

a·loud

/ə'loud/

adverb

audibly; not silently or
in a whisper.

We are an antiracist, anticolonial student-run newsletter
that shares work by BIPOC voices within the SHSSW

STORYTELLING IS POWER

BLACK IN AMERICA

TraQuana Smith | she/her | MSSW student | Black/African American

I wrote this in 2015 during my 1st year of undergrad at UT and looking back as I write new pieces this is still relevant.

I can't tell you how tired I am of being BLACK in America

I'm tired of having to defend my BLACKNESS in America

I'm tired of having to worry about my brother's safety because of their
BLACKNESS

I'm tired of having to worry about my sister's safety because of their BLACKNESS

I'm tired of being BLACK in America!

I'm tired of having to educate others on my struggles of being BLACK in America.

Why can't you educate yourself?

Why can't you try to understand my pain?

Why can't you keep your finger off of the trigger that you so happily point at my
BLACK body?

Why did you pull your gun out because I am BLACK?

I know that I can't ask you for justice because your justice system wasn't made for my kind.

Justice for a BLACK person is not what you had in mind.

I just want to know when can I expect you to want to change your plan?

Tell me how many innocent people have to die before you see a problem with your justice?

Tell me how a mass murder can be taken into custody unharmed but BLACK folks are lucky to make it into the cruiser alive?

Tell me how a passionate BLACK woman is found hanging in her cell after unjustly being arrested?

Somebody tell me how I am supposed to live in America when I am constantly in fear?

I can't be myself in America because I am BLACK and to add to that I am a woman.

I am a BLACK WOMAN in a world that was not made for either of those identities.

I am constantly in fear because I can't be free in America.

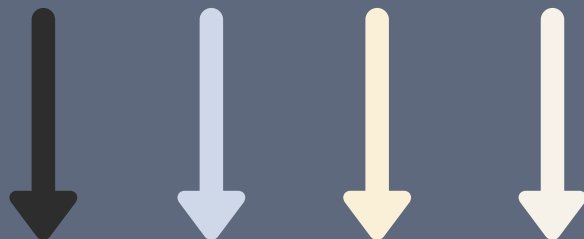
AMERICA is not ready for me to be free because my freedom will cost them their sanity.

Live in my shoes for a little while and you will come to realize that none of us are free until all of us are free!

TRAPPED ABOARD

Rashonda Smith-Livingston | she/her/hers | MSSW student | African American

Aboard a slave ship, that is where I was, but now, I am chain free.
Although this is not only where I aimed to be,
I mean C'mon now!
Wouldn't you agree, that to be truly free, you physically and mentally
must be in the same space simultaneously?
But I am free,
That is what they told me
They even gave me these freedom papers to show me,
Yet I'm stuck in this place where my emotions are motioned by this pain
that I can't seem to refrain from going back to!
I see the tranquil ocean but all I hear are the screams of my people
being brutally beaten and crucially mistreatin'
I lie in bed, memories racing in my head,
Memories of the nights,
Nights I slept in blood, chained to the corpse of my partner; who was
only trying to breathe!
Eric Garner he was only trying to breathe!
But we are free,
It seems as though everything that was created to bring me peace is
somehow a reminder of how I am not truly free.



I feel the same wind from long ago,
It was my blanket some time ago
Now it gently blows against my chain free wrist and ankles,
I can't smell the roses; my nose is stuck aboard the slave ship—
clogged with the stench of rotten feces
I am robbed of my senses.
Please, please do not hug me, for that too is a reminder,
A reminder of how I was contemplated on, violated wrong, personals
and valuables gone
Captured,
Imprisoned,
Trapped,
Aboard the slave ship— that is where I was,
And that is where my mind will always be,
because I- am not, truly free

I DID NOT CHOOSE RESILIENCE

I don't know that
I will ever know how to live
in a world that winces
at the sight of my body.

I am a magnet for eyes-
either inviting them or repelling them,
but nothing in between.

I am a mother's favorite lesson
in her child's self-worth.

So educational,

to point to my
brace // cane // wheelchair //
limp // movement // tears

at least you're not that.

I see them name my body weakness
and the name is reborn in each child's eyes.

Their mothers, so desperate for their
baby to come out on top, scour the streets
for a body their small feet can easily walk
over.

She was, of course, so busy,
she could not take the time to notice
that my body has always been
a stronghold of ache.

The pain that would make her writhe
is just my Tuesday.

Of course, I'd love to writhe-
to be afforded the luxury of screams.

But my professor claims allyship in
with same breath that he
denies me my
accommodations // needs // humanity.

So I do what needs to be done
until my body // mind // heart
refuses the violence of your "resilience".

I watch the mother drag her child away.
I wonder if she knows
that a broken thing
is simply one
that has been forced
into strength
too many times.

We wanted to know,

How are you are nurturing your
needs this summer?

I graduated!

So, I am reminding myself
to revel in my success rather than
immediately focusing on passing the LMSW exam
& getting a job.

I deserve rest and celebration and I deserve to feel my power!
I want to bring that strength into the job market.
I'm working to shed my imposter syndrome
& command the respect
and salary
that I deserve.

You answered.

I desperately needed to quit my job;

I was so stressed and was diagnosed with a condition.
I tried to stick it out but need to choose my own self.

I don't know what's next and I'm concerned about money,
especially with my background.

I'm questioning a lot right now,
but have some hope
that it will work out.

I am resting

by strengthening my boundaries
and self-advocating
in places where

I previously couldn't

We would still
love to hear from you!

Let us know how you are
nurturing your needs this summer at

https://utexas.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9zAt1dkMcON2unY



BE HEARD

We want to hear from you

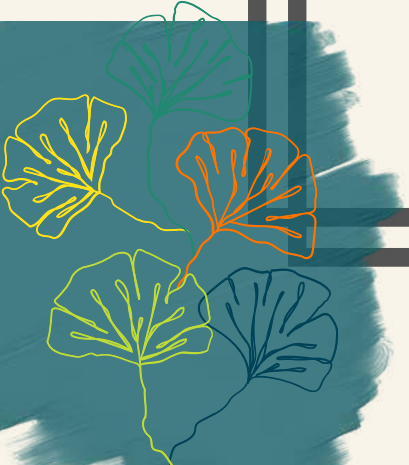
Let your voice be heard through your **art, songs, rants, essays**—your creative musings in all forms. Below we offer some prompt(s) as creative launch pads—these are prompts that sparked curiosity in the *a·loud* Newsletter Team, but these are not meant to limit your creative genius.

Respond to any of the prompts in the following page. Share your response through any medium or expression that feels right for you.



A LIMITLESS SPACE

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 SPACE TO SHARE ANY CONTENT YOU FEEL NEEDS TO BE SHARED.






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.



SUBMISSION DETAILS

TO SHARE YOUR WORK, SUBMIT TO THIS [LINK](#) BY **AUGUST 15TH. STUDENTS WHOSE SUBMISSIONS ARE PUBLISHED WILL BE GIVEN A **\$25.00** CASH AWARD. WRITTEN WORK SHOULD BE NO MORE THAN 750 WORDS IN LENGTH, AND IMAGERY SHOULD BE CLEAR AND SAVED IN JPEG OR GIF FILE FORMAT.**



BPOC COMMUNITY

Our mission is to elevate voices, support and amplify stories of people of color.

This month, our communications team curated this round-up of a few of our favorite Austin artists of color.





Floral Designer



Artwork by
Aryana



Multimedia Artist/Writer

I HAVE TWO SHADOWS

One is darker
And at night with lights off
I can only whisper
softly into my sister's ear

Did you see the fathers

at the birthday party?
They lost the game
and as punishment in their beer-stained button-up shirts and jeans
gyrated their bodies slowly to the clown's song
Asi asi como mueve la colita, si no la mueve la tiene tapadita



 @huacatayy
ximexime.com

Artwork by
Xime Izquierdo Ugaz

Seeking BIPOC Perspectives

Be a part of our team!

Would you be interested in reviewing submissions for this newsletter?

We are always looking for more folks 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. 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.

