



First-Gen Voices: Creative and Critical Narratives on the First-Generation College Experience

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Understanding School

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This is how we learn:
In enclosed spaces,
busy as buzzing bees bustle,
smell of cocoa beans collide with smooth jazz,
earbuds jammed in.
Sitting in too-small desks,
shoved into too-small, musky rooms
watching yet another video as your teacher nurses another hangover.
Through brilliant colors, radiating from every corner,
watching the dancing music float through your mind,
forever beating to your internal clock
others put you into a check box
labeled: disabled
Leaning against a wall
waiting for your turn to tussle
already categorized
Through deafening quiet,
true quiet only pierced by the occasional
flip of a page
of a book too big
too hard
too much
In an open back gown of white, speckled with blue dots
chemicals race in your veins
pumped through pill, IV
subduing you
This is how we educate.