This journal of student writing is a collection of essays written for College Writing II classes at Marist College for the 2010-2011 academic year. Each teacher of College Writing II was asked to submit an outstanding essay from his/her class. Two editors then reviewed the essays, and works were chosen from each semester to be included in this volume.
Naomi Faris, won First Place, and is the daughter of Douglas Faris and Ann Todoki. She is a sophomore from Honolulu, Hawaii majoring in English with a concentration in Literature. She plans to pursue a career in English Secondary Education. Naomi was awarded First Place for her essay "Mixed Race in America: Past, Present, and Future" written for Professor Lynne Koch's College Writing II class. She would like to thank Professor Koch for submitting her essay for the contest and her encouragement throughout the semester.

Stacey Alley won second place for her essay “Individuals with Disabilities,” which was written for Professor Marc Fisher’s College Writing II class. Stacey is currently a sophomore at Marist College, where she is a Psychology/Special Education major. It is because of Stacey’s future plans to become a special education teacher that she chose to write her paper on the topic of inclusion. She is honored to have had her paper entered in the eScriptor writing contest, and would like to thank Professor Fisher for submitting it.

Carly Larkin who won third Place for her essay “Let There be Lights” submitted to Professor Bob Tendy’s College Writing II is a freshmen at Marist majoring in Communications and minoring in Psychology and Spanish. She is originally from the Washington D.C. area where she attended Our Lady of Good Counsel High School. Although she is majoring in communications, Carly, has taken several creative writing courses. She thoroughly enjoys reading and writing, especially humor essays like that of David
Sedaris. Her essay originally appeared in the *The Putman County News and Recorder.*
**Spring 2011**

Catherine Natoli hails from Staten Island, New York and is now a proud resident of Poughkeepsie. She is currently a sophomore at Marist College and is majoring in English with a Literature concentration and has plans of additionally concentrating in Writing. Catherine has been writing creatively for six years, and hopes to someday publish her own collection of short stories and poetry along with a full-length fictional novel. She is a member of the Literary Art Society and hopes to become further involved with Marist literary publications in the coming semesters. Her essay “Adolescent Depression” was written for Professor Joseph Zeppetello’s College Writing II class.

Kendra McKechnie won Second Place for her essay “Learning the Language of Development” Written for Anne McCabe’s College Writing II class. Kendra is an active member of Campus Ministry, Marist’s Ultimate Frisbee team, and the Dean’s Circle. To pursue her love of French, she is studying abroad in Senegal for the fall semester. While abroad, she will study how the Senegalese people express their culture through the arts, and she may examine her essay topic first-hand through her independent study project. She would like to thank Professor McCabe for her patience, persistence, and heart in teaching.
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Learning the Language of Development
Many people believe that the United States has left behind racism and inequality and has embraced civil rights; however these ideas still permeate throughout the nation’s culture. While ethnic and gender equality have made great strides since the introductions of the Fifteenth and Nineteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution, and a hard-fought battle for the rights of homosexuals continues to rage on, one group is almost completely ignored: people of mixed ethnicity and race. This includes any person whose ancestry is composed of multiple races or ethnicities, whether it is two or thirteen. Though this segment of the population is small, it has the potential to grow exponentially as more interracial children are born as a result of mixed relationships and marriages becoming more acceptable in today’s culture.
While they may not suffer the atrocities that past minority segments of the nation’s population have, this portion of the population must still face inequality and hatred, from both bigoted individuals and the United States government. People throughout the country continue to treat people of mixed heritage as pariahs or as “undefined.” Many of mixed ethnicity are often forced to associate themselves with a certain ethnicity, usually the one their physical attributes most resemble, such as skin color or the shape of their facial features. The discomfort the United States feels with interracial relationships and offspring is also palpable in its literature. The American government only began to allow interracial marriages a few decades ago. Before the law was changed, interracial marriages were illegal in some states. Until a few years ago, the United States Census did not allow a person to mark more than one ethnicity or race, instead forcing them to choose only one.

Mixed race is more than issue of inequality; the effects of the mixing of ethnicities calls into question the future of the idea of
ethnicity. Imagine a world free of racial barriers, a world where people are no longer separated by the color of their skin or their bloodlines. Though it has yet to reach this point, such a possibility may become a reality in the future. Such a world could potentially lead to a utopian society where people are judged on merit alone, or a world torn apart by war due to small pockets of unmixed populations. Regardless of what may occur in the future, the United States must start setting a good example for the rest of the world. The United States may claim to be the poster child for equality; however the treatment of these individuals seems to say otherwise. Changes must begin now to influence other countries to embrace multiethnicity and follow the same path. The United States as a whole must become more accepting of people of mixed race and ethnicity in order to deserve its title of a nation of equality, set the right example for other countries, and prepare for the possibility of a world where interraciality is the norm.

The Past: A Brief History of Interracial Marriage in America
Mixed race had a place in United State’s history long before becoming a topic of political debate. Interracial relationships were to exist during America’s early colonial era, though these relationships were not always documented. The first interracial marriage recorded in North America took place in 1614 between Pocahontas “the daughter of a powerful chief of the Algonquians in the Tidewater area of Virginia” (Smith and Davis “A History of Mixed Race in the U.S.”) and Englishman John Rolfe. Pocahontas and Rolfe had one son, Thomas Rolfe, before Pocahontas died in 1617 at the age of twenty-two from smallpox. The result of interracial relationships between Native Americans and early Caucasian settlers can be seen in America’s present population: a significant number of people whose majority ethnicities are Caucasian also possess small amounts of Native American blood.

Such relationships were acceptable in the early days of the nation until 1662, when Virginia became the first colony to establish an anti-miscegenation law. Miscegenation is defined as “marriage, cohabitation, or sexual intercourse between a white
person and a member of another race” (“Miscegenation”) derived from the Latin “miscere” meaning “to mix” and “genus” meaning “race.” By 1750, Maryland, Massachusetts, North Carolina, South Carolina, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Georgia also instituted anti-miscegenation laws. Most interracial bans applied only to marriages between whites and blacks. In some states these laws also applied to Native Americans and people of other races, though interracial relationships between Native Americans and whites was deemed more acceptable, as seen in the following excerpt from a letter written by Reverend Peter Fontaine of Virginia in 1757:

But here methinks I can hear you observe, What! Englishmen intermarry with Indians? But I can convince you that they [Englishmen] are guilty of much more heinous practices, more unjustifiable in the sight of God and man...for many base wretches among us take up with negro women, by which means the country swarms with mulatto bastards, and these mulattoes, if but three generations removed from the black father or mother, may, by the indulgence of the laws of this country, intermarry with the white people, and actually do every day so marry. Now if instead of this abominable practice which hath polluted the blood of many amongst us, we had taken Indian wives in the
first place, it would have made them some compensation for their lands. They are a free people, and the offspring would not be born in a state of slavery. We should become rightful heirs to the land, and should not have smutted our blood, for the Indian children when born are as white as the Spanish or Portuguese. (qtd. in “The Malleability of Race--or the Monster Miscegenation?”)

The excerpt from Fontaine’s letter clearly shows the animosity towards interracial relationships present in many people in United States during this era. Interracial relationships were present in early American history, and therefore people of mixed race, however, the first United States Census in 1790 only accounted for the categories of free white males sixteen years old and above, free white males less than sixteen years of age, free white females, all other free persons, and slaves.

By 1850, Kentucky, Rhode Island, Delaware, Indiana, Maine, Mississippi, Illinois, Florida, Missouri, Texas, Arkansas, Michigan, Iowa, and California were added to the slate of states with anti-miscegenation laws. In the same year the United States Census expanded its categories to include the term “mulatto” to
classify multiracial people. The etymology of the term mulatto, according to Jason Nichols, an instructor of African American Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park, “comes from the word ‘mula’ in Portuguese which is a mule, and a mule being a mix of donkey and horse” (Nichols “1850 – U.S. Census includes color column”). The census was not clear as to when the category should be selected, leading to many multiracial Native and African Americans being counted as “black.” Nichols believes that the practice of being classified as black if one had any African American ancestry was “developed as a way to justify sexual exploitation of black women, a way of discouraging marriage of black and white people, and also a way of propagating a work force” (Nichols “‘Black blood’ makes mulatto slaves”).

By 1865, Alabama, Utah, Kansas, Nebraska, Washington, New Mexico, Nevada, Ohio, Oregon, West Virginia, Colorado, Idaho, and Arizona had prohibited interracial marriage by law, bringing the total of states with anti-miscegenation laws to thirty-six. Almost two decades later in November of 1881 Tony Pace, an
African American, and Mary J. Cox, a white women were indicted under Section 4189 of the Alabama Code which read:

If any white person and any negro, or the descendant of any negro to the third generation, inclusive, though one ancestor of each generation was a white person, intermarry or live in adultery or fornication with each other, each of them must, on conviction, be imprisoned in the penitentiary or sentenced to hard labor for the county for not less than two nor more than seven years. (“Pace v. State, 106 U.S. 583”)

The case became one of the first dealing with interracial marriage to reach the nation’s Supreme Court. There, the charge was upheld based on the argument that “whatever discrimination is made in the punishment prescribed in the two sections is directed against the offense designated and not against the person of any particular color or race...the punishment of each offending person, whether white or black, is the same” (“Pace v. State, 106 U.S. 583”).

In 1912 United States Representative Seaborn Roddenberry of Georgia proposed amending the Constitution to prohibit interracial marriage. In his appeal to Congress Roddenberry stated:
Interracial marriage between whites and blacks is repulsive and averse to every sentiment of pure American spirit. It is abhorrent and repugnant. It is subversive to social peace. It is destructive of moral supremacy, and ultimately this slavery to black beasts will bring this nation to a fatal conflict. (“The Anti-Miscegenation Amendment”)

The amendment as stated in the Congressional Record, 62nd Congress, 3rd session, Dec. 11, 1912. Vol 49, p. 502 read "that intermarriage between negroes or persons of color and Caucasians or any other character of persons within the United States or any territory under their jurisdiction, is forever prohibited; and the term 'negro or person of color,' as here employed, shall be held to mean any and all persons of African descent or having any trace of African or negro blood" (qtd. in “The Right to Marry”). The measure was never passed. A year later in 1913 Oklahoma, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming had founded anti-miscegenation laws, bringing the nation’s total of states that banned interracial marriage to forty-one. Over time, some states began to repeal anti-miscegenation laws, beginning with Pennsylvania in 1780. Despite the changing tides, many states,
mainly those clustered in the South, continued to ban interracial marriage.

In 1958, Mildred Jeter, an African American woman, and Richard Loving, a white man, who were living in Caroline County, Virginia decided to get married. Unable to do so in their home state due to anti-miscegenation laws, the couple traveled to Washington, DC to be married. When Jeter and Loving returned home, they were arrested, due to a provision that forbade interracial couples from getting married somewhere else and returning to Virginia, in addition to normal anti-miscegenation laws. Jeter and Loving were sentenced to a jail term of one to three years, a sentence that would be suspended if they chose to leave Virginia for a twenty-five year period. The couple left for Washington, DC where they were legally allowed to live together, however they continued to face discrimination and struggled to support their children.

Desperate, Jeter wrote a letter to Attorney General of the United States Robert F. Kennedy, which led to the involvement of
the American Civil Liberties Union and Bernard S. Cohen and Philip J. Hirschkop, two lawyers who took on the case pro bono. The Lovings’ lawsuit progressed through multiple levels of the court, their appeal denied in each one, making its way to the United States Supreme Court. After nine years of arguing their case, the Lovings won the right to live as husband and wife in their home state. In the ruling Chief Justice Earl Warren declared that “under our Constitution, the freedom to marry, or not marry, a person of another race resides within the individual and cannot be infringed on by the State” (“The Loving Story”). The pivotal verdict granted the freedom to marry to every interracial couple, whether they were African American, Hispanic, Asian, or white, making Loving v. Virginia (1967) a major stepping-stone towards equality for mixed race America.

The Present: Making Strides

The United States of America has come a long way since Loving v. Virginia (1967).
Today, interracial marriages are common throughout the nation. According to statistics from the United States Census Bureau released in 2005 the number of married interracial couples has increased 667 percent since 1970. Stanford University sociologist Michael Rosenfeld calculated that “more than 7 percent of America’s 59 million married couples in 2005 were interracial, compared to less than 2 percent in 1970” (“After 40 years, interracial marriage flourishing”). These numbers do not even take into account the number of interracial couples in relationships within the nation. Such statistics would not even be available if the United States Census had not altered its form in 2000. In decades past forms did not allow people to select from a large variety of races on the census form, let alone mark multiple races. With time, additional races were added to original categories; however it was not until 2000 that a person could identify himself or herself with more than one race.

While being of mixed race or being in an interracial relationship no longer makes one a pariah, there are still pockets
throughout the country. Though anti-miscegenation laws were outlawed in 1967, it was not until 1998 that a clause that prohibited “marriage of a white person with a Negro or mulatto or a person who shall have one-eighth or more Negro blood” (“The Last Laws to Go: 1998 and 2000) was removed from South Carolina’s state constitution. Four months prior to the clause’s removal a Mason-Dixon poll showed that 22 percent of the state’s voters were opposed to its elimination. Alabama did not remove such laws until 2000, when a similar article was finally removed from the state’s constitution. As there was opposition to anti-miscegenation removal in South Carolina, 19 percent of voters in Alabama said they would not vote to remove the article.

One of the most recent examples of the remaining antagonism for interracial marriage is the case of Beth Humphrey and Terence McKay, a white and black couple who wished to get married in Louisiana. Keith Bardwell, a justice of the peace for Tangipahoa Parish’s 8th Ward, refused to issue the couple a marriage license. Bardwell claimed that he was not a racist and that
his “main concern is for the children” (Ellzey “JP refuses to marry couple”). Though Humphrey and McKay were able to receive their license from another justice of the peace, the fact that such an occurrence is still possible proves that there is still great opposition to people involved in interracial relationships and to people of mixed race.

Such occurrences prove that the United States has yet to truly become the land of equality that it often claims to be. More measures must be taken to further embrace interracial marriage and citizens of mixed race. While the government has taken strides to improve the environment, such as expanding the United States Census to allow for selecting multiple races, further amelioration is possible. Many government forms and national and state standardized tests, as well as continue to limit the option a person may choose for race to one selection, forcing people to either mark “other” or choose to associate with one race over another. Taharee Jackson, who is of Asian, white, and African American descent,
recalled such instances from a young age while talking with journalists from *News 21*:

> From the youngest days I remember specifically only being able to check one box and being very personally restricted by that, but then also my teachers and the principals and administrators being very concerned about where my test scores would go or how I would be represented. I remember literally going downstairs before a standardized test would begin to ask the principal “should I be black today, should I be Asian today? I would really like to be able to check a box that says multiracial or multiethnic. It means I can acknowledge my whole self.” (Jackson)

According to Evelyn Alsutany in her essay “Toward a Multiethnic Cartography” published in *Mixing It Up: Multiracial Subjects*, multiethnic identity is often “ignored and translated to monoracial through the submerging of one identification and the privileging of another” (Kwan and Spiers, eds. 143). Practices such as these must change in order for the equality the United States claims to possess to be true.

> The most significant problem is one that cannot be regulated by the government or any national body: the perception each individual holds towards people of mixed race and interracial
relationships. News 21 interviewed a group of multiethnic citizens, ranging from the age of eight to middle age. All participants had much to say about the experiences they have faced and continue to face today due to being of mixed race. Jackson said, “In the first five minutes of someone seeing me or engaging in conversation I’m already talking about race. Well, where are you from? What are you? Where are your parents from?” (Jackson). Christopher Lewis, a twenty-eight year old white and African American music producer also commented on how people react to people of mixed race: “People like labels. If they can’t label it, then they kind of freak out in their head and don’t know what to do. Where can we classify this?” (Lewis). Melanie Graham, who is African American and white, discussed her relationship with family members: “My grandfather didn’t really accept me, didn’t accept my mom’s relationship, and it was clear to me that it wasn’t okay and he didn’t really acknowledge me as his granddaughter” (Graham).

Fortunately, the tides are beginning to turn. In recent decades some people have become more tolerant and accepting of mixed
race, to the point where it is often no longer an issue. Many celebrities are of mixed descent, such as professional golfer Tiger Woods who is Thai, African American, Chinese, Native American, and Dutch, and singer/songwriter Alicia Keys who is Jamaican, Irish, and Italian. President Barack Obama, one of the most respected and powerful people in the United States, is white and African American. As more people of mixed race become public figures and gain media face time, the more comfortable citizens will become with these people. With time, it could be possible for someone of mixed race to not be questioned about their origins. Instead, multiethnic people could just be accepted, without uncomfortable interrogation. According to U.S. Census estimates from July 2008 released in May “individuals who identify as more than one race total 5.2 million people, an increase of 3.4 percent from the July 2007 estimate” (Davis and Matthews “Mixed-Race in U.S. Struggle to Form Political, Personal Identities”). If people felt more comfortable about being of mixed race, they would be more willing to identify themselves as such. People of mixed race
are no different from someone with one ethnicity, and therefore should not continually be singled out.

The United States must embrace its mixed race population to do more than uphold its claim of equality. As one of the world’s leading nations, America must be able to set an example for other countries. Race has been and continues to be a major issue across the globe, creating great conflict such as the Holocaust and the long-waging war between Israel and Palestine. The United States has progressed greatly since the days of slavery and the Civil War, however; this progress must continue. Many other nations look to the United States as an example of equality and acceptance. America cannot help to amend race issues around the world if the nation is unable to deal with racial issues on its own soil. By continuing to advance racial equality for people of mixed race, the nation can continue to be looked upon as an example, and can aid other nations based on fact rather than inflated claims.

The Future: Mixed, the New Monoracial
The prospect of an America where every person is of mixed race is not a possibility in the near future, however it is a proposal that should already be considered. The number of interracial marriages continues to rise, as seen in TABLE 1 on page 34, a trend that will be maintained due to the vast variety of ethnicities that continue to enter the United States. As these people intermingle, interracial marriages will further increase, and as a result, more people of mixed race will be born. Though the idea of a nation, or even a world, where everyone is of mixed race does not seem plausible at the moment, it is important to evaluate the possibility, as well as the likely positive and negative effects.

Though the research on this matter is severely limited, one can imagine what benefits and problems a mixed-monoracial world could bring. Many conflicts around the globe revolve around poor race relations. If everyone were of mixed heritage, no single group would stand out and draw dislike or hatred. A world where mixed race is the norm could possibly create a utopian society, where individuals were judged based on merit rather than the color of
their skin or their ethnicity, a practice that is still common in this day and age. Cultural sharing has already begun to advance in this era of technology, however this could reach new levels as races continued to mix, creating a completely new culture.

A mixed race world could also have damaging effects. Certain ethnic groups might choose to remain untouched, refusing to interact with others as the rest of the world continued to move towards mixed-monoraciality. These pockets could be a breeding ground for conflict and hatred, filled with the belief that their race is superior or that interraciality is immoral. As a result, war could ensue. Also, while cultural sharing and the development of new culture could occur, so could cultural loss. As ethnicities became more intertwined with each other, certain traditions specific to a group could begin to fade and eventually disappear.

Regardless of what the future may hold, it is essential for the United States to make progress in dealing with people of mixed race. The nation has come far since the days when interracial marriage was banned; however more can still be done. By further
expanding the rights of those of mixed race and helping the nation
to better embrace these people, the United States will be able to
maintain its claims of equality while serving as a role model to
other nations where racial tensions continue to run high. It is
crucial that such measures begin now. The possibility of a world
where mixed race is the norm is looming. The United States must
begin to prepare itself for such a world; if the nation does not, the
world as whole might never be ready.
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Table

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Increasing Percentage of Marriages in the US that are Interracial

Copyright 2008 Michael J. Rosenfeld
Original Data Source: Weighted census microdata 1900-2000, and American Community Survey data for 2005
The Individuals With Disabilities Act

By Stacey Alley

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act states that every state in the United States must educate students with disabilities alongside students without disabilities “to the maximum extent appropriate” (Turnbull, Turnbull, and Wehmeyer 44). Separation, whether by special classes, or separate schools, of students with disabilities, from their peers without disabilities, should only occur when the disability of a child is so severe that a general education classroom environment will hinder their achievement even with the assistance of supplementary aids and services (Turnbull, Turnbull, and Wehmeyer 44). I agree with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act because I believe that educating students with disabilities with students without disabilities will benefit all students, however; I also believe in the continuum of services for students with disabilities. I believe that
certain children, depending on the nature of their disability, would benefit from, and achieve more in a classroom than if kept separate from the general education setting. There is a spectrum for inclusion in which I fall right in the center. To my right, there are those who believe that all students, no matter the disability, or severity of the disability should be placed in a general education setting. This is called “full inclusion.” To the left, are those who believe in segregated, self-contained, completely separate classrooms for all children with disabilities.

In the early and middle twentieth century students with disabilities were discriminated against by schools. If they were even admitted into a school, they were lucky. However, children with disabilities were not always provided with a sufficient and appropriate education. Also, students with a disability were sometimes labeled as having the wrong disability, and therefore, they were not educated appropriately. Students with diverse backgrounds, whether speaking a language other than English, or being of another race, were often misclassified, and were believed
to have a disability when, in fact, they did not (Turnbull, Turnbull, and Wehmeyer 8).

By the 1970s, families of students with disabilities, parent advocacy organizations, and civil rights lawyers began advocating for students with disabilities. Numerous state and local school officials were sued on the premise that the Constitutional rights of students with disabilities were being violated through both exclusion and misclassification; they too deserved the opportunity to receive an education. *Brown vs. The Board of Education*, was the basis of most arguments. The Court, back in 1954, had affirmed that schools could not segregate by race, and therefore, advocates argued that schools could not segregate or discriminate based on disability (Turnbull, Turnbull, and Wehmeyer 8).

In 1972, two cases, *Mills v. Washington, DC, Board of Education* and *Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Citizens v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* pushed the federal courts to act in favor of students with disabilities. They ordered that a free, proper, public education be provided to all students with disabilities, that
students with disabilities should be educated not only in the same school, but the same programs as students without disabilities, and that parents of students with disabilities had the right to challenge any school that did not meet the court’s orders. It was due to these two cases that Congress enacted IDEA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 1975. Congress opened the schools to all students with disabilities, and in doing so proposed that students with disabilities had the right to receive the chance to benefit from special education (Turnbull, Turnbull, and Wehmeyer 9).

In 2004, IDEA was reauthorized, and the Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act was enacted. The group of students who have the right to special education expanded, once only benefitting six-year-olds through 18-year-olds, to encompassing infants, toddlers, young children, and older students up to twenty-one years of age. In order to meet the specific needs of all students, IDEA consists of two age-specific parts. Part B benefits those students ages three through twenty-one who are unable to participate, and succeed in the general education curriculum.
without special education. Part B uses a categorical approach, placing students into categories of disabilities. Part C of IDEA benefits infants through three-year-olds, who have developmental delays in one, or multiple areas of cognitive development, physical development, communication development, or a mental condition that has a great chance of having a developmental delay arise, and therefore, who require early intervention services. Part C allows every state to choose whether or not to serve these “at-risk” infants and toddlers (Turnbull, Turnbull, and Wehmeyer 9).

Today, there are fewer students being educated outside of the general education classroom. Hence, the amount of time they are spending in general education classrooms with children without disabilities is increasing. As of the 2006-2007 school year, there were only 5% of students in a separate educational setting (Turnbull, Turnbull, and Wehmeyer 43). Special education is extremely “outcome-driven.” It strives to provide four outcomes including equality of opportunity, full participation, independent
living, and economic self-sufficiency (Turnbull, Turnbull, and Wehmeyer 9).

There are many opinions, both positive and negative, when it comes to the topic of inclusion. We need to take three perspectives into account, the perspective of the educator, the perspective of the parents, and the perspective of the student. Some educators express concerns when it comes to inclusion because they feel as though students with disabilities need “specialized” settings rather than general education classroom in order to receive individualized instruction. Another concern conveyed by educators is that not all students with disabilities should be “held to the same academic standards” (Turnbull, Turnbull, and Wehmeyer 48) as those children without disabilities. In other words, not all students with disabilities, or because of their disabilities, can master a curriculum that students without disabilities can. Perhaps expecting them to follow the same curriculum as a student without a disability will discourage and frustrate such a student, and could, worse of all, cause him or her to drop out of school.
Class size is another concern that some educators have about inclusive classrooms. They feel as though it is already difficult to teach and give each child the appropriate amount of attention without having students with disabilities present in the classroom. If students with disabilities are placed in an already packed general education classroom the classroom could become too chaotic, and not beneficial toward learning for any student. Plus, students will be deprived of attention that they may need in order to excel. Time is also a key factor which plays into inclusion. Not all teachers have enough time in the school day to stop their lessons in order to assist a child with a disability who is struggling. Nor do they often have the time to create special lesson plans for individual children based on that child’s specific needs (Turnbull, Turnbull, and Wehmeyer 48).

Some parents of children without disabilities believe that having students with disabilities in the same classroom as their children will create a distracting, and non beneficial learning environment. They worry that including students with disabilities
in the classroom will have a negative impact on their child, or that their child will be “short changed” as an educator tries to teach lessons that “focus on the middle range of their students’ ability.”

It is important to note also that not all parents of children with disabilities want their child to be placed in an inclusive classroom. They too may feel that placing their child in a general education classroom with students without disabilities will not meet their child’s needs (Turnbull, Turnbull, and Wehmeyer 48). Some students with disabilities, just as some parents who have students with disabilities, enjoy being in a special education classroom, and prefer being in a place that is beneficial to their learning, less stressful, as well as more enjoyable (Turnbull, Turnbull, and Wehmeyer 49).

Just as there are negative perceptions about inclusion, there are also positive ones. Some educators believe that with supplementary aids and services, as well as specially designed instruction, students with disabilities can be educated sufficiently in the general education classroom. They also believe that they can
be successful in supporting the education of children with special needs as long as they have adequate support. It is also believed that incorporating children with disabilities into the general education classroom allows them to gain social experience they might not otherwise have, and bringing all students together encourages and supports acceptance (Turnbull, Turnbull, and Wehmeyer 49).

Parents in favor of inclusion believe that the general education classrooms “do a better job of improving self-concept, promoting friendships, teaching academics, and preparing for the real world.” There are some parents of children without disabilities who believe that it is beneficial for their child to be in a class with a child who has a disability. They believe that this interaction will foster sensitivity toward others, and acceptance toward others (Turnbull, Turnbull, and Wehmeyer 48). Some students with disabilities enjoy being in a general education classroom, and state that they have more of a chance to form relationships and friendships, while students without disabilities seem to benefit
from the extra educators that are available to provide assistance (Turnbull, Turnbull, and Wehmeyer 49).

Those in favor of segregated classrooms may potentially be in favor of mainstreaming. Mainstreaming is bringing students with disabilities into the general education classroom for “non-academic portions of the school day,” such as art, music, and gym (Turnbull, Turnbull, and Wehmeyer 45). Those supportive of full inclusion would prefer to eliminate the continuum of services or placements. The continuum of services includes an array of settings, beginning with the most inclusive, and ending with the least inclusive. The main goal of the “inclusion movement” is to “limit the need for more restrictive settings by creating a new partnership between special and general educators” (Turnbull, Turnbull, and Wehmeyer 46). Using universal design, in which “learning contributes to progress in the general education curriculum by ensuring that all students can access academic content information and provide evidence of their learning through more than one means,” a curriculum can be created to educated
students, no matter their ability or disability (Turnbull, Turnbull, and Wehmeyer 41).

I believe in inclusion, however, I feel I am realistic and understand that there are some students who because of the impact their disability has on their ability to learn, it would not be beneficial to place them in a general education curriculum. Therefore, I do not believe in full inclusion, or in segregated classrooms, but inclusion using a continuum of placements in which every child can be placed where they will receive the best education possible. I believe that every child should receive the “benefit of the doubt” and should be placed in the general education first; until it is proven that their disability requires another setting.

We need to have high expectations of students with disabilities, and more often they will surprise us, and meet those standards. High expectations lead to higher achievement. We cannot simply accept the bare minimum, or we will receive the bare minimum. High expectations will create confident people who
feel as though they are not second-class citizens; “to deny students the opportunity to benefit from the general education curriculum may actually limit their education and postschool opportunities” (Turnbull, Turnbull, and Wehmeyer 38).

I believe that all those preparing to enter the field of education should also be certified in special education. Teachers today need to know how to create specialized lesson plans, and how to incorporate not only the needs of children without disabilities, but children with disabilities, into their curriculum. An educator today must be prepared to devote time and effort into designing units and lessons that encompass all the various skills, processes, and knowledge of all students. Every student matters, and deserves the very best education that can be provided.
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Let There Be Lights

by Carly Larkin

Much to my father’s disappointment--and although it happened some years ago--I no longer believe in Santa Claus. However, if he does exist I am sure he would have no trouble finding our house come Christmas Eve; and coming upon our house, Jolly Old St. Nick and his crew would surely be blinded by my father’s brilliant Christmas decorations. I envision Rudolph and the other reindeer stunned and thrown off course by the thousands of strands of lights strewn about our roof, deck, trees, bushes, and mailbox. The poor disoriented caribou would become confused and bewildered by our 20 foot singing replica of their master which dominates our front lawn. Surely, upon encountering my father’s mad effulgent masterpiece, Santa and his gang would call it quits; they’d pack up their sleigh and head home to the
North Pole. Millions of children around the world would be left without presents and without hope. All of the elves' hard work would be in vain. Christmas would be ruined because of my father’s obsession with holiday lights and decorations.

My father is one of those people referred to as larger than life. "Simplicity" and "modesty" are words that don’t exist in his vocabulary. What is obsessive to others is normal to him. And, though he is excessive in virtually everything he does, nothing beats his passion for Christmas, or, rather, Christmas decorations. To him Jesus’ birth, quality family time, good food, and presents all take a back seat to—*radiance*. Christmas is about lights: lighted strings, lighted trees, lighted Santas, lighted nutcrackers, lighted nativity scenes, toy trains, stockings and snow globes: all illuminated, all dazzling. That our modest home and property could be seen from outer space is a matter of intense pride for my father.

For my family, Christmas decorating is not a leisurely and fun family pastime. For us, it is a month long dictatorship. It’s the
old gulag, and we are my father's prisoners. He controls the
placement of every ornament, tinsel strand, and wreath. Any
“foreign” decoration we care to include is immediately banished.
This is his Christmas, his reputation, his dignity--and we infidels
are not to blemish it.

My father is the Christmas light industry’s number one
customer. I once attempted to calculate the strands of lights placed
throughout and around my home. I gave up at one thousand.Unfortunately, not everyone finds beauty in his annual blazing
masterpiece for we frequently receive phone calls from our
neighbors requesting that we turn off our outside lights at night.
To such propositions my father thoughtfully responds, “Close your
blinds and get some holiday spirit you dumb bastards.”

I guess we all find Dad's obsession somewhat amusing; but
we choose to distance ourselves from the whole mad development
and leave him to his own kooky devices. Unfortunately, being the
youngest in my family, over the years I have been unwillingly
designated by my father as his partner in crime. Come November
30th we go to every Christmas department store within a 10 mile radius and ransack the aisles. We bulldoze through the store, focused, and determined to hoard as many boxes of lights as we possibly can. If another buyer is spotted eyeing what my father covets, I am ordered to distract him while Dad rushes in, swiping the prize. Ultimately, he fills several carts and stares lovingly at his Christmas booty.

At the check-out line, the cashier quietly curses under his breath as he assesses the nearly one hundred boxes he has to scan. Some customers glare in anger. I lower my eyes, avoiding contact with the disapproving faces. But my father? He has slipped into a utopian yuletide trance. He is happy… and, strangely, so am I. As we exit with our treasure, Dad cracks jokes with the on-looking passersby saying, “Don’t even try fellas, we done cleared the entire store.” Few laugh.

For most people, stringing Christmas lights is not a dangerous, even deadly, business; and though Dad doesn't see it that way, he should. Miraculously, he has gone to the emergency
room only twice due to lighting malfunctions. The first time was four years ago, just before Thanksgiving. In an inspired artistic attempt to spell “Feliz Navidad” on our roof, he fell---25 feet. I was in the kitchen with my mom stuffing the turkey when, looking out the window I saw my father’s body drop past. It’s hard to say what hurt him more, the fact that he suffered a broken arm and two fractured ribs or that he couldn’t finish his masterpiece. The other time was last year when he electrocuted himself on a frayed live wire. I was busy clearing the snow off our bushes when I heard an unusual yelp, kind of a wounded coyote. Running toward the sound, as I rounded the corner I found my father convulsing in the snow, screaming obscenities to the decorating gods. Apparently wet snow and electricity don’t mix well.

I used to think my father’s “lighting enthusiasm” was a selfishly driven attempt to assert his power over a female dominated family. However, over the years, I have come to understand it as something else. Perhaps it is a desperate attempt to create order and consistency from chaos. Perhaps it is a way to
stave off change, time, leaving. He cannot control his mother’s worsening Alzheimer’s, or my leaving home for college, or his boss’s increasingly demanding expectations. But he sure as hell can control where the tacky flashing Santa wreath should be hung.

My father was recently diagnosed with prostate cancer. Unfortunately, this cancer was caught in an advanced stage and has already spread to nearby tissues. He has begun radiation treatment and will begin chemotherapy soon. When talking to him recently by phone, we discussed his latest doctor’s visits and the various medications he has been taking. I could tell from his voice that he was beginning to weaken. My father, my protector, my partner in crime---the man who wants the world to be bright---is deteriorating before my eyes, and there is nothing I can do. Holding the phone away from my face, tears slid from my eyes as I envisioned a time when my father will be unable to perform his decorating rituals. A time when he can no longer spend an entire Saturday streaming countless strands of lights about our front yard, a time when he will rely on me to buy the lights for him, a time when he will settle
for a dusty, poorly decorated Christmas tree in the lobby of a nursing home. I was jerked back into reality, hearing my father shouting my name over the phone.


“Yeah, I’m here Dad. Sorry, I got distracted.”

“That’s fine sweetheart. Listen, can I call you back later? I hope you don’t mind, but I decided to buy some of our holiday ammo online this year, and the shipment just arrived. Wal-Mart was having this amazing Christmas light sale and I couldn’t resist. Don’t worry, we’re still going shopping as soon as you come back for break. What do you think about this: I want to really step up our game this year and buy one of those gigantic inflatable snow globes they sell at Macy’s and put it on top of our roof!”

It's not easy to laugh and cry at the same time. Try it.

Later that night, while in the library, supposedly studying for finals, a friend caught me surfing the internet. “What are you looking at?” she asked. I answered with a question: "Which
gigantic snow globe do you like best? The one with Frosty the Snowman or the one with Rudolph in the middle?”

She looked at me, and I returned her confused stare with a transfixed gaze and maybe the hint of an obsessive smile. I have to get back home soon. There is work to be done before Christmas.

*The lights are waiting.*
Adolescent Depression: What It Is, Its Causes, and the Best Methods of Treatment

By Catherine Natoli

Feelings of sadness or disappointment are normal experiences that every individual goes through at some point in his or her life. These feelings, however, are often fleeting or impermanent. Depression, however, is a psychological disorder that is not, in fact, synonymous with these feelings. Rather, depression is associated with severe feelings of emptiness and hopelessness, and depressants often have a negative view of not only themselves, but also those around them and the world in general. Over the past thirty to forty years, adolescent and teen populations often thought to be vibrant, energetic, and care-free, have experienced a rapid and dramatic increase in clinical depression diagnosis and treatment. Some feel this is due to various reasons and can stem from things such as family life, social
media, and cyberbullying. More and more young people affected with this disorder are losing interest in activities they once enjoyed, experiencing difficulty concentrating, and isolate themselves from the social scenes to which they become accustomed due to strong emotions of sadness, flatness, insecurity, and monotony. In fact, a new and alarming concern has arisen: some feel there is currently an epidemic of adolescent depression that is sweeping not only the youth of America, but the young people of other countries as well. If this is so, why is it occurring? Many scientific studies have been completed that support this idea, and blame the large spread of depression on various sources such as issues in the home, bullying (as well as cyber-bullying), and media pressures. Additionally, the means used in the treatment of depression is cause for strong concern. Antidepressants are, especially in modern society, freely prescribed to any teen or adolescent who exhibits just one sign of clinical depression, with no thought for the consequences or the possible severe side effects. Taking all of these things into account, this paper will explore the
different causes of adolescent depression in great detail, as well as
the pros and cons of antidepressant prescription drugs, and whether
they are more helpful or harmful to the treatment process. I will
also explain the better, health risk-free alternative treatment
methods, such as psychotherapy and various lifestyle changes that
can drastically improve the lives of depressed patients.

In order to understand and evaluate the best ways in which to
treat depression in young adults, one must first understand what
depression is and its causes in young people. Depression,
fundamentally, is a psychological disorder and syndrome causing
severe sadness, low self-esteem, and loss of interest in activities
previously enjoyed by the patient. It represents a lack of the
serotonin chemical in the brain, which causes a drastic drop in
mood. It also can cause periods of vegetative states lasting for
weeks or even months, in which the individual finds it difficult to
lead a normal life. Depression, although it occurs so frequently
that is it sometimes referred to as “the common cold of emotional
problems,” should not be taken lightly (Matson 1). It can create
dramatic and sometimes irreversible problems for the patient, and can seriously damage emotional, psychological, and physical health. It ultimately interferes with the overall happiness of the individual it consumes, hindering their feelings of fulfillment and drive for productivity. In terms of physical health, it can cause frequent and severe headaches, body aches, feelings of nausea, and fatigue (1 – 3).

Diagnosis of childhood and adolescent depression has been the topic of some serious debate over the past decades, because many believe that depression and sadness often normally occurs in pre-teen and teenage years. Doctors and physicians simply take these emotions as part of growing up, commonly known as teen “angst” or feelings of being misunderstood by family and friends during the years of growing into sexual maturity. However, a common diagnosis evaluation began to emerge in the early 1980s, and included all possible criteria for depression symptoms among adolescents. This included symptoms such as significant change in appetite, significant change in weight, sleep difficulty, severe loss
of energy or interest in common activities, feelings of self-reproach of guilt, lack of concentration or focus, and even suicidal thoughts or attempts of self-mutilation or harm. In order to be diagnosed as clinical depression, the patient in question must be experiencing at least four of the mentioned symptoms for a period of two weeks or more (1 - 4). If not discovered and treated properly or quickly, then this disorder can cause feelings of self-loathing, drug abuse, alcohol abuse, or even the tragedy of suicide.

Depression is classified into four major types. The first of these is major depression, or clinical depression, in which the symptoms are constant and severe, and is a recurring disorder that will not disappear without treatment of some kind. The second is atypical depression, which consists of a “specific symptom pattern,” and includes temporary surges in mood that are dependent on the presence of positive occurrences. The third is dysthymia, which is recurrent mild depression that is broken up by periods of normal mood. Finally, there is seasonal affective disorder, otherwise known as S.A.D., which is extremely common
in young people of northern climates. This type of depression includes mood swings and feelings of sadness dependent on weather patterns often of the autumn and winter months; since these seasons tend to be dominated by cold and darkness, they affect the patient’s mood and emotions. This depression does not typically stem from problems of insecurity or self-reproach like the other categories of depression, so typical treatment methods are not largely considered in its treatment (Smith, Saisan, and Segal).

There are several major causes of adolescent and teen depression, no matter the type or intensity of the depression. One of the major causes is family issues, or issues in the home. Major, traumatic changes in the household such as divorce or separation of parents or a death of a loved one can trigger depression symptoms. Another major cause of adolescent depression is bullying in social situations such as school, club activities, or team-sport oriented activities. A new type of bullying has emerged over the past decade called cyberbullying, which is “deliberately using digital media to communicate false, embarrassing, or hostile
information about another person” (O’Keefe and Clarke-Pearson, 801). It includes the bullying or tormenting of an individual by another individual or larger group of people through internet means, including using instant messaging chat conversation, Facebook, MySpace, or e-mail. It is extremely common, and can happen to any young person using the internet for social networking purposes, creating feelings of isolation and thoughts of suicide. Recently, a new phenomenon has risen called “Facebook depression,” which is “a depression that develops when preteens and teens spend a great deal of time on social media sites… and then begin to exhibit symptoms of depression” (802). Teens that suffer from this type of depression have often been involved with some type of cyberbullying in which an embarrassing picture was spread over the internet, or have suffered torment and insult by another person publicly through a Facebook status or comment. It has been concluded that most adolescents who suffer from such an experience often turn to dangerous blogs and internet sites that promote substance abuse and self-harming behaviors in order to
deal with the pain brought on by the torment, which are common coping methods, although negative ones, for depression (801 - 802). Sexting is also a recent cause in the rise of teen depression, which is the sending, receiving, or mass forwarding of sexually explicit content such as nude photos or suggestive messages through cell phones, over the internet, or other digital media. Even though sexting can occur between couples who agree to share such private content consensually, sexting is often used as a form of bullying and done with malicious intent, meant to embarrass or give a bad reputation to the person in the picture or message. In addition to being a federal offense if minors are involved, such practices often lead to the creation and diagnosis of depression for the individual being sexually exploited by such actions (802).

In addition to family issues and bullying, the pop culture media also has a large effect on the rise of depression among young people. Celebrities are emulated in today’s society, especially for their looks, fashions, and bodies. Most teenagers, especially females, feel pressured to dress and look sexually
appealing, similar to famous icons. If they feel as if they do not look this way, or feel that they could never achieve such physical appearances, then they begin to feel worthless and hopeless. These insecurities brew rapidly, and lead into a spiral of self-doubt and self-reproach. These feelings often trigger other symptoms of depression, and may even lead to suicidal thoughts and self-mutilation in order to lessen the pain of these insecurities. Lastly but not less importantly, social difficulties such as relationship problems with friends or significant others might create emotions that can lead to clinical depression or any of the other depressions listed above.

Now that the definition, diagnosis, and causes for depression among adolescents have been examined, it is now fundamental to understand the different treatment methods for depression and which are healthiest and most helpful. Antidepressants are, in the simplest terms, psychiatric medications in the forms of pills, which increase serotonin levels in the brain to trigger a boost in mood energy. They are often forms of SSRI’s, which is an acronym for
selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors. A boost in serotonin levels also regulate sleeping patterns, mental clarity, rid the patient of pain or fatigue, and even helps control the appetite (Smith, Robinson, and Segal). For many years, antidepressants have been the main outlet of medicinal treatment for depressed patients. In today’s society, they are so widely prescribed that even young adults and preteens are taking them for the mildest of depression symptoms. Medications such as Zoloft, Lexapro, Prozac, Paxil, Cymbalta, and Luvox are given as easily to patients by doctors as cold medicine, and the users are getting younger and younger due to the stresses previously mentioned that lead to depressive symptoms. In 2002, doctors wrote out almost eleven million antidepressant prescriptions to teenagers and young children (Harris par. 9). In 2005, one hundred ninety million prescriptions were given out in the United States, and a significant amount of these were given to young people from about ages fifteen to twenty-five (Msnbc.com). Although they can be very beneficial for some patients dealing with depression, they are often not very
helpful. In 2006, a study was released that stated fewer than fifty percent of patients became symptom-free after taking some brand of antidepressant, even after trying two or more brands (Msnbc.com). Furthermore, the few that did become symptom free only slipped back into their symptoms a short while later. This is because not all depression emerges from decreased levels of serotonin that create sad thoughts or negative moods due to changes in bodily functions; for the medication does not solve the underlying problems of the depression or the causes that started it. Even if antidepressants are beneficial to some, they are not a long-term solution to depression; they cannot be taken forever, and are also not recommended for pregnant women or people over the age of sixty five.

Additionally, there are many dangerous and even deadly side effects of these medications, especially in young adults with brains and bodies that are still developing. Various major side effects include worsening depression, anxiety, severe anger and aggression, worsening sleeping trouble, agitation and restlessness,
acting on risky impulses, and hyperactivity. Worst of all, the consumption of antidepressants in some young people can even lead to suicidal thoughts or even suicide attempts, which is exactly the thing we are hoping to be avoided by taking these medications (Smith, Robinson, and Segal). Although these side effects do not affect every individual who takes these pills, they cannot be overlooked; they are a present and possible danger to all depressed patients, not just adolescents. In 2004, the Food and Drug Administration recognized the dangers of many antidepressants and mandated that all antidepressant drugs should contain “black box warnings” clearly labeled on their prescription sheets so that physicians may clearly read and review them when prescribing drugs to children and adolescents (Harris, par. 2). These warnings must entail the numerous risks mentioned previously as well as the danger for suicide or suicidal thoughts. In addition to this, the FDA gave a strongly-worded message to the public explaining that antidepressants largely do not work for adolescents. It released information revealing that Zoloft, the most commonly prescribed
antidepressant to young adults, failed in two scientific tests to effectively treat depression (Harris, par. 14). This leads to a shocking and ridiculous conclusion: antidepressants are often overused and ineffective, while putting the health, emotions, and lives of many adolescents at risk. Due to this, it is clear that antidepressants are not the best option for treating depression in young people. Exploring other treatment options such as psychotherapy and simple but effective lifestyle changes can ensure an improvement or even a cure for depression without all of the frightening health risks.

Cognitive behavioral therapy, otherwise known as psychotherapy, is a treatment method that has become increasingly popular in recent years due to the risks of antidepressants. Seen through my own personal experience, psychotherapy is one-on-one personal counseling with a psychotherapist. The therapist and the patient develop an intentional, personal relationship in which they discuss the positive and negative emotions occurring in the patient’s life, and how to improve the positive while deferring and
trying to eliminate the negative. It aims to solve these negative emotions that cause depression disorder through a process; first, the causes of these emotions are sought out, then a process is created in order to eliminate or lessen these causes. Finally, both the therapist and the patient work together toward the common goal of permanently ridding the patient’s life of such hindering problems. Through developing answers as to why a patient feels a certain way, the causes, and how to get rid of those causes, while promoting the desire to reach the final goal provides motivation for the depressed patient, regardless of the lack of motivation and interest that depression creates; therefore, therapy itself counteracts some effects of depression. The evaluation of emotion and how it connects to behavior is also discussed between the patient and the therapist, so that further depression after treatment can be avoided. This therapy type can also be group-oriented, so that the families of the patients may be involved in their healing and recovery process.
It has been scientifically and psychologically proven that psychotherapy does in fact drastically improve the state of depressed patients. The emergence of psychotherapy has its roots in the growth of cognitive therapy in the 1970s. Because new psychological treatment processes were being developed, the field began to be explored by physicians and therapists more closely. After an extensive study based on material and results consisting of fifty-eight patient observations ranging from the late 1970s to the mid-1990s, it was proven that “clinical research has firmly established the efficacy of psychological interventions for depression… there was a positive effect of therapy that was both statistically reliable and substantial in magnitude” (Robinson, Berman, and Neimeyer 32). The patients that underwent psychotherapy improved dramatically, improving from two standard deviations differing from the general population to just one. The research of this study further concluded that “the benefits of psychotherapy for depression are not short-lived” (40 – 41). This study conducted by Robinson, Berman, and Neimeyer
accurately portrays the success of the psychotherapy process, and declares it a healthy and risk-free alternative to harmful antidepressant medications.

In addition to therapy, there are several simple lifestyle changes that young depressed patients can make in order to improve their condition. These changes, while making the lives of the victims more livable, can also improve their overall physical health. One of the best ways to lessen depression symptoms is exercise. Daily or weekly exercise increases levels of serotonin, as well as other chemicals such as dopamine, in order to boost mood. Physical activity such as running, weight-lifting, and bicycle riding work just like antidepressants do, and they also provide physical benefits. Nutrition is another simple way to ensure depression improvement. Eating three to six well-balanced meals per day keeps energy up while providing proper nutrients to counteract depression effects such as fatigue. Complex carbohydrates such as pasta and potatoes are extremely helpful in boosting morale and overall mood, while also providing a huge source of energy. Sleep
is also a major factor in treating depression; sleep deprivation only leads to the enhancing of depression symptoms such as agitation and irritability. Getting the proper seven to nine hours of sleep per night ensures benefits such as mental and physical clarity as well as sufficient energy for daily activities. Being well-rested can also decrease feelings of sadness and increase feelings of optimism and motivation. Lastly, joining group organizations and volunteer groups is a great way to gain friendships and support during the treatment process. It can deter feelings of loneliness and isolation caused by depression, as well as get the patient involved with activities again (Smith et al.).

A new hope in the world of depression treatment has emerged within the past few years called atypical antidepressants. These antidepressants work in the same way regular antidepressants do, but are a wholly better alternative. They, like other medications, increase levels of serotonin as well as dopamine and norepinephrine. Additionally, they are more widely accepted by health physicians and the FDA because of their mild and sparse
side effects. These side effects are not severe or life-threatening, including temporary confusing after consummation, dry mouth, headache, nausea, sore throat, nose bleeding, and blurred vision (Abajo and Garcia-Rodriguez).

There are four major types of atypical antidepressants on the drug market in today’s society. The first of these is Bupropion, known on the market as the medication called Wellbutrin. This type of atypical antidepressant is a good choice for depressed patients suffering particularly from low levels of energy, and can even help a patient to quit smoking. Moderate side effects include nausea and sore throat, which make the pills appealing to a younger patient. The second major type of atypical antidepressant is Mirtazapine, otherwise known as Remeron. Although it does cause drowsiness, it counteracts side effects of other antidepressants, including sexual disinterest. Its side effects include weight gain, weakness, and other mild effects. The third is Nefazadone, which eases anxiety significantly. Its side effects include blurred vision, low blood pressure, and dry mouth. Lastly
is Trazodone, which is commonly known as the drug Oleptro. In its simplest form, it is a type of weak antidepressant that causes slight drowsiness but is effective in stopping other depression symptoms such as weakness and sleep difficulty. It is often prescribed along with stronger antidepressants, but can be used on its own (Abajo and Garcia-Rodriguez). Because of their lack of severe side effects and due to their inability to become addictive, atypical antidepressants are becoming a more and more popular alternative to well-known antidepressants such as Zoloft and Prozac, both of which have damaging side effects and addictive tendencies. This inability for the user to become addicted makes them perfect for younger age groups, so that doctors and parents can prescribe this medication to younger patients without worrying about addiction. Atypical antidepressants are also not meant for long-term use, which is to the benefit of the user, and are meant to be combined with other types of treatment such as counseling and support groups.
Depression is a plague that has swept the youth of the world in the recent decades due to varying factors, from family difficulties to the internet to the media. Its treatment methods have caused much debate among doctors, therapists, and patients; there is no definite answer as to what is the most beneficial and why. It is evident that atypical antidepressants are an effective treatment option when paired with psychotherapeutic counseling. That way, the medicinal aspect can play a role in the recovery process as well as the psychological aspect, for the latter is crucial in preventing relapse. These treatments are also relatively risk-free, which is important when considering the health and well-being of young people. These two methods combined not only effectively treat the psychological mindset and physical symptoms of the patient, but also make them aware of their emotions, the reasons for their emotions, and how to connect the two so that depression will not be a recurring problem in their lives. With this combined method of treatment, adolescents suffering from any type of depression can stand up to their disorder and enable themselves to fight back, so
that their depression will not control them; they will control their depression.
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Learning the Language of Development A Comparison of International and African Languages in African Education:

By Kendra McKechnie

Salibonani, Molo, Avuwani, Sanibona, Hallo, Abusheni, Lumela, Thobela, Dumela, Hello, and Sanibonani: each of these expressions is an appropriate way to greet someone in South Africa due to the eleven national languages of the country ("Language Challenges"). Although South Africa functions with both international and local languages, dominant use of either type of language has severe negative effects on culture and economy. South African children are generally disinterested in studying traditional African languages, but parents may either push to preserve their culture or generate economical opportunities (Govender). South Africa isn’t the only country that faces this dilemma; across the continent, African countries
struggle with the use of African languages and international languages in an educational setting and each alternative has disadvantages.

According to the African Languages website, it is estimated that there are between 2000 and 3000 spoken languages on the African continent (Joffe). Since decolonization, the domain of language has been difficult for many African countries to settle. When they were under European rule, African languages united people of a community; however, in part due to the lack of communication skills in universal languages, Africa struggles in the current world economy. Concerning language, the difficulty arises when people of one town operate on a different language from people of another town within the same country, and all parties lack a common language to communicate domestically and internationally. Many African countries house societies where several languages are employed for different purposes. For example, some countries use a language in a social context and another in business settings (Alidou), and some countries use
one language predominately for oral communication and the other for written; however, the traditional social environments and the established education systems are unable to adequately address the challenge of multi-lingual communities.

Due to colonization, the cultural association of international languages compared to indigenous African languages often creates cumbersome social classes in the country. In an essay written by Oussenina and Hassana Alidou concerning the interplay of politics, women’s roles, and religion in Niger, members of the community who speak French are considered “French elite.” A hierarchy of languages is then created based simply on the form of education. By referring to these educated “French elite,” Alidou addresses concern for women’s roles in politics. He believes that Nigerian women who are not educated in French cannot easily participate in government or politics. In Niger, language use often deprives women the right to actively participate in politics because they were educated in a different language. Without the division
caused by language, all social classes would have a more equal opportunity to participate in government. If governmental affairs were conducted in an African language, then Niger would be incapable of participating in world government and politics, a fact which harshly challenges the benefit of functioning in an African language.

Allowing the use of African languages in an educational setting often leads to disunity of children. Some of these countries have several local languages in just one region, thus further dividing the people. Because of colonial rule in Africa, artificial states and ethnic groups were brought together in one territory. The only commonality of these people is their shared history. Ayo Bamgbose, author of Language and the Nation, says that the greatest preoccupation of these African states is to promote this sense of “oneness” as a people which will foster a bond between nations. Therefore, a common language would contribute to this sense of nationality and unity, aid in political and economic interactions among other nations, and develop
stronger communicative bonds between more developed nations and those developing in Africa.

If a child is limited to a language only spoken within his community, then a whole world of information is neglected. Dennis O’Neil, of the behavioral sciences department of Palomar College, compiled a study of language use worldwide which shows that English and French have the highest number of countries with a substantial number of native speakers, as shown in Figure 1. In 2001, the United Nations, comprised of 189 member countries, discussed which language each country would like to use for communication with embassies from other countries; 120 countries chose English, 40 chose French, and 20 chose Spanish. Furthermore, English dominates the world of electronic communication. In his essay “Teaching English in Francophone Africa,” Henry Niedzielski Ph.D. asserts that English is the primary language of scientific, commercial, and technical publications. Depriving a child of basic knowledge of French or English deprives him of all of the information
associated with them: translations of most African languages are generally not available due to lack of capable translators available and the wide variety of African languages. Additionally, this greatly limits a country’s’ international relations if their citizens and members of government cannot communicate with other countries.

The article “School Kids Reject African Languages,” written by Pregs Govender, author for the Sunday Times, explains how social expectations play into families’ perception of language use. This article is written about South African children’s disinterest in African languages. When eleven national languages were made official in 1997, students were encouraged to speak these languages in order to give each language equal status in education and society. Despite the schools’ preference for its students to pursue these African languages, there is a great lack of teachers qualified for these positions. South African students refer to several reasons for their choice of more prominent languages: wider variety of
reading materials, availability of teachers at all levels, 
preexisting oral skills from home that do not warrant formal 
instruction, and perception of difficulty in grammar of traditional 
African languages.

The South African parents’ attitude seems to be the most 
influential factor; most parents will encourage their children to 
pursue English in school because they believe it to be more 
beneficial to their children’s future. The North West education 
spokesman Charles Raseala said that when families visit rural 
villages, the parents proudly tell the elders “No, you can’t talk to 
my child in Tswana, she doesn’t hear you. She only speaks 
English.” These parents connect language to opportunity; the 
families of these villages do not have the communication skills 
required to advance in society. They clearly believe that an 
education in English will provide their children a brighter future 
than an education in a local language, which they believe would offer the children no more than the parents had.
While education in international languages theoretically unites a country and creates greater opportunity for world advancement, it may destroy the country’s education system and have negative effects on society. Countering the argument by Bamgbose concerning unity and “oneness” is Sokhna Sané’s argument in her essay “Decolonization and Questions of Language: The Case of Senegal.” Bamgbose contended that African countries needed a single language to unite people of a country and of nations; however, Sané asserts that holding on to the “tongue of the colonizer” only slows down decolonization. As the article “Language Challenges in South Africa’s Schools” reiterates, it would be socially beneficial for the people of South Africa to communicate in languages “free from the historical burdens of colonization or Apartheid.” Therefore, the idea of one language uniting the people is effective with African languages as it unites them culturally.

This idea of a prominent local language is examined by Mukama’s essay on Rwanda where Kinyarwanda is an African
language spoken by the greater part of the population, but French and English are constitutionally the official languages. The county’s educational system requires students to be instructed in Kinyarwanda in primary school then in the choice of either English or French in secondary; however, only ten percent of the population can read or speak fluently in French or English. Mukama raises the question: “What happens to those 90% of the population who can only speak Kinyarwanda?” Something doesn’t connect if children are taught international languages in school, but only ten percent of those children can effectively communicate in that language. The educational structural system and the country’s ideology must cooperate in order for the country to properly function.

These African schools that attempt to instruct in French or English are ripping children out of their comfort zones, a move which has disastrous consequences to the children as well as to society. Amade Bandi’s article for the UNESCO Courier “Blame the System-Francophone African Schools Discriminate
against Children” cites the difficulties that young African children face by having to switch from the language in which they were raised to French without “the slightest psychological adjustment.” The school system in Burkina Faso does not allow for native language at introductory levels as many other countries do, rather the Burkina Faso system forces French from day one. This system is often reinforced by horrible practices that are meant to humiliate students to motivate them to speak only French: this includes forcing a child to wear a donkey skull around his neck with a sign reading “Donkey, speak French!” Bandi references the “Prayer of a Small Black Child,” a work in which Guy Tirolien, a Guadeloupe native, begs the Lord in this prayer not to make him go to school due to his intense fear of bullying. Although this prayer was written in 1950, the school system has not far advanced with time; there are still many children who fear attending school because of the violence and discrimination directed at them because of the differences in language ability. In attempt to further the students’ language
skills, the school system neglects children’s basic education and self-esteem.

Not only do international languages alienate students at school, but home life can become more difficult as well. Zanele Buthelezi explains in her article “Researchers, Beware of Your Assumptions! The Unique Case of South African Education,” the disruption to home life caused by international languages. This article speaks specifically about South Africa but addresses themes relevant to other nations in which parents aspire for their children to become fluent in English or French so as to have greater employment opportunities in the future; however, the push for these languages sacrifices family values and culture. Despite cultural backgrounds, some children who learn English at school are not capable of effectively communicating with extended family not formally instructed in English. Children suffer then from emotionally abuse caused by their separation from their family. This article is in direct contrast to Govender’s article which also directly addresses South Africa. Buthelezi
also explains how English is becoming a more popular oral language among the young who speak it even in the presence of elders who do not understand the language. This practice both estranges the older generation and exterminates local indigenous languages.

South African societies often correlate race and language as a basis for prejudice. South African schools remain divided according to race, a fact which leaves black children with inferior schools and teachers who are not equipped to teach English as a second language because most black families speak African languages at home. The white population of South Africa generally speaks only English at home; therefore, they do not need to make this same adjustment to English. (“Language Challenges”). White English speakers are generally uninterested in learning African languages when they do not have the same family language obligations as most black families. When these children then enter the work force, the black worker will be denied the same opportunities as the white worker because the
black worker did not have the resources to become educated in what is considered the more elite language, English. Figure 2, from Victor Webb’s book *Language in South Africa*, shows the association with English as an upper-class language. The author admits that the table is oversimplified to prove a point, but through his observations, he concludes that the black community views language as a “symbol of oppression” (17). Preferences to certain languages and poor language instruction to some communities have created social classes in these societies. If the solution is to force all social groups to practice the same language, then these currently non-English cultures will be severely disrupted.

The concern for capable teachers, previously mentioned by the students of South Africa in Govender’s article, is reflected in Sokhna Sané’s essay which focuses on Senegal’s struggles with language and society. In Senegal, French remains the language of education and government, although the language, Wolof, is becoming more dominant socially and in more rural areas of the
country. Despite President Abdoulaye Wade’s efforts to boost the status of local languages, French remains the dominant language. This conflict of local languages in daily life has negatively impacted the school system which continues to operate primarily in French. Many teachers admit to reverting to Wolof in a classroom because they believe their students will better understand the topics being discussed. This leads to improper education and less comprehension in the language. Particularly at the university level, students do not have the comprehension skills necessary in French to adequately participate in post-secondary education. These students receive uneven educations because of this confusion and incompetence in language. The Senegalese school system is not properly structured to provide an appropriate education in French, regardless of students’, parents’ and government’s preferences. Some teachers may instruct in French and others in Wolof, a fact which produces an irregular education that makes it difficult for some students to function in society and the work force as adults.
Evode Mukama’s essay “Rethinking Languages of Instruction in African Schools” also echoes this concern. She is disturbed that inadequate teachers make it overly challenging for students to learn French or English, a problem which then excludes those children from advancing in society. Additionally, to accurately understand another language, readings must be taught in context of that language’s society. Attempting to understand these social contexts force the cultures of countries that previously had control over that territory on the African people. In her conclusion she states that “the mastering of language and the mastering of human behavior are mutually linked.” It is for the betterment of the country and its people to offer education in native tongues so as to accurately provide education to all citizens. Very little development is gained from an education that is not understood due to language and cultural barriers. It is not always the disputation over whether African languages or international languages should provide for an advanced education, but rather the question of being given at
least a basic education or a student’s education not comprehended because of the language in which it is communicated.

Many of these African countries need to consider alternatives. Some countries are still maturing from decolonization and require local languages to preserve culture and create not only a sense of unity but an awareness of independence. Additionally, to advance significantly in the world economy the countries need to be able to communicate in international languages. Further educational structural advancements are required to achieve a balance of these two goals. A system in which students can profit from a general education in their own local language while studying international languages as an alternate subject is a necessary prerequisite to greater development in Africa.

Buthelezi claims that gaining literacy in English is strengthened through honing skills in indigenous languages. She sites various studies which assert that it is easier to learn to read
and write in a foreign language after having studied to do so in a mother language. In order to learn an international language, the students must first be proficient in their mother language. Not only is it beneficial to their language proficiency skills but also learning in their mother languages eliminates societal inequity, preserves culture and family values, and decreases classroom discrimination.

Transforming an African nation into a French or English speaking country requires careful planning in an attempt to avoid negative effects on the younger generations or the adult community. The difficulty arises around the structure of school systems. While it seems a simple solution to place children into an environment where they will have a predetermined language forced upon them, it has detrimental effects on the students. Clearly, more qualified teachers are required, a need which is not easy for the schools to address on their own. Systems in which children gain a basic education in the language in which they are most comfortable and also intensively study a foreign language
would be most beneficial to many of these countries.

Furthermore, the countries must also be careful not to exclude the older generations in society who don’t have strong backgrounds in other languages; however, as the bilingual population grows, it will be easier to communicate across language barriers within the country as well as abroad.

According to Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, everyone has the right to education directed to the “full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.” To teach in languages incomprehensible to these African students violates this declaration. Some children mentioned above are not receiving their human right to education if they don’t understand what they are being taught; however, this problem derives from a poor education structure. It is absolutely vital for a country’s global advancement to function in international languages, but it is vital to a country’s basic sustainability to instruct its students in African languages.
## Figure 1.

### The Most Common Languages in the World

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LANGUAGE</th>
<th>APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF NATIVE SPEAKERS (in the year 2000)</th>
<th>COUNTRIES WITH SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF NATIVE SPEAKERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mandarin Chinese</td>
<td>874,000,000</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindi (India)</td>
<td>366,000,000</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>341,000,000</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>322-358,000,000</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bengali (India and Bangladesh)</td>
<td>207,000,000</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>176,000,000</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>167,000,000</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>125,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>German (standard)</td>
<td>100,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>78,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>77,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Wu Chinese</td>
<td>77,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Javanese</td>
<td>75,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Yue Chinese</td>
<td>71,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Telugu (India)</td>
<td>69,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Data and categories from Bamgbose)

Figure 2. The relationship between race, class and language in present day South Africa
Data and categories from Victor Webb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Indian people</th>
<th>White people</th>
<th>Coloured people</th>
<th>Black people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher class</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle class</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English, Afrikaans</td>
<td>Afrikaans, English</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working class</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Afrikaans</td>
<td>Afrikaans</td>
<td>Banru language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This chart demonstrates the asymmetric ethnolinguistic division of power in the country.
Works Cited


