Full Issue, 1.1 The Crambo

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About This Journal

The Crambo was founded in the Fall of 2017 by enthusiastic and committed graduate students in the Masters of Arts in Professional Writing (MAPW) Program at Kennesaw State University. Our primary charge is to serve as a network for graduate students to display and promote their written and artistic creations. It is our sincere desire that The Crambo will serve as a home for honest, uninhibited creative ideas and emancipated expressions for various genres such as poetry, short fiction, creative nonfiction/memoir, screenplays, and visual arts.

About Us

We are the inaugural group of Department, Design, and Marketing editors along with our trusted Production Managers and Co-Editors-in-Chief who breathed life into the vision of a global audience for graduate students everywhere.

How to Submit

Because the editorial board is course-based, the journal accepts submissions until November. Our staff carefully reviews submitted work, with the final decisions made by the editors. The online editions will be published in the Spring.

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Along the Amalfi coast,
lemon trees overwhelm
the rolling hills,
no spaces in between.

This morning, Mad Girl wants to sleep a little longer
and find the Italian blue sky behind her eyes.
She sees black upon blackening skies:
another morning to wear her mad-girl smile,
another morning to repeat a prayer that today
she'll mean it when she tells Sissy, I'm happy. I promise.

Sissy and Mad Girl stop
to smell the fruit,
to consider its yellow
skin. The lemon juice,
both sweet and sour,
stings Mad Girl's tongue,
a punishment
she believes she deserves.

Mad Girl thinks,
I want to sit under the lemon trees.
I want to sleep
and never wake:
the choke of lemon juice
rotting in my throat.
On my bookshelf, nestled among textbooks about art and melodious quotes scribbled on cardstock, is a large glass globe. It is precisely one gallon in capacity and has contained many different goldfish over the years, but today, it remains empty. I have always been fascinated by goldfish. As a child, my memories are flooded with silver and gold fluid forms silently swirling and dancing weightlessly as I watched mesmerized for hours. Goldfish are a large part of Japanese culture, and I remember my daily treks to school through the village, passing by various bodies of water, each housing a mysterious and beautiful world of free-spirits and flowing fins. I knew each and every spot on my way to school that hid one of these magical worlds - usually contained in large stone vases covered with moss outside the front door or ponds with bonsai trees and lily pads giving shade and rest to these delicate sprites.

One of my favorite daily routines was summoning the carp. My friends and I would pass by a beautiful marble encased pond with a Japanese bridge overlooking a dark abyss of water. As I leaned over the hollow bronze rails, we would beat on them with our umbrellas, clap our hands and otherwise create a commotion as one, two, twenty bright hues of orange and gold would emerge from the depths of darkness. Within seconds, the dark green waters would be transformed into a ballet of graceful dancers performing the most elegant arabesque to the beat of our hands. As we conducted this exquisite performance, the fish soon realized that there was no food being thrown to them, and so they would disperse back to the shady coolness out of sight. Of course, carp are such forgiving creatures, so we were able to beckon them every morning as though they had completely forgotten their appearance was in vain the day before.

The omatsuri, or festivals, are flurries of brightly lit orbs, colorfully bold happy, and explosions of brilliant color in the night sky. The beat of the taiko drums resonates powerfully enough to move anyone’s spirit as the flutes play ancient melodies of celebration. I remember coming home from these events with bags of goldfish - black fish with big bubbly eyes, white pearls with red-orange spots on their foreheads, and glittery golden fish with elegant fantails. I had to work so hard to
catch these ephemeral beings, and they would slip through the paper net as I concentrated to capture them. Once my hard earned winnings were securely home, they were placed in a plastic tub, where I would sit and watch them tirelessly for hours. One by one, their delicate bodies would float to the top of the water, and I would have an empty world once again.

My parents realized my fascination with fish, so in the fourth grade, I was given a ten-gallon fish tank. This tank replaced the spot where our TV used to sit, and I remember listening to Carlos Santana's “Flor de Luna” as I curled up on the floor and fell asleep next to my own small universe. Growing up in a tumultuous household with abuse and fighting wreaked havoc on my nerves, and I found myself struggling with OCD and anxiety from a very young age. As the world whirled around me, I always found calm and stillness in my little crystalline wonderland of beings that depended on me, oblivious to my existence. Watching an entire ecosystem happening inside of a transparent box enchanted me, and the fact that it was contained in such as small space gave me a sense of peace and control over my own life.

Throughout college, I carried with me the fish tank and my one-gallon fishbowl as I packed and moved to various dorm rooms and apartments. Moving is already strenuous without the burden of a fracturable cosmos to deal with, but I insisted on taking these aerial beings with me wherever I relocated to, often resulting in a few casualties. Being a twenty-something has proved to be a sort of “mental puberty”, always changing, transitioning and chaotic.

To escape it all, I would immerse myself in a carefree and weightless meditation into their world, gazing for hours on end at how graceful, how effortlessly they glided about. They did not worry about anything and freely drifted and sailed without any burden to hinder their flow. They were completely content being who they were, not concerned with their needs being met, what relationships were on brink of ending, or even if they had another day of life. Watching my goldfish removed me from the tornado going on in my own life, allowing me to enjoy the still simplicity of just being a beautiful part of creation. I realized how unnatural it is to worry, and that in fact, the only things on this earth that worry are human beings. Worry has only shortened the lives of many at best and has taken away moments of joy and living that will never be able to be regained. What would my life have been like if I had been a goldfish? I will never know and worrying about it would not help me understand any better.

Years have gone by and after my last goldfish, Goldie II, passed away, I could not bear the
responsibility of transporting these sensitive organisms to and fro whenever I picked up and moved. I finally accepted that my life was too transitional to be sloshing a world out of order every year that I uprooted myself and replanted. Strangely, I still scrupulously wrap my glass bowl every time I pack, and as I unpack, always find myself polishing it and placing it in view although it remains vacant. I moved across the country this fall and was forced to confront what items I chose to leave behind for the sake of fitting everything into my small trailer. I tossed out my bed, clothing, shoes, and books, but I did not think twice about keeping my fish bowl. It was only when I began unpacking and decorating my room when I realized how peculiar it was that I persisted to display this vacuous sphere which served absolutely no purpose. I keep dreaming of having my little piece of calm again. I have a plan to fill the space back up with clean water, new rocks and fresh plants so that I can go to a pet store and hand-select the most exquisite shimmering inhabit for the new world I created. I guess I’m just waiting for the perfect time: After the break, before the summer, after the next move, or when I know I’m going to be settled for longer than a year. For now, it serves as a reminder of a quiet hideaway where worrying ceases to exist. I have the fishbowl waiting - the little world at my fingertips, always ready to be filled with an entire microcosm of beauty and wonder.
blackberry summer
by Laurel Ann Lowe
Kennesaw State University

Under that lazy fly sun
we run across rows
and through patches,
scattering lucky cottontails
and rust-necked hens,
toward wild brambles
of black-beaded treasure.

The mousers stay
closer to the house
with its clickitat box fans
or on the creaky porch
with its threadbare chairs
and chipped Ball jars
of tepid water.

Auntie has retreated
to her boudoir, glassy-eyed
Uncle into himself.
Our clay-caked soles
fly us down the hill
where our thorn-burned fingers
bleed the same purpled red.
It sits on my bookshelf, relatively untouched. Recently uncovered from an unrelated trip to the family storage unit, it was received and promptly stored away over 10 years ago.

This nicely bound, early digital scrapbook, is a gift from my father, given on my 11th birthday. Bound in blue fabric with a less favorite photo and title captioning on the cover, the scrapbook opens onto a tissue page and typed birthday inscription. The photos inside that follow are a hodge-podge of moments from the first 11 years of my life, and the captions are a series of identifiers and cheesy family inside jokes. The paper has a nice weight to it and a moderate glossy sheen. When I received it, I was mortified. Especially at that time, I was going through a very awkward phase, and it was painful to look through random photos and weird moments that my “lame dad” had captured for me during my childhood so far. The book instantly went into a box in my room, not to be retrieved until a few months ago.

While I still do not look at this book often, 13 years later I have an increased appreciation for the effort and love that my father put into creating it. I have come by my love for material culture honestly, going back at least as far as my great-grandmother, then my paternal grandfather, shared with his wife, and passed to their children, and then to my cousins and myself. As a child, I inherited from my father my grandfather’s stamp collection, my great-grandmother’s painting supplies, postage, and currency collections, and my grandmother’s love of buying, organizing, and using craft supplies. But most of all, our family loves photos. Just yesterday, as I poured over the photo archives at Berea College, I sent a snapshot of one to my dad saying “Wow! Doesn’t this look like one of Grannie’s old photos?” He responded by sharing with me a Dropbox file he has been compiling by scanning old photos that my aunt had saved of my grandmother’s childhood and young adulthood in Kentucky. That night, as I poured over these photos, I thought about how photography has always been a central part of our family life.
My great uncle Bill Hoge was a photo-journalist for his entire career, and even when his eyesight began to deteriorate until he was blind, he maintained an interest in photography and videography and was the family photographer long after it ceased to be practical. He and my dad would sit and talk about the latest film and digital cameras, and after he lost his vision, my dad and I would bring him our cameras so he could feel them while we talked about them.

When my grandfather died, my grandmother lost herself in scrapbooking. She made beautiful framed photo compilations for her children and grandchildren honoring her husband and made elaborate scrapbooks commemorating trips we took or parts of their life together that otherwise would have been forgotten.

It wasn’t until I went away to college, and photography became the primary way that my parents and I communicated for a while, that I really began to understand the importance of this object, and the act tied up in recording the moment and reliving it together after the fact. I began to see why this kitschy digital scrapbook that my dad made for me was so important for him to share with me. The opportunity to relive these moments that we shared or that we didn’t share, through a lens he created, made him present for all of these moments in my mind going forward.

My dad’s penchant for taking photos was always seen as a nuisance to my mother and me when I was young; we would often give him a hard time about being more interested in the photos than just enjoying the moment itself, and I went through periods in childhood where I refused to smile for his photos because I was so fed up with them. Now, though, I see that to have this virtual or physical object as a way to relive the moment, is often what is at the forefront of his mind.

Looking at this photo album in the context of my family history now alters my initial impression. As I flip through the photos that my dad lovingly selected in 2004, I find myself drawn in again and again. Each time I look at it, I notice something new that makes me smile or laugh. The album encapsulates the strong and quirky personality I had as a child and commemorates some of the best times in those years with the people I love. It never gets old to look at pictures of my parents and grandparents—I love looking at the resemblance between my mother and grandmother and me, something that no one noticed until my face changed after braces. Seeing how young my parents looked 13 or more years ago reminds me of so much that has happened.
in those years, how much we have all grown, and how, although our parents seem ageless to us, we all change over time. It also makes me laugh to look at photos of one of the women who I still consider a close friend as we went through our awkward stage together. It feels better to see such embarrassing photos when you know the person right next to you in the picture is feeling the exact same way, and you can commiserate together.

Social media and technology in this day and age promote the creation of virtual scrapbooks just like this one. Facebook and Instagram especially provide opportunities to create and curate unique content that shares your experience, history, and identity, whether through individual posts, albums, or collections. Technology promotes the digitization of photographs, in contrast (or in addition?) to the preservation of the objects themselves. Virtual culture also fosters a pattern of examination and re-examination of one's history through photographic collections. It is standard, at the beginning of a new friendship or romantic relationship, to comb through the other person's social media history, learning about who they were and are through these virtual records. There also comes a point in relationships where two people might sit down together and share their history through these photos and posts in a collective, sanctioned experience. I'll never forget when my best friend from college and I sat down together one afternoon after having been friends for about six months, and she walked me through all of her Facebook pictures, telling me stories of high school friends, her siblings, and extended family. This marked a turning point in our relationship, a deepening, and when I eventually met these important people in her life, it felt like I already knew them, both visually and emotionally. My generation may not typically carry around scrapbooks of their lives, but we do continue to identify ourselves and each other through photographic histories.

Where do I fit into this generational trend, if I am still carrying around photo albums? Am I more part of a familial culture or does this tendency still reflect today's society in general? Should I be spending my time looking forward instead of feeling nostalgic? Why am I so interested in history, above all, my history? What can I learn from these objects? These questions are sparked as I examine this album, but the central thought that comes to mind as I hold this piece is how my dad showed his love for me one year by making something that maybe took some time to appreciate, but that now I will always treasure.
DAPHNE

by Jacklyn Scott
Hood College

Medium: woodfired clay with underglaze
Size: 16”
FOUR LINES ABOUT ARCHIVES

by Ismael Santos
Florida International University

Either it’s state power
or it’s Civil War scrapbooks
or it’s a Repertoire
and creating Cuban Coffee.
My father always told me that a fully loaded eighteen-wheeler should weigh between sixty and eighty thousand pounds, depending on what you’re transporting. Telling me this is what he considered emotional bonding. All I can think about as I walk up to the reflective doors of the doctor’s building is that I look just like him. From the natural part in our hair to the overarched heels, I am him. I remember the on-the-road wisdom he would impart to me when I was a kid. Things like the fact that most truckers are men, so using a glory hole at a truck stop is a bad idea. This was the sort of fatherly advice he gave me.

When I walk up to the reception desk at the free clinic, a nurse in scrubs asks me for my name, and I tell her it’s D.H. Lawrence. After she types it into the computer, she says that she doesn’t see my name, and asks me if it’s an alias. I smile at her and tell her all truckers have aliases. She rolls her eyes and hands me some paperwork to fill out, tells me that she’ll need my legal name on the documents, and tells me to bring it back up to her when I’m finished.

I sit down in an empty seat and start filling out the information. The form they have me fill out asks, “Do you now have, or have you ever had, any of the following…” and I wonder how many people have had to check yes to herpes because of me, or yes to a heart attack, because bromadiolone, ingested orally, is an anticoagulant that will cause death by internal hemorrhaging a few days after you take it, so you never know exactly what you ate that gave you poisoning, or that I might be responsible for it.

A guy with tattoos of different symbols on his knuckles, and a beard down to his gut sits in one of the chair across from me, and all of a sudden I’m fourteen again, with my father telling me how there are all of these codes that truckers use to communicate with each other over CB radios.
“CB,” he would say, “stands for Citizen’s Band,” and how the national channel for truckers is nineteen. He taught me that “Smokey the bear,” is code for a cop, that an alligator on the left lane on I-10 means the remnants of a popped tire, and that every trucker has a different CB handle, a nickname, but how every member of the Deadhead circle’s CB handle starts with D.H. His was D.H. Macho. Mine is D.H. Lawrence, after the writer.

“A Deadhead,” my father would say, “is the term for an empty truck headed to pick up a load.” I sighed in relief because my first thought upon hearing ‘Deadhead circle’ was a bunch of old hippies with long white beards standing around listening to The Grateful Dead, circle jerking each other. Luckily, that’s not what this was. He told me that all of this started because a trucker had been watching the required hazardous material video, and gotten the idea to mess with his freight. It wasn’t long before he noticed that bored truckers wanted something to excite their monotonous lives of driving the entire country without actually getting to see any of it. He told me that they felt underappreciated, but that if the world was a stage, and there were actors on it, the truckers were the people in charge of costume changes, and no matter how good the actors were, the whole play would stand still without the backstage hands. “We are the unrecognized machinery of the watch,” my father said. “We control the lives of every American. I’m telling you this because you’re about to be inducted.”

Now, my father was one of the hardest working men I knew. He worked every day from the day he was eight until he killed himself four years ago, at the age of fifty-nine, and left me his truck. His most prized possession: a blood-red-orange Model 567 Heritage Peterbilt, and a book of instructions for being and inducting Deadheads, and locations to safe spots. When he had first told me about this, sixteen years ago, I had turned away in horror. I couldn’t believe my father was killing innocent people, but the way he explained it was that there was only so much food to go around. He told me that as bees died out, there would be even less, and he asked me if I wanted to be one of the people deciding who got to live or die, or if I wanted someone to choose for me.

The induction took place when I was only fourteen years old. My father had pulled over into a remote location off interstate eighty, and taken me to the back of the truck in which we were transporting supplies for babies. This was when he taught me how to put cocaine in baby formula. He taught me that some cocaine is already cut with baking powder, or ironically enough, baby laxative, so you have to add more or less to the baby formula, depending on the cocaine
concentration, but typically, one gram of cocaine in a 22.2 oz tub of Enfamil is enough. This was my first lesson in population control.

My father knew a thing or two about not getting caught. He grew up poor in the small town of Las Cruzes, Guatemala. The only way to survive in a place like this is to steal and not get caught. My father once told me he stole a cow. You heard me. A fucking bovine creature. He had no idea what he had planned to do with it, but he rode that thing all the way to the main city, two miles away, and sold it for money he used to purchase booze and clothes. My father, the person that was supposed to be my role model, the guy who understood only Spanish and trucker-talk, he'd once asked me if I'd ever stolen anything, and I'd told him no. He told me that I was the worst Guatemalan gypsy he'd ever met. He told me that I didn't understand why he was part of this group of population control agents, and I agreed. He told me it was because third world countries like the one where he grew up didn't even get the chance to have their food contaminated because there wasn't enough to go around. People died of starvation, not of high blood pressure from eating too much red meat.

I finish filling out my paperwork and take it up to the reception desk. On my way back I notice that there are at least fifty people in the waiting room. Most of this is our fault. The Deadhead group has gotten so popular, that we basically make up 60% of all truckers. My father always told me that the government suspected that there was something going on, but that there's no way to stop it. Ceasing transcontinental deliveries would send North America into another dark age. Not to mention that newspapers today will tell you that transcontinental eighteen-wheeler delivery is expected to increase up to forty percent by the year 2045. Especially now that we have The International Fuel Tax Agreement that lets us deliver to Mexico and Canada.

As I make it back to my seat, I hear the flushing sound of a toilet and see someone walk out of the bathroom with toilet paper stuck to the bottom of their left shoe, and I think about D.H. Bill. He told me that he makes sure that every load of toilet paper and paper towels in public bathrooms are sprayed with any local herbicide that contains chlorophenoxy before it gets to the store. This is why you think some toilet paper smells like nature or mint, but that's how you get colon cancer. That's one reason if you're ever at a truck stop, you'll notice every member of the deadhead circle carrying in their own toilet paper and toiletries. Another reason is that having to use truck stop showers is the worst part of being a truck driver.
Imagine what it would look like if you left six people with IBS and compulsive masturbation disorders in a ten-by-fifteen-foot room with the lights off for twelve days. That's what truck stop showers look like. There is an unquantifiable amount of pubic and taint hair on every inch of the floor. Shit, including dog shit from when truckers bring their dogs in with them to bathe, can be found on every square inch of the pubic hair. Our only solace when we walk into a truck stop shower is knowing that we picked out our own shampoo and razor blades. Knowing that we are avoiding dichlorophen and carbaryl. These are the main ingredients in most flea powders. These ingredients can enter the body through any orifice or pore, and cause liver damage with prolonged usage, but will also make you go bald within two weeks. We gave Rogaine their target market.

After my father died, I decided to take up the family business. The main reason being that I was a homeless, terrible writer, trying to live the life of Bukowski, but failing. I couldn't write a poem to save my life, but I could write one that could end someone else's. Having my father die was the best thing that ever happened to me. Not only did I get a place to live, as truck heads have beds in them, but I also got to make money without having to do any real work. You see, it's tradition in Hispanic culture to name your children after yourself, who was named after your grandfather, and so on. I looked like he did anyway, only twenty-five years younger, and no one bothered to check. To be safe, I did use my father's handbook, communicated with every Deadhead I could find along the road, made friends, connections, and introduced myself as my father's son. They all admired him, the ones who knew him, at least, and they told me stories that I'd missed about him during our long mutual silence. They told me he was convinced I would never join, but there I was to prove him wrong. After a few of these encounters, I found a Deadhead who could doctor my I.D, so that it said I had a Class A license. And I'll tell you, I'm four years into this game, and I love it. So does every other Deadhead. You can leave whenever you want, but no one ever does.

In the waiting room, I see some fat fuck taking up two chairs, one row down from me, and I wonder if he's ever eaten an apple. Then I chuckle, recalling that almost every type of fruit or food wrapped in trans-polymer paper comes in a cardboard box filled with the fruit or snack, and all we have to do is open, apply, and reseal. Every time we rip open the hotdog wrappings to add an organophosphate, or xylene to salt and sugar, we have to vacuum seal it, glue it back, or
use candles and incense sticks to reseal plastic wrappers. We make it look so that it hasn't been tampered with, and the average buyer doesn't take the time to check.

How do we keep from harming ourselves? Well, most truckers eat at truck stops. Another precaution is having these things called dead spots where any Deadhead member can always get the clean supplies they need. We meet in remote places right outside every major city, to exchange goods. Truckers transport every and anything you can imagine. From toilet paper to water, Benadryl to paper, flannel shirts to boxers. As a trucker, every load you unload, you get to keep supplies that have been “damaged.” These “damaged” items are things that the seller doesn’t think will sell in the store. This is stuff we’ve purposefully chosen to keep while tainting your supplies. We take all of these supplies to the dead spots in case any other Deadhead needs them. Every trucker that’s part of the Deadhead circle messes with at least one load a week, and there is nothing off limits. If it can be tampered with or poisoned in some way, we'll do it.

I'm getting bored by the time the nurse finally calls my name, and I get to follow her to the back. This is where she asks me if I'm getting enough sleep, and I think about how when you’re a truck driver, you have to drive eleven hours, or fourteen if you count loading and unloading, then there’s a ten-hour break in which you’re supposed to fit in the rest of your life— showering, eating, shitting, and sleeping, but I lie and just tell her yes, I get enough sleep. She then asks me the reason for my visit today, and I tell her that it's just a routine visit and that any major trucking company like Heartland Express, CFI, or J.B Hunt makes you get a physical every year before they’ll pay your insurance premium. I tell her not to worry, that I’m one of the healthiest people she’ll ever meet.

She takes my temperature and blood pressure and scribbles it on my chart, then tells me the doctor will be in shortly, and leaves, but the smell of her perfume lingers. This makes me think about how the things that I tamper with the most, are things that I think are ironic, like, putting benzene in colognes and perfumes, because it has a sweet smell, but causes cancer through prolonged inhalation and skin contact, or putting lindane in alcohol, because while you're in the stall at your local nightclub projectile vomiting and shitting your pants at the same time, you're thinking it's the alcohol, but this and liver damage are the main effects of consuming lindane. The best part is that all of these chemicals we use are accessible to any American with a debit card;
some of us just know how to spend our money better.

The doctor finally comes in. I read his name tag: Dr. Henry Collins, and I laugh. D.H. Collins. He has the same name as a Deadhead that’s responsible for medical deliveries, but it’s not him. He asks me the reason for my visit, and I tell him that Cannon Express requires a yearly physical and flu shot. He takes a look at my chart and says everything looks fine, then he tells me he’ll get me my shot and gets ups to leave, but I put my hand on his shoulder, slip him three hundred, pull out a proof of authenticity slip and a .05ml single-dose prefilled syringe that says, “Influenza vaccine,” and I tell him, “It’s ok. I brought my own.”
the bonsai trees are perfect in their absurdity
each one disfigured in its own beautiful way
dwarfed by design and luscious in creation
walking among them one feels like a god
or in the presence of one
hovering high over tiny spruces and little fruit trees
more perfect than their full-sized mothers
they sing soft songs with their innocent bark
whittled down in rich detail
their natural imperfections disguised
from eyes which are too large to see
the realities of their muted growth
and all seen is exact
As a woman, I feel my diminished power and place in society, especially in relation to men. For this project, I wanted to research representations of women in stock and archival imagery. I’ve worked in mass communications (journalism and advertising) for the past decade and seen few changes in the portrayal of women. Despite massive shifts in the print and digital landscapes, portrayals of women continue to be overtly or subtly sexist. *The Washington Post*, my first employer, has changed owners three times, made massive staff cuts, and dramatically decreased their print circulation since I worked for them. Because stock photography is generic, often
stereotypical, it often portrays women in an annoying or even disrespectful way that mimics mainstream modes of thought. That is why feminist websites like Bustle (one of my former employers) and Refinery291 were eschewing stock photography. They are going against the digital media grain by shooting their own photos, just as magazines did in print’s heyday. Archival images, meanwhile, rarely portray women at all. When they do, they are not identified by name as often as men. When they are identified by name, it’s often in relation to a man. An archival photo I found of Ann Einstein, wife of Albert Einstein, cites her relationship to the scientist before her actual name.

For my initial research, I spent hours scrolling through the Library of Congress online archives and commercial stock websites like Pexels, Unsplash, and Shutterstock. I typed in terms such as...
as “woman,” “wife, and “mother,” in addition to various professions and activities. Often I had to specify “woman” or “female” when searching the latter. For example, a simple search for “scientist” yielded all-male images. Yet when I typed in “woman scientist” and “female scientist,” I did get some results, though very few. The implication is that woman cannot be or should not be scientists. Generally speaking, regardless of profession or activity, women in stock and archival images are faceless, sexualized, and unidentified (if they are, it’s in relation to a man.) They are also overwhelmingly white, tall, and skinny. Take a photo of a woman eating breakfast in bed (Grid A, 1:3). She is wearing flirty knee-highs and black panties and appears headless. Because of these generic portrayals, I whited out the female faces in the comparatively few photos that had them. I also made them half-tone and desaturated to reflect how half-formed and colorless these women appear.
For Grid B, I chose all stock photos of men, which are plentiful, varied, and far less likely to be needlessly sexualized. They are less likely to be doing something domestic or family related and more likely to do something active. I bumped up the saturation on each to show how vibrant these portrayals are compared to those of women. Next, I want to look at portrayals of men and women in various relationships in stock and archival photography. These images will further comment on gender and power dynamics in society.
The neighborhood bar,
just south of the steel alloy border,
recedes in the rhythm of the
familiar songs that only metal can make.
Some discarded and desolate memory
clicks and churns into an almost knowable track.
The regulars know the shakedown song.
It is one that I so often danced to,
as you watched from the half-lit corner.
And if there is a timepiece master,
Then I will soundly clean his clock.

For you deserve a lovely verse,
measured slow and in sacrificial time,
The sway of thirsty hips
becomes a metronomic mire,
a refusal of the raucous rupture
just around the siding’s bend.

Despite the stumbles where brambles once had been,
the regulars remain true to their draughts.
The weaving of stories and swears.
And within the freight of memory, I grasp
for that empty space in a neon night,
a vacuous vault of steel solitude.
The sweaty handshake of home.
June 12, 2016

by Molly Margaret
Western Carolina University

My feet are spotted magenta,
Swollen, ready for birth.
Still, they try to dance,
To the beat of a *bachata* DJ mix.
What a night…
*Pero ay güey—mi cabeza.*

Waking up to the sound of
My heartbeat
Pulsing
In my
Forehead.

Facebook broke the news,
And then began the phone calls.
“*I used to live there…*
No one personally, no…

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*I love you, too, boo.*”

The following days we cried
Together,
Hugged and mourned
Together.

“All those places could have been us…”
“I know… I’m shaken too.”

Places once filled with the same sanctuary
That Atlanta club we danced in was named for…
*Sancutario.*
The only place some of us could be
Ourselves.
You couldn’t ruin them
But now I know every exit.
Everybody needs a safe place to get away.

The story, as it was told to me:

Israel is ours. God gave it to us and we earned it by surviving the Holocaust. The Arab people do not wish to give it to us because they are evil, they will harm us. The white people of this country cannot be trusted to protect us because they are racists and it is only the Jewish men who can be relied on to protect us, the Jewish women, from the threat that Brown men present.

They are the ones we require protection from. Any sacrifice to earn this safe place is worth it.

To claim otherwise was anathema.

I grew up expecting a knock on my door. My family kept cans of food we did not need in preparation for another genocide and we had closets and a cellar, and I expected to have to hide someday.

For years I was grateful to the reliable ugly walls of my synagogue, rising like Jonah's mythical whale to swallow me whole against my will. B'nai Shalom was my succor, and if it asked more of me than I wanted to give, well, perhaps the bargain was worth it. So I sat in the uncomfortable high-backed pews, trying not to squirm in the scratchy tights my mother insisted on, trying not to bat my mother's hand away when she yanked my shirt down over my seven-year-old tummy. Trying not to insist on self-determination. What does self-respect compare with survival?

While the endless services in Hebrew, a language I could not read, droned on for three hours-an eternity to a child-I read about our deaths in the backs of Siddurim, Jewish prayer books, during services at my synagogue.
Soldiers picked up a child my age by the ankles, and while she was still laughing they threw her headfirst into a wall and shattered her skull. Soldiers shot another child just for fun, just for a good time. Soldiers stole Anne Frank away and we know her name because she left a journal for us to find. I traced my way to these children through time and for years I was obsessed with stories from the war.

B’nai Shalom synagogue began in 1948 as Beth Israel synagogue in Pittsburg, an outgrowth of military collaborations with San Francisco’s Jewish Welfare Board to meet the needs of Jewish military personnel returning from World War Two. The founders accommodated the shifting nexus of the East Bay Jewish population and moved to Walnut Creek in 1964. The first full-time rabbi, Gordon Freeman, is the man I think of as my rabbi; darting, joyous, the man who burst through the doors on the holiest of holy days to preach to a group of conservative voters about global warming. A series of male cantors culminated in Cantor Dinkin, with whom I studied Torah for my Bat Mitzvah and who bragged to the congregation about me wanting to spend an extra ten minutes with him, in that way men do when a young teenage girl is awkward, and they think that means she is awkwardly flirting. One more betrayal. One more humiliation.

Spring, 1998. I color the Negev lavender, the color of the sky at dawn. The color of heaven.

My teacher Maya, who is from Israel or who has been to Israel or at any rate is Israel, comes to tell me what a good job I’ve done. I hug her because she is the mother I almost had.

Lavender like my grandmother, who has died. Lavender like the bathroom of my other grandmother, who has little money but has a bathroom made all from purple. Purple everything.

Yitzhak Rabin was to be the savior of Israel. Left-wing liberal who preached peace with the Muslim Palestinians, he was shot by a member of his own people. Yigal Amir was against the Oslo Accords because he could not see what my family did, what everyone I knew saw—that any peace, even a blood-spattered one, is better than none at all. Rabin died in 1996, and our hopes and prayers went out to him but we were all in mourning. A world away, a black shade dropped over our sky and we began to talk in hushed tones about what would happen now to the country that was supposed to be our paradise.
This is what I learn from Hebrew school: Israel was originally intended to be a colony of peace, a gathering place for all the world’s great religions. That Israel was supposed to be a great Communist paradise.
There is no proof of this. There is no way to search for proof of this.

It is a wonderful story. I seize hold.

One day I will go there. To Israel. Where no one will humiliate me again.

1999. The entire Board is composed of white men. The Cantor and the Rabbi are both white men. Children notice these things. Adults know better than to mention them out loud.

I barely speak for years and there are reasons why. Uri Wilensky of The Huffington Post in 2016 that Jews are more often the victims of hate crimes than any other group in the U.S, according to the FBI. I was welcomed as a white person so long as I did not bring up that pesky Judaism. So long as I did not give any “real” white people a reason.

I was safe as a Jew and as a woman, so the story goes, so long as I did not mention feeling unsafe. Feeling afraid of the men in my life, white or Jewish, was unacceptable.

Spring, 1999. I lock my properly submissive, efficiently feminine Hebrew School teacher with the lace keepah, Jewish hair covering, permanently bobby-pinned to her scalp, out of our classroom. It is an accident but as she pounds, it becomes a calling. When I finally unlock the door she barges in and takes aim at each student, in turn, explaining precisely what is wrong with each of us. Attacks verbally, the only way a woman is permitted to act. I am quaking but defiant.

After I dart outside to the undeveloped back lot, my hideaway. The entire hillside glows golden and God is here. God is right here.

Later that day my friend Carly and I discuss in hushed tones the deaths of young Palestinian boys at the hands of Israeli soldiers. Each of us nervy and wide-eyed, scared of something we cannot name.
I cannot stop picturing their weeping mothers. The photographs of ruined homes. All the ruined things.

2013. My father looks sideways at me in the pretty sunlit kitchen composed of pretty, expensive appliances which he nor my mother ever use, from which he spent thousands of dollars from my would-have-been college fund, to please my mother who is so anxious to belong. He says, “the congregation hired a female rabbi.”

Amy Eilberg in 1985 was the first female rabbi to be ordained in a Conservative synagogue.

2013 is better than nothing.

I respond in the affirmative. “How wonderful!”

My father shakes his head. “She’s not going to stay. She’s from New York. She does not fit in with the culture.”

Translation: she is a woman with self-esteem and the Board which to this day is primarily comprised of white men wants her out, so out she will go.

2011. I have called Cantor Dinkin, with trembling fingers. I am backlit by a sun happy like I am to be beyond the dour walls of a theology I can no longer accept.

I picture my cohort. Gabriela from the Palestinian Justice Movement who patted my back while I sobbed a whole year of my life away. Devin who was sexually assaulted then drank herself to death while no one noticed, including me.

I tell the Cantor, “My father raped me.” Silence.

The cantor asks, “What do you want me to do? They’re members of my congregation?” I turn off my phone.
Everybody needs a safe place to get away. But away from what?

2017. My father has “forgotten” to reserve an extra room for me at our hotel in Seattle. He twists and whines and convinces me and my mother it will be fine for us three to share a suite.

I am unmoved. There will be a locked door or I will flee and leave him to explain the situation to his cousins. Leave him to explain the ‘why’.

I get my way. I make myself safe.

2017. My cousin Carol insists, “I have no idea how Trump could get away with saying those things about women in the campaign!”

Greek music plays gaily all around us. Greek gods and nymphs lounge luxuriously on the wall behind us. The food I denied myself for years of misdirected punishment sits pleasantly on my tongue.

“I understand,” I insist right back. “Based on my experiences and those of my friends, the idea someone could get away with that did not come as a shock.”

Blatant is my father’s shame. My mother’s attempt at withering rage. Carol’s instant of recognition.

My mother interrupts to say, “if Black people had gathered behind Hillary the way they did Obama, Trump would not have been elected.”

Gently, I tell her, “it was not their responsibility.”

*It was not my responsibility, what happened to me. But what happens as a result of me is.*

2017. My cousin Caitie and I have rediscovered one another after twenty years of in-between. She sits with her bleach-blonde pixie cut and three-hole piercings next to her hulking, wealthy husband, talking with a flutter in her voice while her anxious hands paint the air. We discuss
science fiction until he leaves early.

Her words pour forth like a waterfall and she says, “I learned after the election what white feminism is.”

“Yes,” I say. “I learned things about my friends that I wish I had not learned.”

Translation: I learned things about my parents I wish I had not learned.

We sit in the grand and grandiose dining room with its museum exterior and intricately painted objects from dozens of different countries. We fill the space with our words about feminism and racism and who we want to be.

Not once do we say, but those Men of Color who are rapists. Not once do we say, but those white men, and those Jewish men perceived to be white, who would never rape us.

Because we do not lie to each other.

John, too thin and balding, wanders by. “What are you girls doing in here?”

We turn beatific smiles towards him and pose, and hold until he backs away. Slowly, as though we are dangerous. As though we are prepared to pounce.

We turn relieved faces towards each other. Do not acknowledge what we have just done, what we are doing.

That we are rewriting the story.

That we are making ourselves safe.
AUTHOR BIOS

In May 2016, Brittany J. Barron graduated from the University of North Georgia with a B.A. in English. Her undergraduate research has been recognized by *The Edith Wharton Review* as well as *Gender Forum*. Currently, Brittany is a Teaching Fellow and second-year MFA candidate in poetry at Georgia College.

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Ismael Santos is a short story author, novelist, and poet. Born and raised in Little Havana, Miami, Florida, Ismael is currently a research assistant at Florida International University, working towards an M.A. in English Literature. His field of interest is jazz studies mixed in with literature. He loves Coltrane.

Jacklyn Scott was born into an artistic family and spent most of her childhood in her mother’s clay studio, volunteering at craft centers and during college working summers at Peters Valley School of Craft. Her exposure to the beauty of handmade objects and the interesting people who make them, led her to study and earn a degree at the Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia where she explored her many interests in printmaking, sculpture and ceramics. She now works full-time at Hood College in Frederick, Maryland, as the Studio Manager for the Art Department where she is currently working towards her MFA in Ceramic Arts. Jacklyn Scott is the author of Making Good: An Inspirational Guide to Being an Artists Craftsman (Schiffer Publishing).

Sakura Stephens received her BFA from the University of Georgia in Art Education in 2013 and afterward taught art in a Title I school for three years. She is currently a Master’s candidate at the University of Texas at Austin with a focus in schools and community-based art education. Her research interests include visual culture and place based art education. Sakura is a practicing potter and teaches ceramics through community programs in Austin. In her free time, she enjoys traveling, taking long walks with her Pomeranian, Boo, and spending too many hours in Sephora.

Christine Stoddard is a former Annmarie Sculpture Garden artist-in-residence and an M.F.A. Digital & Interdisciplinary Art Practice candidate at the City College of New York (CUNY). Her work has appeared in special programs at the New York Transit Museum, the Queens Museum, the Poe Museum, the Ground Zero Hurricane Katrina Museum, and beyond. She also is the author of Water for the Cactus Woman (Spuyten Duyvil Publishing), among other titles, and the founder of Quail Bell Magazine.

Claire Williamson is pursuing an MA in Art Education: Community Focus at the University of Texas at Austin. She earned a BA in International Communication at Saint Louis University, Madrid Campus. Her research centers on material culture examinations of folk art education. Committed to facilitating art programming for underserved populations, she currently works at
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**Ariadne Wolf** is currently pursuing her MFA in Creative Writing, emphasis Creative Nonfiction. She feels lucky to experience the tutelage of such writers as Elmaz Abinader and Micheline Marcom. Her flash fiction and creative nonfiction has been accepted by literary journals worldwide, including *The Crambo, Helen, DIN*, and Ashoka University’s *Plot Number Two*. Her prose recently figured in the anthology *11/9: The fall of American Democracy*. Wolf’s first longer work will be a memoir whose mermaid protagonist expresses her trauma in a variety of creative and magical ways.