"Abre Los Ojos": Why the Mexican Border Wall is a Decoy for America's Greater Issues

BY TYSEAN MOORE

First, a big thank you for reading! This world is crazy. This world is blind. So many issues with this world. Why? Could we make it better, can we stop the violence? Can we fix our scars? The justice system calls themselves something that they shouldn’t be called, also they don’t do everything they’re supposed to do. These people with the badge abuse it, the people with the power abuse it. The people with the power have the rights to change things in my country, but instead they are making things worse for the people, and that’s not fair.

This man Trump is trying to make millions of dollars from a country that needs it, to invest in a 5.7 billion dollar wall; that’s not worth it. This wall needs to go through a full investigation because this will not stop people from coming underground. This won’t work because there are other ways to get around an obstacle. ‘Do you think this will make people test the border now?’

This government shutdown is uncalled for; people do not want to work for free. People worked hard all year, now they have to wait for benefits so they can feed their family all because of a hold off about a wall. There are people dying for no reason, getting separated from their family. There needs to be justice for these people, especially for the people that live and are here in Philadelphia; we are treated like trash.

"The government wants us to be blind to these things that are going on. I want the world to ‘ABRE LOS OJOS’, which means open your eyes."
I see the great wall of Mexico not on this earth anymore. This 5.7 billion dollars could be better spent, this country doesn’t even know what this wall will look like. Where’s a picture? Help the people that need it. My country is in need of a lot of help! This world is changing in so many different ways: it’s crazy, the air is getting filled with all these bad gases, things are getting worse with disease, and people are dying of overdosing on medicine. Some people are just killing for no reason, others because of what they’ve been through as a child. We need to make better decisions when we go out here and do things honestly because these are childish mistakes that we know aren’t right.

We need to do better with this government, the government want us to be blind to these things that are going on. I want the world to ‘ABRE LOS OJOS’, which mean open your eyes. This is my clothing line, coming soon. Why did it have to take this long for people to vote? We had to wait until Trump got in the office to see the bad things, it shouldn’t be like this, just help the people that’re coming for help!

**DEAR YOUNG PEOPLE,**

The Power of Being Yourself

By Jalil Cook

My advice to you is to never hide who you are or you’re going to be. Staying true to yourself is more important than hiding it for the ones who claim to love you, then starting to hate yourself for it. I’ve hidden who I was after my mother passed, just because I thought I was going to disappoint my family. Then, I finally realized that people are going to dislike you no matter what the reason. I hated myself, even wanted to kill myself for hiding who I was for everyone but me. I was called a lot of names and verbally abused. I think that the name calling hurt so much because I was still finding who I was. I used to fall asleep saying to myself, “I am not who they want me to be” or “I’m not good enough for this family.

Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.

My friends at the school I went to are the ones I came out to first. They informed me to be the person that I want to be, not the person people want me to be. Then it came to pass where I just stopped caring about what they want. It was my life to be who I wanted to be. After I admitted who I was to myself I got this feeling of accomplishment and became comfortable in my own skin. I then was ready to take the next step in my life. Family started saying that I wasn’t going to be hired and that I wasn’t going to be accepted by anyone.

When it was time for me to get a job it was hard for me and I started to believe everything they were saying. But then I thought to myself “self doubt is an anchor that stops you from letting go of the pain”. So I didn’t give up and embraced who I was and made my mother proud up there. After my family saw that I wasn’t going to change they finally accepted me. I was happy when they did, so I began to make positive moves and started receiving awards such as being a very outspoken person and hard working, never give up student.
Now I am a senior about to graduate and I have a job that doesn’t judge me based on who I am but based on my skills and work performance. I am now ready to take the biggest step of all. College I’m coming for you! I have officially succeeded at this point of my life. The point of this letter is to inform my readers to never give up. No matter how many people give up on you keep fighting and break through. Still be the person you want to be, everyone can live their life how they want to live it. Always stay true to what you believe in and never give up.

Put The Guns Down

BY JAYONNA WESLEY

Why do we even kill? What are we proving by killing each other? That’s a serious question I have for my people. Innocent people are dying by just being in the wrong places at the wrong time. My big issue is about the killing and how newborns are being victimized by their own parents. My brothers and sisters are being shot, victims of gun violence.

I believe the world would be a better place if we all stop the killing and just work together. Eliminate guns!! We need to be all about building and helping each other reach each other’s goals. We can help one another by coming up with more plans to make money in a professional and safe environment. Youth is the time of life when one is young. Does a person make you so mad you have to kill? I lost a friend to gun violence. To this day I still question why did they end her life like that. She was so young and just experiencing life, she barely got to live her life. I stand for the innocent people we lost. Some people say yes, others should die but I think it’s never okay to kill a human when we have other punishments for bad behaviors.

Some believe karma will come instead of killing. When criminals sit in jail for their punishments they start to rethink about how they could have done better in the situations they made instead of killing a human.

*The Hate U Give* was an outstanding movie for me. The movie spoke to me and made me realize a lot on life and how us black people are being treated. I feel like it’s more killing than black African American men actually being successful in life. I believe life is way better than getting your freedom taken away just by one misunderstanding. We need more people finishing school. The killing rate is very high in Philadelphia, PA. Some black people sell drugs because we feel like it’s a better way out than actually learning and finishing school. Some think it’s faster money. However, I think it’s a waste of time and talent because you never make enough money, you need to achieve what you need in life to build your own empire. YouthBuild helped me realize school is way more important than we think. We need school instead of learning how to shoot each other. We need money to make it in life because this world revolves on money more than funerals. We need to wake up and work together.
Do all lives matter more than black? I do believe all lives matter, but in the case of police brutality and violence against minority groups, black lives have suffered the most. I also argue that All Lives Matter is a protest to Black Lives Matter. Black Lives Matter is a protest against police brutality of black men and women, the violence against women, and the abuse against black youth. There are instances of the police abusing their power.

On a dash cam footage of a cop car, a 65 year-old woman by the name of Rose Campbell from Georgia, was dragged out her car by multiple officers and arrested just for denying to sign a traffic ticket. More officers had arrived at the scene and one officer had been cursing at the elderly women. The officer resigned to protect his identity. The women had stated if she was a different race it would’ve turned out differently.

Another incident at a pool party, police came because of a call of black teens causing issues. Not long after the call, a cop had slammed a 15 year-old girl to the ground. When other black teens came closer, the officer became aware and pulled out his service pistol aiming it at the unarmed teens.

These are prime examples of the police abusing their power against black teens, and being able to do what they want with the support of the administration. The President of the United States, Donald Trump has said, “Do what you keep doing officers, don’t hold their heads while getting in the car.” He shows to be supportive of police brutality and doesn’t seem to care that police are gunning down unarmed black men. The police code of conduct claims that the job is to disarm and arrest, but in certain videos you can see that cops are aiming to kill. A black man by the name of Philando Castile was killed in front of his girlfriend and little daughter in a car for reaching for his wallet under the officers instructions. The officer Jeronimo Yanez, who killed him, is still in service and continuing to live his life just like nothing happened. But that doesn’t change the fact that he’s taken the life of a brother, father, cousin, uncle, and son. Police are getting away with killing freely without hesitation.

As Americans we need to be careful who we vote for and all that goes down to what kind of cop is riding around your neighborhood. Do it for the safety of your family members, friends, and your community.
Teen Moms

BY DYMOND KING

People always say teen mothers are bad parents.

People often say teen moms shouldn’t have kept our babies. They try to down talk us like we’re less than them but don’t we bust our asses too. They talk about us behind our backs and belittle us in our faces, saying we can’t do it or will fail in life, but don’t we get up every morning and make things happen. People count us out like we threw our lives away, but don’t we still keep a smile on our babies’ faces.

I for one never thought I would be a teen mom. I’m 19 years young and was a high school drop out with a newborn baby, sounds just like what people expect from me, right? But what those people don’t know is that I’m back in school, I work 12 hour shifts 5 nights a week just to make sure that my child wants for nothing.

I know plenty of young mothers that go to school and work hard for their kids. Being young doesn’t make you a bad mom and being old doesn’t make you a good mom. There are a lot of older women who don’t have their kids because they didn’t know how to be good mothers to them.

The Department of Human Services is always taking kids from grown women. People say young mothers can’t even take care of ourselves, what makes us think we can take care of a baby, but don’t our babies make us wanna get up and make them proud!

Most teen mothers don’t truly know their strength until the only option left is to be strong.

A lot of us teen moms end up raising our kids on our own. As mothers we have to be there for our children but a lot of teen fathers walk away and leave us to do everything on our own. Most teen moms go through bad depression, not even knowing where their baby’s next can of milk will come from but they still get it. Teen mothers go through hell and high water for our kids just like everybody else: We get more pressure and less credit but we still get the job done.

Don’t count us out just yet, we still have more to overcome and our babies will get the mother that they deserve, the mother that people said we couldn’t be.
Should Abortions Be Legal?

BY THERESA LOVE

First off, I don’t think abortions should be legal. If you’re old enough to have sex you should be old enough to take care of your responsibility. Abortion shouldn’t be allowed because you’re killing an infant that didn’t ask to be here in the first place. If you don’t want to have a baby you shouldn’t have sex period.

The only time abortion should be allowed is in the case of rape of a young person, like if a 14 year old girl got raped and she ended up pregnant.

I don’t condone birth control either because that’s just a way of stopping you from having kids. Condoms may prevent you from having kids but condoms can pop and also people don’t always put them on the right way; it might pop or come off and you don’t even know.

Some people believe in abortions because they might not be ready or stable enough to have kids. Women should be able to make the decision about their own bodies. It’s a woman’s body and they have to carry the baby. The two people should come together as one, best case scenario, but honestly it’s her decision.

IF ABORTION ISN’T WRONG, THEN NOTHING IS WRONG

However, back to stage one, if you know the outcome, and you don’t want it, don’t have sex!

I also don’t agree with abortions because it can mess up your body to have abortions and when you finally want a baby you might miscarry and you might need a specialist to get you through the whole nine months. Then what? It’s the same issue with birth control, when you stop taking it you might not be able to get pregnant, or some people get pregnant while they’re on birth control. So condoms and birth control aren’t options for me.
Abortion

BY ERIC WILLIAMS

Abortion should remain legal and accessible in the United States. I think abortion is a woman’s choice, it’s her body and she will be the one carrying the baby for 9 months. She should have the right to make a decision to keep the baby or to get an abortion.

There are many reasons why a woman would want an abortion. Such as she is not ready for a kid, she can’t financially afford to support both of them, or she may be a victim of rape.

According to individuals against abortion about 22 days after intercourse the child’s heart begins to beat and circulate their own blood. Therefore at about six weeks the fetus eyes and eyelids, mouth, nose, and tongue have formed. Furthermore the fetus brain activity can be seen at seven weeks. When the sperm enters the egg a human is created and they have rights.

All in all, I believe a child does not have human rights until he or she is born. Even though the fetus is formed it does not take its first breath prior to being born. Also, after close scrutiny I still believe that a woman should have the right to make a big decision such as an abortion.

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SHE DOESN’T WANT TO TELL SOMEONE HOW SHE NEEDS TO BE LOVED, SHE JUST WANT SOMEONE TO LOVE HER WITHOUT NEEDING DIRECTION.

LOVE YOURSELF, OPEN YOUR HEART WHICH MEANS DOING THE WORK ON YOURSELF FIRST. THEN LOVE WILL FOLLOW.

EMILY NORSE

Yourtango
SHOULD ABORTION BE LEGAL?

BY ZANIYAH THOMPSON

People have mixed feelings on abortions. It appears that it hasn’t been given the right attention. Abortions cause a lot of questions in discussion today.

Abortion is a process of killing a human being that has not even been given a chance to live life because their mother killed them. Sometimes there are understandable reasons for these actions, but then some females may just feel they aren’t ready to be a parent. Females sometimes feel like it’s not time for her to be a parent because they are too young. And she might not want to have an unwanted baby. However, think about if abortion wasn’t an option, then what would they do? What if your own mother felt this way? You will not have a chance to experience life. Imagine living in a world with babies the size of golf balls or smaller.

Actually to prohibit abortions cannot stop them and people can do everything in secret. Also if a female is raped, she sometimes becomes pregnant, and if she doesn’t want the baby with this situation, shouldn’t she have a right to abort the child? Like if it was your situation, wouldn’t you choose to abort the child? Some females will look at the child and only remember what happened to them and the pain they experienced. Therefore they should be allowed to abort the child in cases like this.

In conclusion, abortion should be legal because any situation can happen to anybody at any age and they should have the opportunity to abort a child they don’t want and weren’t planning on having.
If You Have To

BY ANONYMOUS

If you have to grow older make sure your mind is growing as well.
Make sure you remember where you came from,
remember where I came from. Remember the love you come from.
If you have to step into the world alone remember you're never alone, remember the faith I put in you.
If you have to travel remember to take lots of pictures,
remember I will always only be a call away.

Never be scared, remember that you only get one life.
Never be scared to talk to me, remember I am 19 writing this.
Remember I loved you before I even met you, before I met your daddy lol.
If you have to be a black man remember what that comes with.
Remember who you are, your GREATNESS at its best.
Remember you're a King and Kings never bow down because they would drop their crown.
Remember a king is nothing the day he mistreats a Queen.
But if you have to turn 19 remember that today is the day.
Your day and I'm so happy to be your mom even if I'm not your mom yet lol.
Teyon's Auto Shop

BY TEYON REID

My auto shop will be a big building with three garage doors and each one would be for a different type of car; muscle, SUV, exotic. We do engine work, design and car slant.

I am qualified to run an auto shop because I used to work on cars with my dad at the Lexus dealership and used to watch him with those motors and I want to do that for my career. I also attend Youth Build Charter School and the trade that I picked was business administration. They taught me public speaking skills, people skills, and how to run and manage my own business.

My project will help the people who need their car fixed or to make their car look better, faster, and maybe even be able to be in a car shows. My auto shop wouldn't be like a normal car garage, it will have graphic design and it will be the very first garage that has everything a person would need done to their car.

I would like to request a $250,000 grant to get me a good start on my business. I would use it to get supplies and lifts for the cars.