

**CITIZEN JOURNALISM
PROJECT**

Signs of the Times

Vol. 1, Issue 1, Fall 2017



**AUTRY
MUSEUM**
OF THE AMERICAN WEST

TheAutry.org/LaRaza | #AutryLaRaza #PSTLALA
citizenjournalism@theautry.org

Signs of the Times

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The Autry is proud to support the work of the Citizen Journalism Project. To encourage the free flow of expression and dialogue, we have avoided a heavy-handed editorial approach. All of the views and opinions contained within this publication solely reflect those of the individual contributors.

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FOREWORD

We created this zine in order to celebrate the work of the women and men who, in the late 1960s and 1970s, contributed to the pages of *La Raza*. Also, we wanted to recognize the continuing need for citizen journalism, and we hoped to engage with the Los Angeles community in a new way. We invited residents from across Los Angeles County from various backgrounds to participate in our project by serving as citizen journalists for their communities. We asked them to share their community's challenges, successes, issues, and stories with us. We left the definition of "community" to the discretion of each participant, and as you will see, they defined the concept in many ways, including community as gender, ethnicity, religion, neighborhood, and even basketball teammates.

Their submissions overwhelmed us. In truth, we were unsure what we would receive, but we were not prepared for the sheer number of submissions, their incredible artistic quality, or the richness of their storytelling. We received almost 400 photographs, essays, poems, and artworks—far too many to easily share with the public. Using a rubric that evaluated each piece on newsworthiness, artistic quality, and originality, we reduced the number of entries considerably. Even after narrowing the number of submissions, we had too many for one publication, so we decided to create two volumes for our inaugural publication run. We organized the volumes based on patterns in the content. What remained consistent throughout each volume was that the stories of Los Angeles's residents reveal a struggle with issues that are at once historical and contemporary, and which often reveal larger challenges facing the country.

The first volume, "Signs of the Times," focuses on two topics: women's rights and immigrants' rights. Perhaps these themes struck a chord with our participants because of our current political climate (we recruited our participants in January and February 2017), but visitors to the Autry's *LA RAZA* exhibition will see that these were also pressing issues during the Chicano Movement. Just as in the 1960s and 1970s, Angelenos' responses to these topics prove varied: they exhibit a fear of what may happen to friends and family, pride in community, doubts about our public institutions, and a general sense of frustration. Throughout these pieces, you will find a consistent desire for recognition and respect. Clearly many of the issues that animated *El Movimiento* remain unresolved in 2017.

The second volume, "LA: LA," provides a nuanced vision of life in Los Angeles. Borrowed from the name of the Getty's Pacific Standard Time project, the volume's title refers to the complex stories of Los Angeles's residents. They are not all transplants from back East—many are third-, fourth-, and even fifth-generation Angelenos. And they are not all searching for that fabled fifteen minutes of fame—many are more



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concerned about the lasting health and welfare of our communities. This volume documents the struggles and joys of being a resident of the City of Angels, from income inequality and gentrification to the beauty of local murals and graffiti, and from pollution and poverty to communal activities and religious celebrations.

Due to the overwhelming response and interest in this project and exhibition, we will initiate a second call for submissions in the fall of 2017. If you are or if someone you know is interested in participating in the Citizen Journalism Project, please contact us at citizenjournalism@theautry.org. In the meantime, enjoy this edition and the *LA RAZA* exhibition. //

ABOVE: Photograph by Metztli Garcia. Women's march in Downtown Los Angeles area. Her face filled with a mixture of determination, curiosity, and anger, she displays a perfect representation of all the women at that march who were unsatisfied with the President-elect's comments on woman.



ABOVE: Photograph by Jacquelin Rosas. *United, Never Divided*. This photo was taken at the East Side Rising Walkouts, where we met at Mariachi Plaza to then march towards City Hall. Pictured here are Roosevelt, Garfield, and Torres High School students.



WOMEN'S MARCH



OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Photograph by Textli Gallegos. *Voice.* A young Muxer leading chants at the International Women's Day March on March 5, 2017, Los Angeles, CA. • Photograph by Metztlí García. *Mother and daughter* at Women's March in Downtown Los Angeles in front of Police Department. Mother shows affection to daughter during a march for women's rights. **ABOVE:** Photograph by Textli Gallegos. *Controversy.* Women shakes police officer's hand at the International Women's Day March on March 5, 2017. This kind of action has been known to create controversy in the community. Are police officers our friends and deserve thanks? Or are they our enemy?

Many Unaware of Women's Day

By Psipsina Haendel

This past Wednesday was International Women's Day. All six people in my family left the house dressed in red that morning to support women and girls all around the world. When I arrived at school, I was shocked to see only five or six kids in my class were wearing red. Most kids in my 7th and 8th grade class weren't even aware it was International Women's Day! Annoyed and shocked, I was in disbelief that most 13 and 14 year olds didn't know about a huge international event.

"Do you know it's International Women's Day?" I asked some of the kids in my class. Most of them said they didn't. Through my parents, the news and social media, I was prepared for International Women's Day, and made sure my friends were, too. The day before, we all reminded each other to wear red and subsequently showed up at school wearing the color, representing

power and unity. I saw a meager five people wearing red that day. Not only did they not wear red, but more significantly, they were unaware that it was International Women's Day altogether. These days, with so much going on in the world, people need to stay informed, not only about things like this, but everyday issues; things that are currently going on in the world that will affect everyone.

Not only did my classmates not know about International Women's Day, but my teachers didn't mention it . . . even once. I know that this isn't something that's just occurring at my school. It is all too common for educators to focus on textbooks and testing instead of the things that are happening right now. All across the United States, kids are left unaware of the real things that are affecting us all. Instead of not discussing current events, teachers could connect current

events to the history we learn in school every day. History is very relevant to current events, and vice versa. Both children and educators need to learn and inform one another about current events. //

OPPOSITE PAGE: Photograph by Metzli Garcia. A young woman, at the International Women's March in 2016 in Downtown Los Angeles holds up a sign that says in Spanish, "Vale mas morir peleando," meaning "It's worth more to die fighting." Her fight is much bigger than herself; it is for all women and women's rights. It is more valuable to die fighting for your rights than to live without them.

International





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Photograph by Metzli Garcia. Nathalia, photographer for Las Fotos Project at a women’s march against Trump, holds a sign that reads: “History has its eyes on you.” • Photograph by Textli Gallegos. *Movement*. Cheyenne Phoenix leading the NODAPL march in MacArthur Park on November 30, 2016. She is leading the march through her traditional Shawl Dance. Los Angeles, CA. • Photograph by Sammy Park. • Photograph by Vanessa Clavel. This man stood outside of the Downtown Los Angeles Police Department spreading joy and speaking to passing citizens on the sidewalk, which I found to be beautiful. These men and women are often perceived as “pigs,” but they are here to protect and serve. Many make mistakes, but not all should be blamed for them. This man right here represents how they care for their community.

ABOVE: Photograph by Natalia Angeles. *WE ARE ALL THE SAME*. When I took this photo, not only did I feel a connection with these beautiful women, I felt the sadness they feel because there are people out there who judge them for looking a certain way or being from another country. I connect with that because I’ve been there. I’ve gone to places where there are people who look at you and inside, you know they are judging you. These are girls who I really wish I got the chance to sit with and have a talk about the similarities and differences we have, to learn more about their cultural background and know why they are so proud to be from where they come from. These girls empower me to change the world through photography.



OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Photograph by Metztlí García. Bystander, selling hot dogs during a protest against President Trump, on Presidents' Day holds the Mexico flag, as she stands as a proud immigrant. • Photograph by Maya Rosado. The NoDapl protest took place at MacArthur Park in the Fall of 2016. People at this protest stood in solidarity with Standing Rock to resist the pipeline, which continues to ruin land and pollute water. • Photograph by Fabiola Lopez. *Standing Strong*. A shot taken during the historic Women's March in Downtown L.A. A crowd gathered together hold up their signs proudly as they march for what they believe in. **ABOVE:** Photograph by Metztlí García. At an LGBTQA ball dance, I was in charge of a photo booth. Props were used, like this Mexico/gay rights flag.

F.I.R.S.T G.E.N.E.R.A.T.I.O.N

First isn't a compliment
It's a reminder of previous failure
Which has become a burden

On the shoulders of those kids
College bound by their parents
From the moment they were born

I am one of those kids
Reminded of said failure
Every time I'm told how "special" I am

I'm the "first generation"
I'm "making my family proud"
Well guess what
It doesn't feel that way to me
I want to be a college student
Not another "at risk" triumph

My family says "you're going to make it"
Then they say "you're not depending on me

forever"
If they think I'm going to make it
Why do they think they'll find me starving?

I'm being told "you're going to college"
In other words "don't be like your mother"
Because college is the best option
That also causes stress-induced nightmares
I'm destined to pursue this pathway
That adults have pushed upon me
My blue ink pen lighting the path
Some think will end in failure

Guess what

I'm the first generation
Destined to succeed

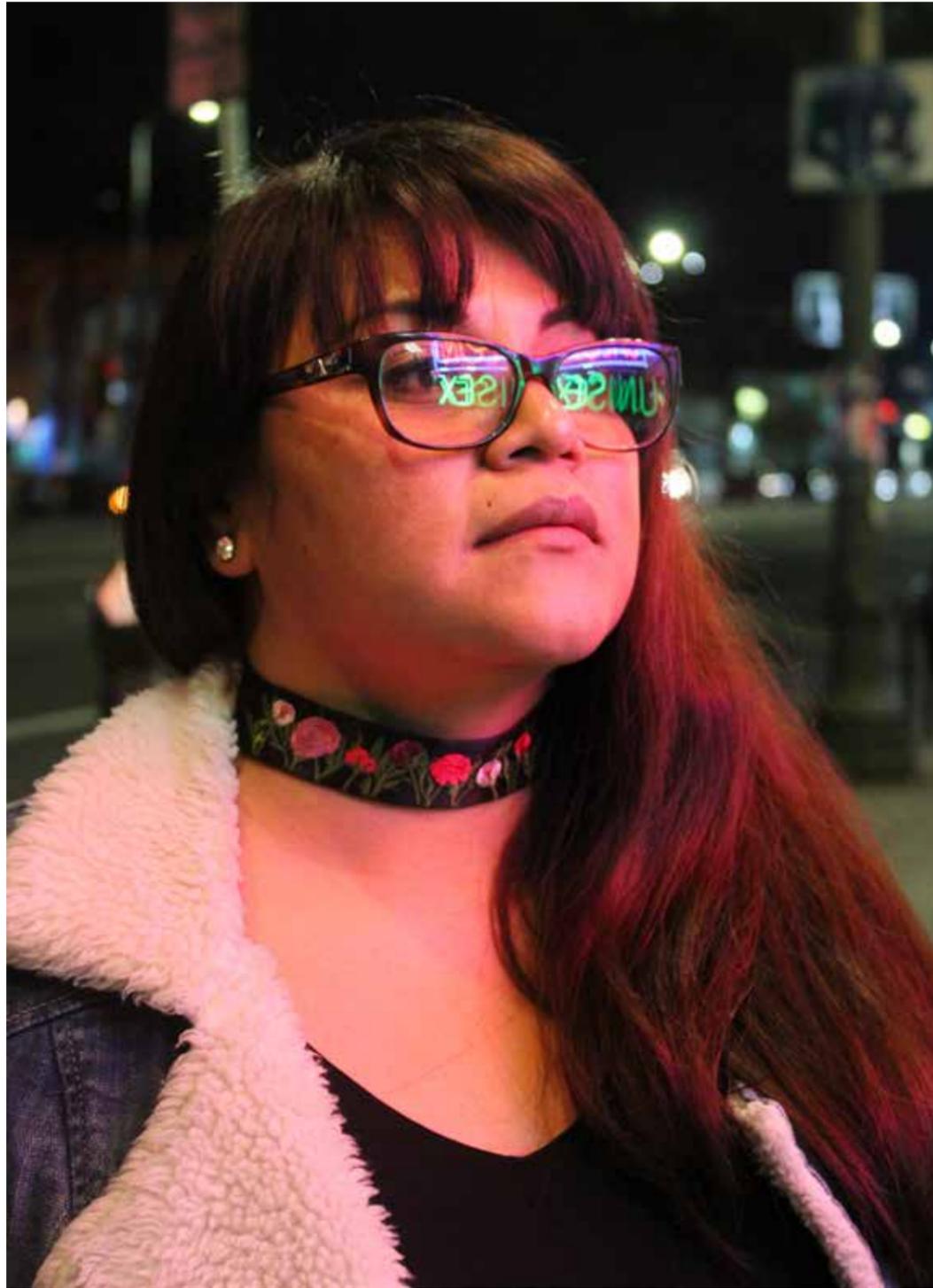
Not an "at-risk" triumph
Just another kid

Written Work of Samantha Campbell



IMMIGRANT MARCH

ABOVE: Photograph by Metztlí Garcia. Student Alejandro Navarrete at the Anti-Trump March on Presidents' Day. Happily, he holds the Mexico flag and says, "Immigrants make America great."



ABOVE: Photograph by Natalia Angeles. *Madre Que Mira a todos*. I remember my mom telling me when I was younger that no matter what, she knows everything and sees everything. I used to wonder how that was even possible until she told me she had eyes in her back. I believed her and after that day I knew that I had to stop doing bad things and become a better person to make my mom proud. My cousins would make fun of me because I would ask them if their mother had eyes in their back, too. Until one day she told me that she never had eyes in her back. I was pretty mad but relieved to know that she didn't have any because that would've been weird. After that I was so happy she had told me that, because if she hadn't I would've probably been a terrible person by now. I've learned that being courageous isn't bad at all, treating someone nice is totally okay. Thanks to my mom she has helped me become a woman who wants to change the world, make a difference, and give back to my community.

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ABOVE: Photograph by Jennifer Alvarez.
La Raza.

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LEFT: Photograph by Natalia Angeles.
No human being is illegal.
 I was born in Mexico City. After finding out that a racist, fascist, and probably Hitler's long-lost brother won, my heart broke in a million pieces. I couldn't believe that this country who is supposed to be united and beautiful voted for a man who will divide them (I know not all voted for him). This photo stood out to me because I'm not any of the things the president says about Mexicans. To me, as an immigrant, I am the girl who wishes she had documents that said the words "You are now a American Citizen" so I can travel and let others know about my work. But no, I am undocumented. I'm proud to be a Mexican woman who is chasing her dream to become a photographer. I AM PROUD TO GO OUT ON THE STREETS AND PROTEST WITH ALL MY PEOPLE WHO SUPPORT IMMIGRANTS AND ARE STILL UNITED.



LEFT: Photograph by Natalia Angeles.
PEOPLE OVER PIPELINES.
 The man who stands with the Standing Rock.
 He wants to protect his tribe; he knows that the president will do everything in his power to make the man's tribe suffer; the man has the power and the voice, to us it matters.
 He is at the protest to show that the Standing Rock will stand forever.
 That not even the president can tear down what his people have.
 He screams and shouts for his people.
 He puts his fist up to let his people that he is there.
 He will fight for them.



LEFT: Photograph by Natalia Angeles.
A daughter of Mexican parents.
 Be proud that your parents come from a country that have people who are hard workers.
 Be proud that your parents work day and night just to see you be someone good in life.
 Be proud to have food every day because your parents worked for that.
 Be proud of your cultural background.



LEFT: Photograph by Natalia Angeles.
TODOS SOMOS PODEROSOS.
 We are all humans who have a voice. Each of us is united and will not let someone tear us apart only because we are diverse.
 TODOS UNIDOS Y TODOS FELICES.



ABOVE: Photograph by Theadora Leimone. A tattered and worn American flag blows in the wind on someone's porch and with politics today the flag has so many different meanings to different people.



ABOVE: Photograph by Sammy Park.



The Wall

It divides the delicious tamales my grandma makes.
 It divides the old records my grandpa hears.
 It divides the kids who play soccer in the middle of the streets.
 I don't get to hear the screams and shouts when Mexico declared its independence.
 I wish that wall didn't exist.
 I wish to see the greatness of my beautiful Mexico.

By Natalia Angeles

C.U.R.L.Y H.A.I.R

A little girl possessed curly locks
 Attached to her head concussed by repression
 Twisted away into migraine-inducing braids

Bloody murder fell from her lips
 As individuality was hidden away
 A monster in a sea of straight waves

Tearing at her cursed scalp
 She clawed the unruly strands
 Begging for them to straighten

Little girls pet her hair
 Like she was some petting zoo attraction
 Meant to be domesticated

Adults fawned over her burden
 Exclaiming she was just a doll
 Truthfully dolls, scalps were straight
 Therefore she was not a doll but rather an unwanted reject

Recalled from toy store shelves
 Replaced with a blonde straight bun
 Played with in a dollhouse of replicas

A little girl watched after-school cartoons
 Brown straight ponytails locked into memory
 Braids dragging her head down onto the couch in pain

Magazine covers advertised hot irons
 Present in the aisles of department stores
 Within grasp of tiny curious hands

Caught red-handed in the bathroom
 She's a culprit dropping her weapon
 Sentenced to serve time in the corner

Mother praising her curly locks
 She's allowed to unravel her chains
 Breaking free extinguished from the crowd

Written Work of Samantha Campbell

Earthbound Goddess

By Nova Odette Trujillo

This is for the girls who are thick like honey
Lips like rose petals
Seashores on your legs
This is for the girls who let their hair grow
long or cut it all off
Who love who they love
And break the glass ceiling
This is for any kind of girl
Every color, shape and size
You are loved
You are the stars in the sky
And all the pearls in the sea
Don't ever let them break you down
You are free to be
Let your golden voice ring out
And never settle for less than your crown
because you are all queens

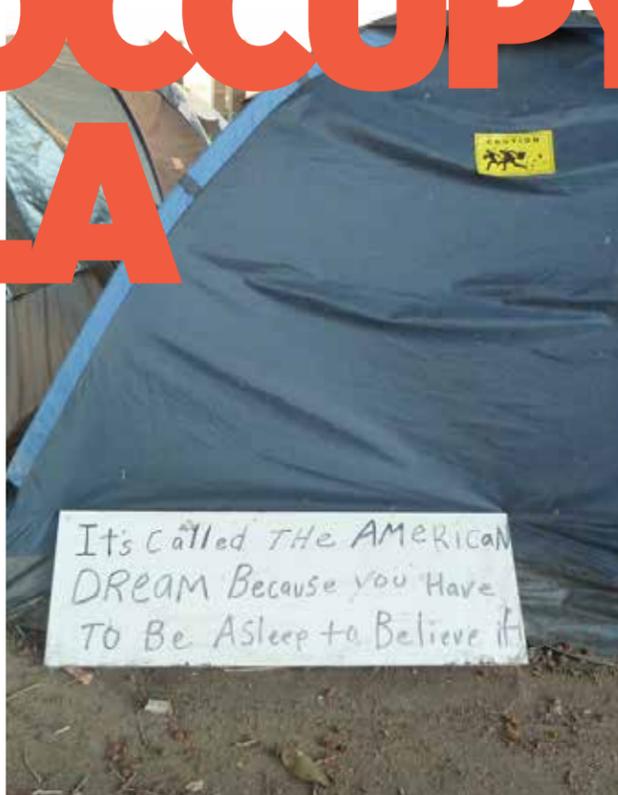
Image: Photograph by Textli Gallegos.
Beauty.

"Mommy and I called abuela today and it was just really interesting to see that when we call my family in Costa Rica, they're always telling me that I'm pretty. I've realized that beauty is all relative to perspective and opinion. In one country, I'm not pretty. In another I am beautiful. It's all a trick of the brain. It is important however for me to love myself because it's my opinion of myself that I should focus on. Others can judge my beauty, but their definition of beauty is relative to them and may be different from mine. And I finally understand those words. I'm not saying I believe them already or that it's 100% engraved in me or I'm going to follow it from here on out. But I think I might understand it. I wrote about it in (my common app essay) an essay but didn't believe it then. Now at least I get it."

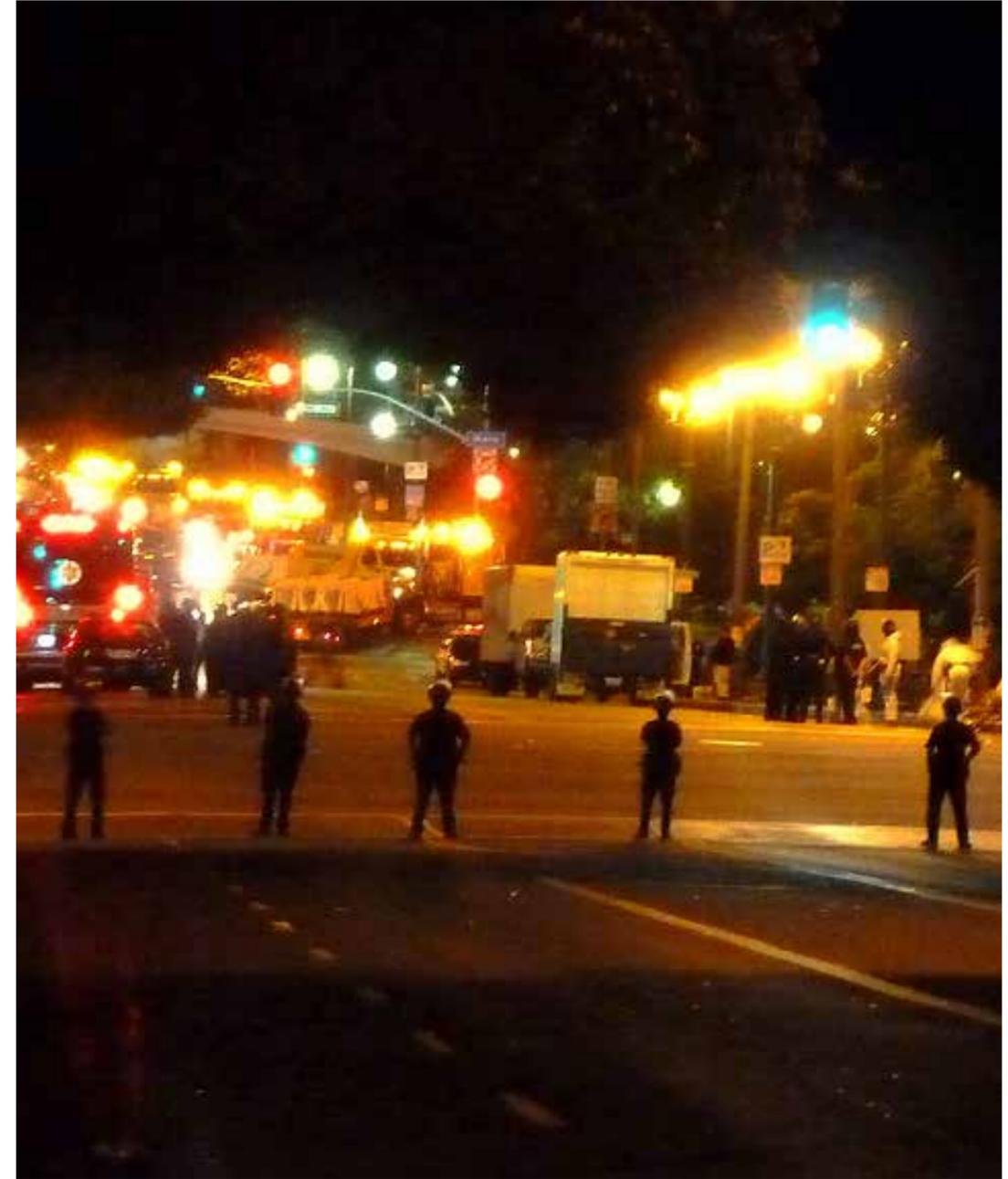
-Sarah Vargas Los Angeles, CA.



OCCUPY LA



OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Photograph by Steve Fine. *It's Called the American Dream*. Occupy LA City Hall encampment, November 2011. • Photograph by Steve Fine. *Corporations Are Not People*. Occupy LA City Hall encampment, November 2011. • Photograph by Steve Fine. *It's Not A Protest, It's A Movement*. Occupy LA City Hall encampment, November 2011 • Photograph by Steve Fine. *Fascism: When People Have to go to Wall Street to Protest Their "Government."* Occupy LA City Hall encampment, November 29, 2011. **ABOVE:** Photograph by Steve Fine. *(We Are the) 99% Symbol as a Sign* (People gathering on north steps of City Hall after the march from Pershing Square). Occupy LA City Hall, Day One, October 1, 2011



OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Photograph by Steve Fine. *Meditation on the Power of Money to Gag Free Speech.* Occupy LA City Hall encampment, November 2011. • Photograph by Steve Fine. *A Union/Occupy LA-Organized March and Rally to City Hall.* Occupy LA City Hall encampment, November 2011. • Photograph by Steve Fine. *A One-Man Vigil Facing Occupy LA Encampment During the Police Raid.* (Unknown vigiler risked arrest for refusing an order to clear the street at 3 a.m.). Occupy LA City Hall encampment, November 29, 2011. • Photograph by Steve Fine. *Occupy LA Print Shop: Signs, Banners, Leaflets, T-shirts.* Occupy LA City Hall encampment, November 2011. **ABOVE:** Photograph by Steve Fine. *Police Cordon Off City Hall, Concrete Barriers Being Erected at NE Corner.* Occupy LA City Hall encampment raided, November 28, 2011.



ABOVE: Photograph by Psipsina Haendel. I have always loved children. Growing up as the oldest of four, I learned how to not only tolerate but enjoy the presence of younger kids. Recently, I have had the pleasure of working as an assistant coach on my younger sister's basketball team. These past few months have been such a wonderful learning experience for me. I've really enjoyed being able to mentor young girls in a sport I'm so passionate about.

When You Think Basketball . . .

Just earlier today I was filling out a March Madness bracket with the rest of my family. Even my eight-year-old sister made her predictions on who would win college basketball's biggest event of the year. But all the while I was thinking, why are the college playoffs for women so much less publicised than for men? This occurs not only in college basketball but also in professional. I went to a Los Angeles Sparks game with one of my basketball teams, and the stadium wasn't even half as packed as when I went to a Clippers game. It's not that women aren't as good, they can play just as well as the men can. It's that people doubt them.

I have experienced people overlooking my athletic abilities because I'm a girl, and it's quite exasperating—and very sexist. Some people take gender as a sign of whether or not someone is good at sports, and that's not okay. So why is it that when people think basketball, they think of Michael Jordan, Bill Russell, and Kobe Bryant? Why not of Lisa Leslie, Candace Parker, or Maya Moore? I think it goes back further than 1946, when the NBA was founded. (The WNBA was founded in 1996, only 21 years ago.) All along, there has been the assumption that men are stronger, which later translated to their athletic capacity being better. Without even giving women a chance, people assumed that they couldn't play. That's why it took 50 years after the NBA being founded for America to give women a chance to play basketball professionally.

When people think basketball, they shouldn't just think of the Los Angeles Lakers. Remember all the women playing in the WNBA who worked so hard to get to where they are today. And the next time you want to watch basketball, watch a women's game, because they're just as good.

By Psipsina Haendel

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