

Coda: Community Writing and Creative Work

Editors' Introduction: An Alphabet of Resistance

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In lieu of a traditional introduction to our spring 2025 issue, Coda offers An Alphabet of Resistance to draw attention to words the federal government has removed from their websites.¹ We see the removal of these words as acts of harm that require us to resist. We aim to amplify these words because words—in general and these in particular—allow us to name our experiences, to critique systems of oppression, to engage in research, to imagine better worlds, to build relationships, and to create structures to bring better worlds into being.

Interspersed among the words, we introduce the work in this issue of Coda.

An Alphabet of Resistance

A is for accessible, activism, activists, advocacy, advocate, advocates, affirming care, all-inclusive, allyship, anti-racism, antiracist, assigned at birth, assigned female at birth, assigned male at birth, at risk

B is for barrier, barriers, belong, bias, biased, biased toward, biases, biases towards, biologically female, biologically male, BIPOC, Black, breastfeed + people, breastfeed + person

C is for chestfeed + people, chestfeed + person, clean energy, climate crisis, climate science, **and Coda**, who states these words. we restate them. we draw your attention to them so you, too, use them, so we don't lose them, so we maintain our ability to critique systems of oppression, (so we don't lose what these words stand for), so we honor the experiences they name, we support the research they allow, we imagine better worlds and build relationships and create structures to bring better worlds into being; commercial sex worker, community diversity, community equity, confirmation bias, cultural competence, cultural differences, cultural heritage, cultural sensitivity, culturally appropriate, culturally responsive

D is for DEI, DEIA, DEIAB, DEIJ, disabilities, disability, discriminated, discrimination, discriminatory, disparity, diverse, diverse backgrounds, diverse communities, diverse community, diverse group, diverse groups, diversified, diversify, diversifying, diversity

1. For more about the removal of these words, see Diane Ravitch's March 8, 2025, blog post, which includes a link to the *New York Times* article from March 7th that reported the original story.

E is for enhance the diversity, enhancing diversity, environmental quality, equal opportunity, equality, equitable, equitableness, equity, ethnicity, excluded, exclusion, expression

F is for female, females, feminism, fostering inclusivity; and **“Freedom is Fundamental”** by **S. M. Foyso Ahmed, Heather Cleary, and Gwendolyn Hooks**, which presents a set of three poems that came out of a time-limited community empathy writing project. The poems are connected yet disparate, creating a sense that they come from the same community writing project but could also stand on their own. “In the Silence” takes you to a place where dreams hang in the balance, while “The Assumption” seems to describe what’s at stake when they do. And “Answers” makes us question the utility of our dreams in the first place

G is for GBV, gender, gender based, gender based violence, gender diversity, gender identity, gender ideology, gender-affirming care, genders, Gulf of Mexico

H is for hate speech, health disparity, health equity, hispanic minority, historically, and **“How We See Free”** by **Debbie Allen, Susann Moeller, Chuck Salmons, Rikki Santer, and Karen Scott**, a collaborative contrapuntal poem created by participants at the Ohio Underground Railroad Whistle-Stop Poetry Tour who responded to the prompt “What does freedom mean to you?”

I is for identity, immigrants, implicit bias, implicit biases, inclusion, inclusive, inclusive leadership, inclusiveness, inclusivity, increase diversity, increase the diversity, indigenous community, inequalities, inequality, inequitable, inequities, inequity, injustice, institutional; and **“(the) intersection”** by **The Moonlight Cheese Alliance and Leslee N. Johnson**, a zine which emerged from a grant-funded partnership with Burners without Borders to support the communities in Asheville, North Carolina after Hurricane Helen, a testament to the generative power of community to build hope and create meaning after tragedy; and intersectional, intersectionality

J is for Jewish people who support Palestine, **K is for** key groups, key people, key populations, **L is for** Latinx, LGBT, LGBTQ, **M is for** marginalize, marginalized, men who have sex with men, mental health, minorities, minority, most risk, MSM, multicultural, Mx, **N is for** Native American, non-binary, Nonbinary, **O is for** oppression, oppressive, orientation

P is for **“(The) Peach Tree”** by **Calley Marotta**, a story that centers overlapping communities comprised of people, places, and a peach tree. In doing so, the story also represents the relationships and meanings that emerge from these communities, relationships that point to new ways of being and living. As the author notes: “This work has been deeply influenced by traditions of Black Feminism and womanism and Disability Justice...movements that encourage writers not to settle for the world that is but dream the world that might be” and people + uterus, people-centered care, person-centered, person-centered care; **“Plantulary”** by **Sequoia Hauck, Rachel Jendrzejewski, Koa Mirai, Mankwe Ndosì, Lela Pierce,**

Pramila Vasudevan, and Jeffrey Wells, a word list that is experimental and multi-vocal, inviting and challenging readers to alter not only their perspectives on nature, but also the ways they commune with it. Slow down and speed up with Aniccha Arts' contemplation and interpretation of the ways of native and non-native plants in South Minneapolis neighborhoods; polarization, political, pollution; and **"(The) Pond"** by **Joonna Smitherman Trapp**, a poem that, having emerged from a writing retreat, serves as a reflection on the retreat itself and the roles of spiritual retreat and engagement; and pregnant people, pregnant person, pregnant persons, prejudice, privilege, privileges, promote diversity, promoting diversity, pronoun, pronouns, prostitute

Q is for ask questions, **R is for** race, race and ethnicity, racial, racial diversity, racial identity, racial inequality, racial justice, racially, racism

S is for segregation, sense of belonging, sex, sexual preferences, sexuality, social justice, sociocultural, socioeconomic; and **"(The) Sound You Never Forget"** by **Ania Payne**, where she remembers her first semester teaching community-engaged courses and the boundaries she needed to push to do so (from letting a dog in the building to acknowledging a relative lack of control when working with community partners). Using humor and serious reflection as a bridge between business writing students with organizations working in the community around them, Payne writes pathways for community-engaged teaching that is unpredictable, imperfect, and worth every minute; and status, stereotype, stereotypes, systemic, systemically

T is for they/them, trans, transgender, transsexual, trauma, traumatic, Tribal; and **"Two Poems by Three Authors"** by **Bonnie Vidrine-Isbell, Aurora Matzke, Genesee Carter**, who initially collaborated on academic pieces about the work of writing program administration. They exercise their collective third voice in poetry as well, a process that, they explain, allows them to be vulnerable, to feel safe, to attend to their bodies, and to play. In the resulting poems, their third voice offers a meditation on structure and agency by contrasting order and excess

U is for unconscious bias, underappreciated, underprivileged, underrepresentation, underrepresented, underserved, undervalued, **V is for** victim, victims, vulnerable populations

W is for women, women and underrepresented; and **"#WeAllWrite/We All Right"** by **Tabitha Espina and Kelvin Keown**, a demonstration of the writing that can materialize from community-driven writing projects. Part exquisite corpse poem, part crowd-sourced reflections on writing, this piece pulls the curtain back on the culture of writing at an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution. Espina and Keown's images celebrate writing and its ubiquity

X, Y, Z