



*a·loud*

a·loud

/ə'loud/

*adverb*

audibly; not silently or  
in a whisper.

***Welcome back to  
a·loud***

We are an antiracist, anticolonial student-run newsletter that shares work by BIPOC voices within the Steve Hicks School of Social Work

Storytelling is **POWER**





*Joanne Sanchez (she/her), Latina Peruvian-American*

### ***You make me smile***

"I painted this piece when I realized my dad was depressed. My younger brother's hands are holding my dad's smile up because he was the only person who could make him laugh amidst the sadness. I learned social support is important- depression knows how to hide in communities of color since we don't talk about it."

# A Letter to the Steve Hicks Social Work program, from a disabled student of color.

After being prompted by a professor for the 3rd time this week  
to peel back the layers of my skin for the class to examine,  
I can't help think how little you do to protect us from exposure;  
at least the surgeon had the decency to stitch me up.

You demand I show my surgical scars,  
my institutionalization papers,  
beg me to say *something in your language for me*.  
and the white students here nod  
empathetically  
Reflecting back emotion so well that they feel  
nothing at all.

You congratulate yourselves  
for allowing someone like me  
to be in the same room with you  
while the main entrance to the school has 25 stairs  
& I am always pointed to the side entrance.

Professor(s)/ Dean(s) \_\_\_ & \_\_\_ & \_\_\_ & \_\_\_ & \_\_\_ (etc.)  
tell me the same things  
this world has taught me to hate about myself,  
only this time, it is said in a gentle voice;  
a piece of rotting meat gift-wrapped.

I think of how many times you have  
lectured to a room who look just like you  
about the importance of helping clients  
whose bodies look like mine.  
Then, you speak to me in private  
And the decay on your breath  
overwhelms the entire office.



And every day  
you turn the peeling of our skin  
into your favorite teaching tool.

and every day  
you say you pity me,  
the blood pooling at my twisted legs  
with a bloody scalpel in your hand.

and every day,  
you practice self-care  
after spending such a long day  
carrying this  
tremendous  
burden.

# PRIDE

*TraQuana Smith (She/Her)  
Black/African American, MSSW Student*

I wish I could tell you how proud I am to be a student at this institution  
But I am not.

I wish I could tell you how proud I am to be a woman  
But I am not

I wish I could tell you how proud I am to be Black  
But I can not  
because

then you would ignore the rest of my identity

Label me as a national threat because

I have so much pride in my caramel skin

Label me as a threat to your educational entitlement

Like white women don't benefit the most from affirmative action

Label me as a sellout because I am preparing to graduate

From a Primarily White Flagship Institution

Because you say I feel like I'm

Too good for an HBCU

When the truth is the HBCU

Just didn't feel like home to me

Because my black has never been

Black enough for our community.

Because we have been trained

To believe that education was only for

The White man.

Correction:

Because we are being trained to believe

That education is only for the

White man.



Because I am never just a woman

I am always a

Black woman

Correction: Because I am always an ANGRY Black woman

Like I don't have the right to be

ANGRY and emotional.

Because I am never just Black

Because it's not like Black people have different lives right?

Because it's not like I deserve to be here as much as anybody else right?

Because I'm not like what you wanted me to be right?

Because I created my own path

And I followed my heart to my destiny

Because I have 4 little people who call me auntie

And they think I'm the world's greatest Shero

Because they will gladly tell you their auntie is at college

Because they don't know what first-gen is

Because my community thinks that I am simply coming back to them

Because my community doesn't understand that I am coming back for them

And if you didn't catch that

then you will never understand why I am proud to be Black in every aspect of my life

Because my Blackness distinguishes every other aspect of my identity

That you try and ignore because you can't take away my Blackness

I will always and forever be a Proud Educated Black Woman

Because my ancestors did not fight this hard for me to give up so easily

# *If I had a day with Trump*

Monica Navarro Jimenez, (She/Her)  
DACA-mented Immigrant from Mexico  
MSSW Student

If I had a day with Trump, our day would start at five in the morning. He would not want to miss the early birds taking an hour-long bus trip to the other side of the city. We would sit next to the woman whose daughter paid \$1.50 for the bus in pennies, whose lunchbox carries homemade tacos for lunch because Lunchables have been rendered innutritious in her home. As their kind smiles and bright eyes are drawn to the orange of his skin, they would try not to stare: bringing attention to themselves has never gone well.

We would be sure to stop at the local clinic and sit in the waiting room, hearing the children on the pediatric side laugh and yell in a harmonious mix of English and Español. He would be proud to see all the women carrying future American citizens, or shocked to find that just like him, they have a desire to form a family and secure for them a future. I'd be sure to introduce him to the future mothers who have lost one or two or three babies before, and that he sees the love that fills their eyes knowing this time they are closer to taking home a baby in their arms.

He would have to meet the women who survived detention centers, whose disillusionment is evident in their voice and whose fear has become a part of their hearts. He will hear about their next court date and come face to face with the uncertainty that comes from not being able to stay and knowing you will suffer if you make the trip back across. "At least your family will be with you," he'd say, and after translating this to Spanish, we would remind him that even that is not guaranteed. Not when you have a citizen son. Not when the border lacks practices to protect family units and reunite them.

We would take a Lyft to the refugee homes, and on the way, hear the driver explain in detail his journey from Honduras to the United States. He will outline walking through swamps, being terrified of not making it to the next day, and ultimately confess he would have died if he had tried to stay with his mother anyway. His mother - he thinks about her every day but has to be strong. He witnessed his friend and his friend's wife shot to death. That, he says, is something one can never forget, something one cannot willingly go back to.

Thanking him for getting us to Casa Marianella and Posada Esperanza, we would climb up the hill to the cul-de-sac the women and children call home. We'd give Russian and Arabic and Spanish the room they need to communicate with one another. Then, sit quietly with the man who does not want to take a walk outside because he misses his family. Instead, he stares blankly at the television he does not understand. We would sit and attempt to communicate with the rest in African dialects and see that smiles and kindness and patience are sometimes the best policy. The beauty of unmerited grace would be his greatest discovery.

We would end the day at a small taco truck in North Austin, cash only. We'd wait on the long line with year-round Christmas lights reflecting in our eyes and be offered Mexican candy for sale from a shy four-year-old who has already learned to take rejection gracefully. Later, her mother will exit the food truck to make sure she is warm enough, and gently kiss her forehead. When we order in mellifluous Spanish and a group of men from across Latin America smile and make their recommendations, he'll see they are just like him: businessmen. After hesitating at the food placed before him, he'd have to agree he has never eaten something more delectable. He'll most likely need an extra cup of horchata to alleviate the effects of the chile I warned him not to eat, and then another one to take back home for Ivanka. "Such a great honor," he'd say staring at his tiny, powerful hands, "America is already great."

# BE HEARD

## We want to hear from you

Let your voice be heard through your art, songs, rants, essays—your creative musings in all forms. Below we offer some prompts as creative launch pads—these are prompts that sparked curiosity in the *a-loud* Newsletter Team, but these are not meant to limit your creative genius.

**Respond to any of the prompts below. Share your response through any medium or expression that feels right for you.**

### *Honoring Grief*

1

We are entering a new year, holding an abundance of grief. In her newsletter, *Anti-Racism Daily*, published on January 11, after the insurrection at the capitol, (read the full piece [here](#)) Nicole Cardoza names the accumulation of grief that has occurred historically, in 2020, and into 2021 for BIPOC communities. She says,

*“If this country will not make space for our healing, it is up to us. We must hold and process our grief tenderly with our community and center collective grief over reductive white grievance politics. Our healing journey may not be linear, but it’s our only path through”.*

How do you honor your grief and the grief of your community?  
How are you making space for yourself at this time?

***Calling all artists, digital designers,  
and creative brains!***

2

*a·loud* is looking for a student created logo. We welcome any form of creativity - and we know y'all have it... have you seen the student pieces above?! If you are interested in designing a logo for the *a·loud* newsletter and getting paid for it, we would love to collaborate and connect with you at [aloud.stf@gmail.com](mailto:aloud.stf@gmail.com)

### ***A Limitless Space***

3

This publication is constantly transforming, and it is your space. What do you feel compelled to share? What do you want your peers and the school of social work to know? Please use this section to share any content you feel needs to be shared.

### ***Submission Details***

To share your work, submit to this [link](#) by February 24th. Students whose submissions are published will be paid \$25.00. Written work should be no more than 750 words in length, and imagery should be clear and saved in JPEG or GIF file format.

# THIS BLACK HISTORY MONTH...

Honor the Black leaders who came before us, revere the Black leaders who are with us today, and cultivate space for the Black leaders to come. Black students, take stock of the power you possess and the resilience woven into your ancestry. This month is a time for rest, reflection, and self-admiration. Non-Black students, recognize and evaluate any unearned privileges that you hold. Let this month be a time of continued action, wealth redistribution, and advocating for anti-racism in the spaces you frequent.

Follow this [link](#) to learn more about a few resources our team found to be of great importance, especially this month.

## AUSTIN ARTIST SPOTLIGHT



Artwork by Chris Rogers

 @chrisrogersart

 @chris-rogersArtist

## ***The Fine Print***

Due to *a·loud*'s position within the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, *a·loud* is unable to publish content that explicitly names individuals or courses. That being said, we will gladly collaborate with you to ensure that your stories are told and heard within these boundaries.

## ***Seeking BIPOC Perspectives***

Would you be interested in reviewing submissions for this newsletter?

We are always looking for more folx to collaborate with. If you identify as Black, Indigenous, or a Student of Color and would like to play a part in reviewing and selecting submissions, please email us at [Aloud.STF@gmail.com](mailto:Aloud.STF@gmail.com). This is not a recurring commitment. If you would like to offer your time once, we would love to have you. Rather stay awhile? Please do. Your input matters.

# **JOIN OUR TEAM**