

UNFOLDING KNOWLEDGE

Our hands are flesh origami.
Holding intellect like delicate paper cranes,
Fingers, reaching epiphanies, folding,
Crinkling, twisting around the base of our pens.
Our appendages fold, crinkle, twist, into
Text book revelations, pages a scholarly kiss
To our intelligence.
Yet I've learned,
Construction paper classrooms will only construct
Our academic excellence,
Making blue lined notebook paper
Crumple and crinkle into our spines, forcing
Wrinkled knowledge into the back of our throats
Until curriculum is all we can digest
Folding us into the step-by step process of
America's version of paper crane students.

The instructions enlisted in the syllabus on how
To enfold our bodies into the pages of our textbooks,
Have failed more times than others because
Fractions of my classmates remain paper dragons.
"Open minded" rests beneath talons, their forked tongues
Deliver testimonies, testifying that violence can
Solve any issue given.
Yet, when mentioned in class, in class discussion
Means that we can only discuss
The lesson plan given.

I wonder,
When will the schools' ancient philosophy
Start teaching that,
Logic by itself won't crease our paper brains
Into nerve pathways leading to acceptance,
While we keep on bombarding streets,
Angry tyrants, making towns lay in fetal positions.
Businesses and streets, their skeletons collapse under our
Origami hands that have been creased into the primal form of a fist.
I wonder,
When will the desire for change to hop our heartbeats
Like adrenaline rushes for peace, instead of disunity,
Occur as "aha moments" like when we

Understand something for the first time.
Because classrooms only give us elbow room
For our brains to know what to think,
Formatted and programmed for the uproar of tests and quizzes,
but not **how** to think, when faced with the reality
Of what's currently occurring.

In History class, the present
Will never make it's own declaration of independence.
Instead we will know more of wars, battles, treaties,
And memorize amendments along with our presidents,
But will never learn that the main moral to grasp,
Is acceptance.
Violence has been our gospel,
As our virtues bend underneath our trampling feet
Anger, rage, hatred slips through our shaken bloodstreams
But the education system's plan for us paper crane students
Silences more than allowing us to be the change
In our future, where our breaths break violence made of stone.
Because submerging our heads underneath tidal waves
Of formulas, equations, and rules, is much
Easier than learning how to live with each other
Through all the differences each human being guarantees.
Because offering peace, offering love,
Like each one of us is an intellectual flower child of the century
Seems to be much harder
Than understanding what it means to exist in harmony.

WHEN

Will we stop this paper crane student folding process
And create a way to hold this world up
With our hands linked together like flesh origami.
Like the graduating class of "we changed this"
And realize that
"Intelligence plus character--that is the goal of true education."