

Fall 2020
ENGL2700 - Creative Writing
Prof. Kat Gonso
Reflections Regarding the H.E.R.E. Narratives Projects

Though I am a science major, I really enjoyed this project, as I felt like I gained a lot of skills and knowledge over the course of the semester. -Cy

[W]e must ask these communities how their voices can be amplified and allow the members to advocate for their specific causes. -Ashley L

I thought I was providing a service to someone in desperate need of a voice. In truth, Ms. Daye, our resident, required no help and needed no voice. Telling her story was an honor but it was not a necessity and I think that there is a big difference there. I also think it can be a dangerous mentality to have, and I'm glad that I was able to check myself, and it's something that I will definitely pay attention to in the future. -Rowan

I really felt as though I learned more about the community and how much some people really care for one another and those ties. Randy seemed so genuinely interested in Hyde Park and he truly believed in the causes they fight for and thinks it's a great place now, but could be even better in the future. It taught me to feel appreciation for these kinds of things. -Ashley M

I was different when I left the community than when I entered because I am able to listen and respond to feedback better and I am more aware of what living or going to school in Hyde Park is like. -Sydney

I feel like it can be easy to accept your preconceived notions as the truth and be less open to ideas that may conflict with those notions, but it's really important to keep an open mind and understand that everything you know or believe might not be truthful. -Madi

A really important lesson I learned and have touched on during this experience was the need to listen to our neighbors more. I think as a society we are focused on our own problems and not looking at larger issues impacting people a couple miles away. -Brigitte

I am going to keep what I learned during this project in mind for the rest of my time at Northeastern and onwards. Northeastern itself unfortunately contributes to some of the inequities faced by the residents of Hyde Park, and I won't forget that. -Lillian

I learned that everyone has subconscious biases about other people/places. Coming into the course, I imagined service learning meant helping people who needed it, but from this experience I learned that the community that we engaged with (Hyde Park) is filled with

people who are well off and who oftentimes create their own outlets for their voices to be heard. -Sam

The next steps for me would be to continue to pay attention to things happening just outside of the Northeastern "bubble". We need to take the time to get to know the diverse communities around us and become more involved. -Michaela

We can take what we learned and do more volunteer work, sign up for community groups like the neighborhood watch, and just pay more attention to the lives and needs of the people living around us. -Nick

The revision process was really interesting to me because it allowed me to confront my own biases as well as my own writing. My first draft needed a lot of work, and through the process of criticism, thought, and revision, I learned more about myself as a writer and was able to confront my own perspectives. -Zoe

One broader problem that I saw explicit examples of during this project was the idea that governments tend to prioritize corporations and making a profit over the well-being and desires of their citizens. We see it all the time on a national level, but to learn about it on a local level was an important reminder that change needs to happen everywhere. -Eric

I think moving forward it will be important for me to ask myself if what I am doing can be done by the people themselves, and if so, reevaluate and question whether or not I am fulfilling my position as someone who is there to support and continue open communication with the community about if I am helping them in a way they actually need. -Mali

I think society, or the surrounding area of Boston could be more informed regarding Hyde Park. There is definitely a bias towards the community as a whole, not realizing how diverse and nice the community is. -Helaina

Local action isn't futile; every voice raised against oppression is worthwhile. -Xan