and unhealthy. The minds and bodies of the slaves and slave holders are often worn down to their breaking points. Economic gains are traded for hostile environments where peace and tranquility are unattainable goals.

With such cruelties practiced by slave holders on a daily basis, it is no surprise that slavery hardened the hearts of those who reaped the benefits of such a practice. In Frederick Douglass’ narrative, he gives an account of Sophia Auld, who is transformed as a result of her experience with slavery. Before her encounter, Douglas describes her face as being composed of “heavenly smiles” and her voice of “tranquil music.” After a short amount of time, “that cheerful eye, under the influence of slavery, soon became red with rage; that voice, made all of sweet accord, changed to one of harsh and horrid discord; and that angelic face gave place to that of a demon” (364). In order to play the role of a slave owner, an individual must surrender innocence, compassion, and love.

Equiano also recognizes the effects slavery has on slave traders when he says:

such a tendency has the slave-trade to debauch men’s minds, and harden them to every feeling of humanity! For I will not suppose that the dealers in slaves are born worse than other men. No; it is the fatality of this mistaken avarice, that corrupts the milk of human kindness and turns it into gall. And, had the pursuits of those men been different, they might have been as generous and as tenderhearted and just, as they are unfeeling, rapacious and cruel (117).
Despite the injustices Equiano faces from slave traders and owners, he is able to realize that all white men are not born with this cruelty embedded within their hearts. The practice of slavery is the acid that corrodes human kindness and creates rapacious and cruel beings.

The road to freedom from slavery often involved the acquisition of knowledge. Equiano, Mary Prince, and Douglass all learned how to read and write, which in most cases was a step towards freedom. Douglass realizes this when Mrs. Auld is forbidden to teach him how to read because it will make him “unfit as a slave” (364). Douglass notes after this incident: “I now understood what had been to me the most perplexing difficulty — to wit, the white man’s power to enslave the black man…From that moment, I understood the pathway from slavery to freedom” (365). Knowing that knowledge is the key to freedom, Douglass becomes determined to learn to read and write. Equiano and Mary Prince also exhibit a similar thirst for knowledge in their narratives. Freedom without education is possible, but much more difficult.

The injustices committed against slaves are too numerous to count, despite the United States’ Declaration of Independence being founded on the principle that “all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” (1). To recognize all men as being equal, yet fail to abolish the practice of slavery was wrong. Even with the abolition of slavery in 1865 with the 13th Amendment, there was a greater issue at hand which would not be addressed until the Civil Rights Movement during the 1960s. Martin Luther King Jr. states in one of his most famous speeches: “One hundred years later, the colored America is still not free. One hundred years later, the life of the colored American is still sadly crippled by the manacle of segregation and the chains of discrimination” (9). To this day, the battle for equality is still fought. There are still those who must be reminded that all men, despite race, religion, or sexual orientation, are undeniably created as equals.
Work Cited


United States Declaration of Independence. (1776) 1
How do we deal with Adversity?

We Learn to Empathize
I have not been to all the places in the Philippines; my Filipino experience was limited to the small village my parents grew up in. However, it was enough to see the ways that Filipinos overcame the hardships of providing for the family, finding employment, and surviving without luxuries like air conditioning. This experience gave me a new perspective on life. I saw through my experience that living simply allowed for the overcoming of human adversity because there was no need to worry about the things in life that complicate it.

Three years ago, I went back to the place where my ancestors were born. Three years ago, I visited Home: the Philippines.

When I went back to the Homeland in 2009, I heard the same phrase uttered over and over again, each time I asked a question about life in the Philippines. That phrase was “Yan ang buhay sa Pilipinas” which translates to “That is life in the Philippines”. They take showers in an outhouse next to the pigpen? Yan ang buhay sa Pilipinas. Families keep dogs that aren’t vaccinated? Yan ang buhay sa Pilipinas. They keep the front door open during the day? Some houses don’t have a front door? Some people can live without a house? Yan ang buhay sa Pilipinas. Because I grew up with Tagalog as my first language and a household that had strong ties to the Philippines, I thought that I understood the Filipino way of life well. I certainly thought I knew more than my other Filipino friends who did not know their heritage, but in the two and a half weeks I was there, I realized the differences between living as a first-generation Filipino-American and living as a native Filipino. Life in the States is so much different from living in the Philippines: people do not live the way you do. I hear that all the time, but I never really thought about it until I went back Home.

Here in the States, we are so fortunate to have what we have. If my family could not afford to send me to college, no worries. That’s why we have community colleges. But community colleges don’t exist back Home. You either go to college or you find a job. Jobs are not hard to find, but they are not “real jobs”. I’ve grown up knowing that I have to go to college to be successful, that I have to get a job before starting a family, and that I have to get a “real job;
it is unacceptable to spend the rest of my life flipping burgers at McDonalds or working behind
the counter at the 7-Eleven.

People in the Philippines do make a living doing those things. Every few feet there is a
shop that sells chips, Coke, Halo-Halo, and cell phone load (in the Philippines, cell phone plans
do not exist; you have to buy minutes and texts pre-paid. For example, my aunts buy $25 worth
of minutes and that $25 has to last the entire month). There are an abundance of convenient
stores back Home; I literally saw 3 right next to each other (and there never seems to be any
competition, either). Or you can be creative: at the local market, vendors were selling some of the
most random goods imaginable. Aside from the necessities like groceries and clothing, there were
pots and pans for cooking, pots and pans for pretend cooking, souvenirs, candles, palms (it was
the day before Palm Sunday), homemade jewelry, and baby chickens that were dyed different
colors. Although we may think that such goods are waste of money, that’s how people can afford
to pay the bills and feed the family.

Although the way of life remains a challenge, it causes people to be tough and more
mature. We just don’t know how blessed we are to live comfortable lives. I know that my family
and probably other people’s families cannot stand having insects in the house. If I even see one
tiny spider crawling on my bedroom wall, I have to kill it or else I will be up all night, looking
around my room for it. At my lola’s house (my grandma’s house) and pretty much everyone
else’s, there are always mosquitoes, ants, spiders, and even cockroaches lurking in the corners.
The people have grown accustomed to them. On my first night, I went into the bathroom and I
saw a cockroach right there on the sink and I flew backwards. My aunt came to see what was
going on, saw the cockroach, and killed it. With her bare hands. She just picked it up, squished it
between her fingers, and threw it away. I was flabbergasted. If I were to do that, I would
probably spend the rest of the night washing my hands until there was no skin left on them. I
spent the remainder of my trip checking every corner of the bathrooms and bedrooms to make
sure there wasn’t a small, flying surprise waiting for me in the sink or the pillow.

Did you know that by the age of six, the children are already learning how to do laundry?
That’s life back Home. And they don’t use washing machines, either; the water pressure is too
low. Instead, they carry baskets of laundry and walk two miles to the river. When I was six, I
didn’t learn to do those things; all I knew was that my mom would do my laundry for me. They
also use a walis ting-ting (broom made of bamboo sticks) to sweep the floors. We didn’t use a broom made out of sticks, we used a Swiffer mop. We treat food like a renewable resource; people in the Philippines treat it like a gift from God.

After I came back from the Homeland, I reflected on the life that I have now. Although I get homesick and wish to go back to the Philippines, I like living here. I am fortunate to live in a place where the indoor plumbing actually works, where you don’t have to spend half your day in front of an electric fan, and where you don’t have to sell candles or dyed baby chicks to bring home a sack of rice and a bag of mangoes to feed your family. My trip back home helped me realize that the things we think are basic necessities are actually luxuries that not many people are fortunate to have. I am thankful that I can focus on school and not have to leave home at 13 like my mom to work to pay for an education. I’ve also learned, however, to admire my relatives who live across the Pacific Ocean. Their way of life has helped them become stronger people and live life with the basics. Now I know what living simply looks like. So what if people leave the front door open even though a bird or two will fly in the house? Who cares that the internet is slower than the speed of a turtle? Why does it matter that eating rice and salt and maybe a fish or two is considered a feast? Yan ang buhay sa Pilipinas.
The Upside-Down Door Latch

By Vanessa Arnaud

I will never forget the small French home with an upside-down door latch in my mother’s native town of Beaumont-le-Roger in Normandy. As a child, I learned firsthand how a French couple, Monsieur and Madame Deduis, had heroically saved the lives of American pilots during World War II. The inversion of their front door latch helped momentarily delay the German soldiers who had a habit of barging unannounced into homes. Confusion about how to open the door gave the Americans enough time to hide in the attic.

The Deduis’ clever tactic saved many Americans from being captured. My grandfather, however, was not as fortunate. As a member of the French Resistance, he was deemed a threat...
and caught at the beginning of the war. His two attempts to escape from the prisoner of war camp resulted in being recaptured and dragged back. Despite being extremely sick with tuberculosis and malnourished, he survived and returned home at the end of the war.

The American pilots never forgot about Mr. and Mrs. Deduis. After the war, many of them sent gifts to the French couple to help them refurbish their war-torn home. Some even came back with their American families and children to meet the special couple who risked their lives to hide them. President Reagan also acknowledged the Deduis’ with a special certificate in recognition of their help.

I never had the opportunity to meet my grandfather who passed away at a young age. His memory, however, lives on through our understanding of history and the value of a global education. Growing up with a French mother and American father has instilled in me the importance of cultural understanding. I feel fortunate to be in a position to share knowledge of foreign cultures, literature, and languages with my students today. We need to understand the unpredictable and surprising ways in which our world has taken shape. We must pay attention to past voices who have tried to make sense of questions regarding human nature, one’s place in the world, the source and legitimacy of political authority, what constitutes a good society, the meaning and limits of freedom and religion, the status of women, the workings of the human psyche, and the limits of reason. The Honors Program allows students to explore, analyze and question the thematic threads that compose vital elements of our global world.
The Benefits of International Travel

By Kristen Cecchettini

A great trial in our society is prejudice and the lack of desire to explore different cultures. Many people do not see the need to become more well-rounded through travel. However, lifelong experiences are gained. This exposure to new cultures is crucial to fighting prejudice and gaining compassion for new cultures. This allows us to become a more united world.

There are two things I think we as Honors Program students all have learned to like: great quotes and great people. With that being said, one of my favorite topics that has been covered extensively for centuries is international experiences, the importance of travel, and interactions with different cultures. As I have just completed my study abroad interview and hosted a Japanese exchange student, the benefits of international travel have been on my mind. As Honors students, we are taught to value different cultures. We read great pieces from different time periods and cultures in our classes, we participate in cultural activities such as the Japanese Tea Ceremony, and we are all encouraged to consider studying abroad at some point in our academic career. But since this idea of exploring different cultures and international experience far predates the Honors Program, I began to wonder why, then, has this belief in travel stayed with our society for so long? I thought researching what well-respected individuals from different times and cultures had to say on the topic might reveal the answer . . .

“Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness” -- Mark Twain

When one experiences a different culture firsthand, it becomes crucial to find similarities and to put away preconceived notions. World peace begins with experiencing what others’ have to offer. It promotes understanding. It is difficult to remain close-minded about a culture when you have been thrust in to it.

“We live in a wonderful world that is full of beauty, charm and adventure. There is no end to the adventures we can have if only we seek them with our eyes open.” -- Jawaharial Nehru
Adventure and a break in a normal routine is part of the excitement of life. How better to experience something new than by exploring a different nation or people? There is so much to be seen than just what our city, state, and country have to offer. St. Augustine reaffirmed that in another famous quote, “The world is a book and those who do not travel read only one page.” We only have one life to live, so we might as well spend this one exploring and living it fully.

“Like all great travelers, I have seen more than I remember, and remember more than I have seen.”
-- Benjamin Disraeli.

Travel creates lasting memories and many great stories. While one will not remember all the people they met or the places they visited, the impact of the trip will last with a person forever and the new ideas can be brought back home to increase cultural sensitivity and understanding on our own soil.

“Perhaps travel cannot prevent bigotry, but by demonstrating that all peoples cry, laugh, eat, worry, and die, it can introduce the idea that if we try and understand each other, we may even become friends.” – Maya Angelou.

Learning that people have more similarities than differences is the key to creating a world of understanding. Racial prejudice and cultural insensitivity can be minimized when people experience that we, no matter what our background, all share the same basic emotions. It is difficult to hate and discriminate against people that you find have similarities to yourself. When looking at our world’s history, a majority of hate crimes were committed by people who were unaware of the other culture. If people start to recognize and learn more about other cultures, we can help prevent these tragedies from happening again.

“To travel is to discover that everyone is wrong about other countries.” – Aldous Huxley.

Our preconceived notions about other lands are often very wrong. People view Californians as people that wear Daisy Dukes and surf all day, when in reality, this is far from the truth. The experience of interacting with different cultures helps reaffirm what is true and what we have improperly stereotyped. It increases our knowledge. It broadens our horizon.

So, clearly the idea of international experience and relating to other cultures well precedes us and our Honors Program. This, to me, makes it even more enticing. If people have encouraged cultural experiences for centuries, clearly we should partake as world travel offers
many benefits, such as adventure, learning about new cultures, and broadening our horizons.
How do we deal with Adversity?

We Turn It into Something Beautiful
Adaptation, Assimilation, and Avoidance

By Kimberly Schmidt

Throughout our lives we are presented with problems and struggles to resolve. While my full twelve piece collection can be interpreted as a struggle to find a balance with our environment and industry, my original concept was to show the different ways we overcome our personal struggles, or even how they overcome us. The selected pieces shown here are three of my favorites in the set.
Dante’s *Inferno*, the first poem of the Divine Comedy, is one of Western culture’s greatest and most celebrated works, and therefore it is naturally included in the reading list for Honors 2. Among its many virtues is a complex rhyme scheme known in Italian as *terza rima* (“third rhyme”).

Consider the rhyme scheme of the first two tercets (i.e., first six lines) of John Ciardi’s translation of *the Inferno* (New York: Penguin Books, 1954), which I assign for Honors 2:

```
Midway in our life’s journey, I went astray
from the straight road and woke to find myself
alone in a dark wood. How shall I say

what wood that was! I never saw so drear,
so rank, so arduous a wilderness!
Its very memory gives a shape to fear.
```

Dante’s actual rhyme scheme is more elaborate. *Terza rima* can be charted by labeling the rhyme sound of the final word of each line with letters; the tercets proceed like this: a/b/a, b/c/b, c/d/c, etc. (Ciardi, in hopes of preserving in English more by way of the original tone, is less ambitious, attempting to rhyme only the final words of the first and third lines of each tercet.) Dante applies *terza rima* throughout the *Divine Comedy*. Each of the one hundred cantos is composed of tercets with this rhyme scheme, such that the triplets themselves are interlocked. The b-word of the first tercet (the final word of the second line) rhymes with the b-words of the second tercet (the final words of the first and third lines), and so on. Here are the first two tercets in their original Italian:
Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita
mi ritrovar per una selva oscura,
ché la diritta via era smarrita.

Ah! quanto a dir qual era è cosa dura
esta selva selvaggia e aspra e forte
che nel pensier rinova la paura!

In light of the complexity of Dante’s rhyme scheme, it is with humility that I present my own poem, part ode to a dear family cat, Puck, part pedagogical device to illustrate to my Honors 2 classes Dante’s use of terza rima:

The family cat
domestic and mild
turned and sat

But then the child
threw a brick
and kitty went wild

Agile and quick
jumping up high
came down with a kick

The poem is unfinished, in part in memory of Puck whose life ended too soon, in part because I have limited poetic imagination. Terza rima, it should be noted, has been quite widely used by English poets; Shelley’s “Ode to the West Wind” is often cited as exemplary. But none of them wrote about Puck.
First they told us we were so pretty

By Aja Lenae Johnson

Without giving away too much, I really want this piece to reflect how seemingly insignificant actions (and in-actions) can have a great impact on a person's self-worth in relation to their identity.

First they told us we were so pretty.
So cute when we played with our dolls;
Dressing them up like mom, cooking for them, taking them on walks in their tiny strollers,
Sitting on the sidewalks drawing pictures of butterflies and dandelions.
Blowing dainty little bubbles,
With our dainty little lips,
And dainty little fingertips.

But one day it all became a more sinister shade of innocence.

One day our dolls turned on us;
Suddenly becoming terrifying monsters that dropped bombs in our mind fields,
Slicing out our tongues if spoke too much, or too loudly.
They poked and prodded us.
With tiny needles attempting to pierce past our skin
And through to our chest cavities.

They bound us with assumptions….
As we wrote out our own eulogies before we had even flowered.
Wishing for saviors because
We thought saviors were a part of the grand design;
Because we thought saviors would sweep us up and lay us down
In beds of sweet-scented petals.

But we couldn’t be saved could we?
Couldn’t be saved from iron cages with lost keys.
And the dolls they taunted,
And the bubbles they burst on our foreheads dripping,
    Stinging our eyes,
    Blurring our vision.
    We were discouraged, distraught.
    We spewed pleas ‘til our throats bled.
    We searched and searched.
And on the edge of hopelessness we found metal hairpins
    That had been hidden between our thighs at birth.

    Shamed the locksmiths for their faulty work,
    Broke free and shamed ourselves for ourselves we’d compromised.

    And now we play with razorblades,
    So they know we’re a force to be reckoned with.
    They stay tucked under our tongues that grew back like tails.

    We play with fire now.
    To burn fortresses and preconceptions,
    To warm the pieces of ourselves left bare,
    To light our way through unchartered forests
    Where no chalk-lined sidewalks exist
    To lead us down paths back to our dollhouses;
    Where things were oh so pretty.

    Where they always thought first to mention these masks,
    And not our minds.