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An Anthology on Human Suffering in America: Notes on Black Lives Matter

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Recommended Citation

Dubois, Katelyn, "An Anthology on Human Suffering in America: Notes on Black Lives Matter" (2021).
Senior Honors Projects. Paper 923.
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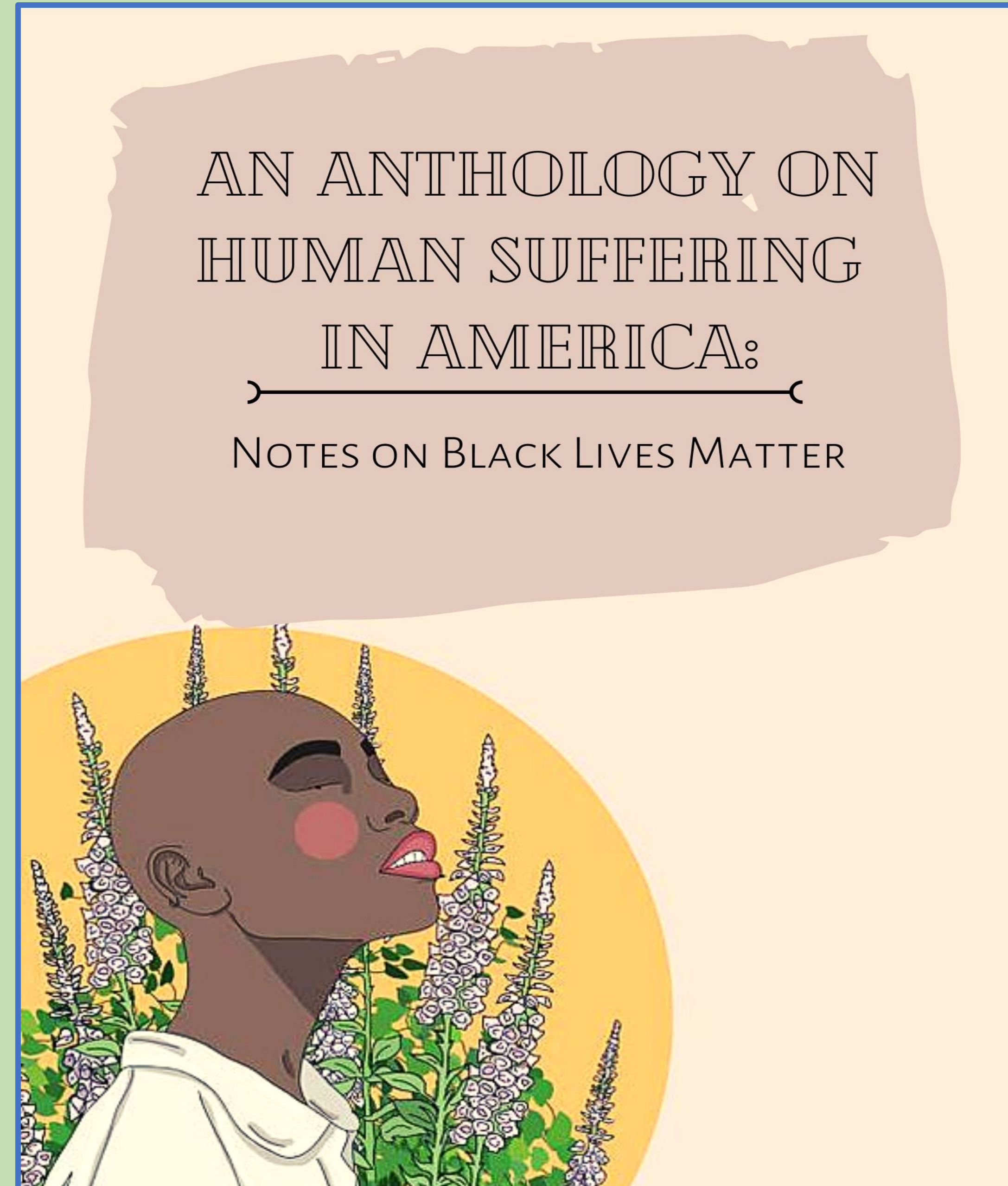
An Anthology on Human Suffering in America: Notes on Black Lives Matter

By: Katelyn M. Dubois, Chinese, International Studies and Diplomacy

Sponsor: Ann Salzarulo-McGuigan, Communication Studies

I. Purpose

Following the killing of George Floyd and the subsequent protests demanding for change and an end to the systemic racism against the Black community in the United States, I felt compelled to do my part towards ensuring a more equal and just society. My goal was to create something that would be accessible, educational, approachable, and inspirational and could be utilized as a vehicle towards achieving proactive and sustainable change in the minds of those who are racist and prejudiced. My goal in creating this anthology is that it will not only give its authors an opportunity to share their stories and raise greater attention to the injustices experienced by the Black community in the United States, but that it will also allow readers to connect with the raw pain, longing, hope, love, and humanity of the pieces- in the hopes that it will incite proactive and sustainable change in creating a more equitable and loving world for all.



III. Editing Process

After receiving about 45 pieces from authors across the United States, co-editor Dina Louis and I, along with the guidance and advice of Ann Salzarulo-McGuigan, began the process of pre-screening all of the pieces and editing them for grammar, formatting, and or spelling errors, however ensuring not to alter the author's original message and content. Beginning in the Summer of 2020 and continuing through May of 2021, each of the final 42 pieces went through two rounds of edits, ending with the author's final approval.

IV. Structure and Design

Whilst deciding on the order of the pieces, Dina and I discovered that all fell into one of four categories: history, loss, everyday life experiences, and inspiration/ calls for change. After separating each of the pieces into one of the four categories, we found that the order seemed to choose itself, as each piece seemed to fall naturally into place. The pieces were then numbered, and organized into a chart with each of the piece's title, author, contact information, photo, and current status, in terms of editing, for organizational purposes.

II. Call for Contributions

With the guidance of Professor Jessica Frazier, I then drafted a call for contributions letter detailing the project and asking others to participate by sending in their creative writing pieces. Through social media and email, Dina, Professor Frazier, Ann, and I contacted about five hundred individuals, asking for their collaboration. We shared the letter and flyer with URI faculty and staff, student organizations, as well as many other universities such as Rhode Island College, Boston University, Harvard, and New York University. In the end, however, the vast majority of the submissions were the result of social media circulation and or originated from the URI community.

Ode to the children
 Ode to the girls and boys
 That grew up as the last choice
 The urban stories
 Or the watered down side characters.
 To the girls who rarely seen themselves in
 The leading ladies growing up
 The girls with thick hair
 And thicker skin.
 The boys who grew up wishing for heroes
 While being painted as villains.
 The children
 Deep skinned with deeper stories.
 Ode to the boys and girls the media left behind
 Because you too deserved role models
 To see stories full of possibility
 Stories that speak to your purpose
 Your potential.
 You too deserve
 To be seen as worthy
 Ode to the girls and boys who deserved better

-Mylisha Phillips

V. Final Project

The final anthology features a total of 42 beautiful, thought-provoking, and inspiring pieces in the forms of poems, memoirs, short essays, and short stories on the topic of systemic racism and social injustice unfairly and unjustly inflicted upon the Black community, as well as an Editor's Note and acknowledgements page. In order to ensure its accessibility, the final anthology is available for free download on its official website linked here, which, in addition to the anthology, features more information on the path towards its creation, the wonderful and talented authors, editors and collaborators, and additional photos from the creative process.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Number	Title	Author	Contact	Photo	Status	Contacted?
2	1	Needs title	KQ	email: seekingtru ?		Need Title-email	Y
3	2	Blueprint	Mylisha Phillips	IG: imamaphillip	O	O	Y
4	3	Beyond Black Hi	Mylisha Phillips	IG: imamaphillip	O	O	Y
5	4	Needs title	Memory Jacobs	email: mtjacobs@ ?		Needs title and p	Y
6	5	40	Hannah Zuta	IG: hannahzuta	O	O	Y
7	6	1776	Mikha'il Wolf	IG: wolfspoetry; ?		Needs edit appr	Y
8	7	Speak	Angel Lucchetti	email: angel_luc	X	O	Y
9	8	No title	V.E.R	anonymou	X	O	Y
10	9	A Statement Ag	Maison Teixeira	email: teixeiram	O	O	Y
11	10	No title	Michael Karshis	Henry	X	O	Y
12	11	Ancestors	S.L	IG: shewritesfr	O	O	Y
13	12	Lost Tribes	Mikha'il Wolf	IG: wolfspoetry; ?		O	Y
14	13	Land of the Free	Anonymou	None	X	O	Y
15	14	Goodbye Brothe	Vincent Okafor	email: voo5@col ?		Needs edit appr	Y
16	15	Martyr	S.L	IG: shewritesfr	O	O	Y
17	16	Who Will Mourn	Ladarius Brown	IG: poet_lbrown; email: ladariusb	O	O	Y
18	17	Her Innocence Is	Aryka N. Moore,	email: anweathe	O	O	Y
19	18	Needs Title	Sephora	IG: saime_a_	X	O	Y
20	19	Polaroid Zone	Doxa Zannou	email: djzgod@g	O	O	Y
21	20	Today	Yessica Acosta	email: yacostase	O	O	Y
22	21	Needs Title	Jadzia Jean	IG: jadez_4; em:	O	Needs edit appr	Y
23	22	My Dad Taught	Bonsu Thompson	IG: bonsudream	X	O	Y
24	23	Needs Title	Bianca Joyner				NO
25	24	In The City	Vincent Okafor	voo5@cornell.ec ?		Needs edit appr	Y
26	25	Needs Title	Aryka N. Moore,	email: anweathe	O	Needs edit appr	Y
27	26	BTSD	Biskashia Cox	IG: melanetada ?		Needs edit appr	Y

VI. Acknowledgements

A special and ever grateful thank you to Dina Lous, Ann Salzarulo-McGuigan, Professor Jessica Frazier, the URI Honors Progra, and all of the incredible authors who volunteered their time and beautiful pieces to the anthology. We also send a warm thank you to all who shared the call for contributions letter and encouraged their friends, colleuges, and family to participate.