

2017

Introduction

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INTRODUCTION

“I look around me: An African girl. A white girl. A teacher. Probably a Mexican man. A freshman. A Muslim lady in her hijab.

“Show me what democracy looks like!” screamed a young man on the loudspeaker.

“This is what democracy looks like!” the crowd screamed back.

This is what democracy looks like, I agreed.” —Anuradha Desai

Welcome to the 2017 edition of *Intertext*. This year’s editors and contributing authors have collaborated with the hope of bringing diverse and dynamic stories to the campus community. Influenced by the current political climate and social atmosphere, the themes presented represent life lessons, the circulation of meaning, and the politics of belonging. These contributions reflect our present circumstances and the responses they’ve conjured. Our first class met on the day of President Trump’s inauguration, and here’s what the editors have to say:

“I always felt like students were not part of the ‘real world,’ as if that didn’t start until we moved our tassel to the other side of our caps. However, being a Syracuse student, I



Layout by Rachel Young. Photograph by Vanessa Rojas-Castillo.

have realized that we are an integral part of the ‘real world.’ Now, more than ever, I feel like I have a voice. Our campus is passionate and inclusive, and as students, we have a real chance at making a difference in our society.” —**Jessica Bowden**

“A portion of the nation was finally filled with the hope that they had seemingly lost on the way, but a majority of the nation was filled with grief and fear. We spent most of the day reading the bold-faced headlines and turning the president into a casual meme, but there was already an air of unease that had been hovering for two years.” —**Alice Chen**

“To say nothing is to stand with Trump. The only way to defeat his fascist government is to make a commitment to being politically informed, protesting, and speaking out against discrimination. A portion of America has spoken, but that doesn’t mean our voices can’t yell louder.” —**Sarah Crawford**

“Regardless of the recent and recurring events taking place in the country I call home, I am not bitter. I am not vengeful. I am aware—aware of the power that you and I possess to make the changes we want to see in our country. In 2017, my eyes are open, my ears are listening, and my heart is set on contributing to a society of equality, tolerance, and justice.” —**Doris Dorval**

“I look to the leader of our country and I disagree with what he represents. In a rhetorical battle of ethics, he shows me exactly what a leader should not look like. I am ready to stand up and let my voice be heard. I can only hope my peers are also ready for this battle.” —**Kathryn Kawasoe**

“Since the inauguration, I’ve told myself to stand strong in who I am. My Blackness, my womanhood, my sense of being.. In addition to hoping for a more just and equitable future, we must put action behind our words, or else ‘hope’ for a better future is a dream.” —**Ibi Lagundoye**

“As I complete my final semester at Syracuse University, I find myself tossed into the world as a Black man with a president who reeks of incompetence and possesses a financial plan that almost assures a bigger wealth disparity gap, a vice president on the wrong side of civil rights and the LGBTQ movement, and a Senate that has historically and continually disenfranchised anyone who isn’t a white male. I hope for equality but would gladly settle for sanity.” —**Brandon Mixson**

“This campus is made up of so many different people, but we still stand together in good times and in bad. With Donald Trump’s presidency, I hope that as a community, we continue to uphold the foundation of diversity Syracuse has built.” —**Destiny Reyes**

“Diversity, justice, and freedom. These are liberties that we all hope for. After President Trump’s inauguration, I doubted America’s credibility. I questioned the status of our country on a moral scale and was quick to lose hope. But then I remembered: Even while doubting the intelligence and integrity of our new president, America still cries ‘land of the free.’” —**Vanessa Rojas-Castillo**

“As a child of Japanese immigrants and the first person in my family to graduate college, I am constantly trying to reconcile the expectation to ‘be American’ with the desire to value and celebrate my Japanese heritage. I hope neither I nor anyone else will have to compromise just to assimilate into a single way of thinking.” —**Sakura Tomizawa**

“I am a proud Latina. I am a proud female. I am a proud first-generation college student. But above all else, I am a proud humanitarian. The value of compassion, kindness, inclusivity, and understanding is something that feels very overlooked in our present political situation.” —**Molly Velázquez-Brown**

“An intolerant society lives within the sheltered domain of a single truth, unable to cope with contrasting narratives that challenge a subjective reality. Students studying within

the Syracuse community are equipped with the courage and articulation to raise their words against wrongful aggressions and victimization.” —**Abigail Welles**

“Now, more than ever, we need compassion. We need empathy. We need inclusivity. The election and inauguration of our 45th president has created an indisputable divide. If we let this divergence widen, we will only let in more corruption, more deceit, and more prejudice.” —**Rachel Young**

We are a group of editors from all walks of life who have found our way to this class at Syracuse University. We wanted this issue to display not only talented artists and writers, but also diversity, conflict, voices of minorities, and hope. All voices matter and deserve to be heard. We hope that in these trying times, *Intertext* becomes a space for all our contributors and readers to feel accepted and free to express themselves.

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We would like to thank our professor, Patrick W. Berry, without whom this publication would not be possible. He facilitated the production of each piece and consistently offered guidance, support, insight, and coffee to all the editors as we tirelessly worked to create this issue. Professor Berry never faltered in kindness or wisdom while our editors asked countless questions, debated creative differences, and learned to produce a magazine using tools and programs that some of us had never used before.

We are truly grateful to Professor Lois Agnew, the Department of Writing Studies, Rhetoric, and Composition, and the College of Arts and Sciences, including its iLEARN program, for supporting this project. We give endless thanks to Benay Bubar, Wendy Mansfield, and Atoosa Rubenstein for providing us with professional guidance, knowledge, and encouragement in a field most of our editors have just begun to explore. We also want to thank the Louise Wetherbee Phelps Awards judges—Benjamin Erwin, Santee Fraser, Tamara Issak, and Krista Kennedy—for putting their valuable time and consideration into choosing the most exemplary upper- and lower-division pieces.

Finally, we must give our thanks to the writers and artists who contributed their work to the publication; without these creators, none of this would have been possible. *Intertext* is brought to life every year by the creativity, excitement, and willingness of students to share their work with the Syracuse University community and beyond.

—**Molly Velázquez-Brown, Ibi Lagundoye, and Doris Dorval**