



# Acknowledgements



To my younger self, who would have never imagined breaking the fourth wall of the exclusive, elitist, and white supremacist publishing world.

To my undergraduate self, who birthed poetry and resistance at 3am, in the depths of institutional isolation.

To my adult self, who struggled to find community with adult learners outside of substance-filled environments.

To my late great grandmother, Lorraine Alexander, who taught me the curiosity and wonder hidden within the treble clef.

To my late grandmother, Shirley Greene, who taught me there was never a lack for systemic questions.

To my grandmother, Linda Whittle, who always told me to never stop dancing as she called me her “little genius.” To Linda, who taught me unlocking my mixed-race ancestry was only the beginning of my liberation.



To the lands on which this text was theorized, curated, edited, and published: the colonized territory of the Eastern Pequot, Golden Hill Paugussett, Lenape, Mashantucket Pequot, Mohegan, Nipmuc, and Schaghticoke Peoples. To the Indigenous peoples who have stewarded this sacred land, now the grounds of the University of Connecticut at Storrs, through generations. To our Indigenous ancestors, for their strength and resilience in protecting this sacred land. May we aspire to uphold our responsibilities in accordance with their example.

To this stolen country, which would not exist without the uncompensated, enslaved labor of Black people. We honor the legacy of the African diaspora and the Black lives, knowledge, and skills stolen through systemic violence, capitalism, imperialism, and white supremacy.

Let us reflect on these complex truths and commit ourselves to the ongoing work of justice.

# Special Thanks

To my mother, Christine Greene, who taught me that food was an ancestral medicine centered in community gathering. To Christine, who taught me to be a “survivin’ ass bitch.”

To Afra Hassan Pour, my best friend, partner in life, and unofficial co-editor.

To Dr. Shelley P. Haley, a mentor, light in the dark, and lifelong “mom away from home.”

To Ezra Valentin, a dear friend and creator of *The Vision*’s cover art.

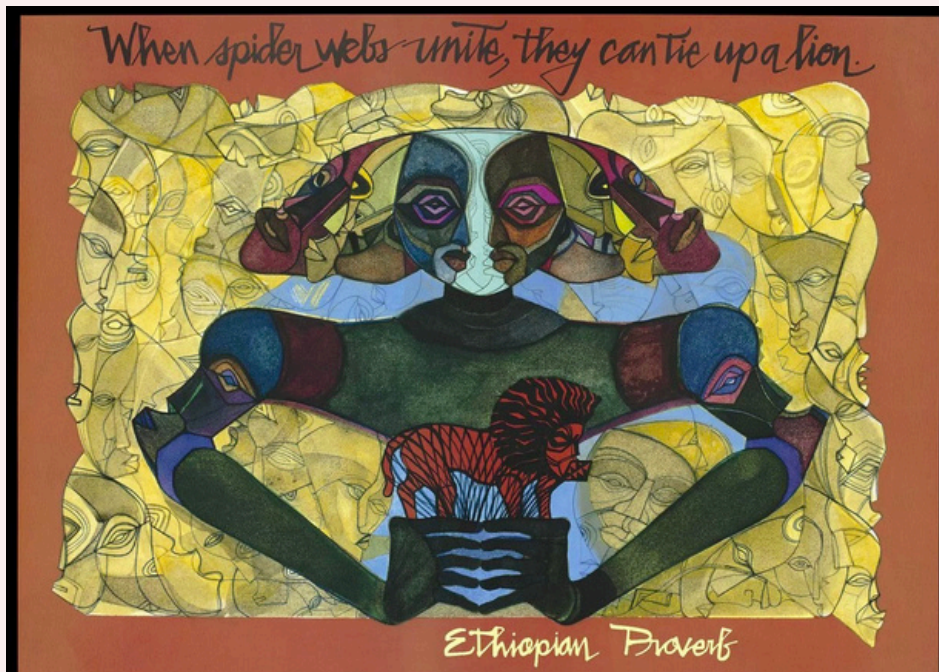
To Carl Dean, who created my original Supplemental Description of Duties (SDD) as an AACC graduate assistant and tasked me with bringing back *The Vision: Black arts and wellness journal*.

To Margaret Bugingo, an essential UConn colleague, white ally, co-conspirator, former supervisor, and co-engineer of the Linguistic Racism Ballot Box.

To Grace Wright-Goodison, an undergraduate worker for the Writing Center, who helped circulate the Linguistic Racism Ballot box among the Library and the AACC.

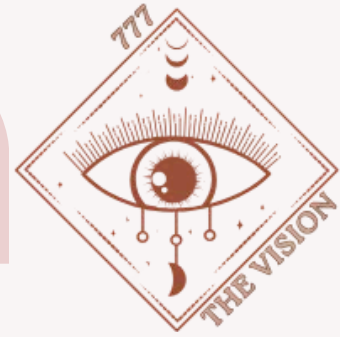
To Ahmed AboHamad, Ananda Griffin, and I’jazz Muhammad, my AACC colleagues, friends, co-conspirators, and fellow members of the AACC 2023-2025 GA cohort.

**The Vision 777 cover art inspiration:**



**“When spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion.” - Ethiopian Proverb**

# Table of Contents

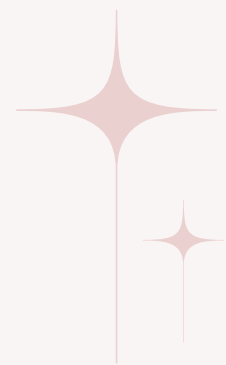


## From the Editor

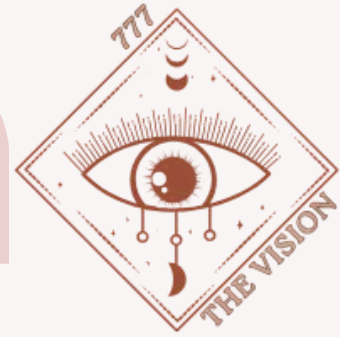
<b>ABOUT THE EDITOR</b> Alexis Greene, aka elexified	10
<b>LETTER FROM THE EDITOR</b> Alexis Greene, aka elexified	11
<b>HISTORY OF THE VISION</b> Alexis Greene, aka elexified	16

## Poetry

<b>HOME</b> Iris Jordan, aka Localblackpoet	19
<b>COMMUNITY</b> Iris Jordan, aka Localblackpoet	20
<b>SULKY SPOKEN WORD</b> Iris Jordan, aka Localblackpoet	21
<b>SELF-LOVE</b> AnUrbanNerd	22
<b>SNOW FALL BLUR</b> Yvonna Maxie	23
<b>I AM FROM</b> Shannon Martin	24
<b>ROOTS DOWN</b> Luckson Saturne	26
<b>IN THE GARDEN OF US</b> Taj Julien	27



# Table of Contents

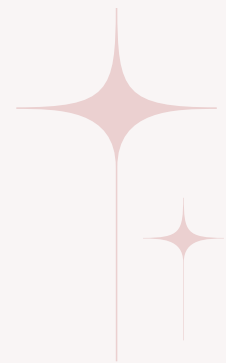


## Poetry (cont.)

<b>THE BLUEPRINT</b> Jourdelyn Vargas, aka Lyricc	28
<b>SOUL ELIXIR</b> Alexis Greene, aka elexified	30
<b>GENERATIONAL CONSTIPATION</b> Alexis Greene, aka elexified	31
<b>RULES OF CONTEMPORARY POETRY</b> Alexis Greene, aka elexified	32
<b>I AM FROM</b> Alexis Greene, aka elexified	33

## Photography

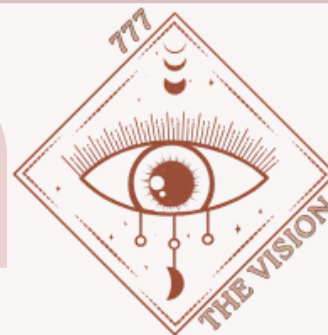
<b>AACC STAFF COMMUNITY PHOTOS (FALL 2024)</b> Alexis Greene, aka elexified and Ahmed AboHamad	36
<b>HAIR JEWELS PHOTOSHOOT</b> Submitted by: Jewel Booker; Photography by: Victor Adeniji	38
<b>TRUTH HUNTER AT JACOB'S DANCE PILLOW</b> Submitted by: Truth Hunter; Photography by: Becca Oviatt	42



## Linguistic Racism Ballot Box

<b>LINGUISTIC RACISM BALLOT BOX</b> Reflections Written by: Alexis Greene, aka elexified Questions Developed by: Margaret Bugingo, Writng Center	45
--	----

# Table of Contents



## Visual Art

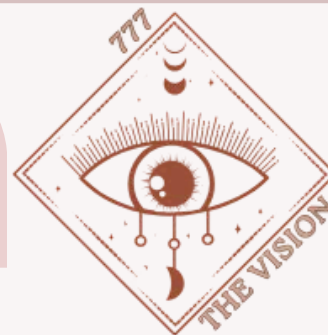
<b>THE OLDEN DAYS</b>	49
Jaelie Jackson	
<b>COMMUNITY IN FRIENDSHIP</b>	50
Rilee Roldan	
<b>UNTITLED (2017)</b>	52
Alexis Greene, aka elexified	
<b>UNTITLED (2017)</b>	53
Alexis Greene, aka elexified	
<b>AN INTERESTING JUXTAPOSITION</b>	54
Alexis Greene, aka elexified	
<b>UNTITLED (2017)</b>	55
Alexis Greene, aka elexified	
<b>BLACK HOLES IN THE OZONE LAYER</b>	56
Alexis Greene, aka elexified	

## Recipes

<b>KALE AND QUINOA SALAD</b>	58
Christine Greene	
<b>MINISTRONE SOUP</b>	59
Christine Greene	
<b>LEX'S RUSTIC PASTA</b>	60
Alexis Greene, aka elexified	
<b>CHICKEN WITH WHITE WINE</b>	61
Christine Greene	
<b>L'IL MOM'S POTATO SALAD</b>	62
Shelley P. Haley	



# Table of Contents



## Recipes (cont.)

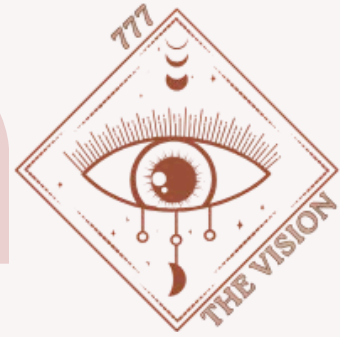
<b>L'IL MOM'S MACARONI AND CHEESE</b> Shelley P. Haley	63
<b>KELEWELE (SPICY PLANTAIN) GHANAIAI HOMEMADE RECIPE</b> Portia Wuyeme Adansie	65
<b>KOSUA NE MAKO ( BOILED EGG &amp; PEPPER) GHANAIAI HOMEMADE RECIPE</b> Portia Wuyeme Adansie	66
<b>GHANAIAI SHITO RECIPE</b> Portia Wuyeme Adansie	67
<b>MESA'AH: A NORTH AFRICAN EGGPLANT STEW</b> Ahmed AboHamad	70
<b>CASPIAN SWEET + SOUR KABABS</b> Submitted by: Afra Hassan Pour; Sourced from: <i>Joon: Persian Cooking Made Simple</i> by Najmieh Batmanglig	72

## Sweet Treats

<b>MASHKE (FANTE KENKEY SMOOTHIE/ ICED KENKEY) GHANAIAI HOMEMADE RECIPE</b> Portia Wuyeme Adansie	75
<b>BEST CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES YOU'VE EVER TASTED</b> Patti Ferraro	76
<b>RICH FRUIT CAKE</b> Shelley P. Haley	77
<b>KEY LIME PIE</b> Christine Greene	78
<b>BAKLAVA CAKE</b> Submitted by: Afra Hassan Pour; Sourced from: <i>Joon: Persian Cooking Made Simple</i> by Najmieh Batmanglig	80
<b>BROWN SUGAR CORNBREAD</b> Shelley P. Haley	82



# Table of Contents



## Prose

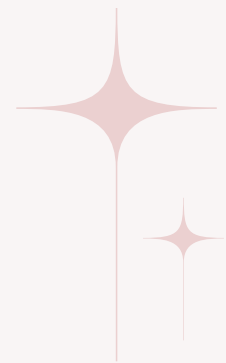
<b>UNTITLED</b> Ahmed AboHamad	84
<b>WHTINEY</b> Denver Kelly	85
<b>333</b> Afra Hassan Pour	87
<b>PAINTING (Y)OUR PRIVILEGE</b> Alexis Greene, aka elexified* *Contains explicit language	93

## Catalog of Events

<b>CATALOG OF EVENTS</b> Alexis Greene, aka elexified	99
--	----

## Closing Remarks

<b>CLOSING REMARKS</b> Alexis Greene, aka elexified	105
--	-----





Words from  
the Editor

# About the Editor



Alexis "Lex" Greene (they/them)



Photography by: Alexa McCall Mahn Udell  
During my time before UConn, and outside of my studies at UConn, I have enjoyed:

- Studying music and creating self-produced music (piano, clarinet, guitar, singing)
- Dancing across genres (ballet, tap, jazz, modern, hip-hop, African, and Russian character)
- Beauty makeup artistry and special effects (SFX) makeup artistry (freelance & retail)
- Photography, videography, and editing
- Creative writing (poetry, prose, creative nonfiction, screenplays, etc.)
- Creating social media content (including content for the AACC's Instagram)

I am a Bronx-born, Bridgeport-raised multimedia artist, scholar, and educator. I began my studies in Higher Education and Student Affairs (HESA) at the University of Connecticut (UConn) in 2023, alongside my role as a graduate assistant (GA) for the African American Cultural Center (AACC).

I was hired by the AACC as the HESA Graduate Student Program Coordinator. During my time as a graduate assistant, I have strategized ways to re-brand *The Vision: Black arts and wellness journal*. My strategies have included many strategic pivots and branches of creative workshops, including:

- Ink Drip: Creative Writing Workshops
- Illuminate: Creative Writing Workshops (in collaboration with the Asian American Cultural Center)
- Black Grads Matter: A Vegas Rule Event
- Art-Official Intelligence Exhibit (in collaboration with DesignedBlack)
- Soulful Vibes Open Mic Night
- Paint and Sip-Licated with Alicia Cobb of ArtSimplified
- Learning "Speech Speak" with Lex Greene
- Black UConn Resource Room (in collaboration with the Writing Center)
- Storytelling our Identities (in collaboration with the Writing Center and UConn MIXED)
- Reflect and Connect, Pt. II: A Post-Inauguration Mixer
- Rest Resource Room (Triple R)
- Community in the Creases: Grad Student Zine Workshop Series (in collaboration with Graduate School and UConn Library)



# Letter from the Editor

I curate the materials you will read within this edition of *The Vision* from the lens of an ever-curious mind; an only-child turned multimedia artist with endless imagination, hope for beautiful realities, and an incessant creation of possible futures; an “accidental” educator (for all intents and purposes); a musician (both classical and experimental); a poet (both published and rejected); a scholar (both within and beyond the university); a creative (within and beyond formal structures and boundaries).

I curate the materials you will read within this edition of *The Vision* from the intersectional lens of a survivor of the ever pervasive, predatory streets and defunct education system of Bridgeport, Connecticut; a survivor of verbal abuse and domestic violence within my two-parent household in Bridgeport; a once fiercely silent only child from Bridgeport turned into an irreverent poet who has performed across Connecticut.

I curate the materials you will read within this edition of *The Vision* from the intersectional lens of a silenced little Black girl, a Black person now existing proudly within their Brown skin, a Black woman who consciously leverages their resounding voice to take up space as such, and a Black non-binary person who rejects confines of societal binaries and identity markers (age, race, gender, (dis)ability, class, sexuality).

I was once a person who allowed themselves to be institutionally pushed out of everything they once knew in Bridgeport and thrust into systemic discomfort—with the hopes of liberating myself from poverty, violence, systemic inequities, and the gender wage gap. At seventeen, I pursued higher education at a small liberal arts college in central New York. Unknowingly, I was accepted to this institution via conditional admittance through a TRIO/SSS program, which refused to name itself as such.

I was a part of a Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) cohort of about 40 incoming freshmen of whom were predominantly students of color from low-income, under resourced “inner cities.” Superficially, I had access to all the resources and mentorship someone who held my sociopolitical identities as a Black woman from an under resourced inner city would ever need; however, my family’s socioeconomic status (lower to upper middle class) stood between me and my academic success.

Within the first two weeks of our HEOP summer intensive program (seven classes across five weeks, including passing a school sanctioned fitness exam), I discerned that most peers in my cohort would attend college in the Fall at next to nothing costs. I, on the other hand, had the sticker price of \$25,000/yr etched into my mind and heart.

From pride and resilience to the reclamation of personal power,  
Alexis C. Greene, aka the artist known as elexified



# Letter from the Editor

I was at a severe disadvantage as I quickly became perceived as the “rich,” light skinned Black girl to my peers. To my peers, I was the bougie, snooty hotep who did makeup (and had “pretty girl privilege” on top of light skinned privilege). I was ostracized and isolated as cliques formed and study groups were weaponized to ensure exceptional academic success. I floundered as I struggled to master academic writing.

To my mentors, I was just another Black girl convinced that pursuing a career in STEM was my only option. I forced myself into a chemistry track, thinking that the only way I could accomplish my escapist goals of liberating myself from poverty and the predetermined privilege(s) I was (and was not) born into as a Black woman. Instead of creating an environment within which resources were sought out to help me persist, I was essentially called delusional and encouraged to become a writer by my mentors.

As I experienced these instances of aggression on both macro and micro scales, the mere prospect of the financial toll I was placing on myself and my family, by way of private, subsidized, and unsubsidized loans, grew more and more enormous. Each way I moved through the institution—and the surrounding area of central New York—was full of guilt and shame-laced strategy. Neither my parents or I could afford to send me to college (or keep me enrolled). To afford my first year of college, my mother took out a Parent Plus loan and my father used money he inherited from my late grandmother, who vehemently abhorred college, and discouraged me from it.

*I couldn't throw away my shot.*

After my first year in college, and nearly flunking both Gen Chem and Orgo, I took the risk of enrolling in a purely humanities-centered course schedule. I equipped myself with courses which would count as credit toward both a Classics degree and/or a Creative Writing degree. To my surprise, I did exceptionally well. A core moment was when my Literature teacher told me she knew my pursuit of chemistry was “just a phase” and that she was anticipating the time when I embraced my writerly identity. Through the help of her mentorship and coursework, I mastered “academic writing.”

In the middle of the one and only creative writing workshop course I took in college, I declared a double major in Classics and Creative Writing. About two weeks later, I asked the same Registrar's office about the process of declaring a leave of absence. Once again, I had been institutionally pushed out of my (dis)comfort zone as I reported via my FAFSA that my father had made just above \$100,000 for the 2017 fiscal year. Somehow that meant we could afford a \$45,000/yr sticker price for my junior year, an amount which would have been three times the cost of our monthly mortgage payment.

From pride and resilience to the reclamation of personal power,  
Alexis C. Greene, aka the artist known as elexified

# Letter from the Editor



There was nothing I could do to convince my college's financial aid office that their decision to cut my financial aid package in half was astronomically unethical. That's just the way it was. That's just how it was done. According to the financial aid officer, my "friends" (either other students of color and/or students a part of other TRIO/SSS programs on campus) had all made their financial aid packages work. Why couldn't I?

I was helpless in convincing the financial aid office that all communities of color were not inherently intertwined; that I was an individual, experiencing an isolated issue apart from my peers. After realizing my systemic helplessness, I confronted the choice I thought was the most shame-inducing of all: go back home to Bridgeport without completing my degree. During the SP2018 semester, I successfully improved my GPA a whole point, to a 3.031. I simultaneously planned my escape from a shamelessly unjust and exploitative system, back into my incubation zone of Bridgeport, Connecticut.

Rather than it being a "safety net" (my father's words), my parents' house and Bridgeport overall were the ground zero of building my creative foundations alongside my academic career. It was within Bridgeport where I began to fully flesh out my multimedia artistic portfolio as the artist *elexified*. Shortly after returning home, I began my career as a retail makeup artist, working in Sephora. Just one year after leaving college, I performed a featured set as an artist in New London, Connecticut.

Through performing my set at Cultured Studios with laryngitis (and an undiagnosed blood disorder) I became ferociously zealous and resilient. By the time I was diagnosed with thalassemia trait in early 2020, I had virtually no iron left in my body. Although I was physically and mentally exhausted and my voice was fragile from strain, I never stopped pursuing ways to leverage my voice with other marginalized communities. I worked with artists of color to create collective communities of resistance. Building community with artists who veraciously uncovered multidimensional tools of systemic disruption and upheaval gave me the confidence to re-enter higher education.

I resumed my studies in English: Creative Writing at the University of Bridgeport (UB) in August of 2020, two years after I left my previous higher education institution. In Bridgeport, Southern CT, and UB, I found a beautiful community of queer and trans artists of color with whom I fleshed out my undergraduate senior capstone project, "The Bias(Ed) Discussion: Expanding Educational Narratives (TBD)." TBD was centered in educational autobiographies, autoethnography, and critical qualitative research.

**From pride and resilience to the reclamation of personal power,  
Alexis C. Greene, aka the artist known as *elexified***

# Letter from the Editor

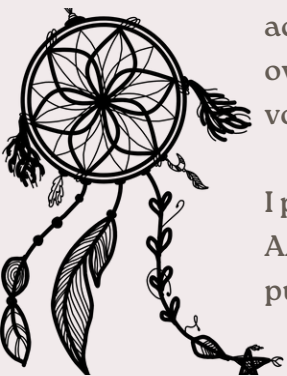
The successes and missteps I encountered within my creation of TBD led me to pursue my studies in the Higher Education and Student Affairs (HESA) master's program at the University of Connecticut (UConn) in 2023. Within my HESA application essay, I explicitly committed myself to promoting the access, representation, and visibility of queer and trans students of color within higher education settings. This commitment was echoed within my assistantship application and interview process, and as I was hired as the HESA graduate assistant for the African American Cultural Center (AACC).

I saw unlimited potential within my opportunity to serve as a graduate assistant for the AACC. When I received my Supplemental Description of Duties (SDD) for my role as an AACC graduate assistant, I was particularly intrigued by the prospect of "Prepare materials for *The Vision* (AACC literary magazine), website and social media." Amid my excitement, however, I neglected to research *The Vision* online, or connect with current UConn students about *The Vision*. Once I began my role as a graduate assistant, I quickly realized that I had overestimated *The Vision* as an active publication on campus, a highly sought-after magazine with an enviable social media presence.

I had also overestimated the relevance of *The Vision* as an efficient modality of creative expressionism for Black students at UConn, post-COVID. In the wake of the pandemic, Black students at UConn had devised alternative methods to *The Vision*, including the community of artists affiliated with DesignedBlack and The Black UConn Collective. In comparison to newly established groups and revised modalities for creating and fostering community care, *The Vision* was inherently outdated and performative; *The Vision* was associated with pervasive institutional cultures and dominant, deficit-based narratives which lacked accurate representation.

Despite encountering many challenges to re-establish *The Vision*, I present this eighth edition to you with pride and resilience, after a four-year hiatus of *The Vision*. I present this eighth edition to you as the first edition published by a sole editor, in lieu of an active *Vision* committee. I present this edition to you as the first editor to feature their own works across each genre. I present this edition to you as the first edition to include voices both inside and beyond UConn, from artists across a variety of ages and races.

I present this edition as an homage to the legacy established by former director of the AACC, Dr. Willena Price (1993-2022). I present this edition of to you as the first publication supervised under new AACC director, Alicia McKenzie, MS (2023-present).



From pride and resilience to the reclamation of personal power,  
Alexis C. Greene, aka the artist known as elexified

# Letter from the Editor

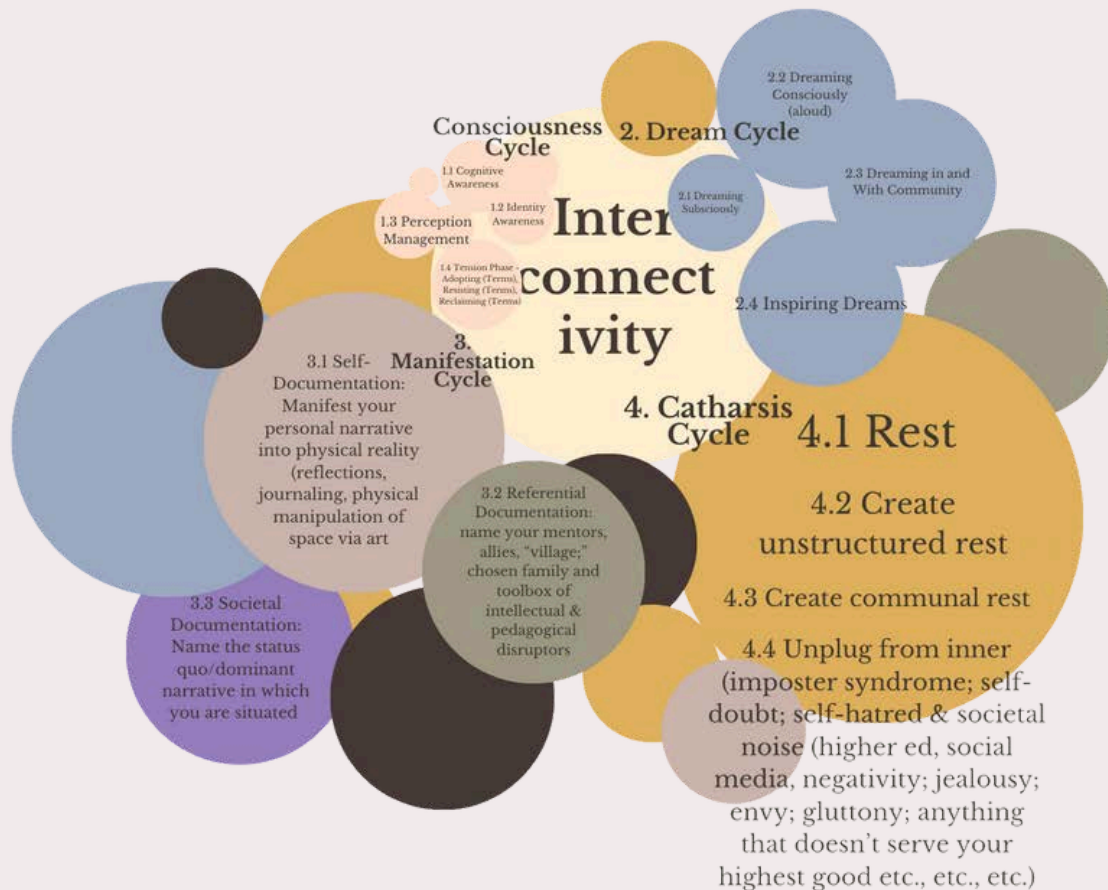
In reading this edition of *The Vision*, I hope it inspires you to imagine ways to decolonize the university as such and strengthen Black UConn. As Black students, we will always face the unique challenge of developing creative ways to pivot; evade retaliation; engage in community care as we navigate societal uncertainty, systemic and individual change, and the politics of sustaining care across arbitrary borders.

How will you take part in (re)imagining our institutional realities and creating possible futures? How will you take part in ensuring the tenor and tenacity of your dreams? How will you ensure institutions do not corrode your capacity to (re)imagine them?

I invite you to ponder these questions as you engage in the works within this edition.

From personal pride and resilience to the reclamation of COLLECTIVE power,

Alexis C. Greene, aka the artist known as elexified





# History of The Vision



To learn the history of *The Vision: Black arts and wellness journal*, one must be unafraid to dig into the crates. A look into the University of Connecticut's digital archives reveals *The Vision's* winding and non-linear history. *The Vision* was first published via the then-called Afro-American Cultural Center, from 1993-1996.

*The Vision* was an extension of the African American Cultural Center's print media publications, including and *The Afro-American Cultural Center Newsletter* (c. 1970-1991), *Contac* (1972-1978), *Kudos and Barbs* (c. 1985), and *The River* (1984-1995). In 2012, years after Dr. Willena Price became director of the African American Cultural Center in 1993, she made it her mission to ensure the "utility" of *The Vision* (*The Vision*, September 2012). Moreover, Dr. Price wanted *The Vision* to represent Black artistic voices within UConn.



CLICK HERE >

Dr. Price wrote a congratulations to *The Vision's* 2012 editors stating, "...[*The Vision*] captures a great sense of the contemporary issues and musings of University of Connecticut students" (September 2012). Price encouraged readers and future contributors to, "...contribute to the richness of future publications that will be produced by this magnificent staff of distinguished contributors" (September 2012).

*The Vision* remained an active staple of artistic expressionism from 2012-2019. From 2012-2019, the African American Cultural Center (AACC) published five editions of *The Vision* via the UConn-owned AACC website. The 2019 edition of *The Vision* was a massive success. This edition was called "The Golden Issue," in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the AACC. Unsurprisingly, this was the longest edition of *The Vision*, at 92 pages, and was the first to feature submissions aside from poetry, prose, and interviews. The 2019 edition of *The Vision* also introduced wellness tips and recipes to the newsletter, transforming it into a Black arts and wellness journal.

During 2020 and 2021, *The Vision* released two digital editions of the publication via the Flipsnack platform, two editions easily missed from the AACC's history unless one does some serious digging. I found the "missing" publications from the now-inactive *Vision* Instagram page, [@vision.aacc](https://www.instagram.com/@vision.aacc).

*The Vision's* Instagram page is a small yet mighty reminder of the AACC's roots in protest and activism. The page features kitschy memes celebrating dynamic open calls for submission and snippets from Black artist-activists such as Nina Simone, Eartha Kitt, and James Baldwin.

To view previous editions of *The Vision* and finds from the University of Connecticut's archive, specifically the African American Cultural Center records collection, [click here](#).





# Context: This Year's Theme



This year's theme for *The Vision 777* was "Change and Community Care." This theme was meant to echo the annual theme created by our AACC professional staff team, for all cultural events and programs during 2024-2025: "Creating a Culture of Radical Community Care."

## *The Vision* Theme and Requirements

This is the submission portal for *The Vision*, the Black arts and wellness journal produced by the University of Connecticut's African American Cultural Center (AACC). You do not need to identify as African American and/or American in order to submit! We welcome submissions from international students and students whose first language is not English!

To view previous versions of *The Vision*, view these links: <https://aacc.uconn.edu/get-involved/thevision/> and <https://www.flipsnack.com/thevisionuconnmag/>

**This year's theme for submissions is "Change and Community Care." For this theme, reflect on the prompt, "how do you build community as you experience and/or navigate change?"**

You are encouraged to submit work which reflects on your experiences navigating change and community care (for both you and others). Feel free to think about change and community care through the lenses of intersectional identities (i.e., identifying as Black and/or Brown in combination with any other social identity across the categories of ability, gender, race, sexuality, and religion), transitions (i.e., a coming-of-age story), health and wellness (i.e., mental and physical well-being), the COVID-19 pandemic, and other global phenomena relevant to your lived experiences.

*The Vision* **prioritizes the voices of all Black and/or Brown students** including African, African American, Asian, Asian American, Caribbean, Caribbean American, Indigenous, Latine, and Native American students. Individuals who identify as mixed and/or mixed raced are also invited to submit. **We accept** submissions from non-Black and/or non-Brown students. Individuals who identify as white and non-Black (or any other racial/ethnic/cultural identity) are welcome to submit.

Additionally, **if you would like to create a submission on behalf of a Black and/or Brown person, you are welcome to do so**; however, this piece must 1) uplift someone within a Black and/or Brown community and 2) align with the goals, missions, and values of the AACC. Please review the "About Us" page at <https://aacc.uconn.edu/about/about-us/> before creating a submission on behalf of an individual as a non-Black and/or Brown individual.

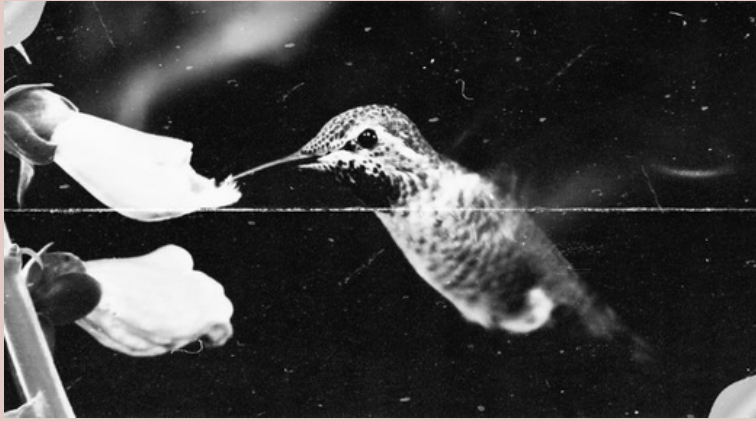
Submissions are open to both high school and college students as well as high school and college staff and faculty. Please note that art in all languages is encouraged. You are not required to translate other languages featured within your art piece to English. Feel free to blend and fuse multiple languages, dialects, and grammatical systems with English, whether within a single sentence, paragraph, section, or throughout an entire art piece.

Submissions will remain open from September 7-February 17, 2024. All pieces submitted will be reviewed for publication in the Spring 2025 semester of the University of Connecticut's Academic Calendar. This calendar is visible at <https://registrar.uconn.edu/academic-calendar/2024-25-academic-calendar/>.

For questions regarding submissions, please email the editor-in-chief at [alexis.greene@uconn.edu](mailto:alexis.greene@uconn.edu).

Depicted: Screenshot from *The Vision 777* submission portal

# Poetry



### Home

Like a bird in the sky,  
I searched forever for a place to call home,  
*yet I never found it.*  
I perched myself on tree branches,  
I sat on power lines,  
I sang songs in the morning,  
but nobody heard—  
*nobody listened.*  
I imagine a future  
where I've built my own nest somewhere,  
*where my own family gathers*  
We will sip fresh water from the nearby streams,  
and eat ripe fruits from Rutaceae trees.  
Is it crazy to wish  
for something you've never seen?  
Is it crazy to long  
for warmth you've never known?

To seek a place where hearts connect,  
and a sanctuary to call home?

I just want to find home.



## *Community*



The future of Black people is not individual—it is collective. When we come together, we have the power to push for meaningful change.. Get to know the person sitting next to you. Across from you. Share your story. Listen to theirs. The more we connect with one another, the stronger our **community** becomes.

**localblackpoet**

**Iris Jordan, aka Localblackpoet | [@iriselenajordan](#)**



## ***Lacking Community // Sulky Spoken Word***

I sip the whiskey sour by lonesome. I watch BET and Power just to grow some. My confidence is never lacking (they say), but somehow, I'm still smacking on this gum. By myself. Put me on the shelf. Put me in the grave. Say my name, say my name. I'm Destiny's Child and maybe yours too. He loves me like cooked food, he says. But I'm still in this bed alone. By myself. Put me on the shelf. Put me in the grave. Say my name, say my name. Write it on my tombstone. I was Destiny's Child. Maybe yours too. The girl you once knew. Lacking. Community.



# SELF

By AnUrbanNerd

The hardest question for my students,  
Has nothing to do with their grades  
Nothing to do with their schedule  
Nothing to do with their advisors or teachers  
Not calculus Nor physics  
It Has nothing to do with class

The hardest questions for the youth I mentor  
Has nothing to do with their finances  
With their job or even the girl they're talkin' to

The hardest question for my young brothers is,  
"How are you doing?"  
"Man, I'm good classes are going well and-"  
We'll get to classes but, how are YOU?  
"I mean I'm coolin' I'm just trying to stay on top of things..."  
I hear you, but how are you FEELING?

And it's like clockwork, we dance around the question until they  
freeze  
Stare down at the table and have to wonder, "how do I feel?"

See young men are used to operating as a function  
For them if they do well, then they feel well  
If they check off boxes they will eventually earn the checks  
If I impress my boys and that girl I'm eyein' then I will earn respect  
I will be valued  
See They have a certain way of ticking...like time bombs

I heard Black Men are better compared to soda cans  
See you can shake a can but it only explodes when you -  
try to make it open up more  
Its crazy, I remember after arguments with my ex, I physically felt  
sore

So now I find myself giving advice I wish someone gave me  
Because I speak from the pain I inflicted and the love that I seeked

See, the hardest question I ask is, "How can I support you?"  
Because when you're used to always defending,  
vulnerability catches your blind side  
You were told you were the man of the house,  
but has anyone told you you were human first?  
So how do I even broach the subject of love?  
When we clearly don't love ourselves



For black boys it's gay to bump knees in the movie theatre  
We can't give compliments to each other  
And God forbid we try to remove that piece of lint  
from a brother's head...

Yet, we yearn to be embraced by a woman  
When we really need a hug  
Bottle up any emotions that reveals cracks in our armor  
We calculate exactly how soft we can act around our girl or partner  
Learning it's much harder to be vulnerable then to remain stoic  
We were taught being cool under pressure was heroic

So when my partner asks jokingly, "Do you like me?"  
A part of me can't help to make jokes as a defense mechanism  
Because in that moment I wonder, "Do I even like me...?"

When men play down emotions, only to let them out during sex  
You ever wonder what your partner ever does with your regret?  
Your sadness? Your frustration?  
All those emotions you project?

My brothers must heal  
We must learn to love ourselves how we wish to love

Stop ending every sentence with "bro" and "bruh" as if that's any  
less homophobic  
Stop dapping before we hug  
And waiting till we're buzzed to say

"I love you..."

"I love me..."

"I'm worth it..."

You all are worth it

And don't let anyone ever convince you otherwise





snow fall blur



I can't remember the first time we said I love you.

I imagine it was quick as if the words swiftly unscrambled in my brain and pried their way out of my mouth.

It was scary as if the monster hiding under my bed finally looked me in my eyes and told me I didn't need to worry anymore.

I bet it was beautiful, a symphony coming from my lungs while the fluttering of your blonde eyelashes stole the show.

It started as a snowflake—intricate and delicate—a type of love I'd never felt before. But now there's an avalanche falling off the mountainside, and we're both in the chalet, getting drunk on hopes and dreams.

I'll use all my love poems as rolling paper. Inhale our warmest memories and exhale our deepest fears.

I can't remember the first time we said I love you, but I remember the first time I saw you. And it's only snowballed from there.

# **I Am From**

Shannon Martin

*After George Ella Leon*

I am from the gray metallic cup

Warmed by chocolate tea

From flour and mango trees

I am from the tar of my slanted driveway

(Gravelled and blackened, tastes like burnt rice)

I am from flowing oceans

The kinds that crash

Into the shore

In unison

I'm from Trelawny Link Up and jet black hair

From Langley Martin and Esmelin Roseway

I'm from the loving hearts and loudmouths

From growing gum trees in my stomach

And believing in Santa Clause



I'm from missing Saturday sabbath to play soccer

And falling asleep before Friday night worship

I'm from Bridgeport Connecticut and Jamaica

The blackened Jerk chicken and milo tea

From the post office fence that

Left an inch-and-a-half scar on my dad's back

The indent on my mother's head from carrying dishes on her head

On the bottom of the black plant shelf

Entangled by the green vine of my mom's creeper lays

The ancient photo album of the Martins

The younger fresh-faced versions of us

Depicted on the silky desaturated film

Great memories of who we used to be

And great reminders of who we are



## **Roots down**

Luckson Saturne

In many ways, I have come to envy the great oak tree.

I envy its acceptance of change and

How it's always found kinship with the land around it.

Although we are colored alike we differ in the way

We put down roots. Granted I would say that I move

Around more than the average oak but my roots are few yet

Firm. Already being accustomed to the company

Of storms, my survival is as assured as an annual fee bill increase.

From the remnants of calamity, much of the grove can

Now be seen eagle-eyed. The trees of good character and

Humility is where I am drawn to. Through the unspoken altruism of

These trees the grove has now bustled with life again.

## In the Garden of Us

In this garden, we tend to the soil of each other's souls,  
Where roots of hope intertwine, and love is the seed we sow.  
Each voice is a melody in the symphony of our shared breaths,  
Where healing rains fall and the sun of compassion warms our hearts.  
We gather not just to stand side by side,  
But to build bridges from our hands to the spaces that divide.  
In the face of struggle, we become the hands that lift, Cultivating, a collective gift.  
Our strength is in the stories we hold, In the warmth of our embrace, in the tales of courage told.  
When shadows fall, and voices wane,  
We rise as one, weaving love through pain. For in the fabric of our unity,  
We curate a culture where every heart finds its way.  
Let us be architects of a radical embrace, Building a sanctuary, a place full of grace. In this  
garden of community, let our spirit bloom, Together, we'll thrive and dispel any gloom.  
In the legacy of those who came before, we sow the seeds of justice, love, and more.  
As we welcome each other, hand in hand, Let's cultivate a world where together we stand.

-T



# The Blueprint

Man, over the past year, I've had more than enough time to discover more about myself.

With so much to say about HOW the world has treated me I'm in awe

If there is a segment of wealth I haven't reached, then please enlighten me...

See I've felt the need to use my voice by any means necessary.

Yes, I am the blueprint to make the changes I wish to see on this earth.

As the daughter of the creator of the universe, he has given me the gift of words.

So I've witnessed firsthand what it means when God puts me first.

When I thought I wanted to stop writing my father said otherwise

You must continue the path as you begin to recognize the purpose of what's yours.

The writing is more than reciting everything you have ever known

I made you in my perfect image to hone in on the expression of language

Bathing you in creativity, as I would cleanse you through each and every piece of poetry

and how dare you outperform.

I know you don't hear this enough, but I am proud of you.

I know you get upset because you feel as though you don't belong, except last time I checked that thought process is wrong.

Using violence as an excuse to harm your counterpart is drawn to internalize hatred won't face, but face it

If you want to prosper you must understand that you're a part of everyone and everyone is a part of you.

So whether consciously or subconsciously you do in fact impact your community.  
So yeah, watch your tone.

Poetry  
Submissions from  
the Editor

## *soul elixir*

**anxiety** metastasizes; a crown to adorn my forehead as  
**unadulterated passion** forages my life ahead.  
*society would rather cast me off as “dead”  
than acknowledge my existence as “valid”.*  
**trepidation-laced fingertips**  
wipe **bent-over books** behind eyelids.  
*adamantly never to dog-ear a book,  
my body is forced into a never-read nook.*  
**Afrocentric curls** backflip  
as **liquor-laced longings** of lust flee from these lips.  
**pawn-shop borrowed patience**  
adorns these fingertips;  
like windshield wipers,  
it woefully caresses **wisdom-wizened hips**.  
entire **ancestral bodies** churn within this belly;  
becoming **almanacs** to later advise this anatomy.  
**twice-baked tears** of salvation seep into the sediments  
of a **soul soaked in sentience**;  
I am congealed and commodified  
as **effervescent sweetness**.

## ***generational constipation***

(08/23/20)

i've forgotten the "we"  
of the question "who are we?"  
i can no longer perform careless condensation.

five properties—polarity, cohesion,  
specific heat, adhesion,  
evaporative cooling, surface tension—  
move metastatically throughout anatomy  
as: confusion, societal tension, disparity,

**high**—specifically, to satiate this state  
(and/or/of) code-switching  
churn within me.

the "who's" and the "we's" of "who are we"—  
the generation to be(at)—  
turn to Instagram, distracted by a Linktree.

"we" haven't begun to become who we "are together"  
—even after Martin Luther King Jr. begged to paper:  
"Where Do We Go From Here...Chaos or Community?"

are these cyber-pacts truly our idea of solidarity?  
I highly doubt you mean  
your scrolling siphons sincerely.

a cyber-shawl of shame drapes over  
the toilet we've been defecating over:  
a hand-sized computer.

an imposter of a moniker;  
an intruder; an originality-murderer;  
a persona full of cyber-luster: our user handles.

as we stumble the steps of series  
amidst the home of the anarchist Father—  
Son, and Holy Spirit—dust encrusts our identities over.

we struggle to find—or to call—His name.  
we douse a cotton pad and address our décolletage.  
double cleansed and over-stripped,

we apply our toner  
and moisturizer—wait.  
*Don't forget the filter.*

**rules of contemporary poetry**  
*for Elizabeth Bishop*

be less multisyllabic; Shakespearean;  
Petrarch in pantomimes. a lesbian conforms,  
lest whisper love epithets to fellow Thespians.

learn the art of *concision*—albeit through  
the pen, key, or art of autocratic dissonance.  
be (*objectively*) less multisyllabic; become

once-removed narrators. separate one's self  
from one's speaker; rebel against accountability—  
lest whisper love epithets to fellow plebeians.

feign refinement; reconciliation with the past  
and its predators—privilege-elevated imposters.  
be (*ornately*) less multisyllabic; become

less politically active—in lieu of promoting one's book or  
one's cause. *because* new-age leftists and feminists  
conform, lest whisper love epithets to fellow Americans.

incorporate references where appropriate.  
learn the art of losing (*Write* it!) one's temperament.  
I am fragrantly multisyllabic; my aromas conform to contours  
of your nose as you exuberantly exhale my love epithet.



**I am from**  
**11/14/2024**

I come from office gossip & chatter;  
high heels click-clacking curiously;  
hands caressing chins and cheeks  
with wonder, whimsy, and worry.

I come from hands which at 11,  
created their own cookbook  
for a family of three—or four  
depending on instable commitment.

I come from electricity and technology  
within an age of complacency, clamor  
and controversial politics. I come from  
the “I did not have sex with that woman”

era of presidential scandals. I come from  
phones wires looped through circular  
outlets; C-shaped phones with extensions  
for each person behind a corporate cubicle.

I come from the stitch of a cervix;  
five months of bedrest, no stairs  
or long walks from bedrooms to kitchens.  
I come from the J-shaped stomach

of ancestors tenacious and headstrong.  
I come from the uterus of a helper  
and a healer, who spreads love through  
food and stories. I come from bellies

of spitfires and whippersnappers;  
interracial couples; musical creators  
who sold out sidewalks with charm.  
I come from the mouths of dreamers

who wished to provide their children  
the tools to build intergenerational wealth.  
I come from lips of a determined woman;  
the hands of a careless lover; the scorn

of a zealously religious grandmother.  
I come from the shame of letters  
hastily sent to renounce and disown  
warnings against burying their worth

in what they could offer to a man. I come from car-  
sucking potholes in unsuspecting middles of roads  
and curse words uttered while swerving  
in and out of cherished memories.

I come from resentment of a childhood  
built around constraints of gang violence.  
I come from “inner cities” and hoods  
which would shatter your world

with one gunshot heard after resting  
your innocent head on your pillow for  
the night & hoping to God it was a firework.

# Photography

# AALL Staff Community Photos



# AACC Staff Community Photos





Submission by:  
Jewel Booker  
(@ [\\_hairjewels/jewel.etc](https://www.instagram.com/_hairjewels/jewel.etc))



Photographer:  
Victor Adeniji  
(@ [vic\\_xxi](https://www.instagram.com/vic_xxi))





Submission by:  
Jewel Booker  
(@\_hairjewels/jewel.etc)



Photographer:  
Victor Adeniji  
(@vic\_xxi)





Submission by  
Jewel Booker:  
(@\_hairjewels/jewel.etc)



Photographer:  
Victor Adeniji  
(@vic\_xxi)







Submission by:  
Jewel Booker  
(@\_hairjewels/jewel.etc)



Photographer:  
Victor Adeniji  
(@vic\_xxi)



Photographer: Becca Oviatt

Depicted:  
Truth Hunter,  
UConn Community Gem

Neag School of Education  
Ph.D. Candidate

Program: Learning, Leadership  
& Education Policy (LLEP)

Concentration: Higher  
Education Racial Justice and  
Decolonization



Truth teaching at Jacob's Dance Pillow School in  
Becket, MA summer of 2023. Truth taught the  
summer community West African Dance Classes.



**Depicted: Truth Hunter**  
**Photographer: Becca Oviatt**



Linguistic Racism  
Ballot Box

# Explanation of Project



The Linguistic Racism Ballot Box was born out of my experiences completing a Practicum (a 10 hour/week unpaid internship for course credit) with the Writing Center at UConn Storrs. As part of my work with the Writing Center and my Practicum supervisor, Margaret Bugingo, I was introduced to linguistic justice. There, I learned about [Margaret's pedagogical, activist-inspired work in developing a Linguistic Justice Statement for the Writing Center](#). There, I also learned about the pervasiveness of linguistic racism within higher education institutions.

During our time as supervisor and supervisee, Margaret introduced me to a series of linguistics scholars, including Vershawn Ashanti Young and Felicia Rose Chavez. During our Practicum I-on-I's, I learned that Margaret is deeply passionate about policy work surrounding linguistic racism and naming the racism built into institutional practices (e.g., allocated testing time for multilingual students). I learned that to advocate for policy changes within higher education, the documentation of student narratives, and leveraging of student voices, are essential.

The Writing Center is not new to advocacy work - or grappling with the complexities of systemic racism. In 2021, the Writing Center published work from a [Racism in the Margins project](#), including [Conversations from the Margins](#). Within an eight-minute-long video, Conversations from the Margins documents the racist experiences Writing Center student staff witnessed. Student staff shared narratives from their classes and sessions with fellow UConn students who experienced racism in their classes. Margaret took deep inspiration from the Racism in the Margins project. Together, with the Writing Center's professional staff, Margaret and I questioned ways to continue and elevate the Racism in the Margins project.



Margaret and I were curious to help Black and Brown UConn students, both inside and beyond the AACC, address contemporary issues; narrate instances of racism and injustice. As a part of her work during our "Organization, Leadership and Administration in Higher Education & Student Affairs" course with Dr. Adam McCready, Margaret reviewed the Writing Center at California State (Cal State) University, Fullerton. The potential within Cal State Fullerton's Writing Center, and their [Language Policy Ally \(LPA\) Program](#), inspired Margaret to advocate for ways to introduce policy-centered, praxis alternatives to writing center operations.



Within her advocacy, Margaret helped me create a linguistic racism "ballot box" and undergraduate Writing Center tutor, Grace Wright-Goodison, sought out responses to the ballot box questions. Grace Wright-Goodison "tabled" at the UConn Library in Storrs, advertised the "ballot box" with staff, peers, and tutees at the Writing Center in Storrs, and asked friends for their submissions.

The ballot box included questions aimed at inspiring student documentation of racist experiences and microaggressions they experienced and/or witnessed. This anonymous "ballot box" was circulated among the Writing Center and the AACC at UConn Storrs, including select "tabling" days at the UConn Library at Storrs. Initially, we did not receive many student submissions to our ballot box. The "Reflect and the Connect: Post-Inauguration Mixer" hosted at the AACC on November 7, 2024, catapulted the ballot box into acute relevance for students of color.

Linguistic Racism Ballot Box Questions:  
Dear Students of Color and Linguistically Diverse Students:

Have you felt your language varieties have been unwelcome at UConn?  
Please share your experience here, so we can work toward change.

Consider:

- If/how "White Mainstream English" has dominated your educational experience?
- What racist language encounters you have had or witnessed?
- What suggestions do you have for policy change or departmental change?

Thank you.

If you'd like to voice your concerns in person, we will hold a town hall for UConn Students of Color on November 21st, at 6pm, in HBL 2119a. All are welcome.

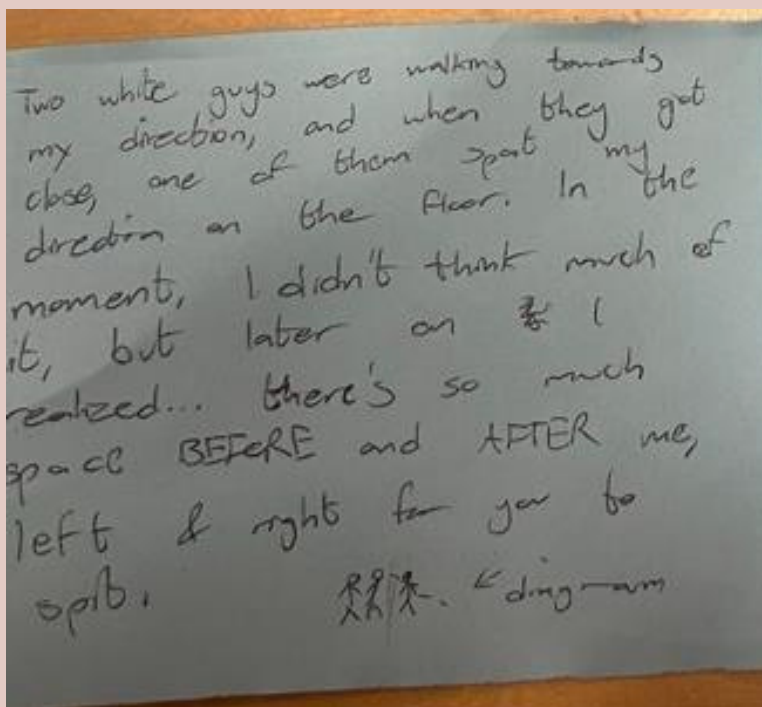
## Contents of Linguistic Racism Ballot Box – FA2024

### Online Responses

- "Professors still saying slurs in books or referring to black people as 'Blacks.'" **Recommendation Made:** "More training and educate more people"

### Handwritten Responses - Majority of Which Were Collected on 11/07/2024

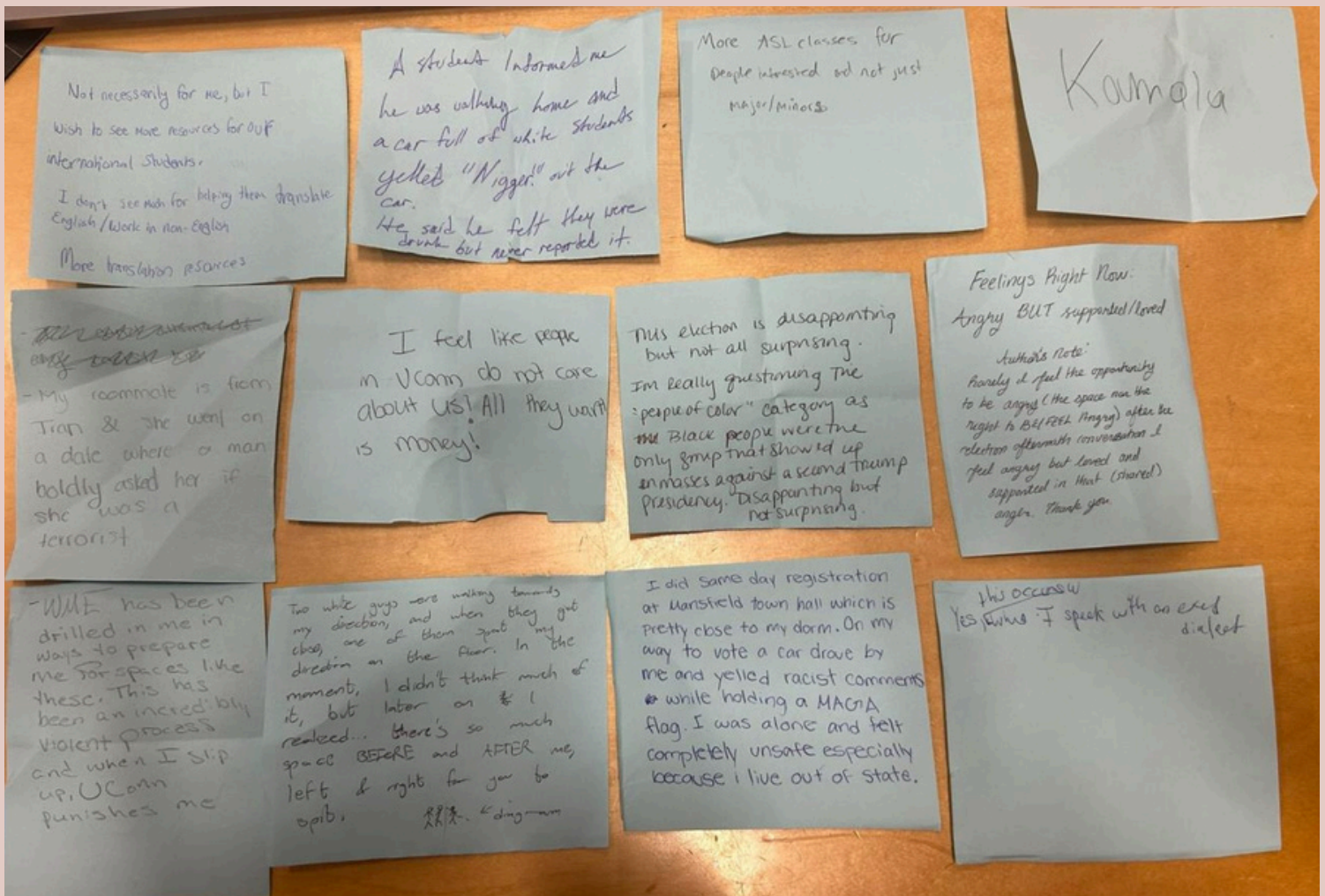
- "Not necessarily for me, but I wish to see more resources for our international students. I don't see much for helping them translate English/work in non-English"
  - **Recommendation Made:** "More translation resources"
- "My roommate is from Iran & she went on a date where a man boldly asked her if she was a terrorist"
- "WME has been drilled in me in ways to prepare me for spaces like these. This has been an incredibly violent process and when I slip up, UConn punishes me"
- "Two white guys were walking towards my direction, and when they got close, one of them spat my direction on the floor. In the moment, I didn't really think much of it, but later, I realized...there's so much space BEFORE and AFTER me, left & right for you to spit." (**See diagram**)



- "I feel like people in UConn do not care about us! All they want is money!"
- "A student informed me he was walking home and a car full of white students yelled 'Nigger' out the car. He said he felt they were drunk but never reported it."
- "More ASL classes for people interested, not just majors/minors"
- "This election is disappointing, but not at all surprising. I'm really questioning the 'people of color' category as Black people were the only group that showed up en masses against a second Trump presidency. Disappointing but not surprising."

- “I did same day registration at Mansfield town hall which is pretty close to my dorm. On my way to vote a car drove by me and yelled racist comments while holding a MAGA flag. I was alone and felt completely unsafe especially because i live out of state”
- “Kamala”
- “Yes, this [linguistic racism] occurs when I speak an (accent) [questionable spelling] dialect”
- “**Feelings Right Now:**”
  - “Angry BUT supported/loved”
    - “**Author’s Note:** Rarely I feel the opportunity to be angry (the space nor the right to be/feel angry) after the election aftermath conversation I feel angry but loved and supported in that shared anger. Thank you”

## Picture of All Handwritten Responses:



Courtesy of: Margaret Bugingo (2024)

# Visual Art





“The Olden Days”

Jaelie Jackson | @jaelie\_crafts

[CLICK HERE](#)





“Community in Friendship”  
Rilee Roldan | @rileesart

[Click Here](#)

*Visual Art  
from the Editor*



untitled (2017)

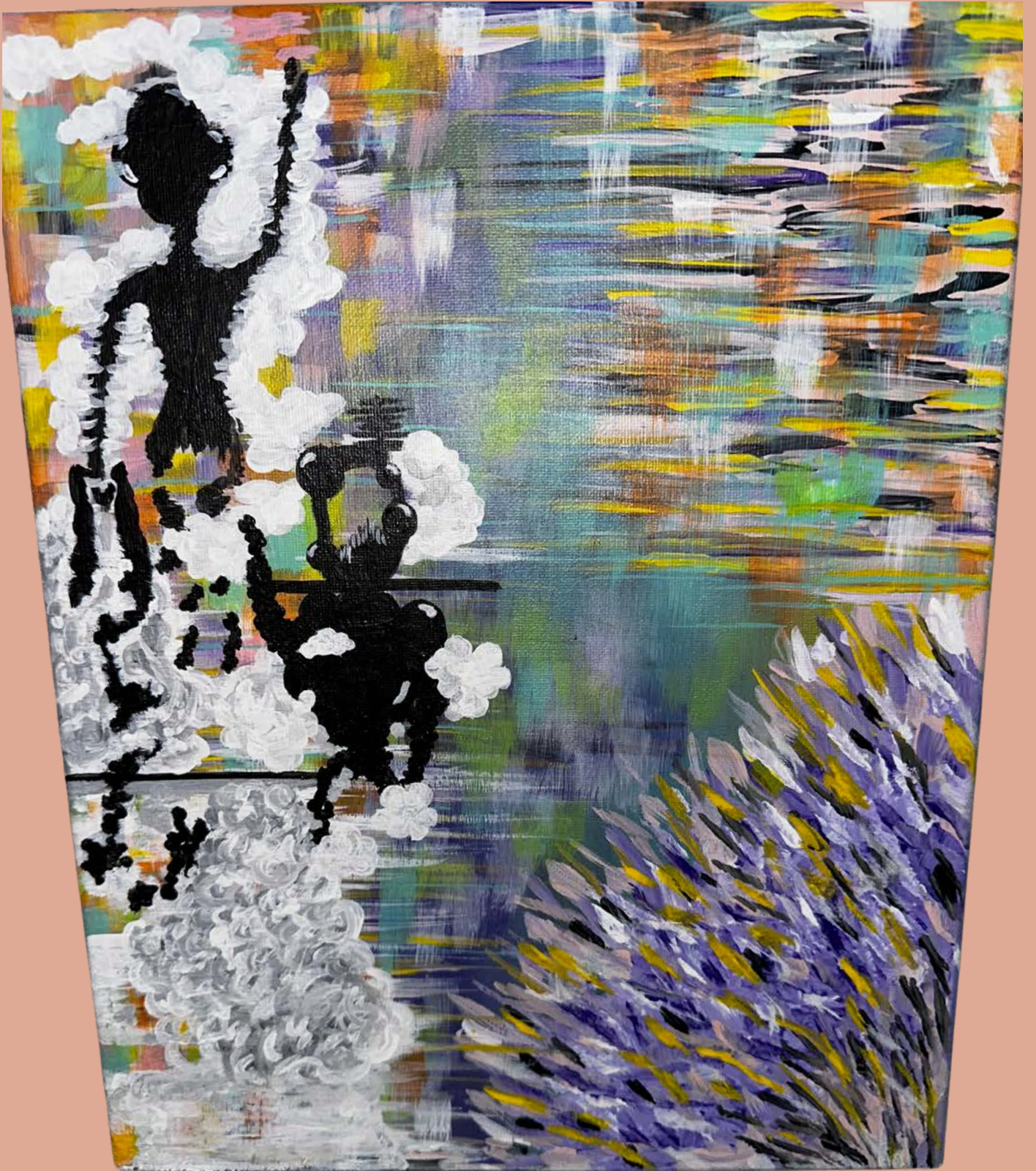


untitled (2017)



“An Interesting Juxtaposition” (2017)





“Black Holes in the Ozone Layer” (2023)



# Savory Recipes

# Kale and Quinoa Salad

Cook quinoa according to package directions, Allow quinoa to set and cool down a little before adding the other ingredients.

## Ingredients

- 4 cups of cooked quinoa
- 2 cups of kale leaves
- 1/3 cup of dried cranberries
- 1/2 cup of mint leaves
- 1/3 cup of pine nuts
- 1/2 cup of Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup of sliced red onion
- Salt and pepper
- 3 tablespoons of balsamic vinegar

## Directions

Mix all the ingredients in a big bowl, you can serve it warm or room temperature. Refrigerate the leftovers and reheat in microwave.

## Extra Hints

I do not usually add the mint, but I left it in just in case you may like it.

I toast the pine nuts in a pan. Heat a dry pan until you feel it is warm. Add the pine nuts and let them get nicely toasted. This takes a minute. Be careful and watch the pine nuts so the do burn. This happens very quickly.

ENJOY :)



Sourced: [Peas and Carrots](#)



# MINESTRONE SOUP

I usually add in a package of sliced portabella mushrooms and a big one sliced chunky. I also add three containers of stock and two cans of diced tomatoes 14 oz. I am not a fan of yellow squash or celery so I omit it you can delete and add whatever you like

Makes 4 servings.

Per serving: 140 cal. (58% from fat); 9 g fat.

## Fresh Minestrone

Prep time: 15 min. Cooking time: 30 min.

- 1 Tbs. olive or vegetable oil
- 2 carrots, peeled and thinly sliced
- 2 ribs celery, thinly sliced
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 cans (14½ oz.) chicken broth
- 1 can (14½ oz.) diced tomatoes
- 1 can (10½ oz.) red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 medium yellow squash, halved lengthwise and thinly sliced
- ½ cup tubetti, ditalini, or other small pasta
- 1 tsp. sugar
- ½ tsp. pepper

166 REDBOOK OCTOBER 1997

- 2 Tbs. chopped flat-leaf parsley
- 2 Tbs. chopped fresh basil

1. Heat oil in 3- to 4-qt. saucepan. Add carrots, celery, onion, and garlic and cook over medium heat 8 to 10 minutes, until tender.
2. Add chicken broth, tomatoes, kidney beans, squash, pasta, sugar, and pepper. Simmer 18 to 20 minutes, until pasta is tender. Just before serving, add parsley and basil. Makes 6 servings; 8 cups.

Per serving: 140 cal. (25% from fat); 4 g fat.

## Crostini and White Bean Salad

Prep time: 15 min. Cooking time: 5 min.

# Lex's Rustic Pasta

## Ingredients

- 4-5 cloves of garlic
- 1/2 lb cherry tomatoes
- 1/2 red onion
- 1/4 stick of butter
- Pasta of Choice (penne preferred)
- Pasta Water (for starch/as thickening agent)
- Olive Oil
- Iodized Salt
- Table salt (Himalayan preferred)
- Pepper
- Optional: Fresh Basil
- Optional: Fresh Parmesan Cheese
- Optional: Onion Powder
- Optional: Garlic Powder
- Optional: Crushed Red Pepper Flakes



## Directions for Cooking Pasta

1. Boil 4-6 quarts of water on high until a rumbling boil is achieved
2. While water is boiling, chop garlic (mince), tomatoes (in half, lengthwise), and onions (in strips)
3. Once rumbling boil is achieved, salt water generously with iodized salt
4. Look at pasta box for cooking time; however, cook pasta at least two minutes less than al dente time suggested
5. While pasta is cooking, heat up a deep-dish pan on medium-medium high heat
6. As pasta is finishing cooking, use a glass measuring cup to retrieve pasta water from pot. Fill the glass measuring cup full of water and keep to the side for making sauce later (may not need to use all)
7. When pasta is done cooking, strain and coat with olive oil (to prevent pasta from sticking to strainer)

## Directions for Rustic Pasta Sauce

1. Return to deep-dish pan on medium-medium high heat
2. When pan is hot in the middle (i.e., heat is apparent when you hover your hand over the pot at a distance), coat pan with olive oil (about 2 tbsp)
3. Once pan is coated, place chopped garlic in the pan. Cook for 30-45 seconds (just enough so fragrance is released)
4. Immediately add your halved cherry tomatoes (this will stop cooking of garlic). Let these cook down. Add salt, pepper, and seasonings of choice. Add butter if desired. As tomatoes cook and release water, taste sauce emerging and season to taste. Add pasta water to thicken, to desired thickness of sauce
5. Once desired thickness of sauce is reached, add cooked pasta to pan. Stir in pasta on medium-medium high heat for about two minutes. Turn down heat after two minutes, as to not overcook pasta
6. Stir ingredients together and add seasonings until desired taste is achieved. Add onions at the end of cooking so they remain crispy. Optional: can add cooked bacon at the very end as well
7. Add grated parmesan on top while pasta is in pot and/or after pasta is plated

Enjoy!!

# Chicken with White Wine

## Ingredients

- 4 – 5 Boneless Chicken Breast – slice in half and pound to they are thin) your will get about 8-10 pieces.
- 2 cups of chicken broth - if you like it liquidy then use this amount; if not use your judgment you might like to use less (same for the wine)
- 2 cups of white wine
- 4 cloves of garlic minced
- 1 package of baby bella mushrooms
- 1 lemon
- Bunch of flat leaf parsley
- 1 stick of butter

## Cooking Instructions

Season chicken with salt, pepper, and garlic powder and lightly flour. (chicken should be dry, no need for them to be wet with egg)

Fry chicken in a pan with olive oil (3-5 minutes on each side).

Once chicken is cooked put on a plate. In the same pan melt butter and add the mushrooms and sauté for 5 minutes.

Then add the wine and cook for 5 more minutes. Add the chicken broth, minced garlic and juice of the lemon. Taste to see if you need to season with salt, pepper and garlic powder. If you would like to thicken the sauce you can add in a tablespoon of flour at a time and wisk in briskly \*so you do not get any lumps.

Add back in the chicken and simmer for 5-7 minutes.

Garnish with chopped flat leaf parsley.



## Side Dish Options

**Good side** – white rice

**Great side** – baby red potatoes: season with salt, pepper, and garlic powder and coat lightly with olive oil. Bake them on a cookie sheet and elevate the potatoes on a cookie cooling rack. Bake for 45-50 minutes at 425 degrees.

# L'il Mom's Potato Salad

## Ingredients:

6-8 potatoes, unpeeled (number depends on size and how much you want to make)  
2 Stalks of celery, chopped (coarse or finer... whatever you prefer)  
1/2 cup chopped onion  
1/2 tsp salt  
1/2 tsp pepper  
1/4 tsp ground mustard  
1/4 cup mayonnaise  
2 tbsp Dijon-style mustard (some folks prefer French's...I don't but it's up to you)  
1/2 cup chopped DILL pickle  
2 Hard-boiled eggs, coarsely chopped  
Paprika

## Method:

1. Boil the potatoes in heavily salted water until very soft. Cool until they are able to be peeled. DO NOT RINSE.
2. Put celery, onion, salt, pepper and ground mustard in a large mixing bowl. Stir until vegetables are coated with the spices.
3. Peel the potatoes and cube them. Add to the vegetable mixture. Stir to combine.
4. Add the mustard and mayonnaise and combine. Add more of each depending on consistency and taste.
5. Add the dill pickle and hard-boiled eggs (you may not need both eggs...I find 1.5 to be plenty). Stir gently to combine. Add more mayonnaise and/or mustard for consistency.
6. Put into a serving bowl and sprinkle top with paprika.
7. ENJOY!!

**6-8 servings**

**Shelley P. Haley**



# Li'l Mom's Macaroni and Cheese

## Ingredients:

1 tablespoon butter/margarine  
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon pepper  
1/2 teaspoon dry mustard  
1 cup milk (whole, 2%, skim)  
1 1/2 cup cheddar cheese, divided  
1 cup elbow macaroni  
Breadcrumbs or panko  
Paprika (optional)

## Method:

1. Cook elbow macaroni until nearly done.
2. Melt the butter/margarine in a medium sauce pan over low-medium heat.
3. Sprinkle the flour over the butter and cook until it bubbles. Do not let it brown!
4. Remove from heat and add salt, pepper and dry mustard. It will be thick. Return to heat until bubbly again.
5. Turn up heat to medium/medium high and gradually pour in the milk, stirring constantly.
6. When the sauce is thick enough to coat a wooden spoon, gradually stir in 1 cup cheese, waiting until each batch melts before adding more.
7. Place semi-cooked macaroni in a casserole dish; pour cheese sauce over the macaroni; stir until combined.
8. Sprinkle breadcrumbs (I like Italian-seasoned ones but plain works too) or panko evenly over the top.
9. Sprinkle remaining cheese over the top of the breadcrumbs; sprinkle paprika on top of cheese, if you like.
10. Bake for 20-25 minutes at 375 degrees in a preheated oven.

**Savory Ghanaian  
Recipes -  
West Africa**



## **KELEWELE (SPICY PLANTAIN) GHANAIAN HOMEMADE RECIPE**

### **INGREDIENTS**

- Ripened plantains
- Black pepper corn
- Ginger
- Dry chilies
- Onion
- Cloves
- Nutmeg
- Peanuts
- Oil for deep frying
- Salt to taste

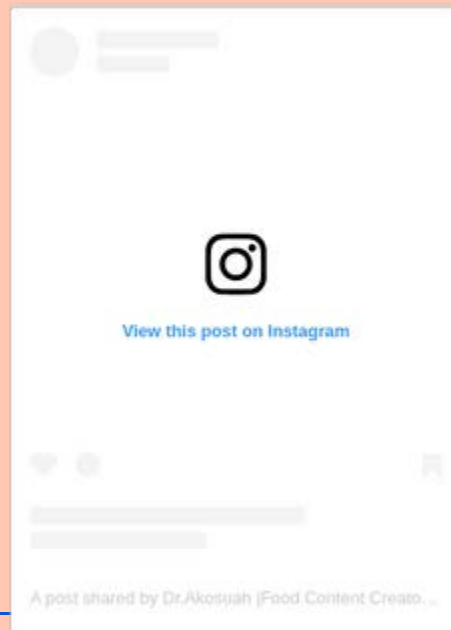


### **Preparation Guide/Instructions**

1. Cut plantains into small pieces and set aside,
2. Blend all other ingredients together with a little water except peanuts and oil into smooth paste.
3. Mix the cut plantains and paste together (just like how you marinate chicken) and set aside.
4. Heat up the oil in a deep frying pan on low to medium heat and add your peanuts to fry for about 3mins and set aside.
5. Deep Fry the plantains in the same oil till golden brown.
6. Serve and enjoy with your fried peanuts.

I will leave a video link below for visual clarity.  
NB; I do not own any rights to video link below

**CLICK HERE**



## **KOSUA NE MAKO ( BOILED EGG & PEPPER) GHANAIAN HOMEMADE RECIPE**

### **Ingredients**

- Eggs
- Pepper
- Onion
- Salt

### **Preparation Guide/Instructions**

1. Pour a reasonable amount of water into a cooking pot, add salt and add a number of eggs to boil for about 10 to 15mins.
2. Chop your onions into small pieces.
3. Add pepper, chopped onions and a little salt into a grinder with a few drop of water depending on the size of your ingredients. The consistency should be a thick textured paste.
4. Peel the egg shells from the boiled eggs and divide each egg into two equal parts. Fill the paste in the center of each egg with finely chopped onions for extra flavor.
5. Serve and enjoy.

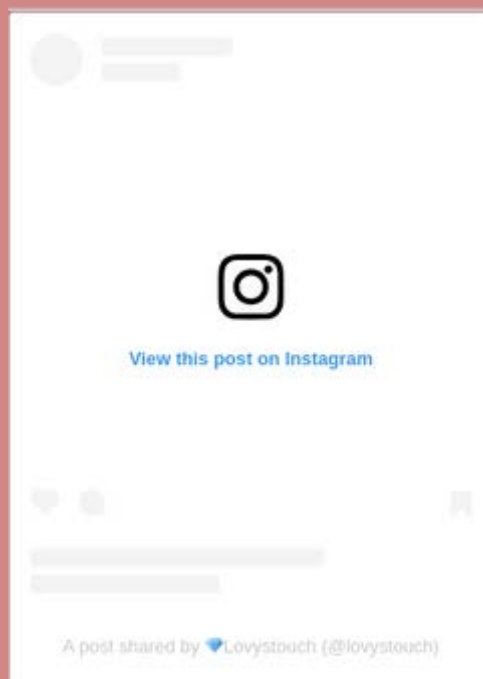


# GHANAIAN SHITO RECIPE

---

## Ingredients

- Vegetable Oil
- Onions (A lot of it because that is the main ingredient)
- Fresh Ginger
- Garlic
- Habanero pepper
- Herrings
- Tomato paste
- Bay leaf
- Cornered beef
- Salt
- Shrimp powder



## **Preparation Guide/Instructions**

1. Chop onions into small pieces.
2. Pour oil into a pan and put it on low to medium heat until the oil becomes hot.
3. Fry the chopped onions in the oil until it is nice and caramelized. Dish out the onions and set aside
4. In the same oil, fry chopped ginger garlic and habanero peppers. Set it aside.
5. In the same oil, fry some herrings till it is golden brown and crispy. Set it aside.
6. In the same oil, fry some shrimp till it's crispy and set it aside.
7. Fry some tomato paste till it loses its moisture and form (dry). Add some bay leaf for flavor and cornered beef for extra flavor.
8. Blend all the ingredients you fried together by adding oil to it in the blender to get a nice thick consistency. Do not blend for long because we need a semi-smooth textured paste.
9. Pour the blended paste into the tomato paste which is still frying on fire on medium heat.
10. Add a little salt and other seasonings you would like to add like shrimp powder. Stir to mix well.
11. Keep stirring on a low to medium heat for about 40 mins continuously until you see a change in the color.
12. If it turns into a dark brown color after 40 mins, your shito sauce is ready.
13. Store it into a glass jar and preserve it. It can be kept for about 6 months.
14. This sauce can be paired with any food like kenkey, rice, gari, bread, etc.

**I will leave a video link above for visual clarity.**

**CLICK HERE**

NB; I do not own any rights to video links above.

## SHITO PICTURES



**Savory Egyptian  
Recipe -  
North Africa**

# Mesa'ah: A North African Eggplant Stew

A staple in Egyptian and North African kitchens, Mesa'ah is a simple yet rich dish that brings together slow-cooked vegetables, warm spices, and deep flavors. Traditionally served with bread, it can be a main course or a side.

## Ingredients

Eggplant,  
Peppers,  
Onion,  
Garlic,  
Tomatoes,  
Tomato Sauce,  
Olive Oil

## Spices:

Cumin,  
Paprika,  
Salt

## Optional:

Pepper Paste,  
Potatoes,  
Chickpeas.



Sourced From: [Delicious](#)



## Method

1. **Prepare the Eggplant:** Slice the eggplant and either fry or air-fry until golden and tender. Set aside.
2. **Build the Base:** In a pan, heat olive oil and gently sauté the onions. Add the garlic stirring briefly.
3. **Introduce the Peppers:** Add in the sliced peppers, letting them soften slightly before adding the tomatoes and tomato sauce.
4. **Spice & Simmer:** Add the tomatoes and tomato sauce, followed by the cumin, paprika, and salt. Let everything cook on low heat until the flavors deepen.
5. **Bring it Together:** Add the fried eggplant (and any optional ingredients like potatoes or chickpeas) into the simmering sauce. Let the flavors meld over low heat, stirring occasionally.
6. **Serve:** Enjoy warm or cold with bread or rice. Mesa'ah is often eaten fresh, but it develops even more depth when left to sit for a few hours. We always joke that the leftovers taste better than when it is first made.

**Savory**  
**Persian Recipe**

# CASPIAN SWEET + SOUR KABABS

*kabab-e torsh*



Submitted by: Afra Hassan Pour

72

Source: *Joon: Persian Cooking Made Simple* by Najmieh Batmanglig



Serves 6 to 8  
Prep: 20 minutes, plus  
marinating for 24 to 48 hours  
Cooking: 4 minutes

## CASPIAN SWEET + SOUR KABABS

**3 lb (1.35 kg) boneless  
chicken thighs, lamb or  
beef tenderloin, cut into  
2½ in (6 cm) pieces**

### MARINADE

1 large onion, peeled and  
quartered  
4 cloves garlic, peeled  
1 cup (120 g) shelled walnuts  
¼ cup fresh basil leaves  
¼ cup fresh mint leaves  
2 cups (475 ml) pomegranate  
juice or ½ cup (75 g)  
pomegranate molasses  
dissolved in 1 cup water  
¼ cup lime juice  
¼ cup (60 ml) olive oil  
1 teaspoon sea salt  
1 teaspoon freshly ground  
pepper  
1 teaspoon ground *golpar*

### SWEET + SOUR GLAZE

1 tablespoon pomegranate  
molasses\*  
¼ teaspoon freshly ground  
pepper  
1 teaspoon fine sea salt  
1 teaspoon red pepper  
flakes (optional)  
1 teaspoon ground *golpar*\*  
¼ cup (55 g) butter, or  
(60 ml) olive oil

### COOKING + GARNISH

6 flat metal skewers  
1 x 12oz (350 g) package of  
lavash bread  
½ cup (50 g) pomegranate  
arils (optional)  
1 cup (85 g) spring onions,  
chopped

*Last summer I had the best sweet and sour kabab in a small village near Rasht, by the Caspian Sea. It was served with plenty of herbs and mirza qasemi (Eggplant and Egg Spread, page 100).*

1. Place the meat in a non-reactive container or bowl.
2. Combine all the ingredients for the marinade in a food processor and pulse until you have a grainy mixture.
3. Pour over the meat and toss well. Cover with a lid or plastic wrap and marinate in the fridge for at least 24 hours or up to 48 hours.
4. Start the barbecue 30 minutes before you want to cook, and let it burn until the coals glowing evenly. If you are using the oven broiler or an indoor grill, make sure it is preheated and **very hot**.
5. In the meantime, in a small saucepan, combine all the ingredients for the glaze and keep warm on very low heat until ready to use.
6. Thread 4 or 5 pieces of lamb onto each skewer, leaving at least 2 in (5 cm) free at the top of the skewers. Make sure you skewer the meat against the grain.
7. Once the coals are glowing, place the skewers on the grill and cook for 1 or 2 minutes on each side, turning frequently. When done, baste both sides immediately with the glaze.
8. Spread a layer of lavash bread on a serving platter and place the skewers on the bread. Place a piece of bread over each skewer and hold the meat down while you pull out the skewer. Sprinkle with pomegranate arils and spring onions. Serve immediately—kababs should be served hot off the skewers. *Nush-e joon!*

### NOTE

You can substitute fish for the meat. Reduce marination for fish to 2 to 4 hours. Everything else remains the same

# Sweet Treats

## **MASHKE (FANTE KENKEY SMOOTHIE/ ICED KENKEY) GHANAIAN HOMEMADE RECIPE**

### **INGREDIENTS**

Fante Kenkey (Sold at the African Market)  
Peanuts /  
Peanut Butter /  
Skimmed milk /  
Condensed Milk Sugar

### **Preparation Guide/Instructions**

1. Cut the Fante Kenkey into small pieces.
2. Blend all ingredients including the pieces of the Fante Kenkey together with a reasonable amount of water depending on the thickness you want.
3. Blend till smooth.
4. Refrigerate (Optional)
5. Serve and enjoy with extra peanuts added for a crunchy feel.

Kindly refer to youtube videos for visual understanding.  
Thank you.



**Kindly refer to youtube videos for visual understanding.**

**CLICK HERE**

# Best Chocolate Chip Cookies You've Ever Tasted (Guaranteed By an Italian Mama!)

## CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

1 cup butter, softened  
¾ cup sugar  
¾ cup packed light brown sugar  
1 tsp vanilla  
2 eggs  
2 ¼ cups flour

1 tsp baking soda  
½ tsp salt  
2 cups chocolate chips  
1 cup chopped nuts, optional

Cream butter, sugar, brown sugar and vanilla until light and fluffy in large Bowl. Add eggs; beat well. Combine flour, baking soda and salt; gradually Add to creamed mixture. Beat well. Stir in chocolate chips and nuts.

Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls onto ungreased cookie sheet. Bake at 375 for 8 to 10 minutes. Cool slightly before removing from cookie sheet.

**(Clearly it's gotten lot's of love!)**



# Rich Fruit Cake

## Ingredients:

3/4 lb Butter  
3/4 lb Brown Sugar  
3 oz ground Almonds  
6 oz chopped peel (if liked)\*  
3/4 lb Currants  
3/4 lb Sultanas  
3/4 lb Raisins  
3 oz Cherries  
5 Eggs  
3/4 lb Plain Flour  
1 teaspoon Baking Powder  
1 glass\*\* Sherry

\*I used a medley of dried fruits: apples, cranberries, mango, pineapple and such because I don't like chopped peel.

\*\*I soak all the dried fruit overnight in approximately 3/4 -1 cup of Sherry so I find I don't need this glass of Sherry.

## Method:

Cream the butter and sugar and beat well. Beat in the ground almonds and the prepared fruit with cherries cut up. Separate the eggs and beat the yolks into the mixture. Sift the flour and baking powder. Whip the egg whites until stiff. Cut and fold them into the fruit mixture along with the flour and sherry. Add a little milk if necessary to bring mixture to a soft consistency. Turn into a prepared tin and bake 3-4 hours \*\*\*at 300 degrees F (Reg. 3).

\*\*\*I don't know if English ovens are different, but I have never had to bake this Fruit Cake more than 1 1/2 -2 hours. It would burn if I followed this instruction!



# Key Lime Pie

## (Adapted from Martha Stewart)

This pie can be topped with either whipped cream or meringue.

### FOR THE CRUST:

- 1 1/2 cups graham-cracker crumbs, broken into pieces
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- 3 tablespoons sugar

### FOR THE FILLING:

- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
- 4 large egg yolks
- 1/2 cup freshly squeezed key lime juice (about 17 limes)
- 1 tablespoon grated key lime zest,
  - Plus more for garnish (about 8 limes)

### FOR THE WHIPPED CREAM TOPPING:

- 1 1/2 cups heavy cream, chilled
- 3 tablespoons sugar

### FOR THE MERINGUE TOPPING:

- 8 large egg whites
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon coarse salt

### DIRECTIONS

**For the Crust:** Heat oven to 375 degrees. Combine graham-cracker crumbs, butter, and 3 tablespoons sugar in a medium bowl; mix well. Press into a 9-inch pie plate, and bake until lightly browned, about 12 minutes. Remove from oven, and transfer to a wire rack until completely cooled.

**For the Filling:** Lower oven to 325 degrees. In a medium bowl, gently whisk together condensed milk, egg yolks, key lime juice, and zest. Pour into the prepared, cooled crust. Return pie to oven, and bake until the center is set but still quivers when the pan is nudged, 15 to 17 minutes. Let cool completely on a wire rack.

**For the Whipped Cream Topping:** Shortly before serving, combine cream and sugar in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a whisk attachment. Whisk on medium speed until soft peaks form, 2 to 3 minutes. Spoon over cooled pie and serve immediately.

**For the Meringue Topping:** Add topping shortly before serving. In a large bowl, combine egg whites, sugar, and salt. Using an electric mixer, beat on medium-high until stiff peaks form. Pipe or spread meringue on pie, making sure it touches the crust all around. Use a kitchen blowtorch to brown meringue all over.



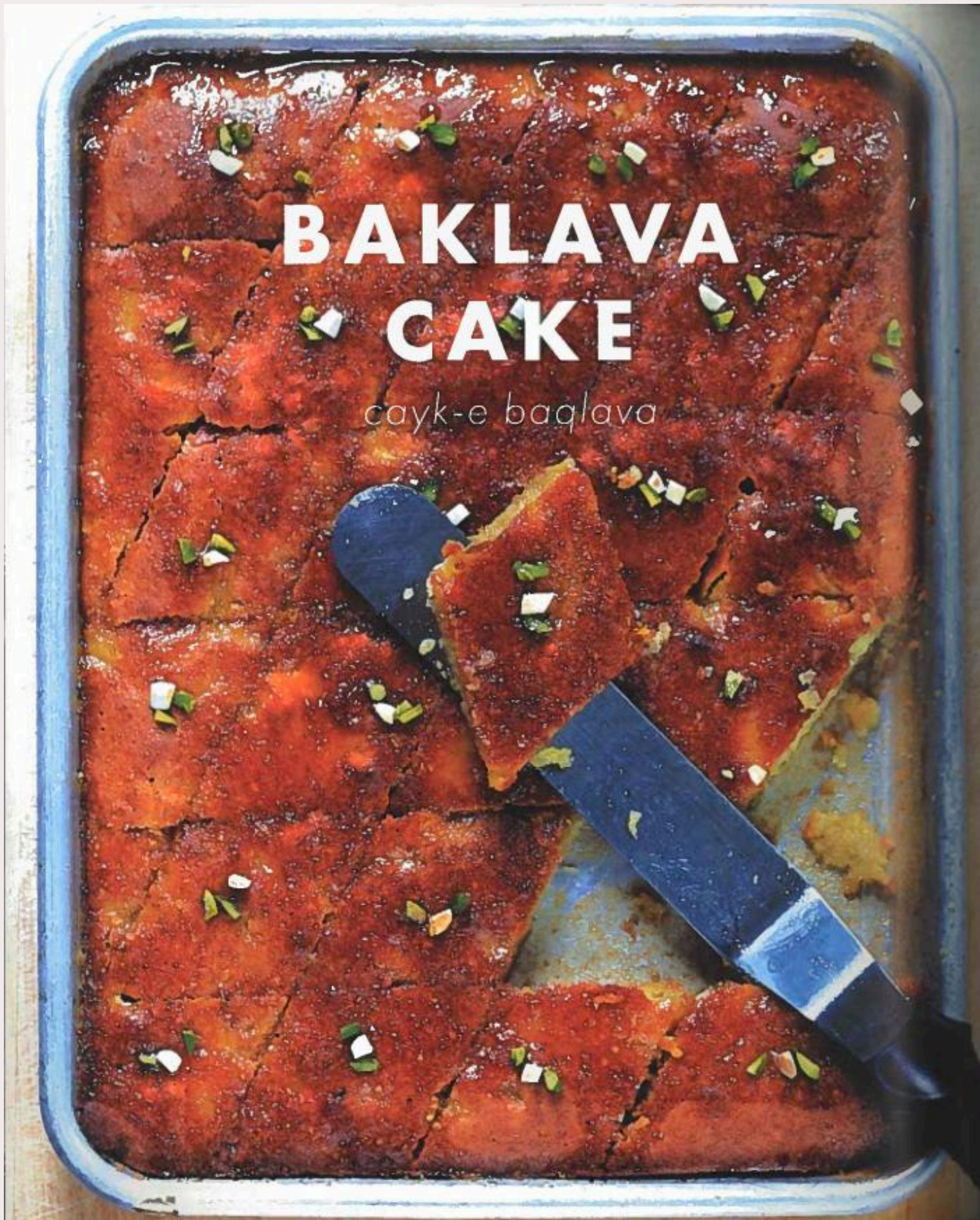
# Key Lime Pie

This pie can be topped with either whipped cream or meringue.

I usually use the Honey Maid graham cracker already crumbled and I also follow the directions on the Honey Maid box, I have tried to cook the crust according to Marha Stewart's directions and I comes out to well done for me. The Honey Maid directions cooks it and a lower temperature.

ENJOY:)





# BAKLAVA CAKE

cayk-e baqlava

Submitted by: Afra Hassan Pour

Source: *Joon: Persian Cooking Made Simple* by Najmieh Batmanglig



Makes one 9 x 13in (23 x 33cm)  
sheet pan  
Prep: 20 minutes  
Cooking: 40 minutes

## BAKLAVA CAKE

### GLAZE

1 cup (340 g) honey  
¼ cup (60 ml) rose water\*  
Zest of 1 orange  
1 tablespoon orange  
blossom water  
3 tablespoons fresh lime  
juice

### CAKE

3 eggs  
¼ cup (85 g) honey  
2 tablespoons rose water\*  
½ cup (120 ml) fresh  
orange juice or milk  
½ cup (120 ml) olive oil  
1 cup (100 g) unbleached  
all-purpose flour sifted  
with 2 teaspoons baking  
powder  
2 cups (190 g) almond meal/  
flour  
1 tablespoon ground  
cardamom  
2 large, firm apples, peeled,  
cored, and chopped

### DECORATION

1 tablespoon chopped raw  
pistachio kernels  
1 tablespoon chopped  
blanched almonds

*Baklava in the form of a cake, rather than a pastry, is less time-consuming to make and equally delicious. Almonds and apples are a classic combination that is much used in Persian baking. For a gluten-free version of the cake, simply substitute the all-purpose flour with rice flour.*

1. In a small saucepan, combine all the ingredients for the glaze. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to low, give the mixture a stir, and simmer for 3 minutes (do not over cook). Remove from heat and set aside.
2. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C) and oil a *quarter-sized (9½ x 13 in/ 24 x 33 cm) rimmed sheet pan*.
3. In a mixing bowl, whisk the eggs and honey until creamy. Add the rose water, orange juice, and oil, and whisk for 1 minute longer.
4. Add the flour and baking powder mixture, almond flour, cardamom, and apple, and fold using a rubber spatula.
5. Gently pour the batter into the prepared sheet pan and bake for 35 to 40 minutes, or until a tester comes out clean.
6. Remove the pan from the oven and place it on a cooling rack. Cut the cake into diamond shapes, drizzle the glaze evenly over the hot cake, and decorate with nuts.
7. Leave the cake in the pan until it has absorbed all the glaze and has cooled down completely. Serve from the same pan or transfer to a serving dish.
8. To store and keep moist, wrap tightly with a few layers of clear plastic wrap and store in the fridge for up to 3 weeks. *Nush-e joon!*

# Brown Sugar Cornbread

1 cup King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour  
1 cup Organic Yellow Cornmeal  
1 tablespoon baking powder  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon salt  
 $\frac{1}{3}$  cup brown sugar or maple sugar  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup butter, melted  
1 cup milk, whole, skim or 2%  
3 large eggs  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon maple flavor (optional)

Preheat oven to 425°F. Lightly grease or oil a scone pan, 8" x 8" square pan, or 9" round baking pan.

In a medium-sized mixing bowl, whisk together flour, cornmeal, baking powder, salt, and sugar until thoroughly combined. In a small bowl or large measuring cup, whisk together melted butter, milk, eggs, and maple flavoring. Add liquid mixture to the dry ingredients and stir together.

Pour into prepared pan. Sprinkle the top with extra brown sugar or maple sugar, if desired, and bake for about 20 to 25 minutes, until browned and a cake tester inserted into the center comes out clean.

Serve warm with butter and maple syrup, or jam.

**Yield: 8 servings.**

# Prose

At 25, I have already been through three heartbreaks – one of them with someone I never even met in person. Here is what I have learned, with the help of friends and loved ones.

We often get attached not just to a person but to the idealized life we imagine they bring. Romantic connection feels like a promise, something to carry us through the days. That is why we can fall for someone we have never met – because they can open our eyes to other possible lives that we are missing. We mourn not just what we had and lost, but also what we could have had.

One of the hardest parts of heartbreak is wondering if we will ever find that kind of connection

again. It is almost impossible to believe in the moment, but going through multiple heartbreaks itself proves our capacity to develop feelings multiple times. If we have felt it before, we will feel it again. And over time, we change in ways that make each loss insignificant and less defining.

Heartbreak can make us doubt ourselves -- our looks, our personality, our voice, and our worth in general. If we come from less privileged backgrounds, we might wonder if it is because we have not fully "made it" in life yet. But the truth is, if someone truly likes you,

they

like you. No life achievement, no physical feature, no personal trait can make someone feel what they do not. And if someone's love is tied to material and superficial things, we would not really want to be with someone whose connection with us is so fragile.

Never cringe at your own feelings. History, literature, and even the Abrahamic traditions teach us that love has driven some humans to madness and to blindness. It is part of being human.

The silver lining of heartbreak is this: if you are capable of feeling so deeply, it means you are capable of real love. And when the right person comes, you will be ready to build a healthy attachment with them.

By: Ahmed

**Ahmed AboHamad**

## Whitney

Denver Kelley

The collegiate experience is worse than climbing Mount Everest barefoot, yet more euphoric than winning the lottery. As my mother always said, “If it was easy, then everyone would do it.” My first semester at the accredited University of Connecticut has been extremely memorable. Filled with side quests, all-nighters for studying, and a pending coffee addiction, my first taste of independence has been multifaceted, to say the least. If you asked me, “How’s college going?” I would say it’s going well. However, if you asked me on a deeper level, I would say that I finally understand “The Greatest Love of All” by Whitney Houston.

### **“I decided long ago, never to walk in anyone’s shadow.”**

The day I moved into my spatially-challenged dorm, I was eager to embark upon the next chapter of my life. I no longer wanted to compare myself to peers or even the former versions of myself. I was ecstatic to discover who I wanted to be and embody that identity. The concept was brilliant— in theory. I was successful in my pursuit until the grade for the first biology exam was released. My heart sank when I overheard a girl in the lecture hall declare that she’d gotten a 90%. The Blackboard App was still open on my phone. Next to “Exam 1,” the 75% I saw pierced my spirit like an arrow. A billion thoughts raced through my head as I began to slightly hyperventilate. *I had studied. You weren’t supposed to do bad when you study. Did I study enough? Maybe her family donated a building to the school. I have to be better than this. Right?* At that moment, I was Atlas; I was carrying the weight of the world on my back and I could hardly put one foot in front of the other. The pressure from my family occupied my mind. The pressure I’d put on myself ate away at my soul.

### **“If I fail, if I succeed, at least I’ll live as I believe.”**

It took me far too long to learn that the path to success isn’t linear. I received my first failing grade during my first semester. While it nearly took me out initially, I eventually realized that the world kept spinning. If I had thought that biology was hell, then chemistry had to be the Antichrist. The third exam consisted of eight open-ended questions. I froze with fear, thinking about how my grade would suffer with one incorrect question. I took a deep breath and wrote my name. I proceeded to answer six questions and treat myself to coffee. A friend who I admire greatly once wrote an essay on the taste of strength being equivalent to the bitterness of the black coffee her mother drank. Although my coffee was more of a tan color than black, I imagined the coffee as fuel to keep fighting. Failure was only one side of a coin. The other side was an opportunity for growth.

### **“No matter what they take from me, they can’t take away my dignity.”**

I used to have luxurious, healthy locs that rested on my shoulders. I had the type of hair that rose “earthy black girl” and “Ms. Lauryn Hill” allegations— the type that could have gone viral on Pinterest if you will. I cut them off a month before I came to college. I can’t say why I decided to go to the local barber after growing my dreadlocks for 2.5 years. It simply felt like the right thing to do. The thrill of the big chop quickly wore off and I began to believe I had to do twice as much to be half as attractive as

before. It was the middle of October when I first bought makeup beyond mascara and lip gloss. I would practice a “full beat” on the days I felt like being a little extra. I never left the dorm in an outfit that I wouldn’t want to be photographed. As my hair grew, I perfected techniques to emphasize my curls. I faked my confidence until I believed in it. I had to take pride in my appearance before I could take pride in myself. I carry myself with dignity in every room I enter.

**“Learning to love yourself; It is the greatest love of all.”**

I began speaking in the mirror in college. In elementary school, I had a daily affirmation. My mother had instilled in me that your speech was incredibly powerful. It was essentially the concept that the Universe was constantly listening and that you could speak things into existence. The younger me didn’t understand this, yet indulged because it was a part of our morning car ride routine. As I got older, the stubbornness of adolescence led me astray from that pattern. I thought it was silly and found it difficult to believe the words I once shouted with exuberance. When the semester became herculean, I pondered what had worked for me in the past. The six-year-old who loved colorful barrettes and wanted to be a fashion designer/zoologist came to mind. I realized that her ambition was still alive. I had to love myself because I loved her.

When “The Greatest Love of All” came on my shuffled playlist several days before the semester’s termination, I finally comprehended the gravity of the song. I could see why the writers of “American Psycho” had paid homage to it amidst a psychological thriller. I knew that the greatest love of all was inside of me.

## I'm 31.

Well, I'm turning 31 on December 27. I started with that because... it's supposed to mean something? At least for some people it means something.

I don't feel anything particular about it. I'm a female bodied individual so my "biological clock" is supposed to be ticking. I think I will never not write about change, never not talk about displacement. I moved 3 times in my life.

If you do the math, it's supposed to be roughly every 10 years of my life. Right? Wrong.

All of them happened since I was 18 and all by my own "choice". No one forced me to move, at least not coerced me explicitly. I always made the "choice" because I never felt like I belonged where I was. Always an Alien.

Last time I moved I came to US, on December 25, 2022. Two days before I turned 29, started the last year of the third decade of my life. Originally, I wanted to get my flight ticket for the 27th so I'm on the air, practically nowhere, when I turn 29. But that didn't happen, so I decided to turn 29 in a new country. Again, because it's supposed to mean something...?!

Back home, with my family, we go out on our birthdays, for dinner. Grab a cake, light the candles, make a wish, sing happy birthday and be loud, just so we celebrate being a family once a year, for each of us. At least forget for a moment that we don't get along, especially my brother and I that were raised by just my mom after my dad passed away, hated my sister and her husband's gut. They have a lot in common.

They're both narcissists, and they would slaughter anyone for their "family"'s benefit, meaning Him, Her and their kids. No one else matters or has a say in anything. They live a dictatorship life. But my sister does one thing very well, puts on a show of a happy family. Because my mom never had that kind of sense of celebration, my grandma always does that for her and her sisters. It feels like she never wanted to have a family of that sense or have kids. It just happened! My sister was raised by my dad and my grandmother, for the first two years of her life, as my mom was studying in college, 3 hours away from home, 5 days a week. They just saw each other on the weekends. Because well, as my grandma would say, "all of my girls have to be educated and financially independent, no one is going to rely on her husband." So, I think a healthy attachment between my sister and my mom was never created. And my dad, was a young boy, pretty much stuck with raising a child by himself, living in her mother in law's house. So, he wasn't happy.

I think that got my sister so demoralized. My grandma tried to spoil her because her mom was away. And my dad was trying to fight that to raise an independent child.

I don't think my sister ever felt that sense of family in her early life. So, she would force us to have this family dinners, Birthday celebrations, Yalda celebrations, New Years celebrations. My mom would just show up and give us money as a gift.

I am continents away from them now. And surprisingly, I miss them. And I miss that manufactured family celebrations. Simply, I liked being celebrated. Even if it was for the sake of someone else's scenario.

I liked thinking that I was worth celebrating, for a day, in my life. And I liked getting money for no reason! I moved 3 times; the first time I moved was because I wanted to get out of babysitting role for the whole family. Physical babysitting for my brother and emotional baby sitting for my mom and sister. She is 8 years older than me but was the only one who was acting up.

So, I moved 11 hours away from the only home that I knew. I moved because the only reason that I would get away with moving out was because of college, to go to the "#2 tech university" in the country. Lived in a dorm for a year, met my first love, partner, roommate and then moved to a house with her the next year. I lived in that city for 5 years with her and her family, although they didn't know the full scope of our relationship and didn't quite like me, they became my family.

The second time I moved, I moved to be closer to my family. My sister had been living in Capital for 6 years by then. Had got married and had a kid, and my mom retired so she was willing to move to Capital to give my brother a proper high school experience. The one thing that he didn't want because he never studied that much. But the only determining factor for any kind of change in my maternal family, is "education".

Which is scary to me. It feels like a human being by itself, is not worth the fight. Your physical, mental and social health doesn't matter as long as you're doing good at school. Which made me fully ignored and invisible for my family, my whole childhood and adolescence, because I was a high-achieving student and top ranked in the city and province, constantly.

We only just started having profound conversations about "what is wrong with me?" When I started slipping up in college. Because I didn't wanna be an engineer. And I was done catering to my family's desire about how they wanted me to maintain the family picture.



I moved to the Capital, Tehran. Because I wanted to work and go to school there, in Art studies and Art management. And I had enough fights over the phone every night with my mom. About the lifestyle that I had that she didn't approve. We had fought enough that I had fully aired out all of my needs and traumas, and she had realized that she can't tame me, so she had to accept me as a different person. Most importantly, we were tired of fighting, none of us had energy to put into it anymore so we had chosen practicing peace with each other.

Since none of us were gonna change. I moved in with them again because I missed them, and I had realized the meaning of "Family would chew each other's meat but wouldn't through away each other's bone".

I had broken up with my first ever chosen family, had been peer pressured into compulsive heterosexuality and was in a toxic relationship with last ever boy I tried to date, who had an uncontrolled borderline personality disorder. And I was still trying to save people. I moved the third time, two years ago, knowing that probably this is not the last time I am moving, and boasting about "being a Nomad" and "being Cosmopolitan", meaning I don't feel at home anywhere so everywhere and anywhere can be my home. And I still believe in that.

I moved to get away from a country that was, and is, falling apart. Socially, Culturally, financially. That I was working full-time and some, but I couldn't afford a room of my own. That I was still worried about being hungry, and jobless, and naked. A country that was threatening my life for being different in belief and sexuality. And my mom, supported me fully. Paid for everything. Spent her whole retirement pension, to send me away. Send me away to keep me safe because every time I left the house she didn't know if I'm gonna come back or be arrested because of not wearing hijab or be shot dead in the street in a protest or be beaten to death in "interrogation". I don't blame her.

I was arrested once by morality police, and I had gone through court once because someone reported my whole team of colleagues for not wearing hijab in the gallery. Which wasn't even true, that time. Just the guy wanted to get us arrested. He was the landlord of the space for gallery and couldn't see that gallery is making more money than he expected and wanted to evict them. And the team were the "sacrificial lamb".

When I was studying for my first master's in Tehran, I started My first ever proper therapy process, so that I thought, before Covid shut the clinic down. I talked to the therapist twice and he said I'm Dysthymic. My whole maternal side of family is. They don't know how to be happy. They create scenarios to mourn.

He said my activating factor for the dysthymic disorder, that later on turned to major depressive disorder, was the death of my father. Which was truly my first love and best friend. He said three factors that would be the most affective and immediate activating factors for disorders are death of a loved one, then Immigration, and then a bad break up. I had experienced first and third, but not the second. And "Immigration" was what turned my Dysthymia to Major Depressive Disorder.

I knew it was going to be hard when I "chose" to immigrate. I knew I'm not welcome here, as an immigrant, as a brown person, as a female non-binary queer person, as a non-believer, as a "big head, smart mouth", etc etc. But what I didn't know was that immigration is a form of death.

You die in your society and are born in a new society. You die in citizenship advantage and are born in a severe disadvantage. You die in your language, culture, music, community! Most importantly community! Your whole community is wiped out and you start over. And you are born in... well, nothing. A new society, culture, language that you had to adapt, a new community and life you have to build, from dust.

Speaking of community, it always took years for me to build the community around me that is like a big embrace, to carry you over life. Being a picky soul and making myself prone to hurt by not accepting to turn my heart to a rock, it takes a long time for me to find people that I can connect to. And it doesn't happen easier as you age, trust me. But everyone always told me "It should be nothing for you, you have this way of building networks. I don't know what it is. But you know a lot of people." Knowing is something, connecting is other, living with people is a whole Other thing. I

wanted this challenge to get tough, to get independent, because literally you have access to no resource from your past life. But I didn't fully know how much the experience is going to break you first. That you will have a wall of culture of language to break to just start interacting with anyone from that society. No one told us how hard it is going to be!

When I first came here, my family were my Iranian and Bangladeshi housemates. I had found them in a "UConn Iranian Community" chatroom on Telegram. And they needed a roommate, so I joined them. But what is fascinating to me is how this community has been formed and been functioning for years now. By international Iranian students in Uconn. And how they are a safety net for each and every new international student that comes here from Iran. They even try to solve problems for other international students whenever possible. They find people houses and drive them around as they get here. Take them to bank, DMV, shopping, to get their social security card set up. They play a crucial role in making this whole system work for us. And each of us replace a member that graduates.

We try to carry the legacy and at least help one other Iranian person when they come here and are literally stranded at the middle of nowhere. They are - we are - an indispensable gear, for making life possible, for each-other, without even being aware of it. And no one else will ever fully understand what we go through, to just be here.

I know probably this community is not one of a kind. I know probably every wave of immigrants that settles in another country did this for each other. They had no other choice. No one else would look out for them. From African people finding themselves on a new land to Japanese people finding themselves in concentration camps, to Syrian refugees swimming to get to a beach, to immigrant students coming to west as a skilled force. Minorities always had to stick up for each other.

When I was 5 or 6, when other girls were dreaming of becoming a bride one day, I would say "when I grow up, I'll go to "foreign" (thinking that foreign is another country all together), have a job and an apartment, and live by myself."

That dream of independence always haunted me. But I didn't know the cost of that dream.

It's all about shock, right? It does something to you. What makes trauma, trauma is the shock factor. Neither your body nor your mind is ready for the unexpected - and doesn't have enough time to process it.

I want to somehow go back to make her ready for what's expecting her. Because after all this, wonders are waiting for her.

Prose Submission  
from the Editor

*painting (y)our privilege*

10/06/2024

paintbrushes proliferating porcelain platforms;  
creases and canvases crafted by the Creator—  
unbeknownst yet unanimously understood—  
position my understanding of Blackness

against ribbons and rungs of ladders on which  
ancestors were not given a leg up. run out of forests  
and hung on trees, I understand my Blackness  
through strings of systemic violence, stored

trauma in shoulders; slams of doorframes  
reverberating off my father's fingertips  
as he caressed the entrance to my childhood  
bedroom and told me I was the victim

of his physical abuse unleashed on my mother.

I understand Blackness in my stress-  
eating of pretzels, specifically "Snaps" by Snyder's  
—otherwise known as "Calculator" pretzels

to my cousin and I in our adolescence.  
I understand Blackness as cracking pretzels  
against erasers of pencils as they attempt  
to use pretzel dust to rewrite the narrative

of cisheteronormativity imposed by grandparents  
of opposing religions, faiths, and creeds. seeds  
planted yet not nurtured become food birds  
transport to environments less hostile and warmer.

I was first warm when I adopted a "queer"  
identity; fused this label with the sweaters,  
blazers, and dance shoes of my youth to beat  
conformity out of my bones and rebellion

into my blood. I understand my identity  
as a current of distilled water; balanced  
by electrolytes and the essence of justice.  
Blackness and queerness bathe each other

as they are mothers, sisters, and friends  
to one another—depending on the day  
or social order. I understand my queerness  
as superior melanin content, born to bask

in sunshine without fear of burning. for it was blood, fire,  
and rope that burned and forsook us generations ago. I  
listen to whispers of sun and rainbows after rain

in quatrains as I remember the martyrs  
who were punished simply for stretching  
the boundaries of what skin wore under it.  
flesh and bones are never enough for painters.

we desire positive feedback loops and apoptosis  
to resist pop culture norms of straight hair, hairless  
armpits and legs; Barbie and Ken no-no squares  
and ditziness rather than intelligence in a woman.

we desire sameness with our picturesque portraits;  
distortion of the frame to flip the foundation  
of the façade of which we desperately poke the plastic  
to steal but a breath—a hydrolyzed atom in the matrix.

bullshit befuddles my diaphragm again as imposter  
syndrome knocks at my cerebellum and whispers  
panic down my spine. I shiver; sweat stains my legs  
as I wonder: whose privilege is on this canvas?

eyes flutter as I dare to remember the psalm  
of my soul as I sacrifice sanity for productivity.  
I understand my queerness through a clinician  
who recommends anti-psychotics, discrediting

the anger I feel as a Black body in higher education.

I require ample hydration through liquid courage  
to deal with atrocities of injustice soaked in performative  
diversity, equity, and inclusion work in higher

education, run by children with steadfast narcissist  
complexes and abandonment issues. I sympathize  
while turning tired eyes toward anti-depressants  
and anti-anxiety medications; trading one chemical

addiction for another; one systemic plight for another.

sometimes I cry out for the same grandmother  
who taught me there was no true way I could be clean  
without her help. as she bathed me and brushed

my teeth from ages one through eight,  
I wondered if my parents' relationship was

defunct to the point of my uncleanliness.  
I sat in the bathtub and waited

for my grandmother to perform her final acts  
of cleansing—scrubbing me viscously from  
my head to my feet. I wondered how liberatory  
it would be to swim down the drain—

into the sewer system where germs, gremlins,  
and genies formed an ecosystem within margins  
while mermaids directed their travels upstream,  
against the current of duckies and bathwater toys

girls and boys from stable homes played with  
as they laughed and splashed in water for hours.  
their fingers and toes became raisins parents  
took pictures of for family photo albums

later used as light forms of blackmail with partners.

I understood my queerness as I looked back at  
baby pictures of me drinking my bottle of milk,  
sleeping on a toilet with my lower half exposed;

pictures of me standing in the kitchen fully naked  
with a baseball cap on, cupping myself  
the way a man cups his privilege, full of entitlement;  
smiling at the camera and nearly biting my lips

as my bones and body grew to understand  
I hated the big breasts & voluptuous vulva I inherited  
from my father's lions. by age eight, I had  
a C-cup—in third grade, pining for the most

masculine boy in my class as a form of safety.  
I guess I also inherited both the internalized  
misogyny and homophobia from my father  
as I wrote love letters to boys in middle school,

telling them after the fact that I had a crush  
but that it went away because they had failed me.  
every man in my life failed me, someday, somehow—  
either by cheating or betraying a best friend of mine.

first, it was my mother; then it was my friends  
I rode the bus with in seventh and eighth grade.  
later it was the girls who ended up pregnant  
by their sophomore year of high school; cyclic

and ignorant exploration of bodies the only way  
to express their internalized hatred and misplaced trust  
in the moral character of boys—parading  
as men. it was then I became sure of my queerness

and my utter terror in the deceptive capacity  
of men. the calamity of masculinity was worn  
as a jacket unafraid to catch smoke of cigarettes  
and tar of resin from a tightly rolled blunt.

I came to understand my neurodivergence  
through aspiring for the #1 academic rank  
from third grade onward, anything less  
than a 90% inspired immediate distress.

I came to understand panic through shame—  
and shame through closeted queerness.  
I came to understand shame through repression  
and expression as artistic reparations

paid to the voiceless child parentified  
in fights where my name was texturized  
against smooth walls where beige and blue  
met Blackness in patched and faded hues.

I understood Blackness as the turpentine  
used to thin incoming messages, divine  
as ancestors pushed truth against my spine.  
spirits guided me toward sumptuous rhymes.

I understood Blackness in brisk moonlight—  
clouded by campus light posts to guide minds  
toward elitist efficacies on tilted tops of hills,  
generationally grounded in white male privilege.

as I dared to write letters to my mind's eye,  
I distorted canvases of femininity and standard—  
creating a cuckhold of self-love and self-loathing.

I plunged off the cliff of conformity into the unknown,  
clutching the dark corners of consciousness.  
I found liberation in writing letters to myself,  
in the second person; lubricating with barbiturates  
as I considered the calamity of the question:

whose privilege is on this canvas?  
I wrote the first poems of my academic career



on a computer screen with a white canvas, cursors  
blinking in my mind, writing terrors

first narrated with tenacity and turbulence.  
chaos created curtains across my psyche  
as I stuffed traumas into Marie Antoinette  
paper dolls, stitched together with common sense.

I left the senselessness of higher education to  
pursue artistic proclamations, hidden in  
one-night stands; false positives; declarations of  
lust wrapped in pig blankets of sweet nothings.

see, we painters know false love prophets  
& pevlic apostates break from the same bread  
as misogynistic politicians whose affiliations  
disintegrate next to reproductive justice.

I clutched to the idea of financial stability  
as I left the senselessness of higher education,  
knowing one day I would return, but not  
before studying the rules of non-conformity.

the self-portraits of Prince & Janelle Monáe  
filled my bedroom as journals & wood floors  
became flooded with prose & woes of identity  
crises, half-remembered heartbreaks, and pity.

upon my return to higher education,  
I was viewed through the same  
high-achieving perspective as my youth.  
but instead of someone saying to me,

“you’re cookin’ with gas, Greene,”  
I received the lackluster lamentations  
of peers and classmates, whitewashed  
with comfort, elitism, and simple psyches—

which never had to experience the knots in their stomach  
upon being intentionally misgendered—or physically  
attacked by their own father for loudly expressing  
their sexuality at the age of 19.

while I do not wish these burdens  
on the precariously privileged, I wish  
to relieve burdens of the precociously privileged.

I wish to hold their callous hands  
as I whisper to Black and Brown women:  
it's okay to take a break. you are no less  
for allowing yourself the rest you deserve.

I wish to cradle my inner child  
in a cocoon of love and creative spirit;  
dump the paint bucket of privilege  
on the floor and finger paint with faith.

I wish to read them a bedtime story  
& tell them I learned Blackness is poetry  
during the turn of my twenties in community,  
with truth-tellers who created portraits with words.

I wish to flip through the pages of my gallery  
of words hung by threads of shallow silk  
and sinews—as ancestral tides turned new  
in ink fibers bold enough to strike them true.

I wish for the world to embrace education  
as a simple act of curiosity instead of a political  
ideology soaked in merit & fit. male statues  
don't fit minds, genderless and formless

until narrated on a page with margins.  
I wish for the academy to embrace Black women  
as its oldest teachers—not the Aristotle's or Socrates'  
or Nietzsche's or Kant's, broken at dog-eared feet.

I wish for the world to embrace education  
as a non-linear path, divided in sevens—  
with luck and misfortune on the same page as profit.  
I wish for the world to embrace the question:

whose privilege is on this canvas?  
you don't have to be a painter to wonder;  
in fact, it works better if you're an interloper,  
lending the microphone to the marginalized.

take a grass seat on their garden of grapes;  
watch vineyards turn into wine as truth  
and harm ferment, creating bubbles  
of justice, joy, and benevolence at your lips.

# Catalog of Events

Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 -  
Rebranding *The Vision* as  
“Ink Drip: Creative Writing Free-  
Write & Workshop Sessions”

**Ink Drip**  
**WRITING**  
**WORKSHOPS**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 5**  
Time: 6:30-8pm  
AACC Conference Room

Theme: Identity work; finding the “I” in Community as Black & Brown students in higher education.

AACC CONFERENCE ROOM

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Scan the QR code!

**INK DRIP**

CREATIVE WRITING FREE-WRITE & WORKSHOP SESSIONS

Join us for intentional creative writing time. You do not come with materials prepared. Time for journaling and/or revision is built in. I will provide feedback at any stage!

NEXT MEETING: DECEMBER 7TH; 7-8:30PM, AACC CONFERENCE ROOM

CURRENT CALLS FOR SUBMISSION: NOVEMBER 30-DECEMBER 7TH; SCAN BELOW

Revised Workshop Flyer,  
Original Workshop Flyer,  
Active Schedule Flyer

*Write Into "I"*

AACC CONFERENCE ROOM

**INK DRIP**

**SCHEDULE**

SP2024 SEMESTER DATES  
March - April 2024; May Dates TBD!


AACC CONFERENCE ROOM  
Student Union, Room 408

<b>MARCH 5</b>	First Session - Open to All Students
<b>MARCH 19</b>	Second Session - Graduate Students
<b>MARCH 26</b>	Third Session - Undergraduate Students



# Catalog of Events

Spring 2024 -  
Black History Observance  
Month Events and Programs




## Black Grads Matter

"VEGAS RULE" EVENT

HOSTED BY:  
AACC GRADUATE ASSISTANTS  
LEX GREENE ANANDA GRIFFIN

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6 @ 4PM  
AACC COMMUNITY ROOM

Are you a Black graduate student? We want to learn about your experiences! Join us for a "Vegas Rule" (whatever is said here stays here) conversation. Let's empower and uplift each other with insight, positivity, and wisdom. If you had to write a letter to your graduate self, what would you say?




## Paint and Sip-Licated

with Alicia Cobb of ArtSimplified

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17  
4PM, AACC COMMUNITY ROOM

JOIN US FOR A PAINT AND SIP WORKSHOP LED BY BRIDGEPORT-BASED PAINTER, VISUAL ARTIST, AND ENTREPRENEUR, ALICIA COBB. ALCOHOL-FREE "MOCKTAILS" WILL BE AVAILABLE IN THE AACC KITCHEN.

ARTISTS OF ALL AGES AND EXPERIENCE ARE WELCOME!



## MOCKTAIL MENU

Raise a glass to life! All alcohol-free!



**MANGO MULE**  
Mango puree, lime juice, ginger beer, ice, sugar to taste



**PINEAPPLE COBB-LER**  
Pineapple juice, strawberry juice, lime juice, club soda



**RASPBERRY BEE'S KNEES**  
Raspberry seltzer, lime juice, sugar to taste

AACC Community Room ALL MADE FRESH TO ORDER

DESIGNEDBLACK, SUBOG, AACC PRESENTS BHM EXHIBITION

## ART - OFFICIAL INTELLIGENCE EXHIBITION



FEB 15 2024

TIME: 7PM  
LOCATION: SU 310

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED.






DATE: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16  
TIME: 7PM

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER PRESENTS

LOCATION: AACC COMMUNITY ROOM


## SOULFUL-VIBES NIGHT



OPEN MIC NIGHT FIRST COME, FIRST TO SPIT

WE WELCOME ALL FORMS OF CREATIVE EXPRESSION, EVEN SIMPLY THOUGHTS ON YOUR MIND!

EMAIL: ALEXIS.GREENE@UCONN.EDU FOR MORE INFORMATION!





## LEARNING "SPEECH SPEAK"

with Lex Greene

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21 @ 7PM  
AACC COMMUNITY ROOM

Are you dreading class presentations? Do you suffer from stage fright? Are you looking to bump up your resume? Join us for public speaking skill-drills and interactive activities!

Hosted by: Lex Greene (they/she), a current Higher Education and Student Affairs (HESA) Master's Student ('25), Graduate Assistant at the AACC, and creator of Ink Drop Creative Writing Workshops

# Catalog of Events

## Spring 2024 - Black History Observance Month Events and Programs



UConn Kids & UConn Bridging Education (KUBE) x AACC



Black Excellence Summit Presentation: (De)Constructing Cosmetics:  
Creating Our "Perfect Match" of Foundation



# Catalog of Events

Fall 2024 -  
 “Black UConn Resource Room” &  
 “Moving from the Margins” (in  
 collaboration with Writing Center)

AACC x UConn Writing Center  
**Black UConn Resource Room**

How can writing incorporate all of my identities?

Open Dialogue | Institutional Critique | Community Brainstorming

Thursday, October 3  
 1-3pm  
 AACC Community Room

Narratives | Racism in the Margins (uconn.edu)

AACC x UConn Writing Center  
**BLACK UCONN RESOURCE ROOM**

Thursday, October 10  
 6-8pm  
 UConn Storrs Writing Center  
 (2nd Floor of Homer Babbidge Library)

Flash Tutoring Sessions

Open Dialogue | Community Brainstorming

RSVP Form - Black UConn Resource Room with Flash Tutoring - Thurs., Oct. 10

Join us for a continuation of our forum about Black student access to and utilization of writing based academic resources. This edition of the forum will include snacks, flash tutoring sessions from Black & Brown tutors, and a breakout room led by AACC graduate assistant, Lex Greene.

AACC x UCONN WRITING CENTER  
**BLACK UCONN RESOURCE ROOM**  
 CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP

WRITING TOPIC: INSPIRING LINGUISTIC JUSTICE

NOVEMBER 7, 2024

UConn WRITING CENTER  
 (2ND FLOOR OF BABBIDGE LIBRARY)  
 6-7:30PM

“Black UConn Resource Room” began as a community forum and became “Storytelling our Identities” (in collaboration with UConn MIXED). These events informed the “Moving from the Margins” town hall, which introduced the Linguistic Racism Ballot Box to UConn

Storytelling Our Identities

A Component of the “Black UConn Resource Room”

storytelling workshop | poetry workshop

What has generationally informed my identity? What represents my current identity?

Thursday, November 14th  
 6-7pm  
 AACC Community Room

Join us for snacks, storytelling, and creative practice intentionally designed for mixed-race Black and Brown students of color at UConn. Hosted by the AACC and Lex Greene, a graduate assistant for the AACC and graduate intern for the UConn Storrs Writing Center.

AACC x UConn Writing Center

Moving FROM THE MARGINS

A Town Hall on Linguistic Racism

What to Expect:

- Listening to experiences from students of color
- Building community with students of color
- Voicing your concerns about your experiences
- Contributing to systemic change at UConn
- A submissions box for anonymous feedback

Join us on Thursday, November 21st

Time: 6-7:30pm  
 Location: Babbidge Library, Rm 219A

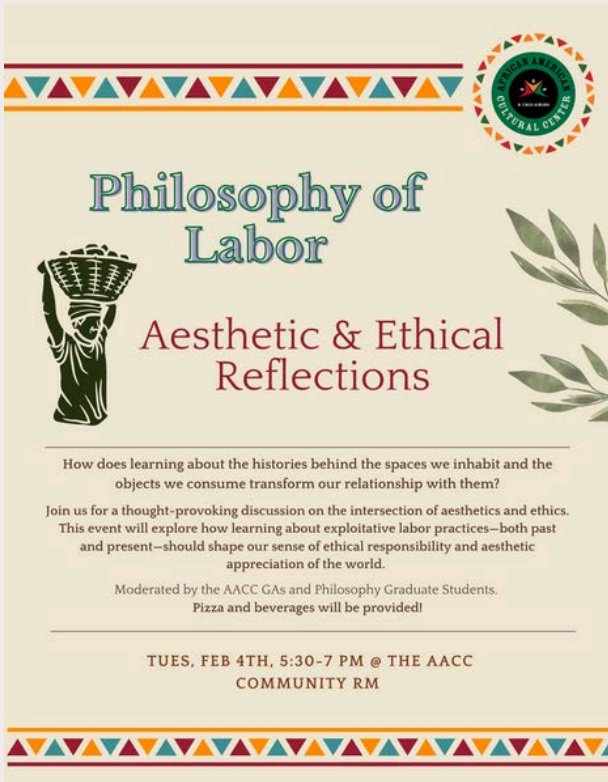
For More Information

(860)486-4387  
 aacc@uconn.edu  
 writingcenter@uconn.edu

Scan to fill out a digital version of the anonymous “ballot box”

# Catalog of Events

## Spring 2025 - Black History Observance Month Events and Programs & “Community in the Creases”



**Philosophy of Labor**  
Aesthetic & Ethical Reflections

How does learning about the histories behind the spaces we inhabit and the objects we consume transform our relationship with them?

Join us for a thought-provoking discussion on the intersection of aesthetics and ethics. This event will explore how learning about exploitative labor practices—both past and present—should shape our sense of ethical responsibility and aesthetic appreciation of the world.

Moderated by the AACC GAs and Philosophy Graduate Students.  
Pizza and beverages will be provided!

TUES, FEB 4TH, 5:30-7 PM @ THE AACC COMMUNITY RM

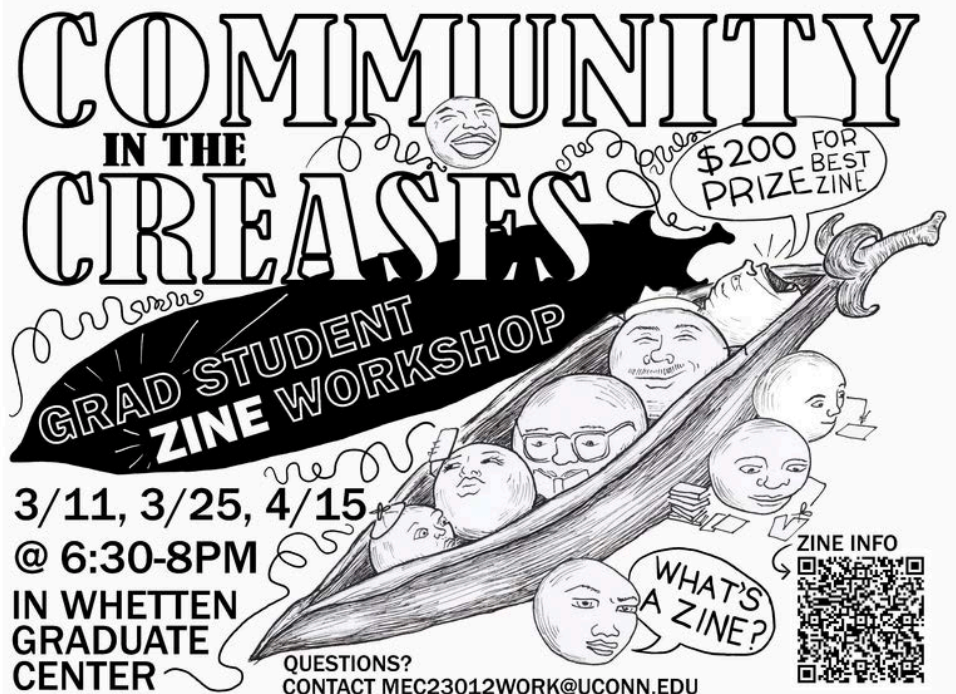


**Rest Resource Room (RRR)**  
Tues., Feb. 11 @ 6pm  
AACC Community Room

Rest with us! Join us for board games, self-care activities, and ice breakers

Featuring conversations about rest literature from Tricia Hersey and Audre Lorde

Collaborations between AACC graduate assistants (Ahmed & Ananda in Philosophy and Lex in Education) inspired the establishment of community partnerships between the Graduate School and the UConn Library. A grad student zine workshop centered in food justice emerged.



**COMMUNITY IN THE CREASES**

GRAD STUDENT ZINE WORKSHOP


3/11, 3/25, 4/15 @ 6:30-8PM  
IN WHETTEN GRADUATE CENTER

\$200 FOR BEST PRIZE ZINE

WHAT'S A ZINE?

QUESTIONS? CONTACT MEC23012WORK@UCONN.EDU

ZINE INFO







Thank You!



Thank you for engaging with this edition of *The Vision*.  
For more information on *The Vision*, scan the QR code below.  
This QR code will redirect you to a guide through the AACC archives.



[CLICK HERE](#)

[CLICK HERE](#)

[CLICK HERE >](#)

Be sure to stay in touch with the AACC. Check the official AACC website regularly for pictures following events. Be sure follow the AACC on Instagram @uconn.aacc. We hope to see you at our next major event and/or program!

From pride and resilience to the reclamation of COLLECTIVE power,

Alexis C. Greene, aka the artist known as elexified

