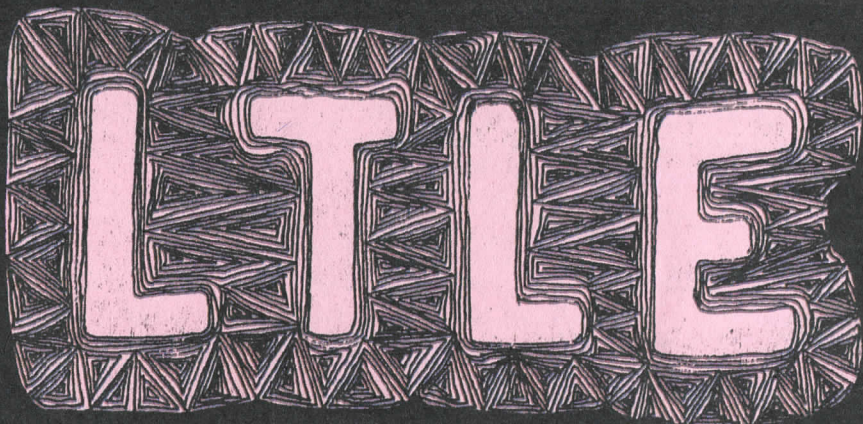


Letters To the LTLE Editor

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Editor

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Inside cover illustrations by cascades

Letter From the Editor

In November 2014, my friend Myriad died. They had survived so much, and endured so much pain, and struggled so hard under the weight of abuse and stigma. Their favourite quote was



"There is no should."

That is, there is no right or wrong,
no proper way to feel or to be:

there is only what is here.

I was having similar thoughts when I decided to start this zine. I wanted to value that which is often discarded quickly or dismissed outright - in this case, the weird thoughts we scribble down or post online, or the things that we can't make comprehensible to anyone else, or the things that make sense at the time but seem totally alien a day later. These incomprehensible ideas might not seem useful or meaningful, but they are still present. Presence is enough to warrant care and attention. A thing doesn't need to have value in order to be valued.

There is no should.

This zine is dedicated to Myriad.

-Ed.

dear ltle letter editor

i am writing to address a letter i
wrote for the previous edition of your
zine which you chose not to include largely
because i failed to submit it and
possibly because i also failed to write it.
that said, your inability to anticipate my inability
to actually provide a letter and respond in a way
that i deem both appropriate and effective seems to
me a flagrant breach of promises you've
made or been imagined to have made by and
to people who may or may not have
intended to write something but then
didn't. had i known you discriminated so
heavily between letters you received and ones whose
existence was a mere casual possibility, i might
not have wasted my time in the first place
not writing that letter to you,
the editor.

i protest your edit or lack thereof of my letter or
lack thereof as editor of letters (both manifest
and not) for ltle. more simply, the implicit editing
by a letter's editor in letting letters be sent to
that editor. i hope we can resolve this speedily
and with minimal infinite recursion.

intended letterwriter to the ltle editor

Editor's letter regarding the intended letter-writer
letter

It has been brought to my attention, via
a letter to the editor, that I have
been discriminatory in my publishing
practices in that I only publish letters
that have actually been written and sent to me.

As such, in this issue of LTLE, I have instituted
an Unwritten Letter Holding Space.
This space will contain the potential
of all the letters that never made it
out of the letter-writer's imagination.

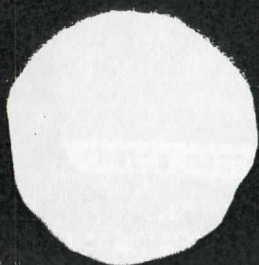
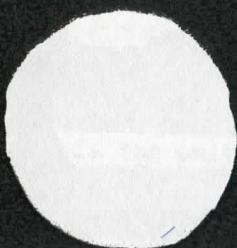
It is all very well for me to say I am making a
space for the publication of the unfeasible and
incomprehensible, but if I don't make space
for that which is ultimately unfeasible
and incomprehensible, i.e., that which is
imperceptible or even unimaginable, then I
have not carried this project to its logical
conclusion.

Yours in unfeasible specificity,

Ed.

dear katherine aka "editor",

i did not see your message but i appreciate the
efforts you are making to correct your truly
embarrassing error. at this time i will not be
pursuing any monetary compensation but i cannot
guarantee that will always be true.



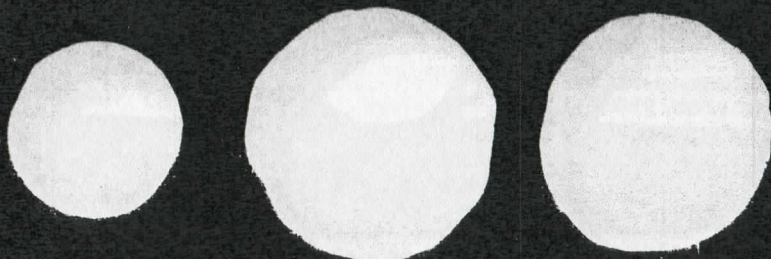
nor can i guarantee that i will not at some point
file a class action suit with all other intended
letterwriters. but i am, for the moment, satisfied
with the steps you are taking.

currently non-litigious regards,

i.l.l.t.l.e

Dear Editor,


There are things that have been twisting knots in my stomach for so long that I see more stars in my eyes than I do in the sky. I can't string together enough paragraphs to untie them. I'm writing a letter to you rather than the minefield in my stomach, because you have an address.



I've sent letters across my bedroom floor. I've sent them flying into the lake that I'd rather call an ocean beyond my doorstep. I've never sent letters where they should go, to the people whose existences can fit inside an envelope.

One letter for my roommate to tell her that I can hear her vibrator through the walls as clearly as

I can hear her tears filling up the empty space next
to her. Another to the man who'd rather caress his
hands around a paintbrush than my waist these days



and all days. I should write one

for my mama and bury it with a


bouquet of roses.

This is the only letter that's mattered because this
is the first one that's reached its home. Because

you are home, wherever you are.

Fondly,

Carolina Cave



To the editor:

I am looking for a job.

My resume: I am in school, I always put the right

amount of milk in my cereal, when

I wake up in the middle of the night

I can go back to sleep, I know how

to cure the hiccups (eat peanut

butter), and I have good taste in

webcomics.

I've been feeling stressed out lately about the

future and about finding fulfillment and rent

money. I only became an adult a

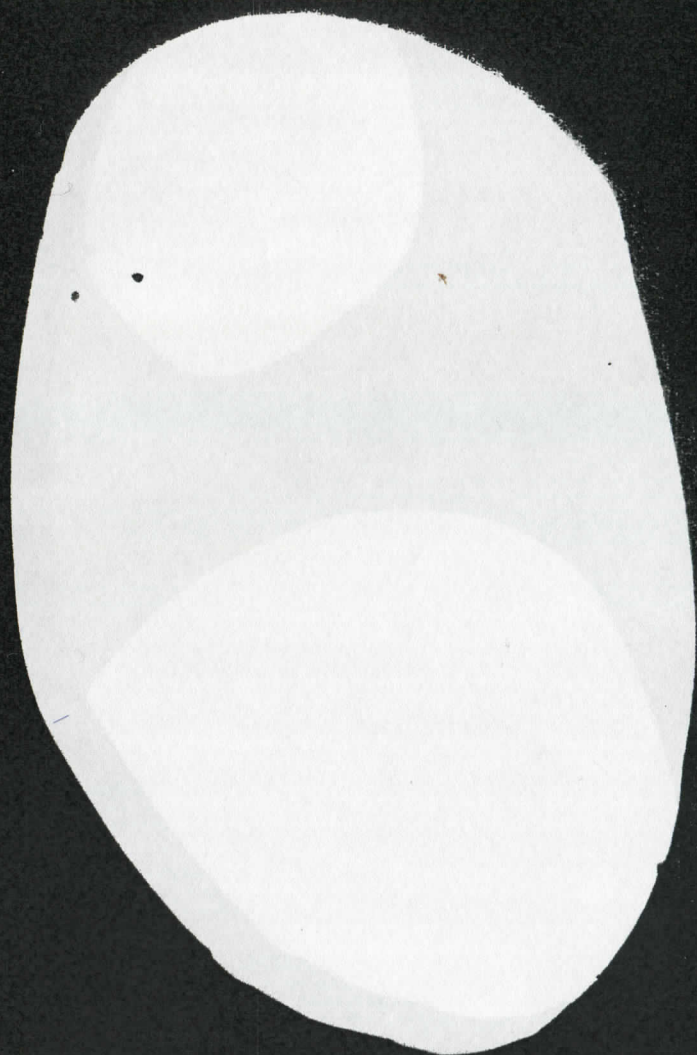
short time ago and it seems scary

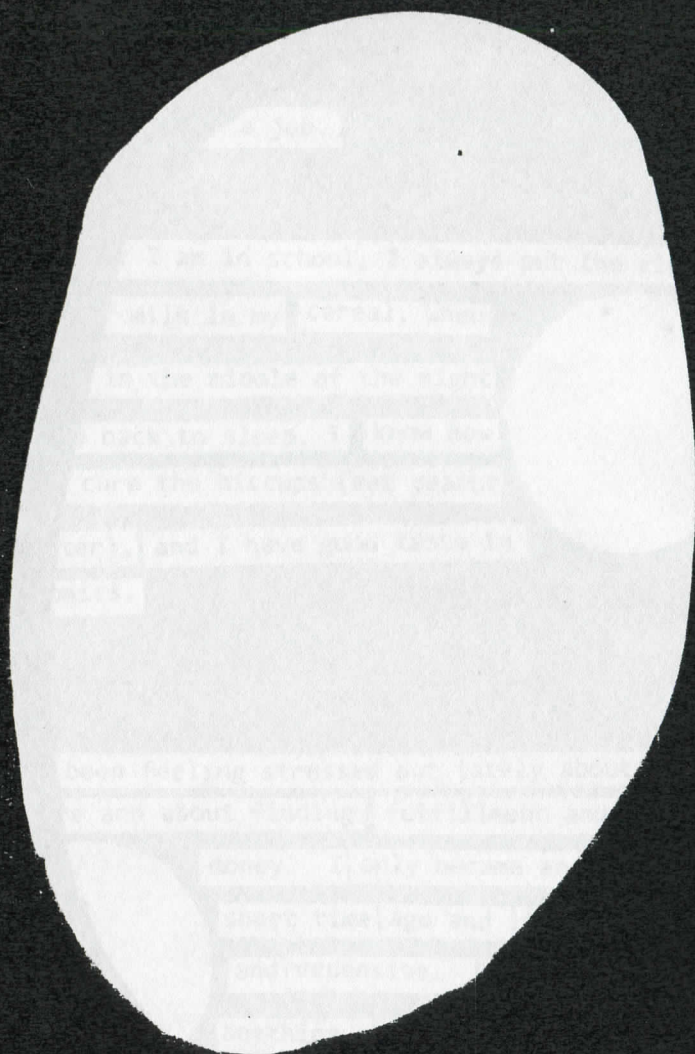
and expensive. Do you know

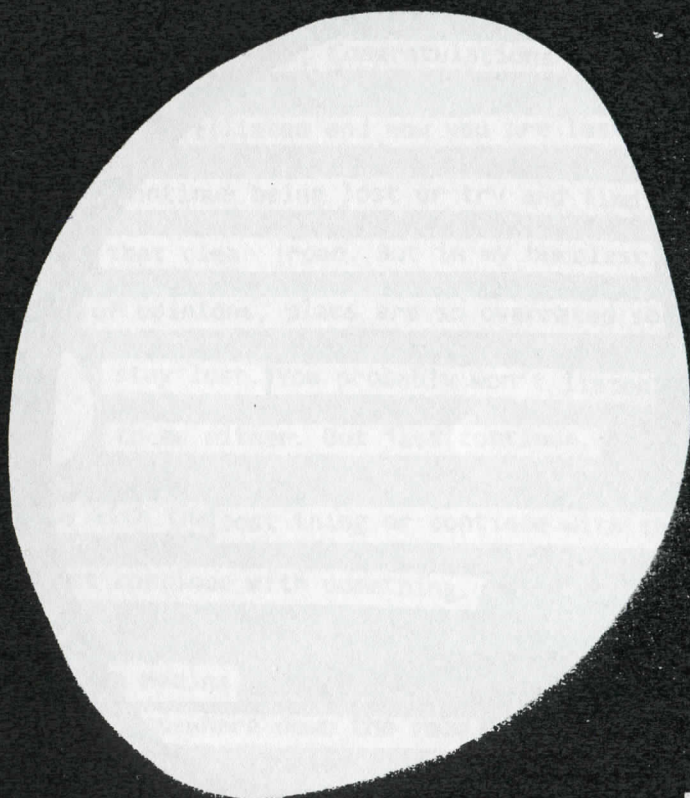
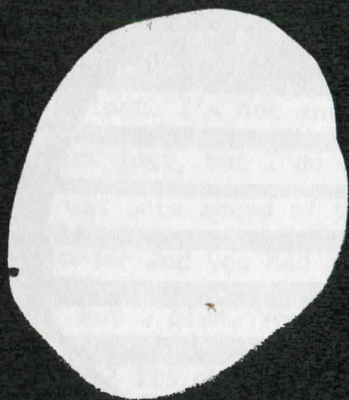
anything about jobs? I need one.

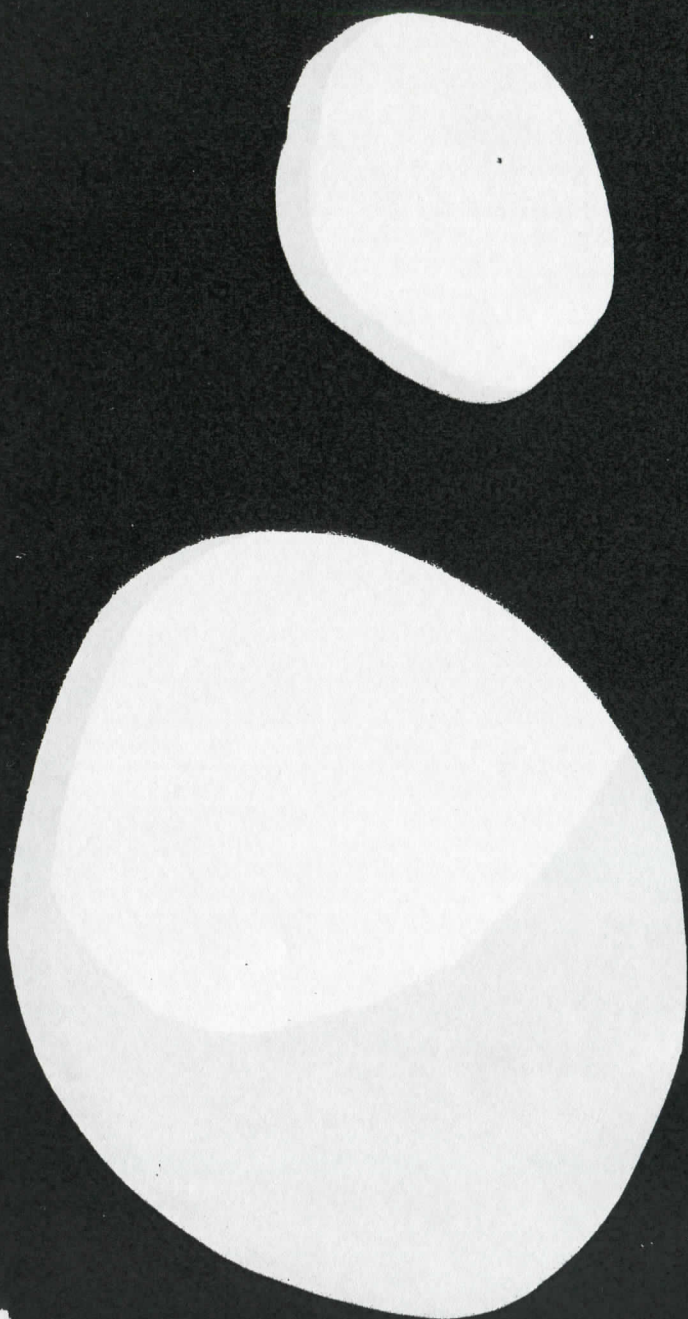
Sincerely,

March









Dear Editor,


You seem to be lost. I'm not entirely sure how you got lost, but I do know you're lost. A clear road was once ahead of you. You had all your supplies in order and you had a plan. Not a very detailed plan, but a plan. You derailed from the plan, didn't you? Its okay. There is no absolutely no shame in your being lost. Not everyone needs a yellow brick road. Everyone said to stay with the plan. Didn't they? Well, Congratulations are in order! You didn't listen and now you are lost.

Continue being lost or try and find that clear road. But in my humblest of opinions, plans are so overrated so stay lost. You probably won't listen to me either. But just continue.

Continue with the lost thing or continue with the plan. Just continue with something.

Nayda Medina



From somewhere down the road



Dear Editor;

I wonder if mothers give you a piece
of their soul when you are born? Right before the
umbilical cord is cut, a small piece of their soul
floods into you along with the amniotic fluid,
their blood?

My mother had several surgeries this year, and each
time, I was certain my soul was in the
balance. That a piece of my soul would
be gone from this world if she left.



There would be a river of sadness running
through me, always. My heart would stop pumping
blood, it couldn't bear to imagine being
without her.

I teach toddlers visual art. I model everything,

speaking calmly; an endless flow of

words and actions. I am fully

present, in case they open

themselves up for a moment of

intimacy and connection. I want to

support and affirm them. If they don't remember

what we did, or who I am, I want that in their

subconscious. That kindness and love that comes

from my mother's soul.

Somehow she is always in my subconscious. I feel

cherished, respected, loved, wherever I am. That

love is in me, when I teach. I am so happy to

carry a piece of my mother.

Can this be?

Sincerely,

Lavinia Roberts

(this is not properly concise.)

I wonder if you've gotten many letters that are lists of what a person feels they should or should not do? I kind of wanted to send you a list, but in two seconds of thinking about it, I realized that it was impossible and might also be a drag.

I wonder if you've gotten a lot of letters about the frustration of should, the inherent binding lack of acceptance of whatever it is we might be doing with ourselves and our time at the moment, the sort of endless grind that is. You probably wouldn't believe the amount of 'shoulding' I have done in regard to this opportunity to communicate through this letter to you, The Letters to the Letters to the Editor Letter Editor. I don't know if you want a capitalized The. Maybe I should change it? Oh, woe...it is such a grind, to say anything at all to anybody, about anything...to be in a constant conflict of expectations and evaluation, a walking civil war between what you should be doing and what you are doing. (I am aware that I am writing parts of this letter in orientation to the offensive second person tense, the presumptuous second person tense.) My second person is tense, the one that I should be, the one that I fail in being.

So, even mention of the word

'should' is stimulating of all these ways that I measure and evaluate and experience who I am and what my life is about. In the unpleasantness of should, I forget that the reason for should is sometimes '...so I can be my real self and be true to my understood values and parameters of personhood.' I don't want to not should myself sometimes, because in a way it keeps me aware of what I want for myself in my life.

I should laugh more. I shouldn't be so serious.

I shouldn't slowly kill myself with cigarettes.

I should stay alive as long as I can, and do as much of what I want and need to do as I can. In a way,

by de-programming my association of the word should with people and places and expectations that were outlandish, impossible, and cruel, the quiet lurking of cultural norms and standards of beauty and relevance and custom and even cleanliness, especially cleanliness, because of colonialism, because of fear...by disassociating my feelings about toxic use of the

should mechanism as a vehicle

of control, intimidation, conformation, exclusion, and cooptation of will through enactment of internal pressure, shame, and eternal failure..

I can re-imagine should as the feeling of wanting to be happy, to be who I am and to do as well as possible in that endeavor. I think it is a matter of how the content of the should is constructed, what that content is, its origins and intent. If I feel like I

should go back through and edit this to be linear and more purposeful, that is the should of the hegemonic narrative of sane and pointful (as opposed to pointless) communication, with proper formatting and appealing stylings, which is a tool of exclusion in formal processes of making things happen/keeping things from happening in the world. So, I don't want to engage with that pressure or dally with that perspective as to the worth of these words as an issuance of significant reflection existing within a body of knowledge. I am just writing a letter to the Letters to the Editor Editor, because I have been meaning to do that. I can only write letters in this way, saying what I most immediately feel like saying. Sometimes what I most immediately feel like saying corresponds with conversations that are happening and what I feel like saying presents itself in a way that makes sense to or is pleasing to or purposeful to other people. Other times, what I most immediately want to say is just long and rambling, with unfinished

sentences and poor boundaries of sensitivity in communication.

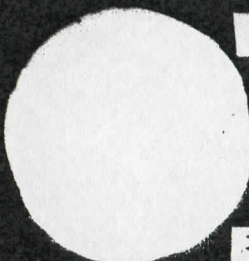
Sometimes, I don't want to say anything, and cannot make myself say anything.

How do people who write letters to the editor sit down and express concise coherent ideas, sentiments, opinions, and recommendations?

Rest in Power, Myriad

If we were honest about the conditional verb tense,
we'd only say must not | should. I experimented to
do just that for a day.

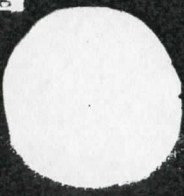
I must work now. We must get some pizza.



It's like everything is out of
place or some noble cause.

Not all colloquial Englishes
work like that, but
it's a tendency.

Saying must proved more cantankerous than my
previous attempts at banning
words like "it" or "lame" or
"bitch." Should is invasive,
but rather useless.



Of course, I should...

but so what.

Even if your friend's a heroin addict, should
is inert.

I actually didn't speak much that day. Besides
coming off crass and imposing, I
also felt like I was in Lord of
the Rings. I made it through
with minor awkwardness.

Since I live alone in Asia, I
don't confront much criticism.

Culturally, nobody really cares what you do here.

But if you need help they are more than accommodating.

Should should be like that. Language is often
based on judgements, not accepting
things as they are. But once you notice
and accept the demands you
can better ignore them.

Love,

